Shh

- Python is ...
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- Python is . . .
- slow.
Python is slow

- A tight loop like below runs 10 to 100 (or more) times slower than C or java.

```python
1  total = 0
2  for i in range(1000):
3      for j in range(1000):
4          total += i  # how many times this statement runs?
5
6  print total
7  # 499950000000
```
Python is slow

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```python
total = 0
for i in range(1000):
    for j in range(1000):
        total += i  # how many times this statement runs?

print total
# 499950000000
```

- Although you can re-write the above and make it run almost, but not quite, as fast.

```python
print sum([1000 * i for i in xrange(1000)])
# 499950000000
```
Why is Python slow

- Interpreted, not compiled.
- Almost no automatic optimization.
- High-level, versatile programming constructs tend to be larger, more complicated, and slower.
- A simple piece of code may have a huge performance implication. e.g. `range(1000)` creates and returns a 1000-element list every time it is called.
Why Python is not slow

- Faster programming constructs (e.g., `xrange()` vs. `range()`, comprehension vs. `for` loop)
- Modules written in C (e.g., `cPickle` vs. `pickle`)
- NumPy and SciPy for scientific computation.
- Python/C API (http://docs.python.org/2/c-api)
- Cython (http://cython.org) takes Python code and generates efficient C code.
- PyPy Just-In-Time (JIT) compiler. (http://pypy.org)
Implementations

- The reference implementation (in C) is called CPython, which Guido van Rossum authored, starting in 1989.

- Guido is also known as Benevolent Dictator For Life (BDFL. See http://tinyurl.com/5pg99q)
Implementations (cont.)

- There are other implementations as well.
- IronPython (.NET CLR http://ironpython.net)
- Jython (Java VM http://www.jython.org/)
- pyjs (JavaScript http://pyjs.org/)
- Skulpt (web browser http://www.skulpt.org)
- CodeSkulptor (web browser http://www.codeskulptor.org)
Python 2 or 3?

- Python 3.0 (2008) broke backward compatibility.
  - Can’t use 2 modules in 3 and vice versa.
- "2 is legacy, 3 is the present and future." (http://tinyurl.com/omgx9tk)
  - 3.4 is expected in early 2014.
  - 2.0 was released in 2000.
  - 2.7 (2010) will be the last 2.x branch.
- Many of 3’s major futures have been backported to 2.6 and 2.7, but not all.
- Other implementations in general still lack support for Python 3.
Editors and IDE’s

- EMACS comes with python.el (24.2 and up) and python-mode.el (newer). See (http://tinyurl.com/y67za8d)
- VIM configuration links at http://tinyurl.com/apx3avc
- IDLE (http://tinyurl.com/c7j2k3x)
- (Semi-) commercial editors, e.g., Komodo, PyCharm, Sublime, ...
- IPython (http://ipython.org) and IPython notebook.
- And many others. See http://tinyurl.com/leqyjw7.
IPython and IPython Notebook

- A comprehensive environment for interactive and exploratory computing.
- One of the six core packages of SciPy stack.
Python Package Index (PyPI) is the repository of software for Python at http://pypi.python.org/pypi. As of a day in Jan 2014, it has about 38,800 packages. Python Indexing Project (pip) (http://www.pip-installer.org) is the standard tool for installing packages (or modules) from PyPI.

Some examples of using pip. At the shell prompt:

```
$ pip
$ pip list
$ pip install SomePackage
$ pip install --user SomePackage
$ pip install --upgrade SomePackage
$ pip uninstall
```

Once a package is successfully installed, then you can import the module within your script.
Installing SciPy Stack

➤ It *is* possible to install all the packages one by one (and all the dependencies). It *could* turn out to be tricky.

➤ An alternative is to download and install free or commercial distributions. Some names are: Anaconda, Enthought Canopy, Python(x,y), WinPython, …


➤ Check out Wakari.IO (https://www.wakari.io) for playing with SciPy stack on the cloud, without local installation.
Quiz

Choose the best one that fits each description:

1. Standard module supporting object (de-)serialization, which is written in C.
2. Compiler that turns Python source into efficient C code.
5. Provides a rich architecture for interactive (scientific) computing. Version 1.0 was released in 2013.

comprehension cPickle CPython Cython Guido van Rossum IPython Niklaus Wirth Pickle pip Sublime xrange() Yukihiro Matsumoto
NumPy

- Provides the `ndarray` object.
- `ndarray` implements an efficient homogeneous multidimensional array.
- Element-wise and vectorized matrix operations are provided.
- Lots of modules use / built on NumPy.
- Documentation at http://docs.scipy.org/doc.
SciPy

- Collection of mathematical algorithms and utility functions built on NumPy.
- Organized into subpackages: cluster, constants, fftpack, integrate, interpolate, io, linalg (linear algebra), ndimage (N-dimensional image processing), odr (orthogonal distance regression), optimize, signal (signal processing), sparse (sparse matrices), spatial, special (functions), stats, weave (C/C++ integration)
- Documentation at http://docs.scipy.org/doc
Matplotlib

- Provides comprehensive 2D and simple 3D plotting.
- Simple plot, Subplots (multiple axes), Histograms, Path, Simple 3D plot (surface, wireframe, scatter, bar), Streamlines (of a vector field), Ellipses, Bar charts, Pie charts, Filled (curves and polygons), Financial charts, Polar plots, ..., including TeX expressions support (internal or external) and Sketch plots (XKCD style)
- Screenshots are (with source code) at http://matplotlib.org/users/screenshots.html.
pandas

- “Python Data Analysis Library” (Release 0.12 as of 2013).
- Series, DataFrame, and Panel objects
- reading/writing data to and from: CSV, text file, Excel, SQL db, and fast HDF5 (scientific data file formats and libraries developed at NCSA), JSON, HTML Table, STATA.
- Labeling columns, iteration, Hierarchical Indexing, Transformation, Selection, Missing Data, Merge, Grouping (or split-apply-combine), Reshaping (or pivoting), Time Series, I/O tools, R interface (via rpy2).
- Wes McKinney, “10-minute tour of pandas” (http://vimeo.com/59324550) or workshop (http://www.youtube.com/watch?v=MxRMXhjXZos)
Learning Resources

► Websites:
  - Official Python Tutorial
    http://docs.python.org/2/tutorial/index.html.
  - Google’s Python Class (2 day class materials including video and exercises)
    https://developers.google.com/edu/python.
Learning Resources

▶ Three advanced level tutorial videos:
  ▶ technical (old)
    http://www.youtube.com/watch?v=E_kZDvwofHY.
  ▶ idioms (new)
    http://www.youtube.com/watch?v=OSGv2VnC0go.
  ▶ functional style
    http://www.youtube.com/watch?v=Ta1bAMOMFOI.
Learning Resources

Books:

- “6 Free E-Books” mentioned on http://tinyurl.com/m2y9rad.
Learning Resources

- Any cool computer language has:
  - Zen (read and memorize!)  
    http://www.python.org/dev/peps/pep-0020/
  - Koans (unit testing) http://tinyurl.com/7n6yfvn
  - Challenges (old) http://www.pythonchallenge.com/

- Need more challenges?
  - Try the Project Euler http://projecteuler.net
Learning Resources

- MOOC’s using Python extensively:
  - “Introduction to Interactive Programming in Python” (Coursera, http://tinyurl.com/c95qh2q)
  - “Coding the Matrix: Linear Algebra through Computer Science Applications” (Coursera, http://tinyurl.com/awkbdo)
Learning Resources

► Twitter:
  ▶ "teaching python 140 character at a time":
    http://twitter.com/raymondh

► Gallery
  ▶ IPython Notebook gallery (including social data)
    http://tinyurl.com/c5tj9xh