# Setting up

Before you can begin coding programs in the Python language you need to set up a programming environment on your computer, by installing the Python interpreter and the standard library of tested code modules that comes along with it. This is available online as a free download from the Python Software Foundation.

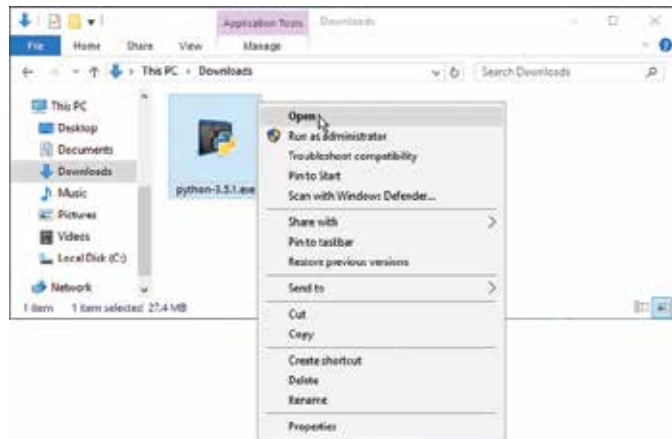Installers for Mac OS X and other platforms are also freely available at **python.org/downloads**

**1** Launch a web browser and navigate to **python.org/downloads** then click the **Download** button to grab the latest version for your system – in this case it's "Python 3.5.1"

**2** When the download completes, find the executable (**.exe**) file in your Downloads folder, then **Open** Python Setup

**Hot tip**

Adding Python to the System Path makes it available from within any directory. After installation, you can enter the exact command **python -V** at a Command Prompt to see the interpreter respond with its version number.

**3** Next, be sure to check the Python Setup option box to select the feature to **Add Python 3.5 to PATH**

**4** Now, click the Python Setup dialog's **Install Now** option to begin copying files onto your computer
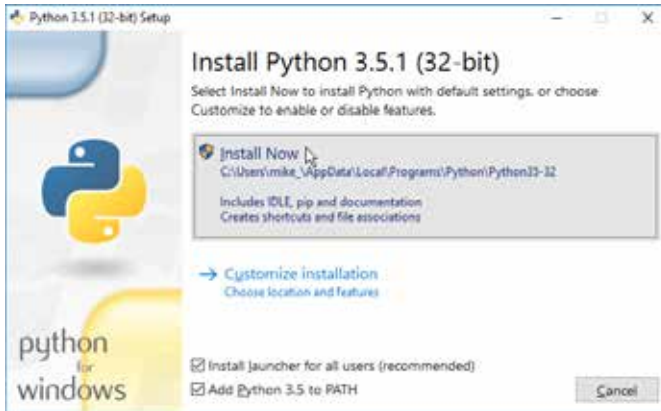


> **Hot tip**
>
> Do accept the suggested destination directory.

**5** Click the **Close** button to complete your Python Setup

Upon completion, the Python group is added to your Start/All Apps menu. Most important of this group is the **IDLE** item that launches the Python integrated development environment.



> **Hot tip**
>
> You will use the IDLE launcher often, so right-click on its icon and choose "Pin to taskbar" to make it readily available from the Windows Desktop.

# Exploring IDLE

The installed Python software package includes the Integrated DeveLopment Environment (IDLE) in which you can easily code and run programs, or snippets, written in the Python language. IDLE provides two different windows for program development:

● Shell Window

● Edit Window

When you start up IDLE it opens a new window containing a menu bar, a banner describing the version, and a **>>>** prompt. This is the Shell Window in which you can interact directly with the Python interpreter by entering statements at the prompt.

Menu Bar

Version Banner

Interactive
Prompt

**Hot tip**
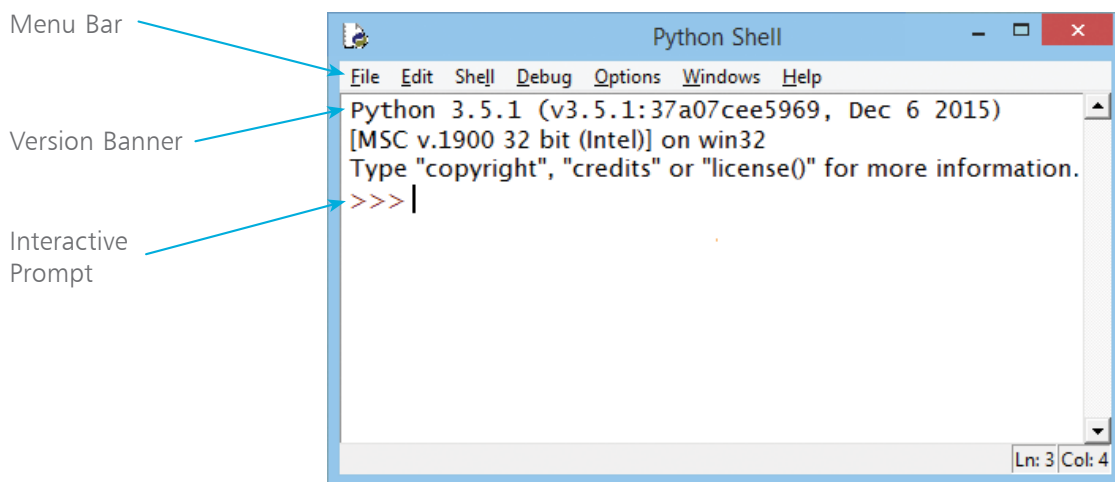
Most programming languages require text strings to be enclosed in quote marks to differentiate them from program code. By convention, Python coders use single quotes.

If the interpreter understands your entry it will respond with an appropriate reply, otherwise it will report an error.

You can make the interpreter print out a string of text by entering a Python **print()** function statement that encloses your string within quote marks inside the parentheses at the interactive prompt.

You can also make the interpreter print out the result of a simple arithmetic sum by entering a valid sum statement at the prompt.

If your statement is not valid, such as a sum that attempts to divide a number by zero, the interpreter will print out an error message helpfully describing the nature of the error.