

As mentioned, this site provides the ability for users to help with the future development of the language. Users can get involved with testing beta versions and reporting errors or program bugs. Visitors can also view documentation related to the development of possible future versions. This is a good way of discovering future enhancements or security fixes before major announcements have been made to the public.

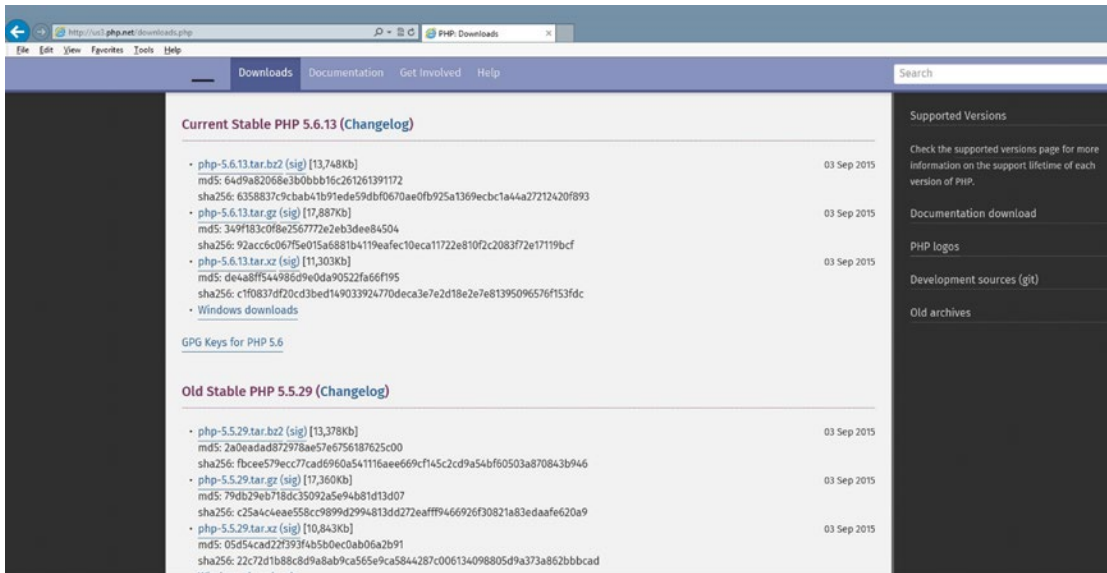


Figure 1-3. Download page (09/24/15)

The download page, as you might have guessed, provides the ability to gain easy access to the latest versions of the language. However, as you will note, only the language itself is provided. It is more common, and recommended, that the beginning user use a **WAMP** (Windows, Apache, MySQL, PHP); **LAMP** (Linux, Apache, MySQL, PHP); or **MAMP** (Mac, Apache, MySQL, PHP) package for initial installation. These packages (which we will look at later) allow for easy installation of multiple products at the same time. Otherwise, you have to run many separate installations, which can become complicated and error-prone if incompatible versions are installed.

WAMP/LAMP/MAMP—Open source (free) combinations, including Apache Web Server, MySQL, and PHP for a specific operating system (Windows, Linux, and Mac). These packages are open source. The combination of software is used for creating dynamic web sites and web applications.