

PHP: Flock, Cookies, Sessions

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Outline

- File Locking
- How cookies work
- Cookies in PHP
- Sessions

File Locking

- Unless you as a coder do something, it is completely possible for two scripts to try to access the same file at the same time.
- To prevent this you should call the flock function to get a lock before you try to do something with a file:

```
$fp = fopen("/tmp/lock.txt", "w");
if (flock($fp, LOCK_EX)) {
    // do an exclusive/write lock. use LOCK_SH (for shared/read lock)
    fwrite($fp, "Write something here\n");
    flock($fp, LOCK_UN); // release the lock
}
else {echo "Couldn't lock the file !";} fclose($fp);
```

- Locks are released when fclose() is called.

Cookies

- Sometimes it is useful to remember a client when it comes back.

To do this one can use the HTTP-Cookie protocol.

The Server can send as one of its response headers:

```
Set-Cookie: name=value; expires=some date;  
path= some path; domain= some_domain;
```

- In PHP you can write out a header using the `header()` function.
- When the Client comes back, it will send the cookie as part of its request header as:
Cookie: name=value

Cookies in PHP

- Cookies can be set using the `setcookie` function:
`setcookie(name, value, expires);`
- This should be done before output is produced by your script.
- To access the value of a cookie returned from a browser you can use the `$_COOKIE` array.

Sessions

- PHP supports session management.
- To start a session one calls `session_start()`;
- Then to set/get values of the session one uses the global array variable `$_SESSION`:

```
$_SESSION["test"]=37; /* sets the test  
session variable*/  
echo $_SESSION["test"];
```

