

myPHP Guestbook®

myPHP Guestbook v. 2.0.5 Copyright © 2003 - 2006 Claudio Pose
myPHP Guestbook was an Open Source project from <Networkarea.ch>, Claudio Pose.

When Claudio Pose offered no more support, *myPHP-Guestbook* was developed by Christian Thomas.

myPHP Guestbook v. 3.2.1 Copyright © 2011- 2014 Christian Thomas, <www.hostonline.de>

In 2014 *myPHP Guestbook* continues with version 4.0.0 written by Wolfgang Leverberg.

myPHP Guestbook v. 4.10.9 Copyright © 2014 - 2022 Wolfgang Leverberg,
<<https://www.php-guestbook.de>>

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Table of Contents:

I. Preparation, disclaimers, installation and use of *myPHP Guestbook*

1. Introduction
2. Disclaimer
3. Preparation and installation
 - 3.1 Initial or new installation
 - 3.2 Update from an earlier version < 4.0
 - 3.3 Special folder rights (!)
 - 3.4 Use of .htaccess files (!)
4. Changes compared to previous versions < 4.0
5. Usage instructions, configuration options, data protection
6. Insert *myPHP Guestbook* into your website with PHP <include> or via IFrame

II. Others *myPHP Guestbook*

1. Bugs
 2. Version History
 3. License
 4. Support
 4. Copyright
 5. Credits
-

I. Preparation, disclaimers, installation and use of *myPHP Guestbook*

1. Introduction

Before you install the guestbook for the first time or use the update of the guestbook, you should read the following notes and the "GNU General Public License" (can be found in the folder "license").

Support for the versions from 4.x (MySQLi) of the guestbook is available at [<https://www.php-guestbook.de/>](https://www.php-guestbook.de/)

- After the successful installation of the *myPHP Guestbook* you will find a comprehensive documentation in the Admin-Control-Panel under the link "Help" with numerous hints and tips on how this script works, on solutions to possible problems and on individual customizations/changes including some CSS-code examples.

myPHP Guestbook is an open source guestbook and is licensed under the GNU General Public License. By installing and using *myPHP Guestbook*, you accept the GNU General Public License.

Under the terms of the license, anyone can independently change the code of *myPHP Guestbook* or use parts of the code for other projects. However, this is only permitted if the license terms are complied with, see here: [<http://www.gnu.org/licenses/>](http://www.gnu.org/licenses/)

So that the program *myPHP Guestbook* can be further improved, your assistance is also asked. You are welcome to report your wishes for future features or announce found errors. Use the guestbook on: [<https://www.php-guestbook.de/>](https://www.php-guestbook.de/), so that also other users can profit and take part in discussions. I will endeavor to fix any discovered bugs immediately.

Since *myPHP Guestbook* is a relatively small project, no patches are offered to close any security gaps. **Therefore, you should always download and install the latest version on [<https://www.php-guestbook.de/>](https://www.php-guestbook.de/) to keep up-to-date.** Please check for updates or register for our Newsletter: <https://www.php-guestbook.de/mail.reg.php>.

2. DISCLAIMER

- **It's not possible to offer an always and everywhere perfectly working software. *myPHP Guestbook* is offered "as well as it is" and WITHOUT ANY WARRANTY; without even the implied warranty of MERCHANTABILITY or FITNESS FOR A PARTICULAR PURPOSE.**

With the installation of *myPHP Guestbook* you accept the exclusion of any warranty and liability. See the GNU General Public License for more details.

You are responsible for compliance with legal regulations when using the *myPHP Guestbook* script (e.g. data protection regulations, etc.).

3. Preparation and installation

This package includes extensive changes and new features to the versions 3.1.x and 3.2.x of the *myPHP Guestbook*. Depending on your wishes, it allows a complete new installation or "only" an update of existing installations of the versions from 3.1.x and higher.

The only difference is that with a **complete new installation**, the configuration file (config.inc.php) for the necessary database connection is rewritten and the database tables are completely recreated.

If the "config.inc.php" with all necessary contents for connecting to the database and the database tables for the guestbook from one of the previous versions **from 3.1.x upwards are already available**, only **an update of the database is required**, whereby in particular the table "_entries", in which the guestbook entries are located, can be retained, which makes a later restoration of entries unnecessary.

If you still have one of the very old **versions 1.x or 2.x** in use, you have to perform a **complete reinstallation**.

Prerequisites for the operation of *myPHP Guestbook* V 4.10.9:

- Apache Server
- MySQL 5.x or 8.0
- PHP 7.x., 8.0 or 8.1
 - Note: PHP 5.x. will not be tested anymore, so an error-free function is possible under these outdated PHP versions, but cannot be guaranteed.
- activated MySQLi support

Not required for the guestbook, but desirable for security reasons:

- use of own .htaccess files allowed by the provider

In order to use the Image Upload- and Smiley Upload function, the following additional requirements must also be fulfilled on the server side:

- file_uploads = On
- activated GD Support

The guestbook can also be installed and used if there is no GD support on the server side and/or if no file upload is allowed (in the case of the larger hosters unlikely), but the image upload function with automatic resizing cannot be used.

For the automatic zipping (compressing) of the backups created with the program

- zlib Support

must be activated on the server side. However, the guestbook can also be installed and used without this support, including the BackUp production, but the backups cannot be compressed automatically.

3.1. Preparation and execution of a complete new or initial installation:

First load all files from the download package onto the server.

Go to ***http(s)://www.your-Domain.com/your-guestbook-folder/install/*** in your browser. You will be asked first if you want to perform a complete new installation or only a database update from one of the guestbook versions from 3.x.

After clicking on the "Complete installation" button, it will check whether the MySQLi module is made available by your provider. If not, this is displayed and you cannot continue at this point.

But if so, as expected, you must complete the input mask with your MySQL and Admin credentials.

In the lower half of the input mask you will see folders/files which must be assigned CHMOD-rights 0755 or 0777. If everything is ok, this will be displayed, otherwise the CHMOD-rights of the displayed folders in the FTP client have to be changed, because otherwise the smiley- and backup-creation, as well as the photo upload will not work.

➤ **Attention:**

The directories "images/smilies", "img_guest", "banner" and "backup" as well as the file "config.inc.php" must contain the CHMOD rights 0755 or even 0777 (can be set in the FTP client). - For further explanations see paragraph I. => 3. => 3.3

After you have filled in all fields of the input mask, click on "Install".

The configuration file is written and in the next step the database is set up.

➤ **After successful installation you should delete the "install" folder from your server for security reasons with all files inside!**

If the installation fails, it is advisable to check the file "config.inc.php" in the "includes" folder again.

- Occasionally, writing the configuration file fails due to certain critical special characters contained in the password for accessing the SQL database. For example, the characters \$ (dollar sign) or # (hash) have been shown to be problematic. - If the configuration file is not written by the program with the consequence that an access to the database is not possible and a corresponding error message is displayed, please check whether and if necessary which special characters are in your password for the database connection and change the password accordingly if necessary.
- In some cases it may happen that after installation the login in the admin panel fails and you will end up in the login screen. In this case, error messages are output as follows:

Warning: session_start(): open(/var/www/web/tmp/sess_ xxx....xxx , O_RDWR) failed: No such file or directory (2) in ***/var/www/users/web/myphp-guestbook/admin/admin.php*** on line 22

Warning: Unknown: open(/var/www/web/tmp/sess_xxx....xxx, O_RDWR) failed: No such file or directory (2) in **Unknown** on line 0

Warning: Unknown(): Failed to write session data (files). Please verify that the current setting of session.save_path is correct (/var/www/web/tmp) in **Unknown** on line 0

To fix this problem, you must either assign CHMOD rights 0777 to the directory (folder) "tmp" in the root directory or, if this does not yet exist, create it first and then assign CHMOD rights 0777.

Here the directory "tmp" has been mentioned, it can also be called something else, e.g. other common names are "session" or "temp".

After installation the whole guestbook can be administered easily via the *myPHP Guestbook* Admin-Control-Panel. Access to the admin panel is only possible with the correct username and password that you entered during installation. To log in to the admin panel, simply save the following link in your browser:

[http\(s\)://www.your-Domain.com/your-guestbook-folder/admin/admin.php](http(s)://www.your-Domain.com/your-guestbook-folder/admin/admin.php)

If the admin area is inactive for more than 30 minutes, the session created with the login will be destroyed for security reasons and the admin has to log in again. Each click on a link in the admin area sets this time measurement back to "zero", so that the full 30 minutes are available again after each click and an unintentional logout is avoided.

3.2. Preparing and updating an existing installation:

If you already use one of the previous *myPHP Guestbook* versions from 3.x on, please create a new, current backup of the guestbook entries in the existing admin area.

Download the Backup and save it safely.

If you have phpMyAdmin, SQL-Dumper or similar, please make a complete backup copy of your existing database.

Copy the complete folder containing all your guestbook files and save it separately as a backup copy.

With the database update, the guestbook entries stored in the table "_entries" are always retained, since this table is not deleted. A database update, however, only works from one of the versions 3.x and up. **If you have used a version 2.x before, you will have to perform a complete reinstallation.** If there are any problems after the update, a backup from version 3.x can usually be imported into the table "_entries" of the database without any further preparation. Although the structure of this table has been slightly changed since versions 4.6.0, 4.7.0 and 4.9.0 to the previous versions because new columns have been added, this does not usually prevent the use of a backup from one of the older guestbook versions from 3.x onwards.

When updating the database, the status of all entries in the guestbook is automatically set to "1" (= released/visible). If you have locked individual entries in your old installation, this must be renewed after the database update.

After creating the backup, as mentioned above, download all files from the new guestbook package to the server, **with one exception:**

- the file: "**config.inc.php**" from the folder "includes" must **not** be uploaded/overwritten, because the database update requires the access data from this file!

Go to [http\(s\)://www.your-Domain.com/your-guestbook-folder/install/](http(s)://www.your-Domain.com/your-guestbook-folder/install/) in your browser. You will be asked first if you want to perform a complete new installation or only a database update from one of the guestbook versions from 3.x..

After clicking on the button "Database Update", the first step is to check if the MySQLi module is provided by your hoster.

If not, you will be informed and it won't go on. You must then upload the previous, "old" guestbook files from the copy created for security reasons.

- **Otherwise, you can select the update you need by marking the corresponding radio button and clicking on the button next to it will make the necessary database changes.** Which tables are new or overwritten is indicated.
- **After a successful Update you should delete the "install" folder from your server for security reasons with all files inside it!**

3.3. Special folder rights

Regardless of whether you came to this paragraph, because the installer has indicated that certain folders are not writable, or you have received error messages during image upload or back-up creation, or because you be just careful: Read this (and the following) section, and do not frighten, if you do not understand everything immediately; everything is solvable. ☺

In the hints of older *myPHP Guestbook*-documentations it was always stated that the backup- and smilie-folders should get the CHMOD rights 0777.

For a better understanding:

The directories (folders) "images/smilies", "backup", "banner" and "img_guest" must be created in such a way that PHP is able to store files in these folders and these files can be "read" by PHP. This requires certain rights, namely the so-called "CHMOD rights 0755" or in some server configurations even 0777, because otherwise the creation of back-ups or the upload of new smiley or images do not work.

For security reasons, however, a folder should have as few rights as possible. So better, because safer, CHMOD 0755 and only if there is no other way CHMOD 0777. On the website of "wiki.selfhtml.org" it is expressed as: "777 is evil."

The checking and, if necessary, changing rights of a folder on the webspace can be done with a FTP client, e.g. with FileZilla or similar. This mostly works by opening the directory tree of your own web space on the web server, clicking on the desired folder with the mouse (depending on the program with the left or right mouse button) and clicking on "Change file

attributes" or "File Permissions" or "Properties" or similar named references. It usually opens another window where you can see and (if necessary) change which rights the folder has or should have.

Whether in your case the four designated folders have to get the rights 0777 or the – **preferably(!)**– lower rights 0755, must be tried out in the doubt, because this also depends on whether the Apache server and the files run under the same user (what they should do nowadays) or not.

After uploading all the files and folders from the download package, the folder rights should normally be 0755. The installer is also focused on 0755 with the built-in check for writeability of these folders. If the folders were displayed there in green with the message: "available, writable", everything should be fine. - *However, this does not replace an independent examination!*

If the installer shows you that the four or one of the four folders "images/smilies", "backup", "banner" and/or "img_guest" are present, but cannot be written to, you can still use the guestbook, but the following will not work:

- a) You can't back up the guestbook entries with this script,
- b) no new smileys and no new own banner can be uploaded with this script
- c) and the upload of images will not work.

To resolve this, you must either change the CHMOD rights of the affected folder(s) as described above or, if not desired or possible, check one of the following options:

- Solution for a): Use another external back-up program for the database entries, e.g. MyphpAdmin, mySQLDumper or similar and activate in the "General configuration" settings here in the admin area of the guestbook the option: "Delete backups from the server after sending them by e-mail?"
- Solution for b): First of all, a whole series of smileys and two banners are already available after the initial installation. Only if they are not sufficient **AND** the folder "smilies" is displayed as not writable, you may need to upload new smileys via FTP and enter them into the database table "_smilies". The similar applies to the upload of your own banner.
- Solution for c): Disable in the "General configuration" settings here in the admin area of the guestbook the option: "Show images in guestbook entries, activate image upload".

3.4. Using .htaccess files

The download package contains three partially different .htaccess files, namely in the folders

"backup", "includes" and "img_guest". They also serve to increase safety against harmful interference by third parties.

Files with the name `.htaccess` (the first character is a dot) are part of the configuration of the Apache web server. In the central configuration, the server administrator, in other words, your provider, determines which permissions he or she wants to grant to which users or which virtual offerings (virtual hosts). In addition, in the central configuration of Apache (which you as a normal user can't access, unless you run your own server), you can also set any other file name, which is why the name of such a file doesn't necessarily have to be `.htaccess` (although it is common and therefore usually so).

With one sentence: You can use the `.htaccess` files from the *myPHP Guestbook*, if your provider has given you this possibility in your hosting package.

This should be the case with the current large providers. Basically more would be possible than contained in the attached files, but not allowed everywhere. The instructions in these files are therefore limited to what providers normally allow.

- If you are unsure or receive error messages after uploading the files, in particular those with "500 Server Error", or if you do not see uploaded images despite an error-free upload, delete the `.htaccess` from the folder `img_guest`, clear the browser cache and call up the website again to check if the error disappears.
- Occasionally, depending on the server configuration, it may happen that your provider allows the use of own `.htaccess`, but the deactivation of CGI and PHP caused by the `.htaccess` file in the upload folder leads to the fact that uploaded images are not displayed.

Then you can try the following: Open the `.htaccess` in the folder `img_guest` with a text editor (e.g. WordPad from Windows). Remove the top two statements (only and, if necessary, in two steps) that read as follows:

```
# Abschalten: cgi, SSI, Auflisten von Inhalten
Options -ExecCGI -Includes -Indexes

# Ausfuehren von php unterbinden
<IfModule mod_php8.c>
    php_flag engine off
</IfModule>
<IfModule mod_php7.c>
    php_flag engine off
</IfModule>
<IfModule mod_php5.c>
    php_flag engine off
</IfModule>
```

If there are no problems with the existing `.htaccess`, so you don't have to delete any of the abovementioned statements, you can try to further increase security, whether your provider also allows the following statement per `.htaccess`:

```
# Prevent delivery of .php, .php3 and .cgi - files
<Files ~ "\.(php3?|cgi)$">
    deny from all
</Files>
```


- After saving this change, reload the ".htaccess" into the upload folder on the server and check again to see if uploaded images are now displayed. (Don't forget to empty the browser cache!) Check with your provider about the appropriate FAQ, e-mails, calls or similar, what is possible with your hosting package and what isn't.

Test whether the uploaded ".htaccess" does what it should do, e.g. by typing the following in your browser:

http://www.your-Domain.com/your-guestbook-folder/img_guest/index.php

... You should see an "HTTP-403 error" in your browser, similar to the content:

"Forbidden You don't have permission to access ... on this server."

If this is the case and uploaded images are displayed, it works properly.

If you can't use any .htaccess files or if they don't produce the desired effect and if you have to assign CHMOD rights 0777 to the three folders "images/smilies", "backup" and "img_guest" described in the previous section, I **strongly recommend to =>**

- a) deactivate the option: "Show images in guestbook entries, activate image upload" under the link "General configuration" and
- b) activate the option: "BackUp after sending via e-mail delete from the server again?" also in the "General configuration" and
- c) **after completion of the installation, change the CHMOD rights of the file "config.inc.php" from the directory "includes" to 0444 or 0644 (-r--r--r-- or -rw-r--r--)** to prevent access and manipulation from outside, and
- d) change the provider, not only because of this guestbook script, but because he obviously lives with his offer still behind the moon.

4. Changes compared to previous versions < 4.0

A complete description of all program changes from version 4.0.0 onwards can be found at "www.php-guestbook.de" under: <<https://www.php-guestbook.de/start.changelog.php>>

5. Usage instructions, configuration options, data protection

After installing the guestbook, you will find detailed information on the various functions, data protection and many other tips in the admin control panel under the link "Help". - **You alone are responsible for compliance with legal requirements, in particular data protection regulations!**

6. Insert *myPHP Guestbook* into your website with PHP <include> or via IFrame

From the reports of some users it became evident that there are always problems when less

experienced users try to integrate the guestbook via the PHP function "include". To make this easier, a separate package has been put together with some customized files and two demo pages, which can also be downloaded from <https://www.php-guestbook.de>.

However, the files in this "include" package **cannot** easily be used for integration into **CMS** or generally for homepages whose structure is such that only one "index" page exists, in which the various contents are then integrated with "switch", "include" or similar. For more details see the corresponding "*ReadMe_include.pdf*" attached to the "include" download.

Basic knowledge of PHP, HTML and CSS should be present when using the "include" extensions.

For embedding the guestbook in your own page via **IFrame**, a short tutorial on how to do that and a javascript file to automatically determine the height of the frame window is included in the download. With the JS file vertical scrollbars in the frame window can be prevented.

II. Others *myPHP Guestbook*

1. Bugs

Please report found bugs of the versions from 4.* onward to this address as soon as possible: post@php-guestbook.de, so that the bugs can be fixed immediately.

2. Version History

1.0.6 Final	13.03.2004	Claudio Pose
1.1.0 Final	17.03.2004	
1.2.0 Final	25.03.2004	
1.3.3 Final	07.04.2004	
1.4.2 Final	14.04.2004	
1.5.1 Final	06.05.2004	
1.6.2 Final	10.06.2004	
1.7.1 Final	02.08.2004	
1.8.3 Final	20.08.2004	
1.9.1 Final	18.09.2004	
1.9.2 Final	16.10.2004	
2.0.0 Final	06.04.2005	
2.0.1 Final	10.04.2006	
2.0.2 Final	29.04.2006	
2.0.3 Final	06.05.2006	
2.0.4 Final	06.05.2006	Christian Thomas
2.0.5 Final	30.06.2006	
3.0.0 Final	24.09.2011	
3.0.1 Final	12.02.2012	
3.1.0 Final	15.04.2012	
3.2.0 Final	21.12.2012	
3.2.1 Final	25.10.2014	
4.0.0 Final	10.03.2014	Wolfgang Leverberg
4.1.0 Final	01.04.2014	
4.2.0 Final	03.10.2014	
4.2.1 Final	28.10.2014	
4.2.2 Final	02.11.2014	
4.2.3 Final	16.11.2014	

4.3.0	Final	28.11.2014	Wolfgang Leverberg
4.3.1	Final	13.12.2014	
4.3.2	Final	02.01.2015	
4.4.0	Final	21.02.2015	
4.4.1	Final	07.03.2015	
4.4.2	Final	20.03.2015	
4.5.0	Final	01.05.2015	
4.5.1	Final	20.06.2015	
4.5.2	Final	26.06.2015	
4.5.3	Final	18.07.2015	
4.5.4	Final	04.09.2015	
4.5.5	Final	03.10.2015	
4.5.6	Final	02.01.2016	
4.6.0	Final	06.02.2016	
4.6.1	Final	01.05.2016	
4.6.2	Final	03.07.2016	
4.6.3	Final	08.10.2016	
4.7.0	Final	06.01.2017	
4.7.1	Final	04.03.2017	
4.7.2	Final	18.03.2017	
4.7.3	Final	13.05.2017	
4.7.4	Final	15.07.2017	
4.7.5	Final	02.09.2017	
4.8.0	Final	01.01.2018	
4.8.1	Final	12.02.2018	
4.9.0	Final	10.05.2018	
4.9.1	Final	08.07.2018	
4.9.2	Final	03.11.2018	
4.9.3	Final	02.01.2019	
4.10.0	Final	04.03.2019	
4.10.1	Final	17.03.2019	
4.10.2	Final	13.04.2019	
4.10.3	Final	01.09.2019	
4.10.4	Final	04.01.2020	
4.10.5	Final	01.01.2021	
4.10.6	Final	03.03.2021	
4.10.7	Final	01.05.2021	
4.10.8	Final	08.09.2021	
4.10.9	Final	02.01.2022	

3. License

myPHP Guestbook is licensed under GNU General Public License. Before using the guestbook, you should first read the license.txt, because with the installation and use of *myPHP Guestbook* you accept the GNU General Public License.

4. Copyright

It is not allowed to remove the copyright notice in the source code. For more information, please read the license.txt.

5. Credits

Many thanks to all of you who have participated in the development of *myPHP Guestbook*.

The following list contains people who have participated in the development of *myPHP Guestbook* in some way (if known):

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Parts of the file upload functions are courtesy of

ISP Image Upload and Resize PHP Program
(c) Joachim Patten (ISP), 2013
isp_image_resize Ver.1.5 : Version 08.02.2013
Copyright Joachim Patten (ISP)
<http://www.neusser-marktplatz.de>

Parts of the spam filter come from

<<http://www.naturfotografie-digital.de/impressum/impressum.php>>.

The function "shortWords" (original designation "MakeBreakable") is courtesy of

Herrn Werner Rumpeltesz, <<http://www.gaijin.at>>,

adapted/changed for use under the requirements of the *myPHP Guestbook*.

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continued <http://www.hostonline.de/>
continued <https://www.php-guestbook.de/>

Remscheid (Germany), January 2022