**The FORM Tag and Attributes**

A form is created using the FORM tag. It goes in the BODY of a regular HTML page, just like most other HTML tags.

Tag: **FORM**  
Description: this tag marks the boundaries of an HTML form. This tag MUST close. There may be more than one form on an HTML page. Each FORM tag will almost always have just ONE submit button (or simulated submit button) associated with it. (Note: It is occasionally desirable to have a form submitted that will indicate certain variables, for example, different months. In this case you would use a submit button for each month; each input tag would contain the same name but a different value.) If you only see one submit button on a page, you can be sure that there's only one FORM tag present. There will NEVER be any FORM tag WITHOUT a submit button (or simulated submit button). We will talk about creating form elements and submit buttons in the next section.

Example:

<form>

<!-- one or more form elements, with their accompanying HTML context -->

<!-- a submit button -->

</form>

Two attributes for the FORM tag are used when connecting a form for unformatted email or to a CGI script: METHOD and ACTION. (We will discuss CGI scripts in the next module.)

Tag: **FORM**  
Attribute: **METHOD**  
Value: **post** or **get** (default)  
Description: this attribute defines the manner in which the form information is conveyed to a URL for providing unformatted email or conveyed to a URL containing a CGI script.

Example (abbreviated):

<form method="post">

<!-- all form element statements -->

</form>

Tag: **FORM**  
Attribute: **ACTION**  
Value: **mailto:EMAIL-ADDRESS**  
Description: the ACTION attribute of the FORM tag connects that form to a URL for providing "insecure" email, which means that the form data is NOT encrypted, but it does NOT mean that any harm will come to your computer or to the person's computer receiving the email of the form data. It is wise not to send any sensitive data, e.g., a credit card. In this case, you must use the method of 'post', so that the email goes off without needing to be attached to anything. With most browsers, when the submit button for the form is pressed then an email will open up containing the selected name/values.

Example:

<form method="post" action="mailto:srubin45@comcast.net"

enctype="text/plain">

<!-- all form element statements -->

</form>

Note: enctype="text/plain" should be included in your form statement when sending unformatted email. It specifies the MIME type of the data to be sent by the post method.

If you use Internet Explorer, the email that you receive will have as its header, "Form posted from Microsoft Internet Explorer". If you use Firefox, the email that you receive will have as its header, "Form posted from Firefox". If you do not include enctype="text/plain" in your form statement, you will be able to open the email but the data will occur in a string that will be somewhat hard to read. Regardless, the file will be called, POSTDATA.ATT. If you do include enctype="text/plain", when you open the email, you will see something that is easy to read. The above description is also true for hills email opened through pine.

Note that mailto:LOGIN@hills.ccsf.edu or LOGIN@ccsf.edu, where LOGIN is your hills login, will not work. It should be LOGIN@mail.ccsf.edu

**To Review:**

The form statement should be the first statement of your form and the </form> should be the last statement of your form. For example:  
  
<form action="mailto:srubin@mail.ccsf.edu" method="post" title="Feedback Form" enctype="text/plain" name="form">

<!-- all form element statements -->

<input ....  
<select ...  
<textarea ...  
<input type="submit"...  
<input type="reset" ....  
  
</form>  
  
In Homework 8, your form statement will use a different value of the action parameter.

For example:  
  
<form action="/cgi-bin/cgiwrap/srubin/form1.pl" method="post" name="myform">