HTML, or HyperText Markup Language, is the foundational language for creating web pages. Think of it as the **skeleton of any website**, providing its basic structure and content.

It uses a system of **tags** enclosed in angle brackets, like `<p>` for a paragraph or `<img>` for an image, to define different elements on a page. These tags often come in pairs, with an opening tag and a closing tag (e.g., `<p>Hello world!</p>`). Some tags, like `<img>` or `<br>` (for a line break), are self-closing.

HTML isn't a programming language; it's a **markup language**. This means it doesn't perform dynamic actions or complex logic. Instead, it instructs web browsers on how to display content—where text should go, where images should appear, how headings should be formatted, and where links should lead.

Modern HTML, currently at **HTML5**, supports multimedia elements, interactive forms, and better semantic structuring, making it more powerful for developing rich web experiences. While HTML defines the content and structure, it works hand-in-hand with **CSS (for styling)** and **JavaScript (for interactivity)** to build the dynamic and visually appealing websites we use every day.