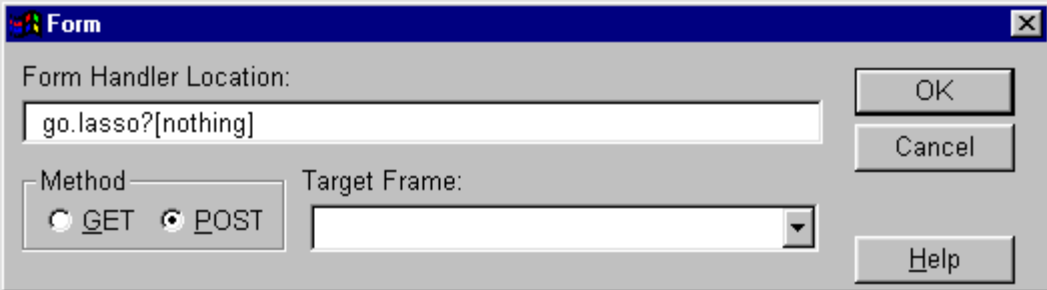


Creating Forms

- For more information on this topic see the AOL Press Tutorial topic on *Creating Forms*.
- "Forms allow readers of your Web page to send you information. You can create forms that send you email, forms that search a database, forms that add information to a database, and more". (AOL Press Tutorial: Creating Forms)
- This tutorial will show you how to create a form that a visitor to your site can use to send you information in the form of an email message.
- When you are ready to start creating your form open AOL Press.
- You can either create a new page by selecting *File* then *New* then *New Page* or you can use a template (a copy of an existing page that you have renamed).
- To create your form, click the *Format* menu then the *Form* option.
- You will see a window like

this:



- Under the *Form Handler Location*: put the following address:
- go.lasso?[nothing]
- NOTE!: There is a period between go and lasso in the statement above! It is necessary that you include this period.
- Under *Method* select *POST*.
- You don't need to do anything with *Target Frame* unless you are using frames on your web page. (see the AOL Press Tutorial topic on *Creating Frames* for more information)
- (If you would like to get more help on the form topic click the *Help* button.)
- After you click *OK* you will see a dotted box appear on the page as well as a floating window (or palette) that will appear if you click inside the dotted box and disappear by clicking outside the dotted box.
- All of your form work will be done inside this dotted box.



- The tools palette will look like this:
- It is now necessary to view the HTML to add some code.
- Click on *Tools* then *Show HTML*.
- Find the line that says this:
- `<FORM action="go.lasso?[nothing]" method="POST">`
- Click to the end of the line and press ENTER to start a new line.
- Now enter this text

```
<input type="hidden" name="[response]" value="response web page">
```

```
<input type="hidden" name="[emailhost]" value="mail.lapeer.lib.mi.us">
```

```
<input type="hidden" name="[mailto]" value="the email address to which the message will be sent">
```

```
<input type="hidden" name="[emailformat]" value="the email format file">
```

```
<input type="hidden" name="[emailfrom]" value="the same email address that you used above">
```

```
<input type="hidden" name="[emailsubject]" value="the information you want to appear on the subject line of the email">
```

- Notice the information that is in ***bold and italics***.
- You will need to enter the correct information for your individual form in place of each of these.
- The ***response web page*** is simply a page that tells the visitor that their message has been submitted. (it is possible to include in this response the information that the visitor supplied but it is not necessary)
- the email format file is a text file that contains formatting instructions for the email it will send. (we will cover how to create this text file later - for now, just name this something related to the form page that you are creating and be sure to end it with .txt)

- For both the *response web page* and *the email format file* be sure to include the directory for that file. (i.e. /Gov/County/ and then your department directory and any subdirectory then the name of the file, with no spaces.)
- Once you are finished you can click on *File* then *Close* then click *Apply*.
- Now that you have set up the information for your form you are ready to create the body of your form.
- When you are creating a form you need to think about how a person might respond to your questions.
- Will it be a yes or no answer? Will they need a space to write several lines of text? Will it be a couple of words or so? Do you want them to pick one option from a list of choices? Do you want them to pick as many of the choices that apply?
- These are all very different responses and they cannot all be taken care of with a single text box.
- A form allows you to use different tools from the *tools palette* to accomplish this.
- Notice the different options you have for these tools:



- There is a tool for each type of question listed above.
- To find more information on each of the tools shown above enter the following location on the *Location:* line of AOL Press:
C:\AOLPRESS\help\refer\form.htm
- Then click on the image of the tool you are interested in. (these descriptions are also printed in the Tutorial at the Library Headquarters)
- When you are using one of these tools to create a new field for a visitor to enter information, name the field something related to what will be put in it and try to keep in lower case for simplicity.
- For example, if you are asking for a person's email address call the field something simple like **email**.
- It is a good idea to keep a list of these field names exactly as you entered them for when

you create your email text file later.

- Be sure to include a *Submit* button at the end of your form. (you can also include the *Reset* button to allow the user to clear all the fields and start over)
- Once you have inserted your *Submit* button (located on the tools palette) drag your cursor over the *Submit* button that you now have on your page so that it is highlighted (you should see a gray box around it similar to when you highlight text)
- Now click on the *Tools* menu then click *Show HTML*.
- Notice that the code for the submit button is now highlighted. (this makes it easier to find your place when switching over to the HTML code)
- This is what you should see highlighted:
<INPUT TYPE=submit>
- For the purposes of creating our form this code is not sufficient.
- Add the necessary coding to make the statement look like this:
<INPUT TYPE="submit" **name="[nothing]" value="the name you want to appear on your button"**>
- The item that is in italics is where you put whatever you want your button to say on it (if you leave this out the button will default to saying "Submit").
- The items that are bold are what you need to add. (notice that you need the quotation marks around the word submit even though AOL Press left them out.
- When your code resembles the above statement, the *File* menu then click *Close* the click *Apply* when you are prompted.
- When you have finished creating your form, you are ready to make text file. (be sure to remember the name you used for the text file when you typed it in the HTML code from earlier in this tutorial.)
- Go to *Creating Forms: Creating Email Text files* to create the text file we talked about earlier.

Return to [Contents](#) page