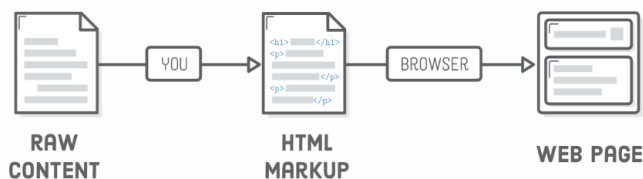


BASIC WEB PAGES

Nº 2. OF [HTML & CSS IS HARD](#)

A friendly tutorial for making (really) simple web pages

HTML defines the content of every web page on the Internet. By “marking up” your raw content with HTML tags, you’re able to tell web browsers how you want different parts of your content to be displayed. Creating an HTML document with properly marked up content is the first step of developing a web page.

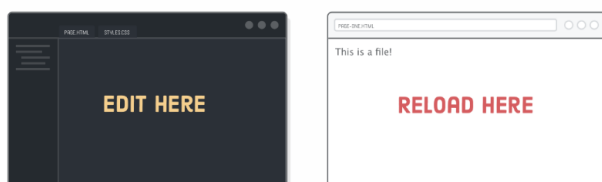


In this chapter, we’ll build our first web page. It’ll look like crap because it won’t have any CSS attached to it, but it will serve as a thorough introduction to the HTML elements that web developers work with on a daily basis.

As you work your way through the examples, try to approach them as a more hands-on version of a WYSIWYG editor like Google Docs or Microsoft Word. We’ll be working with all the same types of content (headings, paragraphs, lists, etc), we’ll just be defining them a little bit more explicitly with HTML.

SETUP

Let’s get started by creating a new project with Atom called `basic-web-pages`. Then, make a new file called `basics.html` in that folder. This HTML file represents a single web page, and it’s where we’ll put all our code for this chapter. If you’re not already set up with Atom, be sure to read the [Introduction](#) for this tutorial series.



Remember that the basic workflow for web developers is to edit HTML in their text editor and view those changes in a web browser, so this is exactly what you should be doing for each section of this chapter.

STRUCTURE OF A WEB PAGE

Add the following HTML markup to our `basics.html` file. This is what you'll start with for every single web page you'll ever produce. Typically, you would use a templating engine of some sort to avoid re-typing the redundant parts, but for this tutorial, we'll be focusing on the raw HTML.

```
<!DOCTYPE html>
<html>
  <head>
    <!-- Metadata goes here -->
  </head>
  <body>
    <!-- Content goes here -->
  </body>
</html>
```

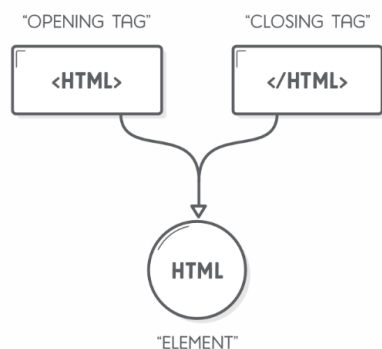
STRUCTURE OF A WEB PAGE

Add the following HTML markup to our `basics.html` file. This is what you'll start with for every single web page you'll ever produce. Typically, you would use a templating engine of some sort to avoid re-typing the redundant parts, but for this tutorial, we'll be focusing on the raw HTML.

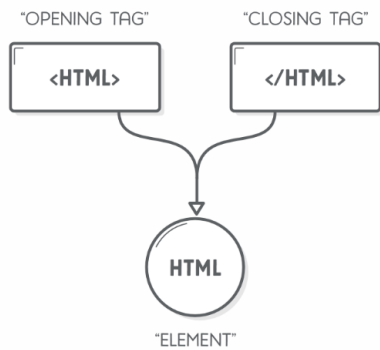
```
<!DOCTYPE html>
<html>
  <head>
    <!-- Metadata goes here -->
  </head>
  <body>
    <!-- Content goes here -->
  </body>
</html>
```

First, we need to tell browsers that this is an HTML5 web page with the `<!DOCTYPE html>` line. This is just a special string that browsers look for when they try to display our web page, and it always needs to look exactly like it does above.

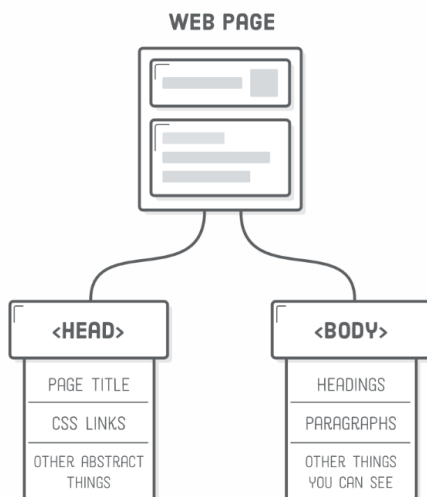
Then, our entire web page needs to be wrapped in `<html>` tags. The actual `<html>` text is called an “opening tag”, while `</html>` is called a “closing tag”. Everything inside of these tags are considered part of the `<html>` “element”, which is this ethereal thing that gets created when a web browser parses your HTML tags.



Inside of the `<html>` element, we have two more elements called `<head>` and `<body>`. A web page's head contains all of its metadata, like the page title, browser parses your HTML tags.



Inside of the `<html>` element, we have two more elements called `<head>` and `<body>`. A web page's head contains all of its metadata, like the page title, any CSS stylesheets, and other things that are required to render the page but you don't necessarily want the user to see. The bulk of our HTML markup will live in the `<body>` element, which represents the visible content of the page. Note that opening up our page in a web browser won't display anything, since it has an empty `<body>`.



The purpose of this `<head>/<body>` split will become clearer in a few chapters after we start working with CSS.

Also notice the HTML comment syntax in the above snippet. Anything that starts with `<!--` and ends with `-->` will be completely ignored by the browser. This is useful for documenting your code and making notes to yourself.

PAGE TITLES

One of the most important pieces of metadata is the title of your web page, defined by the aptly named `<title>` element. Browsers display this in the tab for your page, and Google displays it in search engine results.