

Python 2.7 no Centos 6 (HowTo)

CentOS 6.2 and 6.3 ships with Python 2.6.6. You can manually install Python 2.7 and Python 3.3 but you must be careful to leave the system version alone. Several critical utilities, for example yum, depend on Python 2.6.6 and if you replace it bad things will happen.

Install development tools

In order to compile Python you must first install the development tools and a few extra libs. The extra libs are not strictly needed to compile Python but without them your new Python interpreter will be quite useless.

```
# yum groupinstall "Development tools"
# yum install zlib-devel bzip2-devel openssl-devel ncurses-devel sqlite-
devel readline-devel tk-devel
```

Download and install Python

It is critical that you use make altinstall below. If you use make install you will end up with two different versions of Python in the filesystem both named python. This can lead to problems that are very hard to diagnose.

```
# wget http://python.org/ftp/python/2.7.3/Python-2.7.3.tar.bz2
# tar xf Python-2.7.3.tar.bz2
# cd Python-2.7.3
# ./configure --prefix=/usr/local
# make && make altinstall
```

After running the commands above your newly installed Python interpreter will be available as /usr/local/bin/python2.7 or /usr/local/bin/python3.3. The system version of Python 2.6.6 will continue to be available as /usr/bin/python and /usr/bin/python2.6.

Download and install Distribute

Distribute provides a framework for installing packages from the Python Package Index. Each Python interpreter on your system needs its own install of Distribute.

You can find out what the latest version of Distribute is here. At the time of this edit the current version is 0.6.35. Replace the version number below if there is a newer version available.

```
# wget
http://pypi.python.org/packages/source/d/distribute/distribute-0.6.35.tar.gz
# tar xf distribute-0.6.35.tar.gz
```

```
# cd distribute-0.6.35
# python2.7 setup.py install
```

This generates the script /usr/local/bin/easy_install-2.7 that you use to install packages for Python 2.7. It puts your packages in /usr/local/lib/python2.7/site-packages/.

What's next?

Working with multiple versions of Python is difficult and error-prone. I strongly recommend that you install virtualenv and learn how to use it. Virtualenv is a Virtual Python Environment builder that makes it possible to run Python in a sandbox-like environment. Each sandbox can have its own Python version and packages. This is very useful when you work on multiple projects, each with its own dependencies.

INSTALL AND USE VIRTUALENV FOR PYTHON 2.7

```
# easy_install-2.7 virtualenv
# virtualenv-2.7 --distribute someproject
New python executable in someproject/bin/python2.7
Also creating executable in someproject/bin/python
Installing distribute.....done.
Installing pip.....done.
# source someproject/bin/activate
(someproject)# python --version
Python 2.7.3
(someproject)#
```

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