

A Basic HTML Primer

by

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HTML or Hyper Text Markup Language is a relatively simple markup language that web browsers can use to display web pages. You can write HTML code in any text editor, I personally use Windows Notepad. Just when you save the file remember to save it as a .htm or .html file. The browser recognizes files with the .htm and .html extensions and will look in them for valid HTML code. HTML has had a long history and has gone through a number of revisions. Each successive revision adds more functionality to HTML and with the current version(as of this writing) of HTML (Version 4.0), HTML is a very powerful language that can take some time to learn. Fortunately most work on web pages can be done with just the essentials of HTML and that is what this chapter will teach you.

The first question is how do we get the web browser to know that our document has HTML codes for it to read? HTML code is composed of **tags** that let the browser know what is to be done with certain text. At the beginning of your document you place the command <HTML> and at the end you put </HTML> and the web browser will know that the codes in between are supposed to be HTML.

```
<HTML>
```

put HTML code here

```
</HTML>
```

You have to admit that this is pretty simple. But this web page won't do much of anything at all. So how about we do the obligatory 'Hello World' sample that every

programming book starts off with. It will show you how to do text and some basic HTML.

<HTML>

1

```
<HEAD>
  <TITLE>My First HTML Page</TITLE>
</HEAD>
<BODY>
<P><CENTER>
  <B><FONT SIZE="+2">Hello World</FONT></B>
</CENTER>
</BODY>
</HTML>
```

Believe it or not this little snippet shows you most of what you need to know about HTML. To begin with, note that everything is contained between the `<HTML>` and `</HTML>` tags. These two commands define the beginning and the end of the HTML document. The web browser will ignore any items outside these commands. Next we have a section that is contained between the `<HEAD>` and `</HEAD>` commands. This is the header portion of your HTML document. The `<TITLE>` and `</TITLE>` commands contain the title that will actually appear in the title bar of your browser. Now a lot more can be done in the HEAD section, but that will be addressed as we work our way through this book.

Then we have the `<BODY>` `</BODY>` commands. As you might have guessed this is the body of your HTML document. This is where most of your web pages code is going to go). Now inside the body section we have some text and some additional text that will define how the text will appear in the browser. The `<P>` command defines the beginning

and the end of a paragraph. The `` and `` commands tell the browser to make whatever text is between them bold. The `` tells the browser how big the text should be (there are a variety of methods for doing this, as we shall see.). The `` command ends the font section of the HTML code.

By now I trust you have noticed a pattern. All the commands have an opening command and a closing command. Well this is true for all but a very few HTML commands. Just remember this rule, you close the commands in opposite order of how you opened them. Notice in the above sample code I opened the commands before the text like this: `P><CENTER> `, and then closed them like this: `</CENTER></P>`. This is important to remember. You can think of this as 'backing out' of your commands.

Images and hyperlinks

What we have so far gives you a very simple web page that displays one phrase in bold text. Admittedly, this is not very impressive, but if you understand the concepts involved with using these HTML commands then you conceptually understand HTML. Now lets expand your knowledge of HTML. Usually web pages contain more than simply a title and some text. Other items you might put in a web page would include images and links to other web pages. Placing an image on an HTML document is rather simple:

```
<IMG SRC="imagepath\imagename" WIDTH=52 HEIGHT=88 ALIGN=bottom>
```

You simply provide the path to the image and the name of the image, including its file extension (such as .gif, .bmp, .jpg, etc.). The other properties in this command allow you to alter the placement and size of the image. You can alter its width and height as well as

its alignment.

You will also note that when you first place an image on an HTML page it has a border around it. You can get rid of this by adding 'border = 0' into the tag, as in this example:

```
<IMG SRC="somepic.gif" BORDER =0>
```

Putting a hyperlink to another website or to an email address is just as simple:

```
<A HREF="http://www.wordware.com">
```

This link will connect to the URL (Uniform Resource Locator) contained inside the quotation marks. In order to use this methodology to create an email link simply use this:

```
<A HREF="mailto:sombody@somemail.com">
```

You simply have to change the 'http://' portion to "mailto:" Notice that all three of the preceding methods have one thing in common. They do not close the command in the typical manner that other HTML commands are closed. Now lets examine the source code for a simple but complete HTML document:

```
<HTML>
```

```
<HEAD>
```

```
<TITLE>Test HTML
```

```
Page</TITLE> </HEAD>
```

```
<BODY
```

```
BGCOLOR="blue"> <P>
```

```
<CENTER><B><FONT SIZE="+2">My First Web Page </FONT></B></CENTER>
```

```
<P>I am learning HTML !. I <B><I>LOVE</I></B> HTML!
```

```
<P><CENTER><IMG SRC="java.gif" ></CENTER>
```


<P>

<P><CENTER>You can email me at</CENTER>

<P>

<CENTER>Email

ME </CENTER><

<P><CENTER>Or go to my Web Site </CENTER>

<P><CENTER>Chuck Easttom's

World</CENTER>

</BODY>

</HTML>

First a few clarifications. You should note at the beginning a new command;

```
<BODY BGCOLOR="blue">
```

You can change the background color of your page using this command and any standard color. You can also set a background image for your HTML document with a similar command:

```
<BODY background="mypicture.gif">
```

Colors and Backgrounds

Lets examine a few other simple items we can add to our HTML documents. The first is altering text color. You can set the default text color for the entire document and you can alter the color of specific text. You alter the default text color for the entire

document using a technique very similar to the one used to alter the background color of the document:

```
<BODY TEXT="blue">
```

This text simply tells the browser that unless otherwise specified, all text in this document should be blue. In addition to changing the default color of all text in a document you may wish to simply change the color of a specific section of text. This is fairly easy to do as well. Instead of using the BODY TEXT command we use the FONT command:

```
<FONT COLOR="red">This is red text</FONT> This,
```

like the other color commands, can be used with any standard color.

There are a wide variety of tags you can use to alter the appearance and behavior of texts and images. Just a few others for you to consider would be the <BLINK></BLINK> tag which, as the name implies, causes the text to blink (this is only supported by Netscape and will not work in Internet Explorer). Another example is the <STRIKE></STRIKE> causes the text to appear with a line through it, a strike through. The tags we have covered so far are enough to allow you to accomplish what you need in HTML.

Tables

The next HTML command we are going to examine is the table. You frequently see tables on web pages and they are a very good way to organize data on your web page.

First I will show you how to create a table with a border:

```
<TABLE BORDER=1>
```

```
<TR>
```

```
<TD>
```



```
<P>This  
<P>Is a  
<TR>  
<TD>  
<P>Table  
<TD>  
<P>With a border  
</TABLE>
```

By now you should be able to recognize that the `<TABLE>` and `</TABLE>` tags actually contain the table. Each `<TR>` tag designates another row in the table. The `<TD></TD>` create a cell within that row (TD refers to Table Data). Using those three tags you can create a table with any number of rows or columns you wish. If you will notice the first line of this code the `BORDER` property is set to 1. This means the border has a width and is therefore visible.

In some instances you may not want the border to show. Tables can be used simply to hold images and text in relative positions. In cases such as this you may not wish the border to show. Below is an example of a table whose borders will not show.

```
<P><TABLE BORDER=0 CELLSPACING=0 CELLPADDING=0>  
<TR>  
<TD>  
<P>This  
<TD>  
<P>is a
```



```
<TR>
```

```
<TD>
```

```
<P>Table
```

```
<TD>
```

```
<P>With no borders or padding
```

```
</TABLE>
```

Notice that the `BORDER`, `CELLPADDING`, and `CELLSPACING` are all set to 0. This causes the table itself to not be displayed. However the contents of the table will display. You should also notice that in both examples I have placed text in each cell.

Image 1-3 shows the same web page as you saw in image 1-2 with the addition of two tables. One with a border and one without.

Lists

It is common to present data in lists. With HTML you have access to a variety of types of lists. The first we will discuss is the unordered list.

```
<UL>
```

```
<LI> First Item
```

```
<LI> Second Item
```

```
</UL>
```

The `` and `` tags define the code the lies between them as being part of an unordered list. The `` tags identify list items. An unordered list item will simply appear as a bullet

An ordered list is not much different. The list item stays the same. But the is going to change somewhat.

<OL type = I>

 First Item

 Second

Item

Here is a table containing all the types of ordered lists and how they appear in your browser.

Type = I	I. First Item II. Second Item
Type = I	i. First Item ii. Second Item
Type = 1	1. First Item 2. Second Item
Type = a	a. First Item b. Second Item
Type = A	A. Second Item B. Second Item

Marquee

A very fascinating item you can add to your web page is the marquee. A scrolling marquee takes a message or an image and scrolls it across the screen. The basic format is this.

`<MARQUEE LOOP = INFINITE> Hey this is really cool </MARQUEE>`

Now in addition to text you can also place an image in the marquee that you can scroll across the screen.

`<MARQUEE LOOP = INFINITE> </MARQUEE>`

You can also change the direction the marquee moves in. The direction tag will tell the marquee which direction to scroll too, not from.

`<MARQUEE LOOP = INFINITE DIRECTION = RIGHT>Hey this is a cool marquee
</MARQUEE>`

You can choose from the following directions: Left, Right, Up, and Down. Marquees provide an interesting and relatively easy way to display very eye catching information on your web page.

