

# The 'href' and 'target' attributes

## THE 'HREF' ATTRIBUTE

The only attribute we have seen thus far in this chapter of hyperlinks is 'href'. href points to the URL that the link should jump to. Though it is an optional attribute, without it, the <a> tag will not be a hyperlink because it obviously has no idea where to jump to.

The href attribute takes a URL. This URL can be in the form of:

- a link to an external Web site also known as [absolute URL](#).

```
<a href="https://google.com"></a>
```

- a link to a file or page within the same Web site also known as [relative URL](#).

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

- link to an element on the same page. The element, is referenced using its 'id'. E.g. If you want to link to a div with id='details', the corresponding anchor tag will be:

```
<a href="#details"></a>
```

- protocols such as
  - mailto: | for email addresses.

```
<a href="mailto:abc@alphabets.com"></a>
```

## THE 'TARGET' ATTRIBUTE

'target' specifies the destination where the linked URL in href should be opened. It takes any valid URL as its value.

Destination	Attribute value	Example	Result (try this)
In the same view where the link resides. If no target is specified, this is the default behavior.	_self	<code>&lt;a href="https://google.com" target="_self"&gt;</code> <code>&lt;/a&gt;</code>	<a href="#">LINK will open in same window</a> (Navigate back to the course by clicking Back button in browser)
In a new window or tab. This is very convenient if you want to link the user to a Web page without having the current page disappear. By clicking on the previous window or tab, they can redirect to the page where the link is.  <b>Note:</b> It is best to inform users that the page will open in a new tab or window when using '_blank' as some may not be aware of the new tab having opened.	_blank	<code>&lt;a href="https://google.com" target="_blank"&gt;</code> <code>&lt;/a&gt;</code>	<a href="#">LINK will open in new window</a>

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## Knowledge check 2.5.2 (not graded)

True or False? The 'mailto:' protocol in the href attribute can validate the email address provided.

☐ True

☐ False

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