

Website Guestbook Implementation

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Website Guestbook Implementation

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Website Guestbook Implementation

Background

The implementation of a guestbook can be a good way of getting feedback about your website. This document walks you through the steps for implementing our sample guestbook code. This guestbook code captures several details. These are:

- Name of the person leaving the comment that was entered.
- Email address that was entered.
- The actual comment that was entered.
- Date and time that the entry was added.
- The IP Address of the computer that entered the comment.
- The page that the guestbook entry was entered from.

These fields are defined in the SQL table definitions. (See the `guestbooks.sql` member). Along with these fields there is an auto increment field (named “id”).

As defined in the `guestbooks.sql` code the field, *comment*, is a *longtext* field and that means that up to 4GB can be entered, however, in the “Comment” field of the `guestbook.php` code limits the input to 120 characters (40 columns by 3 rows). If you want to change this, then you will need to change the SQL accordingly.

There are several pre-requisites for the implementation of the code these are:

- An SQL type database (i.e. MySQL) This is for holding the guestbook comments etc. Normally this should be part of the webhosting platform that you are using.
- PHP needs to be available (This also should be part of the webhosting platform).
- The ability to run JavaScript (for the updating of the database)
- All the files should be file transferred to your web server.
- All the files must be in the same folder/directory.



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Guestbook Collateral

The sample guestbook facility, as provided, consists of a Zip file (Guestbook.zip) that contains several files. These files are:

Name	Type	Description
addguestbook.php	PHP	This is the code that actually updates the database with the guestbook comment.
Guestbook Implementation.pds	PDF	This document.
Guestbook.inc	INC	This is the file that contains the log in information that is used to allow access to the database table. This file gets included in the PHP files.
guestbook.php	PHP	This is the boilerplate code that is included on all webpages where a guestbook is wanted.
GuestbookPaging.php	PHP	This file enables paging to be accomplished rather than have a massive webpage load. By default the page will hold ten entries per page.
guestbooks.sql	SQL	This is the source SQL to build the database table required to hold the guestbook entries.
Sample.php	PHP	This is a sample webpage used to show how to place the guestbook onto a webpage.
viewguestbook.php	PHP	This code allows people to view the guestbook comments in time and date order.
words.txt	TXT	This file contains words that will be forbidden in the comments. This file contains lots of rude/obscene words open at your own discretion!

For a fuller description and any tailoring required, please refer to the pertinent section of this document.

The code itself is mostly in PHP but there is a small section of JavaScript which requires access to an external site. This reference is perfectly safe and is purely there to facilitate the execution of the local code.

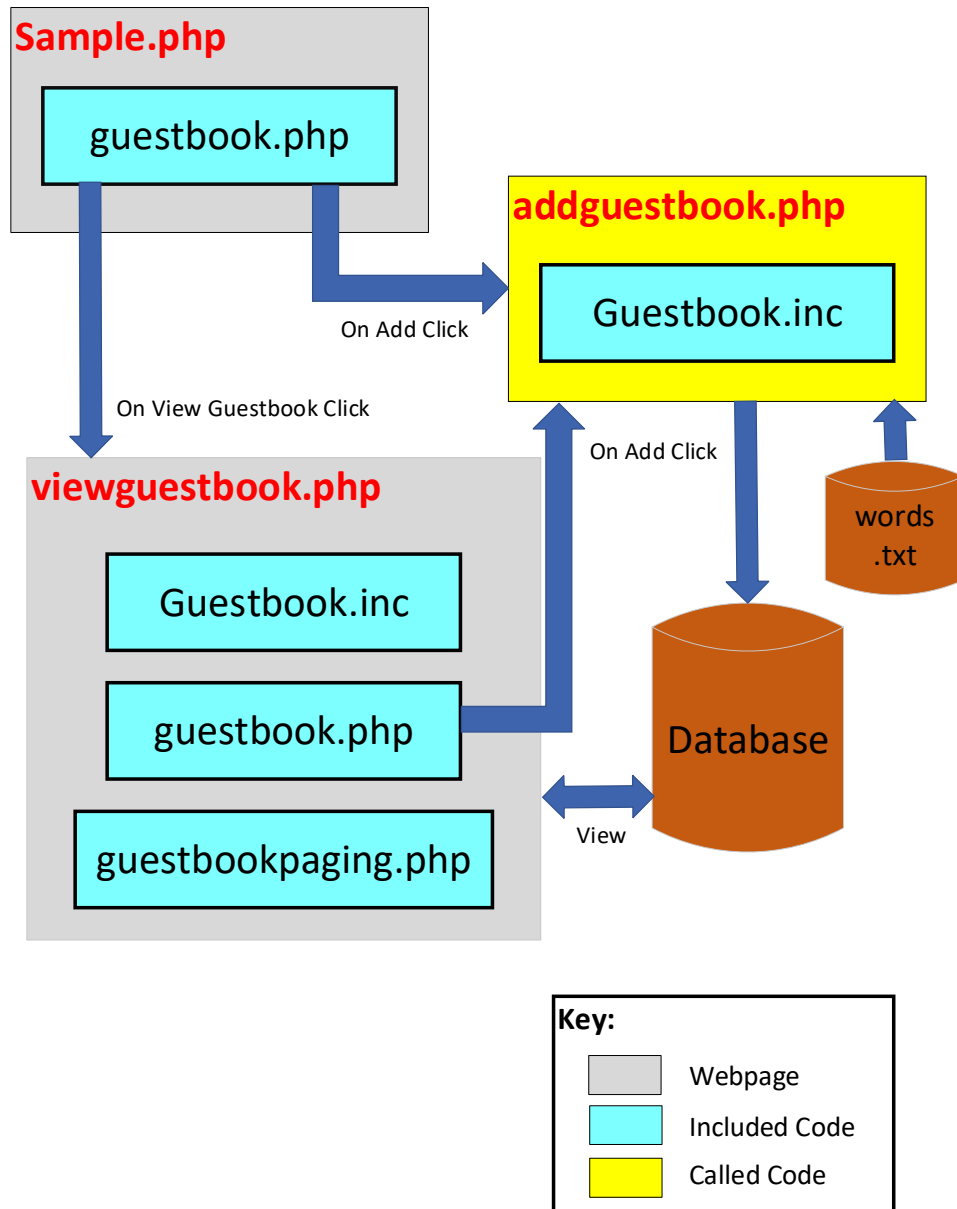
The HTML code uses tables if you want to use cascading style sheets it is for you to convert them, we distribute the code as tables simply because it is easier to implement people who simply want a guestbook on their website.



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Flow Overview Schematic

Guestbook Logic Flow Schematic



Notice that the Guestbook.inc file gets included into the other pages so that it is easier to change the database to be used and the userids and passwords for accessing that database.



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Tailoring the Code

The assumption is going to be made that the database table will contain the same names as are provided in this sample. If you don't want to use these names, and/or want to add additional fields, then you will need to change the field names throughout the code. We will identify where the field names are used within the code so that you are aware of where to make your changes. These are optional changes. Below we will identify the **required** changes.

Tailoring addguestbook.php

Description:

The **addguestbook.php** page is the code that actually updates the database with the users input and the additional fields not submitted by the user. The field names must be the same as those in the database (as defined in the **questbook.sql** member).

Language

PHP

Included Code

Guestbook.inc
Words.txt

Called by

guestbook.php

Required Changes

Line	Code	Required Change
14	<code>date_default_timezone_set('America/Chicago');</code>	Change the time zone setting if required. For a list of supported time zones refer to: https://www.php.net/manual/en/timezones.php
18	<code>\$fd = fopen ("words.txt", "r");</code>	If you change the name of the file containing 'banned' names, then you will need to change this line to reflect the new name.
44	<code>\$sql="INSERT INTO test(name, email, comment, datetime, ipaddr, frompage) VALUES('\$name', '\$email', '\$comment', '\$datetime', '\$ipaddr', '\$frompage')";</code>	The database table name, as distributed, is named "test". Obviously this isn't a very descriptive name and it should be changed to something more meaningful. The green highlighted items are the default field names.



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The **addguestbook.php** code also contains the field names for the database table along with the names used as HTML field names. If you don't wish to use the supplied names or if you want to add additional fields, then this module will need to be changed to reflect those changes.

Tailoring Guestbook.inc

Description:

The **Guestbook.inc** page is the included code that contains the username, password, database and server name for accessing the database table (by default "test"). It gets included into the other code so that any changes to these fields are automatically updated in the rest of the code.

Language

PHP

Included Code

-none-

Called by

addguestbook.php
viewguestbook.php

Required Changes

Line	Code	Required Change
2	\$username="anyone";	Change username value to the username you have set up for your database. This username should have the following privileges: SELECT INSERT UPDATE ALTER
3	\$password="default";	Change the password to the password you have defined for the username defined on line 2.
4	\$database="guestbooks";	This should be the name of the database that contains the table. By default, the table name will be "test".
5	\$servername="your.server.name.com";	This must be changed to point to your database server.

It is essential that the server name is correct otherwise the entire process will fail. The **guestbook.sql** will, if needed, create the database, table and fields for the database, however, this has to be done before using the guestbook facility.



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Tailoring guestbook.php

Description:

The **guestbook.php** code is the code that should be added to any page that you require the guestbook to appear on. The code will look like the following:

Please Sign The Guestbook

Name	<input type="text"/>
Email	<input type="text"/>
Comment	<input type="text"/>
<input type="button" value="Submit the form"/> <input type="button" value="Reset"/> View guestbook	

If the user clicks on “Submit the form” the page will call **addguestbook.php** to update the database with the supplied values.

If the user clicks on “Reset” any values entered into the form will be cleared.

If the user clicks “View guestbook” the **viewguestbook.php** will be displayed.

There is a line of code in this that reads:

```
<td><p class="antispam"><input name="url" type="hidden"></p>
```

This is left in, even though there is no CSS stylesheet provided, simply to show where you can implement an antispam trap. Theoretically, the **type="hidden"** would prevent this too.

Languages

HTML
JavaScript

Included Code

-none-

Called by

Sample.php



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Required Changes

There are **no required changes** to the code unless you change the names of the called pages (**addguestbook.php** and **viewguestbook.php**).

Additionally, if you want to change the names for the HTML fields then you need to reflect those changes in the **addguestbook.php** code.

Tailoring GuestbookPaging.php

Description:

The **GuestbookPaging.php** page is the code that handles the paging for the **viewguestbook.php** output. By default the output will be displayed in blocks of 10 (this is defined in the **viewguestbook.php** code.)

Language

PHP

Included Code

-none-

Called by

viewguestbook.php

Required Changes

There are **no required changes** to the code unless you want to change the names for the HTML fields in the database or the data to be displayed. The default fields that will be displayed are :

Name
Date and Time
Comment

It is strongly recommended that email addresses and IP addresses are never displayed.

Tailoring guestbook.sql

Description:

guestbook.sql is a SQL script that, when executed, will create the database table ("test") and all the fields within that table. This script should be run from the SQL administrator panels. There is a line within the script (line 16) that is commented out that will, if required, create the database "guestbooks". To have the script create the database uncomment the line by removing the dashes that precede the CREATE DATABASE on line 16.



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Language

SQL

Included Code

-none-

Called by

-nothing-

Required Changes

There are no required changes needed unless you want to change the names of the table or the fields in the table. If you change the names in this script, then you need to reflect these changes in the other code samples.

Field Name	Type	Size	Comment	Extra Info.
id	Integer	4	Main Key	Auto increment
name	Variable character	65	Submitters Name	
email	Variable character	65	Submitter's email address	
comment	Long text		Comment Submitted	
datetime	Variable character	65	Date and time of comment	
Ipaddr	Variable character	20	Submitter's IP address	
frompage	Variable character	20	Referring page	

Note that the "frompage" will get truncated to just the last level from the full URL.

Tailoring Sample.php

Description:

The **Sample.php** page is simply a demonstration of how to include the **guestbook.php** code into a web page. It should be noted that the lines 7-9 should be coded as is onto any page that requires the guestbook adding to it.

Language

HTML

PHP

Included Code

Guestbook.php

Called by

-nothing-

Required Changes

There are no required changes to this page unless the name of **guestbook.php** is changed. If it is changed then line 8 will need to be changed to use the new name.



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Tailoring viewguestbook.php

Description:

The **viewguestbook.php** page is the page that gets called whenever the user clicks on the “View guestbook” button is pressed. It uses a paging method that shows the entries in chunks of 10s. This is achieved via the **GuestbookPaging.php** code, however the count of the number of entries per page is passed from this page. (See the “Required Changes” section for details).

Language

HTML
PHP

Included Code

guestbook.inc
guestbook.php
GuestbookPaging.php

Called by

guestbook.php

Required Changes

Line	Code	Required Change
26	<code>\$records_per_page=10;</code>	This value specifies how many guestbook entries to display at a time. The default is 10. Additional pages will be able to be accessed via the links that will be generated.
28	<code>\$query = "select name,comment,datetime from test ORDER BY datetime DESC";</code>	The green highlighted items are the default field names.

The **viewguestbook.php** code also contains the field names for the database table along with the names used as HTML field names. If you don’t wish to use the supplied names or if you want to add additional fields, then this module will need to be changed to reflect those changes.

Tailoring words.txt

Description:

The file, **words.txt**, contains words that will prevent an entry being added to the guestbook.

This file contains lots of rude/obscene words open at your own discretion!

Language

Plain text



Website Guestbook Implementation

Included Code

-none-

Called by

addguestbook.php

Required Changes

The text file can have any words added to it that you may require by simply editing the file.

