

My PHP GuestBook

Import data from other guestbook into *MY PHP GuestBook*

A common case

There are many free guestbooks around today. However, most of them are not kept up to date very well, are not quite flexible enough (e.g. missing responsive behavior) or even worse: they are facing significant and serious security issues. All these abovementioned reasons, have made me switch in 2020 to Wolfgang's [*My PHP GuestBook*](#): an excellent Guestbook, that does exactly what it promises.

The challenge

As some of my old guestbooks are frequently visited and have gathered over 150 messages during past years, they really contain and show some "good old memories".

So it makes sense to not forget about them and to also show these old messages in *My PHP GuestBook*. But cutting & pasting each individual message from an old guestbook into a new guestbook, is an awful lot of work. So I have started thinking about a swift way of importing all those "good old memories" messages into *My PHP GuestBook* in one time.

A solution

If you want to save yourself a lot of "cut & paste" time and you are a bit familiar in working with *phpMyAdmin*, please find below a solution for quickly importing all your "old messages" from a different guestbook into your *My PHP GuestBook*.

Some backgrounds

Please note: This instruction is based on importing messages from an *Alex Guestbook* into *My PHP GuestBook*. You can find examples of Alex guest books on the web if needed.

The approach

For different guestbook scripts, the approach is more or less the same. Differences that require individual adjustments, may result from different names of guest book tables and table columns.

A: I have assumed that you are using the same database for the old and for the new guestbook. If this is not the case, first make sure that both guestbooks are using the same database.

B: We are using *phpMyAdmin* to get access to the database and to import the messages from the "old" *Alex Guestbook* into the "new" *My PHP GuestBook*.

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C: For both the "old" *Alex Guestbook* script as for the "new" *My PHP GuestBook* script, within the common database, you have to find the tables where all the guestbook messages are normally stored. In general:

- For the "old" *Alex Guestbook*, the table name is: `alex_livre_messages` (or similar).
- For the *My PHP GuestBook*, the table name is: `guestbook_entries` (or similar).

The instruction

However, before proceeding, I would like to give you 3 small but relevant 😊 warnings in advance. Please:

A: First of all: make a backup of your database !!!

B: Carefully read each of the below mentioned steps.

C: Execute each step exactly as described.

1. Get access to the common database via *phpMyAdmin*.
2. Click on the "Export" tab and make a backup of this common database.
3. Click on the *My PHP GuestBook* table that contains all the guestbook messages (table in this case: "guestbook_entries").
4. If this table is empty, proceed to step 5.

If this table is not empty:

- Tick the "Show all" box below the last row and confirm with "OK".
- Tick the box "Check all" below the last row.
- Click on the delete button / delete symbol next to the "Check all" button.
- Click on "Yes" when asked: 'Do you really want to execute the following query?'

Having followed these steps. The table "guestbook_entries" is empty now.

5. Click on the "SQL" tab and clean the window (remove the shown code line).
6. Enter the following lines in the clean window:

```
INSERT INTO guestbook_entries(id,name,email,homepage,origin,text,check_time)
SELECT id,nom,email,site,ville_pays,message,time
FROM alex_livre_messages;
```

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Explanations:

- The name "guestbook_entries" is the name of the table for the entries in the *My PHP GuestBook*. If you changed the preset prefix of the table names during installation, you must also make a corresponding adjustment in the line above.
- The name "alex_livre_messages" is the name of the table with the guestbook entries of the old guestbook, from which the import into the *My PHP GuestBook* is to take place. Please check and change if necessary!
- The names between the round brackets are the names of the columns in the "guestbook_entries" table.
- The names between the "SELECT" and the "FROM" are the names of the table columns of the old guestbook with the content to be imported.
- Normally the names of the table-columns don't have to be changed when importing from the *Alex Guestbook*. However, when importing from other guestbooks, there will be changes in the names and the selection of the respective columns, as well as in their order!

7. Click on the "Go" button, right below the window.

You can ignore warnings like: "#1364 Field 'date' doesn't have a default value".

8. Now check/refresh the URL/page where your *My PHP GuestBook* entries show up. Surprise: no messages to be seen yet.

9. So let's take the last steps!

The last steps

You just have looked at the frontpage of your *My PHP GuestBook*. Probably you already noticed that no messages are visible yet However, when looking in the admin section of *My PHP GuestBook*, you will find that all the imported messages are already displayed there. The only thing that still needs to be, is activating all your imported messages in one time.

Still in *phpMyAdmin*, having selected the "guestbook_entries" table, if you look in the "status" column, you will notice that for all the records the value of their individual "status" field is "0". The only thing we have to do now, is changing this "0" value into "1". Here is the trick to do that:

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10. In *phpMyAdmin*, click on the “SQL” tab once again and clean the window (remove the shown code line).

11. Enter the following lines in the clean window:

```
UPDATE guestbook_entries SET status = '1';
```

12. Click on the “Go” button, right below the window.

The result will be that all the messages will get a status of “1”. So now all the imported messages will be visible (when you have refreshed that page) in the frontend of your *My PHP GuestBook* as well. Congratulations, you’re done !!!

Finally

I would like to thank Wolfgang for sharing with me some valuable insights on his excellent *My PHP GuestBook*, that helped me understand better what exactly needs to be done for importing all the messages from a different guestbook.

If you are happy with this instruction, if you have some suggestions for improvements of this instruction or if you have some additional questions, just drop an entry in my guestbook, that can be visited [via this link ...](#) Don’t worry about the language. English, German, Dutch or French, is fine with me.

Kind regards, Pierre Linssen

pierre@php-guestbook.eu