

dictionaries

November 11, 2025

A dictionary is a collection of unordered, modifiable(mutable) paired (key: value) data type.

Creating a Dictionary

To create a dictionary we use curly brackets, {} or the dict() built-in function.

```
[9]: # syntax
empty_dict = {}
# Dictionary with data values
dct = {'key1':'value1', 'key2':'value2', 'key3':'value3', 'key4':'value4'}
```

Example:

```
[14]: person = {
    'first_name':'Abc',
    'last_name':'def',
    'age':250,
    'country':'Finland',
    'is_marred':True,
    'skills':['JavaScript', 'React', 'Node', 'MongoDB', 'Python'],
    'address':{
        'street':'Space street',
        'zipcode':'02210'
    }
}
```

The dictionary above shows that a value could be any data types:string, boolean, list, tuple, set or a dictionary.

Dictionary Length

It checks the number of 'key: value' pairs in the dictionary.

```
[21]: # syntax
dct = {'key1':'value1', 'key2':'value2', 'key3':'value3', 'key4':'value4'}
print(len(dct)) # 4
```

4

Example:

```
[26]: person = {
    'first_name': 'Abc',
    'last_name': 'def',
    'age': 250,
    'country': 'Finland',
    'is_married': True,
    'skills': ['JavaScript', 'React', 'Node', 'MongoDB', 'Python'],
    'address': {
        'street': 'Space street',
        'zipcode': '02210'
    }
}
print(len(person)) # 7
```

7

Accessing Dictionary Items

We can access Dictionary items by referring to its key name.

```
[34]: # syntax
dct = {'key1': 'value1', 'key2': 'value2', 'key3': 'value3', 'key4': 'value4'}
print(dct['key1']) # value1
print(dct['key4']) # value4
```

value1

value4

Example:

```
[50]: person = {
    'first_name': 'Ali',
    'last_name': 'def',
    'age': 250,
    'country': 'Finland',
    'is_married': True,
    'skills': ['JavaScript', 'React', 'Node', 'MongoDB', 'Python'],
    'address': {
        'street': 'Space street',
        'zipcode': '02210'
    }
}
print(person['first_name']) # Ali
print(person['country'])    # def
print(person['skills'])      # ['JavaScript', 'React', 'Node', 'MongoDB', 'Python']
print(person['skills'][0])   # JavaScript
print(person['address']['street']) # Space street
print(person['city'])         # Error
```

```
Ali
Finland
['JavaScript', 'React', 'Node', 'MongoDB', 'Python']
JavaScript
Space street
```

```
-----
KeyError                                Traceback (most recent call last)
Cell In[50], line 18
    16 print(person['skills'][0]) # JavaScript
    17 print(person['address']['street']) # Space street
--> 18 print(person['city'])

KeyError: 'city'
```

Accessing an item by key name raises an error if the key does not exist. To avoid this error first we have to check if a key exist or we can use the **get method**. The get method returns None, which is a NoneType object data type, if the key does not exist.

```
[52]: person = {
        'first_name': 'Ali',
        'last_name': 'def',
        'age': 250,
        'country': 'Finland',
        'is_married': True,
        'skills': ['JavaScript', 'React', 'Node', 'MongoDB', 'Python'],
        'address': {
            'street': 'Space street',
            'zipcode': '02210'
        }
    }

print(person.get('first_name')) # Ali
print(person.get('country'))    # def
print(person.get('skills'))      # ['HTML', 'CSS', 'JavaScript', 'React', 'Node',
    ↪ 'MongoDB', 'Python']
print(person.get('city'))        # None
```

```
Ali
Finland
['JavaScript', 'React', 'Node', 'MongoDB', 'Python']
None
```

Adding Items to a Dictionary

We can add new key and value pairs to a dictionary

```
[59]: # syntax
dct = {'key1': 'value1', 'key2': 'value2', 'key3': 'value3', 'key4': 'value4'}
```

```
dct['key5'] = 'value5'
```

Example:

```
[64]: person = {
        'first_name': 'Ali',
        'last_name': 'def',
        'age': 250,
        'country': 'Finland',
        'is_married': True,
        'skills': ['JavaScript', 'React', 'Node', 'MongoDB', 'Python'],
        'address': {
            'street': 'Space street',
            'zipcode': '02210'
        }
    }
    person['job_title'] = 'Instructor'
    person['skills'].append('HTML')
    print(person)
```

```
{'first_name': 'Ali', 'last_name': 'def', 'age': 250, 'country': 'Finland',
'is_married': True, 'skills': ['JavaScript', 'React', 'Node', 'MongoDB',
'Python', 'HTML'], 'address': {'street': 'Space street', 'zipcode': '02210'},
'job_title': 'Instructor'}
```

Modifying Items in a Dictionary

We can modify items in a dictionary

```
[70]: # syntax
dct = {'key1': 'value1', 'key2': 'value2', 'key3': 'value3', 'key4': 'value4'}
dct['key1'] = 'value-one'
```

Example:

```
[79]: person = {
        'first_name': 'ali',
        'last_name': 'def',
        'age': 250,
        'country': 'Finland',
        'is_married': True,
        'skills': ['JavaScript', 'React', 'Node', 'MongoDB', 'Python'],
        'address': {
            'street': 'Space street',
            'zipcode': '02210'
        }
    }
    person['first_name'] = 'Eyob'
    person['age'] = 252
    print(person)
```

```
{'first_name': 'Eyob', 'last_name': 'def', 'age': 252, 'country': 'Finland',
'is_marred': True, 'skills': ['JavaScript', 'React', 'Node', 'MongoDB',
'Python'], 'address': {'street': 'Space street', 'zipcode': '02210'}}
```

Checking Keys in a Dictionary

We use the in operator to check if a key exist in a dictionary

```
[85]: # syntax
dct = {'key1': 'value1', 'key2': 'value2', 'key3': 'value3', 'key4': 'value4'}
print('key2' in dct) # True
print('key5' in dct) # False
```

True

False

Removing Key and Value Pairs from a Dictionary

- pop(key): removes the item with the specified key name:
- popitem(): removes the last item
- del: removes an item with specified key name

```
[95]: # syntax
dct = {'key1': 'value1', 'key2': 'value2', 'key3': 'value3', 'key4': 'value4'}
dct.pop('key1') # removes key1 item
dct = {'key1': 'value1', 'key2': 'value2', 'key3': 'value3', 'key4': 'value4'}
dct.popitem() # removes the last item
del dct['key2'] # removes key2 item
```

Example:

```
[100]: person = {
    'first_name': 'Asabeneh',
    'last_name': 'Yetayeh',
    'age': 250,
    'country': 'Finland',
    'is_marred': True,
    'skills': ['JavaScript', 'React', 'Node', 'MongoDB', 'Python'],
    'address': {
        'street': 'Space street',
        'zipcode': '02210'
    }
}
person.pop('first_name') # Removes the firstname item
person.popitem() # Removes the address item
del person['is_marred'] # Removes the is_married item\
```

```
[102]: print(person)
```

```
{'last_name': 'Yetayeh', 'age': 250, 'country': 'Finland', 'skills':
['JavaScript', 'React', 'Node', 'MongoDB', 'Python']}
```

Changing Dictionary to a List of Items

The `items()` method changes dictionary to a list of tuples.

```
[108]: # syntax
dct = {'key1': 'value1', 'key2': 'value2', 'key3': 'value3', 'key4': 'value4'}
print(dct.items()) # dict_items([('key1', 'value1'), ('key2', 'value2'), ('key3', 'value3'), ('key4', 'value4')])

dict_items([('key1', 'value1'), ('key2', 'value2'), ('key3', 'value3'), ('key4', 'value4')])
```

Clearing a Dictionary

If we don't want the items in a dictionary we can clear them using `clear()` method

```
[114]: # syntax
dct = {'key1': 'value1', 'key2': 'value2', 'key3': 'value3', 'key4': 'value4'}
print(dct.clear()) # None
```

None

Deleting a Dictionary

If we do not use the dictionary we can delete it completely

```
[120]: # syntax
dct = {'key1': 'value1', 'key2': 'value2', 'key3': 'value3', 'key4': 'value4'}
del dct
```

Getting Dictionary Keys as a List

The `keys()` method gives us all the keys of a dictionary as a list.

```
[126]: # syntax
dct = {'key1': 'value1', 'key2': 'value2', 'key3': 'value3', 'key4': 'value4'}
keys = dct.keys()
print(keys) # dict_keys(['key1', 'key2', 'key3', 'key4'])
```

`dict_keys(['key1', 'key2', 'key3', 'key4'])`

Getting Dictionary Values as a List

The `values()` method gives us all the values of a dictionary as a list.

```
[130]: # syntax
dct = {'key1': 'value1', 'key2': 'value2', 'key3': 'value3', 'key4': 'value4'}
values = dct.values()
print(values) # dict_values(['value1', 'value2', 'value3', 'value4'])
```

`dict_values(['value1', 'value2', 'value3', 'value4'])`

Exercise

- Create an empty dictionary called `dog`

- Add name, color, breed, legs, age to the dog dictionary
- Create a student dictionary and add first_name, last_name, gender, age, marital status, skills, country, city and address as keys for the dictionary
- Get the length of the student dictionary
- Get the length of the student dictionary
- Get the length of the student dictionaryGet the length of the student dictionary
- Get the value of skills and check the data type, it should be a list
- Modify the skills values by adding one or two skills
- Get the dictionary keys as a list
- Get the dictionary values as a list
- Change the dictionary to a list of tuples using items() method
- Delete one of the items in the dictionary
- Delete one of the dictionaries

[]: