

Python for Web Developers Learning Journal

Exercise 1.4: File Handling in Python

Learning Goals

- Use files to store and retrieve data in Python

Reflection Questions

1. Why is file storage important when you're using Python? What would happen if you didn't store local files?

File storage is necessary when using Python to store your data permanently and be able to retrieve it for later use. If you don't store your local files, the data is erased and unavailable once the end of the script is done running.

2. In this Exercise you learned about the pickling process with the `pickle.dump()` method. What are pickles? In which situations would you choose to use pickles and why?

Pickles convert complex data, such as the recipe dictionaries for the recipe app, into a packaged stream of bytes, aka “pickles,” which go into a binary file. You need to use pickles in situations where you send complex object hierarchies over a network or you need to save the internal state of your objects to a database or disk for later use.

3. In Python, what function do you use to find out which directory you’re currently in? What if you wanted to change your current working directory?

In Python, you use the `os.getcwd()` command to find out which directory you’re currently in. If you want to change your current working directory, you use the `os.chdir()` command to navigate to the directory of your choice.

4. Imagine you’re working on a Python script and are worried there may be an error in a block of code. How would you approach the situation to prevent the entire script from terminating due to an error?

To prevent the entire script from terminating due to an error, I would add try-except blocks into my code. The try block creates a safe area for the code to run in and will highlight any errors so they can be fixed.

5. You’re now more than halfway through Achievement 1! Take a moment to reflect on your learning in the course so far. How is it going? What’s something you’re proud of so far? Is there something you’re struggling with? What do you need more practice with? Feel free to use these notes to guide your next mentor call.

So far, I am enjoying Python and believe it’s an easy programming language to learn. I am proud of how easily I can work with the iPython shell and navigate through it. I need more practice working with for loops and also becoming familiar on how data structures are formatted as I keep referring back to Javascript data structures due to its similarities. Additionally, I want more practice with writing functions and performing operations.