

# A very basic overview of Server-Side Scripting

*Or what is PHP, Perl, Python, Ruby  
and what can they do for me?*

# What is server-side scripting?

Server-side scripts are languages that work from the server as opposed to client-side scripting, which are languages like JavaScript that usually run in a web browser.

A script running on the server generally does not care what type of browser is being used and whether the browser can run JavaScript or Cookies.



The oldest of the four and still going strong.



Developed by Larry Wall in 1987.

Widely adopted as a web programming language in 1994.

Remember, CGI forms, PerlShop and Form Mail?

Was the leading programming language until PHP came along in the late 1990s.

Still widely used today by network admins and even by Wall Street traders to figure out complex financial problems.

The overall structure of Perl derives broadly from C. Perl is procedural in nature, with variables, expressions, assignment statements, brace-delimited code blocks, control structures, and subroutines.

Perl also takes features from shell programming. All variables are marked with leading sigils, which identify each data type (scalar, array, hash, etc.) of the variable in context. Importantly, sigils allow variables to be interpolated directly into strings.



Perl has many built-in functions which provide tools often used in shell programming (though many of these tools are implemented by programs external to the shell) like sorting, and calling on system facilities.

Sample "Hello, WebTechNY" code in Perl

```
print "Hello, WebTechNY\n";
```

PHP developed in 1995 for use on web pages.



PHP only reads code within its delimiters. Anything outside its delimiters is sent directly to the output and is not parsed by PHP. The most common delimiters are `<?php` and `?>`, which are open and close delimiters respectively. `<script language="php">` and `</script>` delimiters are also available.

Hello WebTechNY code

```
<?php  
  echo "Hello WebTechNY!\n";  
?>
```





Began in 1991 by Guido Van Rossum and became popular as a web programming language in the early 2000s. Van Rossum currently works full-time at Google and as a result lots of Google code is Python.

Python was intended to be a highly readable language. It aims toward an uncluttered visual layout, frequently using English keywords where other languages use punctuation. Python requires less code than traditional statically-typed structured languages such as Pascal or C.



Hello WebTechNY code

```
print "Hello WebTechNY"
```



Ruby is a dynamic, reflective, general purpose object-oriented programming language that combines syntax inspired by Perl. Ruby originated in Japan during the mid-1990s and was initially developed and designed by Yukihiro "Matz" Matsumoto.



Ruby supports multiple programming paradigms, including functional, object oriented, imperative and reflection. It also has a dynamic type system and automatic memory management; it is therefore similar in varying respects to Python, PHP, and Perl.



```
Hello WebTechNY code  
puts "Hello WebTechNY"
```

The unscientific programming jobs report.

All data taken from Dice.com on 7/09/08

Perl: 910

PHP: 317

Python: 157

Ruby 91