

Python for Cheminformatics & Bioinformatics

Labs: Hands-On Exercises

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Lab Exercises Overview

- ① Python Basics Labs (Lessons 1–6B)
- ② Collections & Advanced Labs (Lessons 7–12)
- ③ Rosalind Bioinformatics Challenges
- ④ Cheminformatics Mini-Project
- ⑤ Summary

Lab 1: Variables & Data Types

Objective: Practice storing and converting molecular and sequence data.

Exercise 1.1 – Compound Data Storage

Create variables for a drug compound:

- Name (string): “Ibuprofen”
- SMILES (string): “CC(C)CC1=CC=C(C=C1)C(C)C(=O)O”
- Molecular weight (float): 206.28
- pIC50 (float): 6.1
- Is active (bool): True if $\text{pIC50} \geq 6.0$

Print all values using f-strings.

Lab 1: Variables & Data Types (cont.)

Exercise 1.2 – DNA Sequence

Store a DNA sequence: "ATGCGATCGATCGATCGATCG"

Calculate and print:

- Sequence length
- Number of adenines (A)
- Number of thymines (T)

Exercise 1.3 – Type Conversion

Given $IC50 = "5.2"$ (string), convert to float and calculate $plC50$.

Store the result as both float and formatted string (2 decimals).

Lab 2: Operators

Objective: Apply operators for molecular calculations and filtering.

Exercise 2.1 – IC50 Conversion

Write code to convert IC50 values from nM to pIC50:

IC50 values: 10.0, 100.0, 1000.0 (nM)

Formula: $\text{pIC50} = -\log_{10}(\text{IC50} \times 10^{-9})$

Hint: Use `import math; math.log10()`

Exercise 2.2 – Lipinski Check

Given: MW=450, LogP=3.5, HBD=2, HBA=8

Check if compound passes Rule of Five:

$(\text{MW} \leq 500) \text{ AND } (\text{LogP} \leq 5) \text{ AND } (\text{HBD} \leq 5) \text{ AND } (\text{HBA} \leq 10)$

Lab 2: Operators (cont.)

Exercise 2.3 – GC Content (Rosalind)

Calculate GC content percentage for: “AGCTATAG”

Formula: $GC\% = (G + C) / \text{total} \times 100$

Expected output: “GC Content: XX.X%”

Exercise 2.4 – Activity Classification

Given $pIC50 = 7.2$, determine if compound is:

- “Highly potent” ($pIC50 \geq 8$)
- “Potent” ($pIC50 \geq 7$)
- “Moderate” ($pIC50 \geq 6$)
- “Weak” ($pIC50 < 6$)

Use comparison and logical operators.

Lab 3: Strings

Objective: Manipulate SMILES and biological sequences.

Exercise 3.1 – DNA Transcription

Transcribe DNA to RNA:

Input: "ATGCGATCGATCG"

Replace all T with U

Expected: "AUGCGAUCGAUCG"

Exercise 3.2 – Reverse Complement (Rosalind REVC)

Generate the reverse complement of DNA:

Input: "AAAACCCGGT"

Complement: A↔T, G↔C

Then reverse the string

Expected: "ACCGGGTTTT"

Lab 3: Strings (cont.)

Exercise 3.3 – SMILES Analysis

Analyze SMILES: “CC(=O)OC1=CC=CC=C1C(=O)O” (Aspirin)

- Find if it contains a ring (digits indicate ring closure)
- Count the number of carbons (C)
- Count oxygen atoms (O)
- Check if it's aromatic (contains lowercase letters)

Exercise 3.4 – Nucleotide Count (Rosalind DNA)

Count nucleotides in: “AGCTTTTCATTCTGACTGCAACGGGCAATA”

Print: “A:X T:X G:X C:X”

Lab 4: Conditionals

Objective: Implement decision logic for compound classification.

Exercise 4.1 – Drug-Likeness Checker

Create a program that checks Lipinski Rule of Five:

Input: MW, LogP, HBD, HBA

Output: Number of violations (0–4)

Print “Drug-like” if violations ≤ 1 , else “Non-drug-like”

Exercise 4.2 – Codon Identifier

Given a 3-letter codon, identify if it's:

- Start codon: “ATG”
- Stop codon: “TAA”, “TAG”, “TGA”
- Other: any other codon

Use if/elif/else or match-case.

Lab 4: Conditionals (cont.)

Exercise 4.3 – Activity Classifier

Classify compound based on pIC50:

- $pIC50 \geq 8$: “Highly Active”
- $7 \leq pIC50 < 8$: “Active”
- $6 \leq pIC50 < 7$: “Moderately Active”
- $5 \leq pIC50 < 6$: “Weakly Active”
- $pIC50 < 5$: “Inactive”

Test with values: 8.5, 7.2, 6.5, 5.3, 4.1

Lab 5: Loops

Objective: Process collections of compounds and sequences.

Exercise 5.1 – Batch IC50 Conversion

Convert list of IC50 values (nM) to pIC50:

IC50_list = [1.0, 10.0, 100.0, 1000.0, 10000.0]

Use a for loop to calculate and print each pIC50.

Exercise 5.2 – Nucleotide Counter (Rosalind DNA)

Count all nucleotides in a DNA sequence using a for loop:

seq = "AGCTTTTCATTCTGACTGCAACGGGCAATATGTCTCTGTGT"

Print counts for A, C, G, T separated by spaces.

Lab 5: Loops (cont.)

Exercise 5.3 – Filter Active Compounds

Given pIC50 values: [5.2, 6.8, 7.3, 4.9, 8.1, 5.9, 6.2]

Use a loop with continue to skip inactive ($pIC50 < 6$)

Print only active compounds.

Exercise 5.4 – Find First Potent Compound

Given pIC50 values: [5.2, 5.8, 6.1, 7.5, 8.2, 6.8]

Use a while loop with break to find the first “highly potent” compound ($pIC50 \geq 7.5$)

Print its index and value.

Lab 6: Functions

Objective: Create reusable molecular utility functions.

Exercise 6.1 – pIC50 Converter Function

Create function: `ic50_to_pic50(ic50_nm)`

Input: IC50 in nanomolar

Output: pIC50 value

Test with: 10, 100, 1000 nM

Exercise 6.2 – GC Content Function

Create function: `gc_content(sequence)`

Input: DNA sequence string

Output: GC percentage (float)

Test with: "AGCTATAG", "GCGCGCGC", "ATATAT"

Lab 6: Functions (cont.)

Exercise 6.3 – Lipinski Calculator

Create function: `check_lipinski(mw, logp, hbd, hba)`

Returns tuple: (`passes: bool, violations: int`)

Test with multiple compound property sets.

Exercise 6.4 – Reverse Complement Function

Create function: `reverse_complement(dna)`

Input: DNA sequence

Output: Reverse complement sequence

Test with Rosalind REVC sample: "AAAACCCGGT" → "ACCGGGTTTT"

Lab 6B: Error Handling

Objective: Build robust code that handles invalid inputs.

Exercise 6B.1 – Safe IC50 Conversion

Modify `ic50_to_pic50()` to handle:

- Negative IC50 values (raise `ValueError`)
- Zero IC50 (raise `ValueError`)
- Non-numeric input (catch `TypeError`)

Return `None` on error and print helpful message.

Exercise 6B.2 – SMILES Validator

Create function that validates SMILES:

Use RDKit: `Chem.MolFromSmiles(smiles)`

If returns `None`, raise `ValueError` with message

Handle with `try/except` and return valid/invalid status.

Lab 7: Lists

Objective: Manage compound libraries using lists.

Exercise 7.1 – Compound Library

Create a list of SMILES strings for 5 common drugs.

Perform operations:

- Add a new compound
- Remove a compound by value
- Insert at specific position
- Print first and last compounds

Exercise 7.2 – pIC50 Statistics

Given: [5.2, 6.8, 7.3, 4.9, 8.1, 5.9, 6.2, 7.8]

Calculate: min, max, sorted list, count of actives (≥ 6)

Lab 7B: Tuples & Sets

Exercise 7B.1 – Compound Records

Create tuples for 3 compounds: (name, SMILES, pIC50)

Unpack each tuple and print formatted output.

Try to modify a tuple value – observe the error.

Exercise 7B.2 – Library Comparison

Library A: { “CMP001”, “CMP002”, “CMP003”, “CMP004” }

Library B: { “CMP003”, “CMP004”, “CMP005”, “CMP006” }

Find:

- All unique compounds (union)
- Common compounds (intersection)
- Compounds only in A
- Compounds only in B

Lab 8: List Comprehensions

Objective: Use comprehensions for elegant data transformations.

Exercise 8.1 – Filter Active Compounds

Given $\text{pIC50} = [5.2, 6.8, 7.3, 4.9, 8.1, 5.9]$

Use list comprehension to filter $\text{pIC50} \geq 6.0$

Exercise 8.2 – Batch Conversion

Convert IC50 list $[10, 100, 1000]$ to pIC50 using:

- a) List comprehension
- b) map() with lambda

Exercise 8.3 – Conditional Comprehension

Create list of tuples: $[(\text{pIC50}, \text{"Active"}) \text{ if } \text{pIC50} \geq 6 \text{ else } (\text{pIC50}, \text{"Inactive"})]$
for values $[5.2, 6.8, 7.3, 4.9, 8.1]$

Lab 9: Dictionaries

Objective: Build compound databases using dictionaries.

Exercise 9.1 – Compound Database

Create a dict of compounds with nested properties:

Key: compound name

Value: dict with SMILES, MW, pIC50, is_active

Exercise 9.2 – Codon Table (Rosalind)

Create a dict mapping codons to amino acids:

“ATG” → “M”, “TGG” → “W”, “TAA” → “Stop”, etc.

Use to translate a short sequence.

Exercise 9.3 – Dict Comprehension

Filter the compound database to only active compounds

using dict comprehension: {k:v for k,v in ... if ...}

Lab 10: File Handling

Objective: Read and write compound and sequence files.

Exercise 10.1 – Write Compound CSV

Create a CSV file with columns: name, SMILES, pIC50

Write data for 5 compounds using `with open()`.

Exercise 10.2 – Read FASTA

Create a simple FASTA parser:

Read file, extract header (lines starting with >)

Concatenate sequence lines

Return dict: {header: sequence}

Exercise 10.3 – Filter and Export

Read compound CSV, filter active compounds ($pIC50 \geq 6$)

Write filtered results to new file “actives.csv”

Lab 11: NumPy

Objective: Use NumPy for numerical molecular data.

Exercise 11.1 – Descriptor Matrix

Create a 2D array of molecular descriptors:

Rows = compounds, Columns = [MW, LogP, HBD, HBA]

Calculate mean and std for each descriptor (column).

Exercise 11.2 – Normalization

Normalize descriptor values to 0-1 range:

Formula: $(x - \min) / (\max - \min)$

Use vectorized operations (no loops).

Exercise 11.3 – Boolean Filtering

Filter compounds where MW < 500 AND LogP < 5

Use boolean indexing.

Lab 11B: Pandas

Objective: Analyze compound datasets with Pandas.

Exercise 11B.1 – Create Compound DataFrame

Create DataFrame with: Name, SMILES, MW, LogP, pIC50

Add 5+ compounds. Add column for activity class.

Exercise 11B.2 – Data Analysis

Calculate: mean pIC50, count by activity class

Filter drug-like compounds ($MW < 500$, $\text{LogP} < 5$)

Sort by pIC50 descending.

Exercise 11B.3 – GroupBy Analysis

Group compounds by activity class

Calculate mean MW and LogP per group

Export results to CSV.

Lab 12: JSON & Regex

Exercise 12.1 – Parse PubChem JSON

Parse JSON compound data:

```
{"CID": 2244, "name": "Aspirin", "MW": 180.16}
```

Extract and print each field.

Exercise 12.2 – Find Restriction Sites

Use regex to find all occurrences of “GAATTC” (EcoRI site) in sequence: “ATGAATTCTCGCGAATTCTA”

Print positions of each match.

Exercise 12.3 – SMILES Validation

Use regex to check if SMILES contains:

- Aromatic ring (lowercase c, n, o, s)
- Ring closure (digits)
- Double bond (=)

Rosalind Challenges

Complete these Rosalind.info problems:

- ① **DNA** – Counting DNA Nucleotides
- ② **RNA** – Transcribing DNA into RNA
- ③ **REVC** – Complementing a Strand of DNA
- ④ **GC** – Computing GC Content
- ⑤ **HAMM** – Counting Point Mutations
- ⑥ **PROT** – Translating RNA into Protein
- ⑦ **SUBS** – Finding a Motif in DNA
- ⑧ **CONS** – Consensus and Profile

Submission: Upload your solutions to GitHub with:

- Clear function documentation
- Test cases with sample data
- README explaining approach

Mini-Project: QSAR Data Prep Pipeline

Objective: Build a complete data preparation pipeline. **Tasks:**

- ① Read compound CSV with SMILES and IC50 values
- ② Validate all SMILES using RDKit
- ③ Convert IC50 (nM) to pIC50
- ④ Calculate Lipinski descriptors (MW, LogP, HBD, HBA)
- ⑤ Add activity class column (Active/Inactive)
- ⑥ Filter drug-like compounds
- ⑦ Export clean dataset to CSV
- ⑧ Generate summary statistics

Deliverables:

- Python script with documented functions
- Output CSV file
- Summary report (mean/std of descriptors)

Mini-Project: Hints

Useful RDKit Functions:

- `Chem.MolFromSmiles(smiles)` – parse SMILES
- `Descriptors.MolWt(mol)` – molecular weight
- `Descriptors.MolLogP(mol)` – LogP
- `Descriptors.NumHDonors(mol)` – H-bond donors
- `Descriptors.NumHAcceptors(mol)` – H-bond acceptors

Pandas Operations:

- `pd.read_csv()` – read input
- `df.apply()` – apply function to column
- `df.describe()` – summary statistics
- `df.to_csv()` – export results

Lab Summary

Basics Labs (1–6B):

- Variables, operators, strings for molecular data
- Conditionals for classification
- Loops for batch processing
- Functions for reusable utilities
- Error handling for robust code

Collections Labs (7–12):

- Lists, tuples, sets, dicts for compound storage
- Comprehensions for elegant transformations
- File I/O for CSV and FASTA
- NumPy/Pandas for data analysis
- JSON/Regex for APIs and pattern matching

Projects:

- Rosalind bioinformatics challenges

Resources

Practice Platforms:

- Rosalind.info – Bioinformatics problems
- LeetCode – General programming
- Kaggle – Data science competitions

Cheminformatics Data:

- ChEMBL – Bioactivity database
- PubChem – Chemical compounds
- ZINC – Virtual screening library

Documentation:

- RDKit: rdkit.org
- Pandas: pandas.pydata.org
- NumPy: numpy.org

Good luck with your exercises!

