**Apache** is the most widely used web server software. Developed and maintained by Apache Software Foundation, Apache is an open source software available for free. It runs on 67% of all webservers in the world. It is fast, reliable, and secure. It can be highly customized to meet the needs of many different environments by using extensions and modules. Most WordPress hosting providers use Apache as their web server software. However, WordPress can run on other web server software as well.

**What is a Web Server?**

Wondering what the heck is a web server? Well a web server is like a restaurant host. When you arrive in a restaurant, the host greets you, checks your booking information and takes you to your table. Similar to the restaurant host, the web server checks for the web page you have requested and fetches it for your viewing pleasure. However, A web server is not just your host but also your server. Once it has found the web page you requested, it also serves you the web page. A web server like Apache, is also the Maitre D’ of the restaurant. It handles your communications with the website (the kitchen), handles your requests, makes sure that other staff (modules) are ready to serve you. It is also the bus boy, as it cleans the tables (memory, cache, modules) and clears them for new customers.

So basically a web server is the software that receives your request to access a web page. It runs a few security checks on your HTTP request and takes you to the web page. Depending on the page you have requested, the page may ask the server to run a few extra modules while generating the document to serve you. It then serves you the document you requested. Pretty awesome isn’t it.

Tomcat is a server that is meant to run applications that were written in Java and JSP (Java Server Pages). **Java and JSP applications are type of scripts that can create dynamic pages much like PHP can.** These scripts are then run on a Tomcat server where it can be accessed. It is open source software just like all the software created by Apache, and since it is open source it is also free. Tomcat offers a lot of advantages over its main competitor JRun one of which is hassle free installation; a lot of complaints have surfaced involving JRun installation.  
Apache Tomcat is used to deploy your Java Servlets and JSPs. So in your Java project you can build your WAR (short for Web ARchive) file, and just drop it in the deploy directory in Tomcat.

So basically Apache is an HTTP Server, serving HTTP. Tomcat is a Servlet and JSP Server serving Java technologies.

**Tomcat is a servlet container. A servlet, at the end, is a Java class. JSP files (which are similar to PHP, and older ASP files) are generated into Java code (HttpServlet), which is then compiled to .class files by the server and executed by the Java virtual machine.**

Apache Maven

Build

Compile step