

# Beginning PHP and MySQL

From Novice to Professional,  
Third Edition



W. Jason Gilmore

## **Beginning PHP and MySQL: From Novice to Professional, Third Edition**

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*This one is dedicated to you, Ruby!*

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# Acknowledgments

**B**ack in 2000, Gary Cornell, co-founder of a small but ambitious computer publisher called Apress, contacted me and asked whether I'd be interested in writing a book about PHP. At the time a developer and aspiring technical writer, I jumped at the opportunity, albeit wondering how I'd ever be able to finish such a large writing project. Like running a first marathon, success was gauged by way of mere completion rather than by any other benchmark.

Eight years have since passed, and that original book is still alive and kicking, its current incarnation being what you hold in your hands. Suffice it to say this project has exceeded my wildest expectations, and I thank Gary and Apress (now a much larger but still ambitious publisher) profusely for the opportunity.

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Last but certainly not least, I'd like to thank my family and friends for reminding me there is indeed life beyond the keyboard.





# Introduction

**M**ost great programming books sway far more toward the realm of the practical than of the academic. Although I have no illusions regarding my place among the great technical authors of our time, it is always my goal to write with this point in mind, producing material that you can apply to your own situation. Given the size of this book, it's probably apparent that I attempted to squeeze out every last drop of such practicality from the subject matter. That said, if you're interested in gaining practical and comprehensive insight into the PHP programming language and MySQL database server, and how these prominent technologies can be used together to create dynamic, database-driven Web applications, this book is for you.

The feverish work of the respective PHP and MySQL communities prompted this new edition, and with it considerable changes over the previous edition. In addition to updating the material to reflect features found in PHP 6 and the latest MySQL releases, two new chapters have been added. Chapter 23 shows you how to create Web sites for the world by taking advantage of open source internationalization and localization tools. Chapter 24 introduces the popular Zend Framework, a great solution for building powerful Web applications. Furthermore, all existing chapters have been carefully revised, and in some cases heavily modified, to both update and improve upon the previous edition's material.

If you're new to PHP, I recommend beginning with Chapter 1, because gaining the fundamental knowledge presented therein will be of considerable benefit to you when you're reading later chapters. If you know PHP but are new to MySQL, consider beginning with Chapter 25. Intermediate and advanced readers are invited to jump around as necessary; after all, this isn't a romance novel. Regardless of your reading strategy, I've attempted to compartmentalize the material found in each chapter so that you can quickly learn each topic without having to necessarily master other chapters beyond those that concentrate on the technology fundamentals.

Furthermore, novices and seasoned PHP and MySQL developers alike have something to gain from this book, as I've intentionally organized it in a hybrid format of both tutorial and reference. I appreciate the fact that you have traded hard-earned cash for this book, and therefore have strived to present the material in a fashion that will prove useful not only the first few times you peruse it, but far into the future.

## Download the Code

Experimenting with the code found in this book is the most efficient way to best understand the concepts presented within. For your convenience, a zip file containing all of the examples can be downloaded from <http://www.apress.com>.

## Contact Me!

I love reader e-mail, and invite you to contact me with comments, suggestions, and questions. Feel free to e-mail me at [jason@wjgilmore.com](mailto:jason@wjgilmore.com). Also be sure to regularly check <http://www.beginningphpandmysql.com> for errata, code, and other updates.