HTML Tables

About this Course

The web is filled with text and images, but it's also filled with information like sports scores throughout the years, list of employee names and email addresses, or nutrition facts for your favorite foods. HTML tables enable the display information in what is commonly known as tabular data, which is information that's stored in a table-like structure of columns and rows. In general, anything that you might put into a spreadsheet could go in a table. There are many use cases for a table, so it's important to add them to your skills because it's a very common method for displaying information.

What you'll learn

* Table elements
* Organizing tables

Table Basics

Tables are a little bit more involved than other HTML elements like paragraphs and images, because in order to construct a table, you need to use elements to represent the individual table cells, the rows that contain those cells, as well as the table itself.

Overview of Tables

It's very common for tables to be populated with information from a database. We're going to build a static table in plain HTML without a database, but for the sake of learning, we're going to imagine that we have a company with a few employees. Each employee will have an email address and a job role.

Resources

Throughout these videos, we'll be learning about many HTML table elements. If you'd like to learn more, be sure to read the notes section of each video to review vocabulary, code, and links to documentation. For starters, here's the [Mozilla Developer Network documentation for the <table> element](https://developer.mozilla.org/en-US/docs/Web/HTML/Element/table).

Create a Basic Table

Similar to an HTML form, you start out creating an HTML table by using the <table> element. It has an opening and closing tag, and it wraps all the table rows and table cells inside of it.

HTML Elements

* <table> - The table element represents data in a series of rows and columns. Tables should only be used for displaying tabular data, and never for page layout.
* <tr> - The table row element defines a row of cells in a table. Table rows can be filled with table cells and table header cells.
* <td> - The table cell element contains data and represents a single table cell. Each table cell should be inside a table row.

The Table Header Cell Element

The table header cell element helps to differentiate between header cells and regular table data. This is helpful for search engine crawlers and screen readers, as well as for CSS styling.

HTML Elements

* <th> - The table header cell helps label a group of cells in either a column or a row.

Structuring Tables

Extra structure can be helpful for automated pieces of software like search engines or screen readers, but it's also helpful for designers because it adds some additional elements that can be targeted with CSS.

The Table Head and Body Elements

The table head element is a completely different element from the table header cell element. In combination with the table body element, the table will gain additional structure.

HTML Elements

* <thead> - The table head element (not to be confused with the table header cell element) defines a set of rows that make up the header of a table.
* <tbody> - The table body element defines one or more rows that make up the primary contents (or "body") of a table.

The Table Foot Element

In general a table footer element should contain a summary of the table. This might be some final cells that are sums, totals, and averages for each column. A table footer might also just contain some meta information about the table itself, such as how frequently the table is updated, copyright information, or perhaps the source of the data within the table.

HTML Elements

* <tfoot> - The table foot element contains a summary of the table. This might be totals for columns of numerical data or meta information about the source of data.

The Caption Element

The caption element is basically a title for the table, and it should come immediately after the opening table tag. This is nice to add because it quickly summarizes what a table might contain.

HTML Elements

* <caption> - The caption element represents the title of the table.

More Table Tips

Tables should only be used for displaying tabular data and not for positioning images and text, because that can now be done with CSS.

Resources

If you'd like to learn more about tables, be sure to read the [Mozilla Developer Network documentation for the <table> element](https://developer.mozilla.org/en-US/docs/Web/HTML/Element/table) and other elements that relate to tables.