[How to copy and move files with Shutil.](http://www.pythonforbeginners.com/systems-programming/python-the-shutil-module/)

16 Oct 2012   | [System & OS](http://www.pythonforbeginners.com/category/systems-programming/)

Tags: [OS](http://www.pythonforbeginners.com/tag/os/) · [Shutil](http://www.pythonforbeginners.com/tag/shutil/)

What is Shutil?

The shutil module helps you automate copying files and directories.

This saves the steps of opening, reading, writing and closing files when there is no actual processing.

It is a utility module which can be used to accomplish tasks, such as: copying, moving, or removing directory trees

shutil. copy ( src , dest )

# Basically the unix command cp src dst.

# this copies the source file to the destination directory

# the destination directory has to exist

# if the filename already exists there, it will be overwritten

# access time and last modification time will be updated

# the same filename is used

# the permissions of the file are copied along with the contents.

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| 1  2  3  4  5  6  7 | import shutil  import os  source = os.listdir("/tmp/")  destination = "/tmp/newfolder/"  for files in source:      if files.endswith(".txt"):          shutil.copy(files,destination) |

shutil.copyfile ( src , dest )

# copy data from src to dest

# both names must be files.

# copy files by name

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| 1  2 | import shutil  shutil.copyfile('/path/to/file', '/path/to/other/phile') |

shutil.move

# recursively move a file or directory (src) to another location (dst).

# if the destination is a directory or a symlink to a directory, then src is moved

inside that directory.

# the destination directory must not already exist.

# this would move files ending with .txt to the destination path

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| --- | --- |
| 1  2  3  4  5  6  7 | import shutil  import os  source = os.listdir("/tmp/")  destination = "/tmp/newfolder/"  for files in source:      if files.endswith(".txt"):          shutil.move(files,destination) |

shutil.copytree ( src , dest )

# recursively copy the entire directory tree rooted at src to dest.

# dest must not already exist.

# errors are reported to standard output.

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| 1  2  3  4  5  6  7 | import shutil  import os  SOURCE = "samples"  BACKUP = "samples-bak"  # create a backup directory  shutil.copytree(SOURCE, BACKUP)  print os.listdir(BACKUP) |

shutil.rmtree ( path )

# recursively delete a directory tree.

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| 1  2  3 | # This removes the directory 'three' and anything beneath it in the filesystem.  import shutil  shutil.rmtree('one/two/three') |