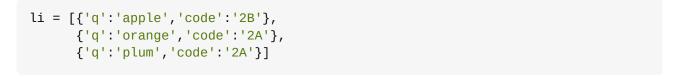
How do I most efficienty check the unique elements in a list?

Asked 14 years, 8 months ago Modified 14 years, 8 months ago Viewed 376 times



let's say I have a list







What is the most efficient way to return the count of unique "codes" in this list? In this case, the unique codes is 2, because only 2B and 2A are unique.

I could put everything in a list and compare, but is this really efficient?



Duplicate of all of these: <u>stackoverflow.com/search?q=%5Bpython%5D+duplicate+list</u>. Specifically this: <u>stackoverflow.com/questions/1143379/...</u> – S.Lott Apr 3, 2010 at 2:40

1 Answer

Sorted by: Highest score (default)



Probably the most efficient simple way is to create a set of the codes, which will filter out uniques, then get the number of elements in that set:







As always, I advise to not worry about this kind of efficiency unless you've measured your performance and seen that it's a problem. I usually think only about code clarity when writing this kind of code, and then come back and tighten it only if I've profiled and found that I **need** to make performance improvements.





- 1 FWIW when sets were first introduced in Python this was a novel concept to me. I found it very useful to read up on the math behind sets, which ties it all together:

 <u>en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Set_(mathematics)</u> jathanism Apr 2, 2010 at 23:42
- To take the unique of some *group*, it's always O(n), since you have look at every element, unless you have some other inside information. Gregg Lind Apr 3, 2010 at 0:11