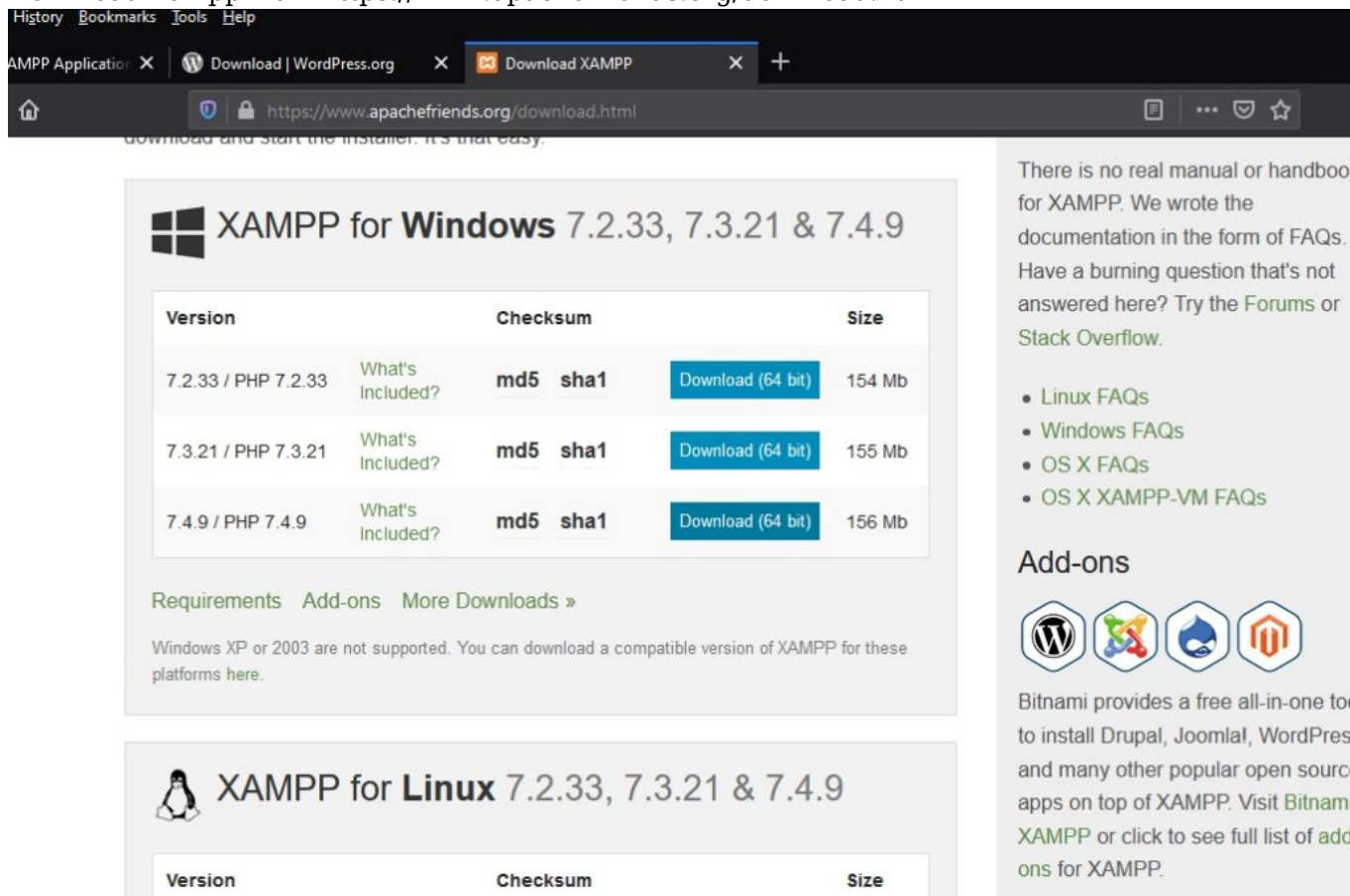# Creating A Portable Web Server

Fleur Stephens

Have you ever wanted to try your hand at developing a website in WordPress but you don't have access to a web server? Would you like to play with multiple websites and WordPress themes without breaking your site?. With the right software you can create a web server on your own PC. In this tutorial I'm going to show you how to setup a web server on a USB stick, so you can access and work on your website wherever you go.

1. Download Xampp from https://www.apachefriends.org/download.html
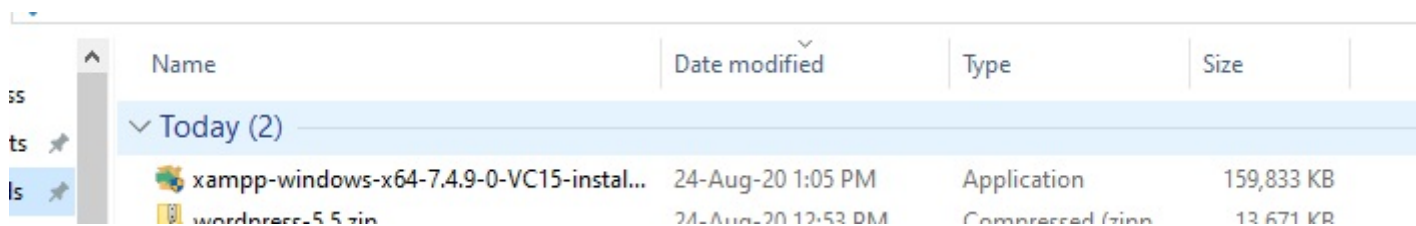
Choose your version and platform (Windows, Linux or Mac) and select download. I have selected the 7.4.9 version as I plan to install WordPress 5.5, which requires PHP 7.4 or higher to run.

Go to your download folder and double click your xampp download
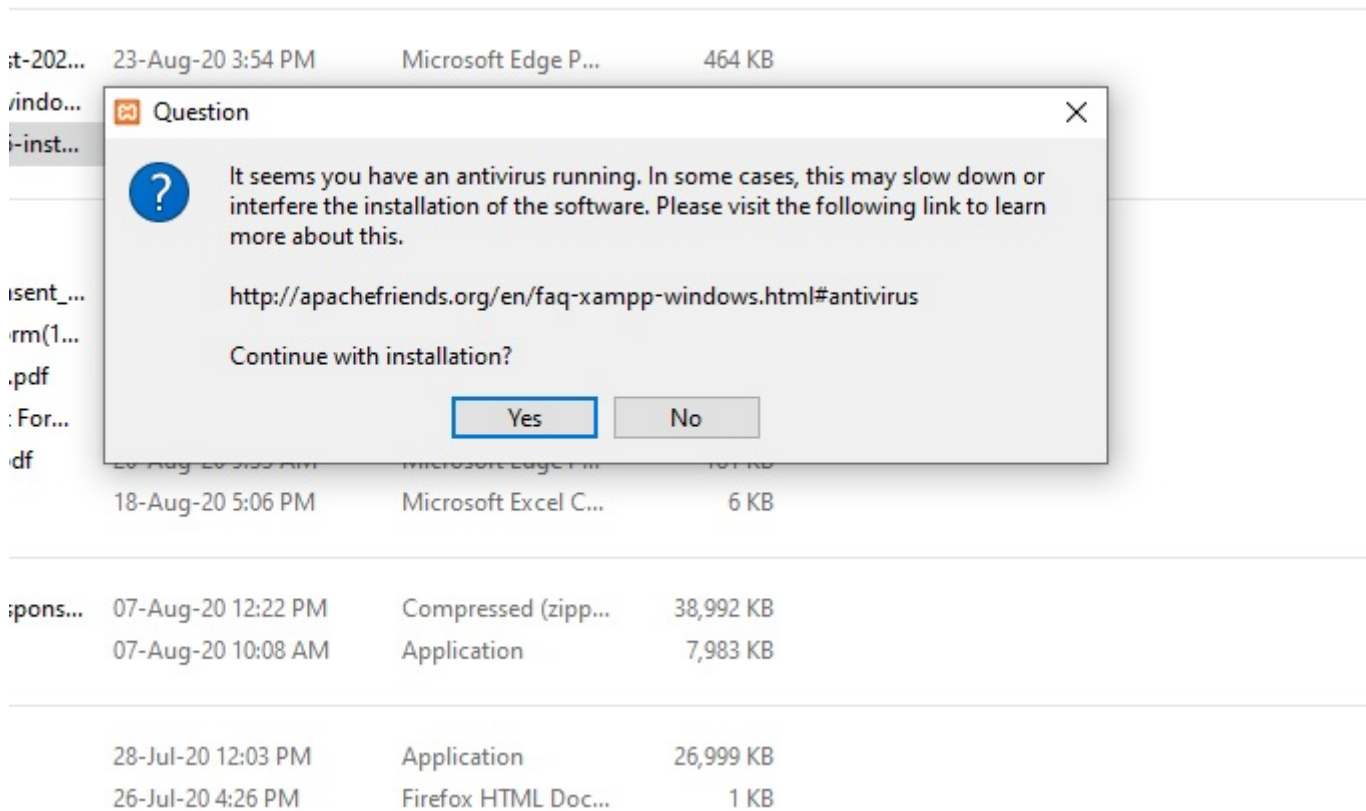
2. Install Xampp

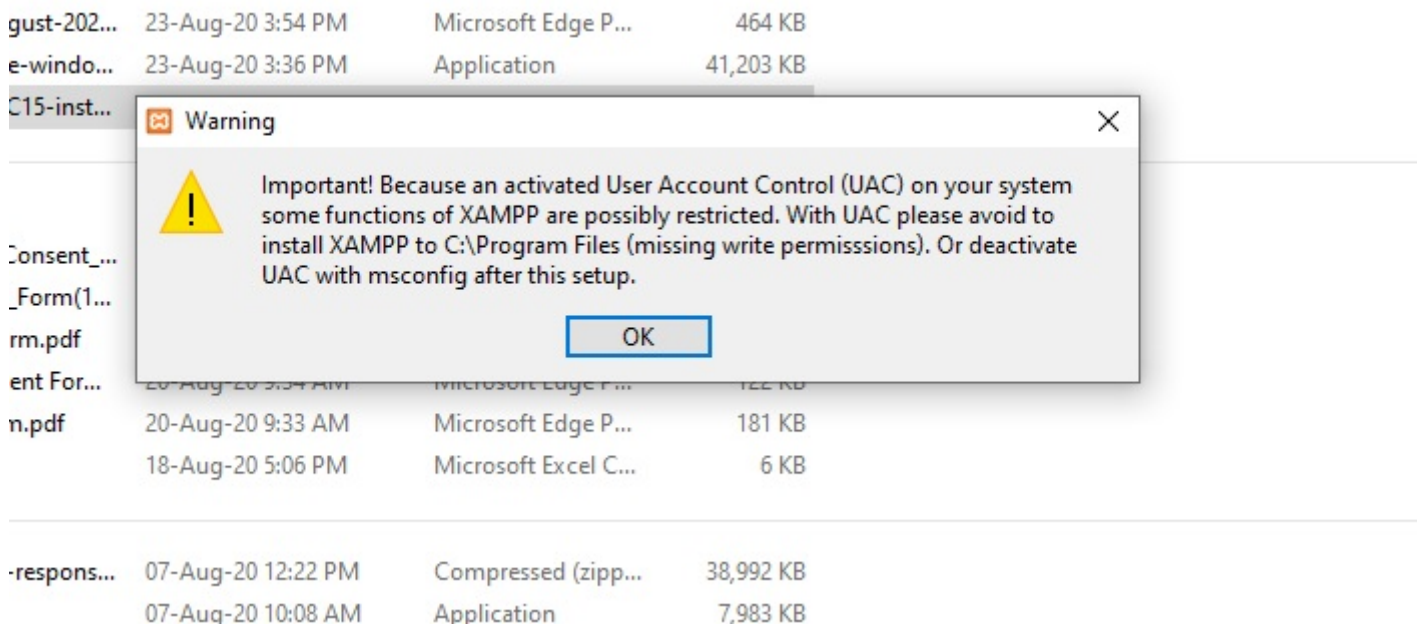Select Yes when prompted for permission to make changes to your pc.

You may be hit with a warning popup in relation to your antivirus interfering with the installation. Select

Yes as you are not installing locally so it will not be a problem.

st-202...	23-Aug-20 3:54 PM	Microsoft Edge P...	464 KB
vindo...			
i-inst...			

Question ✕

? It seems you have an antivirus running. In some cases, this may slow down or interfere the installation of the software. Please visit the following link to learn more about this.

http://apachefriends.org/en/faq-xampp-windows.html#antivirus

Continue with installation?

[Yes] [No]

isent_...			
rm(1...			
.pdf			
: For...			
df	18-Aug-20 5:06 PM	Microsoft Excel C...	6 KB
pons...	07-Aug-20 12:22 PM	Compressed (zipp...	38,992 KB
	07-Aug-20 10:08 AM	Application	7,983 KB
	28-Jul-20 12:03 PM	Application	26,999 KB
	26-Jul-20 4:26 PM	Firefox HTML Doc...	1 KB

The next problem you might encounter is UAC permission, if the following screen pops up select OK and just ignore it as we're not installing to a local drive, if we were installing to a local drive we could get around this by installing to the C:\XAMPP rather than C:\Program Files\Xampp

gust-202...	23-Aug-20 3:54 PM	Microsoft Edge P...	464 KB
e-windo...	23-Aug-20 3:36 PM	Application	41,203 KB
C15-inst...			

Warning ✕

⚠ Important! Because an activated User Account Control (UAC) on your system some functions of XAMPP are possibly restricted. With UAC please avoid to install XAMPP to C:\Program Files (missing write permisssions). Or deactivate UAC with msconfig after this setup.

[OK]

Consent_...			
_Form(1...			
rm.pdf			
ent For...			
n.pdf	20-Aug-20 9:33 AM	Microsoft Edge P...	181 KB
	18-Aug-20 5:06 PM	Microsoft Excel C...	6 KB
-respons...	07-Aug-20 12:22 PM	Compressed (zipp...	38,992 KB
	07-Aug-20 10:08 AM	Application	7,983 KB

Next you will be greeted with the setup wizard, select **Next**
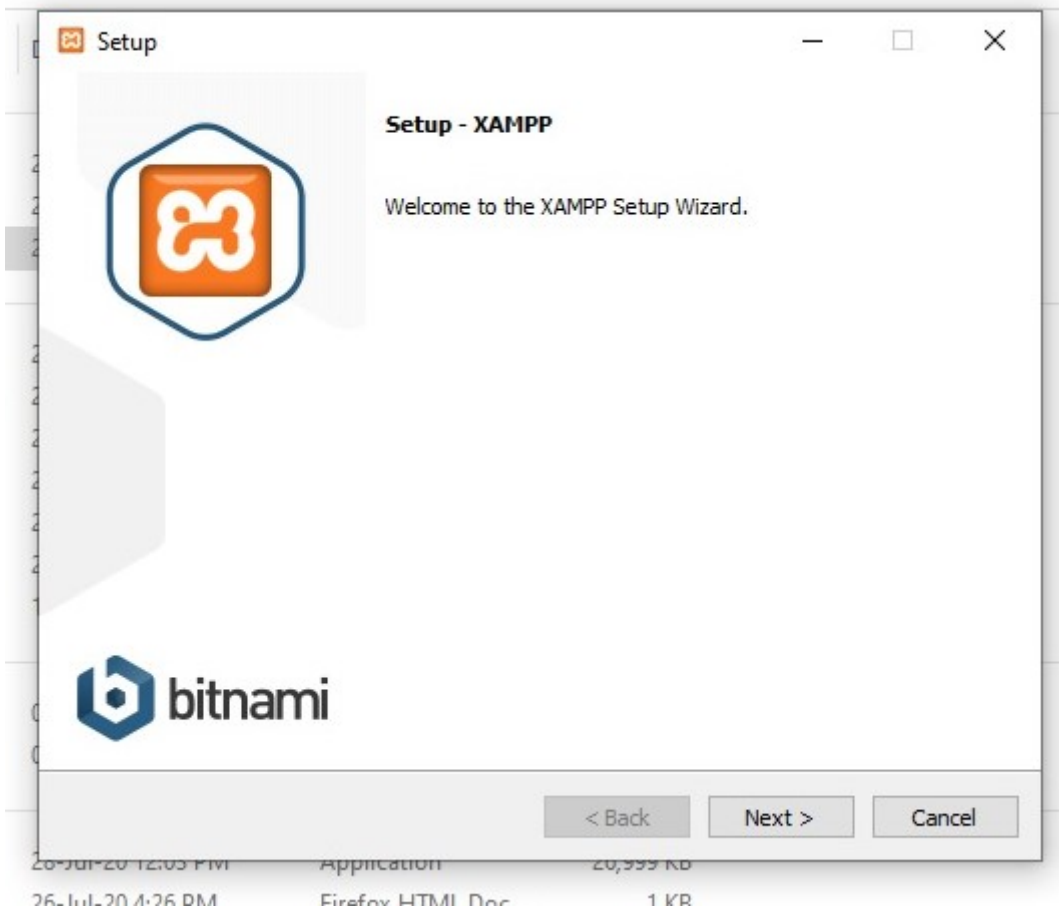
The next screen will offer you installation choices, I like to untick FileZilla and Mercury Mail Server, as I will not be using a Mail server and if I need File Zilla I can install it at a later date. I have left Tomcat as I might want to play with Java at some point. The choices for installation presented are as follows

- Apache (The webserver)
- MySQL (Database Tool) Will be required to run WordPress
- FileZilla FTP Utility (Would be used to transfer website to an online web host)
- Mercury Mail Server (An email Server)
- Tomcat (Java Server)
- PHP Programming Language (required by wordpress)
- Perl Programming Language
- phpMyAdmin (software to access the MySQL server)
- Webalizer (Analyses log files and can create html reports)
- Fake Sendmail (Software that allows you to test email sending e.g. forms)
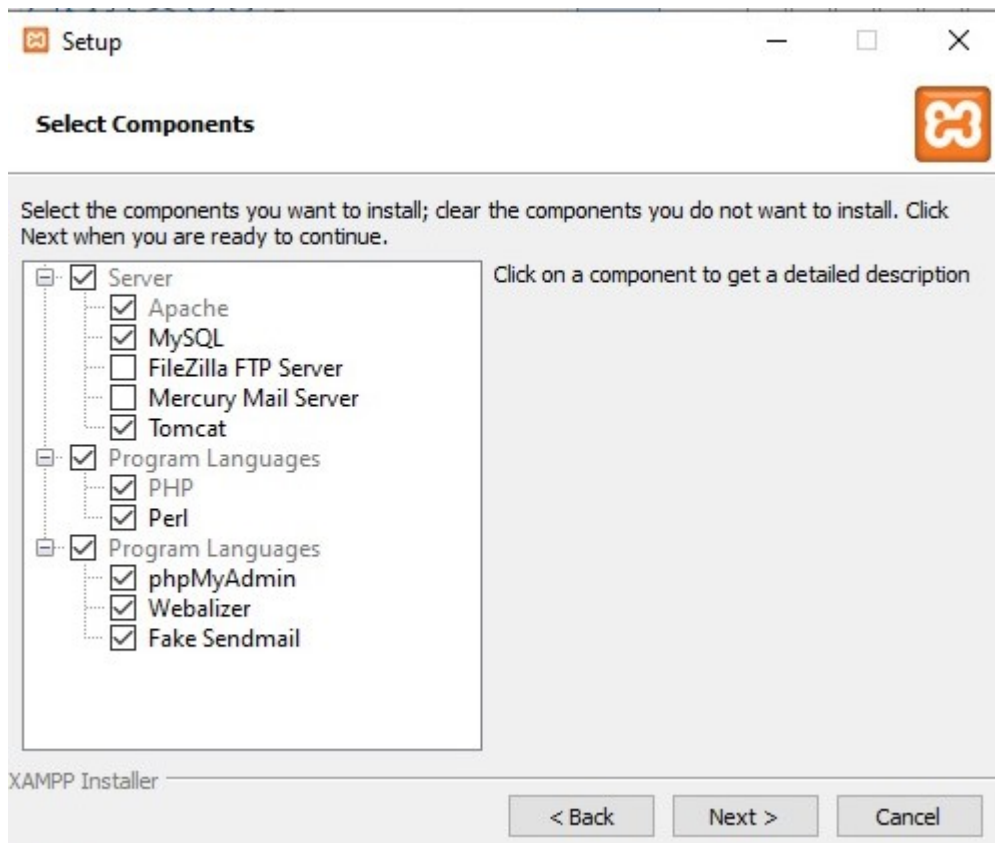
If you're planning on running WordPress; Apache, MySQL and PHP are the bare minimum, however I will also install Perl, phpMyAdmin and Fake Sendmail as my minimum.

The next screen delivers you, the all important option, **Installation folder**. So obviously you need to change this to your USB drive (you can find this using the browse button, circled in red) don't forget to add the xampp folder.
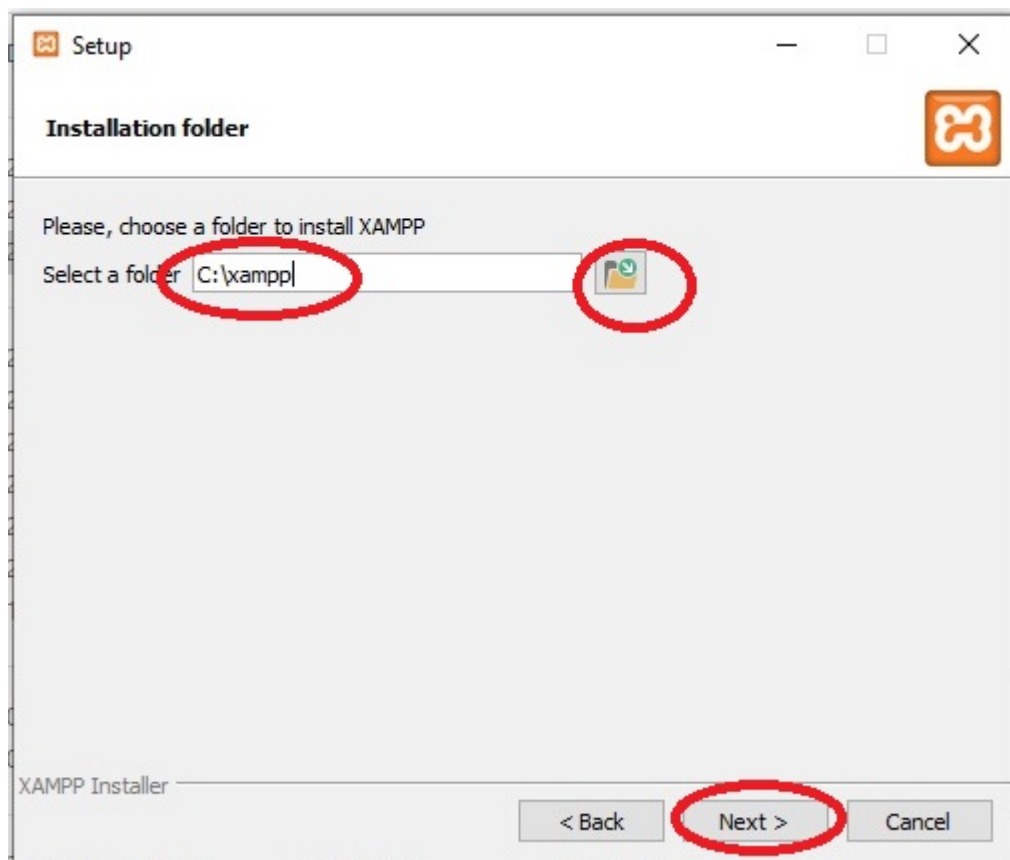

After changing the directory and adding the \Xampp, your page should look like the screenshot below.
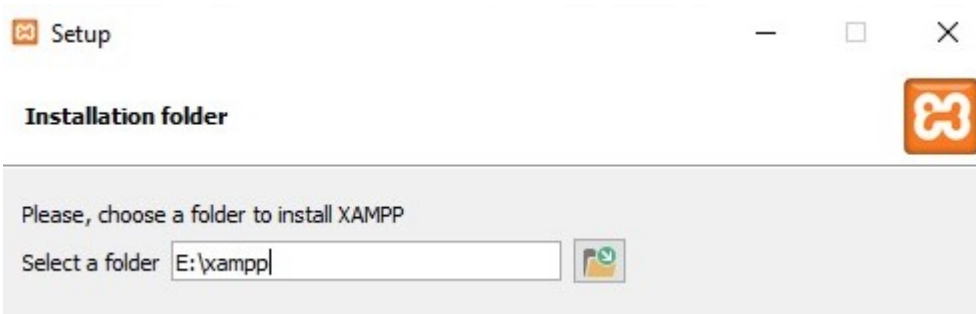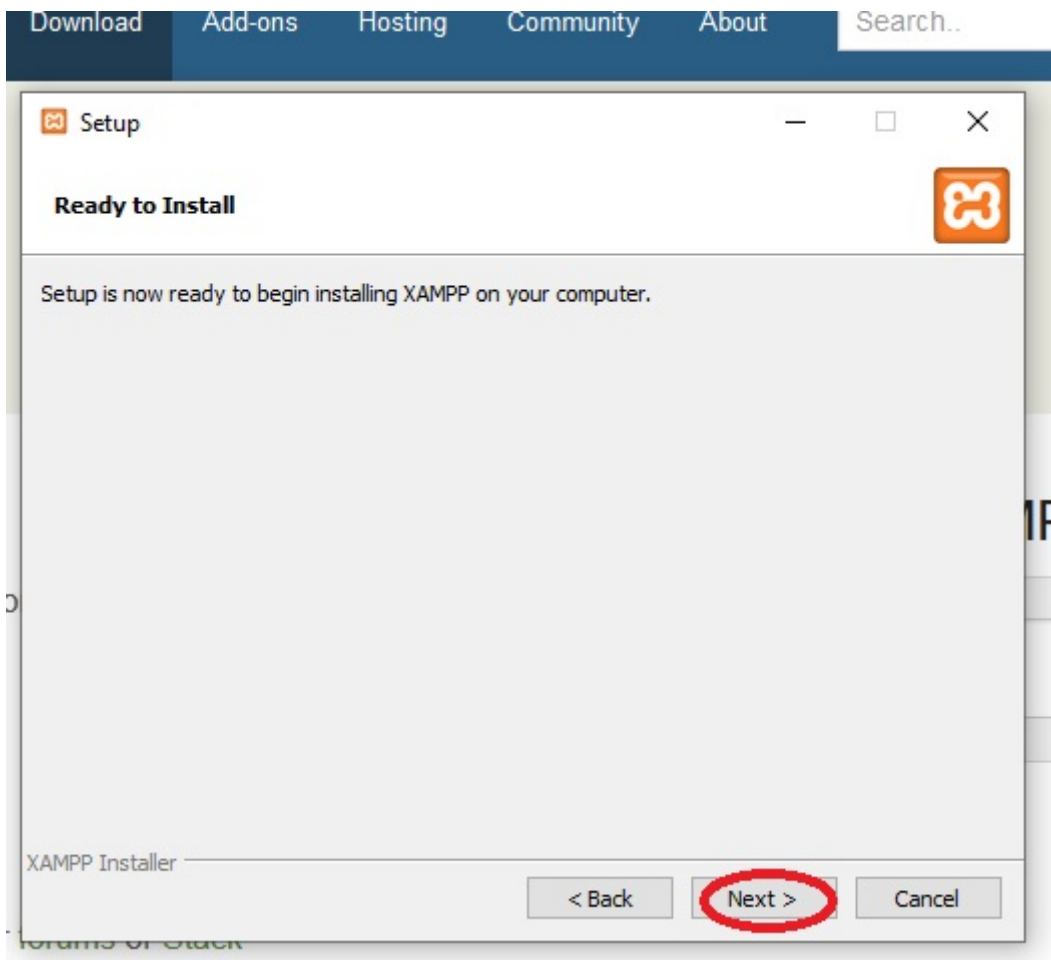
When you have changed the file path to your USB drive and added the folder name (XAMPP) select **next** to continue. This should cause the choose your language page to appear, so select your language (I highly recommend you leave it as English) and select Next
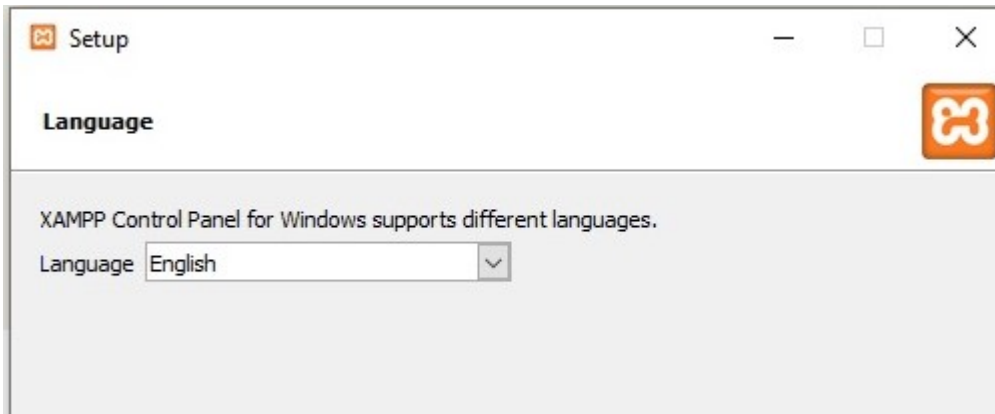
The next page offers you an introduction to Bitnami, if you leave the Bitnami box checked it will open the Bitnami webpage using your default browser. As we cannot use Bitnami installers on our portable webserver I recommend unchecking this box and selecting Next.
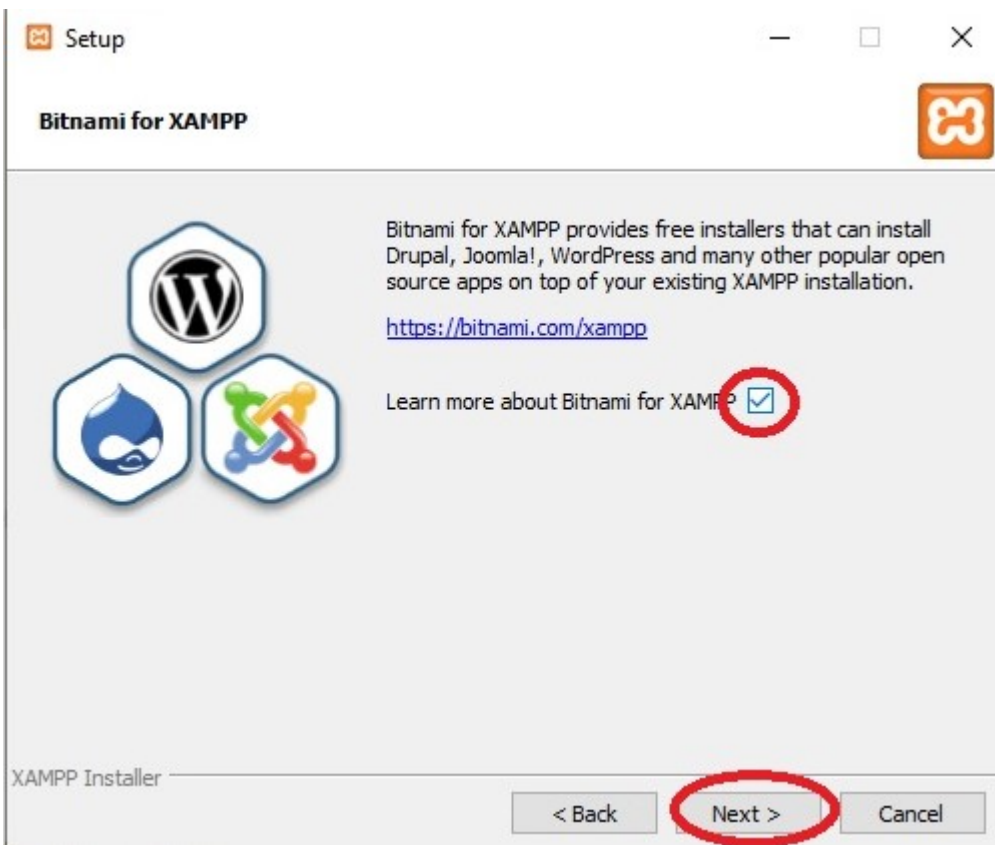

This should take you to the ready to Install page, select Next to begin the installation.

Setup   —   □   ✕

Ready to Install

Setup is now ready to begin installing XAMPP on your computer.

XAMPP Installer

[< Back]   [(Next >)]   [Cancel]

When the installation begins you should see the following.

Setup   —   □   ✕

Welcome to XAMPP!

XAMPP is an easy to install Apache distribution
containing MySQL, PHP and Perl

Installing

Unpacking files

XAMPP Installer

[< Back]   [Next >]   [Cancel..]

Next is break time, depending on the speed of your USB this could take up to an hour or more. When you see the completing set up screen ensure you have Start the Control Panel checkbox selected then hit the Finish button at the bottom of the screen.
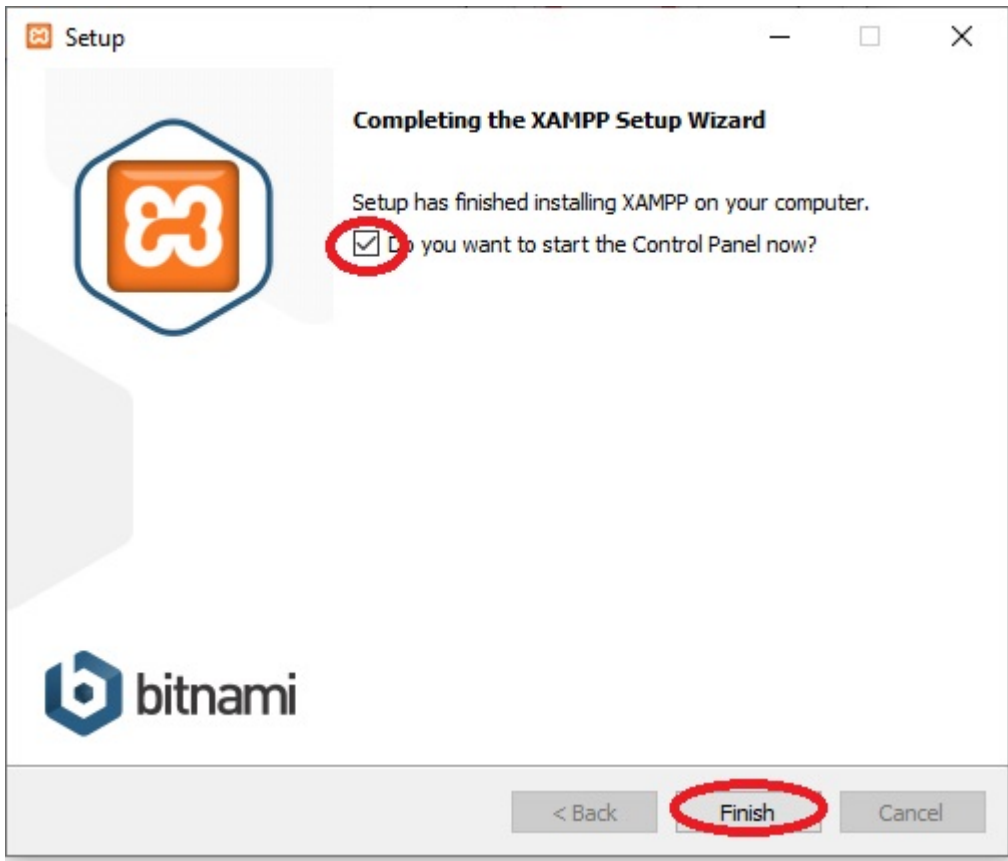
This should open the XAMPP Control Panel. On the control panel select the start button opposite Apache. This will start your webserver. If you would like to use phpMyAdmin, also start the MySQL on the XAMPP control panel. To use/access WordPress on your webserver you need to start both Apache and MySQL.
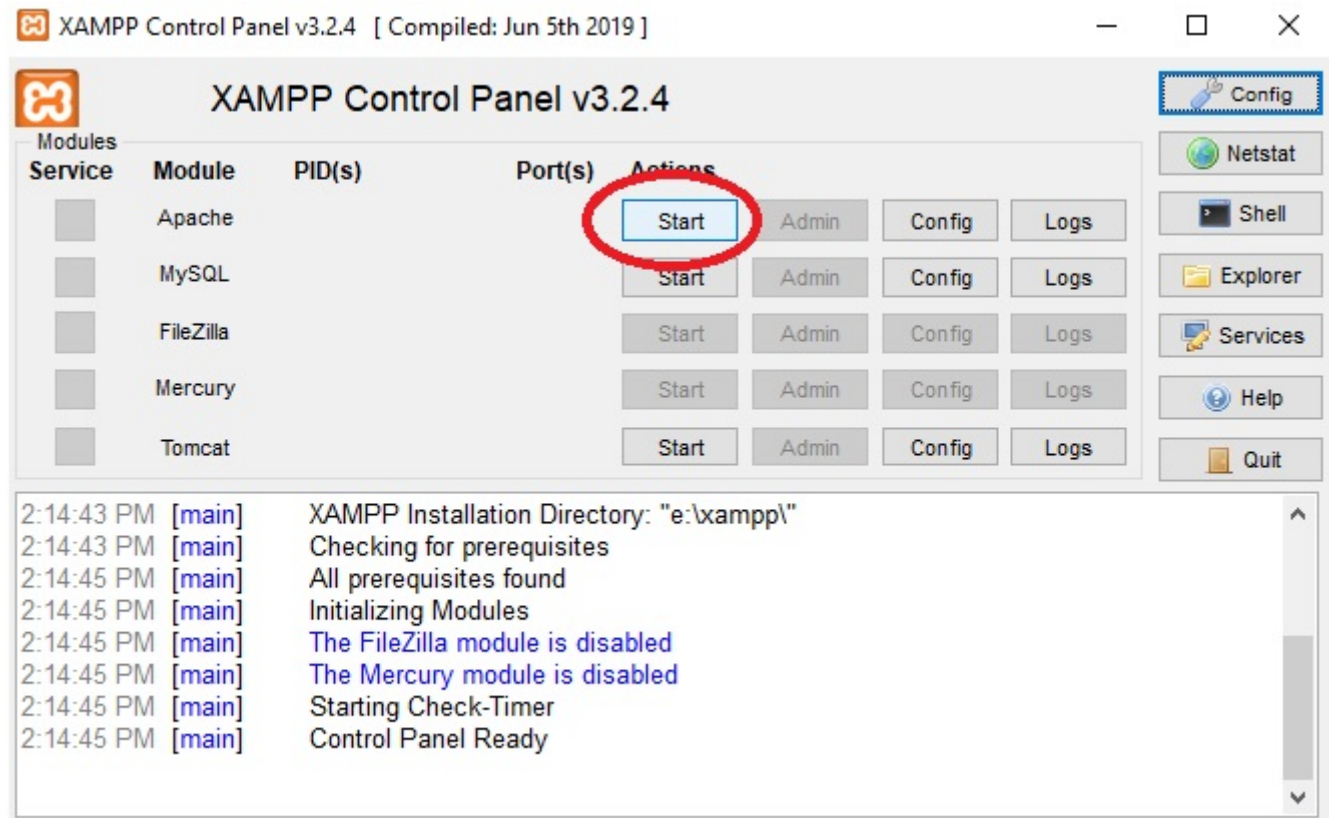
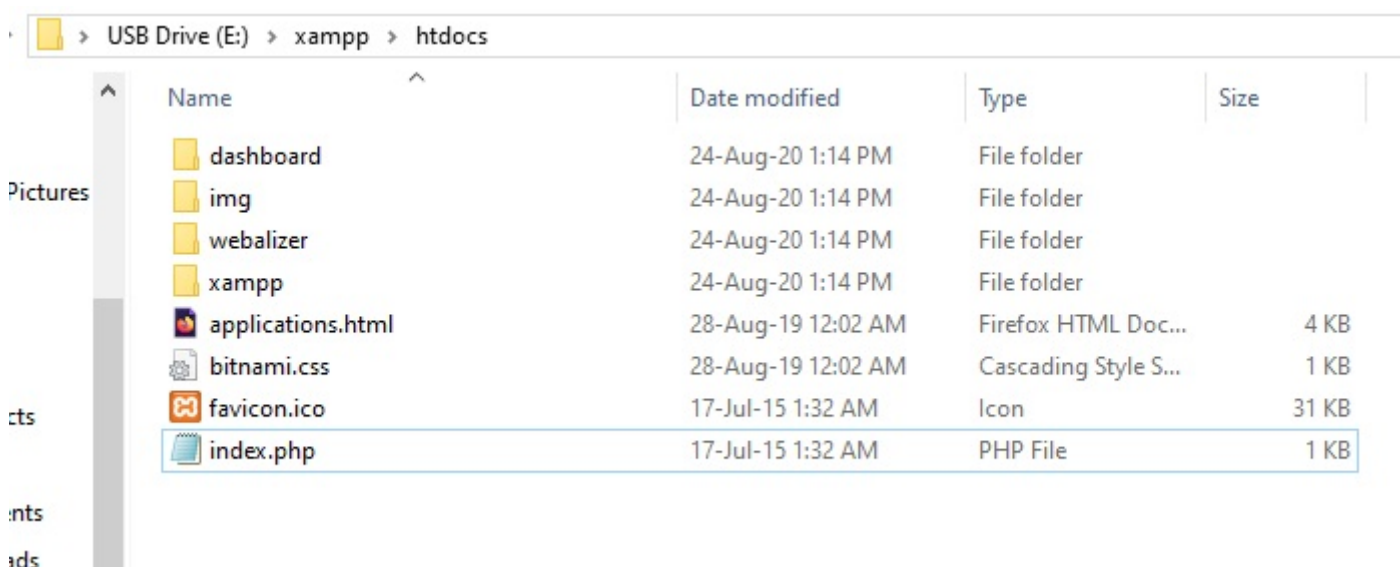To see your webserver webpage open your browser and type in localhost, this should open your website.

Where can I find my site files? If you followed the installation tutorial you should find your website files at htdocs, e.g. E:\xampp\htdocs where E is my USB drive designation.
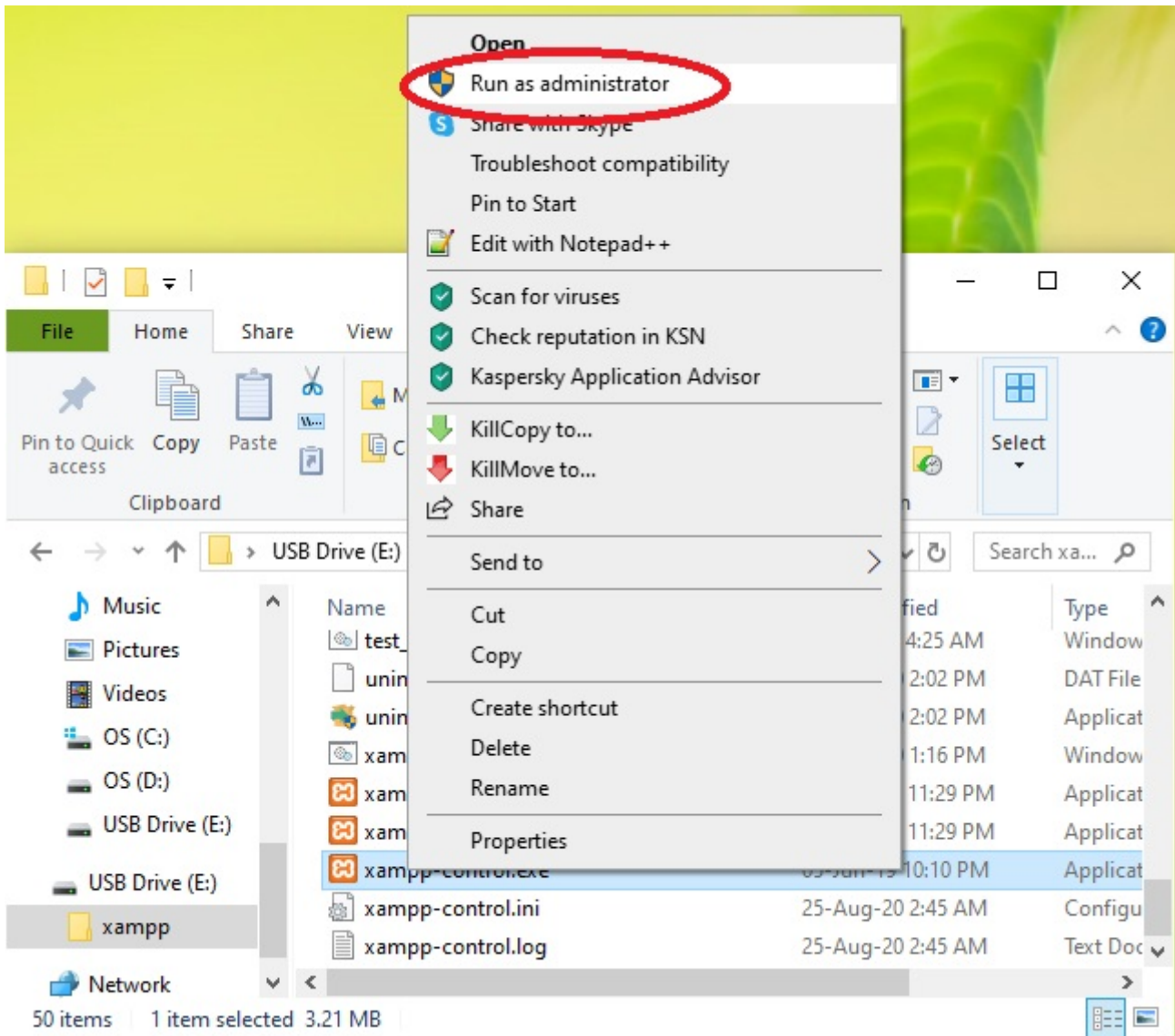

Don't forget to go back to the Xampp control panel and stop any services you have running when you're finished.

How To Restart your Server

To start Xampp, plug in your USB drive, open file explorer, locate the XAMPP folder, scroll to the end of the folder, locate xampp-control.exe and right click run as administrator. See the screenshot below.

This may cause the windows permission screen to pop up if it does so, select Yes allow changes to be made. If all has gone to plan the Xampp Control Panel should pop up on your screen. Select the services you wish to start (Apache to run localhost) , give it a moment and you should be able to view your webserver via localhost on your web browser.

Next month I will return with a tutorial on how to setup WordPress on your portable web server, so stay tuned for that.