What is a Scripting Language?

A script is a set of programming instructions that is interpreted at runtime.
A scripting language is a language that is used to write scripts. Scripts are usually embedded into other software environments. The purpose of the scripts is usually to enhance the performance or perform logical operations for an application. Server side scripts are interpreted on the server while client side scripts are interpreted by the client application.

PHP is a server side script that is interpreted on the server while JavaScript is an example of a client side script that is interpreted by the client browser. Both PHP and JavaScript can be embedded into HTML pages.

Programming Language Vs Scripting Language

The code has to be compiled before it can be executed	The code is usually executed without compiling
Does not need to be embedded into other languages	Is usually embedded into other software environments.

PHP

PHP is a server side scripting language that is used to develop Static websites or Dynamic websites or Web applications. PHP stands for Hypertext Pre-processor, that earlier stood for Personal Home Pages. PHP scripts can only be interpreted on a server that has PHP installed. The client computers accessing the PHP scripts require a web browser only. A PHP file contains PHP tags and ends with the extension ".php".

PHP File Extensions

File extension and Tags In order for the server to identify our PHP files and scripts, we must save the file with the ".php" extension. Older PHP file extensions include

.phtml
.php3
.php4
.php5
.phps

Important points about php

1. PHP was designed to work with HTML, and as such, it can be embedded into the HTML code.
2. PHP files can be created without any html tags and that is called Pure PHP file .
3. The server interprets the PHP code and outputs the results as HTML code to the web browsers.
4. In order for the server to identify the PHP code from the HTML code, we must always enclose the PHP code in PHP tags.
5. A PHP tag starts with the less than symbol followed by the question mark and then the words "php".
6. PHP is a case sensitive language, "VAR" is not the same as "var".
7. The PHP tags themselves are not case-sensitive, but it is strongly recommended that we use lower case letter. The code below   illustrates to this point.
   <?php … ?>

8. We will be referring to the PHP lines of code as statements. PHP statements end with a semi colon (;). If you only have one statement, you can omit the semi colon. If you have more than one statement, then you must end each line with a semi colon. For the sake of consistency, it is recommended that

you always end your statement(s) with a semi colon. PHP scripts are executed on the server. The output is returned in form of HTML.

Example PHP Hello world program
The program shown below is a basic PHP application that outputs the words "Hello World!" When viewed in a web browser.

```
<?php
echo "Hello world";
?>
```
Output:
Hello world

Summary
1. PHP stands for Hypertext pre-processor
2. PHP is a server side scripting language. This means that it is executed on the server. The client applications do not need to have PHP installed.
3. PHP files are saved with the ".php" file extension, and the PHP development code is enclosed in tags.
4. PHP is open source and cross platform.