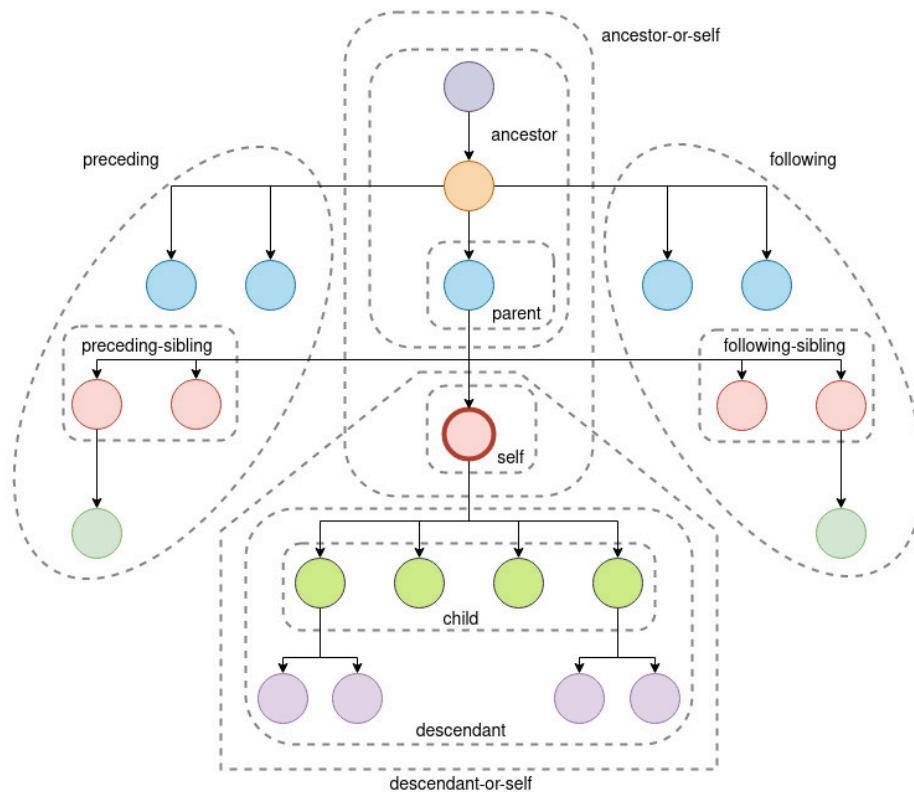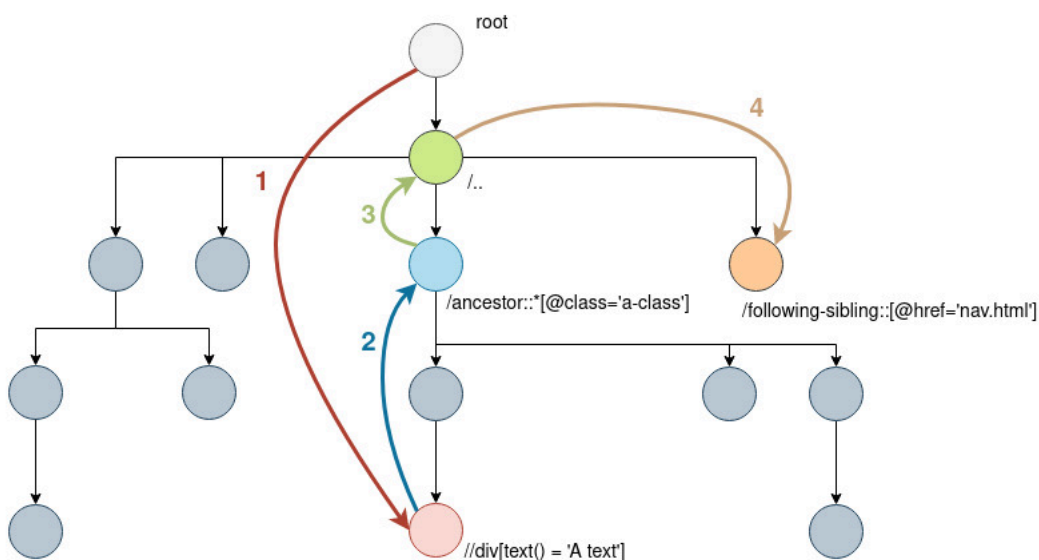# XPath axes

XPath lets you search for elements along its different axes.If you are currently positionned as self, the other nodes are relatively located from you on the axes as below.

ancestor-or-self

ancestor

preceding   following

parent

preceding-sibling   following-sibling

self

child

descendant

descendant-or-self

XPath natively lets you build complex queries chaining them along its different axes. You can navigate like in the example below.

```
//div[text() = 'A text']/ancestor::*[@class='a-class']/../following-sibling::[@href='nav.htm
|-------descendant------|---------ancestor----------|parent|--------following-sibling-------
```

The following xpath query will select an HTML/XML element like bellow.

root

1

4

3

/..

/ancestor::*[@class='a-class']

2

/following-sibling::[@href='nav.html']

//div[text() = 'A text']

Axes explanation

Below a description made by umbraco of the different xpath axes.

Self Axis

While it is rarely used, the self axis returns the node in reference.

```
/self::*[@class = 'foobar']
```

Child Axis

We mentioned the child axis earlier, and used its shortcut right off. The child axis select the nodes immediately below the node in reference. While the verbose method is rarely used, it is here for reference.

```
/child::*[@class = 'foobar']
/*[@class = 'foobar']
```

Parent Axis

The parent axis allows us to see the node immediately above the node in reference.

```
/parent::*[@class = 'foobar']
/..
```

Descendant Axis

Next we have descendant. The descendant axis retrieves all nodes below the node in reference no matter the depth.

```
/descendant::*[@class = 'foobar']
//*[@class = 'foobar']
```

Descendant-or-self Axis

The descendant-or-self axis returns all nodes below the current node, but also returns the node in reference to the command.

```
/descendant-or-self::*[@class = 'foobar']
```

Ancestor Axis

The ancestor axis selects all nodes that are ancestors, or the parent, and the parent's parent, and so on, to the node in reference.

```
/ancestor::*[@class = 'foobar']
```

Ancestor-or-self Axis

The ancestor-or-self axis selects all nodes that are ancestors, or the parent, and the parent's parent, and so on, including the node in reference.

```
/ancestor-or-self::*[@class = 'foobar']
```

Preceding Axis

The preceding axis selects all nodes no matter the depth, that are located on parent-level and who are also located before (preceding) its parent of the node in reference.

```
/preceding::*[@class = 'foobar']
```

Preceding-sibling Axis

The preceding axis selects all nodes that are located on the same level who are also located before (preceding) the node in reference.

```
/preceding-sibling::*[@class = 'foobar']
```

Following Axis

The preceding axis selects all nodes no matter the depth, that are located on parent-level and who are also located after (following) its parent of the node in reference.

```
/following::*[@class = 'foobar']
```

Following-sibling Axis

The preceding axis selects all nodes that are located on the same level who are located after (following) the node in reference.

```
/following-sibling::*[@class = 'foobar']
```