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Hacking Secret Ciphers With Python

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A beginner's guide to cryptography and computer programming with Python



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Synopsis

Hacking Secret Ciphers with Python not only teaches you how to write in secret ciphers with paper and pencil. This book teaches you how to write your own cipher programs and also the hacking programs that can break the encrypted messages from these ciphers. Unfortunately, the programs in this book won't get the reader in trouble with the law (or rather, fortunately) but it is a guide on the basics of both cryptography and the Python programming language. Instead of presenting a dull laundry list of concepts, this book provides the source code to several fun programming projects for adults and young adults.

Book Information

File Size: 5872 KB

Print Length: 718 pages

Simultaneous Device Usage: Unlimited

Publication Date: April 24, 2015

Sold by: Digital Services LLC

Language: English

ASIN: B00WOY87ZU

Text-to-Speech: Enabled

X-Ray: Not Enabled

Word Wise: Not Enabled

Lending: Not Enabled

Enhanced Typesetting: Not Enabled

Best Sellers Rank: #56,915 Paid in Kindle Store (See Top 100 Paid in Kindle Store) #18 in Books > Computers & Technology > Security & Encryption > Encryption #20 in Books > Computers & Technology > Security & Encryption > Cryptography #24 in Kindle Store > Kindle eBooks > Computers & Technology > Programming > Python

Customer Reviews

This is an excellent Python book that teaches the language through fascinating cryptographic algorithms. First about the organization of the book. Very pleasing typeset and nice font size. Code is written inside boxes. The layout and author's style make it an excellent read. The book is accompanied with the author's website where all programs are available for download, though author rightfully asks readers to type in the program themselves. There is even a 'diff' program that author provides in his website which compares readers's program to one on the book, thereby

facilitating faster troubleshooting. The book has 24 chapters. Most chapters have a quote that is very relevant from security point of view. The first chapter gets the reader introduced into cryptography. I asked my 10 yr old daughter to follow along on few chapters. She got fascinated by the hands on exercises in the first chapter (Author asks for the cipher wheel to be photocopied and cut to make paper ciphers). Kids will have great fun with coded messages while introducing to crypto concepts. Next few chapters gets a reader to install Python (version 3) in Windows, Linux or MAC. For a novice, the instructions and screenshots are sure to help. The shell, string functions, writing programs and executing them should become easy once reader goes through first 5 chapters. There are exercises in the book's website which are essential to master the concepts. All programming language constructs are tied together in the chapter 6 where Caesar cipher is implemented. It is really interesting to learn Python through one domain area. The reader masters both Python and Crypto concepts. Author shows how Caesar cipher can be hacked easily and then explains and then implements a transposition cipher.

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