

LESS Development

phpFox 4.3+ provides support to develop your themes using LESS. This not only makes it easier on you as the designer, but also gives Admins the ability to change the color palette of your theme direct from their AdminCP.

If you wish to continue reading on, make sure you have an IDE, Text Editor or Server that supports LESS compiling. phpFox only supports the LESS compiling from the AdminCP for when a client is designing your theme. Under development its best to do it via the .less files.

variables.less

To get this started we need to have a file in our themes `assets/` folder called `variables.less`. You can place any of your custom less variables here. In this test, we will work with a simple example. In that file add

```
@header_bg: #000;
```

With this in place, we can now start working with `autoload.less`.

autoload.less

The `autoload.less` file needs to also be placed in your themes `assets/` folder. The first line of this file should be to include the `variables.less` file. In this working example let's add the following code

```
@import "variables";

.sticky-bar {
    background:@header_bg;
}
```

If you check your site you will see it changes the main header background color.

theme.json

In order to allow clients to easily change the color palette of your theme this requires us to define design rules in our themes `theme.json` file. Open your `theme.json` file. You will find something similar to this

```
{
  "id": "sample",
  "name": "Sample"
}
```

We need to add a new object for the key `vars`. Using the example we have worked with thus far, this file would then look like

```
{
  "id": "sample",
  "name": "Sample",
  "vars": {
    "header_bg": {
      "title": "Header Background",
      "id": ".sticky-bar",
      "attr": "background"
    }
  }
}
```

Each key for this associative object must be the variable name we created in the `variables.less` file. In this case it is `header_bg`. Each key requires an object of 3 key/value sets.

Key	Description
-----	-------------

title	The English phrase for what the Admin will be editing.
id	The CSS rules to make these changes. These should match your CSS rules you apply in <code>autoload.less</code> for this specific variable.
attr	This is the CSS property you are changing. This must be a valid CSS property .

Testing the Design Manager

Now that we have everything in place to enable the **Design Manager** in the **TM**, log into your AdminCP and head on over to your theme. You will notice a new menu has been added for **Design**. Click on that and you should see

