# Introduction

PHP(PHP: Hypertext Preprocessor), originally named Personal Homepage, is a general purpose scripting language developed by Rasmus Lerdorf in 1994. PHP is now widely-used as a general-purpose scripting language, however, it is mostly used for back-end web development and can be embedded into HTML.

It is a server-side web scripting language which means, it runs in a web server. The php script is executed first on the server, generating the HTML and sent to the client.

PHP is a very popular scripting language, however, it is not a very disciplined language in a way that there’s a lot of inconsistencies in the language such as function names and there’s no central organization governing the development of PHP.

In php, there are 2 ways of coding, the Object Oriented and the Procedural Paradigm.

# PHP Fundamentals

## Basic Syntax

PHP Tags

When PHP parses a file, it looks for opening and closing tags, which are <?php and ?> which tells the parser the beginning and end of a php code. This allows PHP to be embedded anywhere in the HTML. This also allows php to be embedded in different documents aside from HTML.

Example:

<?php

Echo “Hello Webtech People!”;

</php>

Escaping from HTML

PHP can skip HTML lines in between php scripts using conditions.

Example:

<php if ($expression == true){ ?>

<p>This will be shown if the condition is met.</p>

<?php }else{ ?>

<p>Otherwise this will be shown.</p>

<?php } ?>

## Variables

Variables are represented by dollar sign($) followed by the name of the variable. PHP is a loosely typed language, meaning, that variable types are defined at run time, and can change at any time during execution.

### Predefined Variables

Predefined variables are variables that are already defined by php.

Superglobals - are built-in variables that are always available in all scopes. Superglobals are named in capital letters and starts with underscore(‘\_’) after the dollar sign with the exception of the $GLOBALS variable.

1. $GLOBALS - references all the variables that are in global scope.
2. $\_SERVER - an array containing information such as headers, paths, and script locations.
3. $\_GET - an associative array containing variables passed through the url
4. $\_POST - an associative array containing variables passed via the HTTP POST method.
5. $\_FILES - an associative array of items uploaded via the HTTP POST method.
6. $\_REQUEST - an associative array containing the value of HTTP Request variables ($\_GET, $\_POST and $\_COOKIE).
7. $\_SESSION - an associative array which contains session variables available to the current script.
8. $\_ENV - an associative array containing the variables passed via the environment method. These variables are coming from the environment under which the PHP parser is running.
9. $\_COOKIES - an associative array containing the cookies passed via HTTP Cookies

## Data Types

(Under String, add string concatenations)

### Conditional

If

If...else

If...else if...else

Switch

## Loops

Loops in PHP are closely similar to loops in other programming/scripting languages such as Java and JavaScript and it has almost the same syntax as the aforementioned languages.

|  |  |  |
| --- | --- | --- |
|  | **Basic Syntax** | **Sample Code** |
| While | while(condition){  // code } | <?php $i = 1; while($i <= 3){  $i++;  echo $i . "<br>"; } ?> |
| For | for(initialization; condition; increment){  // code  } | <?php for($i=1; $i<=3; $i++){  echo $i . "<br>"; } ?> |
| Foreach | foreach($array as $var){  // code } | <?php  $numbers = array(1, 2, 3);    foreach($numbers as $value){  echo $value . "<br>";  }  ?> |
| Do-while | do{  // code  }while(condition); | <?php  $i = 1;  do{  $i++;  echo $i . "<br>";  }  while($i <= 3);  ?> |

## Functions

## Handling Error Messages (HIDE)

# 

# Sessions

Normally, accessing a website causes data to be stored using cookies which, in turn, are stored in the user’s computer. Cookies are basically small pieces of data sent by the server to be stored in a user’s browser which may send it back with the next request to the same server. It is typically used to tell if two requests came from the same browser (MDN Webdocs). Since cookies are susceptible to web attacks and can negatively affect a website’s performance, PHP sessions solve these issues since it stores data in the server instead. In a session based environment, every user is identified through a unique number called session identifier or SID which is used to link each user with their own information in the server like emails and the like (TutorialRepublic).

One example of the use of sessions is in login forms. The basic idea of this is that after a user submits a login form and the password is verified by the server, the server creates a session variable for the user. For every page load that the user does within the website, the server will keep checking the session variable. Once the user logs out of the website, the session is destroyed (Morris, J., 2017).

Data are stored in between requests in the $\_SESSION superglobal array.

Sample code:

<?php

// Starting session

session\_start();

// Storing session data

$\_SESSION["username"] = "user1";

?>

When a site with session support is accessed, PHP will check automatically or on request whether a specific session ID has been sent with the request if session.auto\_start is set to 1 or explicitly through session\_start() respectively (php.net).

To remove certain session data, you can simply use the unset function with the corresponding key of the $\_SESSION array.

Sample Code:

<?php

// Starting session

session\_start();

// Removing session data

if(isset($\_SESSION["username"])){

unset($\_SESSION["username"]);

}

?>

However, if you want to completely remove the session data for a user, simply call the session\_destroy()function to destroy the session.

Sample Code:

<?php

// Starting session

session\_start();

// Storing session data

$\_SESSION["username"] = "user1";

// Removing session data

if(isset($\_SESSION["username"])){

unset($\_SESSION["username"]);

}

// Destroying session

session\_destroy();

?>

References:

<https://developer.mozilla.org/en-US/docs/Web/HTTP/Cookies>

<https://www.tutorialrepublic.com/php-tutorial/php-sessions.php>

<http://php.net/manual/en/intro.session.php>

<https://www.johnmorrisonline.com/build-php-login-form-using-sessions/>

## Handling Data Submissions

Using Post

Using Get

Handling other methods

(use $\_SERVER variable)

## Handling File Uploads

## Dynamic Content using AJAX and Databases