PHP: Tips and Tricks

#	Tip	Description
1	**To use the value of a variable to form another variable, use double dollar sign $$**	For example, if $myname='John', we could write $who = 'myname'; then echo $$who. This will echo out the value of $myname, that is, John.

2	**Use ternary operator for if-else with single statement**	For example,
		`<?`
		`$num = $a > $b ? $a : $b`
		`>`
		Here, the condition will check if a > b. If it is true, the value of $a will be stored in num and if false, value of $b will be stored in num.

3	**Use isset() instead of strlen() when checking for individual elements of a string.**	`<?php`
		`if (isset($name[5])) {`
		`   // The name is at least six characters long.`
		`}`
		`?>`
		When strings are treated as arrays, each character in the string is an element in the array. By checking whether value of a particular element exists, we can determine whether the string is at least that many characters long.
		
		For example, the first character is at element 0 and so, $name[5] is the sixth character in $name. The simple explanation for isset() being faster than strlen() is that strlen() is a function, and isset() is a language construct. In general, calling a function is more expensive than using a language construct.

4	**To replace static year on Web Pages**	You must have observed that many Web pages display a year value at the bottom of the page indicating the copyright date or year. Mostly, this is written as a static text on the Web pages. For example, `© 2014`. This will need to be changed each time manually. PHP provides the `date()` function, which automatically updates the copyright year on a Web page. For example, `© <?php echo date("Y")?>` will display the output as © 2014 on the page. This avoids manual modification.

#	Tip	Description

5	**Using equality operators**	PHP provides two operators namely, == and === to check the values for equality. The == operator checks to evaluate if both the left and right values are equal. However, === operator checks if both the left and right values are equal as well as are of same data type.
		Example:
		<pre>`<?php`
		`   $num1 = 10; // int`
		`   $num2 = "10"; // string`
		`// Using == operator`
		`   var_dump($num1 == $num2); //Returns`
		`bool(true)`
		`// Using === operator`
		`   Var_dump($num1 === $num2);?> //`
		`Returns bool(false)`
		`?>`</pre>