

## Facebook PHP Tutorial

This tutorial will cover the basics of using the Facebook PHP library and how to get your application started, including:

1. Installing The Facebook Developer Application
2. Downloading The Facebook PHP Client Library
3. Creating Your Application
4. Hello Facebook! Example
5. FBML - Facebook Markup Language
6. Using the Facebook API

The first thing you need of course is a Facebook account. You can sign up for Facebook at [www.facebook.com](http://www.facebook.com). Once you have your account you'll need to install the Facebook developer application. This little tool will allow you to generate your application profile and get an API key (more on that later). Once you've logged into Facebook visit: [www.facebook.com/developers/](http://www.facebook.com/developers/) or click below to install the developer application:

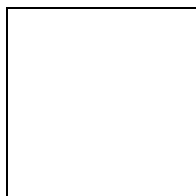
[Add The Facebook Developer Application.](#)

### ***PHP Facebook API Client Library***

Facebook has created a nice php library that allows you to use their API without writing a lot of extra code. You can grab the PHP version of the library at [developers.facebook.com/resources.php](http://developers.facebook.com/resources.php). Download the 'PHP (4 and 5) Client Library'.

Once you've downloaded the library unzip it into a folder that is accessible by your PHP scripts. So you would have something like /php\_include\_directory/facebook/ and in that folder you will have the entire Facebook PHP Client Library (3 folders: client, footprints, php4client). We will be using PHP5 so these examples will be using the "client" directory of the library. The footprints folder is an example application.

### ***Creating Your Application Profile And API Key***



Facebook requires that you register each application you make. Once you've logged into [Facebook](#) and installed the [developer application](#) go to the developer panel (or [click here](#)). Inside the developer application click "Set Up New Application".

**Choose a name for your application.** This is important because it's what users will see when they are browsing the application directory. Currently the name field is the

only thing used when searching for applications. So it's doubly important at this point.

**Click on "Optional Fields"**. Then fill out the **Callback Url** with the location of your script. This is the public URL on your webserver where the Facebook application will be.

**Next fill out the "Canvas Page URL"**. This is your application URL within Facebook. For example if the application was called "Makebeta Is Cool" then the application URL could be: "makebeta" which would make the full URL: <http://apps.facebook.com/makebeta/>.

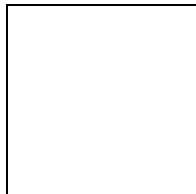
Check **Yes** for **Can your application to be added on Facebook?**

You should check the **Developer Mode** checkbox so that no one can add your application until you are done working on it.

Under **Integration Points** fill out **Side Nav URL** with the full Canvas Page URL. In the example above it would be <http://apps.facebook.com/makebeta/>. This allows users to add your application to their Facebook left side bar navigation.

**All of these settings can be changed after the application has been created.** But it's a good idea not to change the Canvas Page URL or Name once you have users that have installed your application.

**Further Reading:** [Starting your First Facebook App: Demystifying Application Form Field by Field](#)



**Get the API Key and Secret.** You should now see your application listed with a unique API Key and Secret code. You'll use these within your application.

## ***Hello Facebook!***

Let's create a really simple first application that just says hello to the current Facebook user. Here's the code for the Hello Facebook! Application:

PHP Code:

```
<?php
/* include the PHP Facebook Client Library to help
   with the API calls and make life easy */
```

```

require_once('facebook/client/facebook.php');

/* initialize the facebook API with your application API Key
   and Secret */

$facebook = new Facebook(YOUR_API_KEY, YOUR_SECRET_CODE);

/* require the user to be logged into Facebook before
   using the application. If they are not logged in they
   will first be directed to a Facebook login page and then
   back to the application's page. require_login() returns
   the user's unique ID which we will store in fb_user */

$fb_user = $facebook->require_login();

/* now we will say:

   Hello USER_NAME! Welcome to my first application! */

?>

Hello <fb:name uid='<?php echo $fb_user; ?>' useyou='false'
possessive='true' />! Welcome to my first application!

<?php

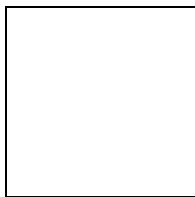
/* We'll also echo some information that will
   help us see what's going on with the Facebook API: */

echo "<pre>Debug:" . print_r($facebook,true) . "</pre>";

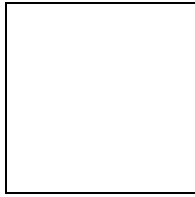
?>

```

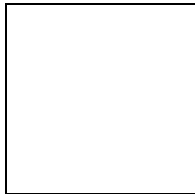
So what happens when a user hits the Canvas Page URL (from the example it would be: <http://apps.facebook.com/makebeta/>)? The **require\_login()** call will produce a screen like this for the user:



If you change `require_login()` to **require\_add()** the user will get a page that looks like this:



After the user logs into or adds the application they will get the canvas page with the “Hello...” text. It should look something like this:



### ***Facebook Markup Language - FBML***

Facebook has provided a bunch of built in tags that will render dynamic data inside your application. All you have to do is include the tags with the correct parameters. In the example above the **fb:name** tag is used to generate the user’s name on the canvas page. fb:name has a couple of parameters, one of which is **uid**. In the example above we set uid = \$fb\_user which is the unique ID of the current user. There are lots of FBML tags you can use, check them all out at:

[developers.facebook.com/documentation.php?doc=fbml](http://developers.facebook.com/documentation.php?doc=fbml)

### ***Facebook API REST-based Interface***

The Facebook Client Library provides you with an easy to use wrapper for the Facebook API REST interface. All of the API calls are available under the \$facebook->api\_client object (after you initiate the \$facebook object). Many of the calls will require that the user has either added or logged into the application. Here’s an example call that would retrieve the user’s About Me text from their profile:

```
$fb_user = $facebook->user;  
$about = $facebook->api_client->users_getInfo($fb_user, 'about_me');
```

There are a number of API calls, and a list of them can be found here:  
[developers.facebook.com/documentation.php](http://developers.facebook.com/documentation.php)