

[What Is Formmail And How Does It Work?](#)

If you need to add an HTML form to your website, then you are going to need a PHP file commonly known as Formmail, which processes the HTML form and sends the results to you via email. Before using formmail, you need to understand how it works and what you need to do before installing it on your website.

To create a Formmail file, you can either write the PHP code yourself (which is impossible unless you are experienced), or you can download the code from one of the many sites that have made the code available. After you download it, you will need to modify the code in order to adapt it to the form you have created.

The first challenge you will face is changing the code, if need be, so that it automatically checks to make sure that all required fields from your form have been completed. Some versions of Formmail automatically include this code, some do not. If it does not include this code, you will need to hire a programmer to create it, or ask someone on a programming message board to help you with it.

The next challenge you will face is writing the code that will create the email message containing the answers to the form and send it to the email address you specified in the code for your HTML form. This is extremely difficult to do if you are not familiar with PHP. Again, you will need the help of a programmer if you can not do it.

Also, you will need to make sure that included, somewhere in the code, is protection against spammers who will try to send spam through your form by altering the recipient field. To prevent this, you need to create a variable in the Formmail file that authorizes only the email address you are using as the recipient. For example, if you have set up your form so that the results will be sent to your Yahoo email account, then you need to insert some code into the Formmail file that prevents the form from being submitted unless your Yahoo email account is the recipient. If you do not this, people will be able to send spam right through your form, which brings us to another important point.

Because it is possible to send spam through a form if the Formmail file is not created properly and does not authorize only one email address as the recipient, a few web hosting companies do not allow their customers to run forms on their sites. Or, they use their own PHP files to process your form, which gives you less flexibility. The better web hosting companies all allow forms and allow you to create your own formmail file to process your HTML form. The better web hosting companies also have extensive firewall protection built into their servers to prevent spam if a form is vulnerable.

I hope this information will help you set up Formmail on your website to process your HTML form. Call your hosting company and ask them if they currently have your site hosted on a server that can process forms. If they do not allow their customers to process forms or have certain rules that restrict your flexibility, you should switch to a better hosting provider that will allow you to use Formmail.

About the Author

Jim Pretin is the owner of <http://www.forms4free.com>, a service that helps programmers create a free HTML form with the code to email the HTML form responses.

Source: <http://www.onlineearnings.net>