



## Introduction to HTML

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## Introduction to HTML

One of the things that made the pre-Netscape web so inviting was the fact that it was based on a simple technology. The technology was so simple, in fact, that almost anyone with basic computer literacy skills could create their own pages. That technology involved normal text files and a set of "tags" called HTML (Hyper Text Markup Language) tags. With these tags a person could create pages that contained text, images, bulleted or numbered list, headlines, etc. In other words, the tags contained enough richness to create neat, interesting pages. At the same time, they were so simple that a ten year old child could learn to use them.

Things have gotten somewhat more complicated recently, and now HTML has expanded its scope to the point where it is almost too complicated to use without a tool to help you. In addition, there are now hundreds of tools available that *will* help you, so it is rarely necessary to edit tags by hand.

## The Basics

Most browsers still accept raw text. That is, if you take a raw text file that contains no tags at all, stick the file in a web server's directory tree, and enter its URL in a browser, the browsers will display it. However, the use of raw text is not recommended. Instead you would like to use the proper tags to create an HTML "page". The "basic page" is shown below:

```
<html>
  <head>
    <title>Sample page</title>
  </head>
  <body>
    Hello there.
  </body>
</html>
```

This page contains indentation that would be uncommon in a normal page, but it helps to highlight the structure. The page as a whole is bracketed by <html> and </html> tags. The header and body are similarly bracketed. The text of the page itself goes in the body.

If you had a page that contained nothing but straight text, you would place all of the text in the body section and mark the paragraphs with <p> tags. The HTML would look something like this:

```
<html>
  <head>
    <title>Sample page</title>
  </head>
  <body>
    This is a test of the emergency broadcast system. This
    is only a test.
  <p>
```

```
The broadcasters in your area, in voluntary cooperation with the
FCC and other state and local agencies, have...
<p>
</body>
</html>
```

The line breaks that you put in the HTML file are irrelevant. The browser word wraps on its own based on the width of the browser window.

## Other Useful Tags

If you want to create headlines in the text, you can use "H" tags with levels of 1 to 6. For example:

```
<h1>This is the largest headline</h1>
<h6>This is the smallest headline</h6>
```

You can break things up with horizontal lines using the `<hr>` tag.

To create a hypertext link, you use the following technique:

```
<a href="http://www.company.com/xxx/yyy/zzz.htm">Text to be the link</a>
```

Similarly you include an image in a document with the following link:

```

```

You can create a bulleted list with the following tags:

```
<ul>
  <li>Item 1
  <li>Item 2
  <li>Item 3
</ul>
```

If you replace "ul" with "ol" you get a numbered list.

Preformatted text that you want to display in a mono font should be placed within a set of `<pre>` and `</pre>` tags.

## Conclusion

There are now hundreds of other tags, but with just these few you can create very nice pages. In the pre-Netscape era these tags were the basis of almost every page on the web.

Developed Under:

All common web browsers