

13.3 Forwarding Requests with `jsp:forward`

You use `jsp:include` to combine output from the main page and the auxiliary page. Instead, you can use `jsp:forward` to obtain the complete output from the auxiliary page. For example, here is a page that randomly selects either `page1.jsp` or `page2.jsp` to output.

```
<% String destination;
    if (Math.random() > 0.5) {
        destination = "/examples/page1.jsp";
    } else {
        destination = "/examples/page2.jsp";
    }
%>
<jsp:forward page="<%= destination %>" />
```

To use `jsp:forward`, the main page must not have any output. This brings up the question, what benefit does JSP provide, then? The answer is, none! In fact, use of JSP is a hindrance in this type of situation because a real situation would be more complex, and complex code is easier to develop and test in a servlet than it is in a JSP page. We recommend that you completely avoid the use of `jsp:forward`. If you want to perform a task similar to this example, use a servlet and have it call the `forward` method of `RequestDispatcher`. See [Chapter 15](#) for details.