



JavaScript beforeunload Event

Summary: in this tutorial, you will learn about the JavaScript `beforeunload` event that allows you to display a confirmation dialog before the user leaves a webpage.

Introduction to JavaScript beforeunload event

Before the webpage and its resources are unloaded, the `beforeunload` event is fired. At this time, the webpage is still visible and you have an opportunity to cancel the event.

To register for the `beforeunload` event, you use the `window.addEventListener()` method:

```
window.addEventListener('beforeunload', (event) =>{  
    // do something here  
});
```

Since the `window` is the global object, you can omit it like this:

```
addEventListener('beforeunload', (event) =>{  
    // do something here  
});
```

If a webpage has a `beforeunload` event listener and you are about to leave the page, the `beforeunload` event will trigger a confirmation dialog to confirm if you want to leave the page.

If you confirm, the browser navigates you to the new page. Otherwise, it cancels the navigation.

According to the specification, you need to call the `preventDefault()` method inside the `beforeunload` event handler to show the confirmation dialog. However, not all browsers implement this:

```
addEventListener('beforeunload', (event) => {  
    event.preventDefault();  
});
```

Historically, some browsers allow you to display a custom message on the confirmation dialog. This was intended to inform the users that they would lose data if they navigated away. Unfortunately, this feature is often used to scam users. As a result, a custom message is no longer supported.

Based on the HTML specification, the calls to `alert()` , `confirm()` , and `prompt()` are ignored in the `beforeunload` event handler.

JavaScript beforeunload event example

The following example attaches an event handler to the `beforeunload` event. If you click the link to navigate to another page, the browser will show a confirmation dialog.

```
<!DOCTYPE html>  
<html lang="en">  
  
  <head>  
    <meta charset="UTF-8">  
    <meta name="viewport" content="width=device-width, initial-scale=1.0">  
    <title>JS beforeunload Event</title>  
  </head>  
  
  <body>  
    <a href="https://www.javascripttutorial.net/">JavaScript Tutorial</a>  
    <script>  
      window.addEventListener('beforeunload', (event) => {  
        event.preventDefault();  
        // Google Chrome requires returnValue to be set.  
        event.returnValue = '';  
      });  
    </script>  
  </body>
```

```
</html>
```

Summary

- The `beforeunload` event is fired before the webpage and its resources are about to unload.
- Use `beforeunload` to confirm if users want to leave the page to prevent data loss.

Quiz