

Running a localhost web server

In order to develop server-side (PHP) applications without depending on the availability of the university server, it is a good idea to install a local web server on your own machine. The following instructions are for Windows computers, but MacOS is equally straightforward.

Once-only steps

1. Download **XAMPP** from <https://www.apachefriends.org/download.html>
2. Run the installer package (creating a desktop icon will make it easier for you to find and launch the server)

For every session...

3. Launch **XAMPP** – either by double-clicking the desktop icon or selecting it from your list of installed programs
4. **From the console displayed, start the Apache server**
5. Use a **Windows Explorer** to locate the *htdocs* folder that has been created inside the folder where **XAMPP** has been installed. This folder is the root folder for your web server.
6. Create a simple file *test.php* that prints a message to the screen. Save this file in your *htdocs* folder
7. Open a web browser and visit the URL <http://localhost/test.php>. If you see the message displayed by your simple PHP file, everything is working properly.
8. Your web pages can be organised in a folder structure within your *htdocs* folder. For example, if *htdocs* contains a sub-folder called *com506* which in turn contains a file *myFile.php*, then the URL of the file is <http://localhost/com506/myFile.php>

Other information...

9. There is no need to use **Filezilla** or any other FTP client. You can simply edit your file directly within the *htdocs* folder structure
10. If you require a database, start the **MySQL** server in Step 4. You can run **PhpMyAdmin** by visiting the URL <http://localhost/phpmyadmin>, where you can create and manage your database tables.