
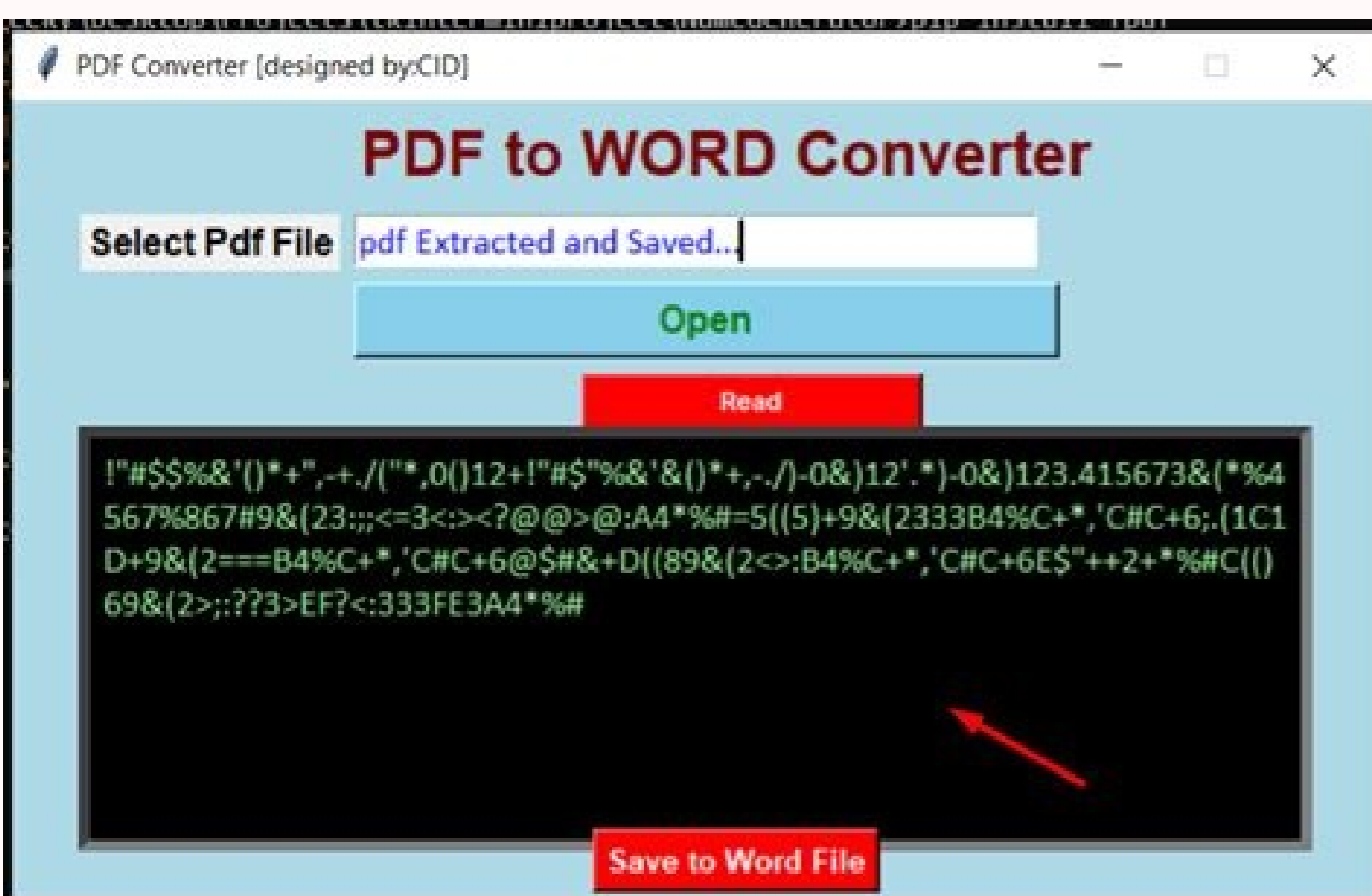


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Beginner's Python Cheat Sheet — Functions

What are functions?
Functions are named blocks of code designed to do one specific job. Functions allow you to write code blocks that can then be run whenever you need to accomplish the same task. Functions can take in the information they need, and return the information they generate. Using functions effectively makes your programs easier to write, read, test, and use.

Defining a function
The first line of a function is its definition, indicated by the keyword `def` followed by the function name and a set of parentheses containing any arguments. A function's body is the code that follows the function name. The body of a function is indented by a set of parentheses, giving the name of the function followed by a set of parentheses.

Making a function
`def greet_name():`
 """Prints a simple greeting **"""**
 print("hello!")

Passing information to a function
Information that's passed to a function is called an argument. Arguments are passed to a function by placing the argument's name and its value in parentheses after the function's name. Your parameters are listed in parentheses in the function's definition.

Passing a single argument
`def greet_name(name):`
 """Prints a simple greeting **"""**
 print("hello, " + name + "!")

`greet_name("sarah")`
`greet_name("oscar")`
`greet_name("brandon")`

Passing a list to a function
The first line of a function is its definition, and the function can work with the values in the list. Any changes the function makes to the list will affect the original list. You can convert a function from modifying a list by passing a copy of the list as an argument.

Passing a list as an argument
`def greet_names(names):`
 """Prints a simple greeting to everyone **"""**
 for name in names:
 msg = "hello, " + name + "!"
 print(msg)

`names = ["hannah", "ty", "margot"]`
`greet_names(names)`

Allowing a function to modify a list
The following example sends a set of names to a function for printing. The original list is mutable, and the passed list is also mutable. Changes to the list are reflected in the original list.

`def print_names(names):`
 """Prints a list of names **"""**
 while names:
 current_name = names.pop()
 print(current_name)

Here some unrelated designs,
and print each of them.
`print("Printing " + current_name)`
`print_names(names)`
`print("Unrelated " + unrelated)`
`print("Unrelated " + unrelated)`

Preventing a function from modifying a list
The following example is the same as the previous one, except the original list is converted to a tuple, which is immutable.

`def print_names(names):`
 """Prints a list of names **"""**

Positional and keyword arguments
The first line of a function is its definition, and the function can work with the values in the list. Any changes the function makes to the list will affect the original list. You can convert a function from modifying a list by passing a copy of the list as an argument.

Using positional arguments
`def describe_pet(pet_name, owner):`
 """Display information about a pet **"""**
 print("I'd love a " + pet_name + ".")
 print("Its name is " + owner + ".")

`describe_pet("hamster", "harry")`
`describe_pet("dog", "willie")`

Using keyword arguments
`def describe_pet(pet_name, owner):`
 """Display information about a pet **"""**
 print("I'd love a " + pet_name + ".")
 print("Its name is " + owner + ".")

`describe_pet(owner="harry", pet_name="hamster")`
`describe_pet(pet_name="willie", owner="dog")`

Default values
You can provide a default value for a parameter. When the function runs, the default value will be used unless the user provides a different value. Parameters with default values must be listed after parameters without default values in the function's definition. The `*` operator allows a parameter to collect an arbitrary number of arguments.

Using a default value
`def describe_pet(pet_name, owner="dog"):`
 """Display information about a pet **"""**
 print("I'd love a " + pet_name + ".")
 print("Its name is " + owner + ".")

`describe_pet("hamster", "harry")`
`describe_pet("willie")`

Using None to make an argument optional
`def describe_pet(pet_name, name=None):`
 """Display information about a pet **"""**
 print("I'd love a " + pet_name + ".")
 print("Its name is " + name + ".")

`describe_pet("hamster", "harry")`
`describe_pet("willie")`

Return values
A function can return a value or a set of values. When a function returns a value, the calling line must provide a variable to store the return value. A function stops running when it reaches a return statement.

Returning a single value
`def get_full_name(first, last):`
 """Return a name formatted as full name **"""**
 full_name = first + " " + last
 return full_name

`musician = get_full_name("jimi", "hendrix")`
`print(musician)`

Returning a dictionary
`def build_person(first, last):`
 """Return a dictionary of information about a person **"""**
 person = {"first": first, "last": last}
 return person

`musician = build_person("jimi", "hendrix")`
`print(musician)`

Returning a dictionary with optional values
`def build_person(first, last, age=None):`
 """Return a dictionary of information about a person **"""**
 person = {"first": first, "last": last, "age": age}
 return person

`musician = build_person("jimi", "hendrix", 27)`
`print(musician)`
`musician = build_person("jimi", "hendrix")`
`print(musician)`

Visualizing functions
To learn more about these examples on pythonforbeginners.com.

Python Crash Course
Covers Python 3 and Python 2
nostalgebraic.com/pythoncrashcourse

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