



DEVELOPMENT LARAGON · UPDATED 27/07/2021

LARAGON, an easy and yet powerful Local Web Development Server

01/03/2021

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1. Introduction

For more then a decade I used [XAMPP](#) as a local development server. Although XAMPP is popular, it is not very fast nor easy to configure and not suited for using multiple PHP versions.

A few years ago I accidentally stumbled upon [Laragon](#). It only took me 10 minutes to realize this was by far the best local development stack I've ever seen.



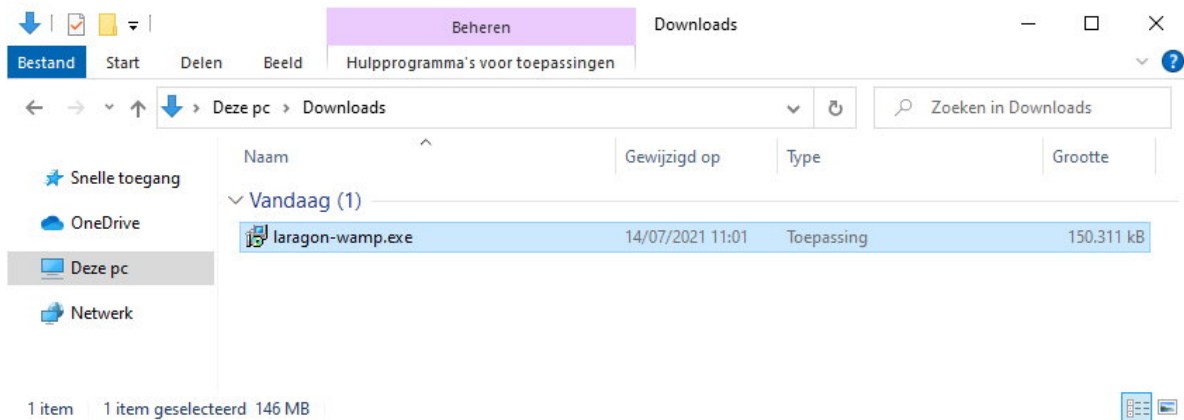
It has some features I have not found in other stacks :

- blazing fast startup, low CPU and memory footprint
- multiple PHP versions possible, easy switching between installed versions
- works out of the box with not only **MySQL/MariaDB** but also **PostgreSQL & MongoDB**
- all tools you need are build-in
- all services and build-in tools are easy to upgrade to their latest versions
- automatic virtual host configuration and hosts file change
- Quick App creation
- ...

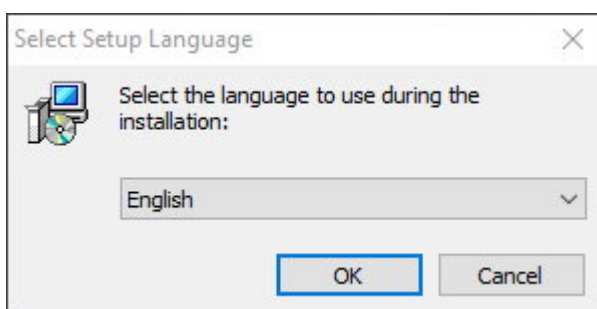
This post covers the installation of Laragon 5.x.

2. Installation

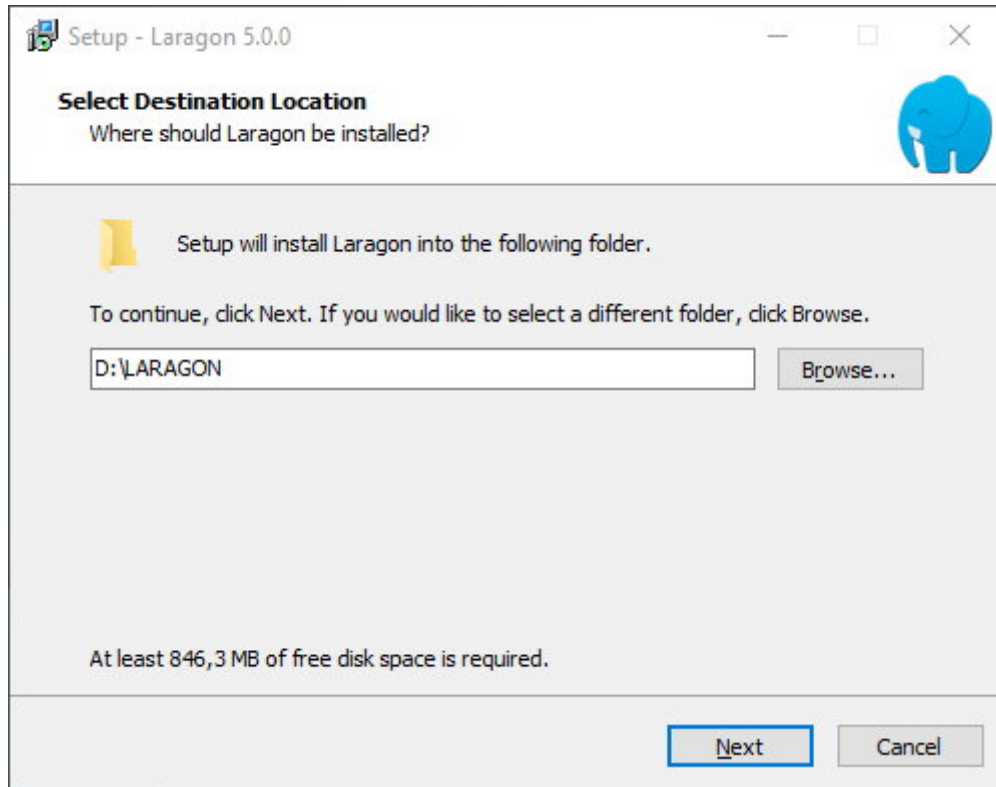
- Download [Laragon \(Full\)](#) into your **Downloads** folder.
- Start the installer **laragon-full.exe**.



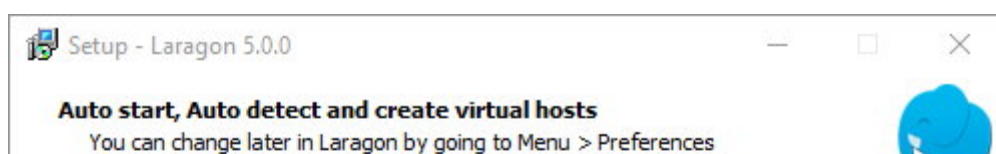
- Select your language.
- Click **OK**.

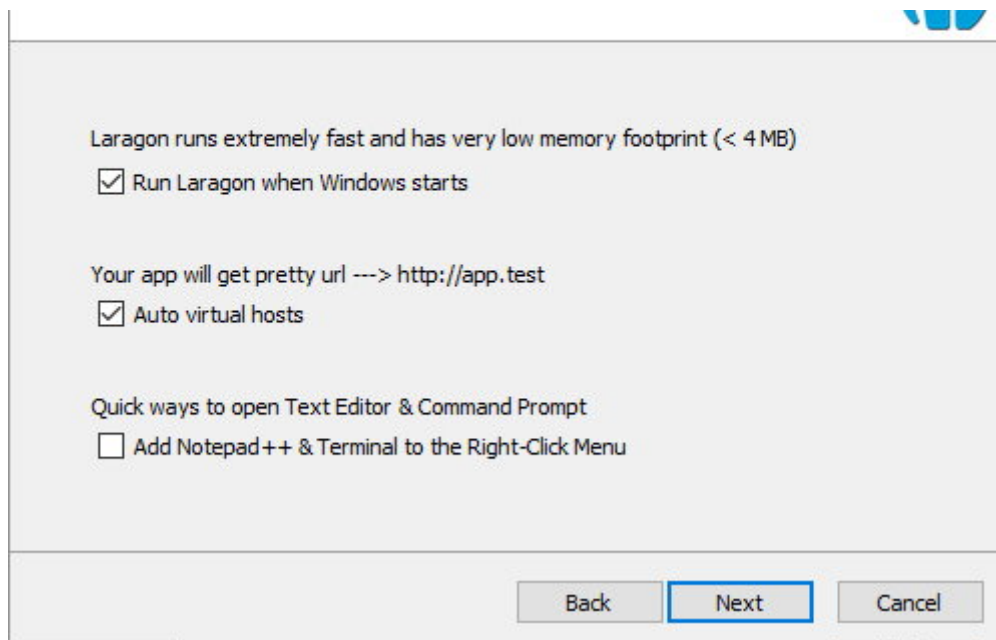


- Change the location of the installation to a folder in the root of a fast drive. Prefer NVMe drives or SSD drives for optimal performance. Avoid using your systems OS boot drive.
By installing Laragon in a folder in the root of the drive you automatically keep the length of the PATH variable as short as possible.
- Click **Next**.

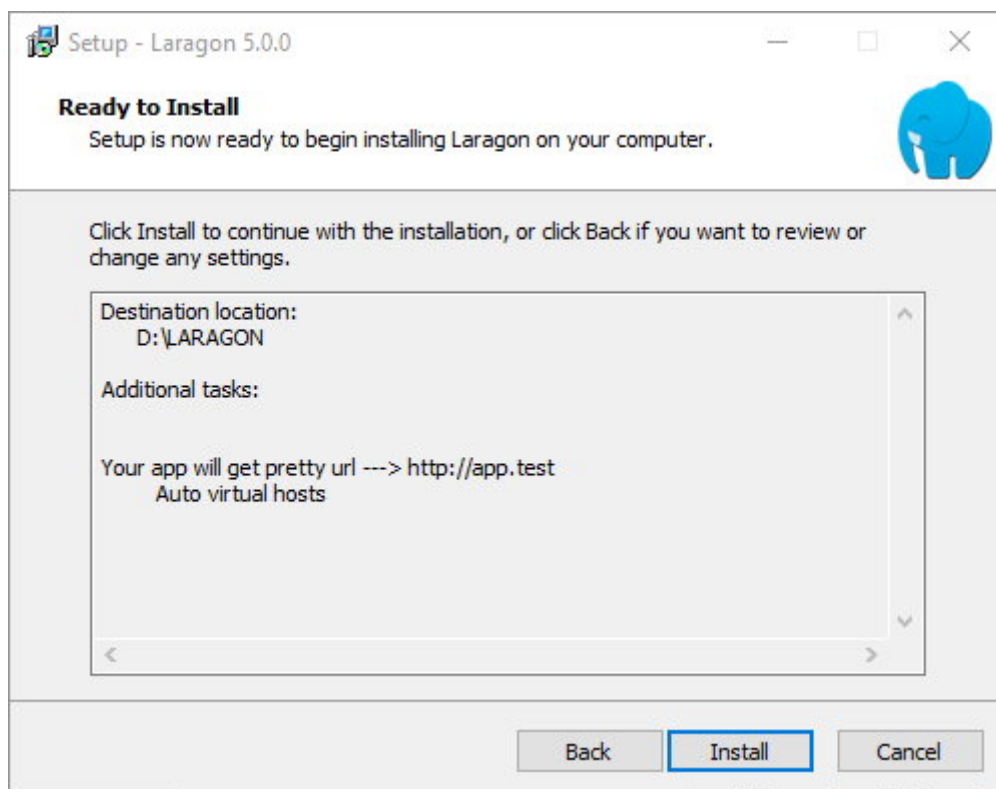


- If you want to run Laragon when Windows starts, check the appropriate option.
- Laragon will automatically adapt your local **hosts file** every time you add or remove a project. Leave the **Auto Virtual hosts** option enabled.
- If you don't already have an enhanced text editor installed, check the last option to integrate (the in Laragon included) Notepad++ to your Explorers Right-Click Menu.
- Click **Next**.



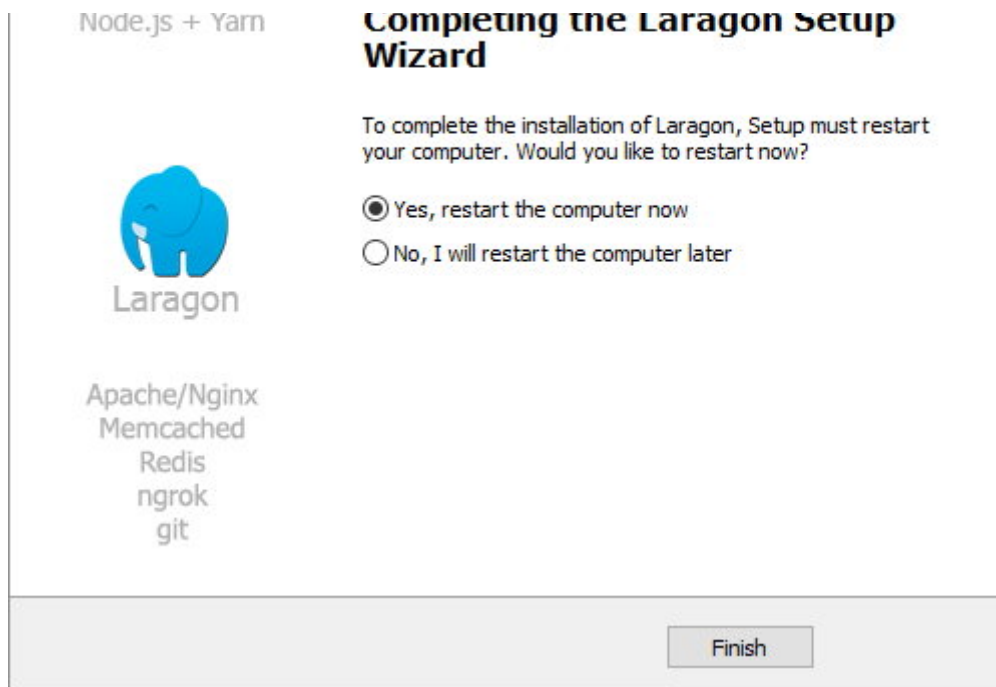


- Click **Install**.



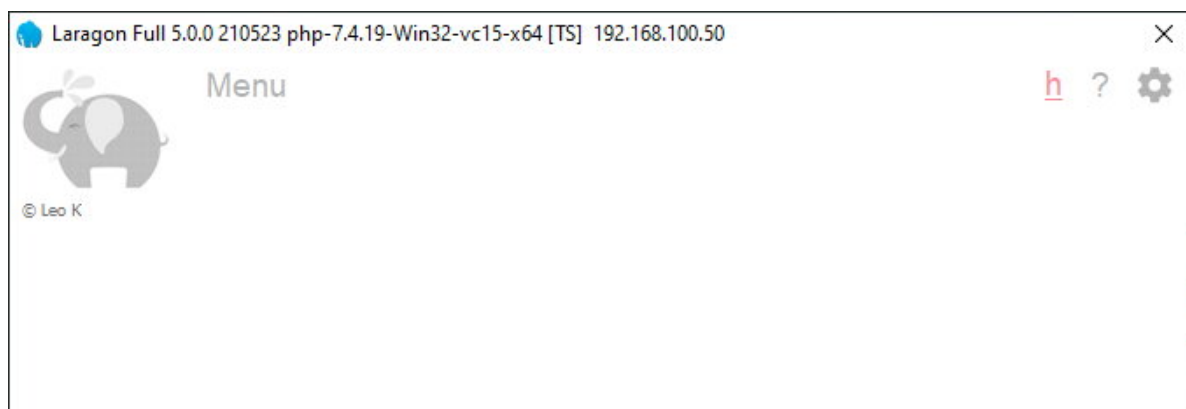
- Click **Finish**.

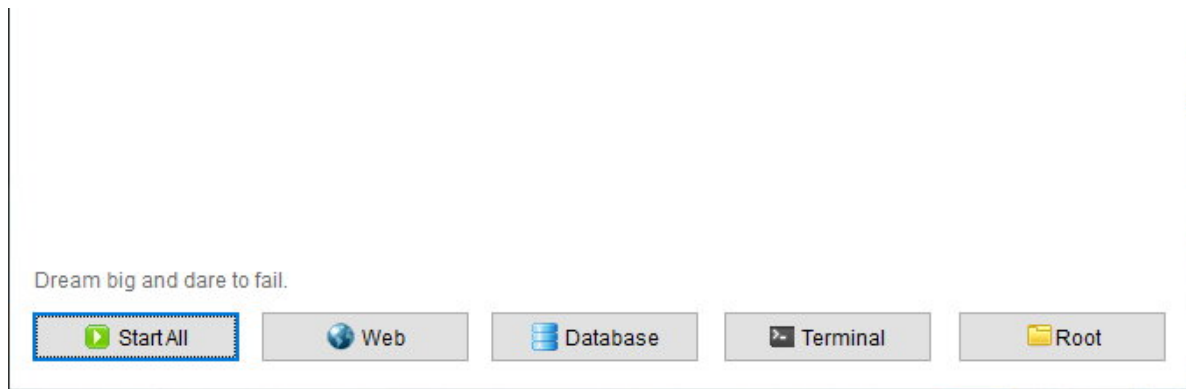




After installation, the computer will reboot. Then double-click the Laragon icon on your desktop.

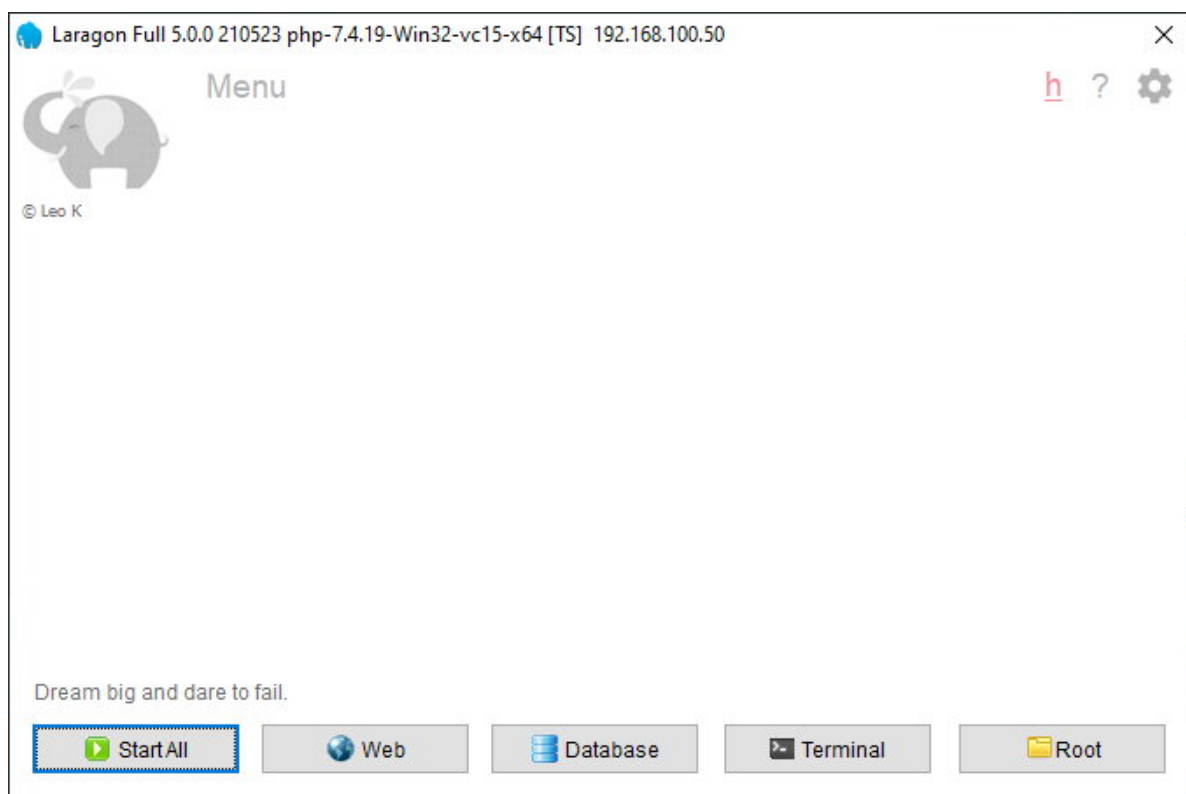
- Laragon is now installed and running.
- The services are not started yet.





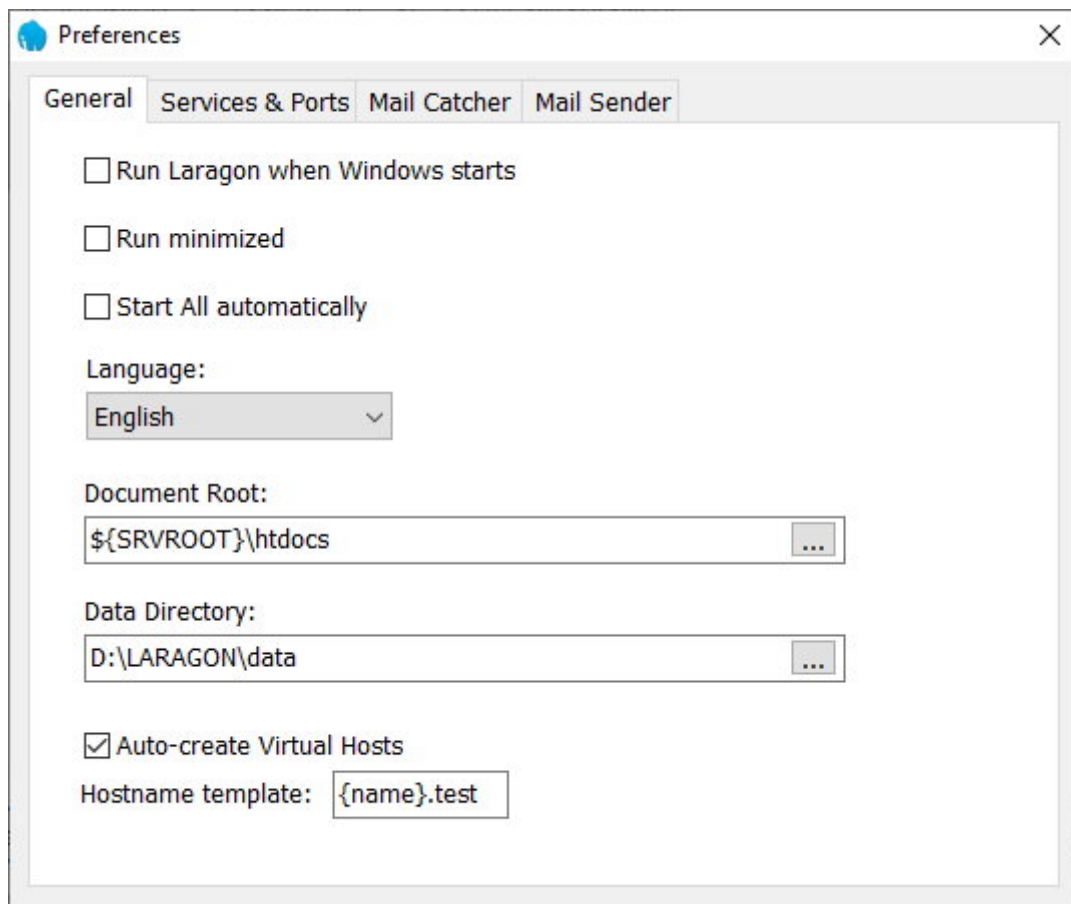
3. Configuration

- Click on the **Settings Icon** in the upper right corner.

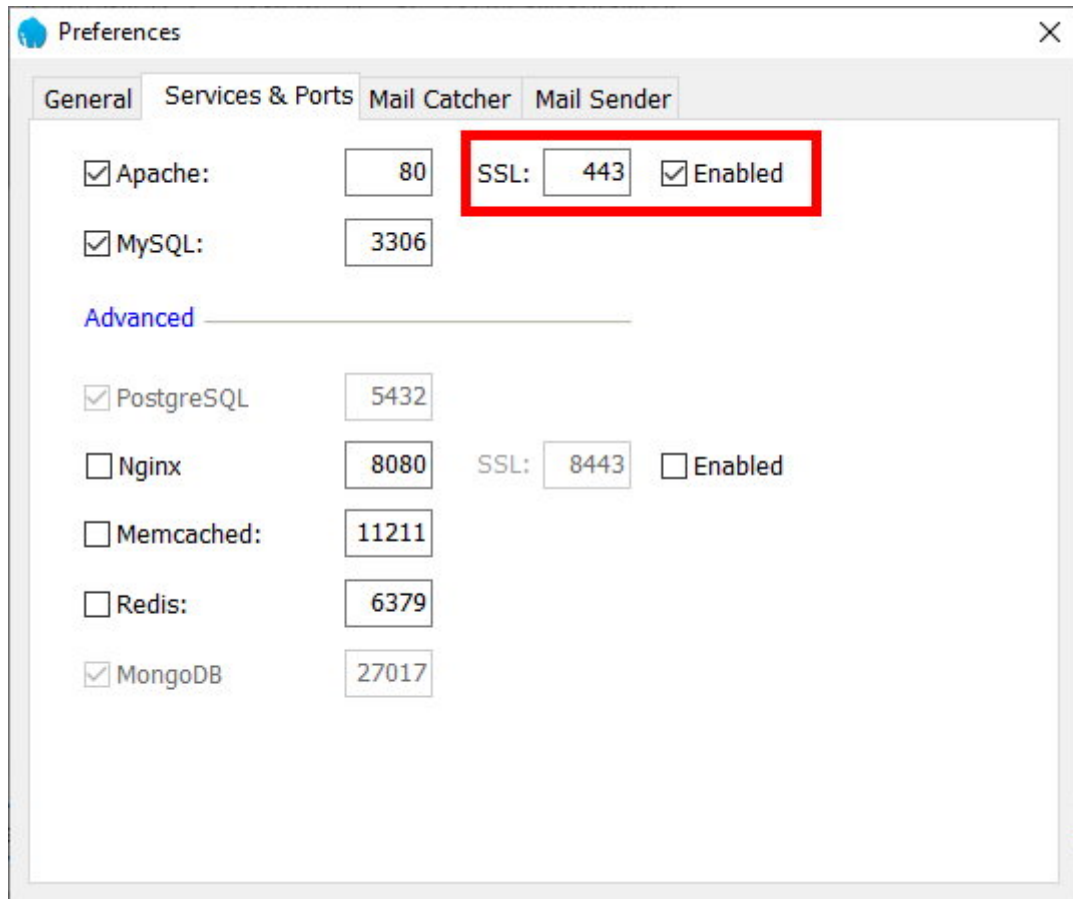


- On the **General** tab, you can change general settings.
- Note :
By default, Laragon will open all your projects in the default domain for local development on your computer called **.test**. Do not change this to anything

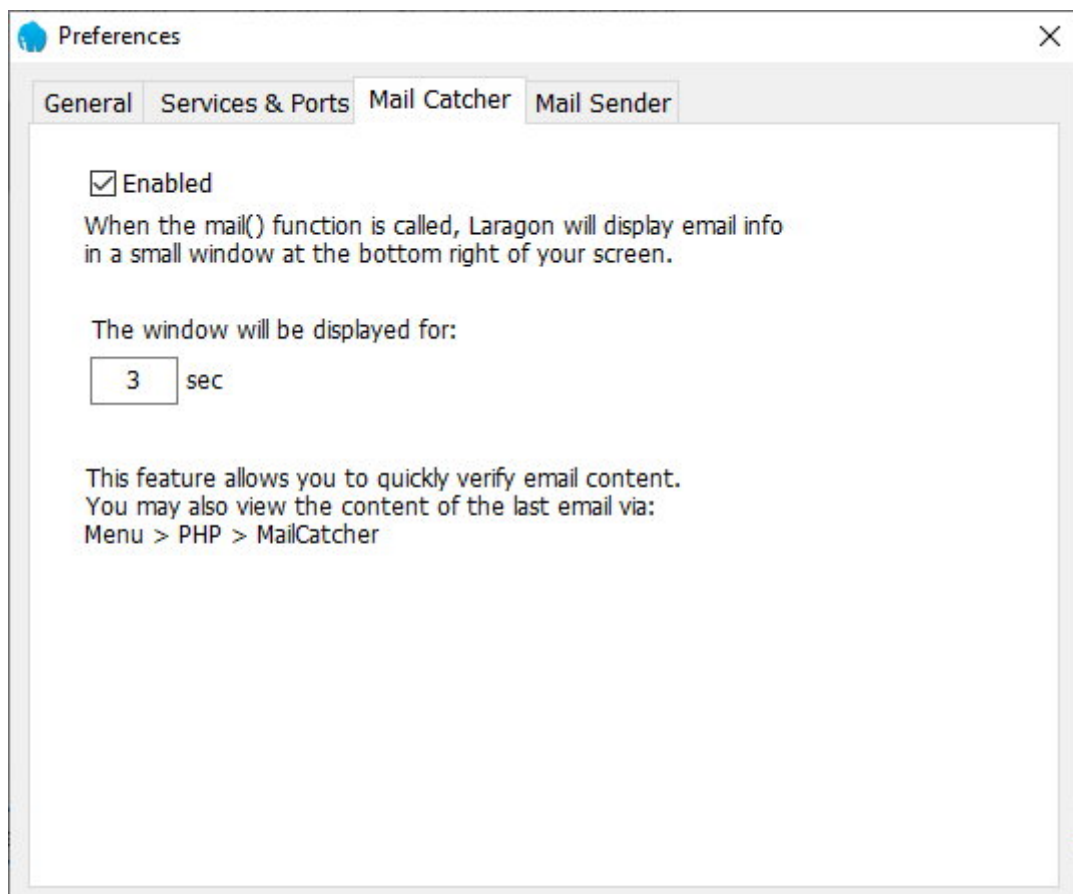
else, especially not to **.dev**. The .dev domain is obsolete for local development.



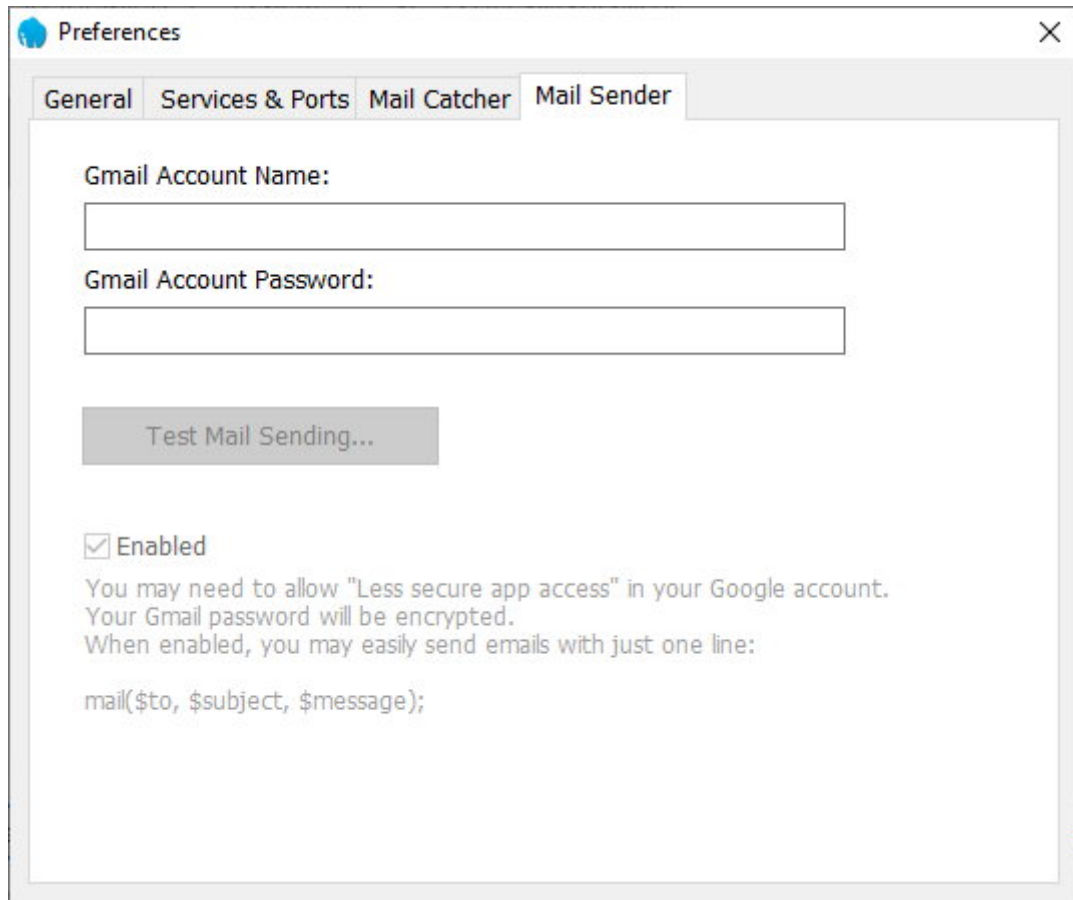
-
- On the **Services & Ports** tab, you can activate additional services or change Port settings.
 - Activate the **SSL** option to make your projects more secure.



- On the **Mail Catcher** tab, you enable or disable the build in Mail Catcher.



- On the **Mail Sender** tab, you configure Gmail as your Mail Sender.

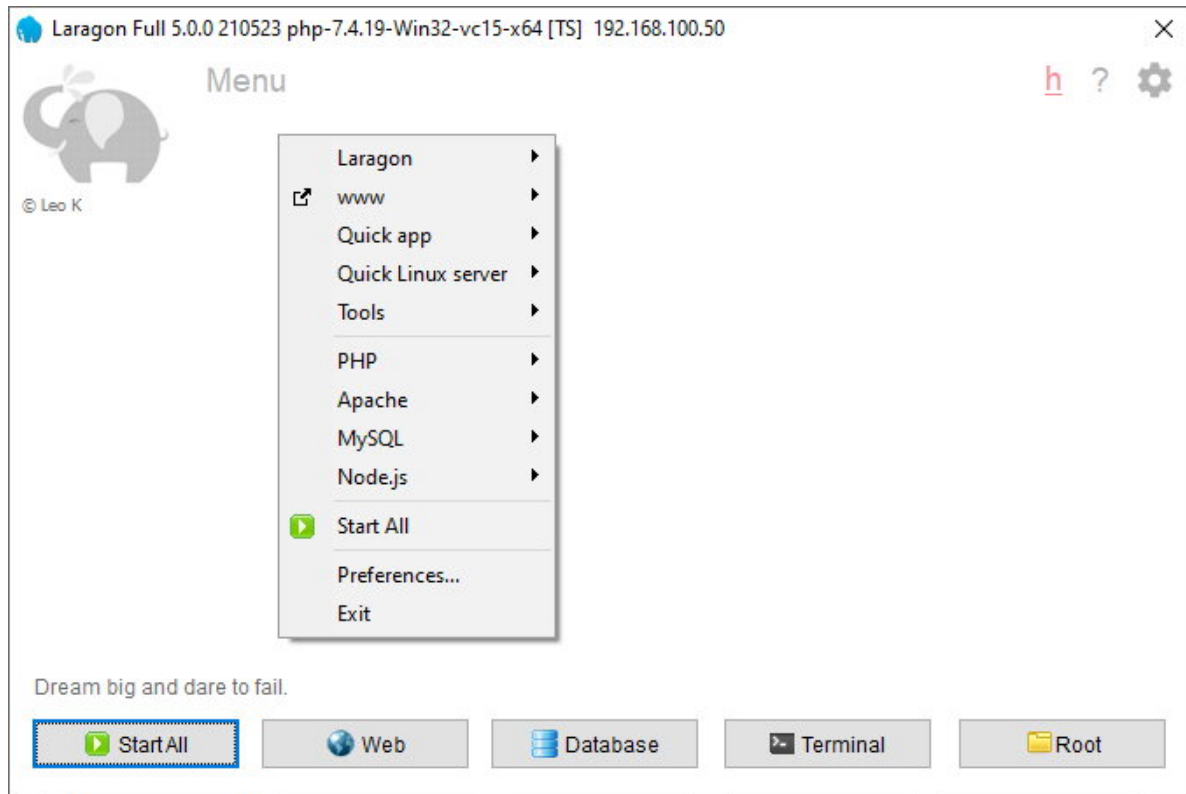


The screenshot shows the 'Preferences' dialog box with the 'Mail Sender' tab selected. The dialog has a title bar with a close button. Below the title bar are four tabs: 'General', 'Services & Ports', 'Mail Catcher', and 'Mail Sender'. The 'Mail Sender' tab contains the following elements:

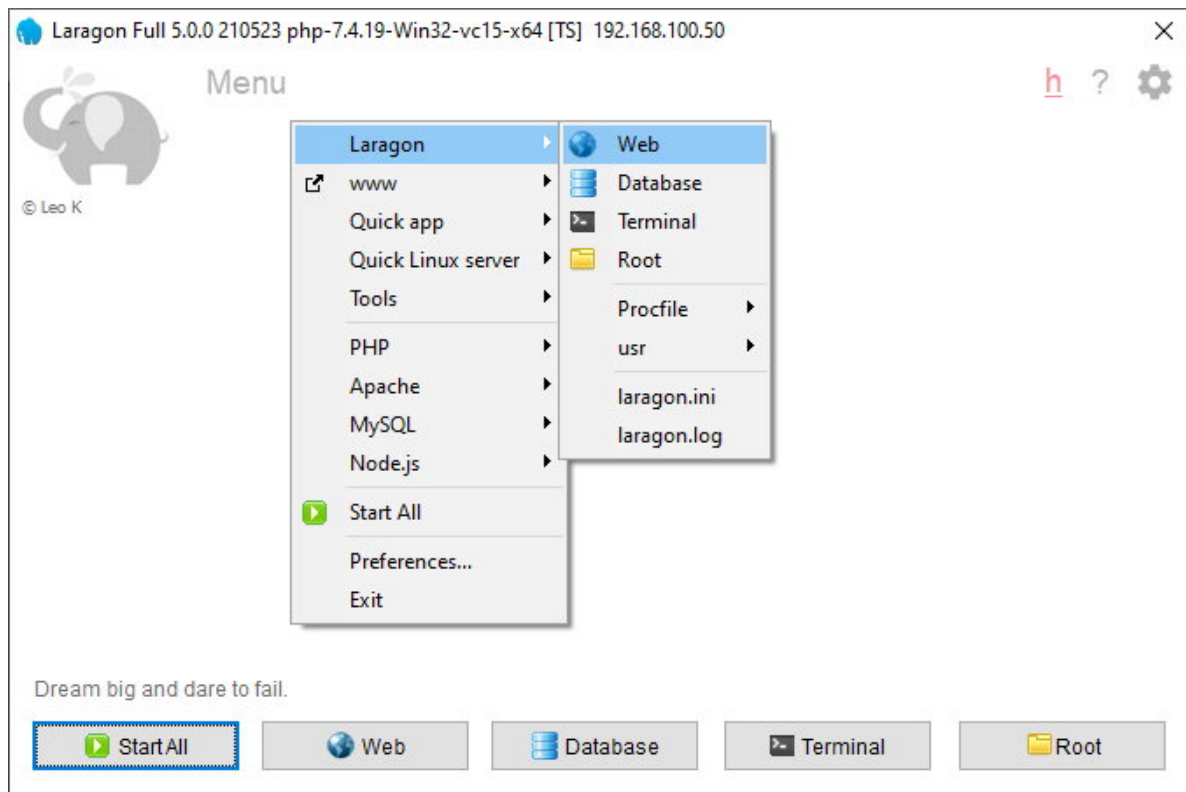
- Gmail Account Name:** A text input field.
- Gmail Account Password:** A text input field.
- Test Mail Sending...** A button.
- ☒ **Enabled**
- Informational text: "You may need to allow 'Less secure app access' in your Google account. Your Gmail password will be encrypted. When enabled, you may easily send emails with just one line:"
- Code snippet: `mail($to, $subject, $message);`

4. Exploring the Main Menu

- Right-click on the Laragon UI to access the Main Menu.



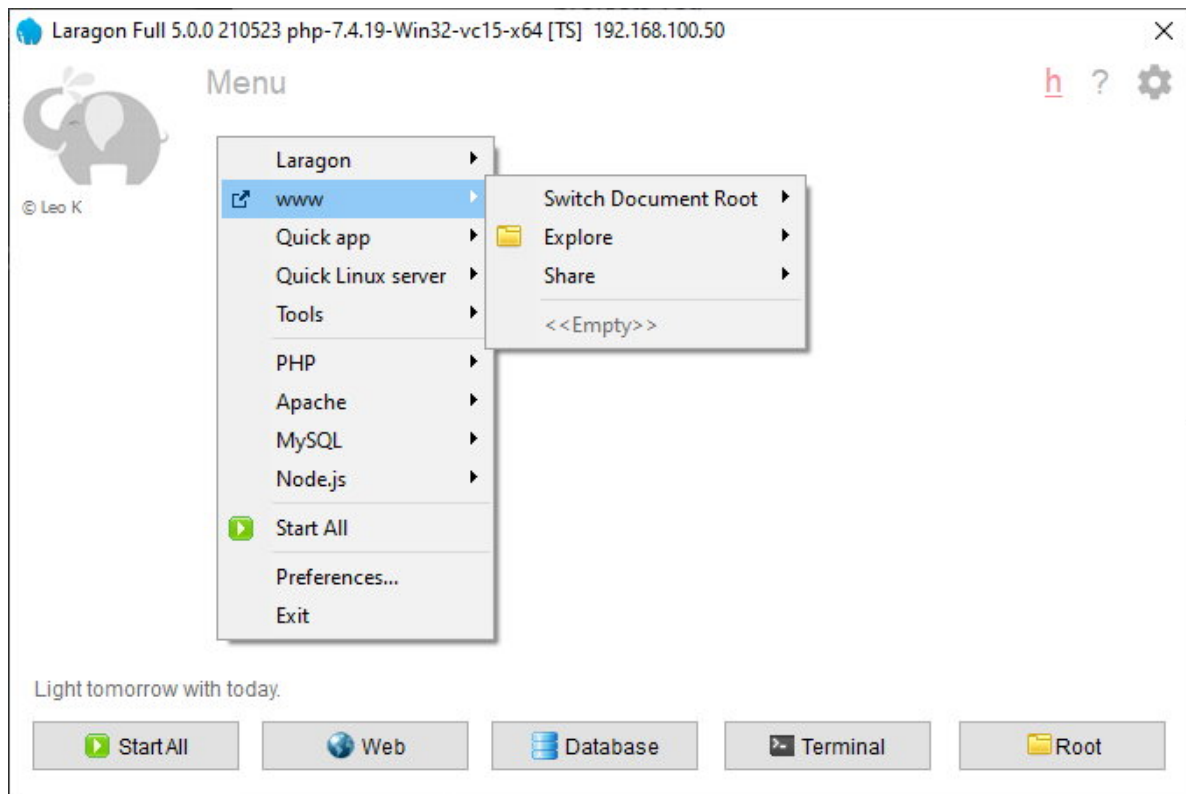
- In the **Laragon** section, you'll find some main Laragon functions and configurations.



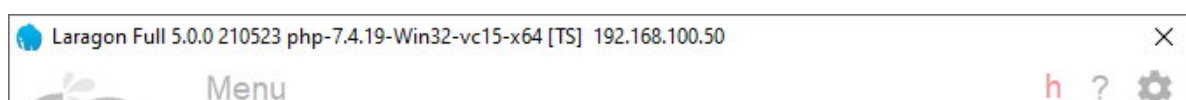
- In the **www** section you'll find your projects

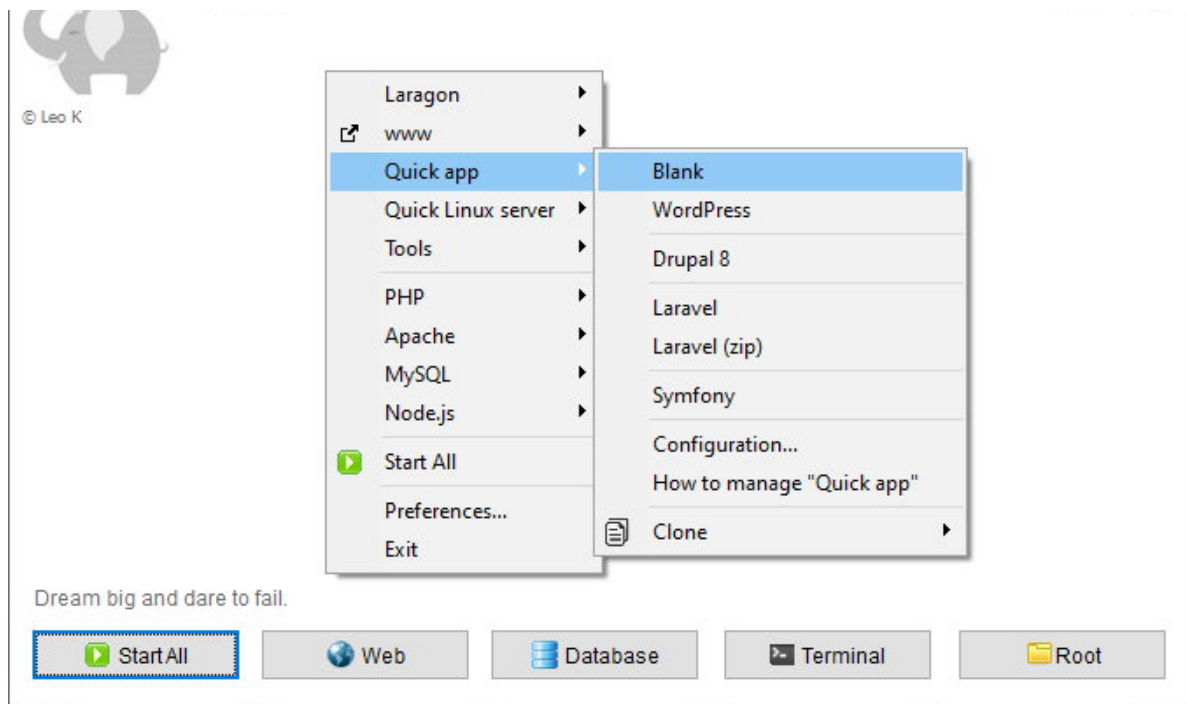
in the **www** section, you find your projects.

- A fresh Laragon installation does not contain any projects yet.

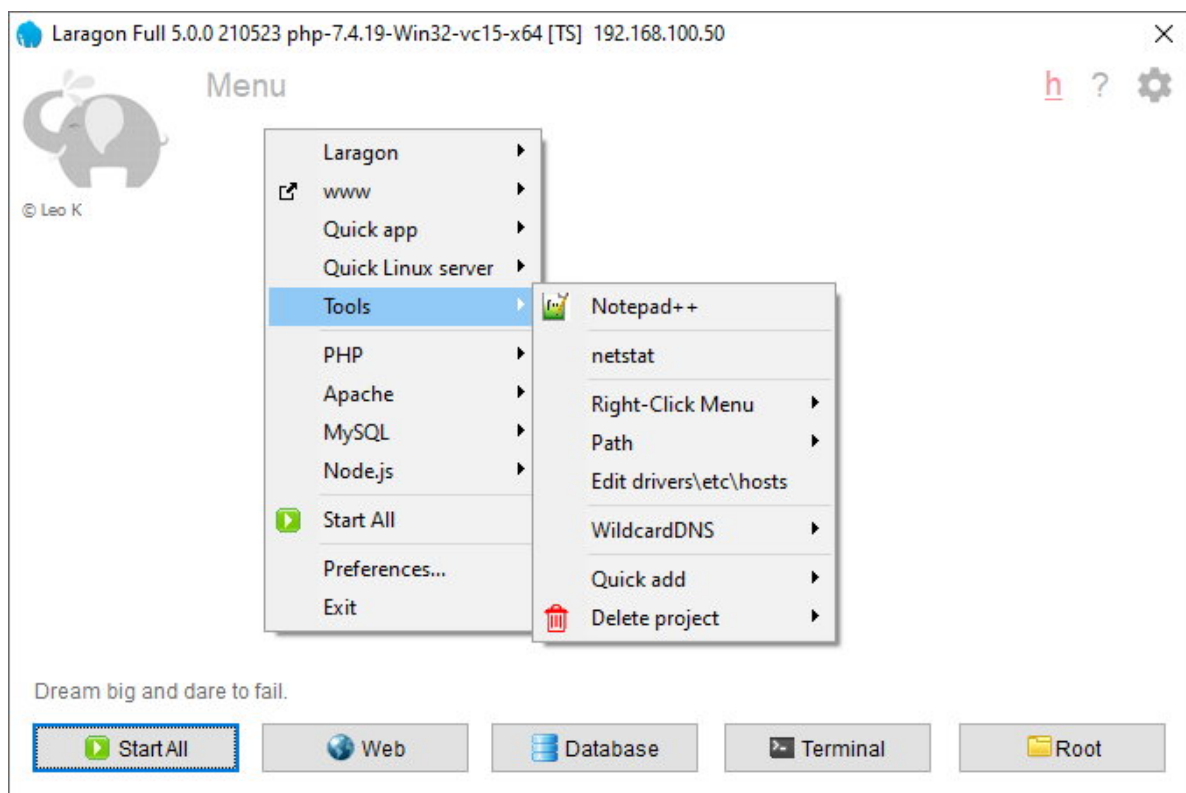


- In the **Quick App** section, you can use predefined scripts to quickly setup some new projects.



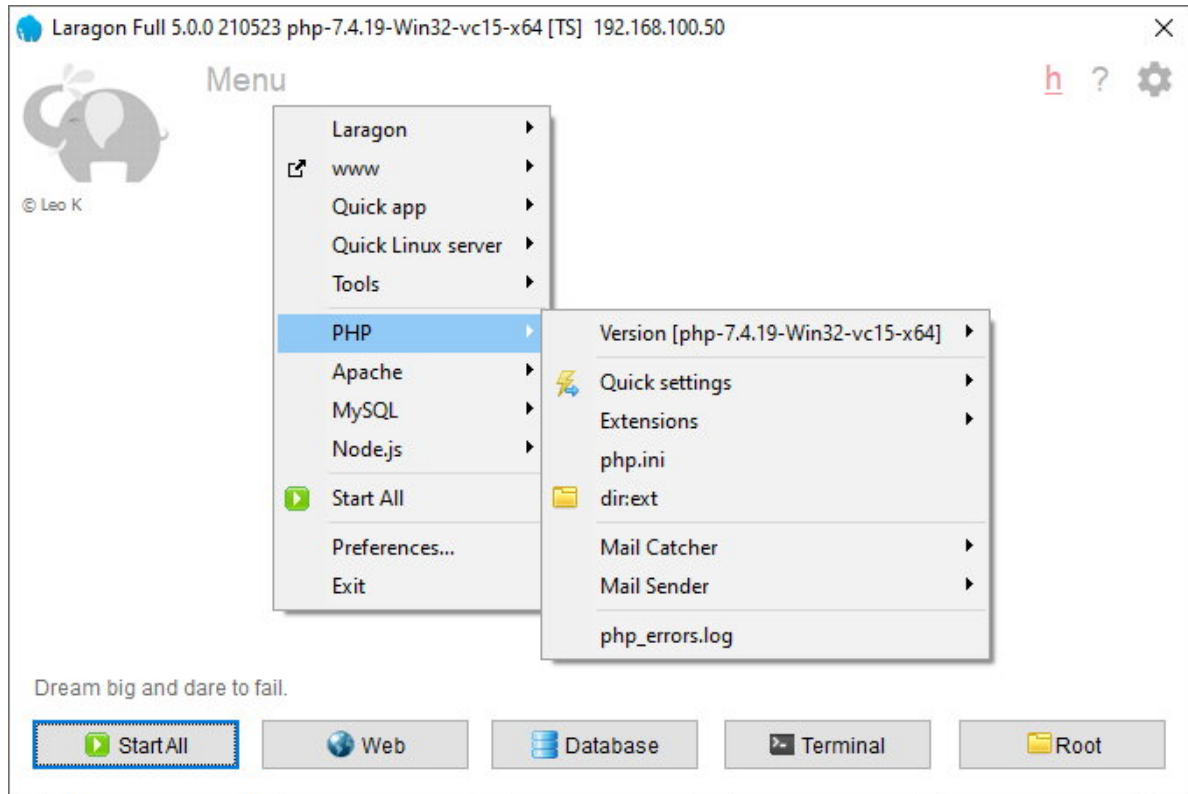


- In the **Tools** section, Laragon provides a collection of tools to help you manage your projects.

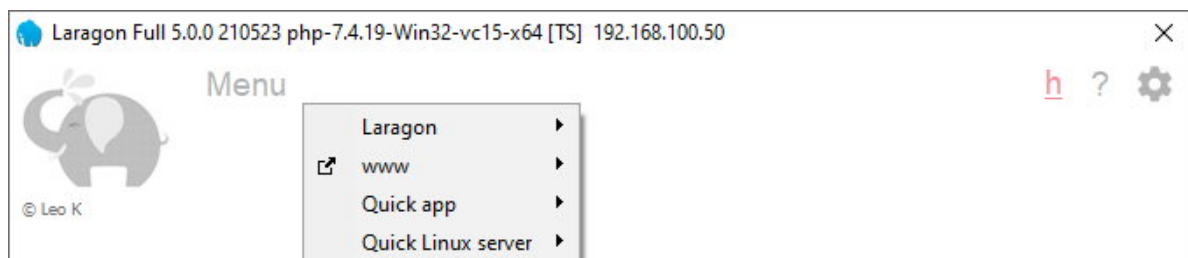


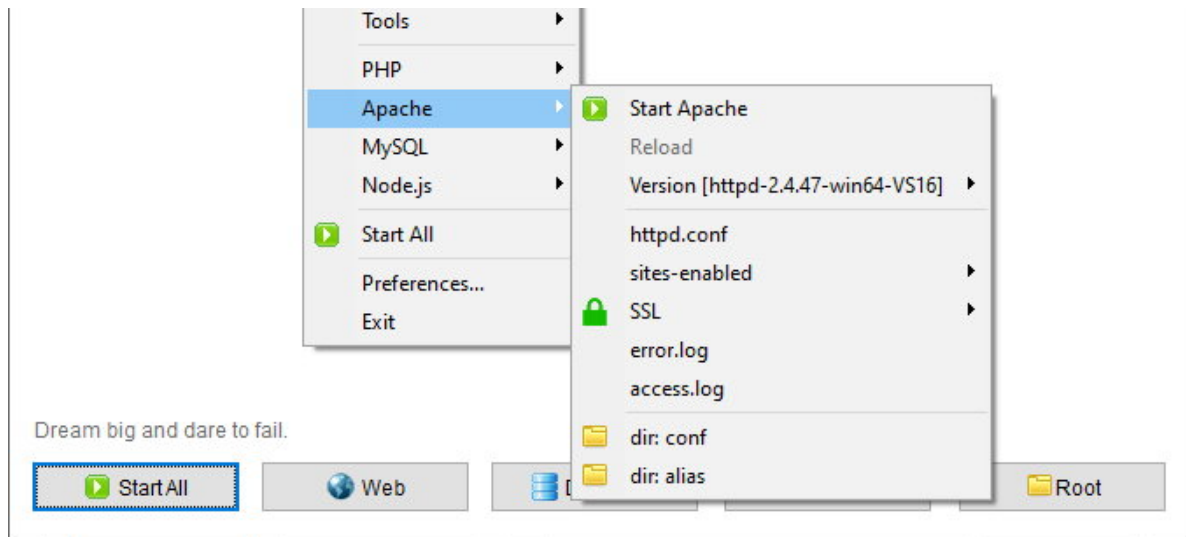
- In the **PHP** section, you can manage and configure the installed PHP version(s).

- It's possible and very easy to install multiple PHP versions and switch between them using the Laragon Main Menu.
- In a [future post](#), we'll explain how to add new PHP versions and/or how to update the existing version.

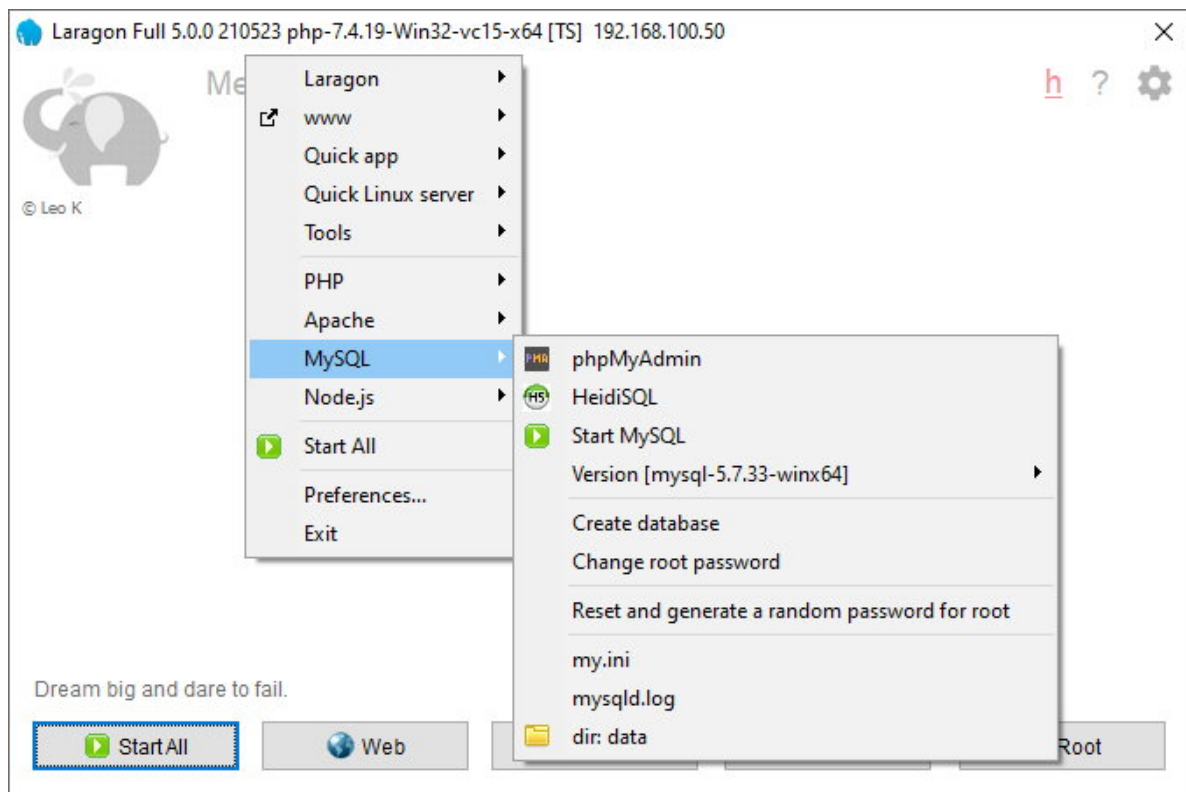


- In the **Apache** section, you can manage and configure the installed Apache version.
- In a [future post](#), we'll explain how to update the existing Apache version.

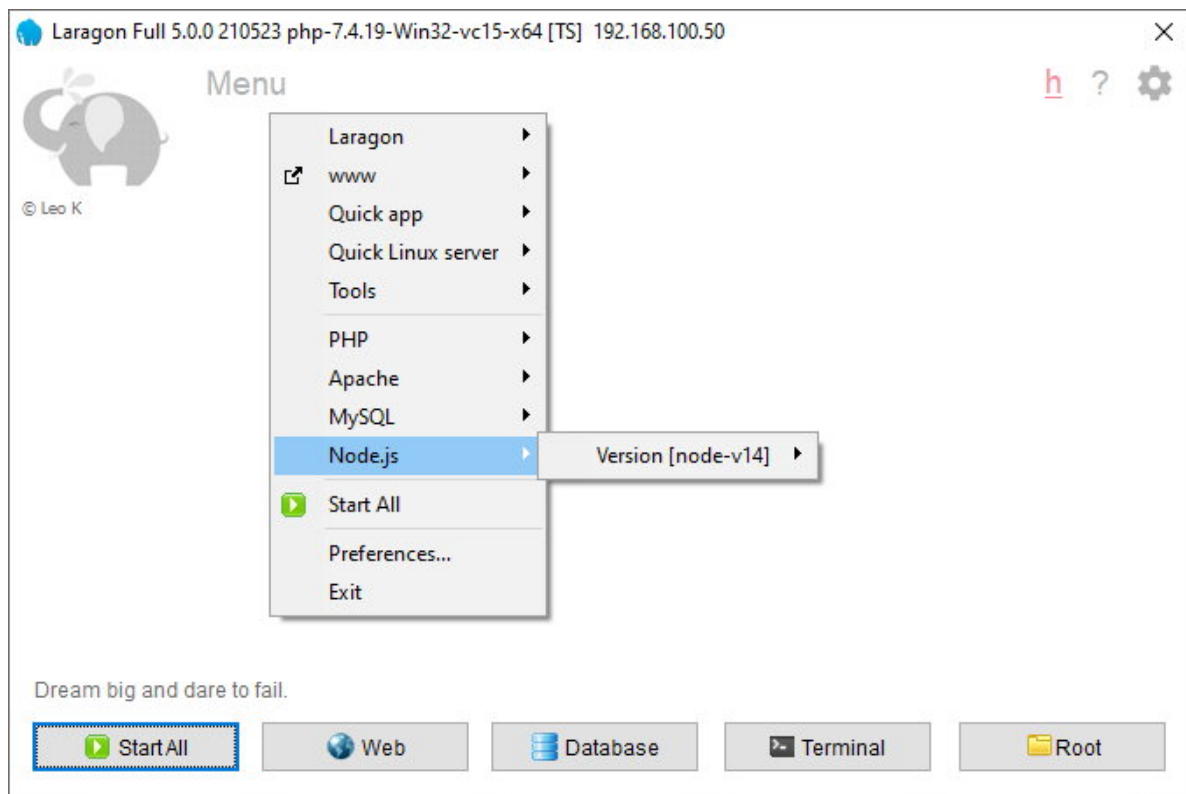




- In the **MySQL** section, you can manage and configure the installed database version.
- In a [future post](#), we'll explain how to update the existing version.
- In other posts, we'll explain how to use database providers like [MariaDB](#), [MongoDB](#) or [PostgreSQL](#).

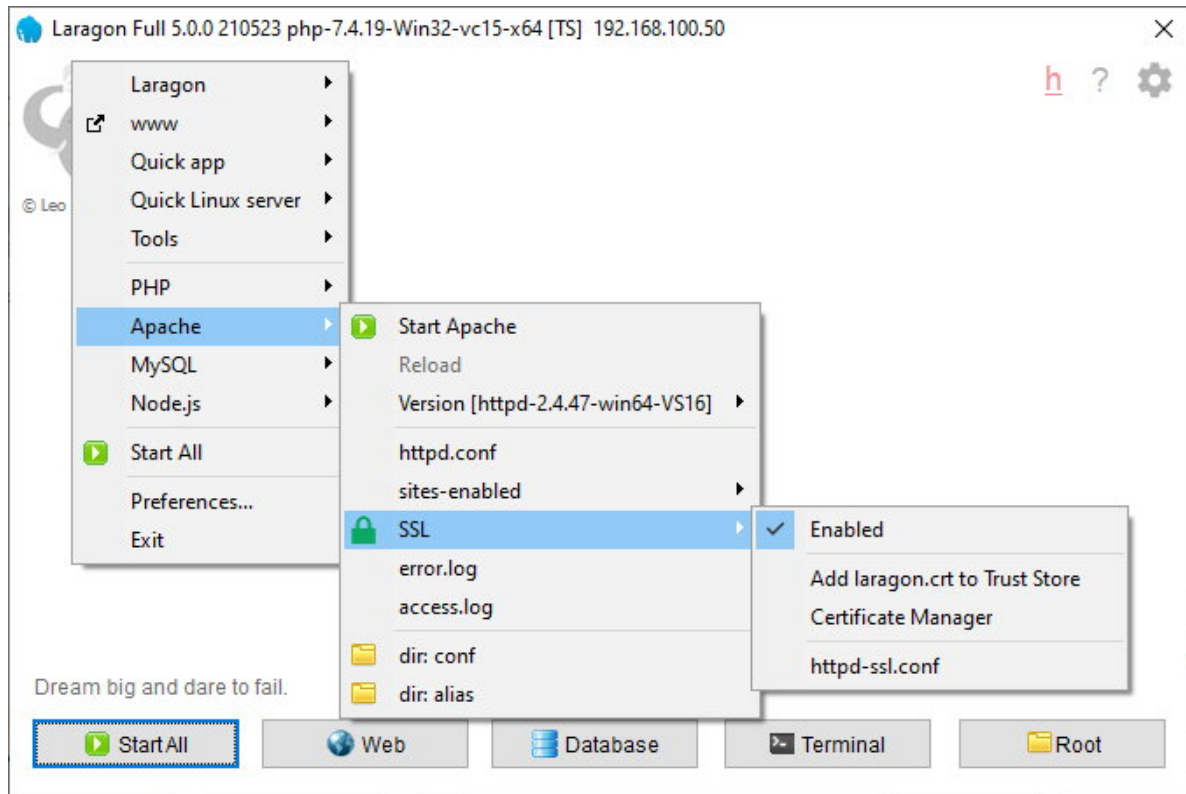


- In the **Node.js** section, you can see the installed Node.js version.
- In a [future post](#), we'll explain how to update the existing version.



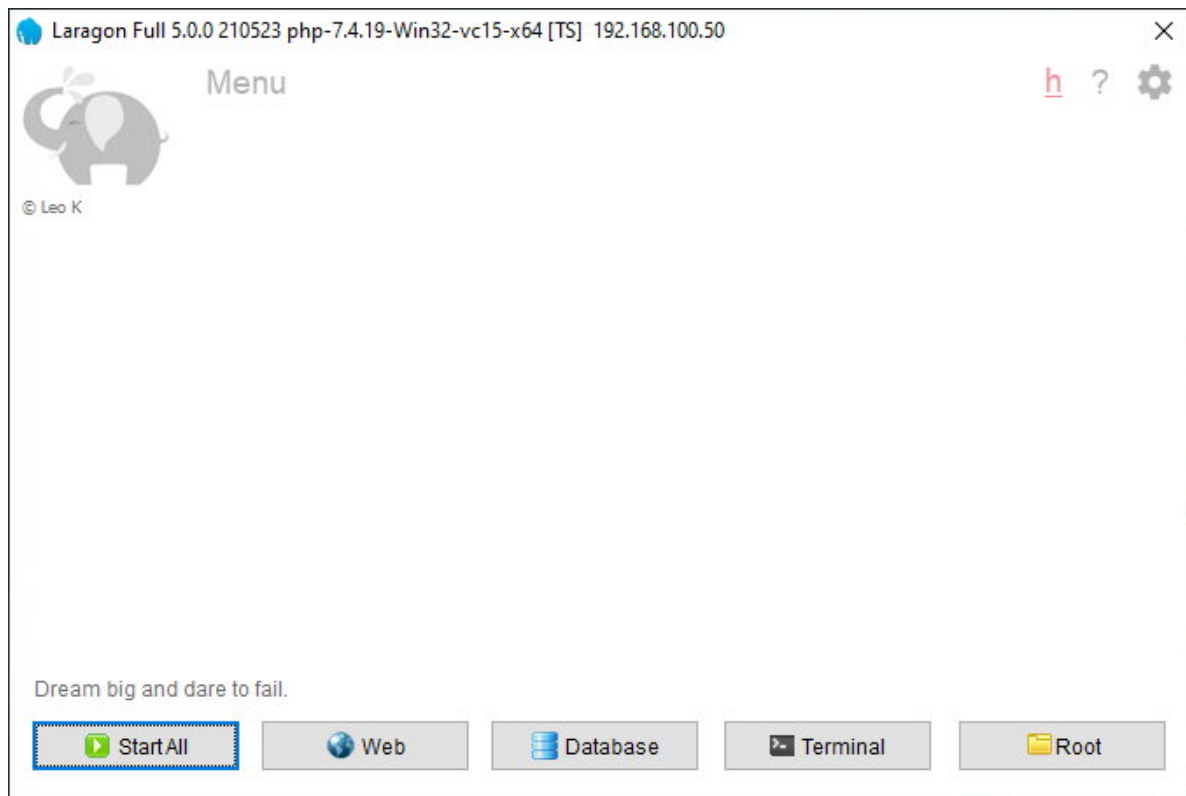
5. Integrating the SSL Certificate

- In case you enabled SSL during installation, you'll have to add the Laragon Certificate to your Windows Trust Store.
- In the menu, select **Apache** → **SSL** → **Add laragon.crt to Trust Store**.

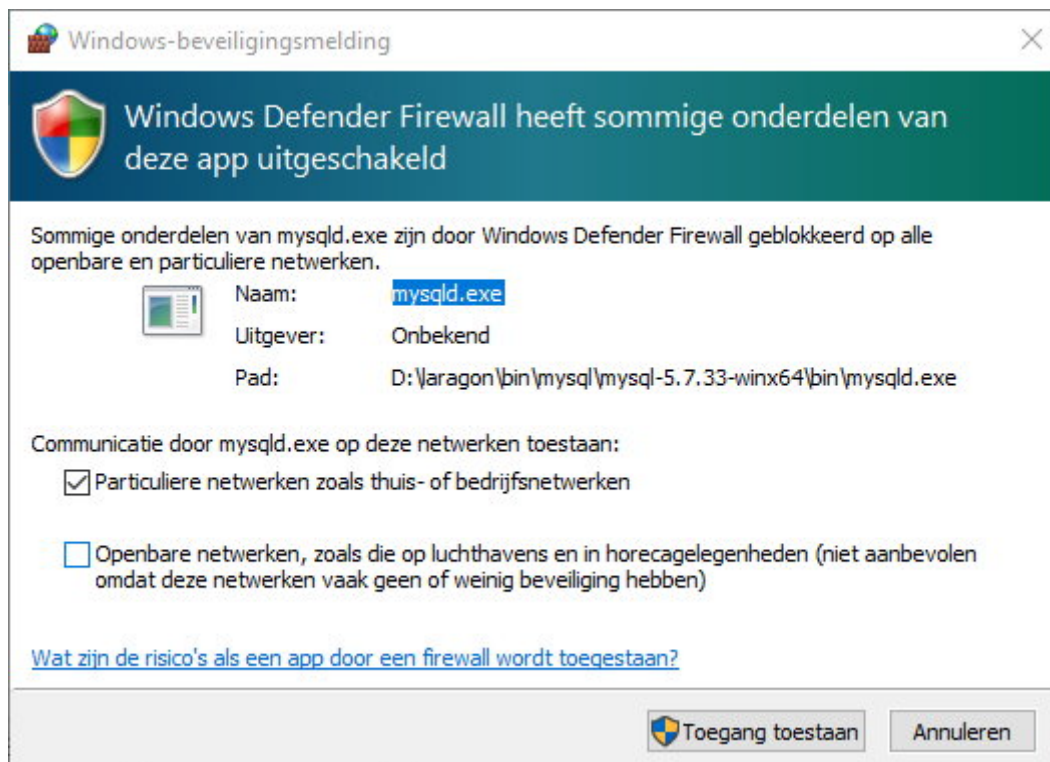


6. Starting the Services for the first time

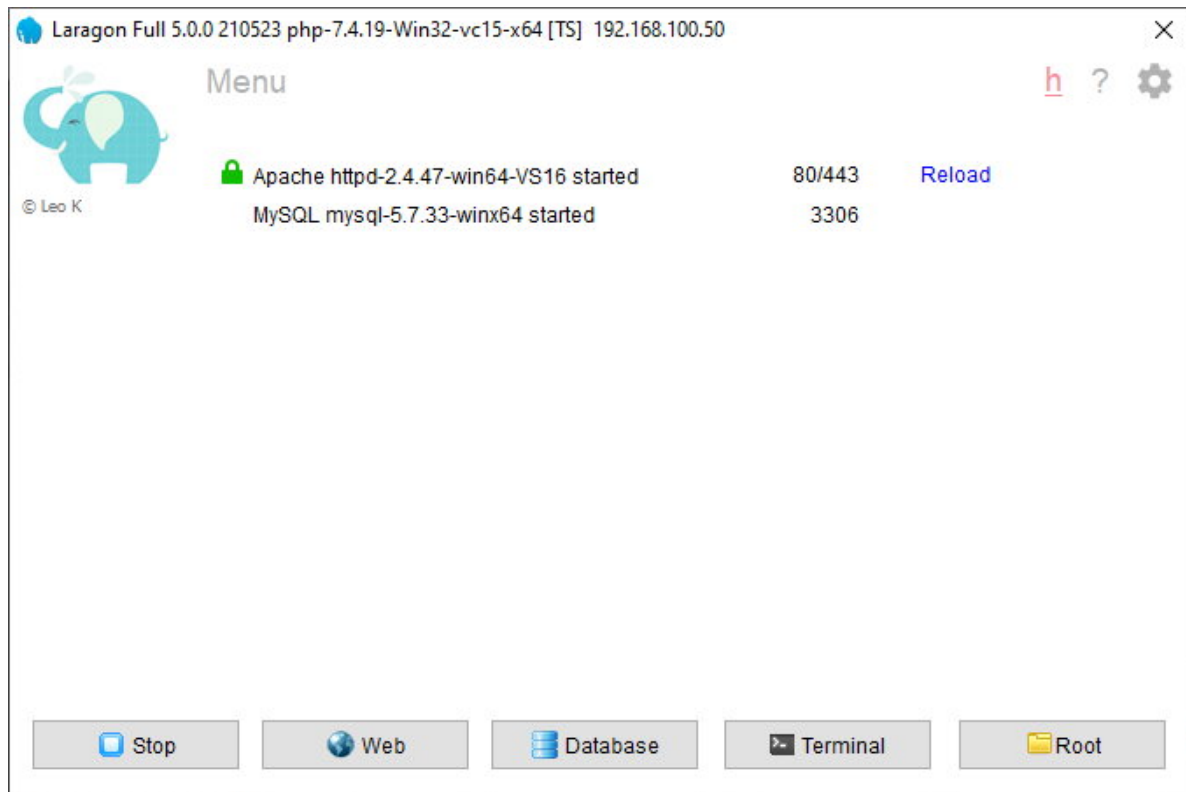
- Click the **Start All** button.



- Your default Windows Defender Firewall (or any other firewall you may be using) will want to know if it can trust the **Apache HTTP service** and the **database service**.
- **Allow** access in your **private** networks.
- **Deny** access in all **public** networks.
- Click the **Allow Access** button.

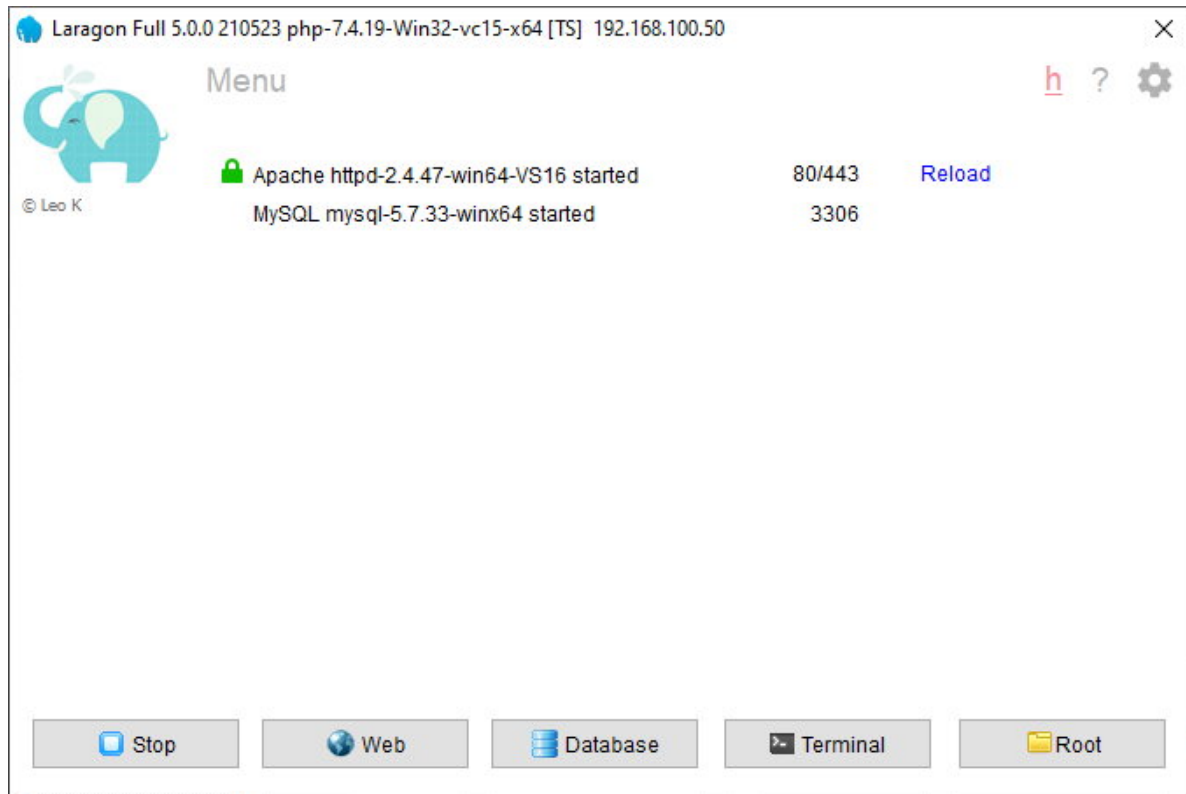


- The services are now started.

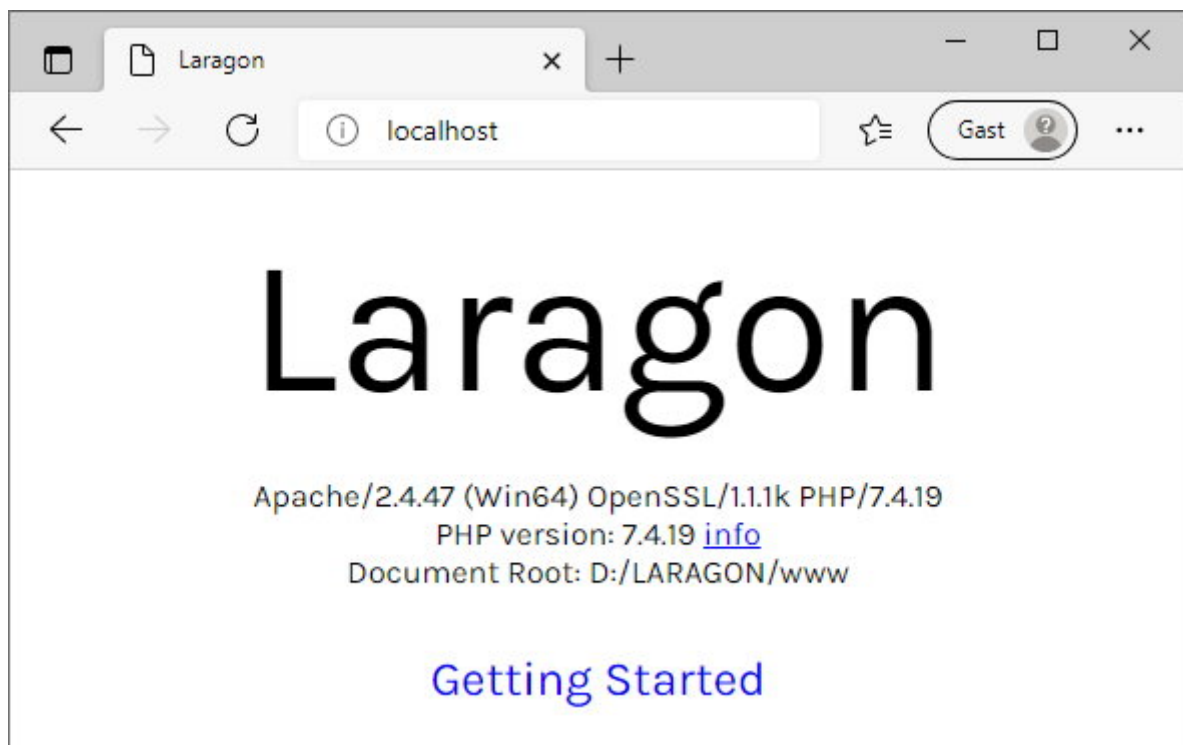


7. Exploring the Button Menu

- In the horizontal Button Menu, you can click the **Stop** button to end the running services.

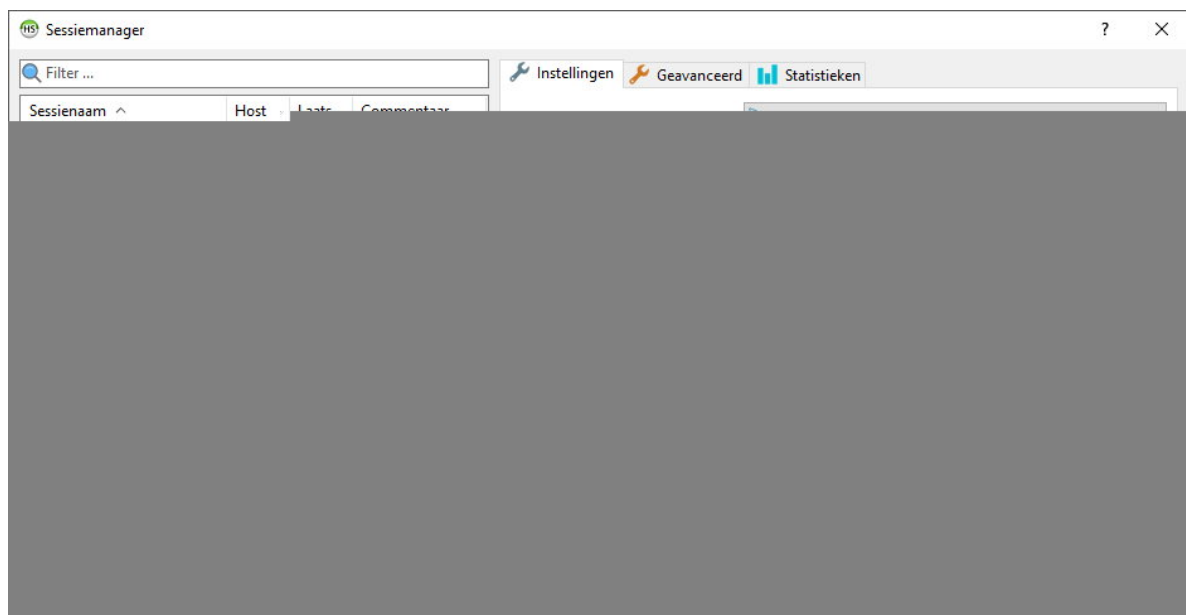


- You can click the **Web** button to open the Laragon web root in your favorite browser.



- You can click the **Database** button to open the database manager.

- By default Laragon will start the build-in portable **HeidiSQL** tool to manage your databases.
- In a [future post](#) we'll explain how to add a portable **phpMyAdmin** tool to manage your databases.



- You can click the **Terminal** button to open a command prompt window in the Laragon Document Root folder.
- Laragon uses the console emulator **Cmdr** as a command prompt.
In a [future post](#), we'll explain how to update Cmdr to its latest version.

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- When you left-click the **Root** button you open an explorer window in the Laragon **Document Root** (www) folder. This is where your projects are located.
 - When you right-click the **Root** button to open an explorer window in the Laragon **Install Root** folder. This is where Laragon itself is located.

8. Summary

[Laragon](#) is a very fast and powerful, yet easy to setup and configure local development server stack. Give it a chance. Play around with it for just a moment. I'm sure you'll start using it too and just like me, you'll never look back.

In future posts I'll explain how easy it is to update Laragons services and even the build-in portable tools.

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