



Core Python Programming (2nd Edition)

By Wesley J Chun

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Praise for *Core Python Programming*

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programmer's wit. More importantly, you will learn Python. Even more importantly, you will find it invaluable in helping you in your day-to-day Python programming life. Well done, Mr. Chun!"

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Editorial Review

From the Author

Update for 2012

6:04PM PST, December 11, 2011

Unbelievably 4 years have passed since my last post. Some of you saw the Amazon page for *Core Python Applications Programming* with a "3rd edition" tag. I'm sure you'll naturally assume that it's the 3rd ed. of *Core Python Programming* but may be confused by the name change. To clarify: it is... sort of.

Two things occurred which led us here: the 1st is a shortage of books on the market to help the intermediate Python developer. What do you do after you've learned Python? You may have read *Dive into Python*, *Beginning Python*, or *Learning Python*, and have written some basic tools/apps but have nowhere to turn other than dive deeply into specific topics w/books about game programming, databases, graphics/multimedia, GUIs, networking, etc.

If you want more than one skill you'd have to buy a book on every topic. This is overkill, esp. if you're only interested in expanding your skillset. In those cases you're not ready to dive that deep. You'll spend a lot, read a few chapters, then they'll collect dust (unless you're being paid or want to become an expert). This is the exact reason why I wrote "Part II" of *Core Python Programming* calling it "Advanced Topics". After spending a year (most of 2000) writing what I thought was the entire book, I asked myself, "Wait, I've just taught all these folks Python, but I didn't really show what they could build with it." Part II was written as a result.

Another thing that happened is that the book grew quite significantly. Originally 810 pages long, it bloomed to 1120 for the 2nd ed. With the new material for the 3rd ed., a massive tome would be difficult & expensive to publish plus would cause an unnecessary burden upon readers (unless getting an electronic edition). Thus I am pleased to announce that those chapters have been extracted to form their own book, *Core Python Applications Programming*!

The contents have been cleaned up and retrofitted w/Python 3 examples paired w/their 2.x friends as a hybrid to help you learn both 2.x & 3.x. You'll find that many chapters have new material including: NoSQL/non-relational databases featuring MongoDB, more Microsoft Office® examples using Outlook & PowerPoint (including the text-to-slide generator some of you have seen me use at conferences), interfacing w/Twitter, using Yahoo!Mail & Gmail to send/receive email, and even doing social media analysis w/Google+! There are also brand new chapters on Web framework development using Django, an introduction to cloud computing w/Google App Engine, and text processing w/CSV, JSON, and XML. The purpose is to provide comprehensive intros to but not go deep into any particular topic; please adjust any expectations appropriately. We hope you are as excited about the new book as we are!

The material making up "Part I" of the original book will take another couple of years to complete due to all the changes coming from Python 3 and not on the horizon at this time, so if you are a programmer completely new to Python, we still recommend the 2nd edition of *Core Python Programming* as the best place to go learn Python as quickly and as in-depth as possible. You'll get a great preview of *Core Python Applications Programming* there too! Also I look forward to meeting some of you at an upcoming conference or in one of my training courses!

Core Python Programming FAQs

1:24 AM PDT, October 30, 2008; last updated 9:17AM PST, December 10, 2012

Wow, I can't believe it's already been 2 years since the 2nd edition was published... thanks for all your support! I'm writing again because many of you have asked about a 3rd edition as well as Python 2.6+ & 3.x.

Q: Will there be a 3rd edition for Python 3.0?

A: I've already added sections on 3.x & 2.6+ to the newest printings, but did not update this book for 3.0 because: 1) if I made updates w/every release of Python, I would no longer be employed nor have a family, 2) as a programmer, I really don't want to put anything on paper (and sell it) for a ".0" release of any software, including Python, and 3) it generally takes several years between editions before there is enough material to warrant a reexploration of the manuscript. 3.x definitely qualifies, so really it's reason #2. Keep an eye out for something after 3.5 though.

Q: Is the book outdated now due to Python 2.6+ & 3.x?

A: No! Some of you who have met me in person or have heard me speak will know that my philosophy is to teach readers the core features of the language and not focus on minor features that come w/every release. (Chances are that you won't be using them anyway!) The book has been created especially to be version-independent. Any important version-specific gotchas are highlighted w/annotations (look for release number markers in the margins). Also in 2009, I added 2 new appendices that discuss 3.x and the role of the final 2.x releases (2.6-2.7). These will only appear in the 5th and newer printings -- look for a red star on the cover.

Q: Why does the book have "a lot of mistakes in it," use thick paper, and have large fonts?

A: There are very few errors in the text now as all of the items on the Errata have been fixed in printings since 2009. The paper was thick only for the 1st edition, and the fonts are slightly larger than normal as it makes the manuscript easier and faster to read.

Q: How's the book selling?

A: Thanks goes to those of you who have made it a bestseller! The book has had 6 printings now and has already completely outsold the 1st book! Now the publisher has asked for a 3rd edition!

It's here!!

2:23 PM PDT, September 14, 2006, updated at 12:29 AM PDT, October 11, 2006

Thanks for tuning in to the Amazon page for *Core Python Programming*. I'm excited to bring you the latest incarnation of my book. In it, you will find updates as major as the changes in Python itself from the 1st edition days of 2.0 (2001). The 2nd edition is expanded (300 new pages!) and updated through Python 2.5 (released about the same time as this book!), including confirmed functionality for future versions. Also added are new chapters of advanced material. As in the 1st edition, a plethora of exercises can be found at the end of every chapter to hammer the concepts home. At the moment, this is the most complete and up-to-date Python book on the market today.

The book's main focus is comprehensively teaching you the core of the Python language, much more than just its syntax (which you don't really need a book to learn, right?). Knowing more about how Python works under the covers, including the relationship between data objects and memory management, will make you a much more effective Python programmer coming out of the gate. The advanced topics chapters are meant as intros or "quick dives" into a variety of distinct subjects. If moving towards those specific areas of development, they are more than enough to get you pointed in the right direction. We would say that the book is 40% introductory, 40% intermediate (in-depth core Python material plus advanced topics chapters), and 20% reference -- it is not meant to be a substitute for a pure reference such as the *Python Essential Reference* or *Python in a Nutshell*.

The material in the book is very much of a community effort (just like Python)! I welcome all comments, suggestions, corrections, feedback, etc., as well as what new chapters to add to future editions. Go to the book's website to download the code or check out the errata. When new versions of Python are released, look there for supplementary material to augment your book, keeping it as up-to-date as possible! I also offer public and private Python training courses and seminars should you feel the need for a "live" experience. I have written the book in an accessible style, reading as if I was having a conversation w/you, or if I was delivering a lecture to you attending one of my courses. Enjoy!

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About the Author

Wesley J. Chun, MSCS, is the author of Prentice Hall's bestselling *Core Python* book series (corepython.com), the *Python Fundamentals* companion video lectures, coauthor of *Python Web Development with Django* (withdjango.com), and has written for Linux Journal, CNET, and InformIT. In addition to being a software architect and Developer Advocate at Google, he runs CyberWeb (cyberwebconsulting.com), a consulting business specializing in Python training & engineering. He has more than twenty-five years of programming, teaching, and writing experience, including more than a decade of Python. While at Yahoo!, he helped create Yahoo!Mail and Yahoo! People Search using Python. He holds degrees in computer science, mathematics, and music from the University of California.

Users Review

From reader reviews:

Donna Bledsoe:

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