

# VS Code Setup and Configuration for Web Development

## Overview

Visual Studio Code (VS Code) is a free, powerful code editor that will be your primary tool for writing HTML, CSS, and managing your web projects. This guide helps you set up VS Code with the essential extensions and configuration for web development.

## Required Video Tutorial

Before following this guide, watch: “**Visual Studio Code Crash Course**” by Traversy Media - **Link:** [https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=WPqXP\\_kLzpo](https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=WPqXP_kLzpo) - **Watch Time:** 32 minutes (complete tutorial) - **Focus on:** Installation, interface, file management, basic extensions

*This comprehensive tutorial covers everything you need. The guide below provides course-specific configuration and web development focus.*

## Quick Setup Checklist

### Basic Installation

- ☐ Download and install VS Code from [code.visualstudio.com](https://code.visualstudio.com)
- ☐ Launch VS Code and complete the welcome setup
- ☐ Verify you can create and save a new file

### Essential Extensions for Web Development

Install these extensions through the Extensions panel (Ctrl/Cmd+Shift+X):

1. **Live Server** - Preview HTML files in browser with auto-reload
2. **Prettier - Code Formatter** - Automatic code formatting
3. **Auto Rename Tag** - Automatically rename paired HTML tags
4. **HTML CSS Support** - Enhanced CSS support in HTML files
5. **Color Highlight** - Visual preview of color codes

### Recommended Settings

- ☐ Enable format on save (Settings → Format On Save)
- ☐ Set default formatter to Prettier
- ☐ Enable auto save (File → Auto Save)

## Course-Specific Configuration

### Creating Your Workspace

1. **Create a course folder** on your computer (e.g., MLA60970-WebDev)

2. **Open the folder** in VS Code (File → Open Folder)
3. **Create your first HTML file** to test setup

## Essential Web Development Features

**Live Preview Setup:** - Install Live Server extension - Right-click any HTML file → “Open with Live Server” - Your webpage opens in browser and updates automatically as you code

**File Organization:** - Create folders for each week (Week1, Week2, etc.) - Keep HTML, CSS, and image files organized - Use clear, professional file names

**Code Formatting:** - Prettier extension formats your code automatically - Ensures consistent, readable HTML and CSS - Activated by saving files (if format on save is enabled)

## Professional Development Context

### Why VS Code for Web Development?

- **Industry Standard:** Used by professional web developers worldwide
- **Free and Open Source:** No cost, regularly updated
- **Extensive Extensions:** Thousands of tools available
- **Git Integration:** Built-in version control support
- **Live Preview:** See changes instantly as you code

### Skills You’ll Develop

- **Professional Code Editor Usage:** Essential for any web development career
- **File Management:** Organizing web projects efficiently
- **Code Formatting:** Writing clean, maintainable code
- **Live Development:** Modern web development workflow
- **Extension Management:** Customizing development environment

## Troubleshooting Common Issues

### VS Code Won’t Open Files

- **Check file permissions** - ensure you have write access to your project folder
- **Try running as administrator** (Windows) or with sudo (Mac/Linux) if needed
- **Restart VS Code** and try opening folder again

### Live Server Not Working

- **Check extension is installed** - Extensions panel → search “Live Server”

- **Right-click HTML file** → ensure “Open with Live Server” option appears
- **Check firewall settings** - may block local server connection

### Code Not Formatting

- **Install Prettier extension**
- **Enable format on save** - Settings → search “format on save”
- **Set Prettier as default formatter** - Settings → search “default formatter”

### Testing Your Setup

Create a simple test file to verify everything works:

1. **Create new file:** test.html
2. **Add basic HTML structure:**

```
<!DOCTYPE html>
<html lang="en">
<head>
  <meta charset="UTF-8">
  <meta name="viewport" content="width=device-width, initial-scale=1.0">
  <title>VS Code Test</title>
</head>
<body>
  <h1>Hello, Web Development!</h1>
  <p>If you can see this in your browser, VS Code is set up correctly.</p>
</body>
</html>
```

3. **Save the file** (should auto-format with Prettier)
4. **Right-click** → **Open with Live Server**
5. **Verify** the page opens in your browser

If all steps work, you’re ready for Week 1!

### Next Steps

#### Prepare for Course Content

- **Review HTML basics** - understand tags, elements, attributes
- **Explore CSS fundamentals** - styling, selectors, properties
- **Practice file organization** - create folders for different projects

#### Additional Learning Resources

- **MDN Web Docs** - Comprehensive web development reference
- **W3Schools** - Beginner-friendly tutorials and examples

- **VS Code Documentation** - Official guides and tips

### **Professional Portfolio Setup**

Your VS Code setup serves you beyond this course: - **Future web projects** - personal websites, portfolios, client work - **Career development** - demonstrate professional tool usage - **Continued learning** - foundation for advanced web development

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*With VS Code properly configured, you're ready to begin professional web development. This setup will serve you throughout the course and in future web development projects.*