The following is an excerpt from a chapter in my upcoming book, ["Your First Web App"*](#).*

Setting up your environment for coding with PHP

In order to begin developing with PHP, the first thing we need to do is get our "environment" setup.

Your environment

In software development, your environment consists of the applications that will run on your computer, in the background, to enable our web app to actually come to life.

In our case, we need our environment to possess a few things: a database server (that will store all of our data for us); a web server (as explained earlier, that will be responsible for helping us access our app via a web browser); and PHP (as it has its own dependencies and requirements, which we need to install).

Luckily for us, there are pre-packaged solutions that already contain all of those components! At this point, we can yet again be thankful for the multitude of free, openly-available tools that the software development community has made available.

If you're on Windows

...you can simply install WAMP, which stands for Windows Apache (the web server) MySQL (the database server) PHP.

Visit their homepage - http://www.wampserver.com/en/ - selecting the "Download" option, and choosing the first package ("Wampserver (32 bits & PHP 5.4) 2.4" at the time of writing).

If you're on Mac

...you can simply install MAMP, which stands for Windows Apache (the web server) MySQL (the database server) PHP.

Visit their homepage - http://www.mamp.info/ - and download MAMP (*not* MAMP Pro, their premium offering).

Installing WAMP/MAMP

Once downloaded WAMP or MAMP (depending on your operating system), proceed through the installation, making sure to **write down any passwords** you need to create throughout the process. They don't have to be insanely secure (and can sometimes even be left blank), as you'll only be accessing these tools on your own computer.

Testing everything out

Once installed, let's test everything to make sure it's working properly.

The interfaces for both WAMP and MAMP should both have clearly labeled ways to "Start All Servers/Services". Ensure that everything is started, and you should be able to visit the "Home/Test Page" (which should also be easy to find within each application's interface).

If you run into any problems, run a quick Google search; it's very likely that someone else has experienced a very similar issue before and has explained how to remedy it. If Googling doesn't turn anything up, feel free to contact me and I'll help point you in the right direction.

Great! You now have the necessary background applications installed to power your web app.

Mac only: A minor adjustment

When you opened up the MAMP home/test page, you may noticed that the URL included an ugly ":8888". Let's get rid of that.

In the MAMP widget, click the "Ports" button/tab, and then click the "Set to default Apache and MySQL ports". Wait about ten seconds and then visit the

home/test page again. You should now see a URL *without* the ":8888". Success!