

PHP and Forms

CS/IT 490 WD, Fall 2013

Last update 2013-09-23

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Breakdown

- GET and POST
- Handling form data
- Form validation
- Saving form data to a text file

GET and POST

- When we create a **form** in HTML, we have the option to set its **method** attribute to “get” or “post”.
- If you set it to “get”, then the name-value pairs for each input item will be displayed in the URL.
- Post is more invisible, and does not affect the URL.

GET and POST

- A URL with GET data can be cached, a POSTed form cannot be cached
- GET has a maximum length, but POST does not.
- If your form has a password field, after the submit is hit, the GET data will show up in the URL.

http://www.w3schools.com/php/php_forms.asp

GET and POST

- In PHP, the associative array of form data can be accessed with

`$_GET` or
`$_POST`

http://www.w3schools.com/php/php_forms.asp

Handling form data

- Remember that with form elements, you will be setting **name** attributes.
- **Values** corresponding to these names may be typed in (text box, text area) or selected (check boxes / radio buttons)
- The name/value pairs will show up in `$_GET` or `$_POST` once the form has been submitted.
- Remember that the **id** attribute is for JavaScript, CSS, and XHTML. PHP cares about the names.

Handling form data

```
<input type="text" id="username" name="username" />
```

Will be accessible via:

```
$_POST["username"]
```


Handling form data

```
<input type="radio" id="ship1" name="shipping" value="home" />
```

Will be accessible via:

```
$_POST["shipping"]
```

If this first radio button is selected, then the value of `$_POST["shipping"]` will be “home”.

Handling form data

```
<h2>Form Output</h2>
<pre>
  <? print_r( $_POST ); ?>
</pre>

<form method="post">

  <p>
    <label for="username">Username</label>
    <input type="text" id="username" name="username" />
  </p>

  <p>
    <input type="checkbox" id="isOver21" name="isOver21" value="true" />
    <label for="isOver21">Over 21?</label>
  </p>

  <p>
    <input type="radio" id="ship1" name="shipping" value="home" />
    <label for="ship1">Ship to Home</label>

    <input type="radio" id="ship2" name="shipping" value="business" />
    <label for="ship2">Ship to Business</label>

    <input type="radio" id="ship3" name="shipping" value="school" />
    <label for="ship3">Ship to School</label>
  </p>

  <p>
    <input type="submit" name="submit-form" value="true" />
  </p>
</form>
```

Handling form data

Form Output

```
Array
(
    [username] => rjmfff
    [isOver21] => true
    [shipping] => home
    [submit-form] => true
)
```

Username

☒ Over 21?

☒ Ship to Home ☐ Ship to Business ☐ Ship to School

This sample code is under the folder “Forms” in the PHP folder.

Form validation

- While you can validate a form with JavaScript to make sure that required fields are filled in, and of the right type...
- You should always validate form data from the server-side!
- JavaScript is good for quick feedback, but it can be exploited. Always make sure to validate the data with PHP!

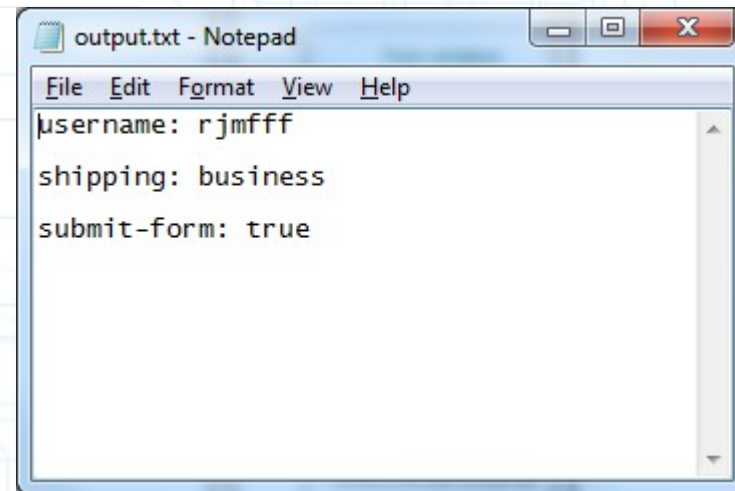
Form validation

- Regular Expressions are useful for form validation, but they can be a little hard to use in the beginning.
- You can read a RegEx intro here:
<http://www.zytrax.com/tech/web/regex.htm>
- Good RegEx tester:
<http://www.regular-expressions.info/javascriptexample.html>
- RegEx Reference page:
<http://www.regular-expressions.info/reference.html>
- We will do some basic examples later.

Saving form data to a text file

```
7  <?
8  // save data
9
10 $filepath = "output.txt";
11 $fileHandler = fopen( $filepath, "w" );
12 if ( $fileHandler == false )
13 {
14     print_r( error_get_last() );
15     exit();
16 }
17
18 foreach ( $_POST as $key=>$value )
19 {
20     fwrite( $fileHandler, $key . ":" . $value . "\n\n" );
21 }
22
23 fclose( $fileHandler );
24
25 ?>
```

- Sample code for saving form data is also on the class webpage.
- Something similar will be used for Assignment 3



Practice

- Just another concept that is best illustrated through actually working on something similar.
- Sample code on class page should be for guidance.
- We will work some samples in class.

References

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