

Getting Started with Python

Installing Python



- Downloading and installing **Anaconda** on your PC is a good place to start. The [Anaconda Individual Edition](#) is open source and free of charge.
- Anaconda comes with JupyterLab and [Jupyter Notebook](#). The latter is convenient because it allows you to run segments of your code separately and immediately visualise or retrieve outputs in your Internet browser window.
 - Files with extension **.ipynb** are Jupyter Notebook files. A Jupyter Notebook is usually opened by typing **jupyter notebook** in your command prompt window. If your PC has multiple drives and you want to open Jupyter Notebook on a specific drive, please navigate to that drive in the command prompt window (e.g. by typing D: and Enter) before launching the Notebook.
- If you are going to write more complex Python code or scripts, you may also want to download [Visual Studio Code](#) (VS Code) or [PyCharm](#). You can create and run **.py** files in PyCharm and in VS Code. The latter also supports Jupyter Notebook if you add Jupyter and Python extensions. Both also integrate with [GitHub Copilot](#) which can be really useful for AI-assisted coding.
- Anaconda comes with a large number of pre-installed packages. Information on additional packages can be found on the [Python Package Index](#) (PyPi). More information on how to install packages can be found [here](#) although a simple **pip install <package name>** in your command prompt window is probably all you need.

Python for Beginners

- There are lots of resources for learning Python online, many of them fully or partially free. The selection below is by no means exhaustive.
- [Codecademy](#) has many free Python courses. [Learn Python 3](#) is a good starting point for beginners.
- Training websites such as **Udemy** have many [free Python courses](#).
- There are also many **phone apps** available, e.g. **Python 3 Tutorials**.
- **Youtube** has many free tutorials:
 - [Python Tutorial for Absolute Beginners #1 - What Are Variables?](#)
 - [Python for Beginners - Learn Python in 1 Hour](#)
 - [Learn Python - Full Course for Beginners](#)
- For additional references to courses: [15 Free Courses to Learn Python](#).
- There are also [fee-based courses](#) available which give you a certificate upon completion. However, given the extent of free material available, you should carefully consider the pros and cons of paying for a course.

Python Projects

- There is no better alternative to learning Python to working on specific projects.
- You can create your own projects based on publicly available data (e.g. from [Yahoo Finance](#), [Quandl](#)) or alternatively search for interesting [Kaggle Competitions](#) that can be done in Python:
 - The [Titanic competition](#) is a popular application of machine learning, for example.
- If you get stuck on your project, ask the GitHub Copilot for help or search [Stackoverflow](#) and you'll probably find your question answered in at least five different ways!