

Tutorial 1

Understanding the Basic Structure of an HTML Web Page

Understanding Hyper Text Markup Language, or HTML, is very important because it is the primary language used to build Web pages. Over a third of the world's population uses the Internet, and that statistic is growing. Hence, knowing some HTML is likely to become a necessity. Even if you are not a computer scientist, Web developer or Web designer, your profession may still require you to know some basic HTML, like how to create a hyperlink. Read the tutorial below to learn about the basic elements of an HTML Web page.

First take a look at this short HTML Web page sample; it is depicted here as how it appears in a text editor program:

```
1 <!DOCTYPE html>
2 <html>
3 <head>
4 <title>Smells Like Teen Spirit</title>
5 <style>
6   body {
7     background-color: lightblue;
8   }
9   h1 {
10    color: white;
11  }
12 </style>
13 </head>
14
15 <body>
16 <h1>Smells Like Teen spirit</h1>
17 <p>Entertain us.</p>
18 </body>
19
20</html>
```

Commands in HTML are characterized by start tags or opening tags and end tags or closing tags. For instance on line 4 above, there is the opening tag <title> and closing tag </title>. The text between these tags tell you the title of the document. Furthermore, all HTML documents start off with a document type

tag. This tag is found on line 1, and it tells you what type of HTML this document is written in (e.g. HTML vs. HTML5). The entire components of the HTML document, that is the content and styling or what you see in an Internet browser, are contained between the `<html>` tag on line 2 and the `</html>` tag on line 20; and the two main components of an HTML Web page are the head and body.

The head of the document above is contained between the `<head>` tag on line 3 and the `</head>` tag on line 13. The head contains important information such as links, keywords and the title. The head also contains information about the styling of the document. The styling (e.g. background color or font size) is in CSS or Cascading Style Sheets. The CSS language of an HTML document is contained between the tags `<style>` (line 5) and `</style>` (line 12) that are within the `<head>` tags. Lines 6 through 10 in the sample above are in CSS. In this example, the CSS tells you that the body of the Web page has a light blue background and the header or title (`h1` refers to the title on line 16) has a white font color. Not all HTML documents have the CSS embedded like you see above. Sometimes developers choose to have all the styling information in a separate CSS file that is linked to within the `<head>` tags. This allows for developers to edit the HTML and CSS of the Web page without getting the two confused.

Next is the body of the document which is contained between the `<body>` tag on line 15 and the `</body>` tag on line 18. The elements of the body comprise the content you see on a Web page in a browser. The header or title at of the content is “Smells Like Teen Spirit.” The text is found between the `<h1>` and `</h1>` tags on line 16. H tags refer to a specific header font. There are six H tags in HTML, and they look like this: `<h1>`, `<h2>`, `<h3>`, `<h4>`, `<h5>` and `<h6>`. Google each H tag to see how each one looks, or use a text editor and view your title live. On the next line, line 17, are P tags. P stands for paragraph, and P tags allow you to separate content into paragraphs within your HTML document. The text “Entertain us” is the first paragraph of the Web page. If you wanted a second paragraph, you would put your text between new P tags on the next line.

Now you understand the basic structure of an HTML Web page. In a Web browser this sample would appear as a light blue page with a large title in white and a simple paragraph in black text that reads “Entertain us.”