zip's keyword argument strict

Set `strict=True` if you expect the arguments to have the same length. `zip` will error if they do not.

```
firsts = ["Luke", "Darth", "Obi-Wan"]
lasts = ["Skywalker", "Vader"]
for first_name, last_name in zip(firsts, lasts, strict=True):
    print(f"{first_name} {last_name}")
# Luke Skywalker
# Darth Vader

Traceback (most recent call last):
  File "<python-input-2>", line 1, in <module>
    for first_name, last_name in zip(firsts, lasts, strict=True):
                                 ~~~^^^^^^^^^^^^^^^^^^^^^^^^^^^^^
ValueError: zip() argument 2 is shorter than argument 1
```

The error only happens when `zip` reaches the end of one, but not all, of the arguments.

Rodrigo 🐍🚀
🦋 @mathspp.com

Case-insensitive string comparisons

When comparing strings in a case-insensitive manner, use the method `casefold`, which is designed specifically for this task.
You need `casefold` because some characters across different languages are... kinda funky!

This string is lowercase...
But converting to upper and back to lowercase doesn't roundtrip!

```
print("straße".lower())
# straße

print("straße".upper().lower())
# strasse

print("STRASSE".casefold() == "straße".casefold())
# True

print("straße".casefold())
# strasse
```

💡 The methods `lower/upper` can be used if you are ***sure*** you're only working with ASCII.

Rodrigo 🐍🚀
🦋 @mathspp.com

Type unions with pipe in `isinstance`

Types can be combined with the pipe operator `|` to create a type union.

This works, for example, inside `isinstance`, to make it more convenient to check if a value has one of 2+ types.

This checks if `x` is an `int` OR a `float` OR a `complex` number.

```python
def is_number(x):
    return isinstance(x, int | float | complex)

print(is_number(34))  # True
print(is_number("hey"))  # False
```

💡 Only available in Python 3.10+.

Rodrigo 🐍🚀
🦋 @mathspp.com

Parsing integers from different bases

The built-in `int` can parse integers from any base from binary to base 36 (including octal, decimal, and hexadecimal).

`0` tells int to interpret the string as a string literal (which uses the prefix to guess the base).

```
print(int("13"))  # 13
print(int("101", 2))  # 5
print(int("ff", 16))  # 255

print(int("0b101", 0))  # 5
print(int("0xff", 0))  # 255
```

Rodrigo 🐍🚀
🦋 @mathspp.com

First element that satisfies a condition

Need the first element of an iterable that satisfies some condition?
Use a generator expression and the built-in `next`.

The built-in `next` accepts a fallback to return if it finds nothing. If you don't specify the fallback, you get a `StopIteration` exception instead.

```
important_numbers = [42, 73, 10, 16, 0]
print(
    next(n for n in important_numbers if n % 2)
)  # 73

important_numbers = [42, 10, 16, 0]
print(next(
    (n for n in important_numbers if n % 2),
    "?!",
))  # ?!
```

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@mathspp.com

Last element that satisfies a condition

Need the last element of an iterable that satisfies some condition?
Use a `deque` from the module `collections`.

```
from collections import deque

important_numbers = [42, 73, 10, 16, 0]
print(  # Last even number.
    deque(
        (n for n in important_numbers if n % 2 == 0),
        maxlen=1,
    )
).pop()  # 0

large = (n for n in important_numbers if n > 100)
if (d := deque(large, maxlen=1)):
    print(d.pop())
else:
    print("No large numbers present!")
```

If there is no element in the iterable that satisfies the condition, the `deque` will be empty and you can't pop from it (you get an `IndexError`).

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@mathspp.com

Unique elements from a list

```python
nums = [42, 73, 42, 42, 0, 73, 10, 10, 16]
for unique_num in set(nums):
    print(unique_num, end=" ")
# 0 73 42 10 16
```

You can get the unique elements of a list (or of another iterable) with the built-in set type. The result is in an arbitrary order.

If you need to preserve the original order, you can use `dict.fromkeys` instead.

```python
nums = [42, 73, 42, 42, 0, 73, 10, 10, 16]
for unique_num in dict.fromkeys(nums):
    print(unique_num, end=" ")
# 42 73 0 10 16
```

💡 Both examples only work with hashable

Rodrigo 🐍🚀
🦋 @mathspp.com

How to schedule program cleanup

Use the function `register` from the module `atexit` to schedule a function to run at program exit.

Your cleanup function will likely clear resources you're using, like database connections.

```python
import atexit

def cleanup():
    """Clean up program resources."""
    db.close_connection()
    print("Cleaned up!")

atexit.register(cleanup)
```

Registered functions run even if the program terminates with an exception.

💡 `register` can be used as a decorator.

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@mathspp.com

map with multiple arguments

The built-in `map` can accept 2+ iterable arguments if the function it's mapping takes 2+ arguments.

```
bases = [2, 3, 4, 2, 3, 4]
exps = [2, 2, 2, 3, 3, 3]

for num in map(pow, bases, exps):
    print(num, end=" ")
# 4 9 16 8 27 64
```

This makes `map` a viable alternative to list comprehensions/generator expressions in some situations.

```
nums = (b ** exp for b, exp in zip(bases, exps))
# vs
nums = map(pow, bases, exps)
```

💡 In Python 3.14, `map` gets a keyword argument `strict`, like `zip`'s.

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🦋 @mathspp.com

Remove punctuation from a string

The string method `translate` lets you replace (or delete) multiple characters of a string in one go. (Kind of like multiple calls to the method `replace`.)

```
import string

s = "Hello, world!"
print(s.translate(str.maketrans("", "", string.punctuation)))
# Hello world
```

The string method `translate` expects a "translation table", which we build with the auxiliary class method `maketrans`. The third argument is a string of characters we want to delete.

```
'!"#$%&\'()*+,-./:;<=>?@[\\]^_`{|}~'
```

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🦋 @mathspp.com

Count characters in a file

Use `chain`, from the module `itertools`, to iterate over the characters of a file. Used with `Counter`, from the module `collections`, lets you count the characters in a file.

```python
from collections import Counter
from itertools import chain

with open("/Users/rodrigogs/.zshrc") as f:
    chars = Counter(chain.from_iterable(f))

print(chars.most_common(5))
# [(' ', 583), ('e', 314), ('t', 273), ('o', 264), ('n', 216)]
```

`f` lets you iterate over the lines of the file, so `chain.from_iterable(f)` lets you iterate over the characters in each line of the file in turn.

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🦋 @mathspp.com

Run-length encoding

Use `groupby`, from the module `itertools`, to group consecutive equal elements into groups.
When used right, `groupby` has many useful use cases.

```python
from itertools import groupby

def run_length_encoding(iterable):
    for val, group in groupby(iterable):
        yield val, len(list(group))


print(list(run_length_encoding("AAAB0AA")))
# [('A', 3), ('B', 1), ('0', 1), ('A', 2)]
```

If the groups are very long, this way of computing the length of the group might be a waste of memory.

💡 `groupby` also accepts a keyword argument `key`, if you want to apply a transformation to the values before grouping.
E.g., using `key=str.casefold` would group equal characters regardless of their casing.

Rodrigo 🐍🚀
🦋 @mathspp.com

String prefixes and suffixes

Strings have a method `startswith` to check if a string has a certain prefix and a method `removeprefix` (3.9+) to remove the given prefix from the string.

```python
string = "Hello, world!"

print(string.startswith("Hello"))
# True
print(string.removeprefix("Hello"))
# ', world!'
```

```python
string = "Hello, world!"

print(string.startswith("Hey"))
# False
print(string.removeprefix("Hey"))
# 'Hello, world!'
```

If the prefix isn't there, `removeprefix` leaves the string unchanged.

💡 Use these methods instead of slicing for readability.

💡💡 Use `endswith` and `removesuffix` to work with suffixes.

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@mathspp.com

`match` multiple options

In structural pattern matching (`match` statement, Python 3.10+) you can use the vertical bar to separate multiple options.

```
def walk(direction):
    match direction:
        case NORTH:
            return (0, -1)
        case UP:
            return (0, -1)
        ...
```

```
def walk(direction):
    match direction:
        case NORTH | UP:
            return (0, -1)
        ...
```

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@mathspp.com

Round to “pretty” whole numbers

The built-in `round` accepts negative integers as its argument. A negative integer rounds to a power of 10, which tends to be a “nice”/“pretty” whole number.

```
price = 1374
hundreds = round(price, -2)

print(
    f"It cost roughly {hundreds} dollars."
)
# It cost roughly 1400 dollars.
```

The integer without the sign gives the number of 0s.

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@mathspp.com

type statements

Python 3.12 introduced type statements: a convenient way of creating type aliases that can also be made generic.

```python
from typing import TypeAlias, TypeVar

T = TypeVar("T")

Pair: TypeAlias = tuple[T, T]
```

```python
type Pair[T] = tuple[T, T]
```

The type variable for the generic doesn't need to be defined separately.

```python
x: Pair[int] = (3, 4)
```

✅ Both versions type-check correctly.

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@mathspp.com

Create context managers with `contextlib.contextmanager`

Use `contextlib.contextmanager` as a decorator to turn a generator into a context manager.

```python
from contextlib import contextmanager

@contextmanager
def my_open(path, mode):
    try:
        file = open(path, mode)
        yield file
    finally:
        file.close()
```

What you yield (if anything) can be captured by the "`as ...`"

```python
with my_open(".zshrc", "r") as f:
    print(len(list(f)))  # 129
```

Regardless of whether there's an error or not, the file will be closed.

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Immutable dictionary

You can use `MappingProxyType` to create an immutable / read-only dictionary.

```python
from types import MappingProxyType

my_dict = MappingProxyType(
    {
        "url": "mathspp.com",
        "email": "rodrigo@mathspp.com",
    }
)
```

Access values with keys, as usual.

```python
print(my_dict["url"])
# mathspp.com

# TypeErrors:
my_dict["name"] = "Rodrigo"
my_dict["url"] = ""
```

Modifying values or creating new key/value pairs raises a `TypeError`.

💡 Don't keep references to the underlying dictionary, because that's still mutable...

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self-debugging f-strings

Include an equals sign = at the end of a formatted value and the f-string will print the expression you are formatting (in code) together with its value.

```
name = "RoDrIgO"
print(f"Method title: {name.title() = }")

# Method title: name.title() = 'Rodrigo'
```

Code

Value

💡 The spaces around the equal sign aren't necessary but the result looks better with those.

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Dunder attribute `__file__`

In a Python file, the dunder attribute `__file__` gives you the full path of your file.

tool.py

```python
print(__file__)
# /Users/rodrigogs/Documents/tmp/tool.py
```

Useful, for example, to locate resources that are "next" to your script.

```python
from pathlib import Path

RESOURCES = (Path(__file__).parent / "res").resolve()
```

💡 __file__ isn't *always* available. For example, in Jupyter notebooks.

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Current date and time

The module `datetime` has two functions to produce a `date` object with the current date and a `datetime` object with the current date and time.

```python
import datetime as dt

today = dt.date.today()
print(f"{today:%c}")
# Tue Apr  1 00:00:00 2025

now = dt.datetime.now()
print(f"{now:%c}")
# Tue Apr  1 13:43:44 2025
```

The format specifier %c displays the date (and time) in a locale-appropriate way.

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Set operations with `dict.keys()`

Dictionary `keys` objects support set operations.

```python
en_pt = {
    "yellow": "amarelo",
    "red": "vermelho",
}

en_fr = {
    "red": "rouge",
    "blue": "bleu",
}
```

```python
# Keys in both:
print(en_pt.keys() & en_fr.keys())
# {'red'}

# Keys in en_pt but not in en_fr:
print(en_pt.keys() - en_fr.keys())
# {'yellow'}

# Keys in either:
print(en_pt.keys() | en_fr.keys())
# {'red', 'blue', 'yellow'}
```

Some operations supported include difference, union, and intersection.

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Chain multiple dictionaries

You can use `ChainMap` from the module `collections` to create a unified view over a hierarchy of dictionaries.

```
default = {
    "user": "user",
    "theme": "light",
    "lan": "en",
}
```

```
local = {

    "theme": "dark",

}
```

```
user = {
    "user": "rodrigo",


}
```

```
from collections import ChainMap

settings = ChainMap(user, local, default)

print(settings["user"])  # rodrigo
print(settings["theme"])  # dark
print(settings["lan"])  # en
```

In this example, we can read settings from the user, from the local installation, or the defaults. Each level can be edited individually.

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Longest word in a string

You can find the longest word in a string by using the built-in `max` and by specifying the built-in `len` as the key.

```
s = "These are just some sensational words"

print(max(s.split(), key=len))
# sensational
```

Using the built-in `min` would produce the shortest word instead (are) and using the built-in `sorted` would order the words by length.

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Dynamic attribute manipulation

The built-ins `getattr`, `setattr`, and `delattr`, can be used to manipulate attributes dynamically.
You'll rarely use these, but when you need them, they are very powerful.

```python
class Colour:
    pass

c = Colour()

setattr(c, "r", 255)
setattr(c, "g", 125)
setattr(c, "b", 0)

print(c.g)  # 125
```

```python
attr = "g"
print(getattr(c, attr))  # 125

print(getattr(c, "x", "heh"))  # heh

delattr(c, "g")
print(c.g)  # AttributeError
```

Default value.

The first two arguments are the object and the name of its attribute being manipulated.

⚠️ This shows how the functions work but not necessarily how you'd use them in “real life”.

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Notify parent class when subclassing

The class method `__init_subclass__` can be used to notify a class when it's subclassed. Effective for some metaprogramming without metaclasses.

```
class ParentCls:
    def __init_subclass__(cls, **kwargs):
        print(f"{cls} created with {kwargs = }")
```

The new subclass is the `cls` passed in.

```
class ChildCls(ParentCls, example=True):
    pass

# <class '__main__.ChildCls'> created
# with kwargs = {'example': True}
```

The keyword arguments given to the new class are passed to `__init_subclass__` as well.

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Enforce keyword args for options

Use a single asterisk * between commas to force all following arguments to be keyword only.
Particularly helpful for options or “config-like” arguments.

```python
def get_temperature(room, *, unit="celsius"):
    pass

get_temperature("bedroom", "fahrenheit")  # ⚠️ TypeError

get_temperature("bedroom", unit="fahrenheit")  # ✅
```

The argument `unit` must be passed as a keyword argument.

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Flag enumerations

The module `enum` contains a `Flag` type that you can use for enumerations that should support the Boolean operations & (AND), | (OR), ^ (XOR), and ~ (INVERT).

```
from enum import Flag, auto
class Color(Flag):
    RED = auto()
    GREEN = auto()
    BLUE = auto()

purple = Color.RED | Color.BLUE

print(Color.GREEN in purple)  # False
print(list(purple))
# [<Color.RED: 1>, <Color.BLUE: 4>]
```

Purple is red with blue.

Is the flag GREEN set?

What flags is `purple` composed of? (Python 3.11+)

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Use `Literal` for options

Use the type `Literal` from the module `typing` when a function accepts a small number of specific values that represent configurations or options.

```python
def get_temperature(city: str, unit: str) -> float: ...
```

```python
from typing import Literal

def get_temperature(
    city: str,
    unit: Literal["celsius", "fahrenheit"],
) -> float:
    ...

print(get_temperature("Lisbon", "celsius"))  # 18.0
print(get_temperature("Lisbon", "fahrenheit"))  # 64.4
```

`Literal` side-benefit: documents the valid values.

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Return value of a generator

When a generator is finished, you can return an arbitrary value (like a normal function).

```python
def my_generator_function():
    yield 1
    yield 2
    return 73
```

```python
gen = my_generator_function()
print(next(gen), next(gen))  # 1 2
try:
    next(gen)
except StopIteration as err:
    print(err.value)  # 73
```

The return value of a generator is attached to the exception `StopIteration` it raises when it's finished.

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Enumerations of string values

When creating various string values, for example for function options or configurations, you can group them under a string enumeration `StrEnum` from the module `enum`.

```python
from enum import StrEnum

class Direction(StrEnum):
    UP = "UP"
    DOWN = "DOWN"
```

```python
def move(direction: Direction) -> None:
    if direction == Direction.UP:
        print("Going up.")
    elif direction == Direction.DOWN:
        print("Going down.")
    else:
        raise ValueError()


move(Direction.UP)  # Going up.
move("DOWN")  # Going down. (Doesn't type-check.)
```

If needed, you can use the string directly at runtime.
(But it won't pass type checking.)

⚠️ Python 3.11+ only.

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Most recently-modified file

Use the built-in `max` and a custom key function to find the most recently modified file in a folder in a single line of code.

```python
from pathlib import Path

folder = Path("/path/to/folder")
most_recent = max(folder.iterdir(), key=lambda p: p.stat().st_mtime)
print(most_recent)  # /path/to/folder/some_file.txt
```

`.stat()` provides access to file statistics and `st_mtime` is the modified time.

```python
most_recent = max(
    (p for p in folder.iterdir() if p.is_file()),
    key=lambda p: p.stat().st_mtime,
)
```

Files only (no directories).

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Normalise strings by removing accents

You can use the built-in module `unicodedata` to write a function that removes accents from strings, normalising all characters into the ASCII range.

```python
import unicodedata

def remove_accents(string):
    return  "".join(
        char for char in unicodedata.normalize("NFD", string)
        if unicodedata.category(char) != "Mn"
    )

print(remove_accents("Rodrigo Girão Serrão"))  # Rodrigo Girao Serrao
print(remove_accents("äáàãñç"))  # aaaanc
```

Separates the accents from the letters.

```python
list(unicodedata.normalize("NFD", "äáàãñç"))
# ['a', '̈', 'a', '́', 'a', '̀', 'a', '̃', 'n', '̃', 'c', '̧']
```

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Transpose a list of lists

The built-in `zip` can be used with the splat operator `*` to transpose a list of lists.

```
persons = [["Han", "Solo"], ["Obi-Wan", "Kenobi"], ["Darth", "Vader"]]

firsts, lasts = zip(*persons)
print(firsts)
# ('Han', 'Obi-Wan', 'Darth')
print(lasts)
# ('Solo', 'Kenobi', 'Vader')
```

You can also look at this operation as “undoing” what a `zip` does (you can get `firsts` and `lasts` from `persons` and vice-versa).

```
print(
    list(zip(firsts, lasts)) == persons
)  # True
```

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Inline lists and tuples

The splat operator * can be used to inline lists, tuples, and other iterables.

```
firsts = ("Han", "Obi-Wan", "Darth")

def more_firsts():
    yield "Frodo"
    yield "Gandalf"

huge_crossover = [
    "Harry", "Hermione", "Ron",
    *firsts,
    *more_firsts(),
    "Guido",
]
```

```
print(huge_crossover)
# ['Harry', 'Hermione', 'Ron',
#  'Han', 'Obi-Wan', 'Darth',
#  'Frodo', 'Gandalf', 'Guido']
```

The splat operator * “flattens” the iterables as if their values were written out explicitly inside this list.

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Typing iterables instead of lists

If you're accepting an iterable argument, don't type it as a list.
Instead, use `typing.Iterable` or `collections.abc.Iterable`.

```
# ❌
def create_files(files: list[Path]) -> None:
    for file in files:
        ...
```

Using `list[Path]` is too restrictive; all you need is to be able to iterate over `files`.

Python 3.9+

```
from collections.abc import Iterable

def create_files(files: Iterable[Path]) -> None: ...
```

Python 3.8

```
from typing import Iterable

def create_files(files: Iterable[Path]) -> None: ...
```

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Multi-dictionary

You can create a dictionary that maps a single key to multiple values. (Kind of). The easiest way is with `collections.defaultdict` and the built-in `list`.

```
from collections import defaultdict

multidict = defaultdict(list)
```

All keys will map to an empty list by default:

```
print(multidict["SW"])  # []
print(multidict["LotR"])  # []
```

By accessing the key and appending, you map a single key to “multiple” values.

```
multidict["SW"].append("Han Solo")
multidict["SW"].append("R2D2")
print(multidict["SW"])  # ['Han Solo', 'R2D2']
```

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Global enumeration members

```python
from enum import Flag, auto, global_enum

@global_enum
class FilePermissions(Flag):
    READ = auto()
    WRITE = auto()
    EXECUTE = auto()
```

Use the decorator `global_enum` from the module `enum` to automatically export enumeration members to your globals.

```python
BASE_PERMISSIONS = READ | WRITE
```

```python
BASE_PERMISSIONS = FilePermissions.READ | FilePermissions.WRITE
```

You can still access the members through the enumeration class.

(Class decorator; pretty cool, right?)

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Automatic enumeration values

The module enum lets you use auto to automatically assign values to the enumeration members. Works well with flags and string enumerations, too!

```python
from enum import Flag, auto

class Permissions(Flag):
    READ = auto()      # 1
    WRITE = auto()     # 2
    EXECUTE = auto()   # 4

print(repr(Permissions.EXECUTE))
# <Permissions.EXECUTE: 4>
```

For flags, values are consecutive powers of 2.

```python
from enum import StrEnum, auto

class Direction(StrEnum):
    NORTH = auto()  # north
    SOUTH = auto()  # south
    ...

print(repr(Direction.NORTH))
# <Direction.NORTH: 'north'>
```

For string enumerations, values are the lowercase member name.

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OS-agnostic line splitting

Strings have a method `splitlines` that you should use when splitting a string on newlines. Don't use .split("\n") because of carriage returns!

```
windows_string = WindowsPath("some_file.txt").read_text()
```

Lines on Windows can be terminated with `\r\n` instead of just `\n`:

```
print(windows_string.split("\n"))
# ['This is a\r',
#  'multiline string\r',
#  'from a Windows machine.']
```

```
print(windows_string.splitlines())
# ['This is a',
#  'multiline string',
#  'from a Windows machine.']
```

💡 use `.splitlines(keepends=True)` to preserve the line-ending characters.

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Longest and shortest

The built-ins `max`/`min`, the built-in `len`, and `functools.partial`, can be put together to create the custom functions `longest` and `shortest`.

```
from functools import partial

longest = partial(max, key=len)
shortest = partial(min, key=len)

words = "This is a truly extraordinary sentence".split()
print(longest(words))  # extraordinary
print(shortest(words))  # a
```

`partial` lets you create different functions by combining simple functions you already know.

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Bounded cache

Use `functools.lru_cache` to create a memory-bounded cache.
The argument specifies how many values to cache.

```python
from functools import lru_cache

@lru_cache(1024)
def function_to_cache(*args): ...

# Some function calls...

print(function_to_cache.cache_info().currsize)  # 35
print(function_to_cache.cache_info())
# CacheInfo(hits=12, misses=35, maxsize=1024, currsize=35)
```

Cache up to 1024 values.

Access cache stats through `.cache_info` on the cached function.

💡 When the cache is full, the Least-Recently Used values (LRU) are evicted to make room for the new ones.

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Read files in chunks

The built-in `iter` has the superpower of turning functions into iterables. `iter(f, value)` creates an iterator that calls `f` until it returns the given value.

In this example, iter creates an iterable that reads the file in chunks of 16 characters.

```python
from functools import partial

with open("bee-movie-script.txt", "r") as f:
    chunk_reader = iter(partial(f.read, 16), "")
    for chunk in chunk_reader:
        print(chunk)

"""
According to all
 known laws of a
viation, there i
s no way a bee s
hould be able to
...
"""
```

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Format specifier `!r`

Use the format specifier `!r` in f-strings to improve your print-debugging.
This uses a value's `repr`, which is better for debugging.

```python
string = "3"
number = 3

print(f"{string} {number}")  # 3 3
print(f"{string!r} {number!r}")  # '3' 3

from fractions import Fraction

one_third = Fraction(1, 3)
print(f"{one_third}, {one_third!r}")
# 1/3, Fraction(1, 3)
```

Strings and numbers look the same... Unless you use `!r`.

Printing a fraction will pretty-print it. Using `!r`, we can be sure it's a `Fraction` object.

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Counting values

Do you want to count how many values satisfy a given condition?
Use the built-in sum and a generator expression.

1. The generator expression goes over all values you want to consider...

```
sum(predicate(value) for value in iterable)
```

2. The predicate evaluates the condition on each value, returning `True` or `False`.

3. The built-in `sum` accumulates all the Boolean values, effectively counting the number of `True`s.

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The evolution of the dot product

How the idiom to compute the dot product has evolved in Python, using the module `operator`, the built-ins `map` and `zip`, and more.

"Standard" idiom in older versions of Python.

```
# Python <=3.11
sum(map(operator.mul, vec1, vec2))
```

```
# Python 3.12+
from itertools import starmap

sum(starmap(
    operator.mul,
    zip(vec1, vec2, strict=True),
))
```

`strict=True` ensures the vectors have the same length.
`itertools.starmap` gets the multiplication "inside" the pairs produced by `zip`.

```
# Python 3.14+
sum(map(operator.mul, vec1, vec2, strict=True))
```

In 3.14 we go back to the original idiom because `map` now supports `strict=True`.

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Batching API calls

Since Python 3.12, the module `itertools` provides `batched`, that slices the given iterable in batches of the specified size. Use it for batch processing anything, e.g., API calls:

Hit the API once per user... ❌

```
all_user_data = []
for user in users_to_fetch:
    user_data = api.get_user(user)
    all_user_data.append(
        user_data.stuff_you_want
    )
```

Ask for data from 50 users at a time. ✅

```
from itertools import batched

all_user_data = []
for batch in batched(users_to_fetch, 50):
    users_data = api.get_users(batch)
    all_user_data.extend(
        ud.stuff_you_want
        for ud in users_data
    )
```

Fewer API calls is good because:

- much faster
- less rate limiting

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Redact email addresses

You can use f-strings to create the effect of redacted/private data such as phone numbers or email addresses. (The format spec is doing all the work!)

```
def redact_email(email):
    user, _, domain = email.partition("@")
    return f"{user[:2]:*<{len(user)}}@{domain}"
```

Show first two chars.

Align the two chars on the left...

and use *...

to fill the field with the width of the user.

```
print(redact_email("rodrigo@mathspp.com"))
# ro******@mathspp.com
```

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Random choices

Use the functions `random.choices` and `random.sample` to randomly pick elements from a sequence, with and without replacement, respectively.

```python
import random

coin_sides = ["heads", "tails"]

print(random.choices(coin_sides, k=4))
# ['heads', 'tails', 'tails', 'tails']
```

```python
import random

colours = ["red", "green", "blue",
           "black", "white"]
print(random.sample(colours, k=3))
# ['black', 'green', 'blue']
```

k determines how many values to pick.

💡 Don't use the module `random` for security-sensitive randomness. E.g., don't generate passwords with it. Use the module `secrets` instead.

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Dynamic regex replacements

Regex replacements can be computed dynamically, based on the match found. The function `re.sub` accepts a function that accepts the match and returns the replacement.

The function is used instead of a replacement string.

```python
import re

def replace(match):
    return "*" * len(match.group(0))

text = "I know Python, C, C++, JavaScript, and Haskell."

bad_words = r"C(\+\+)?|JavaScript"

print(re.sub(bad_words, replace, text))
# I know Python, *, ***, **********, and Haskell.
```

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String constants

The module string defines many useful constants that you can, and should, use!
These will save you from plenty of easily-avoidable bugs.

```python
import string

print(string.ascii_lowercase)
# abcdefghijklmnopqrstuvwxyz

print(string.digits)
# 0123456789

print(string.punctuation)
# !"#$%&'()*+,-./:;<=>?@[\]^_`{|}~
```

These are just 3 of the many available constants!

💡 Think this is silly? I found +10,000 repos on GitHub with bugs on alphabet strings; avoidable with `string.ascii_lowercase`...

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Case-insensitive regular expressions

Regular expressions can start with the flag `(?i)`, making them case-insensitive.

```python
import re

print(re.match(r"hey", "HeY"))
# None

print(re.match(r"(?i)hey", "HeY"))
# <re.Match object; span=(0, 3), match='HeY'>
```

More convenient than lowercasing the strings to check.

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Module `itertools` categorisation

The 19 iterables from the module itertools can be classified into 5 categories.
This makes it easier to remember what tools you have at hand.

1

```
# Filtering
from itertools import (
    compress,
    dropwhile,
    filterfalse,
    takewhile,
)
```

2

```
# Reshaping
from itertools import (
    batched,
    chain,
    groupby,
    islice,
    pairwise,
)
```

3

```
# Tool-complementing
from itertools import (
    accumulate,    # reduce
    starmap,       # map
    zip_longest,   # zip
)
```

4

```
# Infinite
from itertools import (
    count,
    cycle,
    repeat,
)
```

5

```
# Combinatorial
from itertools import (
    combinations,
    combinations_with_replacement,
    permutations,
    product,
)
```

💡 There's also `tee`, which is not an iterable.

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t-strings for safe string formatting

t-strings (T, not F) are composed of string segments and the interpolated values. The interpolated values must be processed/converted by you, which means you can sanitise them.

```
to_format = "<script>alert('Malicious JS');</script>"
html_page = t"<html>{to_format}</html>"
print(interpolate_html_safe(html_page))
# <html>&lt;script&gt;alert('Malicious JS');&lt;/script&gt;</html>
#       ^^^^     ^^^^                        ^^^^     ^^^^
```

The potentially malicious HTML, that contained a JS script, was escaped.

```
from string.templatelib import Template

def interpolate_html_safe(template: Template) -> str:
    ...  # Processes interpolated values...
```

💡 Python 3.14+ only

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Structural unpacking

Python iterables (lists, tuples, ...) can be unpacked according to their length and nesting.

```
colour_info = ("AliceBlue", (240, 248, 255, 255))
#                           name   red green blue alpha

name, (*rgb, alpha) = colour_info
```

The splat operator `*` can be used at any level of nesting to capture 0 or more values.

Tuples on the left of the assignment capture nesting.

```
print(name)  # AliceBlue
print(rgb)  # [240, 248, 255]
print(alpha)  # 255
```

💡 Structural unpacking also works in `for` loops.

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Ergonomic multiline strings

When writing multiline strings I like to have the """ on their one lines, which adds extra newlines at the beginning and end of the string. Use \ to escape them.

```
string = """
Multiline string.
No escaped newlines
"""

print("> " + string + "!")
```

```
>
Multiline string.
No escaped newlines
!
```

```
string = """\
Multiline string.
First & last newlines escaped\
"""

print("> " + string + "!")
```

Avoid the leading newline.

Avoid the trailing newline.

```
> Multiline string.
First & last newlines escaped!
```

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Underscore in the REPL

In the REPL, the special value _ refers to the result of the most recent non-None expression.

The result is saved in _.

```
>>> 3 ** 3 ** 3
7625597484987
>>> print(_)
7625597484987

>>> _
7625597484987

>>> sum([_, _, -_, -_])
0
>>> _
0
```

The function print returns None, so _ still holds the previous result.

The function sum produces a non-None value, so that updates the value in _.

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Subclassing immutable types

If you need to subclass an immutable type (uncommon, but not unheard of), you will need to override `__new__`, which runs before `__init__`.

Use the value (`4.5`) to create the `float` part.

```
class FloatSubclass(float):
    def __new__(cls, value, *args, **kwargs):
        print("__new__", value, args, kwargs)
        return super().__new__(cls, value)

    def __init__(self, value, *args, **kwargs):
        print("__init__", value, args, kwargs)
        # Do whatever with the args and kwargs

x = FloatSubclass(4.5)
# __new__ 4.5 ('hello',) {'foo': True}
# __init__ 4.5 ('hello',) {'foo': True}
print(x)  # 4.5
```

Subclass-specific customisation typically goes in `__init__`.

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💡 There's more to the story than this, but this is the

Idiomatic sequence slicing

The five sequence slicing patterns below are idioms you must learn so that you can understand the patterns automatically, without thinking.

```
string = "Slicing is easy!"
```

`[:n]` – first n chars.

```
print(slicing[:4])
# Slic
```

`[:-n]` – without last n chars.

```
print(slicing[:-4])
# Slicing is e
```

`[::-1]` – reversed.

```
print(slicing[::-1])
# !ysae si gnicilS
```

Built-in `reversed` is usually preferred.

`[n:]` – after first n chars.

```
print(slicing[4:])
# ing is easy!
```

`[-n:]` – last n chars.

```
print(slicing[-4:])
# asy!
```

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File tail

To get a file tail (the last few lines of a file), use a `deque` from the module `collections`.

```python
from collections import deque

with open("/path/to/python/lib/this.py", "r") as f:
    tail = deque(f, maxlen=4)

for line in tail:
    print(line)

#     for i in range(26):
#         d[chr(i+c)] = chr((i+13) % 26 + c)
#
# print("".join([d.get(c, c) for c in s]))
```

Number of last lines to fetch.

💡 If the file has fewer lines than those requested, you get the full file.

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One-shot file I/O

For one-shot file I/O, you can use the methods `write_text` and `read_text` from `pathlib.Path`.

```python
from pathlib import Path

filepath = Path("hello_world.txt")

filepath.write_text("Python is cool!")

print(filepath.read_text())
# Python is cool!
```

If the file exists, `write_text` overwrites the contents of the file.

You get more control if you use a context manager and `open` but this gets the job done in most cases.

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Formatting big numbers

To improve readability when printing big numbers, use format specifiers to include thousands separators.

```
bignum = 123541241234

print(f"Big money ${x:,}")
# Big money $123,541,241,234

print(f"Big money ${x:_}")
# Big money $123_541_241_234

print(f"Big money ${x:n}")
# Big money $123541241234
```

The comma (,) uses commas as the thousands separator.

The underscore (_) uses underscores as the thousands separator.

The specifier n uses a locale-appropriate thousands separator...

... which may be none!

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Named groups in regex

When using regex with Python's module re, you can use the syntax `(?P<...>)` to create a named group, making it easier to retrieve match groups.

The group name goes inside the <>.

```python
import re

pattern = r"(?P<user>\S+)@(?P<domain>\S+)"
```

```python
match = re.match(pattern, "rodrigo@mathspp.com")

print(match.group("user"))  # rodrigo
print(match.group("domain"))  # mathspp.com
```

💡 This is a Python-specific regex feature.

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Resolving paths

When working with paths, use the methods `expanduser` and `resolve` from `pathlib.Path` to get expanded paths that are absolute.

```
from pathlib import Path

docs = Path("~/Documents/")
print(docs.expanduser())  # /Users/rodrigogs/Documents

downloads = docs / "..." / "Downloads"
print(downloads)  # ~/Documents/../Downloads
print(downloads.expanduser().resolve())  # /Users/rodrigogs/Downloads
```

The reverse order gives the wrong result...

```
print(downloads.resolve().expanduser())
# /Users/rodrigogs/Documents/~/Downloads
```

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Formatting dates in f-strings

Dates, times, and `datetime` objects, from the module `datetime`, can be formatted directly in f-strings with the usual specifiers.

```python
from datetime import date

print(f"{date.today():%Y-%m-%d}")
# 2025-06-03

print(f"{date.today():%Y---%m :: %d}")
# 2025---06 :: 03
```

The “format specifier” after the colon : can contain arbitrary characters and only the known specifiers are replaced.

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Concatenate files from handlers

If you want to concatenate multiple files and you ***already*** have a list of file handlers, use `itertools.chain.from_iterable`.

```
08:12:03 [INFO] Starting the data sync process
08:12:04 [DEBUG] Loaded 142 user records from cache
```

```
08:12:06 [INFO] Connection to remote server established
08:12:08 [WARN] Response time exceeded threshold: 534ms
```

```
08:12:09 [DEBUG] Retry attempt #1 initiated
08:12:11 [INFO] Data sync completed successfully
```

```python
open_files = [log1, log2, log3]

from itertools import chain

with open("full_log.log", "w") as f:
    f.writelines(chain.from_iterable(open_files))
```

💡 If you don't have the files open yet, it's best to open one at a time.

```
08:12:03 [INFO] Starting the data sync process
08:12:04 [DEBUG] Loaded 142 user records from cache
08:12:06 [INFO] Connection to remote server established
08:12:08 [WARN] Response time exceeded threshold: 534ms
08:12:09 [DEBUG] Retry attempt #1 initiated
08:12:11 [INFO] Data sync completed successfully
```

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Generator recipe

To write a generator, first write a function that returns the list with the elements you want. Then, convert to a generator function.

```python
def squares(stop):
    result = []
    for n in range(stop):
        result.append(n ** 2)
    return result
```

Yield instead of appending.

```python
def squares(stop):

    for n in range(stop):
        yield n ** 2
```

Same values produced.

```python
squares(5)  # [0, 1, 4, 9, 16]
```

```python
list(squares(5))  # [0, 1, 4, 9, 16]
```

💡 The trick also works for infinite generators, even if the list version never returns.

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Partition a string in two halves

To split a string over a separator once, use the method `str.partition`. This returns a 3-item tuple with the results of the split. The middle item can be used to check if the split was successful.

```
email = "rodrigo@mathspp.com"
user, at, domain = email.partition("@")

if at:
    print(user)  # rodrigo
    print(at)  # @
    print(domain)  # mathspp.com
```

```
email = "mathspp.com"
user, at, domain = email.partition("@")

if not at:
    print(user)  # mathspp.com
```

The 2nd and 3rd items are empty if no split happened.

```
print("aaa oi bbb oi ccc".partition("oi"))
# ('aaa ', 'oi', ' bbb oi ccc')

print("aaa oi bbb oi ccc".rpartition("oi"))
# ('aaa oi bbb ', 'oi', ' ccc')
```

If the separator occurs 2+ times, splits on the first.
Use `str.rpartition` to split on the last.

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Regex multiline flag

The multiline flag `(?m)` makes it so that the special characters ^ and $ match the beginning & end of each newline instead of the beginning & end of the string.

```
the = r"^[Tt]he"
```

```
The quick brown fox jumps over
the lazy dog.
```

The caret ^ matches the beginning of the string.

```
the = r"(?m)^[Tt]he"
```

```
The quick brown fox jumps over
the lazy dog.
```

The caret ^ matches the beginning of each new line because of the multiline flag `(?m)`.

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Extract assignments from conditionals

Instead of using a conditional statement to make an assignment, use a conditional expression.

“If the user is logged in,
set their permissions to "full",
otherwise
set them to "guest".”

```
if logged_in:
    permissions = "full"
else:
    permissions = "guest"
```

```
permissions = "full" if logged_in else "guest"
```

“Set the user permissions to "full"
if the user is logged in,
otherwise set them to "guest".”

Conditional expressions are very effective if you learn to read them!

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File discovery by name pattern

If you want to find all files in a directory that have a name that follows a given pattern, you can use the method `glob` from `pathlib.Path`.

Find all files with “cat” in the name.

```python
from pathlib import Path

cat_files = Path("Downloads").glob("*cat*")
# cat_and_dog.png, cute_cat.jpg, two_cats.png
```

Find all files that end with “.jpg”.

```python
from pathlib import Path

jpg_imgs = Path("Downloads").glob("*.jpg")
# cute_cat.jpg, cute_dog.jpg
```

Filesystem:

```
📂 Downloads/
  - cat_and_dog.png
  - cute_cat.jpg
  - cute_dog.jpg
  - two_cats.png
```

💡 The order of the files is arbitrary.

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Structural pattern matching with dictionaries

Structural pattern matching can be used to match dictionaries and their keys/values.

```
match my_dict:
    case {"user": str(), "age": int()}:
        print("Match!")
```

```
my_dict = {
    "user": "John",
    "age": 47,
    "children": 2,
}
```

✅ matches even though there are extra key/value pairs.

❌ Missing key "age".

```
my_dict = {"user": "John"}
```

❌ "age" should be an integer but it's a string.

```
my_dict = {"user": "John",
           "age": "47"}
```

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Slicing generators for debugging

When debugging generators, `itertools.islice` can be used to slice a generator to get the first few elements for inspection.

```
from itertools import islice

gen = mysterious_generator()

print(list(islice(gen, 3)))  # [0, 1, 4]
```

You can use `list(islice(..., n))` to get the first n elements immediately.

Don't forget that subsequent usages of `islice` will slice from the *remainder* of the generator.

```
print(list(islice(gen, 3)))
# [9, 16, 25]
print(list(islice(gen, 3)))
# [36, 49, 64]
```

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