

# (unicode error) 'unicodeescape' codec can't decode bytes in position 2-3: truncated \UXXXXXXXX escape

Asked 3 years, 4 months ago   Active 7 months ago   Viewed 373k times

I'm trying to read a .csv file into Python (Spyder) but I keep getting an error. My code:

130

```
import csv
```

```
data = open("C:\Users\miche\Documents\school\jaar2\MIK\2.6\vektis_agb_zorgverlener")
data = csv.reader(data)
print(data)
```



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I get the following error:

SyntaxError: (unicode error) 'unicodeescape' codec can't decode bytes in position 2-3: truncated \UXXXXXXXX escape

I have tried to replace the \ with \ or with / and I've tried to put an r before "C.. but all these things didn't work.

python

csv

unicode

syntax-error

edited Feb 7 at 14:09



ZygD

4,627

11

32

55

asked May 23 '16 at 21:36



Miesje

647

2

6

7

Does this help: [stackoverflow.com/questions/904041/...](https://stackoverflow.com/questions/904041/...) – Charles L. May 23 '16 at 21:43

5 How did your alternative solutions not work? I'd expect either a raw string, or a string with / 's instead of \"'s to work just fine. – Blckknight May 24 '16 at 3:50

when I use double backslashes the program says that the file I want to open doesn't exists. – Miesje May 24 '16 at 10:19

Possible duplicate of ["Unicode Error "unicodeescape" codec can't decode bytes... Cannot open text files in Python 3](#) – pppery Sep 16 at 21:38

## 9 Answers

This error occurs because you are using a normal string as a path. You can use one of the following solutions to fix your problem

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2:

```
pandas.read_csv("C:/Users/DeePak/Desktop/myac.csv")
```

3:

```
pandas.read_csv("C:\\Users\\DeePak\\Desktop\\myac.csv")
```

edited Jan 10 '18 at 12:17



Tshilidzi Mudau

3,532 2 25 35

answered Sep 2 '17 at 6:27



DeePak M. Birajdar

1,821 1 5 2

3 I like the 2nd option, it makes path portable across Windows and Linux. Thanks for Python's shielding the peculiarity of Windows. – [Yu Shen](#) Apr 24 '18 at 16:15

Thanks man. The first answer solved my problem. All I did was add the r to make my string raw. – [Samuel Nde](#) Aug 26 '18 at 7:23

In my case only one \ before the first \ worked: C:\\Users\\DeePak\\Desktop... – [Feri](#) Aug 26 '18 at 11:54

this seems to be an issue when the file path is C, using other letters won't give issues when using the windows style "\" – [xgg](#) Nov 20 '18 at 15:29



The first backslash in your string is being interpreted as a special character, in fact because it's followed by a "U" it's being interpreted as the start of a unicode code point.

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To fix this you need to escape the backslashes in the string. I don't know Python specifically but I'd guess you do it by doubling the backslashes:

```
data =
open("C:\\Users\\miche\\Documents\\school\\jaar2\\MIK\\2.6\\vektis_agb_zorgverlener")
```

answered May 24 '16 at 1:15



thomasrutter

94.2k 22 131 153

when I use double backslashes the program says that the file I want to open doesn't exist. – [Miesje](#) May 24 '16 at 9:27

1 That sounds promising as it means it now considers the string to be valid – [thomasrutter](#) May 24 '16 at 11:49

Right. So next problem is, that file path doesn't exist. Have you omitted a file extension, eg vektis\_agb\_zorgverlener.txt ? Windows Explorer will hide file extensions from you by default because it's stupid; you can [fix it](#) though. – [bobince](#) May 25 '16 at 7:02

data = open(r"C:\Users\miche\Documents\school\jaar2\MIK\2.6\vektis\_agb\_zorgverlener")

edited Feb 17 '17 at 21:30



Dartmouth

913 2 15 21

answered Feb 17 '17 at 18:35



Mohit Solanki

1,322 6 15

Try writing the file path as "C:\\Users\\miche\\Documents\\school\\jaar2\\MIK\\2.6\\vektis\_agb\_zorgverlener" i.e with double backslash after the drive as opposed to

"C:\Users\miche\Documents\school\jaar2\MIK\2.6\vektis\_agb\_zorgverlener"

answered May 18 '18 at 22:29



Ibrahim Isa

191 1 3

1 Thanks. It worked! – [sandeep.ganage](#) Sep 17 at 11:33

it works ! could you please tell why the double slash after the drive works? – [ayat ullah sony](#) Sep 27 at 9:42

As per [String literals](#):

String literals can be enclosed within *single quotes* (i.e. `'...'`) or *double quotes* (i.e. `"..."`). They can also be enclosed in matching groups of three single or double quotes (these are generally referred to as triple-quoted strings).

The backslash character (i.e. `\`) is used to escape characters which otherwise will have a special meaning, such as newline, backslash itself, or the quote character. String literals may optionally be prefixed with a letter `r` or `R`. Such strings are called **raw strings** and use different rules for backslash escape sequences.

In *triple-quoted strings*, *unescaped newlines* and *quotes* are allowed, except that the *three unescaped quotes* in a row terminate the string.

Unless an `r` or `R` prefix is present, escape sequences in strings are interpreted according to rules similar to those used by Standard C.

So ideally you need to replace the line:

data = open("C:\Users\miche\Documents\school\jaar2\MIK\2.6\vektis\_agb\_zorgverlener")

To any one of the following characters:

- Using *raw* prefix and *single quotes* (i.e. `'...'`):

```
data = open(r"C:\Users\miche\Documents\school\jaar2\MIK\2.6\vektis_agb_zorgverlener")
```

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- Using *double quotes* (i.e. "..." ) and forwardslash character (i.e. / ):

answered Oct 22 '18 at 18:17



I don't understand why you are distinguishing between single and double quotes here? Python processes them identically. – [snakecharmerb](#) Apr 28 at 14:26

10

answered Feb 27 at 5:06



4

answered Dec 12 '17 at 14:26



3

answered Mar 20 '18 at 10:14



4/5



0

The double \ should work for Windows, but you still need to take care of the folders you mention in your path. All of them (except the filename) must exist. otherwise you will get an error.

answered Aug 15 '17 at 13:45



G4W

8 6



**protected** by [Community](#) ♦ Apr 11 '18 at 15:32

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