

Editing and Running a Python Program With NotePad++ on Windows

Note: This handout is under development – please send suggestions to Chuck Severance (csev@umich.edu)

Screen Cast for This Material

<http://tinyurl.com/kjkylu>

You will need Apple QuickTime installed to view this video.

Pre-Requisites

Please download and install NotePad++ from this site. Look for the ".exe" installer file to download and then run to install NotePad++.

<http://sourceforge.net/projects/notepad-plus/files/>

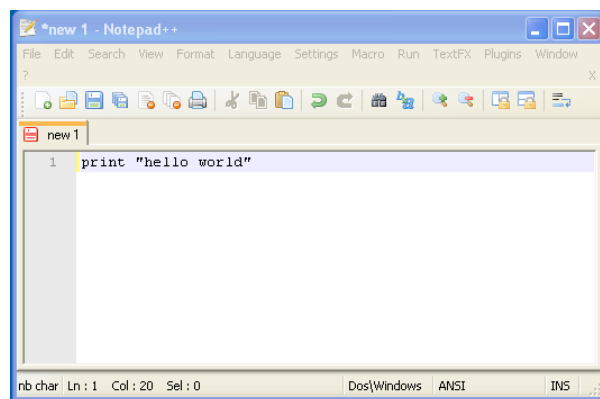
Please download and install Python 2.7.3 (any recent 2.x version will do) from:

<http://www.python.org/download/releases/2.7.3/>

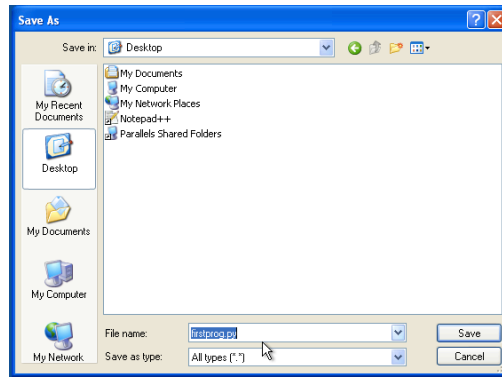
Please install Python into the default directory of **C:\Python27**

Editing With NotePad++

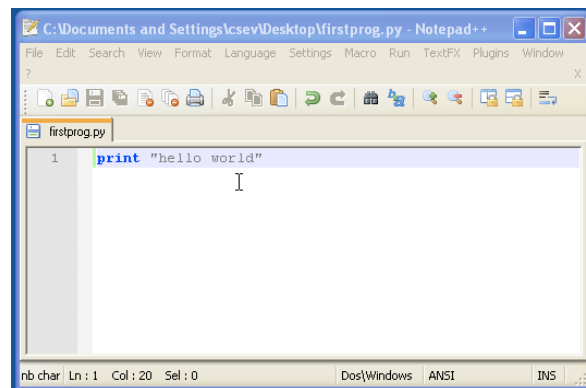
Start **NotePad++** from either a Desktop icon or from the **Start Programs** menu and enter your first Python program into **NotePad++**:



Save your program as **firstprog.py** onto your Desktop.



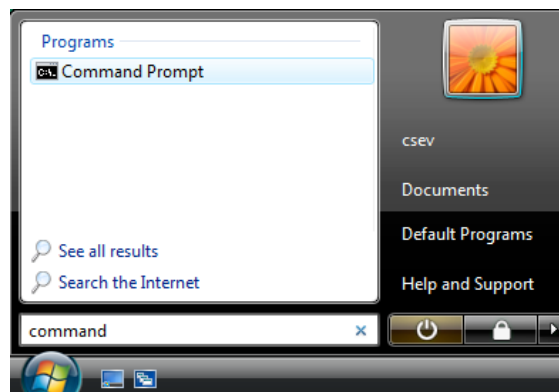
You will notice that after you save the file, **NotePad++** will color your code based on the Python syntax rules.



Syntax coloring is a very helpful feature as it gives you visual feedback about your program and can help you track down syntax errors more easily. **NotePad++** only knows that your file is a Python file after you save it with a ".py" suffix.

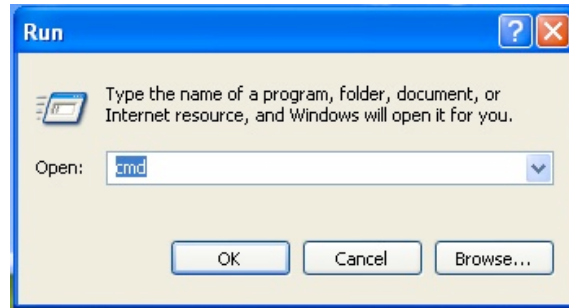
Starting Command Line on Windows Vista

Press **Start** (the round Window icon in the lower right) and in the space called **Start Search** type in the word **command** – Vista will find the “Command Prompt” – select and launch the Command Prompt.



Starting Command Line on Windows XP

To start the command line interface to Windows XP, do **Start -> Run -> cmd -> OK** – You will see an interface that looks as follows after you press **Start -> Run** – simply enter **cmd** and press **OK**.



Note: This is a good time to re-affirm the non-use of spaces in file names and directories. It makes life in the Command Line much easier. If not, you can simply put the folder/directory or file name in double quotes.

Where Are You?

When the command line starts up, you are in your “home” directory. Your home directory is different for each of the operating systems. In each of these examples, your logged in account should be used instead of **csev**.

Windows XP: C:\Documents and Settings\csev

Windows Vista: C:\Users\csev

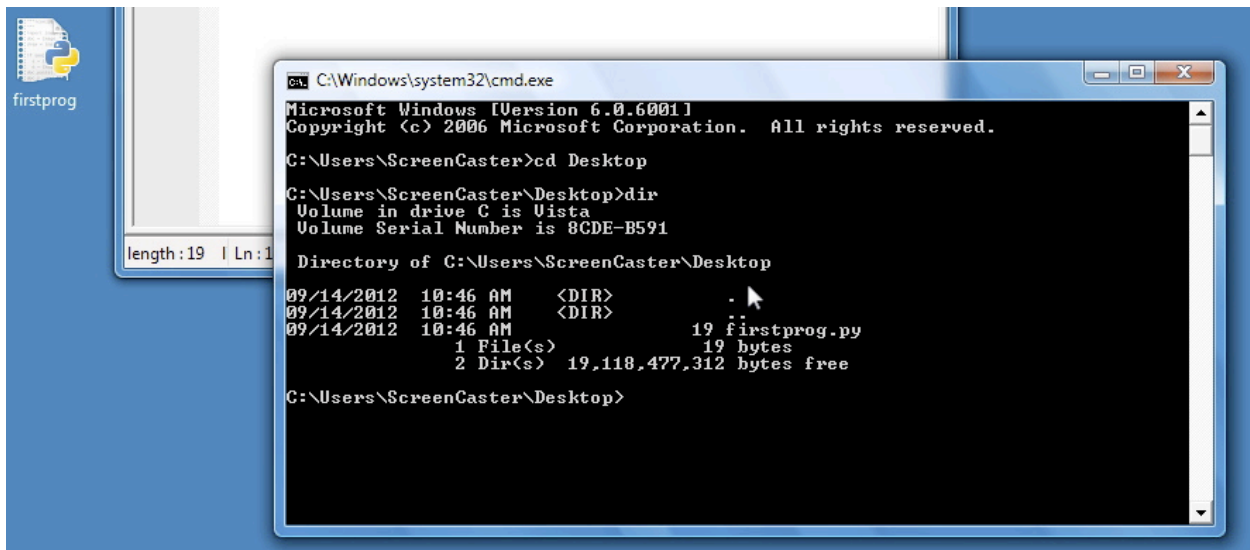
The command line prompt usually includes some clue as to where you are “at” in the folder structure on your hard drive.

If you want to really figure out where you are, use the **cd** command with no parameters

```
C:\Documents and Settings\csev> cd
C:\Documents and Settings\csev
```

Where can you go?

Generally the first thing you want to do when you open a command line interface is to navigate to the right folder. Say you wanted to run a file from your desktop. The command is **cd Desktop** to get into the folder that is your Desktop. You can use the **dir** command to see which files are in the current directory and the **cd ..** command to go "up" a directory



Nifty Trick: On the **cd** command, you can partially type a folder name like **Desktop** and then press the **TAB** key – the system will auto-complete the folder name if you have typed enough that the system can accurately guess what you mean to type.

If you get Lost...

If you can't figure out what folder you are in and/or cannot figure out how to get to the folder you want to get to – simply close and re-open the Command Line / Terminal window. You will be back to your “home” directory – so you can start from a known location.

Some Cool Hints on the Windows Command Line Interface

If you click on the little icon in the upper-left of the command prompt window and select **Preferences** – you can set many things about the command line – probably the most important is to set the Command History Buffer Size to be 999.

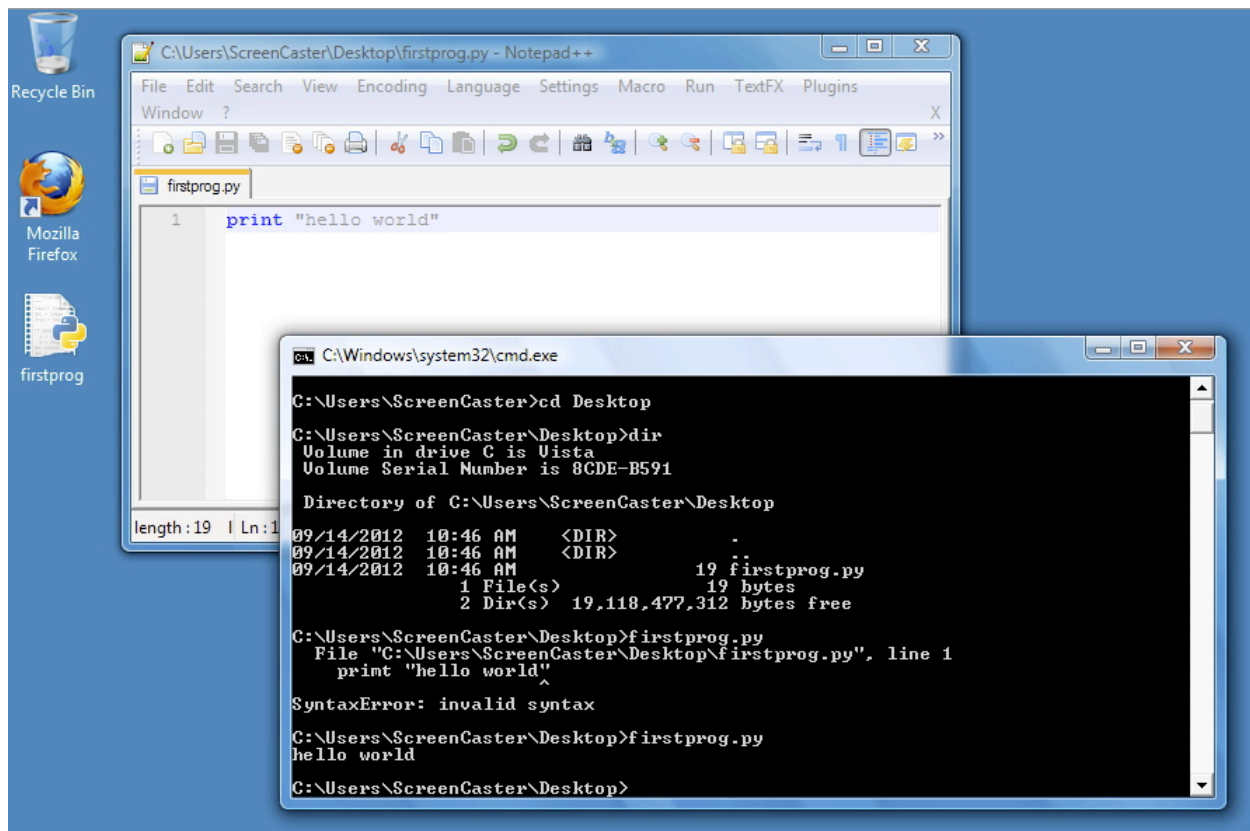
If you want to clear the scroll back buffer on windows type the **cls** command at the prompt.

Running Your Python Program in the Command Line

To run your program in the command line you type

firstprog.py

Where **firstprog.py** is the name of the file containing your Python program. Make sure to use the **cd** command to be in the correct directory that contains your program file(s).



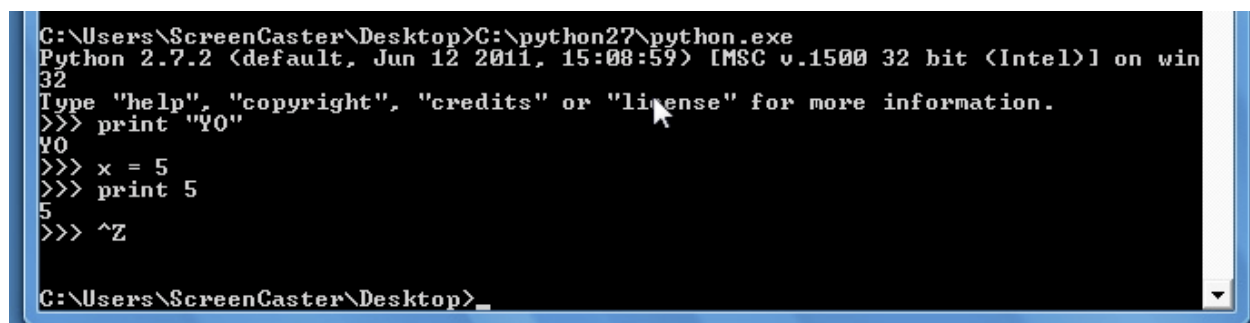
You can run your program over and over again in the command window. **Hint:** You can use the up-arrow key to scroll back through previous commands and re-execute them by pressing **enter**. This allows you to quickly edit and rerun your program to make and test changes.

Running The Python Interpreter in the Command Line

You can run the Python interpreter on the Command line by typing

C:\Python27\python.exe

Python will load and give you the ">>>" (Chevron) prompt and allow you to type Python commands



You can end your session with the interpreter by typing **Control-Z** and **Return**.