The Ultimate Visual Studio Code Setup For Django Developers

Visual Studio the text editor is known as Visual Studio Code is Microsoft's free text editor that runs on Windows, Linux, and macOS. It's a recent entrant to the market; Microsoft released the product as a public preview at the end of 2015, posting the open source code to Github, before making it available as a general release in April 2016.

Despite its newbie status, Visual Studio Code has rapidly gained popularity among developers. Some may argue that it is not a real IDE, but merely an advanced text editor. But in my opinion, after installing a number of extensions, it becomes almost a full-fledged IDE with very rich functionality.
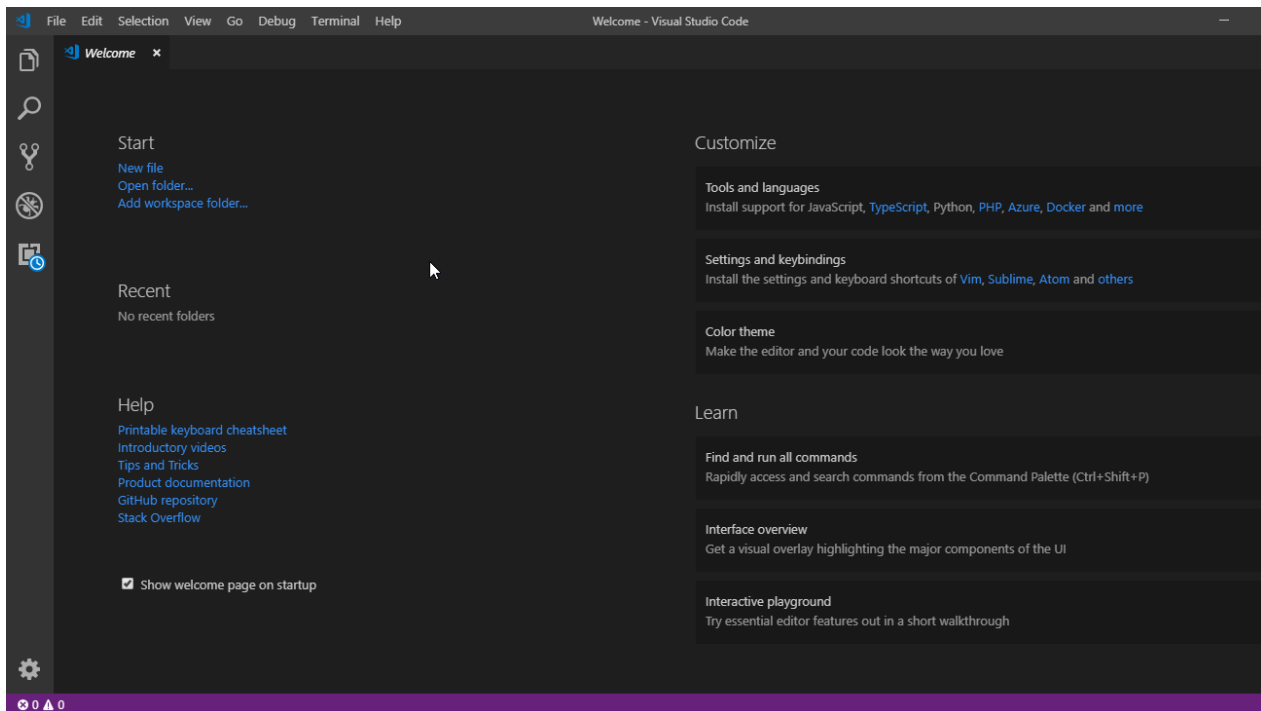
Additionally, despite being an Electron-based application, it is quite lightweight and responsive (in contrast to for example Atom, which is very slow and resource intensive).

This tutorial will go through Installation and setup of the VS code for Python and Django projects on your machine.
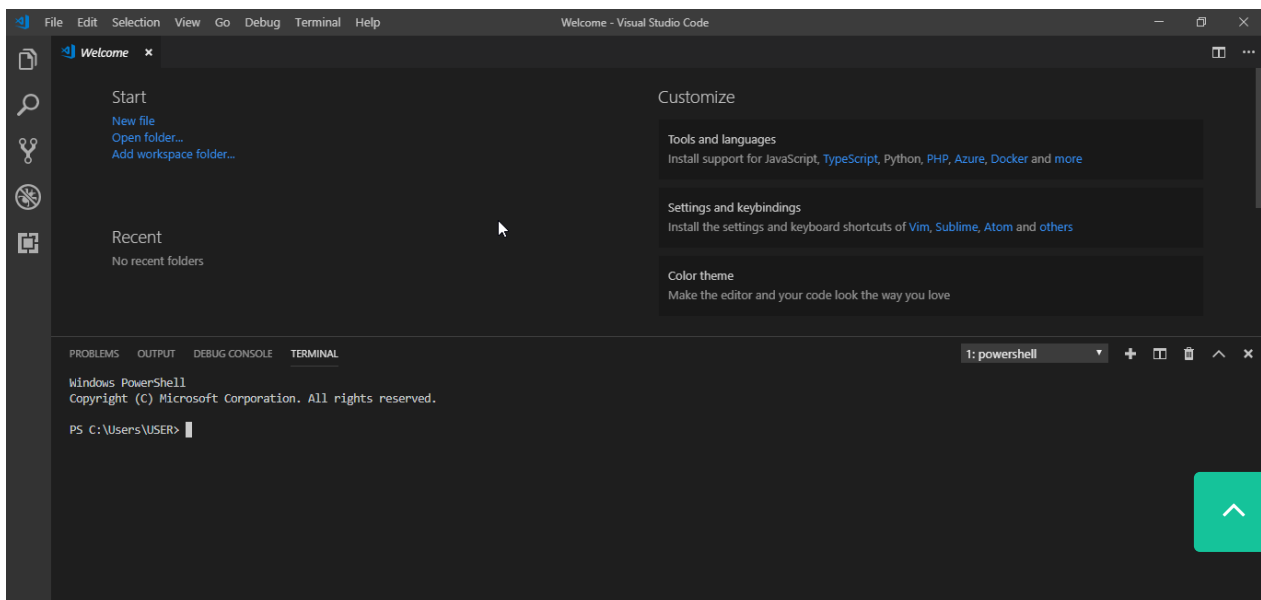
Installing Visual Studio Code

Visual Studio Code is a free text editor so to download it you just have to visit their official site and download the file depending on your operating system. So visit Vscode's-website and download the latest stable build for your OS and once the download is finished install the editor and launch the app.

The best thing about VScode is that it comes with a built-in terminal which comes handy for Django projects press `Ctrl+Shift+`` to invoke the terminal.
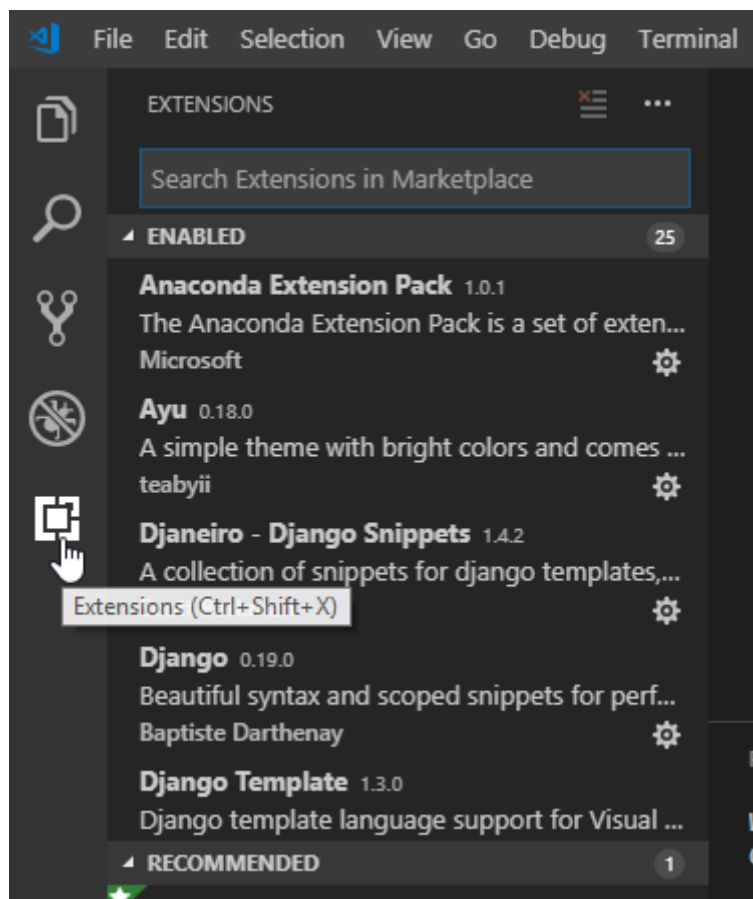
Note that in windows powershell may seem weird for new users it is recommended to use Python debug console or CMD.
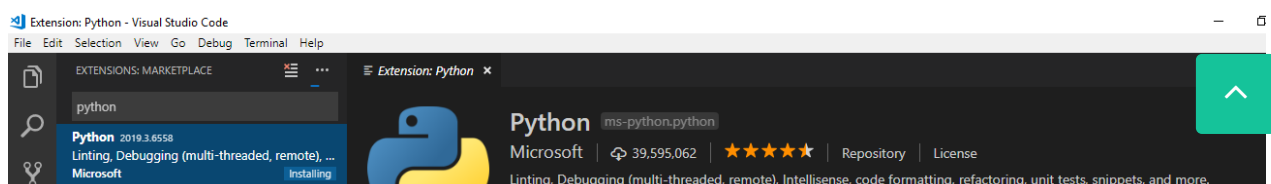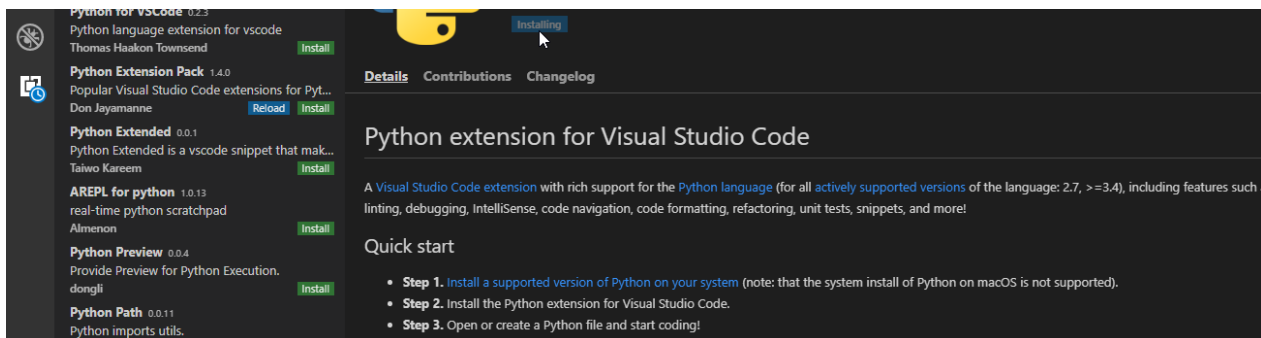
Configuring Python

To enjoy Pythonic features such as Linting, Debugging (multi-threaded, remote), Intellisense, code formatting, refactoring, unit tests, snippets, and more you need to install Python extension for Vscode.

To install an extension press `Ctrl+Shift+x` or click the extension icon.

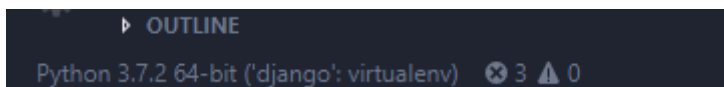Now search for Python and install the one published by Microsoft.

Adding Extension For Django

Search for `Djaneiro` this extension provides a collection of snippets for Django templates, models, views, fields & forms ported from Djaneiro for SublimeText.

Selecting Python Environment

Press **CTRL+SHIFT+P**(**CMD+SHIFT+P** for MacOS) and type `Python: Select Interpreter` and select the environment for your project. You can see the active environment at the bottom left of the editor.
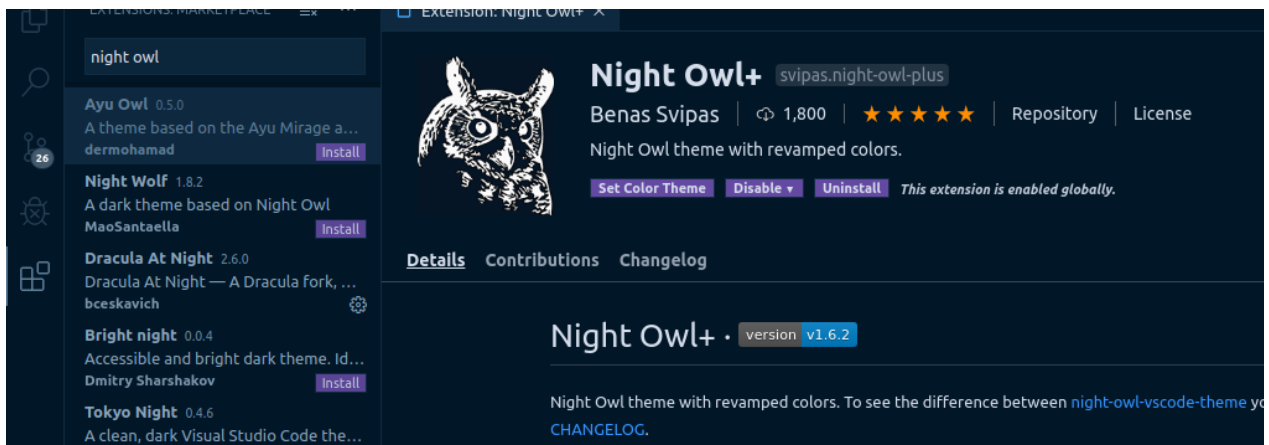

Installing Theme

The default Vscode theme is great in itself however there are plenty for fabulous free themes available for download.
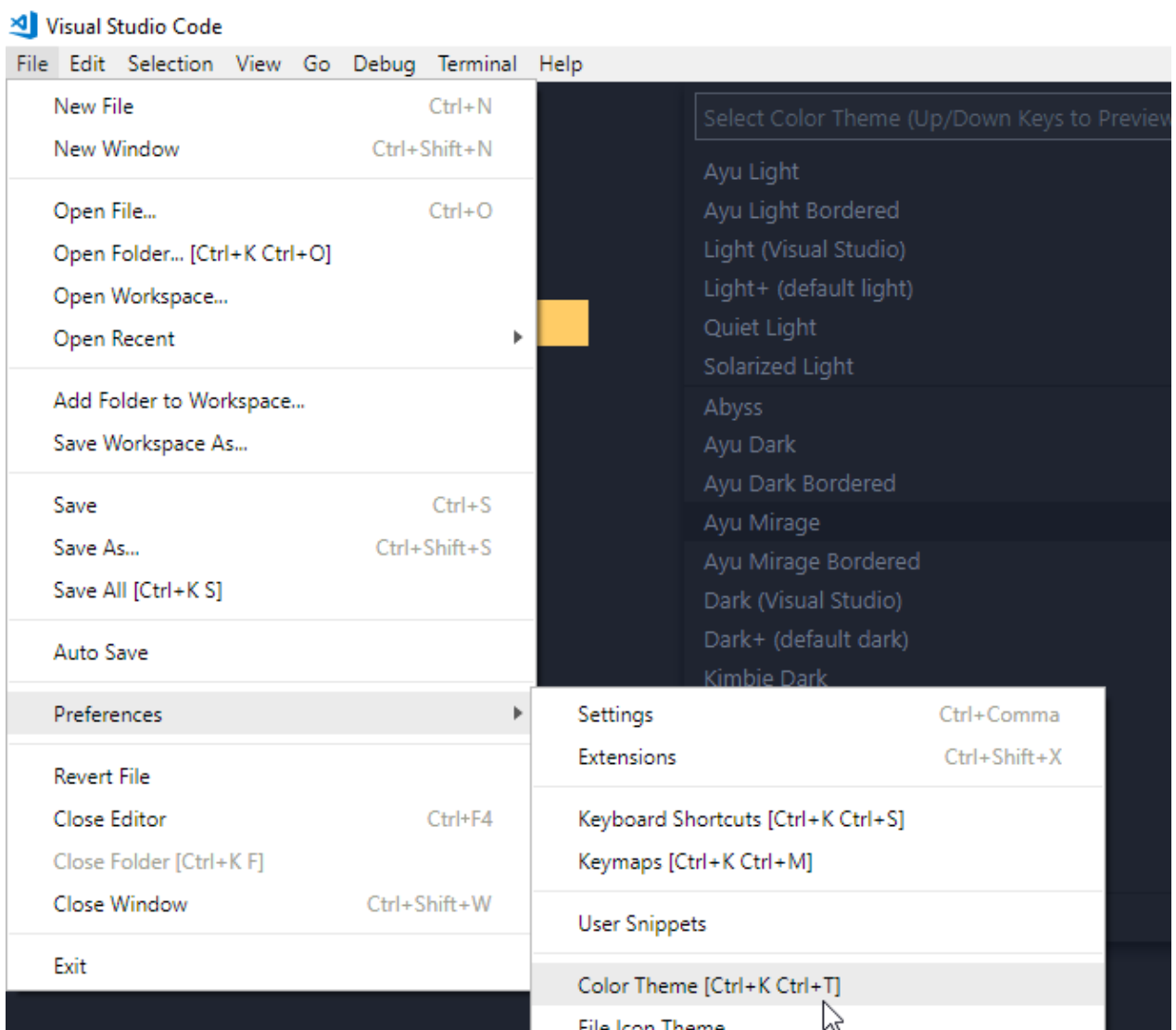
My favorite one is Night Owl+ so let's install night owl+ theme from extensions.

To explore more Vscode themes visit https://vscodethemes.com/
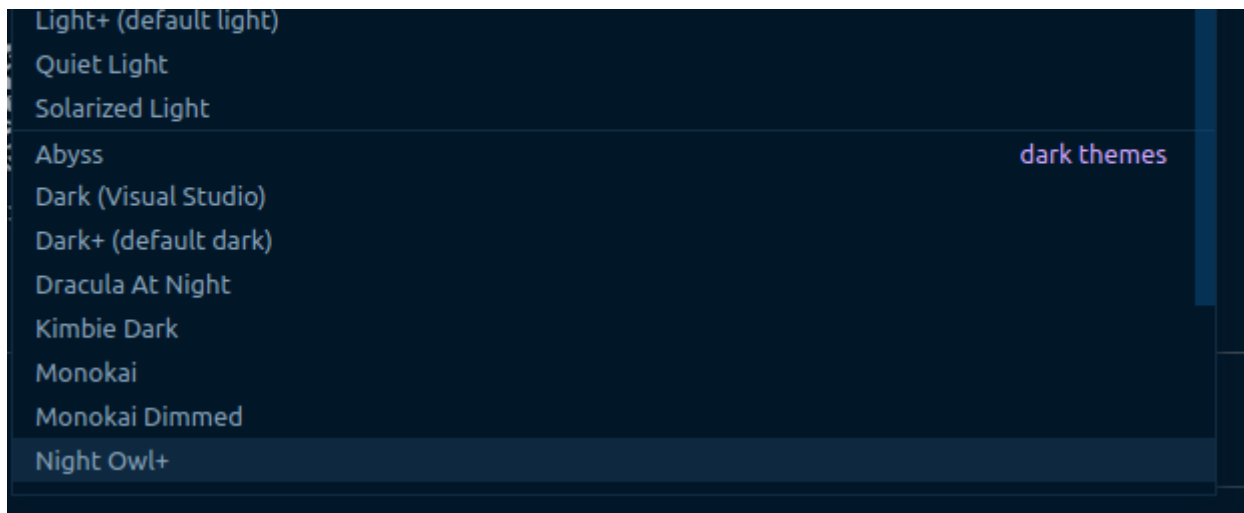
To change the theme go to, **file>Preference> color theme**
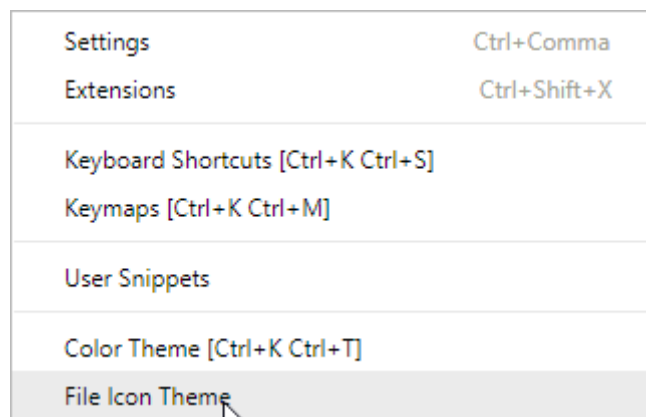

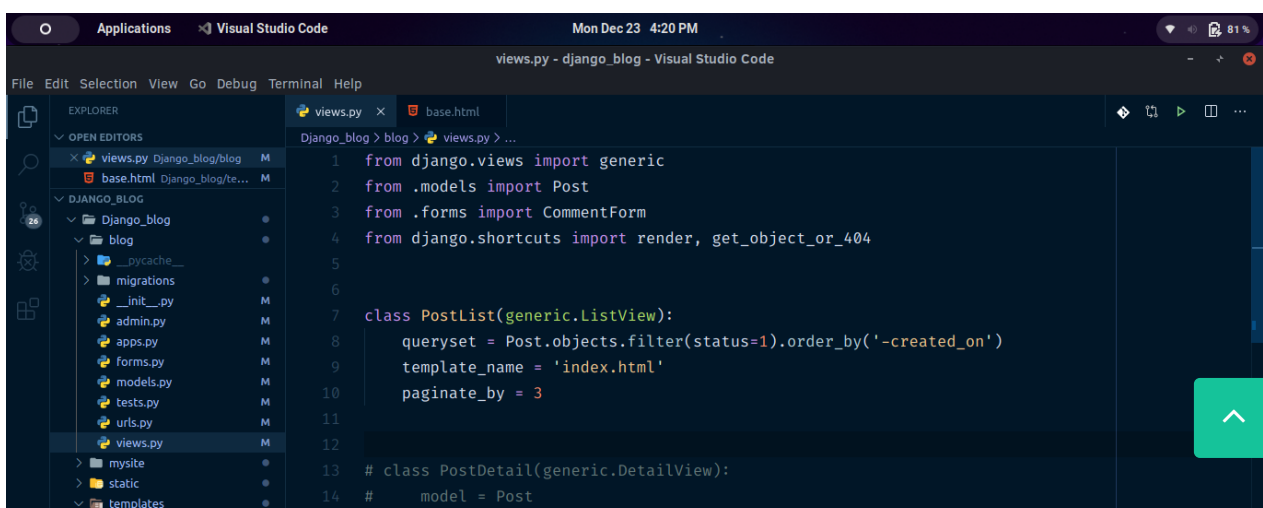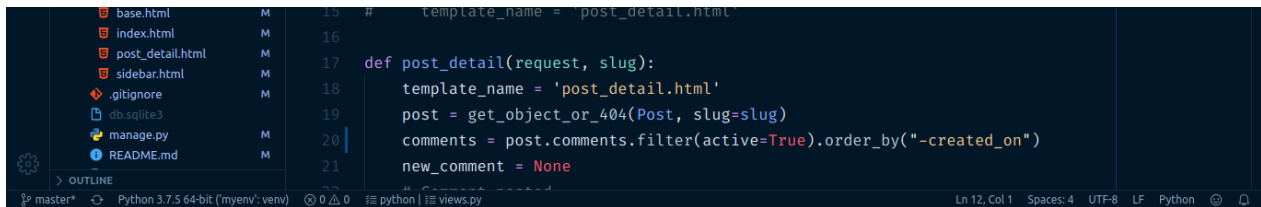And select the theme that you prefer.

Notice below the color theme there is an option for the **file icon theme.**

Download **Material Icon Theme** from extensions store and click on that and select the icon theme this will give different file icons for different files.

After that restart VS code to activate the extensions. Now open any of your Django project you should get this beautiful view.

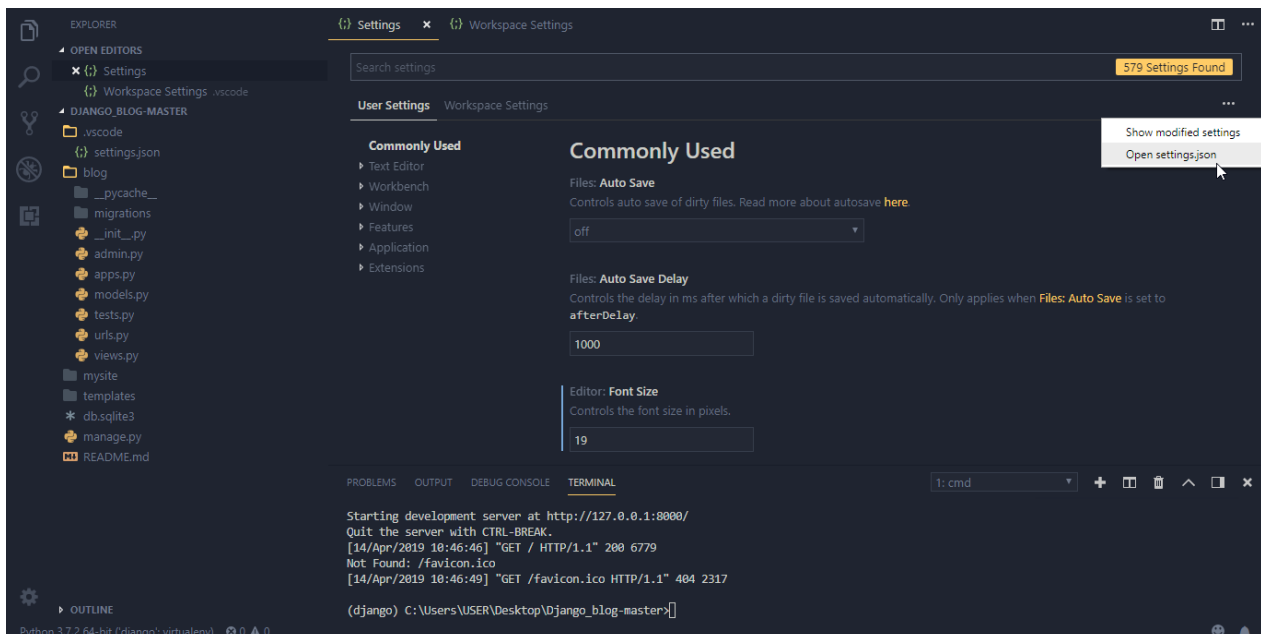Your font might look different I am using Fira code font here.

Configuring Additional Useful Settings

Go to **file> preferece> settings** then open settings.json from there.

In USER SETTINGS inside the curly braces { } add the following Settings.

```
// my custom settings
    "editor.formatOnSave": true,
    "editor.rulers": [
        80,
        120
    ],
    "files.exclude": {
        "**/.git": true,
```

```
        "**/.svn": true,
        "**/.hg": true,
        "**/CVS": true,
        "**/.DS_Store": true,
        ".vscode": true,
        "**/*.pyc": true,
    },
    "workbench.editor.enablePreview": false,
    "editor.minimap.enabled": false,
    "python.linting.pylintArgs": [
        "--load-plugins",
        "pylint_django"
    ]
```

To use the above features, the editor will prompt you to install **pylint** and **autopep8**, or you can install them directly in the virtual environment.

```
pip install autopep8
pip install pylint
```

Some useful VScode extensions:

- Code Spell Checker

- Django

- Git History

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If you appreciate my work, or if it has helped you along your journey. It would mean a lot to me if you could write a message on

6 thoughts on "The Ultimate Visual Studio Code Setup For Django Developers"

Gaetano

June 19, 2020 at 1:23 pm

thanks you , Good!

Reply

sachin

May 8, 2021 at 7:14 am

really good article

Reply

MasterBDX

November 9, 2020 at 1:31 am

thanks you awesome content

Geo Massar

February 27, 2021 at 5:12 am

Which Django book(s) would you recommend for a beginner who knows basic Python classes?

Ibrahim

March 15, 2021 at 11:05 am

One of the best book of understanding django is 'Two-Scoops-Django'.

Cristian Samaniego

May 25, 2021 at 4:36 pm

there is also a django crash course book from the same authors of 'two scoops of django'

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