

BRIEF CONTENTS

Acknowledgments	xix
Introduction	xxi

PART I: GETTING STARTED 1

Chapter 1: Dealing with Errors and Asking for Help	3
Chapter 2: Environment Setup and the Command Line	17

PART II: BEST PRACTICES, TOOLS, AND TECHNIQUES 43

Chapter 3: Code Formatting with Black	45
Chapter 4: Choosing Understandable Names	59
Chapter 5: Finding Code Smells	69
Chapter 6: Writing Pythonic Code	87
Chapter 7: Programming Jargon	107
Chapter 8: Common Python Gotchas	133
Chapter 9: Esoteric Python Oddities	153
Chapter 10: Writing Effective Functions	161
Chapter 11: Comments, Docstrings, and Type Hints	181
Chapter 12: Organizing Your Code Projects with Git	199
Chapter 13: Measuring Performance and Big O Algorithm Analysis	225
Chapter 14: Practice Projects	247

PART III: OBJECT-ORIENTED PYTHON 273

Chapter 15: Object-Oriented Programming and Classes	275
Chapter 16: Object-Oriented Programming and Inheritance	293
Chapter 17: Pythonic OOP: Properties and Dunder Methods	315
Index	339

CONTENTS IN DETAIL

ACKNOWLEDGMENTS xix

INTRODUCTION xxi

Who Should Read This Book and Why	xxii
About This Book	xxii
Your Programming Journey	xxiv

PART I: GETTING STARTED 1

1 DEALING WITH ERRORS AND ASKING FOR HELP 3

How to Understand Python Error Messages	4
Examining Tracebacks	4
Searching for Error Messages	7
Preventing Errors with Linters	8
How to Ask for Programming Help	9
Limit Back and Forth by Providing Your Information Upfront	10
State Your Question in the Form of an Actual Question	10
Ask Your Question on the Appropriate Website	10
Summarize Your Question in the Headline	11
Explain What You Want the Code to Do	11
Include the Full Error Message	11
Share Your Complete Code	11
Make Your Code Readable with Proper Formatting	12
Tell Your Helper What You've Already Tried	13
Describe Your Setup	13
Examples of Asking a Question	14
Summary	14

2 ENVIRONMENT SETUP AND THE COMMAND LINE 17

The Filesystem	18
Paths in Python	18
The Home Directory	19
The Current Working Directory	19
Absolute vs. Relative Paths	20
Programs and Processes	21
The Command Line	22
Opening a Terminal Window	23
Running Programs from the Command Line	23
Using Command Line Arguments	24
Running Python Code from the Command Line with <code>-c</code>	26
Running Python Programs from the Command Line	26

Running the py.exe Program	26
Running Commands from a Python Program	27
Minimizing Typing with Tab Completion	27
Viewing the Command History	28
Working with Common Commands	28
Environment Variables and PATH	35
Viewing Environment Variables	36
Working with the PATH Environment Variable	36
Changing the Command Line's PATH Environment Variable	37
Permanently Adding Folders to PATH on Windows	38
Permanently Adding Folders to PATH on macOS and Linux	39
Running Python Programs Without the Command Line	39
Running Python Programs on Windows	40
Running Python Programs on macOS	41
Running Python Programs on Ubuntu Linux	41
Summary	42

PART III: BEST PRACTICES, TOOLS, AND TECHNIQUES **43**

3 **CODE FORMATTING WITH BLACK** **45**

How to Lose Friends and Alienate Co-Workers	46
Style Guides and PEP 8	46
Horizontal Spacing	47
Use Space Characters for Indentation	47
Spacing Within a Line	48
Vertical Spacing	51
A Vertical Spacing Example	51
Vertical Spacing Best Practices	52
Black: The Uncompromising Code Formatter	53
Installing Black	54
Running Black from the Command Line	54
Disabling Black for Parts of Your Code	57
Summary	58

4 **CHOOSING UNDERSTANDABLE NAMES** **59**

Casing Styles	60
PEP 8's Naming Conventions	61
Appropriate Name Length	61
Too Short Names	61
Too Long Names	63
Make Names Searchable	64
Avoid Jokes, Puns, and Cultural References	64
Don't Overwrite Built-in Names	65
The Worst Possible Variable Names Ever	66
Summary	67

5 FINDING CODE SMELLS

69

Duplicate Code	70
Magic Numbers	71
Commented-Out Code and Dead Code	74
Print Debugging	75
Variables with Numeric Suffixes	76
Classes That Should Just Be Functions or Modules	77
List Comprehensions Within List Comprehensions	77
Empty except Blocks and Poor Error Messages	79
Code Smell Myths	80
Myth: Functions Should Have Only One return Statement at the End	80
Myth: Functions Should Have at Most One try Statement	81
Myth: Flag Arguments Are Bad	82
Myth: Global Variables Are Bad	82
Myth: Comments Are Unnecessary	83
Summary	84

6 WRITING PYTHONIC CODE

87

The Zen of Python	88
Learning to Love Significant Indentation	91
Commonly Misused Syntax	92
Use enumerate() Instead of range()	92
Use the with Statement Instead of open() and close()	93
Use is to Compare with None Instead of ==	94
Formatting Strings	95
Use Raw Strings If Your String Has Many Backslashes	95
Format Strings with F-Strings	96
Making Shallow Copies of Lists	97
Pythonic Ways to Use Dictionaries	98
Use get() and setdefault() with Dictionaries	98
Use collections.defaultdict for Default Values	99
Use Dictionaries Instead of a switch Statement	100
Conditional Expressions: Python's "Ugly" Ternary Operator	101
Working with Variable Values	103
Chaining Assignment and Comparison Operators	103
Checking Whether a Variable Is One of Many Values	103
Summary	104

7 PROGRAMMING JARGON

107

Definitions	108
Python the Language and Python the Interpreter	108
Garbage Collection	109
Literals	109
Keywords	110
Objects, Values, Instances, and Identities	111
Items	114

Mutable and Immutable	114
Indexes, Keys, and Hashes	117
Containers, Sequences, Mapping, and Set Types	119
Dunder Methods and Magic Methods	120
Modules and Packages	120
Callables and First-Class Objects	121
Commonly Confused Terms	122
Statements vs. Expressions	122
Block vs. Clause vs. Body	123
Variable vs. Attribute	124
Function vs. Method	124
Iterable vs. Iterator	125
Syntax vs. Runtime vs. Semantic Errors	126
Parameters vs. Arguments	128
Type Coercion vs. Type Casting	128
Properties vs. Attributes	128
Bytecode vs. Machine Code	129
Script vs. Program, Scripting Language vs. Programming Language	129
Library vs. Framework vs. SDK vs. Engine vs. API	130
Summary	131
Further Reading	131

8 COMMON PYTHON GOTCHAS 133

Don't Add or Delete Items from a List While Looping Over It	134
Don't Copy Mutable Values Without <code>copy.copy()</code> and <code>copy.deepcopy()</code>	140
Don't Use Mutable Values for Default Arguments	142
Don't Build Strings with String Concatenation	144
Don't Expect <code>sort()</code> to Sort Alphabetically	146
Don't Assume Floating-Point Numbers Are Perfectly Accurate	147
Don't Chain Inequality <code>!=</code> Operators	149
Don't Forget the Comma in Single-Item Tuples	150
Summary	150

9 ESOTERIC PYTHON ODDITIES 153

Why 256 Is 256 but 257 Is Not 257	154
String Interning	155
Python's Fake Increment and Decrement Operators	156
All of Nothing	157
Boolean Values Are Integer Values	158
Chaining Multiple Kinds of Operators	159
Python's Antigravity Feature	160
Summary	160

10 WRITING EFFECTIVE FUNCTIONS 161

Function Names	162
Function Size Trade-Offs	162

Function Parameters and Arguments	165
Default Arguments	165
Using * and ** to Pass Arguments to Functions	166
Using * to Create Variadic Functions	167
Using ** to Create Variadic Functions	169
Using * and ** to Create Wrapper Functions	171
Functional Programming	172
Side Effects	172
Higher-Order Functions	174
Lambda Functions	174
Mapping and Filtering with List Comprehensions	175
Return Values Should Always Have the Same Data Type	177
Raising Exceptions vs. Returning Error Codes	178
Summary	179

11 COMMENTS, DOCSTRINGS, AND TYPE HINTS 181

Comments	182
Comment Style	183
Inline Comments	184
Explanatory Comments	184
Summary Comments	185
"Lessons Learned" Comments	185
Legal Comments	186
Professional Comments	186
Codetags and TODO Comments	187
Magic Comments and Source File Encoding	187
Docstrings	188
Type Hints	190
Using Static Analyzers	192
Setting Type Hints for Multiple Types	194
Setting Type Hints for Lists, Dictionaries, and More	195
Backporting Type Hints with Comments	196
Summary	197

12 ORGANIZING YOUR CODE PROJECTS WITH GIT 199

Git Commits and Repos	200
Using Cookiecutter to Create New Python Projects	200
Installing Git	202
Configuring Your Git Username and Email	203
Installing GUI Git Tools	203
The Git Workflow	204
How Git Keeps Track of File Status	204
Why Stage Files?	206
Creating a Git Repo on Your Computer	206
Adding Files for Git to Track	208
Ignoring Files in the Repo	209
Committing Changes	210
Deleting Files from the Repo	214
Renaming and Moving Files in the Repo	215

Viewing the Commit Log	216
Recovering Old Changes	217
Undoing Uncommitted Local Changes	218
Unstaging a Staged File	218
Rolling Back the Most Recent Commits	218
Rolling Back to a Specific Commit for a Single File	219
Rewriting the Commit History	220
GitHub and the git push Command	221
Pushing an Existing Repository to GitHub	222
Cloning a Repo from an Existing GitHub Repo	222
Summary	223

13

MEASURING PERFORMANCE AND BIG O ALGORITHM ANALYSIS

225

The timeit Module	226
The cProfile Profiler	228
Big O Algorithm Analysis	230
Big O Orders	230
A Bookshelf Metaphor for Big O Orders	231
Big O Measures the Worst-Case Scenario	235
Determining the Big O Order of Your Code	237
Why Lower Orders and Coefficients Don't Matter	238
Big O Analysis Examples	239
The Big O Order of Common Function Calls	242
Analyzing Big O at a Glance	243
Big O Doesn't Matter When n Is Small, and n Is Usually Small	244
Summary	244

14

PRACTICE PROJECTS

247

The Tower of Hanoi	248
The Output	249
The Source Code	250
Writing the Code	252
Four-in-a-Row	259
The Output	259
The Source Code	260
Writing the Code	264
Summary	271

PART III: OBJECT-ORIENTED PYTHON

273

15

OBJECT-ORIENTED PROGRAMMING AND CLASSES

275

Real-World Analogy: Filling Out a Form	276
Creating Objects from Classes	278

Creating a Simple Class: WizCoin.	279
Methods, <code>__init__()</code> , and <code>self</code>	280
Attributes	282
Private Attributes and Private Methods	282
The <code>type()</code> Function and <code>__qualname__</code> Attribute.	284
Non-OOP vs. OOP Examples: Tic-Tac-Toe	285
Designing Classes for the Real World Is Hard	290
Summary	291

16 OBJECT-ORIENTED PROGRAMMING AND INHERITANCE 293

How Inheritance Works.	294
Overriding Methods	296
The <code>super()</code> Function.	297
Favor Composition Over Inheritance	299
Inheritance's Downside	301
The <code>isinstance()</code> and <code>issubclass()</code> Functions	303
Class Methods	304
Class Attributes	306
Static Methods.	306
When to Use Class and Static Object-Oriented Features	307
Object-Oriented Buzzwords	307
Encapsulation	307
Polymorphism	308
When Not to Use Inheritance	308
Multiple Inheritance	309
Method Resolution Order	311
Summary	312

17 PYTHONIC OOP: PROPERTIES AND DUNDER METHODS 315

Properties	316
Turning an Attribute into a Property	316
Using Setters to Validate Data.	319
Read-Only Properties	320
When to Use Properties	322
Python's Dunder Methods	322
String Representation Dunder Methods.	323
Numeric Dunder Methods	325
Reflected Numeric Dunder Methods.	328
In-Place Augmented Assignment Dunder Methods	330
Comparison Dunder Methods.	332
Summary	337

INDEX 339