Here are **20 Python interview questions paired with concise answers**, presented in a clean Q&A format without topic headings:

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1. **What is Python?**
   A versatile, high-level, interpreted programming language known for its clean syntax, dynamic typing, extensive libraries, and wide range of applications (techbeamers.com, hackr.io).

2. **Is Python compiled or interpreted?**
   Python code is typically compiled into bytecode and then interpreted by the Python Virtual Machine; implementations like CPython do both (geeksforgeeks.org).

3. **What benefits does Python offer?**
   It's simple to read, portable, extensible, open-source, supports dynamic typing, automatic memory management, multiple paradigms, and has a rich standard library (guru99.com).

4. **What is PEP 8?**
   The official style guide for writing readable, consistent Python code (pythonguides.com, guru99.com).

5. **Define mutable and immutable types.**
   Mutable types (like lists, dicts, sets) can change after creation; immutable types (like strings, tuples, numbers) cannot (almabetter.com).

6. **Difference between list and tuple?**
   Lists are mutable and generally slower; tuples are immutable and faster (edureka.co).

7. **Explain slicing.**
   A way to extract subsequences using the [start:stop:step] syntax .

8. **What does the pass statement do?**
   It's a no-operation placeholder used in empty code blocks (interviewbit.com).

9. **How do break and continue work?**
   break exits the loop entirely; continue skips the rest of the current iteration and moves to the next one (pythonguides.com).

10. **What is an iterator?**
    An object with __iter__() and __next__() methods, capable of returning elements one at a time .

11. **What is __init__?**
    A constructor method called when creating an instance of a class (interviewbit.com).

12. **What is self in class methods?**
    It refers to the specific instance of the class from within its methods .

13. **Explain pickling and unpickling.**
    Pickling serializes objects to byte streams; unpickling restores them (guru99.com).

14. **What is a docstring?**
    A string literal placed right after function, class, or module definitions used for documentation .

15. **What is unit testing in Python?**
Using frameworks like unittest to test individual components of code separately ([interviewbit.com](interviewbit.com)).

16. **How do you handle exceptions?**
Use try to wrap code, except to catch errors, finally for cleanup, and raise to throw exceptions manually .

17. **What is the difference between == and is?**
== checks value equality, while is checks if two references point to the exact same object ([pythonguides.com](pythonguides.com)).

18. **How do you merge two dictionaries?**
In Python 3.9+, use {**d1, **d2}, or use d1.update(d2) to merge in place ([pythonguides.com](pythonguides.com)).

19. **How do you find the max/min key by value in a dict?**
Use max(d, key=d.get) or min(d, key=d.get) .

20. **What are Python's built-in data types?**
Common types include strings, integers, floats, lists, tuples, sets, dictionaries, and arrays ([interviewbit.com](interviewbit.com)).