

Re: [PHP] Mysql support – test or complain?

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On Monday 10 December 2007, Dave M G wrote:

One is based on the assumption that mysql is as likely not to be available as it is to be installed. In this case I should write my scripts to test whether it exists and then use either mysql or straight mysql commands as appropriate. If this is the way to go, what do I do to test for the existence of mysql from within a PHP script?

The other is to assume that recent installs and upgrades of PHP > 5 should have mysql because that's the currently preferred way of doing things, and therefore I should contact the web host and ask that they install it, or I find a different host.

Which assumption should I be proceeding with?

Thank you for any advice or assistance.

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Dave M G

ext/mysql is not part of the stock install of any version of PHP. Some shared hosts install it, some do not.

PDO, as of PHP 5.1, is part of the stock install. Nearly any shared host that has MySQL will install the PDO-MySQL backend driver. I'd say this is the most likely MySQL connection method you'll find on a modern host. (A host that doesn't offer PHP 5.2 or later by default is not one you want to do business with. <http://gophp5.org/>)

ext/mysql used to be part of the stock install of PHP, but has not been since PHP 5.0 for assorted legal reasons. Most shared hosts install it anyway for legacy support, but you shouldn't use it because it hasn't had any worthwhile updates since MySQL 3 or so. Securing queries in PDO or mysql is far far easier.

My recommendation is to use PDO rather than mysql if you don't control the

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server configuration. If you can be choosy about the host, then write what you want and only pick hosts that will support you.

Even better, if you are able to do so, write your own thin abstraction layer that uses PDO or mysqli internally. Then you can switch from one to the other more easily if you find you need to, and you can also add whatever syntactic convenience sugar you want.

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"If nature has made any one thing less susceptible than all others of exclusive property, it is the action of the thinking power called an idea, which an individual may exclusively possess as long as he keeps it to himself; but the moment it is divulged, it forces itself into the possession of every one, and the receiver cannot dispossess himself of it." -- Thomas Jefferson

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