Connecting to MySQL

The first step for interacting with MySQL—connecting to the server—requires the appropriately named `mysqli_connect()` function:

```
$dbc = mysqli_connect (hostname,
→ username, password, db_name);
```

The first three arguments sent to the function (host, username, and password) are based upon the users and privileges set up within MySQL (see Appendix A, "Installation," for more information). Commonly (but not always), the host value will be *localhost*.

The fourth argument is the name of the database to use. This is the equivalent of saying `USE databasename` within the mysql client.

If the connection was made, the `$dbc` variable, short for *database connection*, will become a reference point for all of your subsequent database interactions. Most of the PHP functions for working with MySQL will take this variable as its first argument.

Before putting this knowledge to the test, there's one more function to learn about. If a connection problem occurred, you can call `mysqli_connect_error()`, which returns the connection error message. It takes no arguments, so would be called using just

```
mysqli_connect_error();
```

To start using PHP with MySQL, let's create a special script that makes the connection. Other PHP scripts that require a MySQL connection can then include this file.
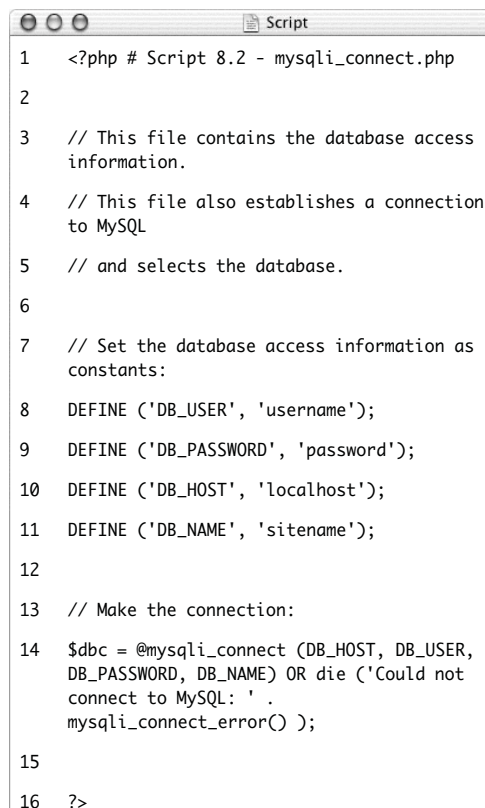
To connect to and select a database:

1. Create a new PHP document in your text editor or IDE (**Script 8.2**).

```
<?php # Script 8.2 -
→ mysqli_connect.php
```

This file will be included by other PHP scripts, so it doesn't need to contain any HTML.

Script 8.2 The `mysqli_connect.php` script will be used by every other script in this chapter. It establishes a connection to MySQL and selects the database.

```
1    <?php # Script 8.2 - mysqli_connect.php

2

3    // This file contains the database access
     information.

4    // This file also establishes a connection
     to MySQL

5    // and selects the database.

6

7    // Set the database access information as
     constants:

8    DEFINE ('DB_USER', 'username');

9    DEFINE ('DB_PASSWORD', 'password');

10   DEFINE ('DB_HOST', 'localhost');

11   DEFINE ('DB_NAME', 'sitename');

12

13   // Make the connection:

14   $dbc = @mysqli_connect (DB_HOST, DB_USER,
     DB_PASSWORD, DB_NAME) OR die ('Could not
     connect to MySQL: ' .
     mysqli_connect_error() );

15

16   ?>
```