Chris Zurbrigg, has developed video tutorials on Python used within Maya. His lessons cover both generic Python and key Maya Python commands. I highly recommend you watch these videos and keep the link for further study.

Here is link to Chris's home page: http://zurbrigg.com/

Here is link to Chris's tutorials: http://zurbrigg.com/tutorials

Here is the link: http://zurbrigg.com/tutorials/beginning-python-for-maya

Note that in his tutorials, Chris uses a Maya plugin script editor, Charcoal, which he developed. You can still enter Python commands in Maya's default script editor. You can also use Idle outside of Maya as long as you aren't using Maya's Python module, maya.cmds.

http://zurbrigg.com/tutorials/beginning-python-for-maya/2-4-converting-mel-commands-to-python 15:29

http://zurbrigg.com/tutorials/beginning-python-for-maya/3-1-core-data-types 05:05

http://zurbrigg.com/tutorials/beginning-python-for-maya/3-2-variables 05:21

http://zurbrigg.com/tutorials/beginning-python-for-maya/3-3-comments 01:52

http://zurbrigg.com/tutorials/beginning-python-for-maya/3-4-1-numeric-types 07:00

http://zurbrigg.com/tutorials/beginning-python-for-maya/3-4-2-operators 10:53

http://zurbrigg.com/tutorials/beginning-python-for-maya/3-4-3-division-and-truncation 03:28

http://zurbrigg.com/tutorials/beginning-python-for-maya/3-5-maya-commands-getattr 07:51

http://zurbrigg.com/tutorials/beginning-python-for-maya/3-6-maya-commands-setattr

http://zurbrigg.com/tutorials/beginning-python-for-maya/3-7-1-strings 07:37

http://zurbrigg.com/tutorials/beginning-python-for-maya/3-7-2-escape-sequences 06:23

http://zurbrigg.com/tutorials/beginning-python-for-maya/3-7-3-basic-string-operations 05:12

http://zurbrigg.com/tutorials/beginning-python-for-maya/3-7-4-indexing-and-slicing-strings 06:47

http://zurbrigg.com/tutorials/beginning-python-for-maya/3-7-5-modifying-strings 02:45

http://zurbrigg.com/tutorials/beginning-python-for-maya/3-7-6-string-methods 08:53

http://zurbrigg.com/tutorials/beginning-python-for-maya/3-7-7-string-formatting 07:25

http://zurbrigg.com/tutorials/beginning-python-for-maya/3-8-print-function 03:26