

Unit-II

Lecture: 1

Handling HTML Form with PHP

Capturing Form Data

While dealing with forms, information can be submitted and transferred to same or another page. To set up a form for server processing and data retrieval, two important form attributes that controls how the form data is processed whenever it is submitted must be specified. These two form attributes are:

- **method attributes**
- **action attributes**

i.e. `<form action= " " method= " ">`

```
.  
.   
.   
</form>
```

Action Attribute:

- specifies the PHP script file location for processing when it is submitted.
 - If no script file location is specified, the browser submits the form by using the current PHP script file location (i.e. the self script in which the form is being called).

Method Attribute:

- specifies what type of method the form will use to send the data.
- two methods are used:
 - GET and
 - POST
 - By default, if no method is specified the GET method is used.

Setting access keys for the form data by using the element's name attribute:

The element's name attribute (name = "unique name here") value is used by PHP as key to enable access to the data value of the specified form field element when you submit the form.

e.g. `<input type= "text" name = "firstname">`

How form data is sent:

When you submit the form to the server, it encodes it by using a scheme called URL encoding which has a built-in pattern that describes how the form data is parsed and encoded.

This scheme parses and encodes the form data as a name/value pairs, and it uses the equal sign (=) to concatenate the name/value pairs together.

If the form data to be sent consists of different pairs, the ampersand character (&) is used to separate them.

e.g. data from the form having fields: first name, last name and subject(do check the lecture video):

<http://localhost/handling%20form%20data/example2.php?firstname=abhi&lastname=sharma&subject=Computer+System+Architecture>

How Send works?

Client browsers can send information to a web server in two different ways:

1. GET method
2. POST method

1. GET Method:

In GET method, the data is sent as URL parameters that are usually strings of name and value pairs separated by ampersands(&).

In general, a URL with GET data will look like this:

<http://localhost/handling%20form%20data/example2.php?firstname=abhi&lastname=sharma&subject=Computer+System+Architecture>

2. POST Method:

In POST method, the data is sent to the server as a package in a separate communication with the processing script. Data sent through POST method will not be visible in the URL.

Retrieving the data (Server Side)

- ❖ Superglobals \$_POST and \$_GET are used to gather data from PHP forms.

In both the methods, the server receives a string that will be parsed in order to get the data as a list of key/value pairs.

The global \$_POST variable allows you to access the data sent with the POST method and similarly to access the data sent with the GET method, you can use \$_GET.