[**PHP** (recursive acronym for **PHP: Hypertext Preprocessor**) is a widely-used open source general-purpose scripting language that is especially suited for web development and can be embedded into HTML1](https://www.php.net/manual/en/intro-whatis.php). It allows developers to create dynamic and interactive web pages by executing code on the server side, generating HTML that is then sent to the client. Unlike client-side JavaScript, PHP’s execution is hidden from users, making it a powerful tool for building web applications.

Here are **five free reference links** where you can learn PHP:

1. [**W3Schools PHP Tutorial**](https://www.w3schools.com/php/default.asp): W3Schools offers a comprehensive PHP tutorial with an online editor, exercises, examples, quizzes, and certification[2](https://www.w3schools.com/php/default.asp).
2. [**Learn-PHP.org**](https://www.learn-php.org/): This free interactive PHP tutorial is suitable for both beginners and experienced programmers. [No downloads required—just click on the chapter you want to start with and follow the instructions](https://www.php.net/manual/en/intro-whatis.php)[3](https://www.learn-php.org/).
3. [**Udemy Free PHP Courses**](https://www.udemy.com/topic/php/free/): Udemy provides free PHP courses taught by knowledgeable professionals. [Learn to create flexible, dynamic web pages using PHP](https://www.php.net/manual/en/intro-whatis.php)[4](https://www.udemy.com/topic/php/free/).
4. [**The PHP Handbook on freeCodeCamp**](https://www.freecodecamp.org/news/the-php-handbook/): Explore PHP basics, its applications, and frameworks like Laravel. [This resource covers the essentials for beginners](https://www.php.net/manual/en/intro-whatis.php)[5](https://www.freecodecamp.org/news/the-php-handbook/).
5. [**PHP Tutorial on phptutorial.net**](https://www.phptutorial.net/): This tutorial covers PHP from scratch, including syntax, variables, functions, arrays, and more advanced topics[6](https://www.phptutorial.net/).

Happy learning! 🚀👩‍💻