**Python**

Python is a [high-level](https://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/High-level_programming_language), [interpreted](https://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Interpreter_(computing)), [general-purpose programming language](https://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/General-purpose_programming_language). Its design philosophy emphasizes [code readability](https://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Code_readability) with the use of [significant indentation](https://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Off-side_rule).

Python is [dynamically-typed](https://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Type_system#DYNAMIC) and [garbage-collected](https://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Garbage_collection_(computer_science)). It supports multiple [programming paradigms](https://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Programming_paradigm), including [structured](https://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Structured_programming) (particularly [procedural](https://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Procedural_programming)), [object-oriented](https://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Object-oriented_programming) and [functional programming](https://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Functional_programming). It is often described as a "batteries included" language due to its comprehensive [standard library](https://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Standard_library).

[Guido van Rossum](https://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Guido_van_Rossum) began working on Python in the late 1980s as a successor to the [ABC programming language](https://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/ABC_(programming_language)) and first released it in 1991 as Python 0.9.0. Python 2.0 was released in 2000 and introduced new features such as [list comprehensions](https://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/List_comprehension), [cycle-detecting](https://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Cycle_detection) garbage collection, [reference counting](https://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Reference_counting), and [Unicode](https://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Unicode) support. Python 3.0, released in 2008, was a major revision that is not completely [backward-compatible](https://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Backward_compatibility) with earlier versions. Python 2 was discontinued with version 2.7.18 in 2020.

Python consistently ranks as one of the most popular programming languages.

History

Python was conceived in the late 1980s by [Guido van Rossum](https://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Guido_van_Rossum) at [Centrum Wiskunde & Informatica](https://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Centrum_Wiskunde_%26_Informatica) (CWI) in the [Netherlands](https://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Netherlands) as a successor to the [ABC programming language](https://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/ABC_(programming_language)), which was inspired by [SETL](https://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/SETL), capable of [exception handling](https://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Exception_handling) and interfacing with the [Amoeba](https://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Amoeba_(operating_system)) operating system. Its implementation began in December 1989. 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](https://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/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. In January 2019, active Python core developers elected a five-member Steering Council to lead the project.

Python 2.0 was released on 16 October 2000, with many major new features. Python 3.0, released on 3 December 2008, with many of its major features [backported](https://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Backporting) to Python 2.6.x and 2.7.x. Releases of Python 3 include the 2to3 utility, which automates the translation of Python 2 code to Python 3.

Python 2.7's [end-of-life](https://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/End-of-life_(product)) 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. No further security patches or other improvements will be released for it. With Python 2's [end-of-life](https://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/End-of-life_(product)), only Python 3.6.x and later where supported, and later support for 3.6 also dropped.

In 2022, Python 3.10.4 and 3.9.12 were expedited and so were older releases including 3.8.13, and 3.7.13 because of many security issues in 2022. In 2021, Python 3.9.2 and 3.8.8 were also expedited as all versions of Python (including 2.7) had security issues leading to possible [remote code execution](https://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Remote_code_execution) and [web cache poisoning](https://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Cache_poisoning).

Design philosophy and features

Python is a [multi-paradigm programming language](https://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Multi-paradigm_programming_language). [Object-oriented programming](https://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Object-oriented_programming) and [structured programming](https://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Structured_programming) are fully supported, and many of its features support functional programming and [aspect-oriented programming](https://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Aspect-oriented_programming) (including by [metaprogramming](https://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Metaprogramming) and [metaobjects](https://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Metaobject) [magic methods] ). Many other paradigms are supported via extensions, including [design by contract](https://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Design_by_contract) and [logic programming](https://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Logic_programming).

Python uses [dynamic typing](https://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Dynamic_typing), and a combination of [reference counting](https://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Reference_counting) and a cycle-detecting garbage collector for [memory management](https://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Memory_management). It uses dynamic [name resolution](https://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Name_resolution_(programming_languages)) ([late binding](https://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Late_binding)), which binds method and variable names during program execution.

Its design offers some support for functional programming in the [Lisp](https://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Lisp_(programming_language)) tradition. It has filter,mapandreduce functions; [list comprehensions](https://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/List_comprehension), [dictionaries](https://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Associative_array), sets, and [generator](https://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Generator_(computer_programming)) expressions. The standard library has two modules (itertools and functools) that implement functional tools borrowed from [Haskell](https://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Haskell_(programming_language)) and [Standard ML](https://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Standard_ML).

Its core philosophy is summarized in the document The [Zen of Python](https://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Zen_of_Python) (PEP 20), which includes [aphorisms](https://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Aphorism) such as:

* Beautiful is better than ugly.
* Explicit is better than implicit.
* Simple is better than complex.
* Complex is better than complicated.
* Readability counts.

Rather than building all of its functionality into its core, Python was designed to be highly [extensible](https://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Extensibility) via modules. This compact modularity has made it particularly popular as a means of adding programmable interfaces to existing applications. Van Rossum's vision of a small core language with a large standard library and easily extensible interpreter stemmed from his frustrations with [ABC](https://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/ABC_(programming_language)), which espoused the opposite approach.

Python strives for a simpler, less-cluttered syntax and grammar while giving developers a choice in their coding methodology. In contrast to [Perl](https://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Perl)'s "[there is more than one way to do it](https://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/There_is_more_than_one_way_to_do_it)" motto, Python embraces a "there should be one—and preferably only one—obvious way to do it" philosophy. [Alex Martelli](https://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Alex_Martelli), a [Fellow](https://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Fellow) at the [Python Software Foundation](https://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Python_Software_Foundation) and Python book author, wrote: "To describe something as 'clever' is not considered a compliment in the Python culture."

Python's developers strive to avoid [premature optimization](https://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Premature_optimization), and reject patches to non-critical parts of the [CPython](https://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/CPython" \o "CPython) reference implementation that would offer marginal increases in speed at the cost of clarity. When speed is important, a Python programmer can move time-critical functions to extension modules written in languages such as C; or use [PyPy](https://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/PyPy" \o "PyPy), a [just-in-time compiler](https://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Just-in-time_compilation). [Cython](https://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Cython" \o "Cython) is also available, which translates a Python script into C and makes direct C-level API calls into the Python interpreter.

Python's developers aim for it to be fun to use. This is reflected in its name—a tribute to the British comedy group [Monty Python](https://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Monty_Python)—and in occasionally playful approaches to tutorials and reference materials, such as examples that refer to spam and eggs (a reference to a [Monty Python sketch](https://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Spam_(Monty_Python))) instead of the standard [foo and bar](https://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Foobar).

A common [neologism](https://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Neologism) in the Python community is pythonic, which has a wide range of meanings related to program style. "Pythonic" code may use Python idioms well, be natural or show fluency in the language, or conform with Python's minimalist philosophy and emphasis on readability. Code that is difficult to understand or reads like a rough transcription from another programming language is called unpythonic.

Python users and admirers, especially those considered knowledgeable or experienced, are often referred to as Pythonistas.

Syntax and semantics

Python is meant to be an easily readable language. Its formatting is visually uncluttered, and often uses English keywords where other languages use punctuation. Unlike many other languages, it does not use [curly brackets](https://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Curly_bracket_programming_language) to delimit blocks, and semicolons after statements are allowed but rarely used. It has fewer syntactic exceptions and special cases than [C](https://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/C_(programming_language)) or [Pascal](https://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Pascal_(programming_language)).

### Indentation

Python uses [whitespace](https://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Whitespace_character) indentation, rather than [curly brackets](https://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Curly_bracket_programming_language) or keywords, to delimit [blocks](https://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Block_(programming)). An increase in indentation comes after certain statements; a decrease in indentation signifies the end of the current block. Thus, the program's visual structure accurately represents its semantic structure. This feature is sometimes termed the [off-side rule](https://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Off-side_rule). Some other languages use indentation this way; but in most, indentation has no semantic meaning. The recommended indent size is four spaces.