

## HTML Guide • Forms

(Although fairly extensive not a complete listing)

Element	Code	Note
Form	<code>&lt;form&gt;&lt;/form&gt;</code>	Contains the control form fields
Action attribute	<code>&lt;form action="URL or mailto"&gt;</code>	URL value is a pathway to a cgi app. And mailto value requires an email address
Method attribute	<code>&lt;form method="post" or "get"&gt;</code>	"post" is preferred and supports form data greater than 100 characters and does not display the value of the form controls in the URL Search engines use the get method
Name attribute	<code>&lt;form name="form_name"&gt;</code>	Used for referencing the form and its objects with javascript
ENCTYPE attribute	<code>&lt;form enctype="multipart/form-data"&gt;</code>	Determines how the form data is encoded. In most cases you will not need to use this attribute at all. The default value (i.e. If you don't use this attribute at all) is "application/x-www-form-urlencoded", which is sufficient for almost any kind of form data. The one exception is if you want to do file uploads. In that case you should use "multipart/form-data".
Input control	<code>&lt;input&gt;</code>	This versatile element is used to create Entry Blanks, Checkboxes, Radio buttons, and Submit & Reset buttons; the type of form control you get depends on the value assigned to its Type attribute
Entry Blank field	<code>&lt;input type="text"&gt;</code>	Text is the default value; it identifies this Input element as a text entry blank
Name attribute	<code>&lt;input name="field_name"&gt;</code>	Needed to identify a particular form field
Size attribute	<code>&lt;input size="pixels"&gt;</code>	Determines the length of the entry blank
Maximum length attribute	<code>&lt;input maxlength="n"&gt;</code>	N = a maximum number of characters that the user can type into an Entry Blank
Value attribute	<code>&lt;input value="some text"&gt;</code>	Sets the text to be displayed in the entry blank
Required attribute	<code>&lt;input required&gt;</code>	Specifies that an input field must be filled out before submitting the form. The required attribute works with the following input types: text, search, url, tel, email, password, date pickers, number, checkbox, radio, and file.
Read-Only attribute	<code>&lt;textarea readonly&gt;</code>	Shows contents but doesn't allow editing Some browser may prefer the traditional minimized form of this attribute (remember attribute minimization is not xhtml compatible)
Email Input	<code>&lt;input type="email"&gt;</code>	This input field will be validated to confirm that its value is an email address

Element	Code	Note
Text Area control	<code>&lt;textarea&gt;&lt;/textarea&gt;</code>	Multiple-row entry blanks
Name attributes	<code>&lt;textarea name="textarea_name"&gt;</code>	Needed to identify a particular form field
Rows attribute	<code>&lt;textarea rows="n"&gt;</code>	N = number of rows in the Entry Blank
Columns attribute	<code>&lt;textarea cols="n"&gt;</code>	N = the width in characters
Read-Only attribute	<code>&lt;textarea readonly="readonly"&gt;</code>	See note under Entry Blank control
Check Box	<code>&lt;input type=checkbox&gt;</code>	Indicates that this is a checkbox option
Name attribute	<code>&lt;input name="checkbox_name"&gt;</code>	Identifies a particular checkbox query Several checkboxes in a form may share the same control name to create a checkbox group
Value attribute	<code>&lt;input value="data"&gt;</code>	Data = the string value that is sent for processing
Checked attribute	<code>&lt;input checked="checked"&gt;</code>	Indicates a particular check box is checked by default Some browser may prefer the traditional minimized form of this attribute (remember attribute minimization is not xhtml compatible)
Radio Button	<code>&lt;input type=radio&gt;</code>	Indicates that this is a radio button option All other attributes are the same as the check box option To create a radio group give a series of radio boxes the same name
Select control	<code>&lt;select&gt;&lt;/select&gt;</code>	Used to create a drop-down menu list or scroll list of choices Contains the option elements Html structure is similar to an ordered or unordered list
Name attribute	<code>&lt;select name="list_name"&gt;</code>	Identifies the menu list or scroll list
Size attribute	<code>&lt;select size="n"&gt;</code>	N = determines number of visible rows in the scroll list Also defines a scroll list
Multiple attribute	<code>&lt;select multiple="multiple"&gt;</code>	Allows user to select more than one choice from a scroll list Some browser may prefer the traditional minimized form of this attribute (remember attribute minimization is not xhtml compatible)
Option	<code>&lt;option&gt;&lt;/option&gt;</code>	Nested within the Select element it creates a menu option

Element	Code	Note
Label attribute	<code>&lt;option label="display_name"&gt;</code>	<p>The label attribute specifies a shorter version of an option</p> <p>The shorter version will be displayed in the drop-down list. For instance:</p> <pre>&lt;option label="MD"&gt;Maryland&lt;/option&gt;</pre> <p>Not supported by Firefox and I.E. 7</p>
Selected attribute	<code>&lt;option selected="selected"&gt;</code>	Sets a particular Option element as preselected; has no value
Values	<code>&lt;option value="text"&gt;</code>	<p>Sets the values that will be sent to the server</p> <p>Usually it is a shorten version of the text between the option element's start and close tags. For instance;</p> <pre>&lt;option value="ny"&gt;new york&lt;/option&gt;</pre>
Options Group	<code>&lt;optgroup&gt;&lt;/optgroup&gt;</code>	<p>Groups nested menu options</p> <p>Browsers will either group menu options into a submenu or divide them into categories</p>
label attribute	<code>&lt;optgroup label="group_name"&gt;</code>	The name that will be given to the submenu or category
Button	<code>&lt;button&gt;nested content&lt;/button&gt;</code>	<p>Contains text or an image</p> <p>Nested text becomes the button's label</p> <p>Buttons are supposed to be rendered as interactive desktop buttons that depress when clicked</p>
Type attribute	<code>&lt;button type="submit reset button"&gt;</code>	<p>Submit = a submit button</p> <p>Reset = a reset button</p> <p>Button = allows the nesting of a graphic or graphic and text combined; both the graphic and text sit atop the button; when the image or text is clicked the button depresses; having an image sit on top of button looks odd.</p>
Name	<code>&lt;button name="button_name"&gt;</code>	Assigns the button a name
Value	<code>&lt;button value="text"&gt;</code>	Labels the button
Submit button	<code>&lt;input type="submit"&gt;</code>	Creates a submit button
Value attribute	<code>&lt;input value="name"&gt;</code>	Places a name in the center of the button; defaults to "submit" sans this attribute
Reset button	<code>&lt;input type="reset"&gt;</code>	Creates a reset button
Value attribute	<code>&lt;input value="name"&gt;</code>	Places a name in the center of the button; defaults to "reset" sans this attribute
Image Submit button	<code>&lt;input type="image"&gt;</code>	<p>Uses an image as your button</p> <p>Make sure the image is easily identifiable as a button</p>
SRC attribute	<code>&lt;input src="path/filename"&gt;</code>	Works just as it does in the IMG element
Alt attribute	<code>&lt;input alt="alternative text"&gt;</code>	Works just as it does in the IMG element

Element	Code	Note
Name attribute	<code>&lt;input name="some_name"&gt;</code>	Allows JavaScript reference to this form element
Value	<code>&lt;input value="text"&gt;</code>	Set or returns the value of the Value attribute
Label	<code>&lt;label&gt;text to associate&lt;/label&gt;</code>	<p>Used to label text fields, checkboxes and radio buttons, and menus form controls since these form control do not have implicit labels</p> <p>Can be used implicitly by nesting the form control with the label element or explicitly by using the for attribute to association a label with a particular form control</p> <p>With checkboxes and radio buttons browsers are suppose to let you click the label text for easier selection of these form controls</p> <p>Helps non-visual browser to associate text labels to a particular form control</p>
For Attribute	<code>&lt;label for="form_control_id"&gt;</code>	Associate the label to a form control via the value of it ID attribute
Examples	<pre> &lt;button type="submit" onclick="validateform()"&gt; Submit Data &lt;/button&gt;  &lt;button type="button" onclick="validateform()"&gt;   &lt;img src="images/submit.gif" width="50" height="20" alt=""&gt; &lt;/button&gt; </pre>	
Hidden	<code>&lt;input type="hidden"&gt;</code>	<p>Hidden fields are used to pass default data to the CGI App, such as where to send the processed data set</p> <p>These controls do not display but can be read by viewing a page's source code</p>
Name attribute	<code>&lt;input name="control_name"&gt;</code>	
Value attribute	<code>&lt;input value="data"&gt;</code>	Data = the info that is sent for processing
Password	<code>&lt;input type="password"&gt;</code>	<p>Please note that this mechanism affords only light security protection</p> <p>Although the password is masked by the browser from casual observers, it is transmitted to the server in clear text, and may be read by anyone with low-level access to the network</p>
<b>Universal attributes</b>		
Keyboard Shortcuts	<code>accesskey="keyboard_key"</code>	<p>Any form control can have this attribute</p> <p>Assign this attribute a keyboard letter or number so when the end user depresses that key the form control having that key as its accesskey attribute value will receive focus (i.e., be selected)</p>
Disabling form controls	<code>disabled="disabled"</code>	This attribute disables its form control

Element	Code	Note
		<p>May want to disable a submit button until all required fields are filled out</p> <p>In your javascript validation function you would set the disabled value to false (document.formname.submit.disable=false) if all required fields have passed validation</p> <p>Some browser may prefer the minimized form of the this attribute</p>
Tab Order	tabindex="n"	<p>N = an index number</p> <p>See example after this table</p>
<b>Form organizing elements</b>		
Fieldsets	<fieldset></fieldset>	The form controls nested with a fieldset will be boxed with a border
Legends	<legend>Legend Head</legend>	Legend is nested within the FIELDSET element and adds a head to the top of your boxed fieldset
Align attribute	align="left center right"	<p>Not supported by HTML 5</p> <p>Horizontally aligns the legend head along the top border of the fieldset</p> <p>Left is the default value</p>

## Setting Tab Order

You can select the order in which a form control will receive focus when pressing the Tab key on the end user's keyboard by using the TABINDEX attribute. Assign numbers beginning at zero. Note by default the tab order is the order in which the form controls are written, so only use this attribute to override the default tab order.

```
<form action="some_cgi_app" method="post">
Name:
  <input type="text" name="name" id="full_name" size="35" maxlength="55"
    tabindex="0"><br >
Email:
  <input type="text" name="email" size="35" maxlength="35" tabindex="1"> <br >
Street Address:
  <input type="text" name="street" size="35" maxlength="55" tabindex="2">
  <br>
City:
  <input type="text" name="city" size="35" maxlength="35" tabindex="3"> <br>

  <input type="submit" value="Submit" tabindex="4">
</form>
```

## Uploading Files

```
<form action="some_cgi_app" method="post" enctype="multipart/form-data">
```

The enctype (encode type) attribute can only be used when the method attribute is assigned the post value. The enctype determines the content type to use for encoding the form data set. The "multipart/form-data" value should be used for submitting forms that contain files, non-ASCII data, and binary data; it also makes sure that the correct MIME [Multipurpose Internet Mail Extensions] type is assigned to the uploaded file(s).

```
<input type= "file" name="control_name" size="30" accept="application/msword"> <br>
```

The above input element defines a form control for uploading files that will accept only MS Word documents.

```
Full Name: <input type= "text" name="full_name" size="30"> <br>
```

The above code creates a place for end user to enter their name, which will be sent to the server as part of the multipart data.

```
<input type="submit" value="Up Load File">
```

The above code defines a submit button.

```
</form>
```

The end tag above closes the form data set.