

# instructional support

Enhancing Teaching and Learning through Technology

---

## Adding a Page Counter to a Spot Web Page

---

Have you ever wanted to know how many people visit your Website? Well now you can add text counter to your pages. That's right, pages! We've added functionality that allows you to put a counter on any page you want, and it will keep track of all those visits for you.

©2007 Portland Community College  
Contact the [Blackboard Help Desk](#)  
[14](#) hits since March 20, 2007

### How its Done:

The counter on Spot is handled by a small CGI program that is called every time someone looks at your page. The program writes each visit to file, then prints it to your web page. To call the CGI program, you need to include a small snippet of code into each page you want counted. Just add the snippet where you would like the counter to display. Here's the code:

```
<!--#exec cgi="/cgi-bin/counter.pl"-->
```

### Server Side Includes:

To make sure that snippet of code is seen, we need to use something called Server Side Includes, or SSI for short. Server Side Includes allow you to perform some dynamic actions in a web page, such as calling a CGI counter, or printing the date of the last file modification.

There are two ways to enable Server Side Includes in your pages. The simplest is to name your files with a .shtml suffix. The .shtml suffix lets the web server know it should treat the file differently than plain old html. If you're working with new pages, naming them .shtml may be the easiest way. You may need to update your page links if you use this method, as it will change the names of your files. Many page editors will update the links for you.

The second option is to put an invisible file into your web directory that tells the server to treat all files like they have Server Side Includes in them. This process is a bit more difficult, and requires that you connect to Spot with telnet. If you are uncomfortable with using telnet, or would like help with this, feel free to contact us. Otherwise, here are the steps.

- 1) SSH to spot.pcc.edu (e-mail [afreed@pcc.edu](mailto:afreed@pcc.edu) if you don't have ssh access)
- 2) open your public\_html directory
- 3) use pico to create a file named .htaccess
- 4) enter the following text into the file: (or .htm if that's what you use)

```
XBitHack on
AddType text/html .html
AddHandler server-parsed .html
```
- 5) Save the file
- 6) Logout

If you have questions, feel free to consult the [readme](#) file at Matt's Script archive.

<http://www.scriptarchive.com/textcounter.html>