

Python Lists

```
mylist = ["apple", "banana", "cherry"]
```

List

Lists are used to store multiple items in a single variable.

Lists are one of 4 built-in data types in Python used to store collections of data, the other 3 are [Tuple](#), [Set](#), and [Dictionary](#), all with different qualities and usage.

Lists are created using square brackets:

Example

Create a List:

```
thislist = ["apple", "banana", "cherry"]  
  
print(thislist)
```

List Items

List items are ordered, changeable, and allow duplicate values.

List items are indexed, the first item has index `[0]`, the second item has index `[1]` etc.

Ordered

When we say that lists are ordered, it means that the items have a defined order, and that order will not change.

If you add new items to a list, the new items will be placed at the end of the list.

Note: There are some [list methods](#) that will change the order, but in general: the order of the items will not change.

Changeable

The list is changeable, meaning that we can change, add, and remove items in a list after it has been created.

Allow Duplicates

Since lists are indexed, lists can have items with the same value:

Example

Lists allow duplicate values:

```
thislist = ["apple", "banana", "cherry", "apple", "cherry"]  
  
print(thislist)
```

List Length

To determine how many items a list has, use the `len()` function:

Example

Print the number of items in the list:

```
thislist = ["apple", "banana", "cherry"]  
  
print(len(thislist))
```

List Items - Data Types

List items can be of any data type:

Example

String, int and boolean data types:

```
list1 = ["apple", "banana", "cherry"]  
  
list2 = [1, 5, 7, 9, 3]  
  
list3 = [True, False, False]
```

A list can contain different data types:

Example

A list with strings, integers and boolean values:

```
list1 = ["abc", 34, True, 40, "male"]
```

type()

From Python's perspective, lists are defined as objects with the data type 'list'

```
<class 'list'>
```

Example

What is the data type of a list?

```
mylist = ["apple", "banana", "cherry"]  
  
print(type(mylist))
```

The list() Constructor

It is also possible to use the `list()` constructor when creating a new list.

Example

Using the `list()` constructor to make a List:

```
thislist = list(("apple", "banana", "cherry")) # note the double  
round-brackets  
  
print(thislist)
```

Python Collections (Arrays)

There are four collection data types in the Python programming language:

- List is a collection which is ordered and changeable. Allows duplicate members.
- [Tuple](#) is a collection which is ordered and unchangeable. Allows duplicate members.
- [Set](#) is a collection which is unordered, unchangeable*, and unindexed. No duplicate members.
- [Dictionary](#) is a collection which is ordered** and changeable. No duplicate members.

*Set *items* are unchangeable, but you can remove and/or add items whenever you like.

**As of Python version 3.7, dictionaries are *ordered*. In Python 3.6 and earlier, dictionaries are *unordered*.

When choosing a collection type, it is useful to understand the properties of that type. Choosing the right type for a particular data set could mean retention of meaning, and, it could mean an increase in efficiency or security.

Python - Access List Items

Access Items

List items are indexed and you can access them by referring to the index number:

Example

Print the second item of the list:

```
thislist = ["apple", "banana", "cherry"]  
  
print(thislist[1])
```

Note: The first item has index 0.

Negative Indexing

Negative indexing means start from the end

-1 refers to the last item, -2 refers to the second last item etc.

Example

Print the last item of the list:

```
thislist = ["apple", "banana", "cherry"]  
  
print(thislist[-1])
```

Range of Indexes

You can specify a range of indexes by specifying where to start and where to end the range.

When specifying a range, the return value will be a new list with the specified items.

Example

Return the third, fourth, and fifth item:

```
thislist = ["apple", "banana", "cherry", "orange", "kiwi", "melon", "mango"]  
  
print(thislist[2:5])
```

Note: The search will start at index 2 (included) and end at index 5 (not included).

Remember that the first item has index 0.

By leaving out the start value, the range will start at the first item:

Example

This example returns the items from the beginning to, but NOT including, "kiwi":

```
thislist = ["apple", "banana", "cherry", "orange", "kiwi", "melon", "mango"]  
  
print(thislist[:4])
```

By leaving out the end value, the range will go on to the end of the list:

Example

This example returns the items from "cherry" to the end:

```
thislist = ["apple", "banana", "cherry", "orange", "kiwi", "melon", "mango"]
```

```
print(thislist[2:])
```

Range of Negative Indexes

Specify negative indexes if you want to start the search from the end of the list:

Example

This example returns the items from "orange" (-4) to, but NOT including "mango" (-1):

```
thislist = ["apple", "banana", "cherry", "orange", "kiwi", "melon", "mango"]
```

```
print(thislist[-4:-1])
```

Check if Item Exists

To determine if a specified item is present in a list use the `in` keyword:

Example

Check if "apple" is present in the list:

```
thislist = ["apple", "banana", "cherry"]
```

```
if "apple" in thislist:
```

```
    print("Yes, 'apple' is in the fruits list")
```


Python - Change List Items

Change Item Value

To change the value of a specific item, refer to the index number:

Example

Change the second item:

```
thislist = ["apple", "banana", "cherry"]  
  
thislist[1] = "blackcurrant"  
  
print(thislist)
```

Change a Range of Item Values

To change the value of items within a specific range, define a list with the new values, and refer to the range of index numbers where you want to insert the new values:

Example

Change the values "banana" and "cherry" with the values "blackcurrant" and "watermelon":

```
thislist = ["apple", "banana", "cherry", "orange", "kiwi", "mango"]  
  
thislist[1:3] = ["blackcurrant", "watermelon"]  
  
print(thislist)
```

If you insert *more* items than you replace, the new items will be inserted where you specified, and the remaining items will move accordingly:

Example

Change the second value by replacing it with *two* new values:

```
thislist = ["apple", "banana", "cherry"]  
  
thislist[1:2] = ["blackcurrant", "watermelon"]  
  
print(thislist)
```

Note: The length of the list will change when the number of items inserted does not match the number of items replaced.

If you insert *less* items than you replace, the new items will be inserted where you specified, and the remaining items will move accordingly:

Example

Change the second and third value by replacing it with *one* value:

```
thislist = ["apple", "banana", "cherry"]  
  
thislist[1:3] = ["watermelon"]  
  
print(thislist)
```

Insert Items

To insert a new list item, without replacing any of the existing values, we can use the `insert()` method.

The `insert()` method inserts an item at the specified index:

Example

Insert "watermelon" as the third item:

```
thislist = ["apple", "banana", "cherry"]
```

```
thislist.insert(2, "watermelon")
```

```
print(thislist)
```

Note: As a result of the example above, the list will now contain 4 items.

Python - Add List Items

Append Items

To add an item to the end of the list, use the `append()` method:

Example

Using the `append()` method to append an item:

```
thislist = ["apple", "banana", "cherry"]  
  
thislist.append("orange")  
  
print(thislist)
```

Insert Items

To insert a list item at a specified index, use the `insert()` method.

The `insert()` method inserts an item at the specified index:

Example

Insert an item as the second position:

```
thislist = ["apple", "banana", "cherry"]  
  
thislist.insert(1, "orange")  
  
print(thislist)
```

Note: As a result of the examples above, the lists will now contain 4 items.

Extend List

To append elements from *another list* to the current list, use the `extend()` method.

Example

Add the elements of `tropical` to `thislist`:

```
thislist = ["apple", "banana", "cherry"]  
  
tropical = ["mango", "pineapple", "papaya"]  
  
thislist.extend(tropical)  
  
print(thislist)
```

The elements will be added to the *end* of the list.

Add Any Iterable

The `extend()` method does not have to append *lists*, you can add any iterable object (tuples, sets, dictionaries etc.).

Example

Add elements of a tuple to a list:

```
thislist = ["apple", "banana", "cherry"]  
  
thistuple = ("kiwi", "orange")
```

```
thislist.extend(thistuple)
```

```
print(thislist)
```

Python - Remove List Items

Remove Specified Item

The `remove()` method removes the specified item.

Example

Remove "banana":

```
thislist = ["apple", "banana", "cherry"]  
  
thislist.remove("banana")  
  
print(thislist)
```

Remove Specified Index

The `pop()` method removes the specified index.

Example

Remove the second item:

```
thislist = ["apple", "banana", "cherry"]  
  
thislist.pop(1)  
  
print(thislist)
```

If you do not specify the index, the `pop()` method removes the last item.

Example

Remove the last item:

```
thislist = ["apple", "banana", "cherry"]  
  
thislist.pop()  
  
print(thislist)
```

The `del` keyword also removes the specified index:

Example

Remove the first item:

```
thislist = ["apple", "banana", "cherry"]  
  
del thislist[0]  
  
print(thislist)
```

The `del` keyword can also delete the list completely.

Example

Delete the entire list:

```
thislist = ["apple", "banana", "cherry"]  
  
del thislist
```

Try it Yourself »

Clear the List

The `clear()` method empties the list.

The list still remains, but it has no content.

Example

Clear the list content:

```
thislist = ["apple", "banana", "cherry"]  
  
thislist.clear()  
  
print(thislist)
```

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Python - Loop Lists

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Loop Through a List

You can loop through the list items by using a `for` loop:

Example

Print all items in the list, one by one:

```
thislist = ["apple", "banana", "cherry"]
```

```
for x in thislist:
```

```
    print(x)
```

Try it Yourself »

Learn more about `for` loops in our [Python For Loops](#) Chapter.

Loop Through the Index Numbers

You can also loop through the list items by referring to their index number.

Use the `range()` and `len()` functions to create a suitable iterable.

Example

Print all items by referring to their index number:

```
thislist = ["apple", "banana", "cherry"]
```

```
for i in range(len(thislist)):
```

```
    print(thislist[i])
```

Try it Yourself »

The iterable created in the example above is `[0, 1, 2]`.

Using a While Loop

You can loop through the list items by using a `while` loop.

Use the `len()` function to determine the length of the list, then start at 0 and loop your way through the list items by referring to their indexes.

Remember to increase the index by 1 after each iteration.

Example

Print all items, using a `while` loop to go through all the index numbers

```
thislist = ["apple", "banana", "cherry"]
```

```
i = 0
```

```
while i < len(thislist):
```

```
    print(thislist[i])
```

```
    i = i + 1
```

Try it Yourself »

Learn more about `while` loops in our [Python While Loops](#) Chapter.

Looping Using List Comprehension

List Comprehension offers the shortest syntax for looping through lists:

Example

A short hand `for` loop that will print all items in a list:

```
thislist = ["apple", "banana", "cherry"]
```

```
[print(x) for x in thislist]
```

Python - List Comprehension

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List Comprehension

List comprehension offers a shorter syntax when you want to create a new list based on the values of an existing list.

Example:

Based on a list of fruits, you want a new list, containing only the fruits with the letter "a" in the name.

Without list comprehension you will have to write a `for` statement with a conditional test inside:

Example

```
fruits = ["apple", "banana", "cherry", "kiwi", "mango"]
```

```
newlist = []
```

```
for x in fruits:
```

```
if "a" in x:  
  
    newlist.append(x)
```

```
print(newlist)
```

Try it Yourself »

With list comprehension you can do all that with only one line of code:

Example

```
fruits = ["apple", "banana", "cherry", "kiwi", "mango"]
```

```
newlist = [x for x in fruits if "a" in x]
```

```
print(newlist)
```

Try it Yourself »

The Syntax

```
newlist = [expression for item in iterable if condition == True]
```

The return value is a new list, leaving the old list unchanged.

Condition

The *condition* is like a filter that only accepts the items that evaluate to `True`.

Example

Only accept items that are not "apple":

```
newlist = [x for x in fruits if x != "apple"]
```

Try it Yourself »

The condition `if x != "apple"` will return `True` for all elements other than "apple", making the new list contain all fruits except "apple".

The *condition* is optional and can be omitted:

Example

With no `if` statement:

```
newlist = [x for x in fruits]
```

Try it Yourself »

Iterable

The *iterable* can be any iterable object, like a list, tuple, set etc.

Example

You can use the `range()` function to create an iterable:

```
newlist = [x for x in range(10)]
```

[Try it Yourself »](#)

Same example, but with a condition:

Example

Accept only numbers lower than 5:

```
newlist = [x for x in range(10) if x < 5]
```

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Expression

The *expression* is the current item in the iteration, but it is also the outcome, which you can manipulate before it ends up like a list item in the new list:

Example

Set the values in the new list to upper case:

```
newlist = [x.upper() for x in fruits]
```

[Try it Yourself »](#)

You can set the outcome to whatever you like:

Example

Set all values in the new list to 'hello':

```
newlist = ['hello' for x in fruits]
```

[Try it Yourself »](#)

The *expression* can also contain conditions, not like a filter, but as a way to manipulate the outcome:

Example

Return "orange" instead of "banana":

```
newlist = [x if x != "banana" else "orange" for x in fruits]
```

[Try it Yourself »](#)

The *expression* in the example above says:

"Return the item if it is not banana, if it is banana return orange".

Python - Sort Lists

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Sort List Alphanumerically

List objects have a `sort()` method that will sort the list alphanumerically, ascending, by default:

Example

Sort the list alphabetically:

```
thislist = ["orange", "mango", "kiwi", "pineapple", "banana"]  
  
thislist.sort()  
  
print(thislist)
```

[Try it Yourself »](#)

Example

Sort the list numerically:

```
thislist = [100, 50, 65, 82, 23]  
  
thislist.sort()  
  
print(thislist)
```

[Try it Yourself »](#)

Sort Descending

To sort descending, use the keyword argument `reverse = True`:

Example

Sort the list descending:

```
thislist = ["orange", "mango", "kiwi", "pineapple", "banana"]  
  
thislist.sort(reverse = True)  
  
print(thislist)
```

Try it Yourself »

Example

Sort the list descending:

```
thislist = [100, 50, 65, 82, 23]  
  
thislist.sort(reverse = True)  
  
print(thislist)
```

Try it Yourself »

Customize Sort Function

You can also customize your own function by using the keyword argument `key = function`.

The function will return a number that will be used to sort the list (the lowest number first):

Example

Sort the list based on how close the number is to 50:

```
def myfunc(n):  
  
    return abs(n - 50)  
  
thislist = [100, 50, 65, 82, 23]  
  
thislist.sort(key = myfunc)  
  
print(thislist)
```

[Try it Yourself »](#)

Case Insensitive Sort

By default the `sort()` method is case sensitive, resulting in all capital letters being sorted before lower case letters:

Example

Case sensitive sorting can give an unexpected result:

```
thislist = ["banana", "Orange", "Kiwi", "cherry"]  
  
thislist.sort()  
  
print(thislist)
```

Try it Yourself »

Luckily we can use built-in functions as key functions when sorting a list.

So if you want a case-insensitive sort function, use `str.lower` as a key function:

Example

Perform a case-insensitive sort of the list:

```
thislist = ["banana", "Orange", "Kiwi", "cherry"]

thislist.sort(key = str.lower)

print(thislist)
```

Try it Yourself »

Reverse Order

What if you want to reverse the order of a list, regardless of the alphabet?

The `reverse()` method reverses the current sorting order of the elements.

Example

Reverse the order of the list items:

```
thislist = ["banana", "Orange", "Kiwi", "cherry"]

thislist.reverse()
```

```
print(thislist)
```

Python - Copy Lists

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Copy a List

You cannot copy a list simply by typing `list2 = list1`, because: `list2` will only be a *reference* to `list1`, and changes made in `list1` will automatically also be made in `list2`.

There are ways to make a copy, one way is to use the built-in List method `copy()`.

Example

Make a copy of a list with the `copy()` method:

```
thislist = ["apple", "banana", "cherry"]
```

```
mylist = thislist.copy()
```

```
print(mylist)
```

[Try it Yourself »](#)

Another way to make a copy is to use the built-in method `list()`.

Example

Make a copy of a list with the `list()` method:

```
thislist = ["apple", "banana", "cherry"]
```

```
mylist = list(thislist)
```

```
print(mylist)
```

[Try it Yourself »](#)

Python - Join Lists

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Join Two Lists

There are several ways to join, or concatenate, two or more lists in Python.

One of the easiest ways are by using the `+` operator.

Example

Join two list:

```
list1 = ["a", "b", "c"]
```

```
list2 = [1, 2, 3]
```

```
list3 = list1 + list2
```

```
print(list3)
```

Try it Yourself »

Another way to join two lists is by appending all the items from list2 into list1, one by one:

Example

Append list2 into list1:

```
list1 = ["a", "b", "c"]
```

```
list2 = [1, 2, 3]
```

```
for x in list2:
```

```
    list1.append(x)
```

```
print(list1)
```

Try it Yourself »

Or you can use the `extend()` method, which purpose is to add elements from one list to another list:

Example

Use the `extend()` method to add list2 at the end of list1:

```
list1 = ["a", "b" , "c"]
```

```
list2 = [1, 2, 3]
```

```
list1.extend(list2)
```

```
print(list1)
```

[Try it Yourself »](#)

Python - List Methods

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List Methods

Python has a set of built-in methods that you can use on lists.

Method	Description
append()	Adds an element at the end of the list
clear()	Removes all the elements from the list

<u>copy()</u>	Returns a copy of the list
<u>count()</u>	Returns the number of elements with the specified value
<u>extend()</u>	Add the elements of a list (or any iterable), to the end of the current list
<u>index()</u>	Returns the index of the first element with the specified value
<u>insert()</u>	Adds an element at the specified position
<u>pop()</u>	Removes the element at the specified position
<u>remove()</u>	Removes the item with the specified value
<u>reverse()</u>	Reverses the order of the list
<u>sort()</u>	Sorts the list

