

Re: A critique of cgi.escape

Source: <http://coding.derkeiler.com/Archive/Python/comp.lang.python/2006-09/msg03524.html>

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In article <mailman.499.1159035571.10491.python-list@xxxxxxxxxx>, Fredrik Lundh wrote:

Lawrence D'Oliveiro wrote:

So I think the default for the second argument to `cgi.escape` should be changed to `True`. Or alternatively, the second argument should be removed altogether, and quotes should always be escaped.

you're confused: `cgi.escape(s)` is designed to be used for ordinary text, `cgi.escape(s, True)` is designed for attributes. if you use the code the way it's intended to be used, it works perfectly fine.

He's not confused, he's correct; the author of `cgi.escape` is the confused one. The optional extra parameter is completely unnecessary and achieves nothing except to make it easier for people to end up with bugs in their code.

Making `cgi.escape` always escape the `'` character would not break anything, and would probably fix a few bugs in existing code. Yes, those bugs are not `cgi.escape`'s fault, but that's no reason not to be helpful. It's a minor improvement with no downside.

One thing that is flat-out wrong, by the way, is that `cgi.escape()` does not encode the apostrophe (`'`) character. This is essentially identical to the quote character in HTML, so any code which escaping one should always be escaping the other.

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