**Where do you write your JavaScript code?**

Take a step back

Remember, web browsers were originally built to understand HTML and CSS and convert those languages into something pretty on your screen. This part of the web browser is called the***rendering engine*** (I get more into this in my CRP course).

But did you know, that most browsers also have something called a ***JavaScript engine***.

This allows the browser to execute JavaScript.

The <script> tag

How does the browser know when it should be using the *rendering engine (for HTML and CSS)* or the *JavaScript engine (to execute JavaScript code)*?

The web browser is usually expecting HTML and CSS, so you must specifically tell the browser when JavaScript is coming.

And you do this by ... using the <script> tag.

The <script> tag is regular HTML.

It acts like a switch that effectively says “Hey browser, here is some JavaScript code. You don’t know how to deal with JavaScript so please pass it off to the JavaScript interpreter”.

And of course, when the browser encounters the closing </script> tag, it knows it’s reached the end of the JavaScript program and can get back to its normal duties.

Where can you place the <script> tag?

It is perfectly valid to put <script> tags anywhere inside the page’s HTML.

You will sometimes see some JavaScript code between the <head></head> tags. Or, you may see it in the <body></body> tags (or even in both places).

You’ll often see <script> tags just below the closing </body> tag—this approach makes sure the page is loaded and the visitor sees it before running any JavaScript.

Another option for including JavaScript on a page is creating the script in an external text file. Save that file with a .js extension, making it a JavaScript file. The .js file is then included in the page using the **src** attribute of the opening script tag.

There are reasons why you would prefer one approach to another (for example, to improve the critical rendering path) but this is beyond the scope of this course.

**Bottom line: To separate JavaScript code from normal HTML and CSS code, you need to enclose it within a set of <script></script> tags. This will make sure the JavaScript engine will know to deal with the code.**