

# Getting Started With Drupal

Drupal is an open-source project released under the GNU General Public License Version 3, or GPLv3. A detailed overview of the licensing can be found in the Drupal installation archive or on the GNU General Public License page. This license requires that any projects developed using Drupal also be released under the same GPL. It is important that anyone considering the use of Drupal read and understand the requirements of the GPLv3 and how it interacts with any institutional policies or expectations for development projects.

*GNU General Public License page*  
[www.gnu.org/copyleft/gpl.html](http://www.gnu.org/copyleft/gpl.html)

## System Requirements

Drupal is designed to run under what is commonly referred to as a LAMP environment. This refers to the Linux operating system, the Apache Web server, the MySQL database, and the PHP language. This environment is built from open-source software, which means the only startup cost for Drupal is the hardware for a Web server. Most commercial Web hosting companies provide these services as a default package, though you may need to confirm that all of Drupal's specific requirements for settings in Apache and PHP are met. The core Drupal software will run under Microsoft's Server software using the IIS Web server, but user-contributed add-ons and advanced functionality may not be fully supported. At this time, Drupal

cannot use Microsoft's SQL database, so Windows users would still need to install MySQL and PHP.

The school library system of Genesee Valley BOCES is running Fish4Info for over 30 libraries, along with quite a few additional Drupal sites, on a single server. The server is, as servers run, about average. It has dual processors and 4GB of memory and uses a RAID setup for faster hard drive access. We expect this \$8,000 server to scale up to meet our Drupal needs for the next few years as we add more libraries to Fish4Info. For smaller sites, a basic Web server will run about \$3,000 for a decent amount of memory and RAIDed hard drives. Libraries without the technical support or infrastructure to run their own server can easily purchase Web hosting services for their Drupal site.

## Installation

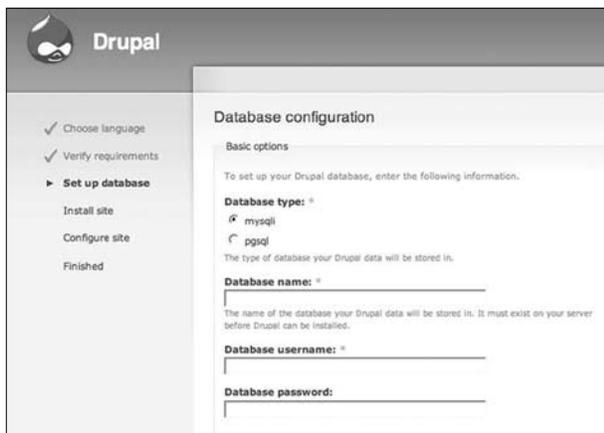
Drupal installation is actually very easy once the required support systems of Apache, MySQL, and PHP are set up. To start using Drupal, download the latest stable version from the Drupal.org Web site and copy the files from the downloaded archive to your Web documents directory. When you download Drupal, it will come in a compressed `.tar.gz` file. You need to extract this file to add it to your site. If you are using Linux or Mac OS X, this is no problem. In Windows, you may find that your regular zip-centric compression utility does not know how to handle `.tar.gz` files. You can use the free software Extract Now at to access the files.

Drupal.org Web site  
<http://drupal.org>

Extract Now  
[www.extractnow.com](http://www.extractnow.com)

After downloading and extracting the installation files, the first thing you will need to do is create a database within MySQL to hold the information from Drupal. Once you have a database created, you can run the Drupal installation program by pointing your browser to the root of the directory into which you installed Drupal. The installation dialog will ask for the name of your MySQL database as well as the database username and password (see figure 1). Assuming there are no problems, Drupal will then proceed to install itself with a default set of configurations. If you do encounter problems, you can find additional help in the handbooks on Drupal.org.

When everything is installed, you will be taken to your new Drupal Web site. The next thing you must do



**Figure 1**  
Drupal installation dialog.

is create your first user. Click on the link Create the First Account under Step 1. This first account is a super-user account that has complete access to the entire Web site. Protect this account password! After logging in with your new user, you can click on the Administer link in the left sidebar. This will take you to the administration section, which will show a message about some problems with your installation. Click on the Status Report link to see any issues that Drupal may have found. After this, you are ready to begin working with your site.

### **Testing Drupal: No Server Required**

If you want to take a look at Drupal and work through some of the information provided here, there is a way to install a test site that does not require a Web server. It must be stressed, however, that the method discussed here is for testing purposes only and is not intended for use as a live server. To try Drupal on a Windows computer, you can download and install XAMPP, a single Windows program that provides an easy-to-use package of Apache, MySQL, and PHP. XAMPP is a free download. There is also a Mac OS X version available for XAMPP, but we had better luck with MAMP, a Mac-only free download. Once you set up one of these packages, follow the regular installation instructions.

#### *XAMPP download*

<http://www.apachefriends.org/en/xampp.html>

#### *MAMP download*

<http://mamp.info/en/index.php>