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While turning my personal website from HTML to PHP I implemented a few variables in PHP to reduce the repetitiveness of my HTML code. I made a variables.php file that contained the created variables and then had each page that needed the variables require the file. One variable was $navbar so I could just write <?= $navbar; ?> instead of replicating the lengthy HTML on every page. The same goes for my $profile variable which places the code for my picture and little blurb about me on the bottom of most pages.

For my photography page I placed the URL for each of my photos in a database. I then used PHP to query the database for all the URLs and pushed them into an array. Then to display the thumbnails, I made a PHP foreach loop that iterates through the URLs and echos the HTML to display each photo. This used to be implemented by a bunch of HTML <img> tags in a row for each photo.

I added database interactivity for my contact me page. The form does a POST to a PHP file I wrote called submitForm.php that does an INSERT into the database with the person’s inputted name, email, and comment. It also then displays a little message either “Success!” or “Fail!” depending on what happened with the query. I then had the submitForm.php file have all the code from the regular contact.php file so that when the form submits and redirects to submitForm.php it looks and acts the same as the contact page.

As for CSS, I added a box-shadow when the user hovers the mouse over the displayed image in the preview div. Also, I fixed the fact that the text was white inside my white inputs on my contact page. I also fixed some padding and margins here and there.

Coming from a background with only HTML, CSS, and JavaScript knowledge it was great to get experience with PHP and databases. I used to have no idea how to connect a database to a website and query it. Also, PHP always seemed a little daunting and I didn’t know what it was for. But I’ve found it easy to pick up since finishing the first part of this project. Going along with picking up PHP, I learned how easy it is to use XAMPP to run PHP and have a MySQL database.