

Web Design & Publishing

Beginning HTML

HTML stands for **Hypertext Markup Language**; the language of the Web. HTML files are text files that include tags that indicate format, style and layout functions. A Web browser reads the HTML file and interprets the tags, thus presenting the information in the way the designer intended.

An HTML file can be developed in a simple text editor like TextEdit, BBEdit or Notepad. You simply save the file with the .html extension. You can also use a word processor like Word, but if so, you need to save as a text file and give it the .html extension (do not use “Save as HTML feature, more on this later). We will be introducing the Web Editor Dreamweaver, but with a Web Editor, we are doing the same thing: we are creating an html file that is text-based. Once you have an html file you can move from TextEdit to Dreamweaver or back without issue to maintain and modify the page.

HTML5 is the next generation of html. It functions in the same manner, but adds semantic tags, rich media and animation features and works with CSS3. We will address these updates later in the semester. XHTML (X is for extensible) was introduced a few years ago, and it provided more structure and guidelines to HTML. Used in conjunction with stylesheets (which we will discuss in a few weeks), XHTML separated document structure from formatting, thus allowing more flexibility in Web design. As we discuss HTML, we will identify the aspects of HTML5 and XHTML that must be observed.

A tag is a command written between angle brackets (the less than and greater than symbols), as shown below.

```
<html>
```

Some tags have attributes that provide a variety of options within the tag. The attributes have associated values deemed by the designer. Values are surrounded by quotation marks.

```
<tag attribute= “value”>
```

```
<body bgcolor=“blue”>
```

```
<body bgcolor=“#AACCC0”>
```

Most tags must also be closed after inserting the contained text. This tag bolded the text cary-anne’s page. The closing tag makes sure no other text is bolded in the document.

```
<strong>cary-anne’s page</strong>
```

In HTML tags could be upper or lower-cased and it made no difference to most major browsers. However, with the move to XHTML, lowercase tags will be required. Many designers use uppercase letters within tags to make them stand out from the content. Others use lowercase for simplicity (prevents from having to use the shift key or cap lock). You should use lowercase tags for this course.

» Basic Tags

- **<html>** the opening tag on every HTML page. It tells the browser that this is an HTML file.
- **<head>** indicates the heading of the document. Nothing within the head tag actually shows up on page, but this is where designers can store information about the title or special search terms associated with the page.
- **<title>** indicates the title of the page. This title does not show up on the page itself, but in the top title bar of the browser.
- **<body>** indicates the beginning of the section with content in it. **** bold; replaced **** in XHTML
- **** italic; replaced **** in XHTML
- **<h1>**, **<h2>**, **<h3>**...**<h6>** etc. indicates a level of heading size. You can use the different headings to set up the format of your page and indicate different sections.
- **<p>** indicates the opening of a paragraph, puts space between it and the previous content.
- **
** provides a line break without the spacing of a paragraph; use the closing slash; standalone tag.
- You can use the **attribute bgcolor** to change the background color. You can use the six character hexadecimal code or you can use a limited number of words to describe color, i.e. red, blue, lightblue, orange, etc.

```
<body bgcolor="#AA11CC">  
    or  
<body bgcolor="red">
```

» Format of an HTML file

```
<html>  
<head>  
  <title>My First Web Site</title>  
</head>  
  
<body bgcolor="lightblue">  
  <h1>My First Web Site</h1>  
  <p><strong>Welcome to my first Web site!</strong></p>  
  
  <h2>Introduction</h2>  
  <p>This is my place on the Web to let you know what is going on with me!</p>  
  
  <h2>Education</h2>  
  <p>This is where I will insert information about hobbies.</p>  
  
  <h2>Hobbies</h2>  
  <p>This is where I will insert information about hobbies.</p>  
  
  <h2>Contact Information</h2>  
  <p>For more information, you can email me at cary-anne@txstate.edu</p>  
  
</body>  
</html>
```