

Our First Python Forensics App

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INTRODUCTION

In 1998, I authored a paper entitled “Using SmartCards and Digital Signatures to Preserve Electronic Evidence” (Hosmer, 1998). The purpose of the paper was to advance the early work of Gene Kim, creator of the original Tripwire technology (Kim, 1993) as a graduate student at Purdue. I was interested in advancing the model of using one-way hashing technologies to protect digital evidence, and specifically I was applying the use of digital signatures bound to a SmartCard that provided two-factor authenticity of the signing (Figure 3.1).

Years later I added trusted timestamps to the equation adding provenance, or proof of the exact “when” of the signing.

Two-factor authentication combines a secure physical device such as a SmartCard with a password that unlocks the capability of the card’s. This yields “something held” and “something known.” In order to perform applications like signing, you must be in possession of the SmartCard and you must know the pin or password that unlocks the cards function.

Thus, my interest in applying one-way hashing methods, digital signature algorithms, and other cryptographic technologies to the field of forensics has been a 15-year journey . . . so far. The application of these technologies to evidence preservation, evidence identification, authentication, access control decisions and network protocols continues today. Thus I want to make sure that you have a firm understanding of the underlying technologies and the many applications for digital investigation, and of course the use of Python forensics.



FIGURE 3.1

Cryptographic SmartCard.

Before I dive right in and start writing code, as promised I want to set up some ground rules for using the Python programming language in forensic applications.

NAMING CONVENTIONS AND OTHER CONSIDERATIONS

During the development of Python forensics applications, I will define the rules and naming conventions that are being used throughout the cookbook chapters in the book. Part of this is to compensate for Python's lack of the enforcement of strongly typed variables and true constants. More importantly it is to define a style that will make the programs more readable, and easier to follow, understand, and modify or enhance.

Therefore, here are the naming conventions I will be using.

Constants

Rule: Uppercase with underscore separation

Example: HIGH_TEMPERATURE

Local variable name

Rule: Lowercase with bumpy caps (underscores are optional)

Example: currentTemperature

Global variable name

Rule: Prefix *gl* lowercase with bumpy caps (underscores are optional)

Note: Globals should be contained to a single module

Example: *gl*_maximumRecordedTemperature

Functions name

Rule: Uppercase with bumpy caps (underscores optional) with active voice

Example: ConvertFahrenheitToCentigrade(...)

Object name

Rule: Prefix *ob_* lowercase with bumpy caps

Example: *ob_*myTempRecorder

Module

Rule: An underscore followed by lowercase with bumpy caps

Example: *_*tempRecorder

Class names

Rule: Prefix *class_* then bumpy caps and keep brief

Example: `class_TempSystem`

You will see many of these naming conventions in action during this chapter.

OUR FIRST APPLICATION “ONE-WAY FILE SYSTEM HASHING”

The objective for our first Python Forensic Application is as follows:

1. Build a useful application and tool for forensic investigators.
2. Develop several modules along the way that are *reusable* throughout the book and for future applications.
3. Develop a solid methodology for building Python forensic applications.
4. Begin to introduce more advanced features of the language.

Background

Before we can build an application that performs one-way file system hashing I need to better define one-way hashing. Many of you reading this are probably saying, “I already know what a one-way hashing is, let’s move on.” However, this is such an important underpinning for computer forensics it is worthy of a good definition, possibly even a better one that you currently have.

One-way hashing algorithms’ basic characteristics

1. The one-way hashing algorithm takes a stream of binary data as input; this could be a password, a file, an image of a hard drive, an image of a solid state drive, a network packet, 1’s and 0’s from a digital recording, or basically any continuous digital input.
2. The algorithm produces a message digest which is a compact representation of the binary data that was received as input.
3. It is infeasible to determine the binary input that generated the digest with only the digest. In other words, it is not possible to reverse the process using the digest to recover the stream of binary data that created it.
4. It is infeasible to create a new binary input that will generate a given message digest.
5. Changing a single bit of the binary input data will generate a unique message digest.
6. Finally, it is infeasible to find two unique arbitrary streams of binary data that produce the same digest.

Table 3.1 Popular One-Way Hashing Algorithms

Algorithm	Creator	Length (Bits)	Related standard
MD5	Ronald Rivest	128	RFC 1321
SHA-1	NSA and published by NIST	160	FIPS Pub 180
SHA-2	NSA and published by NIST	224	FIPS Pub 180-2
		256	FIPS Pub 180-3
		384	FIPS PUB 180-4
		512	
RIPEND-160	Hans Dobbertin	160	Open Academic Community
SHA-3	Guido Bertoni, Joan Daemen, Michaël Peeters, and Gilles Van Assche	224, 256, 384, 512	FIPS-180-5

Popular cryptographic hash algorithms?

There are a number of algorithms that produce message digests. [Table 3.1](#) provides background on some of the most popular algorithms.

What are the tradeoffs between one-way hashing algorithms?

The MD5 algorithm is still in use today, and for many applications the speed, convenience, and interoperability have made it the algorithm of choice. Due to attacks on the MD5 algorithm and the increased likelihood of collisions, many organizations are moving to SHA-2 (256 and 512 bits are the most popular sizes). Many organizations have opted to skip SHA-1 as it suffers from some of the same weaknesses as MD5.

Considerations for moving to SHA-3 are still in the future, and it will be a couple of years before broader adoption is in play. SHA-3 is completely different and was designed to be easier to implement in hardware to improve performance (speed and power consumption) for use in embedded or handheld devices. We will see how quickly the handheld devices’ manufacturers adopt this newly established standard.

What are the best-use cases for one-way hashing algorithms in forensics?

Evidence preservation: When digital data are collected (for example, when imaging a mechanical or solid state drive), the entire contents—in other words every bit collected—are combined to create a unique one-way hashing value. Once completed the recalculation of the one-way hashing can be accomplished. If the new calculation matches the original, this can prove that the evidence has not been modified. This

assumes of course that the original calculated hash value has been safeguarded against tampering since there is no held secret and the algorithms are available. Anyone could recalculate a hash, therefore the chain of custody of digital evidence, including the generated hash, must be maintained.

Search: One-way hashing values have been traditionally utilized to perform searches of known file objects. For example, if law enforcement has a collection of confirmed child-pornography files, the hashes could be calculated for each file. Then any suspect system could be scanned for the presence of this contraband by calculating the hash values of each file and comparing the resulting hashes to the known list of contraband hash values (those resulting from the child-pornography collection). If matches are found, then the files on the suspect system matching the hash values would be examined further.

Black Listing: Like the search example, it is possible to create a list of known bad hash files. These could represent contraband as with CP example, they could match known malicious code or cyber weapon files or the hashes of classified or proprietary documents. The discovery of hashes matching any of these Black Listed items would provide investigators with key evidence.

White Listing: By creating a list of known good or benign hashes (operating system or application executables, vendor supplied dynamic link libraries or known trustworthy application download files), investigators can use the lists to filter out files that they do not have to examine, because they were previously determined as a good file. Using this methodology you can dramatically reduce the number of files that require examination and then focus your attention on files that are not in the known good hash list.

Change detection: One popular defense against malicious changes to websites, routers, firewall configuration, and even operating system installations is to hash a “known good” installation or configuration. Then periodically you can re-scan the installation or configuration to ensure no files have changed. In addition, you must of course make sure no files have been added or deleted from the “known good” set.

Fundamental requirements

Now that we have a better understanding of one-way hashing and its uses, what are the fundamental requirements of our one-way file system hash application?

When defining requirements for any program or application I want to define them as succinctly as possible, and with little jargon, so anyone familiar with the domain could understand them—even if they are not software developers. Also, each requirement should have an identifier such that could be traced from definition, through design, development, and validation. I like to give the designers and developers room to innovate, thus I try to focus on WHAT not HOW during requirements definition (Table 3.2).

Requirement number	Requirement name	Short description
000	Overview	The basic capability we are looking for is a forensic application that walks the file system at a defined starting point (for example, c:\ or /etc) and then generates a one-way hashing value for every file encountered
001	Portability	The application shall support Windows and Linux operating systems. As a general guideline, validation will be performed on Windows 7, Windows 8, and Ubuntu 12.04 LTS environments
002	Key functions	In addition to the one-way hashing generation, the application shall collect system metadata associated with each file that is hashed. For example, file attributes, file name, and file path at a minimum
003	Key results	The application shall provide the results in a standard output file format that offers flexibility
004	Algorithm selection	The application shall provide a wide diversity when specifying the one-way hashing algorithm(s) to be used
005	Error handling	The application must support error handling and logging of all operations performed. This will include a textual description and a timestamp

Design considerations

Now that I have defined the basic requirements for the application I need to factor in the design considerations. First, I would like to leverage or utilize as many of the built-in functions of the Python Standard Library as possible. Taking stock of the core capabilities, I like to map the requirements definition to Modules and Functions that I intend to use. This will then expose any new modules either from third party modules or new modules that need to be developed (Table 3.3).

One of the important steps as a designer or at least one of the fun parts is to name the program. I have decided to name this first program *p-fish* short for *Python-file system hashing*.

Next, based on this review of Standard Library functions I must define what modules will be used in our first application:

1. `argparse` for user input
2. `os` for file system manipulation
3. `hashlib` for one-way hashing
4. `csv` for result output (other optional outputs could be added later)
5. `logging` for event and error logging
6. Along with useful miscellaneous modules like `time`, `sys`, and `stat`

Requirement	Design considerations	Library selection
User input (000, 003, 004)	Each of these requirements needs input from the user to accomplish the task. For example, 000 requires the user to specify the starting directory path. 003 requires that the user specify a suitable output format. 004 requires us to allow the user to specify the hash algorithm. Details of the exception handling or default settings need to be defined (if allowed)	For this first program I have decided to use the command line parameters to obtain input from the user. Based on this design decision I can leverage the <code>argparse</code> Python Standard Library module
Walk the file system (000, 001)	This capability requires the program to traverse the directory structure starting at a specific starting point. Also, this must work on both Windows and Linux platforms	The <code>OS</code> Module from the Standard Library provides key methods that provide the ability to walk the file system, <code>OS</code> also provides abstraction which will provide cross platform compatibility. Finally, this module contains cross platform capabilities that provide access to metadata associated with files
Meta data collection (003)	This requires us to collect the directory path, filename, owner, modified/access/created times, permissions, and attributes such as read only, hidden, system or archive	
File hashing (000)	I must provide flexibility in the Hashing algorithms that the users could select. I have decided to support the most popular algorithms such as MD5 and several variations of SHA	The Standard Library module <code>hashlib</code> provides the ability to generate one-way hashing values. The library supports common hash algorithms such as “md5,” “sha1,” “sha224,” “sha256,” “sha384,” “sha512.” This should provide a sufficient set of selection for the user
Result output (003)	To meet this requirement I must be able to structure the program output to support a format that provides flexibility	The Standard Library offers multiple options that I could leverage. For example, the <code>csv</code> module provides the ability to create comma separated value output, whereas the <code>json</code> module (Java Object Notation) provides encoder and decoders for JSON objects and finally the <code>XML</code> module could be leveraged to create XML output

Continued

Requirement	Design considerations	Library selection
Logging and error handling	I must expect that errors will occur during our walk of the file system, for example I might not have access to certain files, or certain files may be orphaned, or certain files may be locked by the operating system or other applications. I need to handle these error conditions and log any notable events. For example, I should log information about the investigator, location, date and time, and information that pertains to the system that are walked	The Python Standard Library includes a logging facility which I can leverage to report any events or errors that occur during processing

Program structure

Next, I need to define the structure of our program, in other words how I intend to put the pieces together. This is critical, especially if our goal is to reuse components of this program in future applications. One way to compose the components is with a couple simple diagrams as shown in [Figures 3.2](#) and [3.3](#).

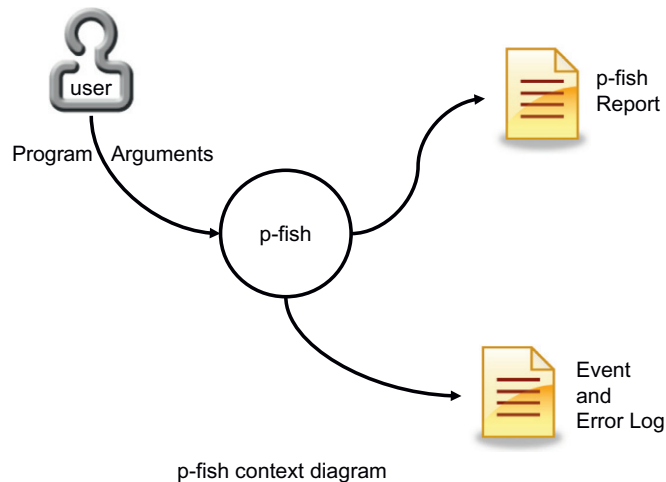


FIGURE 3.2

Context diagram: Python-file system hashing (p-fish).

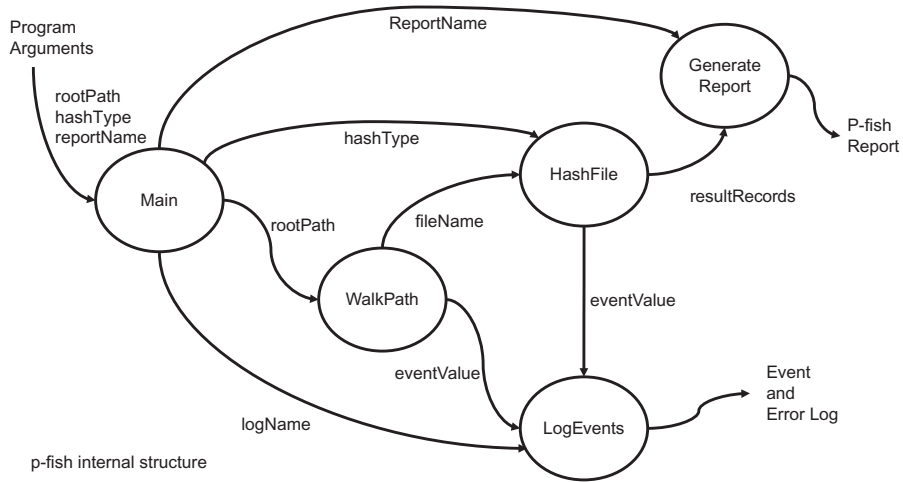


FIGURE 3.3

p-fish internal structure.

The context diagram is very straightforward and simply depicts the major inputs and outputs of the proposed program. A user specifies the program arguments, p-fish takes those inputs and processes (hashes, extracts metadata, etc.) the file system produces a report and any notable events or errors to the “p-fish report” and the “p-fish event and error log” files respectively.

Turning to the internal structure I have broken the program down into five major components. The `Main` program, `ParseCommandLine` function, `WalkPath` function, `HashFile` functions, `CSVWriter` class and logger (note logger is actually the Python logger module), that is utilized by the major functions of pfish. I briefly describe the operation of each below and during the code walk through section a more detailed line by line explanation of how each function operates is provided.

Main function

The purpose of the `Main` function is to control the overall flow of this program. For example, within `Main` I set up the Python logger, I display startup and completion messages, and keep track of the time. In addition, `Main` invokes the command line parser and then launches the `WalkPath` function. Once `WalkPath` completes `Main` will log the completion and display termination messages to the user and the log.

ParseCommandLine

In order to provide smooth operation of p-fish, I leverage `parseCommandLine` to not only parse but also validate the user input. Once completed, information that is germane to program functions such as `WalkPath`, `HashFile`, and `CSVWrite` is available from parser-generated values. For example, since the `hashType` is specified by the user, this value must be available to `HashFile`. Likewise the `CSVWriter` needs the path where the resulting pfish report will be written, and `WalkPath` requires the starting or `rootPath` to start the walk.

WalkPath function

The `WalkPath` function must start at the root of the directory tree or path and traverse every directory and file. For each valid file encountered it will call the `HashFile` function to perform the one-way hashing operations. Once all the files have been processed `WalkPath` will return control back to `Main` with the number of files successfully processed.

HashFile function

The `HashFile` function will open, read, hash, and obtain metadata regarding the file in question. For each file, a row of data will be sent to the `CSVWriter` to be included in the p-fish report. Once the file has been processed, `HashFile` will return control back to `WalkPath` in order to fetch the next file.

CSVWriter (class)

In order to provide an introduction to class and object usage I decided to create `CSVWriter` as a class instead of a simple function. You will see more of this in upcoming cookbook chapters but `CSVWriter` sets up nicely for a class/object demonstration. The `csv` module within the Python Standard Library requires that the “writer” be initialized. For example, I want the resulting `csv` file to have a header row made up of a static set of columns. Then subsequent calls to `writer` will contain data that fills in each row. Finally, once the program has processed all the files the resulting `csv` report must be closed. Note that as I walk through the program code you may wonder why I did not leverage classes and objects more for this program. I certainly could have, but felt for the first application I would create a more function-oriented example.

Logger

The built-in Standard Library logger provides us with the ability to write messages to a log file associated with p-fish. The program can write information messages, warning messages, and error messages. Since this is intended to be a forensic application, logging operations of the program is vital. You can expand the program to log additional events in the code, they can be added to any of the `_pfish` functions.

Writing the code

I decided to create two files, mainly to show you how to create your own Python module and also to give you some background on how to separate capabilities. For this first simple application, I created (1) `pfish.py` and (2) `_pfish.py`. As you may recall, all modules that are created begin with an underscore and since `_pfish.py` contains all the support functions for `pfish` I simply named it `_pfish.py`. If you would like to split out the modules to better separate the functions you could create separate modules for the `HashFile` function, the `WalkPath` function, etc. This is a decision that is typically based on how tightly or loosely coupled the functions are, or better stated, whether you wish to reuse individual functions later that need to stand alone. If that is the case, then you should separate them out.

In [Figure 3.4](#) you can see my IDE setup for the project `pfish`. You notice the project section to the far upper right that specifies the files associated with the project. I also have both files open—you can see the two tabs far left about half way down

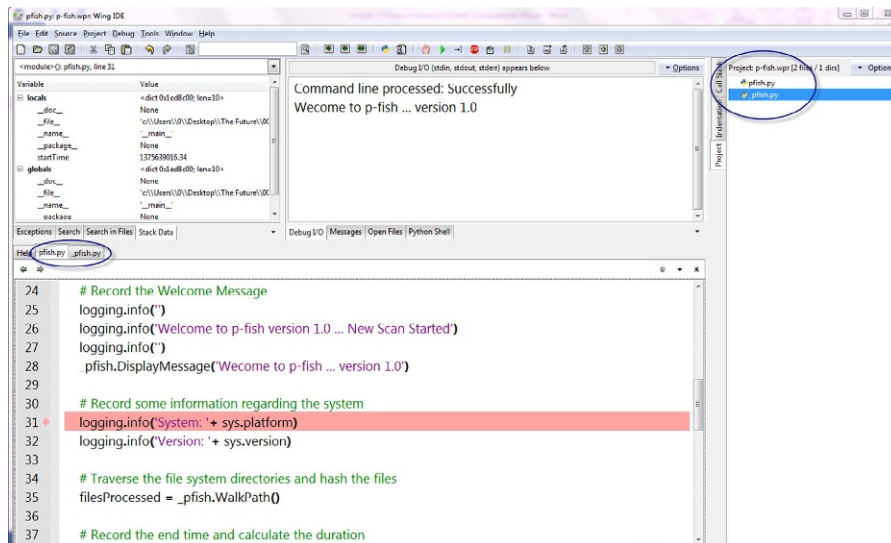


FIGURE 3.4

p-fish WingIDE setup.

where I can view the source code in each of the files. As you would expect in the upper left quadrant, you can see the program is running and the variables are available for inspection. Finally, in the upper center portion of the screen you can see the current display messages from the program reporting that the command line was processed successfully and the welcome message for pfish.

CODE WALK-THROUGH

I will be inserting dialog as I discuss each code section. The code walk-through will give you an in-depth look at all the code associated with the program. I will be first walking through each of the key functions and then will provide you with a complete listing of both files.

Examining main—code walk-through

The embedded commentary is represented in italics, while the code itself is represented in a fixed-sized font.

```
# p-fish : Python File System Hash Program
# Author: C. Hosmer
# July 2013
# Version 1.0
#
```

The main program code is quite straightforward. At the top as you would expect, you see the import statements that make the Python Standard Library modules available for our use. What you have not seen before is the import statement referencing our own module in this case `_pfish`. Since I will be calling functions from Main that exist in our module, the module must import our own module `_pfish`.

```
import logging    # Python Library logging functions
import time      # Python Library time manipulation functions
import sys       # Python Library system specific parameters
import _pfish    # _pfish Support Function Module

if __name__ == '__main__':
    PFISH_VERSION = '1.0'
    # Turn on Logging
```

Next, you can see my initialization of the Python logging system. In this example I have hard-wired the log to be stored in the file aptly named `pFishLog.log`. I set the logging level to `DEGUG` and specified that I wanted the Time and Date recorded for each log event. By setting the level to `DEBUG` (which is the lowest level) this will ensure all messages sent to the logger will be visible.

```
logging.basicConfig(filename='pFishLog.log', level=logging.
    DEBUG, format='%(asctime)s %(message)s')
```

Next, I pass control to process the command line arguments by calling the `_pfish.ParseCommandLine()` function. I must prefix the function with `_pfish`, since the function exists in the `_pfish` module. If the parse is successful, the function will return here, if not, it will post a message to the user and exit the program. I will take a deeper look at the operation of `ParseCommandLine()` in the next section.

```
# Process the Command Line Arguments
_pfish.ParseCommandLine()
```

I need to record the current starting time of the application in order to calculate elapsed time for processing. I use the Standard Library function `time.time()` to acquire the time elapsed in seconds since the epoch. Note, forensically this is the time of the system we are running on, therefore if the time is a critical element in your investigation you should sync your system clock accordingly.

```
# Record the Starting Time
startTime = time.time()
```

Next the program posts a message to the log reporting the start of the scan and display this on the user screen only if the verbose option was selected on the command line (more about this when I examine the `ParseCommandLine` function). Notice that I used a `CONSTANT` to hold the version number instead of just embedding a magic number. Now we can just modify the `CONSTANT` in the future. Then anywhere `PFISH_VERSION` is used it will display the proper version number. I also logged the system platform and version in case there is a question in the future

about the system that was used to process these data. This would be a great place to add information about the organization, investigator name, case number, and other information that is relevant to the case.

```
# Post the Start Scan Message to the Log
logging.info('Welcome to p-fish version 1.0... New Scan Started')
_pfish.DisplayMessage('Welcome to p-fish... version 1.0')
```

Note, since I created a constant PFISH_VERSION, we could use that to make the source code easier to maintain. That would look something like:

```
_pfish.DisplayMessage('Welcome to p-fish ... '+ PFISH_VERSION)

# Record some information regarding the system
logging.info('System: '+ sys.platform)
logging.info('Version: '+ sys.version)
```

Now the main program launches the WalkPath function within the _pfish module that will traverse the directory structure starting at the predefined root path. This function returns the number of files that were successfully processed by WalkPath and HashFile. As you can see I use this value along with the ending time to finalize the log entries. By subtracting the startTime from the endTime I can determine the number of seconds it took to perform the file system hashing operations. You could convert the seconds into days, hours, minutes, and seconds of course.

```
# Traverse the file system directories and hash the files
filesProcessed = _pfish.WalkPath()

# Record the end time and calculate the duration
endTime = time.time()
duration = endTime - startTime

logging.info('Files Processed: '+ str(filesProcessed) )
logging.info('Elapsed Time: '+ str(duration) + 'seconds')

logging.info('Program Terminated Normally')

_pfish.DisplayMessage("Program End")
```

ParseCommandLine()

In the design section I made a couple of decisions that drove the development:

1. I decided that this first application would be a command line program.
2. I decided to provide several options to the user to manipulate the behavior of the program. This has driven the design and implementation of the command line options.

Based on this I provided the following command line options to the program.

Option	Description	Notes
-v	Verbose, if this option is specified then any calls to the <code>DisplayMessage()</code> function will be displayed to the standard output device, otherwise the program will run silently	
--MD5 --SHA256 --SHA512	Hash type selection, the user must specify the one-way hashing algorithm that would be utilized	The selection is mutually exclusive and at least one must be selected or the program will abort
-d	<code>rootPath</code> , this allows the user to specify the starting or root path for the walk	The directory must <i>exist</i> and must be <i>readable</i> or the program will abort
-r	<code>reportPath</code> , this allows the user to specify the directory where the resulting <code>.csv</code> file will be written	The directory must <i>exist</i> and must be <i>writable</i> or the program will abort

Even though at first some of these requirements might seem difficult, the `argparse` Standard Library provides great flexibility in handling them. This allows us to catch any possible user errors prior to program execution and also provides us with a way to report problems to the user to handle the exceptions.

```
def ParseCommandLine():
```

The majority of the process of using `argparse` is knowing how to setup the parser. If you set the parser up correctly it will do all the hard work for you. I start by creating a new parser named "parser" and simply give it a description. Next, I add a new argument in this case `-v` or verbose. The option is `-v` and the resulting variable that is used is `verbose`. The help message associated with the argument is used by the help system to inform the user on how to use `pfish`. The `-h` option is built-in and requires no definition.

```
parser = argparse.ArgumentParser('Python file system hashing . .
p-fish')

parser.add_argument('-v', '--verbose', help='allows progress messages to
be displayed', action='store_true')
```

*The next section defines a mutually exclusive group of arguments for selecting the specific hash type the user would like to generate. If you wanted to add in another option, for example `sha384`, you would simply add another argument to the group and follow the same format. Since I specified under the `add_mutually_exclusive_group` the option **required=True**, `argparse` will make sure that the user has only specified one argument and at least one.*

```
# setup a group where the selection is mutually exclusive ## and required.
group = parser.add_mutually_exclusive_group(required=True)

group.add_argument('--md5', help='specifies MD5 algorithm',
action='store_true')
```

```

group.add_argument('--sha256', help = 'specifies SHA256
algorithm', action='store_true')

group.add_argument('--sha512', help = 'specifies SHA512
algorithm', action='store_true')

```

Next I need to specify the starting point of our walk, and where the report should be created. This works the same as the previous setup, except I have added the **type** option. This requires `argparse` to validate the type I have specified. In the case of the `-d` option, I want to make sure that the `rootPath` exists and is readable. For the `reportPath`, it must exist and be writable. Since `argparse` does not have built-in functions to validate a directory, I created the functions `ValidateDirectory()` and `ValidateDirectoryWritable()`. They are almost identical and they use Standard Library operating system functions to validate the directories as defined.

```

parser.add_argument('-d', '--rootPath', type=
ValidateDirectory, required=True, help="specify the root
path for hashing")

parser.add_argument('-r', '--reportPath', type=
ValidateDirectoryWritable, required=True, help="specify the
path for reports and logs will be written")

# create a global object to hold the validated arguments,
# # these will be available then to all the Functions
within # the _pfish.py module

global gl_args
global gl_hashType

```

Now the parser can be invoked. I want to store the resulting arguments (once validated) in a global variable so they can be accessible by the functions within the `_pfish` module. This would be a great opportunity to create a class to handle this which would avoid the use of the global variables. This is done in [Chapter 4](#).

```
gl_args = parser.parse_args()
```

If the parser was successful (in other words `argparse` validated the command line parameters), I want to determine which hashing algorithm the user selected. I do that by examining each value associated with the hash types. If the user selected `sha256` for example, the `gl_args.sha256` would be `True` and `md5` and `sha512` would be `False`. Therefore, by using a simple `if/elif` language routine I can determine which was selected.

```

if gl_args.md5:
    gl_hashType = 'MD5'
elif gl_args.sha256:
    gl_hashType = 'SHA256'
elif gl_args.sha512:
    gl_hashType = 'SHA512'
else:
    gl_hashType = "Unknown"

```



```

        logging.error('Unknown Hash Type Specified')
    DisplayMessage("Command line processed: Successfully")
    return

```

ValidatingDirectoryWritable

As mentioned above, I needed to create functions to validate the directories provided by the users for both the report and starting or root path of the Walk. I accomplish this by leveraging the Python Standard Library module `os`. I leverage both the `os.path.isdir` and `os.access` methods associated with this module.

```
def ValidateDirectoryWritable(theDir):
```

First check to see if in fact the directory string that the user provided exists. If the test fails then I raise an error within `argparse` and provide the message “Directory does not exist.” This message would be provided to the user if the test fails.

```

    # Validate the path is a directory
    if not os.path.isdir(theDir):
        raise argparse.ArgumentTypeError('Directory does not exist')

```

Next I validate that write privilege is authorized to the directory and once again if the test fails I raise an exception and provide a message.

```

    # Validate the path is writable
    if os.access(theDir, os.W_OK):
        return theDir
    else:
        raise argparse.ArgumentTypeError('Directory is not writable')

```

Now that I have completed the implementation of the `ParseCommandLine` function, let us examine a few examples of how the function rejects improper command line arguments. In [Figure 3.5](#), I created four improperly formed command lines:

- (1) I mistyped the root directory as `TEST_DIR` instead of simply `TESTDIR`
- (2) I mistyped the `-sha512` parameter as `-sha521`
- (3) I specified two hash types `-sha512` and `-md5`
- (4) Finally, I did not specify any hash type

As you can see in each case, `ParseCommandLine` rejected the command.

In order to get the user back on track they simply have to utilize the `-h` or `help` option as shown in [Figure 3.6](#) to obtain the proper command line argument instructions.

WalkPath

Now let us walk through the `WalkPath` function that will traverse the directory structure, and for each file will call the `HashFile` function. I think you will be pleasantly surprised how simple this is.

```

C:\p-fish>python pfish.py --sha512 -d "c:\\p-fish\\TEST_DIR\\" -r "c:\\p-fish\\" -v
usage: Python file system hashing .. p-fish [-h] [-v]
          (-md5 | --sha256 | --sha512) -d
          ROOTPATH -r REPORTPATH
Python file system hashing .. p-fish: error: argument -d/--rootPath: Directory does not exist

C:\p-fish>
C:\p-fish>python pfish.py --sha512 -d "c:\\p-fish\\TESTDIR\\" -r "c:\\p-fish\\" -v
usage: Python file system hashing .. p-fish [-h] [-v]
          (-md5 | --sha256 | --sha512) -d
          ROOTPATH -r REPORTPATH
Python file system hashing .. p-fish: error: one of the arguments --md5 --sha256 --sha512 is required

C:\p-fish>
C:\p-fish>python pfish.py --sha512 --md5 -d "c:\\p-fish\\TESTDIR\\" -r "c:\\p-fish\\" -v
usage: Python file system hashing .. p-fish [-h] [-v]
          (-md5 | --sha256 | --sha512) -d
          ROOTPATH -r REPORTPATH
Python file system hashing .. p-fish: error: argument --md5: not allowed with argument --sha512

C:\p-fish>
C:\p-fish>python pfish.py -d "c:\\p-fish\\TESTDIR\\" -r "c:\\p-fish\\" -v
usage: Python file system hashing .. p-fish [-h] [-v]
          (-md5 | --sha256 | --sha512) -d
          ROOTPATH -r REPORTPATH
Python file system hashing .. p-fish: error: one of the arguments --md5 --sha256 --sha512 is required

C:\p-fish>_

```

FIGURE 3.5

Demonstration of ParseCommandLine.

```

C:\p-fish>python pfish.py -h
usage: Python file system hashing .. p-fish [-h] [-v]
          (-md5 | --sha256 | --sha512) -d
          ROOTPATH -r REPORTPATH

optional arguments:
  -h, --help            show this help message and exit
  -v, --verbose         allows progress messages to be displayed
  --md5                 specifies MD5 algorithm
  --sha256              specifies SHA256 algorithm
  --sha512             specifies SHA512 algorithm
  -d ROOTPATH, --rootPath ROOTPATH
                        specify the root path for hashing
  -r REPORTPATH, --reportPath REPORTPATH
                        specify the path for reports and logs will be written

C:\p-fish>_

```

FIGURE 3.6

pfish -h command.

```
def WalkPath():
```

I first initialize the variable processCount in order to count the number of successfully processed files and I post a message to the log file to document the root path value.

```
processCount = 0
errorCount = 0
```

```
log.info('Root Path: ' + gl_args.rootPath)
```

Next I initialize the CSVWriter with the reportPath provided on the command line by the user. I also provide the hashType selected by the user so it can be included in the Header line of the CSV file. I will cover the CSVWriter class later in this chapter.

```
oCVS = _CSVWriter(gl_args.reportPath+'fileSystemReport.csv',
gl_hashType)

# Create a loop that process all the files starting
# at the rootPath, all sub-directories will also be
# processed
```

Next I create a loop using the os.walk method and the rootpath specified by the user. This will create a list of file names that is processed in the next loop. This is done for each directory found within the path.

```
for root, dirs, files in os.walk(gl_args.rootPath):

    # for each file obtain the filename and call the
    # HashFile Function
```

The next loop processes each file in the list of files and calls the function HashFile with the file name joined with the path, along with the simple file name for use by HashFile. The call also passes HashFile with access to the CVS writer so that the results of the hashing operations can be written to the CVS file.

```
for file in files:
    fname = os.path.join(root, file)
    result = HashFile(fname, file, oCVS)

    # if successful then increment ProcessCount
```

The process and error counts are incremented accordingly

```
if result is True:
    processCount += 1
# if not successful, the increment the ErrorCount
else:
    errorCount += 1
```

Once all the directories and files have been processed the CSVWriter is closed and the function returns to the main program with the number of successfully processed files.

```
oCVS.writerClose()
return(processCount)
```

HashFile

Below is the code for the HashFile function, it is clearly the longest for this program, but also quite simple and straightforward. Let us walk through the process.

```
def HashFile(theFile, simpleName, o_result):
```

For each file several items require validation before we attempt to hash the file.

(1) Does the path exist

(2) Is the path a link instead of an actual file

(3) Is the file real (making sure it is not orphaned)

For each of these tests there is a corresponding log error that is posted to the log file if failure occurs. If the file is bypassed the program will simply return to WalkFile and process the next file.

```
# Verify that the path is valid
if os.path.exists(theFile):
    #Verify that the path is not a symbolic link
    if not os.path.islink(theFile):
        #Verify that the file is real
        if os.path.isfile(theFile):
```

The next part is a little tricky. Even through our best efforts to determine the existence of the file, there may be cases where the file cannot be opened or read. This could be caused by permission issues, the file is locked or possibly corrupted. Therefore, I utilize the try methods while attempting to open and then read from the files. Note that I'm careful to open the file as read-only the "rb" option. Once again if an error occurs a report is generated and logged and the program moves on to the next file.

```
try:
    #Attempt to open the file
    f = open(theFile, 'rb')
except IOError:
    #if open fails report the error
    log.warning('Open Failed: '+ theFile)
    return
else:
    try:
        # Attempt to read the file
        rd = f.read()
    except IOError:
        # if read fails, then close the file and
        # report error
        f.close()
        log.warning('Read Failed: '+ theFile)
        return
    else:
        #success the file is open and we can
        #read from it
        #lets query the file stats
```

Once the file has been successfully opened and verified that reading from the file is allowed, I extract the attributes associated with the file. These include owner, group, size, MAC times, and mode. I will include these in the record that is posted to the CSV file.

```

theFileStats = os.stat(theFile)
    (mode, ino, dev, nlink, uid, gid, size,
    atime, mtime, ctime) = os.stat(theFile)

# Display progress to the user
DisplayMessage("Processing File: " + theFile)

# convert the file size to a string
fileSize = str(size)

# convert the MAC Times to strings
modifiedTime = time.ctime(mtime)
accessTime = time.ctime(atime)
createdTime = time.ctime(ctime)

# convert the owner, group and file mode
ownerID = str(uid)
groupID = str(gid)
fileMode = bin(mode)

```

Now that the file attributes have been collected the actual hashing of the file occurs. I need to hash the file as specified by the user (i.e., which one-way hashing algorithm should be utilized). I'm using the Python Standard Library module hashlib as we experimented with in [Chapter 2](#).

```

#process the file hashes
if gl_args.md5:
    #Calculation the MD5
    hash = hashlib.md5()
    hash.update(rd)
    hexMD5 = hash.hexdigest()
    hashValue = hexMD5.upper()
elif gl_args.sha256:
    #Calculate the SHA256
    hash=hashlib.sha256()
    hash.update(rd)
    hexSHA256 = hash.hexdigest()
    hashValue = hexSHA256.upper()
elif gl_args.sha512:
    #Calculate the SHA512
    hash=hashlib.sha512()
    hash.update(rd)
    hexSHA512 = hash.hexdigest()
    hashValue = hexSHA512.upper()
else:
    log.error('Hash not Selected')
#File processing completed
#Close the Active File

```

Now that processing of the file is complete the file must be closed. Next I use the CSV class to write out the record to the report file and return successfully to the caller in this case WalkPath.

```
f.close()

# write one row to the output file
o_result.writeCSVRow(simpleName,
theFile, fileSize, modifiedTime,
accessTime, createTime, hashValue,
ownerID, groupID, mode)
return True
```

This section posts the warning messages to the log file relating to problems encountered processing the file.

```
else:
    log.warning('['+ repr(simpleName) +', Skipped NOT a File'+ ']')
    return False
else:
    log.warning('['+ repr(simpleName) +', Skipped Link
NOT a File'+ ']')
    return False
else:
    log.warning('['+ repr(simpleName) +', Path does NOT exist'+ ']')
    return False
```

CSVWriter

The final code walk-through section I will cover in this chapter is the CSVWriter. As I mentioned earlier, I created this code as a class instead of a function to make this more useful and to introduce you to the concept of classes in Python. The class only has three methods, the constructor or `init`, `writeCSVRow`, and `writerClose`. Let us examine each one.

```
class _CSVWriter:
```

The constructor or init method accomplishes three basic initializations:

- (1) Opens the output csvFile
- (2) Initializes the csv.writer
- (3) Writes the header row with the names of each column

If any failure occurs during the initialization an exception is thrown and a log entry is generated.

```
def __init__(self, fileName, hashType):
    try:
        # create a writer object and write the header row
        self.csvFile = open(fileName, 'wb')
```

```

        self.writer = csv.writer(self.csvFile,
                                delimiter=',', quoting=csv.QUOTE_ALL)
        self.writer.writerow( ('File', 'Path', 'Size',
                              'Modified Time', 'Access Time', 'Created Time',
                              hashType, 'Owner', 'Group', 'Mode') )
    except:
        log.error('CSV File Failure')

```

The second method writeCSVRow receives a record from HashFile upon successful completion of each file hash. The method then uses the csv writer to actually place the record in the report file.

```

def writeCSVRow(self, fileName, filePath, fileSize, mTime,
               aTime, cTime, hashVal, own, grp, mod):

    self.writer.writerow( (fileName, filePath,
                          fileSize, mTime, aTime, cTime, hashVal, own,
                          grp, mod))

```

Finally, the writeClose method, as you expect, simply closes the csvFile.

```

def writerClose(self):
    self.csvFile.close()

```

Full code listing pfish.py

```

#
# p-fish : Python File System Hash Program
# Author: C. Hosmer
# July 2013
# Version 1.0
#
import logging          # Python Standard Library Logger
import time            # Python Standard Library time functions
import sys             # Python Library system specific parameters
import _pfish         # _pfish Support Function Module

if __name__ == '__main__':

    PFISH_VERSION = '1.0'

    # Turn on Logging
    logging.basicConfig(filename='pFishLog.log', level=logging.DEBUG,
                        format='%(asctime)s %(message)s')

    # Process the Command Line Arguments
    _pfish.ParseCommandLine()

    # Record the Starting Time

```

```

startTime = time.time()

# Record the Welcome Message
logging.info("")
logging.info('Welcome to p-fish version '+ PFISH_VERSION+'... New Scan
Started')
logging.info("")
_pfish.DisplayMessage('Welcome to p-fish ... version '+
PFISH_VERSION)

# Record some information regarding the system
logging.info('System: '+ sys.platform)
logging.info('Version: '+ sys.version)

# Traverse the file system directories and hash the files
filesProcessed = _pfish.WalkPath()

# Record the end time and calculate the duration
endTime = time.time()
duration = endTime - startTime
logging.info('Files Processed: '+ str(filesProcessed) )
logging.info('Elapsed Time: '+ str(duration) +' seconds')
logging.info("")
logging.info('Program Terminated Normally')
logging.info("")

_pfish.DisplayMessage("Program End")

```

Full code listing _pfish.py

```

#
# pfish support functions, where all the real work gets done
#
# Display Message()      ParseCommandLine()      WalkPath()
# HashFile()            class _CVSWriter
# ValidateDirectory()   ValidateDirectoryWritable()
#
import os                #Python Standard Library - Miscellaneous
                        operating system interfaces
import stat              #Python Standard Library - functions for
                        interpreting os results
import time              #Python Standard Library - Time access and
                        conversions functions
import hashlib           #Python Standard Library - Secure hashes and
                        message digests
import argparse          #Python Standard Library - Parser for command-
                        line options, arguments
import csv               #Python Standard Library - reader and writer for
                        csv files

```



```

import logging          #Python Standard Library - logging facility
log = logging.getLogger('main._pfish')

#
# Name: ParseCommand() Function
#
# Desc: Process and Validate the command line arguments
#       use Python Standard Library module argparse
#
# Input: none
#
# Actions:
#       Uses the standard library argparse to process the
#       command line
#       establishes a global variable gl_args where any of the
#       functions can
#       obtain argument information
#
def ParseCommandLine():
    parser = argparse.ArgumentParser('Python file system hashing ..
    p-fish')

    parser.add_argument('-v', '-verbose', help='allows progress messages
    to be displayed', action='store_true')

    # setup a group where the selection is mutually exclusive and
    required.
    group = parser.add_mutually_exclusive_group(required=True)
    group.add_argument('-md5', help='specifies MD5 algorithm',
    action='store_true')
    group.add_argument('--sha256', help='specifies SHA256
    algorithm', action='store_true')
    group.add_argument('--sha512', help='specifies SHA512
    algorithm', action='store_true')

    parser.add_argument('-d', '--rootPath', type=
    ValidateDirectory, required=True, help="specify the root
    path for hashing")
    parser.add_argument('-r', '--reportPath', type=
    ValidateDirectoryWritable, required=True, help="specify the
    path for reports and logs will be written")

    #create a global object to hold the validated arguments, these will be
    available then
    # to all the Functions within the _pfish.py module

    global gl_args
    global gl_hashType

    gl_args = parser.parse_args()

```

```

        if gl_args.md5:
            gl_hashType = 'MD5'
        elif gl_args.sha256:
            gl_hashType = 'SHA256'
        elif gl_args.sha512:
            gl_hashType = 'SHA512'
        else:
            gl_hashType = "Unknown"
            logging.error('Unknown Hash Type Specified')

        DisplayMessage("Command line processed: Successfully")

        return

# End ParseCommandLine=====

#
# Name: WalkPath() Function
#
# Desc: Walk the path specified on the command line
#       use Python Standard Library module os and sys
#
# Input: none, uses command line arguments
#
# Actions:
#       Uses the standard library modules os and sys
#       to traverse the directory structure starting a root
#       path specified by the user. For each file discovered,
#       WalkPath
#       will call the Function HashFile() to perform the file
#       hashing
#

def WalkPath():
    processCount = 0
    errorCount = 0

    oCSV = _CSVWriter(gl_args.reportPath+'fileSystemReport.csv',
                     gl_hashType)

    # Create a loop that process all the files starting
    # at the rootPath, all sub-directories will also be
    # processed

    log.info('Root Path: '+gl_args.rootPath)

    for root, dirs, files in os.walk(gl_args.rootPath):
        # for each file obtain the filename and call the HashFile Function
        for file in files:
            fname = os.path.join(root, file)

```

```

        result = HashFile(fname, file, oCVS)

        # if hashing was successful then increment the ProcessCount
        if result is True:
            processCount += 1
        # if not successful, the increment the ErrorCount
        else:
            ErrorCount += 1

    oCVS.writerClose()

    return(processCount)

#End WalkPath=====

#
# Name: HashFile Function
#
# Desc: Processes a single file which includes performing a hash of the
#       file
#       and the extraction of metadata regarding the file processed
#       use Python Standard Library modules hashlib, os, and sys
#
# Input: theFile = the full path of the file
#        simpleName = just the filename itself
#
# Actions:
#         Attempts to hash the file and extract metadata
#         Call GenerateReport for successful hashed files
#
def HashFile(theFile, simpleName, o_result):
    # Verify that the path is valid
    if os.path.exists(theFile):

        #Verify that the path is not a symbolic link
        if not os.path.islink(theFile):

            #Verify that the file is real
            if os.path.isfile(theFile):

                try:
                    #Attempt to open the file
                    f = open(theFile, 'rb')
                except IOError:
                    #if open fails report the error
                    log.warning('Open Failed: '+ theFile)
                    return
                else:
                    try:
                        # Attempt to read the file

```

```

        rd = f.read()
    except IOError:
        # if read fails, then close the file and
        # report error
        f.close()
        log.warning('Read Failed: '+ theFile)
        return
    else:
        #success the file is open and we can read from it
        #lets query the file stats

        theFileStats = os.stat(theFile)
        (mode, ino, dev, nlink, uid, gid, size, atime,
        mtime, ctime) = os.stat(theFile)

        #Print the simple file name
        DisplayMessage("Processing File: " + theFile)

        # print the size of the file in Bytes
        fileSize = str(size)

        #print MAC Times
        modifiedTime = time.ctime(mtime)
        accessTime = time.ctime(atime)
        createdTime = time.ctime(ctime)

        ownerID = str(uid)
        groupID = str(gid)
        fileMode = bin(mode)

        #process the file hashes

        if gl_args.md5:
            #Calculation and Print the MD5
            hash = hashlib.md5()
            hash.update(rd)
            hexMD5 = hash.hexdigest()
            hashValue = hexMD5.upper()
        elif gl_args.sha256:
            hash=hashlib.sha256()
            hash.update(rd)
            hexSHA256 = hash.hexdigest()
            hashValue = hexSHA256.upper()
        elif gl_args.sha512:
            #Calculate and Print the SHA512
            hash=hashlib.sha512()
            hash.update(rd)
            hexSHA512 = hash.hexdigest()
            hashValue = hexSHA512.upper()
        else:
            log.error('Hash not Selected')

```

```

        #File processing completed
        #Close the Active File
        print "======"
        f.close()

        # write one row to the output file
        o_result.writeCSVRow(simpleName, theFile,
            fileSize, modifiedTime, accessTime, createTime,
            hashValue, ownerID, groupID, mode)
        return True
    else:
        log.warning('['+ repr(simpleName) +', Skipped NOT a
            File'+ ']')
        return False
else:
    log.warning('['+ repr(simpleName) +', Skipped Link NOT a
        File'+ ']')
    return False
else:
    log.warning('['+ repr(simpleName) +', Path does NOT
        exist'+ ']')
return False

# End HashFile Function =====
#
# Name: ValidateDirectory Function
#
# Desc: Function that will validate a directory path as
#       existing and readable. Used for argument validation only
#
# Input: a directory path string
#
# Actions:
#         if valid will return the Directory String
#
#         if invalid it will raise an ArgumentTypeError within
#         argparse
#         which will in turn be reported by argparse to the user
#
def ValidateDirectory(theDir):
    # Validate the path is a directory
    if not os.path.isdir(theDir):
        raise argparse.ArgumentTypeError('Directory does not exist')

    # Validate the path is readable
    if os.access(theDir, os.R_OK):
        return theDir
    else:

```

```

        raise argparse.ArgumentTypeError('Directory is not readable')
#End ValidateDirectory =====
#
# Name: ValidateDirectoryWritable Function
#
# Desc: Function that will validate a directory path as
#       existing and writable. Used for argument validation only
#
# Input: a directory path string
#
# Actions:
#         if valid will return the Directory String
#
#         if invalid it will raise an ArgumentTypeError within
#         argparse
#         which will in turn be reported by argparse to the user
#

def ValidateDirectoryWritable(theDir):

    # Validate the path is a directory
    if not os.path.isdir(theDir):
        raise argparse.ArgumentTypeError('Directory does not exist')

    # Validate the path is writable
    if os.access(theDir, os.W_OK):
        return theDir
    else:
        raise argparse.ArgumentTypeError('Directory is not writable')

#End ValidateDirectoryWritable =====

#=====
#
# Name: DisplayMessage() Function
#
# Desc: Displays the message if the verbose command line option is present
#
# Input: message type string
#
# Actions:
#         Uses the standard library print function to display the
#         message
#

def DisplayMessage(msg):

    if gl_args.verbose:
        print(msg)

```

```

        return

#End DisplayMessage=====

#
# Class: _CSVWriter
#
# Desc: Handles all methods related to comma separated value operations
#
# Methods constructor:      Initializes the CSV File
#           writeCSVRow:    Writes a single row to the csv file
#           writerClose:    Closes the CSV File

class _CSVWriter:
    def __init__(self, fileName, hashType):
        try:
            # create a writer object and then write the header row
            self.csvFile = open(fileName, 'wb')
            self.writer = csv.writer(self.csvFile, delimiter=',',
            quoting=csv.QUOTE_ALL)
            self.writer.writerow( ('File', 'Path', 'Size', 'Modified Time',
            'Access Time', 'Created Time', hashType, 'Owner', 'Group', 'Mode') )
        except:
            log.error('CSV File Failure')

    def writeCSVRow(self, fileName, filePath, fileSize, mTime, aTime,
    cTime, hashVal, own, grp, mod):

        self.writer.writerow( (fileName, filePath, fileSize, mTime,
        aTime, cTime, hashVal, own, grp, mod))

    def writerClose(self):
        self.csvFile.close()

```

RESULTS PRESENTATION

Now that the walk-through has been completed and I have gone through a deep dive into the code, let us take a look at the results. In [Figure 3.7](#), I executed the program with the following options:

```
C:\p-fish> Python pfish.py --md5 -d "c:\p-fish\TESTDIR\\" -r "c:\p-fish\\" -v
```

The `-v` or verbose option was selected and the program displayed information regarding every file processed was selected as expected.

In [Figure 3.8](#), I examine the `c:\p-fish` directory and discover that two files were created there, which are the two resulting files for the `pfish.py`.

1. fileSystemReport.csv
2. pFishLog.log

```

C:\Windows\system32\cmd.exe
-d ROOTPATH, --rootPath ROOTPATH
    specify the root path for hashing
-r REPORTPATH, --reportPath REPORTPATH
    specify the path for reports and logs will be written

C:\p-fish>python pfish.py --md5 -d "c:\p-fish\TESTDIR\" -r "c:\p-fish\" -v
Command line processed: Successfully
Welcome to p-fish .. version 1.0
Processing File: c:\p-fish\TESTDIR\hpwmd121.dat
=====
Processing File: c:\p-fish\TESTDIR\hpwpr103.dat
=====
Processing File: c:\p-fish\TESTDIR\hpwpr104.dat
=====
Processing File: c:\p-fish\TESTDIR\hpwpr110.dat
=====
Processing File: c:\p-fish\TESTDIR\hpwpr111.dat
=====
Processing File: c:\p-fish\TESTDIR\Before and After\124.JPG
=====
Processing File: c:\p-fish\TESTDIR\Before and After\210.JPG
=====
Processing File: c:\p-fish\TESTDIR\Before and After\291.JPG
=====
Processing File: c:\p-fish\TESTDIR\Before and After\292.JPG
=====
Processing File: c:\p-fish\TESTDIR\Before and After\293.JPG
=====

```

FIGURE 3.7

Test run of pfish.py.

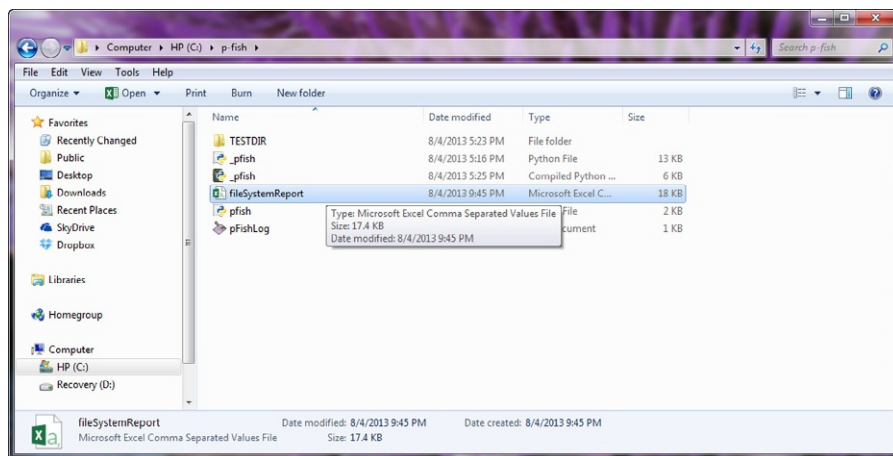


FIGURE 3.8

Result directory after pfish execution.

By choosing to leverage the Python `csv` module to create the report file Windows already recognizes it as a file that Microsoft Excel can view. Opening the file we see the results in Figure 3.9, a nicely formatted column report that can now manipulate with Excel (sort columns, search for specific values, arrange in date order, and examine each of the results). You notice that the hash value is in a column named MD5 that is labeled as such because I passed the appropriate heading value during the initialization of the `csv`.

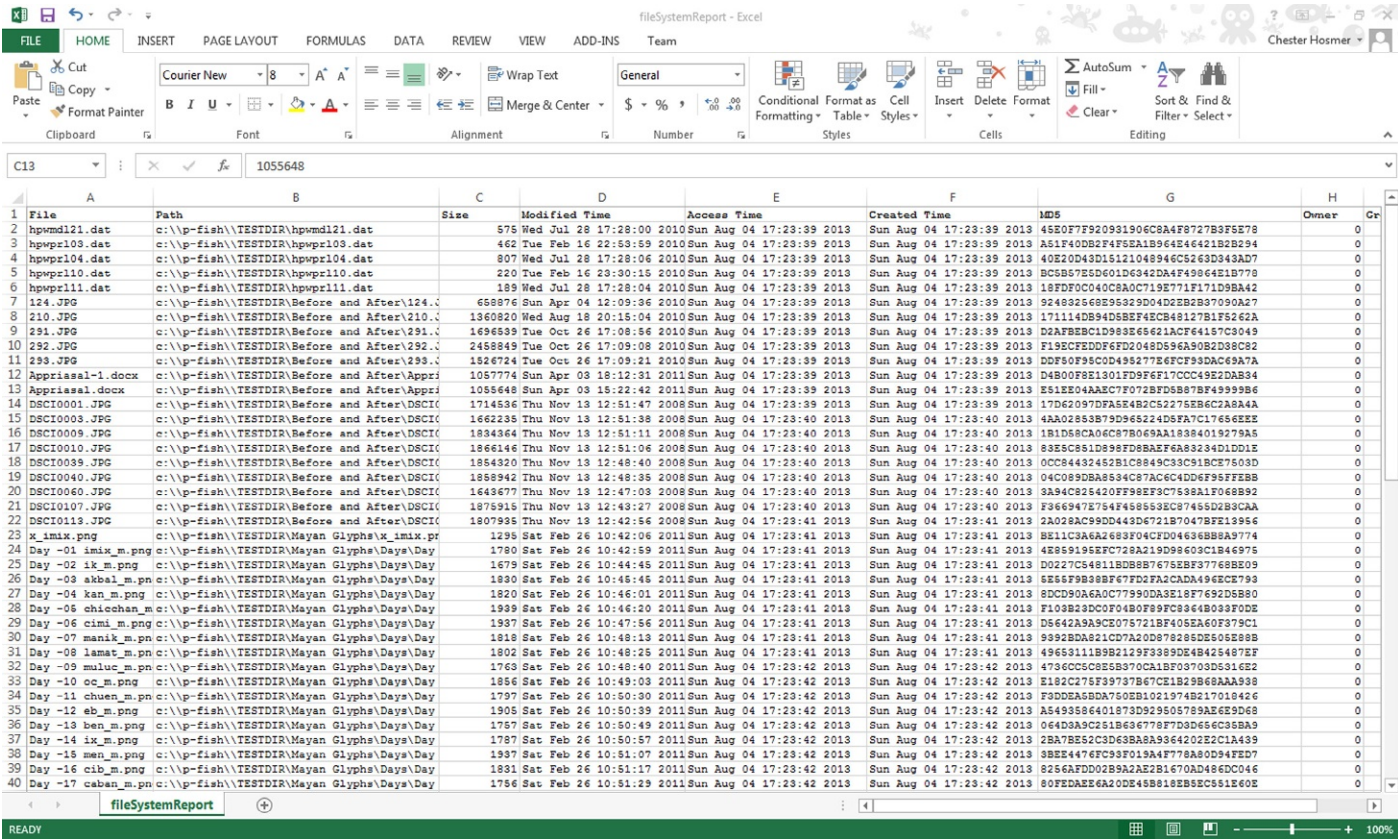
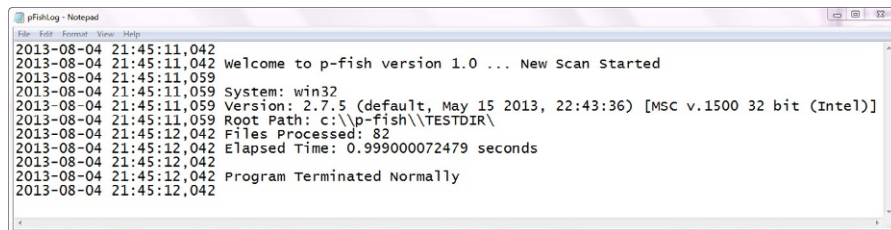


FIGURE 3.9

Examining the Result File with Microsoft Excel.



```
pFishLog - Notepad
File Edit Format View Help
2013-08-04 21:45:11,042
2013-08-04 21:45:11,042 Welcome to p-fish version 1.0 ... New Scan Started
2013-08-04 21:45:11,059
2013-08-04 21:45:11,059 System: win32
2013-08-04 21:45:11,059 Version: 2.7.5 (default, May 15 2013, 22:43:36) [MSC v.1500 32 bit (Intel)]
2013-08-04 21:45:11,059 Root Path: c:\\p-fish\\TESTDIR\\
2013-08-04 21:45:12,042 Files Processed: 82
2013-08-04 21:45:12,042 Elapsed Time: 0.999000072479 seconds
2013-08-04 21:45:12,042
2013-08-04 21:45:12,042 Program Terminated Normally
2013-08-04 21:45:12,042
```

FIGURE 3.10

Contents of the pFishLog file.

The generated pFishLog.log file results are depicted in [Figure 3.10](#). As expected we find the welcome message, the details regarding the Windows environment, the root path that was specified by the user, the number of files processed, and the elapsed time of just under 1 s. In this example no errors were encountered and the program terminated normally.

Moving to a Linux platform for execution only requires us to copy two Python Files.

1. pfish.py
2. _pfish.py

Execution under Linux (Ubuntu version 12.04 LTS in this example) works *without* changing any Python code and produces the following results shown in [Figures 3.11–3.13](#).

You notice that the pFishLog file under Linux has a number of warnings; this is due to lack of read access to many of the files within the /etc directory at the user privilege level I was running and due to some of the files being locked because they were in use.

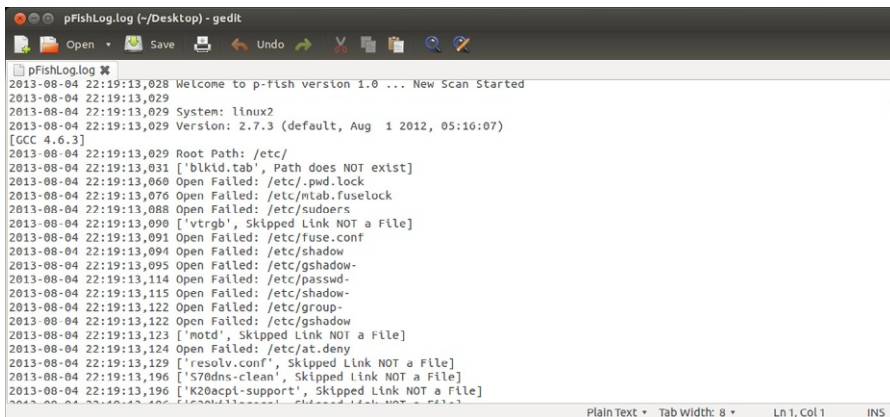
CHAPTER REVIEW

In this chapter I created our first useable Python forensics application. The pfish.py program executes on both Windows and Linux platforms and through some ingenuity I only used Python Standard Library modules to accomplish this along with our own code. I also scratched the surface with `argparse` allowing us to not only parse the command line but also validate command line parameters before they were used by the application.

I also enabled the Python logger and reported events and errors to the logging system to provide a forensic record of our actions. I provided the user with the capability of selecting among the most popular one-way hashing algorithms and the program extracted key attributes of each file that was processed. I also leveraged the `cvs` module to create a nicely formatted output file that can be opened and processed by standard applications on both Windows and Linux systems. Finally, I implemented our first class in Python with many more to come.

```
ch3t@PythonForensics: ~/Desktop
ch3t@PythonForensics:~/Desktop$ clear
ch3t@PythonForensics:~/Desktop$ python pfish.py --sha256 -d /etc/ -r ~/Desktop/ -v
Command line processed: Successfully
Welcome to p-fish ... version 1.0
Processing File: /etc/host.conf
=====
Processing File: /etc/kernel-1mg.conf
=====
Processing File: /etc/apg.conf
=====
Processing File: /etc/wgetrc
=====
Processing File: /etc/updatedb.conf
=====
Processing File: /etc/crontab
=====
Processing File: /etc/ld.so.cache
=====
Processing File: /etc/gai.conf
=====
Processing File: /etc/blkid.conf
=====
Processing File: /etc/legal
=====
Processing File: /etc/profile
=====
Processing File: /etc/insserv.conf
=====
Processing File: /etc/shells
=====
Processing File: /etc/colorid.conf
=====
Processing File: /etc/sysctl.conf
=====
Processing File: /etc/netscsid.conf
=====
Processing File: /etc/fstab
=====
Processing File: /etc/usb_modeswitch.conf
=====
Processing File: /etc/pnm2ppa.conf
```

FIGURE 3.11
Linux Command Line Execution.

A screenshot of a text editor window titled 'pFishLog.log (~/Desktop) - gedit'. The window displays a log file with the following content:

```
pFishLog.log #
2013-08-04 22:19:13,028 Welcome to p-fish version 1.0 ... New Scan Started
2013-08-04 22:19:13,029
2013-08-04 22:19:13,029 System: linux2
2013-08-04 22:19:13,029 Version: 2.7.3 (default, Aug 1 2012, 05:16:07)
[GCC 4.6.3]
2013-08-04 22:19:13,029 Root Path: /etc/
2013-08-04 22:19:13,031 ['blkid.tab', Path does NOT exist]
2013-08-04 22:19:13,068 Open Failed: /etc/.pwd.lock
2013-08-04 22:19:13,076 Open Failed: /etc/mtab.fuselock
2013-08-04 22:19:13,088 Open Failed: /etc/sudoers
2013-08-04 22:19:13,090 ['vtrgb', Skipped Link NOT a File]
2013-08-04 22:19:13,091 Open Failed: /etc/fuse.conf
2013-08-04 22:19:13,094 Open Failed: /etc/shadow
2013-08-04 22:19:13,095 open Failed: /etc/gshadow-
2013-08-04 22:19:13,114 Open Failed: /etc/passwd-
2013-08-04 22:19:13,115 Open Failed: /etc/shadow-
2013-08-04 22:19:13,122 Open Failed: /etc/group-
2013-08-04 22:19:13,122 Open Failed: /etc/gshadow
2013-08-04 22:19:13,123 ['motd', Skipped Link NOT a File]
2013-08-04 22:19:13,124 Open Failed: /etc/at.deny
2013-08-04 22:19:13,129 ['resolv.conf', Skipped Link NOT a File]
2013-08-04 22:19:13,196 ['s70dns-clean', Skipped Link NOT a File]
2013-08-04 22:19:13,196 ['K20acpi-support', Skipped Link NOT a File]
```

The status bar at the bottom of the window shows 'Plain Text', 'Tab width: 8', 'Ln 1, Col 1', and 'INS'.**FIGURE 3.13**

Linux Execution Results pFishLog File.

SUMMARY QUESTIONS

1. If you wanted to add additional one-way hashing algorithms, which functions would you need to modify? Also, by using just the Python Standard Library what other one-way hashing algorithms are readily available.
2. If you wanted to eliminate the need of the two global variables how could you easily accomplish this by using classes? What function would you convert to a class and what methods would you need to create?
3. What other events or elements do you think should be logged? How would you go about doing that?
4. What additional columns would you like to see in the report and how would you obtain the additional information?
5. What additional information (such as Investigator name or case number) should be included in the log. How would you obtain that information?

LOOKING AHEAD

In [Chapter 4](#), I will be continuing with the cookbook section by tackling searching and indexing of forensic data.

Additional Resources

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Kim G. The design and implementation of tripwire: a file system integrity checker. Purdue ePubs computer science technical reports, 1993. <http://docs.lib.purdue.edu/cstech/1084/>.

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