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Pythonic Programming

Tips for Becoming an Idiomatic Python Programmer

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Tips for Becoming an Idiomatic
Python Programmer



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Preface

Welcome, reader! Let me briefly introduce myself. I am a computer science professor, and I have been teaching Python since 2012—that is, for the last nine years. I have been teaching Python 2.7 and Python 3.4. I have been teaching undergraduate and graduate students. I have been teaching adults in their fifties, and teenagers, and everyone in between. I have even been teaching my twin cats in my dreams, and they were not the worst learners.

Over those nine years, I answered hundreds of questions and graded hundreds of programming assignments ranging from `print('Hello, world!')` to several-pages-long data acquisition and analysis scripts. I am not exaggerating: *literally hundreds*.

Besides, in the last three years, I have answered close to 2,000 Python-related questions on StackOverflow.¹ That's a lot of questions. I wonder what took me so long to start seeing patterns in the questions and the students' programs; most questions were the same, and most programs had the same programming errors.

That's when I decided to select one hundred Pythonic tips—solutions to the most common errors and answers to the most common questions—and compile them into a book.

And that is how this book was born.

Yours, D.Z.

Professor

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1. stackoverflow.com