

# :mod:`pydoc` --- Documentation generator and online help system

**System Message: ERROR/3 (D:\onboarding-resources\sample-onboarding-resources\cpython-main\Doc\library\ (cpython-main) (Doc) (library)pydoc.rst, line 1); [backlink](#)**

Unknown interpreted text role "mod".

**System Message: ERROR/3 (D:\onboarding-resources\sample-onboarding-resources\cpython-main\Doc\library\ (cpython-main) (Doc) (library)pydoc.rst, line 4)**

Unknown directive type "module".

```
.. module:: pydoc
   :synopsis: Documentation generator and online help system.
```

**System Message: ERROR/3 (D:\onboarding-resources\sample-onboarding-resources\cpython-main\Doc\library\ (cpython-main) (Doc) (library)pydoc.rst, line 7)**

Unknown directive type "moduleauthor".

```
.. moduleauthor:: Ka-Ping Yee <ping@lfw.org>
```

**System Message: ERROR/3 (D:\onboarding-resources\sample-onboarding-resources\cpython-main\Doc\library\ (cpython-main) (Doc) (library)pydoc.rst, line 8)**

Unknown directive type "sectionauthor".

```
.. sectionauthor:: Ka-Ping Yee <ping@lfw.org>
```

**Source code:** :source:`Lib/pydoc.py`

**System Message: ERROR/3 (D:\onboarding-resources\sample-onboarding-resources\cpython-main\Doc\library\ (cpython-main) (Doc) (library)pydoc.rst, line 10); [backlink](#)**

Unknown interpreted text role "source".

**System Message: ERROR/3 (D:\onboarding-resources\sample-onboarding-resources\cpython-main\Doc\library\ (cpython-main) (Doc) (library)pydoc.rst, line 12)**

Unknown directive type "index".

```
.. index::
   single: documentation; generation
   single: documentation; online
   single: help; online
```

The `:mod:`pydoc`` module automatically generates documentation from Python modules. The documentation can be presented as pages of text on the console, served to a web browser, or saved to HTML files.

**System Message: ERROR/3 (D:\onboarding-resources\sample-onboarding-resources\cpython-main\Doc\library\ (cpython-main) (Doc) (library)pydoc.rst, line 19); [backlink](#)**

Unknown interpreted text role "mod".

For modules, classes, functions and methods, the displayed documentation is derived from the docstring (i.e. the `:attr:`__doc__`` attribute) of the object, and recursively of its documentable members. If there is no docstring, `:mod:`pydoc`` tries to obtain a description from the block of comment lines just above the definition of the class, function or method in the source file, or at the top of the module (see `:func:`inspect.getcomments``).

**System Message: ERROR/3 (D:\onboarding-resources\sample-onboarding-resources\cpython-**

**main\Doc\library\ (cpython-main) (Doc) (library)pydoc.rst, line 23); [backlink](#)**

Unknown interpreted text role "attr".

**System Message: ERROR/3 (D:\onboarding-resources\sample-onboarding-resources\cpython-main\Doc\library\ (cpython-main) (Doc) (library)pydoc.rst, line 23); [backlink](#)**

Unknown interpreted text role "mod".

**System Message: ERROR/3 (D:\onboarding-resources\sample-onboarding-resources\cpython-main\Doc\library\ (cpython-main) (Doc) (library)pydoc.rst, line 23); [backlink](#)**

Unknown interpreted text role "func".

The built-in function `:func:`help`` invokes the online help system in the interactive interpreter, which uses `:mod:`pydoc`` to generate its documentation as text on the console. The same text documentation can also be viewed from outside the Python interpreter by running `:program`pydoc`` as a script at the operating system's command prompt. For example, running

**System Message: ERROR/3 (D:\onboarding-resources\sample-onboarding-resources\cpython-main\Doc\library\ (cpython-main) (Doc) (library)pydoc.rst, line 30); [backlink](#)**

Unknown interpreted text role "func".

**System Message: ERROR/3 (D:\onboarding-resources\sample-onboarding-resources\cpython-main\Doc\library\ (cpython-main) (Doc) (library)pydoc.rst, line 30); [backlink](#)**

Unknown interpreted text role "mod".

**System Message: ERROR/3 (D:\onboarding-resources\sample-onboarding-resources\cpython-main\Doc\library\ (cpython-main) (Doc) (library)pydoc.rst, line 30); [backlink](#)**

Unknown interpreted text role "program".

`pydoc sys`

at a shell prompt will display documentation on the `:mod:`sys`` module, in a style similar to the manual pages shown by the Unix `:program`man`` command. The argument to `:program`pydoc`` can be the name of a function, module, or package, or a dotted reference to a class, method, or function within a module or module in a package. If the argument to `:program`pydoc`` looks like a path (that is, it contains the path separator for your operating system, such as a slash in Unix), and refers to an existing Python source file, then documentation is produced for that file.

**System Message: ERROR/3 (D:\onboarding-resources\sample-onboarding-resources\cpython-main\Doc\library\ (cpython-main) (Doc) (library)pydoc.rst, line 38); [backlink](#)**

Unknown interpreted text role "mod".

**System Message: ERROR/3 (D:\onboarding-resources\sample-onboarding-resources\cpython-main\Doc\library\ (cpython-main) (Doc) (library)pydoc.rst, line 38); [backlink](#)**

Unknown interpreted text role "program".

**System Message: ERROR/3 (D:\onboarding-resources\sample-onboarding-resources\cpython-main\Doc\library\ (cpython-main) (Doc) (library)pydoc.rst, line 38); [backlink](#)**

Unknown interpreted text role "program".

**System Message: ERROR/3 (D:\onboarding-resources\sample-onboarding-resources\cpython-main\Doc\library\ (cpython-main) (Doc) (library)pydoc.rst, line 38); [backlink](#)**

Unknown interpreted text role "program".

#### Note

In order to find objects and their documentation, `:mod:`pydoc`` imports the module(s) to be documented. Therefore, any code on module level will be executed on that occasion. Use an `if __name__ == '__main__':` guard to only execute code when a file is invoked as a script and not just imported.

**System Message: ERROR/3 (D:\onboarding-resources\sample-onboarding-resources\cpython-main\Doc\library\ (cpython-main) (Doc) (library)pydoc.rst, line 49); [backlink](#)**

Unknown interpreted text role "mod".

When printing output to the console, `:program`pydoc`` attempts to paginate the output for easier reading. If the `:envvar:`PAGER`` environment variable is set, `:program`pydoc`` will use its value as a pagination program.

**System Message: ERROR/3 (D:\onboarding-resources\sample-onboarding-resources\cpython-main\Doc\library\ (cpython-main) (Doc) (library)pydoc.rst, line 54); [backlink](#)**

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**System Message: ERROR/3 (D:\onboarding-resources\sample-onboarding-resources\cpython-main\Doc\library\ (cpython-main) (Doc) (library)pydoc.rst, line 54); [backlink](#)**

Unknown interpreted text role "envvar".

**System Message: ERROR/3 (D:\onboarding-resources\sample-onboarding-resources\cpython-main\Doc\library\ (cpython-main) (Doc) (library)pydoc.rst, line 54); [backlink](#)**

Unknown interpreted text role "program".

Specifying a `-w` flag before the argument will cause HTML documentation to be written out to a file in the current directory, instead of displaying text on the console.

Specifying a `-k` flag before the argument will search the synopsis lines of all available modules for the keyword given as the argument, again in a manner similar to the Unix `:program`man`` command. The synopsis line of a module is the first line of its documentation string.

**System Message: ERROR/3 (D:\onboarding-resources\sample-onboarding-resources\cpython-main\Doc\library\ (cpython-main) (Doc) (library)pydoc.rst, line 62); [backlink](#)**

Unknown interpreted text role "program".

You can also use `:program`pydoc`` to start an HTTP server on the local machine that will serve documentation to visiting web browsers. `:program`pydoc -p 1234`` will start a HTTP server on port 1234, allowing you to browse the documentation at `http://localhost:1234/` in your preferred web browser. Specifying 0 as the port number will select an arbitrary unused port.

**System Message: ERROR/3 (D:\onboarding-resources\sample-onboarding-resources\cpython-main\Doc\library\ (cpython-main) (Doc) (library)pydoc.rst, line 67); [backlink](#)**

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**System Message: ERROR/3 (D:\onboarding-resources\sample-onboarding-resources\cpython-main\Doc\library\ (cpython-main) (Doc) (library)pydoc.rst, line 67); [backlink](#)**

Unknown interpreted text role "program".

`:program`pydoc -n <hostname>`` will start the server listening at the given hostname. By default the hostname is 'localhost' but if you want the server to be reached from other machines, you may want to change the host name that the server responds to. During development this is especially useful if you want to run pydoc from within a container.

**System Message: ERROR/3 (D:\onboarding-resources\sample-onboarding-resources\cpython-main\Doc\library\ (cpython-main) (Doc) (library)pydoc.rst, line 73); [backlink](#)**

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`:program`pydoc -b`` will start the server and additionally open a web browser to a module index page. Each served page has a navigation bar at the top where you can *Get* help on an individual item, *Search* all modules with a keyword in their synopsis line, and go to the *Module index*, *Topics* and *Keywords* pages.

**System Message: ERROR/3 (D:\onboarding-resources\sample-onboarding-resources\cpython-main\Doc\library\ (cpython-main) (Doc) (library)pydoc.rst, line 79); [backlink](#)**

Unknown interpreted text role "program".

When `:program`pydoc`` generates documentation, it uses the current environment and path to locate modules. Thus, invoking `:program`pydoc spam`` documents precisely the version of the module you would get if you started the Python interpreter and typed `import spam`.

**System Message: ERROR/3 (D:\onboarding-resources\sample-onboarding-resources\cpython-main\Doc\library\ (cpython-main) (Doc) (library)pydoc.rst, line 85); [backlink](#)**

Unknown interpreted text role "program".

**System Message: ERROR/3 (D:\onboarding-resources\sample-onboarding-resources\cpython-main\Doc\library\ (cpython-main) (Doc) (library)pydoc.rst, line 85); [backlink](#)**

Unknown interpreted text role "program".

Module docs for core modules are assumed to reside in `https://docs.python.org/X.Y/library/` where X and Y are the major and minor version numbers of the Python interpreter. This can be overridden by setting the `:envvar:`PYTHONDOCS`` environment variable to a different URL or to a local directory containing the Library Reference Manual pages.

**System Message: ERROR/3 (D:\onboarding-resources\sample-onboarding-resources\cpython-main\Doc\library\ (cpython-main) (Doc) (library)pydoc.rst, line 90); [backlink](#)**

Unknown interpreted text role "envvar".

**System Message: ERROR/3 (D:\onboarding-resources\sample-onboarding-resources\cpython-main\Doc\library\ (cpython-main) (Doc) (library)pydoc.rst, line 97)**

Unknown directive type "versionchanged".

```
.. versionchanged:: 3.2
   Added the ``-b`` option.
```

**System Message: ERROR/3 (D:\onboarding-resources\sample-onboarding-resources\cpython-main\Doc\library\ (cpython-main) (Doc) (library)pydoc.rst, line 100)**

Unknown directive type "versionchanged".

```
.. versionchanged:: 3.3
   The ``-g`` command line option was removed.
```

**System Message: ERROR/3 (D:\onboarding-resources\sample-onboarding-resources\cpython-main\Doc\library\ (cpython-main) (Doc) (library)pydoc.rst, line 103)**

Unknown directive type "versionchanged".

```
.. versionchanged:: 3.4
   :mod:`pydoc` now uses :func:`inspect.signature` rather than
   :func:`inspect.getfullargspec` to extract signature information from
   callables.
```

**System Message: ERROR/3 (D:\onboarding-resources\sample-onboarding-resources\cpython-main\Doc\library\ (cpython-main) (Doc) (library)pydoc.rst, line 108)**

Unknown directive type "versionchanged".

```
.. versionchanged:: 3.7
   Added the ``-n`` option.
```