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How to read user or console input in PHP ?



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In PHP, the console is a command-line interface, which is also called **interactive shell**. We can access it by typing the following command in a terminal:

```
php -a
```

If we type any PHP code in the shell and hit enter, it is executed directly and displays the output or shows the error messages in case of any error. A sample run of a PHP code, that reads input from PHP console looks like this:

```
sayantan@sayantan-HP-250-G6-Notebook-PC:~$ php -a
Interactive mode enabled

php > 
```

In this article, We will discuss two methods for reading console or user input in PHP:

Method 1: Using **readline()** function is a built-in function in PHP. This function is used to read console input.

The following things can be achieved by **readline()** function:

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- Accept a single input by prompting the user:

PHP

```
<?php

// For input
// Hello World
$a = readline('Enter a string: ');

// For output
echo $a;
?>
```

Output:

```
Enter a string: GeeksforGeeks
GeeksforGeeks
```

- By default, the data type of the variable accepted through readline() function is **string**. So for any other data type, we have to **typecast** it explicitly as described below.

PHP

```
<?php

// Input section
// $a = 10
$a = (int)readline('Enter an integer: ');

// $b = 9.78
$b = (float)readline('Enter a floating'
    . ' point number: ');

// Entered integer is 10 and
// entered float is 9.78
echo "Entered integer is " . $a
    . " and entered float is " . $b;
?>
```

Output:

Enter an integer: 10

Enter a floating point number: 9.78

Entered integer is 10 and entered float is 9.78

- We can achieve the same things without prompting the user also:

```
$a = readline();
```

- In this case, as soon as the user hits *enter*, the entered value is stored in the variable *a*.
- **Accept multiple space separated inputs:** For this, we use another function **explode()** together with **readline()**. The first argument of **explode()** is the delimiter we want to use. In the below example, the delimiter is **space**. The second argument is the **readline()** function. Here also the data type of `$var1` and `$var2` will be string. So we have to separately typecast them for other data types. In the above example, the typecasting is shown for integers.

PHP

```
<?php

// Input 10 20
list($var1, $var2)
    = explode(' ', readline());

// Typecasting to integers
$var1 = (int)$var1;
$var2 = (int)$var2;

// Printing the sum of var1 and var2.
// The sum of 10 and 20 is 30
echo "The sum of " . $var1 . " and "
    . $var2 . " is " . ($var1 + $var2);

?>
```

Output:

The sum of 10 and 20 is 30

- We can also read an array through **explode()**:

PHP

```
<?php
```

```
// For input
// 1 2 3 4 5 6
$arr = explode(' ', readline());

// For output
print_r($arr);

/*Array
(
    [0] => 1
    [1] => 2
    [2] => 3
    [3] => 4
    [4] => 5
    [5] => 6
)*/

?>
```

Output:

```
Array
(
    [0] => 1
    [1] => 2
    [2] => 3
    [3] => 4
    [4] => 5
    [5] => 6
)
```

Method 2: Using fscanf() function works same as the fscanf() function in C. We can read 2 integers from Keyboard(STDIN) as below:

- This is different from the previous method

PHP

```
<?php

// Input 1 5
fscanf(STDIN, "%d %d", $a, $b);

// Output
// The sum of 1 and 5 is 6
echo "The sum of " . $a . " and "
    . $b . " is " . ($a + $b);

?>
```

Output:

The sum of 1 and 5 is 6

Comparison between two methods:

- No need to use explicit typecasting for **fscanf() function**, because it is done by the format specifiers , e.g. **%d**, **%f**, **%c** etc. You can read more about [format specifiers](#).
- fscanf() function is much faster than the readline() function.

PHP is a server-side scripting language designed specifically for web development. You can learn PHP from the ground up by following this [PHP Tutorial](#) and [PHP Examples](#).

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