## Python Essential Reference



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Fourth Edition



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Every so often a book comes along that makes you ask yourself, "Gee, when was the last time I had

my eyes checked?" David M. Beazley's Python: Essential Reference is just such a book. Condensing thousands of pages of Python online documentation into a compact 319-page softcover, Beazley and his editors used the old-college trick (often performed in reverse) of dickering with the font size to meet a putative page-limit requirement. The result is a truly condensed product fit for the occularly well-adjusted (nota bene).

Beazley's subject is Python, a full-featured, freely-redistributable, POSIX-compliant (platforms include Linux, Unix, Macintosh, and Windows) scripting language that is based on object-oriented design principles. As advertised, Beazley's source release (1.5.2) is available from an unfortunately slow server at www.python.org. The installation under Linux (Redhat 5.2) proceeded without incident.

Beazley holds true to his catalogic purpose: fully 230 pages are formatted as technical appendices and indices covering the standard litany: built-in function syntax, database features, OS-level interfaces, Internet interfaces, and compiling/profiling/debugging. All references are fully annotated and illustrated with example source code that runs from a couple of lines to a couple of pages. In lock step with competing scripting languages, Python is extensible and embeddable in C and C++, and with blitzkrieg efficiency, Beazley summarizes these crucial practical issues in the final 30 pages. Python users who are tired of chasing questions through hyperlinked online documents will benefit from the expansive random-access index.

Python the book captures the orderliness of Python the language. Beazley begins with an 86-page précis of Python in the fashion of Kernighan and Ritchie: too brief for a newbie tutorial but enough to propel old hands into a scripting language that aspires to the elegance of a compiled language.

Indeed, it is a byte-compiling language. The line bytecode=compile("some\_python\_script",'','exec')) creates 'bytecode' as a token executed by exec bytecode. But a five-minute investigation through Beazley's book does not describe how 'bytecode' can be written into a separate executable file. If writing the byte-compiled code to a file is not possible, Python suffers from the limitations of other scripting languages: the executable is the source and cannot be hidden from the user, at least not without some difficulty. Despite its extensibility, embeddability, and pleasing architecture, Python is like other scripting languages: appropriate for solving small nonproprietary problems.

Those familiar with more established scriptors like Perl may ask, "Why Python?" Unlike Perl, Python is a product of the fully object-oriented (OO) era, and its constructs reflect design principles that aspire beyond keystroke shortcuts of the succinct-but-often-arcane Perl. Python creator Guido van Rossum cleansed Perl's idiosyncracies and objectified basic data structure, data manipulations, and I/O. With Python, OO is so intrinsic that learning Python is equivalent to learning OO. The same cannot be said of Perl.

Unfortunately, comparisons with other languages are missing from Beazley's book. Van Rossum, in an embarrassingly self-serving foreword, preemptively asserts that we readers need "neither evangelizing nor proselytizing"--after all, we already own the book--but we do need galvanizing and we don't find it. Specifically, we need a response to the oft-repeated wisdom that new computer languages are only worth learning if they teach us to organize our thinking along new lines.

Scripting languages, however, are for quick and dirty projects: quick to write, easy to hack, and ultimately disposable. The essential tension created by van Rossum and friends is between the elegance of object-oriented principles and the utility of a quick-hacked script. Sadly, the tension remains unresolved in Beazley's reference. There is little to convince us that Python has earned its place in the firmament by changing our thinking. But Beazley has given us much to get us going if we have already taken the leap of faith. --Peter Leopold --This text refers to an out of print or unavailable edition of this title.

#### From Library Journal

Though Python is a relatively new programming language, it has quite a significant audience owing to its sensible syntax. An active user of Python since 1996, Beazley provides ample information on the fundamentals of versions 2.0 and 2.1, including syntax, functions, operators, classes, and libraries. This is first and foremost a reference, so he avoids lengthy discussions of Python's superiority. Peppered with good code samples and featuring a companion web site with more extensive pieces, this title should be on hand in larger libraries.

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#### 作者介绍:

David M. Beazley 早在1996年就开始使用Python编程。在洛斯阿莫斯国家实验室工作期间,他教会很多志愿者用Python编写科学计算软件。他创办的Dabeaz 公司提供软件开发、培训和咨询服务,专长于Python、Ruby、Perl等动态编程语言的实际应用。他是Python软件基金会的会员。

目录:

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## 标签

Python

programming

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### 评论

A concise python introductory book for experienced developers.

学过一门00语言的直接翻这本就ok

包含语法、系统库、嵌入与扩展的全面内容,与官方文档范围和叙事结构挺像,不错的线下手册。基于Python2.6和3.0,内容准确而丰富,提及了MRO的C3算法、各类Encoding的详细区别等等。
Very clear

<del>书</del> 评
第13章,第2节 copy copy The copy module provides functions for making shallow and deep copies of compound objects, including lists, tuples, dictionaries, and instances of user-defined objects. copy(x) Makes a shallow copy of x by creating a new compound ob

<sup>1:</sup> 主从句关系混乱,主谓宾衔接关系混乱。 2: 英语即使他们懂,他们也不会用很流畅的汉语逻辑反应到书面上 3: 英语其实他们不是特别懂 4: 汉语水平也很一般 5: 对他们的学识水平强烈怀疑,技术思维很一般,没有敏感度,否则书不会翻译成这样。

6: 因为我们是中国人,需要汉语记...

如果已经掌握了几种编程语言了,学Python就用这本书,其它Python的书都可以烧掉了。 这本书不仅将语法和API组织的井然有序,更可贵的,是他在整部书中穿插了很多best practices. -----

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