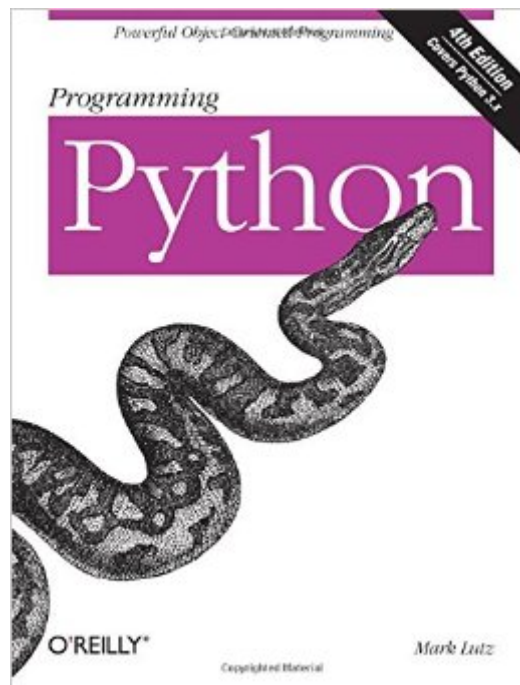


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Programming Python



Synopsis

If you've mastered Python's fundamentals, you're ready to start using it to get real work done. Programming Python will show you how, with in-depth tutorials on the language's primary application domains: system administration, GUIs, and the Web. You'll also explore how Python is used in databases, networking, front-end scripting layers, text processing, and more. This book focuses on commonly used tools and libraries to give you a comprehensive understanding of Python's many roles in practical, real-world programming. You'll learn language syntax and programming techniques in a clear and concise manner, with lots of examples that illustrate both correct usage and common idioms. Completely updated for version 3.x, Programming Python also delves into the language as a software development tool, with many code examples scaled specifically for that purpose. Topics include:

- Quick Python tour: Build a simple demo that includes data representation, object-oriented programming, object persistence, GUIs, and website basics
- System programming: Explore system interface tools and techniques for command-line scripting, processing files and folders, running programs in parallel, and more
- GUI programming: Learn to use Python's tkinter widget library
- Internet programming: Access client-side network protocols and email tools, use CGI scripts, and learn website implementation techniques
- More ways to apply Python: Implement data structures, parse text-based information, interface with databases, and extend and embed Python

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Customer Reviews

Programming Python is a book designed to take people who know Python and guide them on how to actually make it do things in the real world. It's important to note that the material in here (In the December 2010 4th edition) is for 3.X versions of Python and only deals with 2.X to the extent that the versions overlap, so you'll be better off with an earlier edition of the book (or another book designed to deal thoroughly with both versions) if you're working on a project that needs to work using earlier versions of Python. The amount of information here is gigantic, and includes sample code to some degree on practically every page. I was working from an ebook that O'Reilly gave me access to as a review copy, and I can imagine how unwieldy the actual physical book must be given the 1600+ page count. If you prefer to buy hard copies of books, this is definitely not going to be the quick reference book that you carry around in your back pocket. Since it's so focused on how to actually use Python code to accomplish specific tasks, the best thing about Programming Python is that it comes from O'Reilly. It shares their usual policy for programming books that you're welcome to reuse the code samples in your own projects, and the publisher also provides errata for all of their books at their website. If you need a guide on how to do just about anything from creating a GUI to interfacing with an SQL database, Programming Python is a remarkably thorough resource.

I've programmed in Python before, but haven't used it for a couple of years. I was looking for a refresher, as well as some example applications. Firstly note that this book isn't an introduction to Python, nor is it a reference. The author makes that clear in the preface, instead referring you to the other titles he has written. Also the book covers Python 3.x. Perhaps those who are interested in earlier versions should get the previous edition of the book. On the other hand while there are some changes between the two versions, reading the book wouldn't be a waste of time if you are interested in Python 2.x. I liked this book in the sense that if I looked up a particular topic, I often found his discussion reasonable and could get some useful idiomatic python code to use. On the other hand, the author intends this book as a tutorial. When I tried to read through it as a tutorial I just found it falling a bit flat. Also at around 1600 pages I doubt I would have the endurance to read through it from beginning to end. I guess the main problem with the book is that you are interested in one particular area to use Python, say web development, or interfacing with databases this book would probably have insufficient detail, and you would want a specialist book in that area. Also I found the authors writing style somewhat verbose. Another issue is that those people who want to build a GUI for instance may not be interested in his choice of tool Tkinter. In conclusion, this book does have some useful information, I didn't really like it. While it is hard to pin down the reasons for my dislike, I guess it is because he tries to cover so many topics, that not all of them are covered

that well. Also it is not always clear who the audience is, beginners may find his explanations to terse, whereas those who have some familiarity with python may wonder why he is pointing out the obvious. I recommend people who are looking to develop a particular application in python, instead get a book more focused on their area of interest. Those who are new to python should avoid this book also. Those who are looking for a python 3.x refresher should find a book that's a little less weighty. It's kind of annoying all those people who have received a free book from O'reilly giving it a five star review. Although they disclosed it, it now makes me suspicious as to how many other five star reviews are given by people who enjoy getting free books, and haven't disclosed the fact.

For those looking to further their Python abilities, Programming Python by Mark Lutz is a great tool in achieving that goal. If you're new to programming and trying to learn Python, you'll want to start with Learning Python by Mark Lutz as that will give you the necessary foundation. Then you can move to this one. I was interested in learning the language and didn't realize there was a Learning Python so I got Programming Python instead. Luckily, I have experience with a couple of languages so I was able to go through the book and learn what I needed to know. There are many good examples given that explain what you are trying to learn. As with other O'Reilly books, this also has plenty of code to help you through all the topics covered in the book. The index is well done and is great as a reference for later on when you need to look something up in a pinch. What I found really interesting is Chapter 20 about the integration of Python with C. Seeing that a lot of industry uses C for a lot of operational systems, that chapter was particularly useful as it helps to learn how to interface the two languages together. I have worked primarily with MATLAB throughout school and work. MATLAB is also able to interface with C and it's great, but expensive. Python is a great open source language so it allows anyone on a tight budget to do similar things as MATLAB and the ability to interface with C is great and this chapter will get you going on that. I highly recommend this book to anyone wanting to delve further into Python. If you have prior programming experience, especailly in OOP, then you should be fine with this. If you don't have that experience, like I said, start with Learning Python. You'll be better off that way.

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