**!DOCTYPE**

Specifies the Document Type Definition (DTD) to which the document conforms.

**What's New for Windows Internet Explorer 8**

The behavior of the **!DOCTYPE** declaration helps control the document compatibility mode. For more information, see [Defining Document Compatibility](http://msdn.microsoft.com/en-us/library/cc288325(VS.85).aspx).

**Syntax**

|  |  |
| --- | --- |
| **HTML** | TopElement  Availability "Registration//Organization//Type Label//Definition  Language""URL" |

**Possible Values**

|  |  |
| --- | --- |
| TopElement | Specifies the top-level element type declared in the DTD. This corresponds to the Standard Generalized Markup Language (SGML) document type being declared.  HTMLDefault. HTML. |
| Availability | Specifies whether the formal public identifier (FPI) is a publicly accessible object or a system resource.  PUBLICDefault. Publicly accessible object.  SYSTEMSystem resource, such as a local file or URL. |
| Registration | Specifies whether the organization is registered by the International Organization for Standardization (ISO).  +Default. Organization name is registered.  -Organization name is not registered. The Internet Engineering Task Force (IETF) and World Wide Web Consortium (W3C) are not registered ISO organizations. |
| Organization | Specifies a unique label indicating the name of the entity or organization responsible for the creation and maintenance of the DTD being referenced by the **!DOCTYPE** declaration—the OwnerID.  IETFIETF.  W3CW3C. |
| Type | Specifies the public text class, the type of object being referenced.  DTDDefault. DTD. |
| Label | Specifies the public text description, a unique descriptive name for the public text being referenced. Can be appended with the version number of the public text.  HTMLDefault. HTML. |
| Definition | Specifies the document type definition.  Frameset[frameSet](http://msdn.microsoft.com/en-us/library/ms535251(VS.85).aspx) documents.  StrictExcludes the presentation attributes and elements that the W3C expects to phase out as support for style sheets matures.  TransitionalContains everything except **frameSet** elements. |
| Language | Specifies the public text language, the natural language encoding system used in the creation of the referenced object. It is written as an [ISO 639](http://xml.coverpages.org/iso639a.html) World Wide Web link language code (uppercase, two letters).  ENDefault. English language. |
| URL | Specifies the location of the referenced object. |

**Remarks**

New for Internet Explorer 8 Internet Explorer 8 and later. The **!DOCTYPE** declaration helps determine the document compatibility mode of a Web page. The document compatibility mode of a Web page determines the level of conformance to industry standards, such as the [Cascading Style Sheets, Level 2.1 (CSS2.1)](http://www.w3.org/tr/css21) World Wide Web link and others. To enable the highest level of standards compliance, verify that your Web pages are rendered using the latest document compatibility mode available. For more information, see [Defining Document Compatibility](http://msdn.microsoft.com/en-us/library/cc288325(VS.85).aspx).

This declaration must occur at the beginning of the document, before the [html](http://msdn.microsoft.com/en-us/library/ms535255(VS.85).aspx) tag.

The **!DOCTYPE** element does not require a closing tag.

You can use this declaration to switch Microsoft Internet Explorer 6 and later into strict standards-compliant mode. You turn the switch on by including the **!DOCTYPE** declaration at the top of your document, specifying a valid **Label** in the declaration, and in some cases, specifying the **Definition** and/or **URL**. The following table shows when standards-compliance is on or off.

|  |  |  |
| --- | --- | --- |
| **DOCTYPE** | **URL Present** | **URL Not Present** |
| No DOCTYPE present | off | off |
| HTML (no version) | off | off |
| HTML 2.0 | off | off |
| HTML 3.0 | off | off |
| HTML 4.0 | on | on |
| HTML 4.0 Frameset | on | off |
| HTML 4.0 Transitional | on | off |
| HTML 4.0 Strict | on | on |
| XHTML | on | on |
| XML | on | on |
| Unrecognized DOCTYPE | on | on |

**Note**  In standards-compliant mode, compatibility with other versions of Internet Explorer is not guaranteed. When standards-compliant mode is switched on, the rendering behavior of documents may be different in later versions of Internet Explorer. You should not use this mode for content that is fixed in nature, such as content that is burned on a CD.

**Examples**

The following examples show how to use the **!DOCTYPE** declaration to specify the DTD a document conforms to, and to switch Internet Explorer 6 and later to standards-compliant mode.

Both of the declarations in the following example specify conformance to the HTML 4.0 DTD. The second declaration specifies "Strict" conformance to this DTD. The first declaration does not. Both declarations switch Internet Explorer 6 and later to standards-compliant mode.

[Copy Code](javascript:CopyCode('ctl00_MTCS_main_ctl18_code');" \o "Copy Code)

<!DOCTYPE HTML PUBLIC "-//W3C//DTD HTML 4.0//EN">

<!DOCTYPE HTML PUBLIC "-//W3C//DTD HTML 4.0 Strict//EN">

Both of the declarations in this example specify conformance to the "Transitional" HTML 4.0 DTD. The second declaration specifies the URL of the DTD. The first declaration does not. The second declaration switches Internet Explorer 6 and later to standards-compliant mode. The first declaration does not.

[Copy Code](javascript:CopyCode('ctl00_MTCS_main_ctl19_code');" \o "Copy Code)

<!DOCTYPE HTML PUBLIC "-//W3C//DTD HTML 4.0 Transitional//EN">

<!DOCTYPE HTML PUBLIC "-//W3C//DTD HTML 4.0 Transitional//EN"

"http://www.w3.org/TR/html4/loose.dtd">

**Standards Information**

This declaration is defined in [HTML 3.2](http://www.w3.org/tr/rec-html32.html) World Wide Web link.