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# **How To Add Authentication to Your App with Flask-Login**

Updated on November 22, 2021

Python Python Frameworks



**Anthony Herbert** 

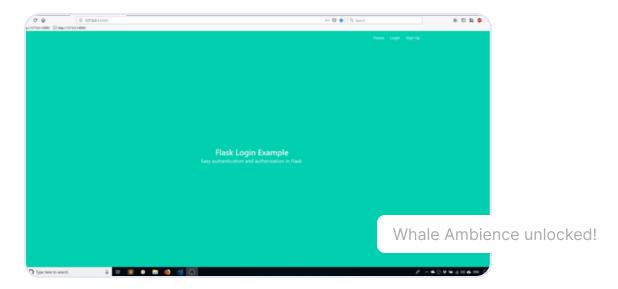
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## Introduction

Allowing sers to log in to your app is one of the most common features you will add to your web applications. You can add authentication to your Flask app with the Flask-Login

package.



In this tutorial, you will:

- · Use the Flask-Login library for session management
- Use the built-in Flask utility for hashing passwords
- Add protected pages to the app for logged in users only
- Use Flask-SQLAlchemy to create a User model
- Create sign-up and login forms for the users to create accounts and log in
- Flash error messages back to users when something goes wrong
- Use information from the user's account to display on the profile page

You will build a sign-up and a login page that allow users to log in and access protected pages. You will use information from the User model and display it on the protected pages when the user logs in to simulate what a profile would look like.

**Note:** This tutorial is limited in scope and does not cover advanced persisting of sessions. Furthermore, modifying the data type for the primary key or considerations for migrating to different database systems are also outside of the scope of this introductory tutorial.

The source code for this project is available on GitHub.

# **Prerequisites**

To complete this tutorial, you will need the following:

- familiarity with Python.
- P n installed on a local environment.
- Knowledge of Basic Linux Navigation and File Management.

Here is a diagram to provide a sense of what the file structure of the project will look like once you have completed the tutorial:

```
    flask auth app

  └─ project
     ├─ __init__.py  # setup the app
       — auth.py
                         # the auth routes for the app
                        # the database
       — db.sqlite
       — main.py
                         # the non-auth routes for the app
       – models.py
                         # the user model
       — templates
                                                  Whale Ambience unlocked!
         ├── base.html # contains common layou
           — index.html # show the home page
           — login.html # show the login form
           - profile.html # show the profile page
         └─ signup.html # show the signup form
```

As you progress through the tutorial, you will create these directories and files.

This tutorial was verified with sqlite3 v3.36.0, python v3.9.8, flask v2.0.2, flask-login v0.5.0, and flask-sqlachemy v2.5.1.

# **Step 1 – Installing Packages**

There are three main packages you need for your project:

- Flask
- Flask-Login: to handle the user sessions after authentication
- Flask-SQLAlchemy: to represent the user model and interface with the database

You will be using SQLite to avoid having to install any extra dependencies for the database.

First, start with creating the project directory:

```
$ mkdir flask_auth_app
Copy
```

Next, navigate to the project directory:

```
$ lask_auth_app Copy
```

You will want to create a Python environment if you don't have one.

Note: You can consult the tutorial relevant to your local environment for setting up venv.

Depending on how Python was installed on your machine, your command will look similar to:

```
$ python3 -m venv auth Copy
```

The -m flag is for module-name. This command will execute th new virtual environment named auth. This will create a new directory containing bin, include, and lib subdirectories. And a pyvenv.cfg file.

Next, run the following command:

```
$ source auth/bin/activate Copy
```

This command will activate the virtual environment.

Run the following command from your virtual environment to install the needed packages:

```
(auth)$ pip install flask flask—sqlalchemy flask—login Copy
```

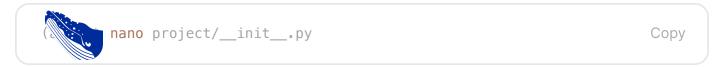
Now that you have installed the packages, you are ready to create the main app file.

# **Step 2 - Creating the Main App File**

Let's start by creating a project directory:

```
(auth)$ mkdir project Copy
```

The first file will be the \_\_init\_\_.py file for the project:



This app will use the Flask app factory pattern with blueprints. One blueprint handles the regular routes, which include the index and the protected profile page. Another blueprint handles everything auth-related. In a real app, you can break down the functionality in any way you like, but the solution covered here will work well for this tutorial.

This file will have the function to create the app, which will initialize the database and register the blueprints. At the moment, this will not do much, but it will be needed for the rest of the app.

You will need to initialize SQLAlchemy, set some configuration values, and register the blueprints here:

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project/\_\_init\_\_.py

```
from flask import Flask
                                                                           Copy
from flask sqlalchemy import SQLAlchemy
# init SQLAlchemy so we can use it later in our models
db = SQLAlchemy()
def create app():
                       Products
                                                                          >
                       Solutions
                                                                          >
                       Developers
                                                                          >
                       Partners
                       Pricing
DigitalOcean
                                Log in ✓
                                                           Sign up
                                               Blog
                                               Docs
```

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Then add your main\_blueprint:

#### project/main.py

```
from flask import Blueprint
from . import db

main = Blueprint('main', __name__)

@main.route('/')
def index():
    return 'Index'

@main.route('/profile')
def profile():
    return 'Profile'
```

For the auth\_blueprint, you will have routes to retrieve both the login page (/login) and the sign-up page (/signup). Finally, you will have a logout route (/logout) to log out an active user.

Next, create auth.py:

```
(auth)$ nano project/auth.py Copy
```

Then add your auth\_blueprint:

## project/auth.py

```
from flask import Blueprint
from . import db

au lueprint('auth', __name__)
@auth.route('/login')
```

```
def login():
    return 'Login'

@auth.route('/signup')
def signup():
    return 'Signup'

@auth.route('/logout')
def logout():
    return 'Logout'
```

For the time being, define login, signup, and logout with termination with the desired functionality.

In a terminal, you can set the FLASK\_APP and FLASK\_DEBUG values:

```
(auth)$ export FLASK_APP=project Copy (auth)$ export FLASK_DEBUG=1
```

The FLASK\_APP environment variable instructs Flask on how to load the app. You would want this to point to where create\_app is located. For this tutorial, you will be pointing to the project directory.

The FLASK\_DEBUG environment variable is enabled by setting it to 1. This will enable a debugger that will display application errors in the browser.

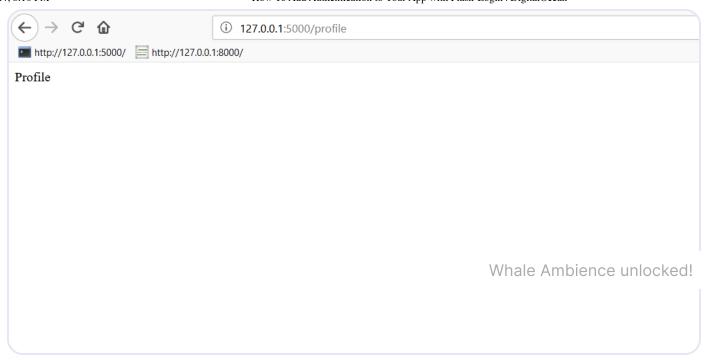
Ensure that you are in the flask\_auth\_app directory and then run the project:

```
(auth)$ flask run Copy
```

Now, in a web browser, you can navigate to the five possible URLs and see the text returned that was defined in auth.py and main.py.

For example, visiting localhost:5000/profile displays: Profile:





Once you have verified that the routes are behaving as expected, you can create the templates.

# **Step 4 – Creating Templates**

Next, create the templates that are used in the app. This is the first step before you can implement the actual login functionality.

The app will use four templates:

- index.html
- profile.html
- login.html
- signup.html

You will also have a base template that will have code common to each of the pages. In this case, the base template will have navigation links and the general layout of the page.

First, create a templates directory under the project directory:



Next, add the following code to the base.html file:

#### project/templates/base.html

```
<!DOCTYPE html>
                                                                            Сору
<html>
<head>
    <meta charset="utf-8">
    <meta http-equiv="X-UA-Compatible" content="IE=ed</pre>
                                                         Whale Ambience unlocked!
    <meta name="viewport" content="width=device-width</pre>
    <title>Flask Auth Example</title>
    <link rel="stylesheet" href="https://cdnjs.cloudflare.com/ajax/libs/bulma/0.</pre>
</head>
<body>
    <section class="hero is-primary is-fullheight">
        <div class="hero-head">
            <nav class="navbar">
                <div class="container">
                    <div id="navbarMenuHeroA" class="navbar-menu">
                         <div class="navbar-end">
                             <a href="{{ url for('main.index') }}" class="navbar-
                                 Home
                             </a>
                             <a href="{{ url_for('main.profile') }}" class="navba
                                 Profile
                             </a>
                             <a href="{{ url_for('auth.login') }}" class="navbar-
                                 Login
                             </a>
                             <a href="{{ url_for('auth.signup') }}" class="navbar
                                 Sign Up
                             <a href="{{ url_for('auth.logout') }}" class="navbar
                                 Logout
                             </a>
                         </div>
                    </div>
                </div>
            </nav>
        </div>
        <div class="hero-body">
            <div class="container has-text-centered">
```

This code will create a series of menu links to each page of the application. It also establishes a block for content that can be overwritten by chi''.

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**Note:** This tutorial uses Bulma to handle styling and layout. For a deeper dive into Bulma, consider reading the official Bulma documentation.

Next, create templates/index.html:

```
(auth)$ nano project/templates/index.html Copy
```

Add the following code to the newly created file to add content to the page:

## project/templates/index.html

```
{% extends "base.html" %}

{% block content %}

<h1 class="title">
    Flask Login Example

</h1>
<h2 class="subtitle">
    Easy authentication and authorization in Flask.

</h2>
{% endblock %}
```

This code will create a basic index page with a title and subtitle.

## Next, create templates/login.html:

```
(aut nano project/templates/login.html Copy
```

This code generates a login page with fields for **Email** and **Password**. There is also a checkbox to "remember" a logged in session.

#### project/templates/login.html

```
{% extends "base.html" %}
                                                                           Copy
{% block content %}
<div class="column is-4 is-offset-4">
    <h3 class="title">Login</h3>
    <div class="box">
        <form method="POST" action="/login">
                                                       Whale Ambience unlocked!
            <div class="field">
                <div class="control">
                    <input class="input is-large" type="email" name="email" plac</pre>
                </div>
            </div>
            <div class="field">
                <div class="control">
                    <input class="input is-large" type="password" name="password"</pre>
                </div>
            </div>
            <div class="field">
                <label class="checkbox">
                    <input type="checkbox" name="remember">
                    Remember me
                </label>
            </div>
            <button class="button is-block is-info is-large is-fullwidth">Login
        </form>
    </div>
</div>
{% endblock %}
```

## Next, create templates/signup.html:

```
(auth)$ nano project/templates/signup.html Copy
```

Add the following code to create a sign-up page with fields for email, name, and password:



project/templates/signup.html

```
{% extends "base.html" %}
                                                                            Copy
{% block content %}
<div class="column is-4 is-offset-4">
    <h3 class="title">Sign Up</h3>
    <div class="box">
        <form method="POST" action="/signup">
            <div class="field">
                <div class="control">
                     <input class="input is-large" type="email" name="email" plac</pre>
                </div>
            </div>
                                                         Whale Ambience unlocked!
            <div class="field">
                <div class="control">
                     <input class="input is-large" type="text" name="name" placeh</pre>
                </div>
            </div>
            <div class="field">
                <div class="control">
                     <input class="input is-large" type="password" name="password"</pre>
                </div>
            </div>
            <button class="button is-block is-info is-large is-fullwidth">Sign U
        </form>
    </div>
</div>
{% endblock %}
```

#### Next, create templates/profile.html:

```
(auth)$ nano project/templates/profile.html Copy
```

Add this code to create a page with a title that is hardcoded to welcome **Anthony**:

## project/templates/profile.html

```
{* extends "base.html" %}

{% content %}
<h1 class="title">
```

```
Welcome, Anthony!
</h1>
{% endblock %}
```

You will revisit this code later to dynamically greet any user.

Once you have added the templates, you can update the return statements in each of the routes to return the templates instead of the text.

Next, update main.py by modifying the import line and the routes for index and profile:

#### project/main.py

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```
from flask import Blueprint , render_template

...
@main.route('/')
def index():
    return render_template('index.html')

@main.route('/profile')
def profile():
    return render_template('profile.html')
```

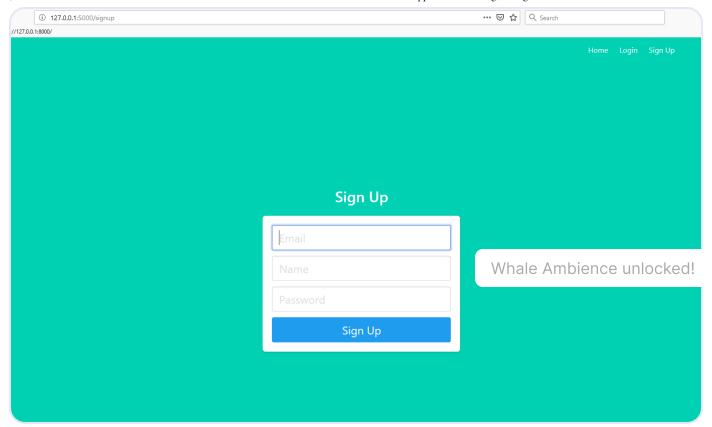
Now you will update auth.py by modifying the import line and routes for login and signup:

## project/auth.py

```
from flask import Blueprint , render_template
...
@auth.route('/login')
def login():
    return render_template('login.html')

@auth.route('/signup')
def signup():
    return render_template('signup.html')
```

Once you've made these changes, here is what the sign-up page looks like if you navigate to



You can navigate to the pages for /, /login, and /profile as well.

Leave /logout alone for now because it will not display a template later.

# **Step 5 – Creating User Models**

The user model represents what it means for the app to have a user. This tutorial will require fields for an email address, password, and name. In future applications, you may decide you want much more information to be stored per user. You can add things like birthdays, profile pictures, locations, or any user preferences.

Models created in Flask-SQLAlchemy are represented by classes that then translate to tables in a database. The attributes of those classes then turn into columns for those tables.

Create the User model:





#### project/models.py

```
from . import db

class User(db.Model):
   id = db.Column(db.Integer, primary_key=True) # primary keys are required by
   email = db.Column(db.String(100), unique=True)
   password = db.Column(db.String(100))
   name = db.Column(db.String(1000))
```

This code defines a User with columns for an id, email, pas Whale Ambience unlocked!

Now that you've created a User model, you can move on to configuring your database.

# **Step 6 – Configuring the Database**

You will be using an SQLite database. You could create an SQLite database on your own, but let's have Flask-SQLAlchemy do it for you. You already have the path of the database specified in the \_\_init\_\_.py file, so you will need to tell Flask-SQLAlchemy to create the database in the Python REPL.

Ensure that you are still in the virtual environment and in the flask\_auth\_app directory.

If you stop your app and open up a Python REPL, you can create the database using the create\_all method on the db object:

```
>>> from project import db, create_app, models
>>> db.create_all(app=create_app()) # pass the create_app result so Flask-SQLAl
```

**Note:** If using the Python interpreter is new to you, you can consult the official documentation.

You will now see a db.sqlite file in your project directory. This database will have the user table in it.



For the sign-up function, you will take the data the user submits to the form and add it to the database. You will need to make sure a user with the same email address does not already exist in the database. If it does not exist, then you need to make sure you hash the password before placing it into the database.

**Note:** Storing passwords in plaintext is considered a poor security practice. You will generally want a complex hashing algorithm and salt to keep passwords secure.

Let's start by adding a second function to handle the POST form data. Gather the data passed from the user.

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Update auth.py by modifying the import line and implementing signup\_post:

## project/auth.py

Create the function and add a redirect. This will provide a user experience of a successful sign-up and being directed to the Login Page.

Now, let's add the rest of the code necessary for signing up a user. Use the request object to get the form data.

Continue to update auth.py by adding imports and implementing signup\_post:

#### auth.py

```
from flask import Blueprint, render_template, redirect, url_for, reques Copy
from werkzeug.security import generate_password_hash, check_password_hash
    models import User
from mport db
...
@auth.route('/signup', methods=['POST'])
```

```
def signup_post():
    # code to validate and add user to database goes here
    email = request.form.get('email')
    name = request.form.get('name')
    password = request.form.get('password')

user = User.query.filter_by(email=email).first()  # if this returns a user,

if user: # if a user is found, we want to redirect back to signup page so return redirect(url_for('auth.signup'))

# create a new user with the form data. Hash the password so the plaintext vertical new_user = User(email=email, name=name, password)

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# add the new user to the database db.session.add(new_user) db.session.commit()

return redirect(url_for('auth.login'))
```

This code will check to see if a user with the same email address exists in the database.

# Step 8 - Testing the Sign Up Method

Now that you have the sign-up method completed you will be able to create a new user

Let's test the form to create a user.

There are two ways you can verify if the sign-up was successful:

- You can use a database viewer to look at the row that was added to your table.
- Or you can try signing up with the same email address again, and if you get an error, you know the first email was saved properly.

Let's add code to let the user know the email already exists and direct them to go to the login page. By calling the flash function, you can send a message to the next request, which in this case, is the redirect. The page the user is redirected to will then have access to that message in the template.

First, add the flash before you redirect to the sign-up page.



project/auth.py

```
from flask import Blueprint, render_template, redirect, url_for, request Copy sh
...
@auth.route('/signup', methods=['POST'])
def signup_post():
    if user: # if a user is found, we want to redirect back to signup page so us
        flash('Email address already exists')
        return redirect(url_for('auth.signup'))
```

To get the flashed message in the template, you can add this casta traffic that formal Whale Ambience unlocked!

#### project/templates/signup.html

This code will display the message "Email address already exists. Go to login page." if the email address is already in the database.



Sign Up	
Email address already exists. Go to <u>log</u> <u>page</u> .	gin
Email	
Name	Whale Ambience unl
Password	
Sign Up	

At this point, you can run the application and attempt to sign up with an email address that already exists.

# **Step 9 - Adding the Login Method**

The login method is similar to the sign-up function. In this case, you will compare the email address entered to see if it is in the database. If so, you will test the password the user provided by hashing the password the user passes in and comparing it to the hashed password in the database. You will know the user has entered the correct password when both hashed passwords match.

Once the user has passed the password check, you will know that they have the correct credentials and you can log them in using Flask-Login. By calling login\_user, Flask-Login will create a session for that user that will persist as the user stays logged in, which will allow the user to view protected pages.

You provide the property with a new route for handling the data submitted with POST. And redirect to the property with a new route for handling the data submitted with POST. And redirect to the property of the property of

#### project/auth.py

```
@auth.route('/login')
def login():
    return render_template('login.html')

@auth.route('/login', methods=['POST'])
def login_post():
    # login code goes here
    return redirect(url_for('main.profile'))
Whale Ambience unlocked!
```

Now, you need to verify if the user has the correct credentials:

#### project/auth.py

```
@auth.route('/login', methods=['POST'])

def login_post():
    # login code goes here
    email = request.form.get('email')
    password = request.form.get('password')
    remember = True if request.form.get('remember') else False

    user = User.query.filter_by(email=email).first()

# check if the user actually exists
# take the user-supplied password, hash it, and compare it to the hashed pas if not user or not check_password_hash(user.password, password):
        flash('Please check your login details and try again.')
        return redirect(url_for('auth.login')) # if the user doesn't exist or part of the short of the short
```

Let's add in the block in the template so the user can see the flashed message:

#### project/templates/login.html

```
Copy
{% with messages = get_flashed_messages() %}
{% if messages %}
```

You now have the ability to say a user has been logged in successfully, but there is nothing to log the user into.

Flask-Login can manage user sessions. Start by adding the UserMixin to vour User model. The UserMixin will add Flask-Login attributes to the model sc Whale Ambience unlocked! to work with it.

#### models.py

```
from flask_login import UserMixin
from . import db

class User( UserMixin,  db.Model):
    id = db.Column(db.Integer, primary_key=True) # primary keys are required by
    email = db.Column(db.String(100), unique=True)
    password = db.Column(db.String(100))
    name = db.Column(db.String(1000))
```

Then, you need to specify the *user loader*. A user loader tells Flask-Login how to find a specific user from the ID that is stored in their session cookie. Add this in the create\_app function along with init code for Flask-Login:

#### project/\_\_init\_\_.py

```
from flask import Flask
from flask_sqlalchemy import SQLAlchemy
from flask_login import LoginManager

...

def create_app():
    ...
    db.init_app(app)

in_manager = LoginManager()
    in_manager.login_view = 'auth.login'
    login_manager.init_app(app)
```

```
from .models import User

@login_manager.user_loader
def load_user(user_id):
    # since the user_id is just the primary key of our user table, use it in
    return User.query.get(int(user_id))
```

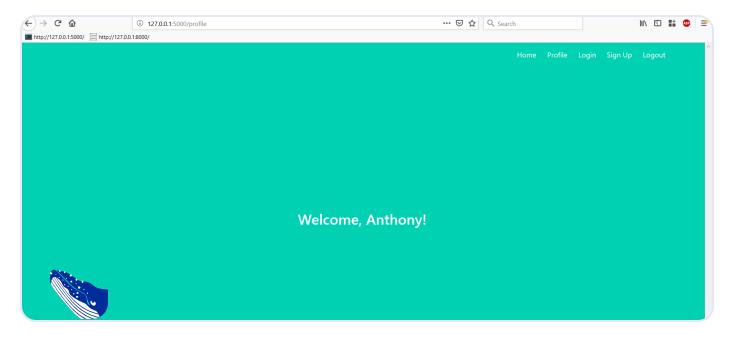
Finally, add the login\_user function before redirecting to the profile page to create the session:

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#### project/auth.py

```
from flask_login import login_user
from .models import User
from .import db
...
@auth.route('/login', methods=['POST'])
def login_post():
    # if the above check passes, then we know the user has the right credentials
    login_user(user, remember=remember)
    return redirect(url_for('main.profile'))
```

With Flask-Login setup, use the /login route. When everything is in place, you will see the profile page.



At this point, you can run the application and attempt to log in.

# **Step 10 - Protecting Pages**

If your name is not **Anthony**, then you will see that your name is wrong on the profile page. The goal is for the profile to display the name in the database. You will need to protect the page and then access the user's data to get the name.

To protect a page when using Flask-Login, add the @login\_requried decorator between the route and the function. This will prevent a user that is not logged in from seeing the route. If the user is not logged in, the user will get redirected t Whale Ambience unlocked! Flask-Login configuration.

With routes that are decorated with the @login\_required decorator, you can use the current\_user object inside of the function. This current\_user represents the user from the database and provides access all of the attributes of that user with *dot notation*. For example, current\_user.email, current\_user.password, and current\_user.name, and current\_user.id will return the actual values stored in the database for the logged-in user.

Let's use the name of the current\_user and send it to the template:

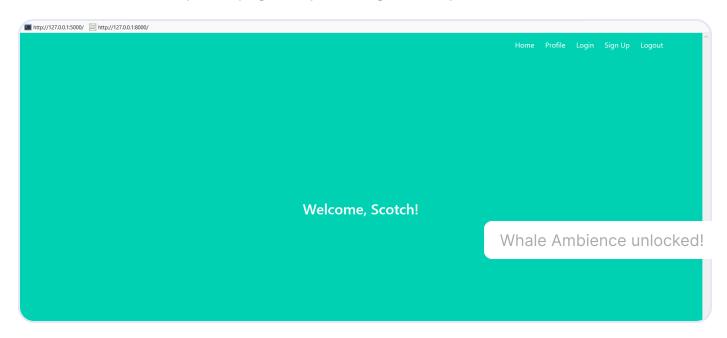
## project/main.py

```
from flask import Blueprint, render_template
    from flask_login import login_required, current_user
    from . import db
...
@main.route('/profile')
@login_required
def profile():
    return render_template('profile.html', name=current_user.name)
```

Then in the profile.html file, update the page to display the name value:

## project/templates/profile.html

Once a user visits the profile page, they will be greeted by their name.



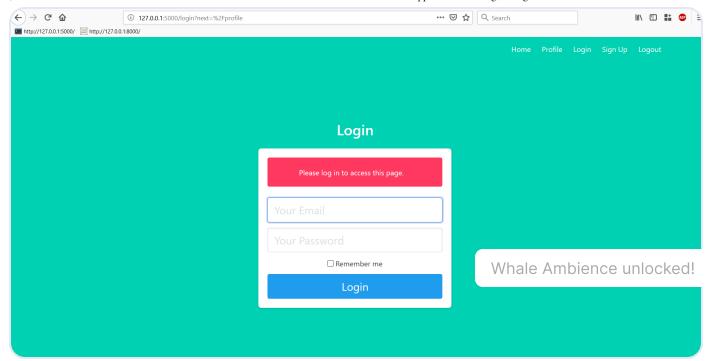
Now to update the logout view, call the logout\_user function in a route for logging out:

## project/auth.py

Use the <code>@login\_required</code> decorator because it does not make sense to log out a user that is not logged in to begin with.

After a user logs out and tries to view the profile page again, they will be presented with an error message:





This is because Flask-Login flashes a message when the user is not allowed to access a page.

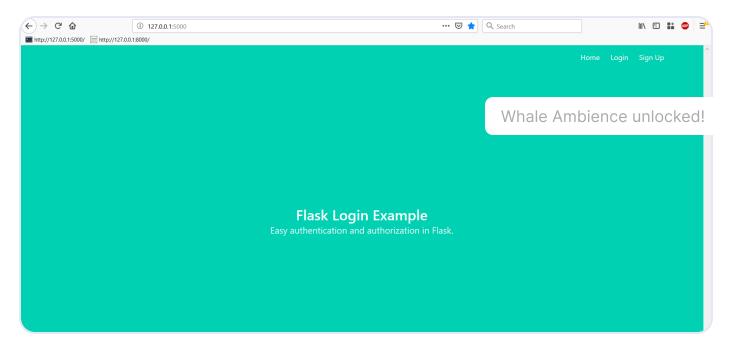
One last thing to do is put if statements in the templates to display only the links relevant to the user:

#### templates/base.html

```
Copy
<div class="navbar-end">
    <a href="{{ url_for('main.index') }}" class="navbar-item">
        Home
    </a>
    {% if current_user.is_authenticated %}
    <a href="{{ url for('main.profile') }}" class="navbar-item">
        Profile
    </a>
    {% endif %}
    {% if not current user.is authenticated %}
    <a href="{{ url_for('auth.login') }}" class="navbar-item">
        Login
    <a href="{{ url_for('auth.signup') }}" class="navbar-item">
        Sign Up
    </a>
       endif %}
        if current_user.is_authenticated %}
    <a href="{{ url_for('auth.logout') }}" class="navbar-item">
        Logout
```

```
</a>
{% endif %}
</div>
```

Before the user logs in, they will have the option to log in or sign-up. After they have logged in, they can go to their profile or log out.



With that, you have successfully built your app with authentication.

# Conclusion

In this tutorial, you used Flask-Login and Flask-SQLAlchemy to build a login system for an app. You covered how to authenticate a user by first creating a user model and storing the user information. Then you had to verify the user's password was correct by hashing the password from the form and comparing it to the one stored in the database. Finally, you added authorization to the app by using the <code>@login\_required</code> decorator on a profile page so only logged-in users can see that page.

What you created in this tutorial will be sufficient for smaller apps, but if you wish to have more functionality from the beginning, you may want to consider using either the Flask-User or Flask-Security libraries, which are both built on top of the Flask-Login library.

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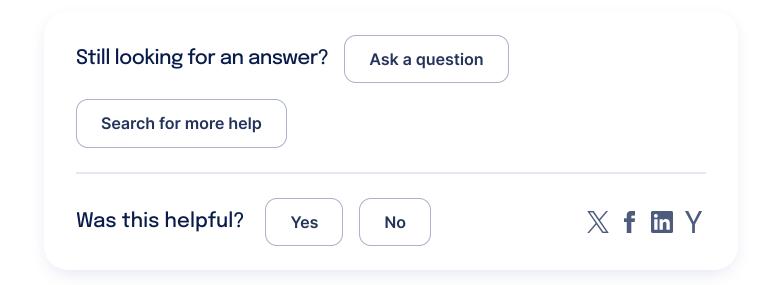
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#### holla22 • November 3, 2020

For anyone struggling with the database creation. It's missing an import part for the models. I've added models at the end after create\_app else won't create the user table specified.

```
>>> from project import db, create_app, models
>>> db.create_all(app=create_app())
```

Hope it helps someone getting stuck.

Show replies ✓ Reply

#### calsmal • March 18, 2021

Hello - wondering if anyone can help with the database configuration aspect of this tutorial.

I have followed closely but I am receiving the error 'AttributeError: can't set attribute' when initiating the db.create\_all command within Python.

I have used the suggestion in the comments to import models but still no joy. Anyone able to explain where I'm going wrong?



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#### blessedmadukoma • May 3, 2020

Please this did not work for me. From the login section, I got this error AttributeError: 'User' object has no attribute 'is\_active'

Why? I followed every step but I'm getting that error. Any idea please?

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#### 3b6bcbc6e98c47c796b3f4f9a9b620 • March 11, 2024

```
@login_manager.user_loader
def load_user(user_id):
    _# return User.query.get(int(user_id))_
    user = None
    print(f'{user_id=}')
    with Session.begin() as session:
        user = session.scalars(select(User).where(User.id == user_id)).f
    if user:
        print(f'{user=}')
        return User(email=user.email, )
```

always prints >> user\_id='None'

Reply

#### b5188c35b9ad426ead34f9b49daf28 • January 25, 2024

best tutorial on this topic I've ever seen. Correctly explained and it is clear what and in which file changes or additions should be made. Thank you!

instead of **method='sha256'** I used **method='scrypt'** but the "password" field should then be larger, in my case: password varchar(300)

Reply

d72e9d812ef2495f892f3733b3d5e2 • December 30, 2023

How can I write a function in this backend, wich handle a post request from axios, and I can get the information about the logged in user?

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Reply

Patrick Boertje • May 17, 2023

Please update the tutorial.

The db.create\_all() function is not working anymore, instead after the db.init\_app in \_\_init\_\_.py, put the next two lines.

<u>Reply</u>

c75763f3917a42bb8b110804ec • October 11, 2022

Sorry, but where am I supposed to add the headers for CORS? I keep getting errors...:/

Reply



#### CuteSeaGreenScubaDiver • June 18, 2022

Minor error: The label on the second code block in part 7 should be changed to read project/auth.py instead of auth.py, so that it is consistent with the other code blocks for the same file. This is confusing – as it makes it seem like there is another auth.py file outside the project/ directory.

<u>Reply</u>

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luckybokadia655 • December 13, 2021

how to set up an admin page with this project?

Reply

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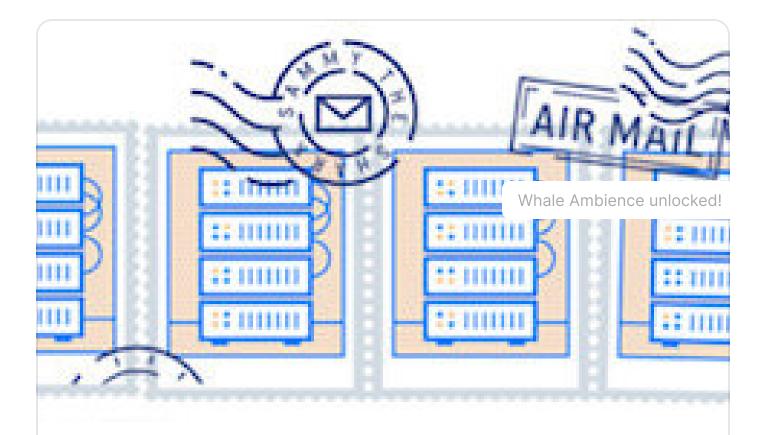
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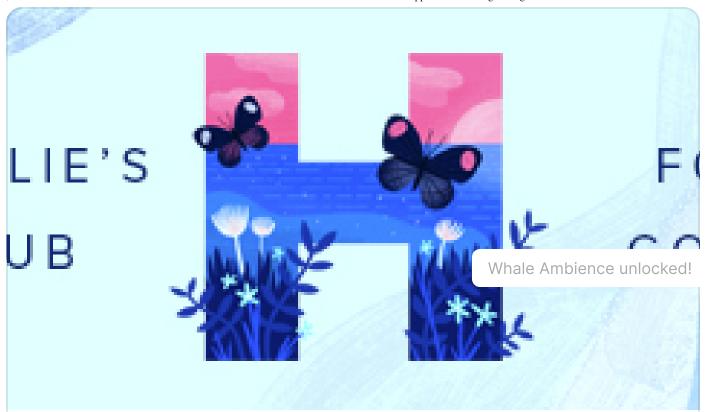


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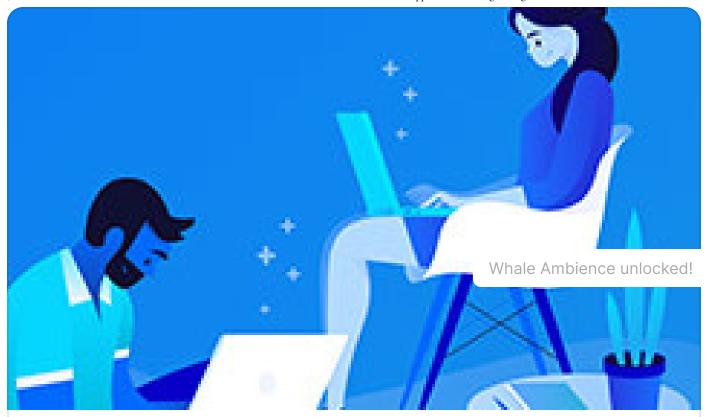


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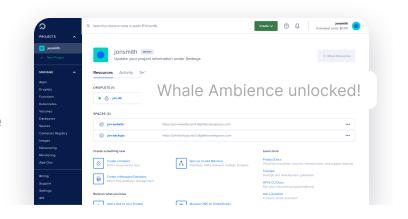
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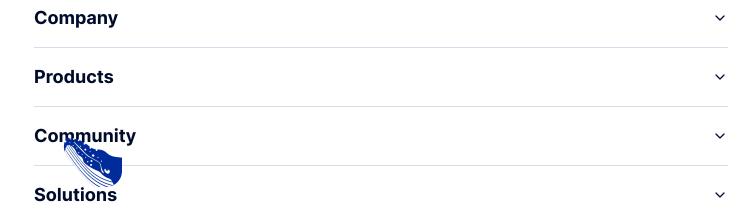


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