

**Hypertext Markup Language** (**HTML**) is the standard [markup language](https://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Markup_language" \o "Markup language) for documents designed to be displayed in a [web browser](https://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Web_browser). It can be assisted by technologies such as [Cascading Style Sheets](https://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Cascading_Style_Sheets) (CSS) and [scripting languages](https://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Scripting_language) such as [JavaScript](https://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/JavaScript).

[Web browsers](https://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Web_browser) receive HTML documents from a [web server](https://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Web_server) or from local storage and [render](https://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Browser_engine) the documents into multimedia web pages. HTML describes the structure of a web page [semantically](https://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Semantic_Web) and originally included cues for the appearance of the document.



*Tim Berners-Lee*

In 1980, physicist [Tim Berners-Lee](https://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Tim_Berners-Lee), a contractor at [CERN](https://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/CERN), proposed and prototyped [ENQUIRE](https://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/ENQUIRE), a system for CERN researchers to use and share documents. In 1989, Berners-Lee wrote a memo proposing an [Internet](https://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Internet)-based [hypertext](https://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Hypertext) system.[[3]](https://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/HTML#cite_note-3) Berners-Lee specified HTML and wrote the browser and server software in late 1990.

HTML is a [markup language](https://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Markup_language" \o "Markup language) that [web browsers](https://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Web_browser) use to interpret and [compose](https://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Typesetting) text, images, and other material into visual or audible web pages. Default characteristics for every item of HTML markup are defined in the browser, and these characteristics can be altered or enhanced by the web page designer's additional use of [CSS](https://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Cascading_Style_Sheets). Many of the text elements are found in the 1988 ISO technical report TR 9537 *Techniques for using SGML*, which in turn covers the features of early text formatting languages such as that used by the [RUNOFF command](https://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/TYPSET_and_RUNOFF) developed in the early 1960s for the [CTSS](https://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Compatible_Time-Sharing_System) (Compatible Time-Sharing System) operating system: these formatting commands were derived from the commands used by typesetters to manually format documents. However, the SGML concept of generalized markup is based on elements (nested annotated ranges with attributes) rather than merely print effects, with also the separation of structure and markup; HTML has been progressively moved in this direction with CSS.