

Creating Links

The HTML 4.01 specification puts it simply and clearly: “A link is a connection from one web resource to another.” This ability to create hyperlinks from one document to another is what makes HTML unique among document markup languages and is the key to its widespread popularity. You can create a link to any web resource, including (but not limited to) another HTML document, an image, a program, or a particular element within an HTML document.

This chapter focuses on these HTML elements related to linking and building relationships between documents.

a	Anchor (link)
base	Provides a base pathname
link	Establishes relationship between documents

Simple Hypertext Links

The anchor (a) element is used to identify a string of text or an image that serves as a hypertext link to another document.

a

<a>...

Attributes

Core (id, class, style, title)
Internationalization
Events (plus onfocus, onblur)
accesskey="*character*"
charset="*charset*"
coords="*x,y coordinates*"

```
href="URL"
id="text"
hreflang="language code"
name="text"
rel="relationships"
rev="relationships"
shape="rect|circle|poly|default"
tabindex="number"
target="text"
type="media type"
```

The `href` attribute provides the pathname (URL) of the document to which you want to link. URLs can be absolute or relative, as discussed in the next sections.

A text link is marked up like this:

```
I am <a href="link.html">linking</a> to you!
```

To make an image a link, enclose the image element in an anchor as follows:

```
<a href="link.html"></a>
```

By default, most graphical browsers display linked text underlined and in blue, but this presentation can be altered with style sheets. Linked images appear with a blue border by default unless you change this setting with the `border` style property or the deprecated `border` attribute in the `img` element.

Absolute URLs

An *absolute URL* is made up of the following components: a protocol identifier, a hostname (the name of the server machine), and the path to the specific filename. When you are linking to documents on other servers, you need to use an absolute URL. The following is an example of a link with an absolute URL:

```
<a href="http://www.littlechair.com/web/index.html">...</a>
```

Here, the protocol is identified as *http* (HyperText Transfer Protocol, the standard protocol of the Web), the host is *www.littlechair.com*, and the pathname is *web/index.html*.

Relative URLs

A *relative URL* provides a pointer to another document relative to the location of the current document. The syntax is based on pathname structures in the Unix operating system, which are discussed in Chapter 4. When pointing to another document within your own site (on the same server), it is common to use relative URLs.

For example, if I am currently in *resume.html* (identified here by its full pathname):

```
www.littlechair.com/web/work/resume.html
```

and I want to put a link on that page to a document named *bio.html* that is in the same directory:
