

Learn to Code for the Web

Glossary

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A

Attribute

- A piece of metadata on an HTML tag to define extra properties, for example, class, href or src.

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B

Back-end code

- Code that runs on a webserver, that processes requests and serves responses. It cannot be viewed from a browser.

Browser

- A program that runs on a computer or device that accesses the world wide web.

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C

Class (HTML/CSS)

- A piece of metadata applied to an HTML element to identify it differently to others. Classes are applied to HTML elements via the element's class attribute. Many classes can be applied to a single element by separating them with a space inside the class attribute. CSS and JavaScript code can target elements with specific classes. In CSS, this is done via selectors.

Closing Tag

- The last tag of a pair that define an element, for example, `</p>`.

Comment

- A note in code written by a developer. Comments are ignored by computer programs that read code.

Content management system (CMS)

- A piece of software that stores and publishes the content for a website. A CMS will often provide a visual interface for editing content. It generates web pages by placing content into HTML templates.

CSS

- 'Cascading Style Sheets'. A language used for defining how web pages should look visually.

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D

DNS

- 'Domain Name Service'. The DNS matches domain names to IP addresses – similar to a telephone book.

Declaration (CSS)

- A single pair of property and rule in a CSS style sheet, for example, `margin-bottom: 10px`.

DOCTYPE declaration

- The first line of any HTML file that tells the browser to consider the rest of the file as HTML. For an HTML file, the DOCTYPE declaration reads <!DOCTYPE html>.

Domain name

- A human-readable address for a server on the internet.

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E

Element

- A single unit of HTML. It is defined by either a single tag, or an opening/closing pair of tags.

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F

Front-end code

- Code that appears in the browser that a user interacts with (and which can be viewed using browser tools).

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H

Host

- A computer on the web.

HTML

- 'Hypertext Markup Language'. The code language that web pages are all written in.

Hyperlink

- Commonly just referred to as a 'link'. An HTML element that references (and 'links to') another URL. Made with an <a> tag. The building block of the web: clicking a link navigates to it in your browser.

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I

IP Address

- A program that transforms source code to executable code a line at a time, running it as it goes.

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J

JavaScript

- A programming language. Web browsers can process JavaScript code, using it to manipulate the data on a web page, and to add rich interactivity to the page. Originally invented in 1995 at Netscape for their Navigator browser, it now can be used on the back-end as well as in the browser, and is one of the most popular programming languages in the world.

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M

Markup

- A 'markup language' is one that wraps human-readable text in other characters to add either formatting or structure. HTML is an example of a markup language. Sometimes, 'markup' is used as a term to refer to HTML code, eg "here is the markup for this page".

Metadata

- ‘Data about data’. A term used throughout computing; a common example might be the date and time a file was altered. In an HTML page, the <head> element contains metadata about a page, such as references to CSS and JavaScript files, as well as details of the tools that created the page, the language the page’s content is written in, and more.

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O

Opening tag

- The first tag of a pair that define an element, for example, <p>.

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P

Parse

- In computing, to ‘parse’ something (usually a file, string, or piece of data) means to read it and, internally, convert it to a structured representation of that data. Web browsers parse HTML and CSS, ‘reading’ the markup languages and converting the structures expressed in the textual code to elements that should appear on the screen.

Path

- The location on a host of a resource. Part of a URL.

Property (CSS)

- A single aspect of styling to be applied as part of a rule. Examples include: border, margin and font-size.

px

- Short for ‘pixels’; a unit of measurement in CSS, corresponding to a single dot on the screen.

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Q

Query string

- Part of a URL used to pass extra data to a URL. Example uses for query strings include sending search terms to a URL, or supplying a 'page number' for paginated results.

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R

Request

- What a computer sends to a web server when it requests a resource.

Resource

- A page, image, video, file or asset that exists somewhere on the web.

Response

- What a computer receives in response to a request.

Rule (CSS)

- A CSS rule defines styles to be applied to particular elements of an HTML page.

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S

Scheme

- In a URL, the 'scheme' is the very first thing that appears in it. A scheme describes what sort of resource the URL points at. For example, the 'http' scheme means that the remainder of the URL is a resource that can be requested over HTTP – meaning it is a web page. One way to think of a scheme is that it tells you the kind of application you should access that resource with.

Selector (CSS)

- A string that can be matched to one or more elements by the browser when it parses the CSS.

Style sheet

- Another way of referring to a collection of CSS rules, usually those in a single file.

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T

Tag

- A piece of HTML that surrounds text to make an element.

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U

URL

- Uniform Resource Locator. The location of a resource on the internet. Sometimes called a 'web address'.

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V

Value (CSS)

- The value to assign to a particular property, for example, 'lightgrey' or 'bold'. Sometimes supplied with a unit, for example, '10px', '5em'.

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