PHP Syntax

Summary: in this lesson, you'll learn basic PHP syntax, including case sensitivity, statements, and whitespaces.

As a programming language, PHP has a set of rules that governs how you write programs.

PHP code

Like HTML, you need to have the opening tag to start PHP code:



If you mix PHP code with HTML, you need to have the enclosing tag:



For example:

However, if a file contains only PHP code, the enclosing tag is optional:

```
<?php
echo 'PHP Syntax';
```

Case sensitivity

PHP is **partially** case-sensitive. Knowing what are case sensitive and what is not is very important to avoid syntax errors.

If you have a function such as count, you can use it as COUNT. It would work properly.

The following are case-insensitive in PHP:

- PHP constructs such as <u>if</u>, <u>if-else</u>, <u>if-elseif</u>, <u>switch</u>, <u>while</u>, <u>do-while</u>, etc.
- Keywords such as true and false.
- <u>User-defined function</u> & <u>class names</u>.

On the other hand, <u>variables</u> are case-sensitive. e.g., \$message and \$MESSAGE are different variables.

Statements

A PHP script typically consists of one or more statements. A statement is a code that does something, e.g., assigning a value to a variable and calling a function.

A statement always ends with a semicolon (;). The following shows a statement that assigns a literal string to the \$message variable:

```
$message = "Hello";
Code language: PHP (php)
```

The above example is a simple statement. PHP also has a compound statement that consists of one or more simple statements. A compound statement uses curly braces to mark a block of code. For example:

```
if( $is_new_user ) {
    send_welcome_email();
}
Code language: PHP (php)
```

You don't need to place the semicolon after the curly brace (}).

The closing tag of a PHP block (?>) automatically implies a semicolon (;). Therefore, you don't need to place a semicolon in the last statement in a PHP block. For example:

<?php echo \$name ?>

Code language: HTML, XML (xml)

In this example, the statement echo \$name doesn't need a semicolon. However, using a semicolon for the last statement in a block should work fine. For example:

<?php echo \$name; ?>

Code language: HTML, XML (xml)

Note that it's OK if the code may not make any sense to you now because you'll learn more about them in the upcoming tutorial.

Whitespace & line breaks

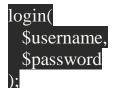
In most cases, whitespace and line breaks don't have special meaning in PHP. Therefore, you can place a statement in one line or span it across multiple lines.

For example, the following code snippets are equivalent:

login(\$username, \$password);

Code language: PHP (php)

And:



Code language: PHP (php)

Summary

- PHP is partially case-sensitive.
- PHP constructs, function names, class names are caseinsensitive, whereas variables are case-sensitive.

- A statement ends with a semicolon (;).
- Whitespace and line breaks don't matter in PHP; do leverage them to make the code more readable.