

## Re: ? about file() and open()

**Source:** <http://coding.derkeiler.com/Archive/Python/comp.lang.python/2005-01/0259.html>

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Sean <D.Sean.Morris@gmail.com> wrote:

> *Was wondering if there was any difference between these two functions.*

Not today:

```
>>> open is file
True
```

they're two names for the same object. Which isn't a function, btw:

```
>>> type(open)
<type 'type'>
```

the object, as you see, is a type (besides calling it to instantiate it, you might inherit from it, etc).

> *I have read some text that said file() wasn't introduced until 2.2 and that it was synonymous with open(). Does this mean that I should be using file() where I used open() before?*

According to Guido, you should keep `_calling_ 'open'` -- that's the name to which a factory function to be called may be bound in the future if and when a good way is found to return filelike objects of some other type depending on circumstances (e.g., one day it might become possible to open some kinds of URL that way).

You should use 'file' when you're subclassing, or in other situations where you want to be sure you're naming a type, not a function (few good cases come to mind, but maybe `isinstance` is a possible case, although likely not `_good_...;-)`).

Alex