Chapter 1: Introduction

Introduction

Welcome to *Introduction to CSS3 and HTML5*! My name is Alan Simpson, and I'll be your instructor. For many years, I worked in traditional publishing as a freelance author, and I've had over 100 computer articles published in dozens of languages throughout the world. My interest in developing websites started back when the World Wide Web first became available to the public. Since then, I've devoted most of my time to the online world rather than more traditional print publishing, and I've mastered many Web development tools and technologies, including HTML, XHTML, CSS, JavaScript, and ASP.Net.

I wanted to teach this course for many reasons. For one, I just enjoy creating websites. For another, of all the different Web development tools and technologies out there, CSS and HTML are the most important. There are a few reasons why. First, they're the foundation on which all other tools and technologies stand. Second, you can't really learn or use the other technologies until you've mastered CSS and HTML. And third, CSS and HTML, particularly CSS version 3 and HTML Version 5, which we'll discuss in this course, are cutting edge now and the wave of the future.

So let's talk about the goals of this course. They're pretty straightforward, really. When you complete this course, you should have a strong understanding of what CSS3 and HTML5 are, how to use them, and why you'd want to use them to create all of your Web pages. Most important, this course is about gaining HTML5 and CSS3 coding skills.

To help you achieve these goals, we'll build a working website together. In fact, if you have a place to post your site, you can use what you'll create to publish your own content. That includes pictures, videos, and sound files in your computer that you want to share. You'll also learn sufficient skills to add your own pages or even build entirely new websites from scratch.

Here in Lesson 1, I'd like to begin with some of the most basic, yet most important, tools, techniques, and terminology that you'll need to succeed in this course and in developing websites on your own.For those of you who recently completed the *Creating Web Pages* course, this will be a bit of a review. For those of you who managed to remember everything from that course, I apologize in advance for the overlap. But since few people remember everything they've learned, I think we'd be wise to go over the tools and techniques you really need to have down pat in order to do any kind of web development.

What You Should Already Know

Before moving on, I just want to make it clear that this isn't a course for beginners. Even though we'll be reviewing *some* material from the more basic *Creating Web Pages* course, if you've never created a Web page in your life or you've never heard of HTML, CSS, or *code*, then you may be in over your head here right from the start. You'd be better off starting with the *Creating Web Pages* course, which is the true beginner's course for all things related to creating websites. In this course, I'll review some of the key topics from that course. But it'll only be a quick review, and we'll only go over the key topics.

Like most online courses, this course assumes you're already computer literate enough to understand terms like *folder*, *file*, *click*, and *code* and are skilled enough to use copy and paste, open folders, save files, and so forth. If you're new to computers and not clear on those things, a beginner's course in a classroom environment would likely be a better starting point.

Why Learn HTML and CSS?

Many people wonder if it's even necessary to learn HTML nowadays. After all, there are countless programs and online services that allow you to create a site with point-and-click simplicity without even knowing that HTML exists. There's no shortage of programs for creating e-books and other electronic documents without knowing CSS or HTML. So why bother learning these languages when there are programs that will do all the hard work for you?

There are a couple answers to that question. Many of you taking this course may have already "been there, done that" with the fancy authoring systems. Maybe you're here now because you've discovered it's just not enough. Maybe you've learned that, for real creative prowess, you really need to know these languages yourself. Employers all seem to know this. And maybe you're here because your employer sent you here, or you're tired of having to answer "No" at job interviews when you're asked if you're fluent in CSS and HTML.

With CSS and HTML extending their reach into all forms of electronic publishing and application development, the need for people with knowledge to use them will continue to grow.

If you just want to create one website and be done with it, then sure, some kind of authoring system may be just the ticket to help you avoid the learning curve required to truly master CSS and HTML. But if you're looking to make a living in high tech and compete with the pros, gaining knowledge of CSS and HTML is a perfect starting point. So without any further ado, let's mosey over to Chapter 2 and get started.