

Python Help!

Python has a great help utility.

WE'LL COVER THE FOLLOWING ^

- Wrapping Up

Python comes with a handy help utility. Just type “help()” (minus the quotes) into a Python shell and you’ll see the following directions (Python version may vary)

```
help()
```

```
Welcome to Python 2.6!  This is the online help utility.
```

```
If this is your first time using Python, you should definitely check out  
the tutorial on the Internet at http://www.python.org/doc/tut/.
```

```
Enter the name of any module, keyword, or topic to get help on writing  
Python programs and using Python modules.  To quit this help utility and  
return to the interpreter, just type "quit".
```

```
To get a list of available modules, keywords, or topics, type "modules",  
"keywords", or "topics".  Each module also comes with a one-line summary  
of what it does; to list the modules whose summaries contain a given word  
such as "spam", type "modules spam".
```

```
help>
```

Note that you now have a “help>” prompt instead of the “>>>”. When you are in help mode, you can explore the various modules, keywords and topics found in Python. Also note that when typing the word “modules”, you will see a delay as Python searches its library folder to acquire a list. If you have installed a lot of 3rd party modules, this can take quite a while, so be prepared to go fix yourself a mocha while you wait. Once it’s done, just follow the

directions and play around with it and I think you'll get the gist.

Wrapping Up

Now you know how to take an unknown module and learn a lot about it by just using some of Python's built-in functionality. You will find yourself using these commands over and over again to help you learn Python. As I mentioned earlier, you will find these tools especially helpful for the 3rd Party modules that don't believe in documentation.