

# help! it's **FORM HELPERS**

a Ruby on Rails  
cheat sheet guide  
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Form helpers make building Rails-friendly forms super easy. Use 'em in views, including layouts and partials. Save time, save money!

## Step 1

### Form helpers belong to one of three groups:

- \* **Form Tag Helpers** create fields not based on your model
- \* **Form Helpers** create fields based on your model/objects
- \* **Form Options Helpers** create select fields (lists, etc.)

← except  
date\_helper!

## Step 2

### Start, submit, and end forms

the controller method to parse the form

```
<%= start_form_tag :action => 'update', :id => @books %>
```

For forms that work from an existing object, use `:id` to specify the object. When creating new objects, leave it off.

the object name

```
<%= submit_tag "Create" %>
```

the button's value  
(e.g. appearance)

```
<%= end_form_tag %>
```

no args here

## Step 3a

### Understand the API docs

<http://rails.rubyonrails.com/classes/ActionView/Helpers/FormHelper.html>

There are just too many form helper methods for me to list 'em all. But for the form tags based on objects/models, there's a formula to make grokking the API docs a little easier.

the singular name of the object/controller.  
e.g. "book" or "user" or "article"

options as hash parameters.  
e.g. "rows" => 50, or "size" => 10

```
text_area(object, method, options = {})
```

the column name (really an ActiveRecord method)

## Step 3b

### Real-world examples of #3

```
<%= text_field "user", "first_name", "size" => 25 %>
<%= password_field "user", "password" %>
<%= text_area "book", "description", "rows" => 20, "cols" => 90 %>
```