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**PHP** is a [server-side scripting](http://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Server-side_scripting) language designed for [web development](http://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Web_development) but also used as a [general-purpose programming language](http://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/General-purpose_programming_language). PHP is now installed on more than 244 million [websites](http://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Website) and 2.1 million [web servers](http://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Web_server).[[2]](http://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Php#cite_note-2) Originally created by [Rasmus Lerdorf](http://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Rasmus_Lerdorf) in 1995, the [reference implementation](http://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Reference_implementation) of PHP is now produced by The PHP Group.[[3]](http://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Php#cite_note-about_PHP-3) While PHP originally stood for Personal Home Page,[[4]](http://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Php#cite_note-History_of_PHP-4) it now stands for PHP: Hypertext Preprocessor, a [recursive acronym](http://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Recursive_acronym).[[5]](http://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Php#cite_note-5)

PHP code is [interpreted](http://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Interpreter_%28computing%29) by a web server with a PHP processor module, which generates the resulting web page: PHP commands can be embedded directly into an [HTML](http://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/HTML) source document rather than calling an external file to process data. It has also evolved to include a [command-line interface](http://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Command-line_interface) capability and can be used in [standalone](http://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Computer_software) [graphical applications](http://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Graphical_user_interface).[[6]](http://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Php#cite_note-6)

PHP is [free software](http://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Free_software) released under the [PHP License](http://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/PHP_License), which is incompatible with the [GNU General Public License](http://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/GNU_General_Public_License) (GPL) due to restrictions on the usage of the term PHP.[[7]](http://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Php#cite_note-7) PHP can be deployed on most web servers and also as a standalone [shell](http://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Shell_%28computing%29) on almost every [operating system](http://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Operating_system) and [platform](http://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Computing_platform), free of charge.[[8]](http://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Php#cite_note-foundations-8)