Using the Python Interpreter

Note

In order to create and run Python programs on your own computer, you need to download and install the Python interpreter. You can get the latest version from here:

https://www.python.org/downloads

Follow the instructions given there for downloading the interpreter and installing it on your machine.

1. You will begin by running a program in interactive mode:

   Open your Python interpreter - you will see that the IDLE program appears (figure 1).

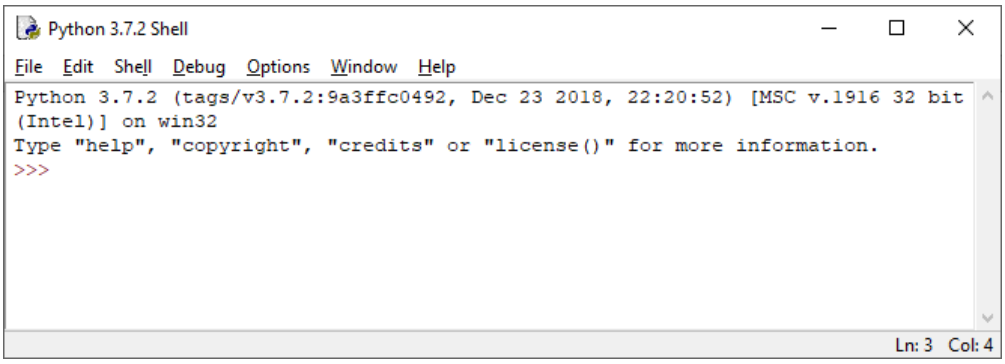

Fig 1 The IDLE program

   Type the code below at the prompt, exactly as you see it, then press *Enter*,

```
print('Hello world')
```

   You will see the words 'Hello world' displayed, as shown in figure 2.

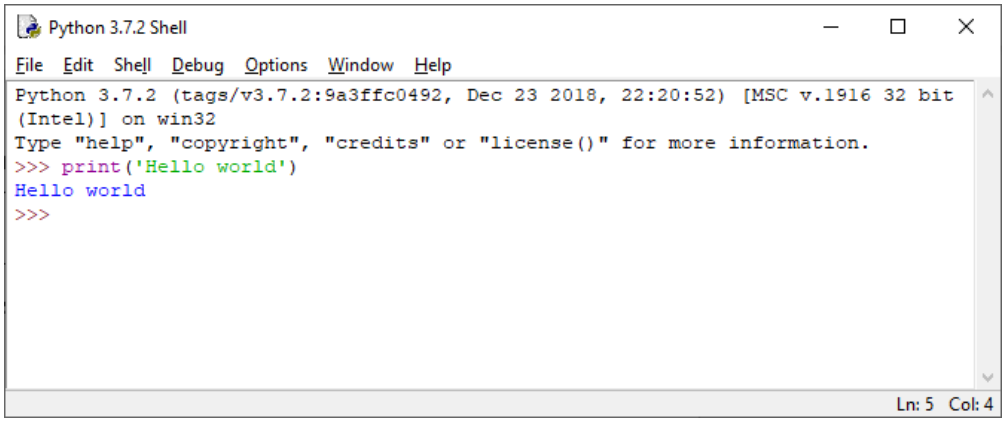

Fig 2 Your first program

2. You will now save your code to a file.

   Choose **File|New File** from the top menu bar of the IDLE program. You will be presented with a text editor into which you can type your program.

   Type the above single line of code as shown in figure 3

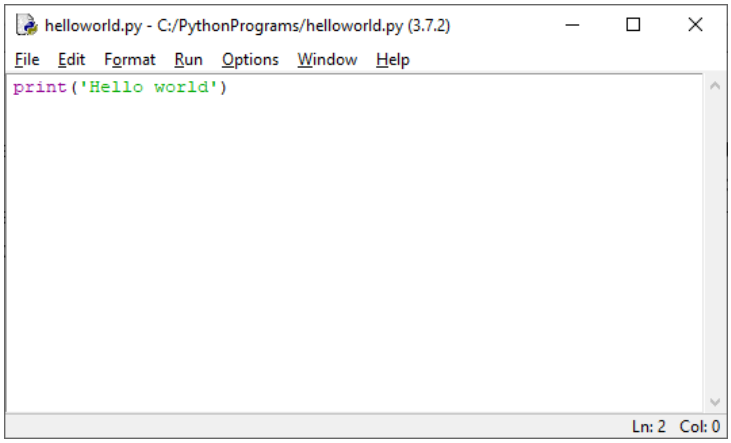

Fig 3 Writing a program with the Python text editor

   Save your file, naming it `helloworld.py`

3. Run the program by choosing **Run|Run Module**, or simply by pressing F5 in a Windows™ environment, or (usually) Fn + F5 on a Mac™.

   The words 'Hello world' will appear on the IDLE screen as before (figure 2).

4. You can now explore what happens when you have a syntax error.

   Leave out the final bracket after 'Hello world' and then run the program again. The position of the error is highlighted, and a pop-up window appears telling you the nature of your error (figure 4).

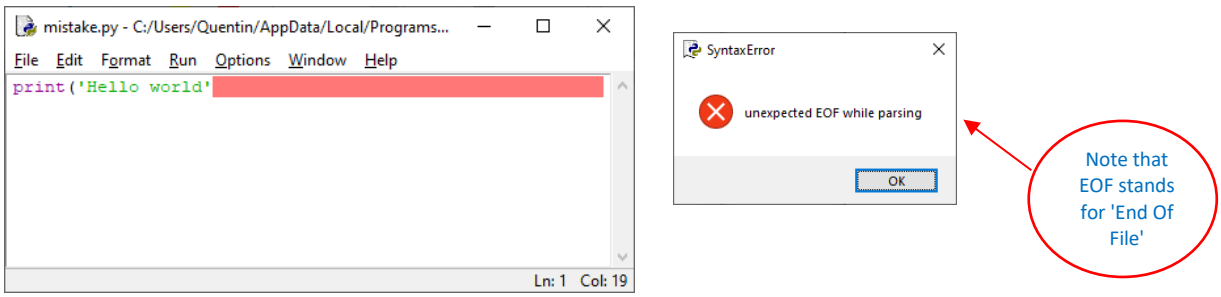

Fig 4 Trying to run a program that contains a syntax error.

5. Add an additional line as shown below, and run the program again:

```
print('Hello world')
print('Hello world again')
```

   You should see that the program results in the following output:

```
Hello world
Hello world again
```