Python is a [high-level](), [general-purpose programming language](). Its design philosophy emphasizes [code readability]() with the use of [significant indentation]().[32]

Python is [dynamically typed]() and [garbage-collected](). It supports multiple [programming paradigms](), including [structured]() (particularly [procedural]()), [object-oriented]() and [functional programming](). It is often described as a "batteries included" language due to its comprehensive [standard library]().[33][34]

[Guido van Rossum]() began working on Python in the late 1980s as a successor to the [ABC programming language]() and first released it in 1991 as Python 0.9.0.[35] Python 2.0 was released in 2000. Python 3.0, released in 2008, was a major revision not completely [backward-compatible]() with earlier versions. Python 2.7.18, released in 2020, was the last release of Python 2.[36]

Python consistently ranks as one of the most popular programming languages.[37][38][39][40]

History

The designer of Python, [Guido van Rossum](), at [OSCON]() 2006

Main article: [History of Python]()

Python was conceived in the late 1980s[41] by [Guido van Rossum]() at [Centrum Wiskunde & Informatica]() (CWI) in the [Netherlands]() as a successor to the [ABC programming language](), which was inspired by [SETL](),[42] capable of [exception handling]() and interfacing with the [Amoeba]() operating system.[11] Its implementation began in December 1989.[43] Van Rossum shouldered sole responsibility for the project, as the lead developer, until 12 July 2018, when he announced his "permanent vacation" from his responsibilities as Python's "[benevolent dictator for life]()", a title the Python community bestowed upon him to reflect his long-term commitment as the project's chief decision-maker.[44] In January 2019, active Python core developers elected a five-member Steering Council to lead the project.[45][46]

Python 2.0 was released on 16 October 2000, with many major new features such as [list comprehensions](), [cycle-detecting]() garbage collection, [reference counting](), and [Unicode]() support.[47] Python 3.0, released on 3 December 2008, with many of its major features [backported]() to Python 2.6.x[48] and 2.7.x. Releases of Python 3 include the `2to3` utility, which automates the translation of Python 2 code to Python 3.[49]

Python 2.7's [end-of-life]() was initially set for 2015, then postponed to 2020 out of concern that a large body of existing code could not easily be forward-ported to Python 3.[50][51] No further security patches or other improvements will be released for it.[52][53] Currently only 3.8 and later are supported (2023 security issues were fixed in e.g. 3.7.17, the final 3.7.x release[54]).