

## Localhost or Remote Host

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### Localhost or Remote Host Installations

A localhost is a Web server and associated database that is set up directly on your computer or that may be on a local network either within your home or business environment. You have direct easy access to the machine upon which the software is situated

A remote host is one that you access via the internet it may be owned by you or you may rent it from a dedicated hosting company. In this case there are different flavours such as managed, dedicated, virtual, or shared hosting. But in simple terms the computer that houses the software is remote from you. The scope and detailed explanation of each of these flavours is outside of the boundaries of this manual but whichever option you select you must ensure that they meet your expected requirements together with the minimum specifications detailed above.

In respect of the localhost option there are a number of ready made packages that put all the necessary software together (excluding Joomla!) in one easily installable package that generally allow you to have your own personal Web server and database without really knowing too much about how they work.

The following are the more readily available, and popular, varieties of these packages and the operating systems for which they are designed.

With the exception of the LAMP packages, none of the following packages should be used for live Web sites they are only intended for development/localhost servers. The LAMP packages when used in conjunction with the appropriate Linux security measures are generally the same for localhost and live site situations.

The AMP elements within the following package names stand for Apache, MySQL, and PHP.

Package Name  
Operating System  
Web Site  
Documents

WAMP  
Windows  
<http://www.wampserver.com/en/>  
<http://www.wampserver.com/wamp5.chm>

MAMP  
Apple Mac OSX  
<http://www.mamp.info/en/mamp.html>

<http://www.mamp.info/en/help.html>

#### LAMP

Linux (and other Unix)  
Distribution Dependant

#### XAMPP

Multi-platform &ndash; Windows, Linux, Solaris, Mac  
<http://apachefriends.org>  
<http://www.apachefriends.org/en/faq-xampp.html>

In respect of Linux systems - most distributions these days come with the requisite components available within their own repositories, or even within the main distribution software download that you get. There will often be different ways of activating the functionality so you would need to check the documentation of your own particular distribution choice. The individual distributions compile the necessary dependencies, links, and changes as a part of the installation process, be it RPM, YUM, or one of the other bespoke installers.

Alternatively, on any OS platform you can download and configure the individual components from the various web sites listed (as you generally would need to do for a live Web site if your hosting provider did not cater for these) and create your own servers, but these packages do provide an easier, integrated solution.

Most of the packages will also usually contain some form of database administration program as well, for example, PHPMyAdmin or MySQLAdmin, to enable effective management of the database, if not, you will find it advantageous to install such a program if you intend doing any sort of database editing work.

The remainder of this Manual assumes for the most part, that you have a fully functioning Web server.

We would strongly recommend testing Joomla! and its functionality on a localhost installation in the first instance to get a feel for the software and what it can offer you.

On remote, hosted or dedicated servers the configuration and availability of these applications will depend on the host provider or the operating system that is installed upon the server. It would be a wise move to determine their current versions as well as the host's policy regarding updating the software before signing any contracts. The variation that can occur between providers and OS can be significant and is outside the scope of this brief instruction. If you encounter a problem with your host provider and the use of Joomla! check the forums to see if other users have experienced the particular issue and what their solution was.

Joomla! can be used with alternative web servers such as Microsoft© Internet Information Service (IIS) as well as alternative database models (alternative database work is very much in its infancy though), but these are not paths we intend exploring in this manual as Joomla! Is primarily developed for use on the AMP combinations already stated.

There are discussions and work under way to expand the platforms upon which Joomla! will operate without significant issue, but this is in its early stages of development. For particular issues, or to see if a combination of programs meet the necessary criteria, check the forums to see if anyone else has succeeded with a particular task or indeed whether you can contribute to one of the ongoing projects.

### Checking the installation

Once you have completed the necessary installation of your server software it is worth running a quick test to ensure that all the necessary, minimum requirements are met.

Remove the phpinfo.php script suggested in the following section from your Web root directory as soon as you have the necessary information. Leaving it in situ is a security risk. Your Joomla! installation has a built in version of the same script in the Help Menus for future reference.

You can do this very simply by creating a basic PHP script:

```
<?php  
  
// Show all information  
  
phpinfo();  
  
?>
```

Save this, as phpinfo.php for example, in the file to the root of your Web site, then simply enter the address of your Web site into your browser as follows: <http://www.yourdomain.com/phpinfo.php> or <http://localhost/phpinfo.php> and you should receive a detailed summary and state of all the PHP compilation options and extensions (such as the Zlib, XML, and MySQL modules), the PHP version in use, server information and environment (if it is compiled as a module), the PHP environment, Operating System version information, paths, master and local values of configuration options, HTTP headers, and the PHP License. See the next page for a (very) compressed view of the information that this script outputs. The actual output is a single column and extends over a number of pages!

For a full description of all the elements that are output, visit the explanatory page at <http://uk3.php.net/phpinfo>.

Compressed view of the output of "phpinfo";

Once you are satisfied that your server is ready for the installation to proceed, the next step is to obtain a copy of the latest release of Joomla!

Remove the `phpinfo.php` file from your web root as soon as you have the necessary information. Leaving it in situ is a security risk. Your Joomla! installation has a built in version of the same script in the Help Menus for future reference.

Check out the online Glossary to assist with definitions of individual words that are new to you. If we have missed any let us know please.