

The most common DOM methods at a glance

Reaching Elements in a Document

`document.getElementById('id')`: Retrieves the element with the given `id` as an object

`document.getElementsByTagName('tagname')`: Retrieves all elements with the tag name `tagname` and stores them in an array-like list

Reading Element Attributes, Node Values and Other Data

`node.getAttribute('attribute')`: Retrieves the value of the attribute with the name `attribute`

`node.setAttribute('attribute', 'value')`: Sets the value of the attribute with the name `attribute` to `value`

`node.nodeType`: Reads the type of the `node` (1 = element, 3 = text node)

`node.nodeName`: Reads the name of the `node` (either element name or `#textNode`)

`node.nodeValue`: Reads or sets the value of the `node` (the text content in the case of text nodes)

Navigating Between Nodes

`node.previousSibling`: Retrieves the previous sibling node and stores it as an object.

`node.nextSibling`: Retrieves the next sibling node and stores it as an object.

`node.childNodes`: Retrieves all child nodes of the object and stores them in an list. here are shortcuts for the first and last child node, named `node.firstChild` and `node.lastChild`.

`node.parentNode`: Retrieves the node containing `node`.

Creating New Nodes

`document.createElement(element)`: Creates a new element node with the name `element`. You provide the name as a string.

`document.createTextNode(string)`: Creates a new text node with the node value of `string`.

`newNode = node.cloneNode(bool)`: Creates `newNode` as a copy (clone) of `node`. If `bool` is `true`, the clone includes clones of all the child nodes of the original.

`node.appendChild(newNode)`: Adds `newNode` as a new (last) child node to `node`.

`node.insertBefore(newNode, oldNode)`: Inserts `newNode` as a new child node of `node` before `oldNode`.

`node.removeChild(oldNode)`: Removes the child `oldNode` from `node`.

`node.replaceChild(newNode, oldNode)`: Replaces the child node `oldNode` of `node` with `newNode`.

`element.innerHTML`: Reads or writes the HTML content of the given element as a string—including all child nodes with their attributes and text content.

Known browser quirks:

`getAttribute` and `setAttribute` are not reliable. Instead, assign the property of the element object directly: `obj.property = value`. Furthermore, some attributes are actually reserved words, so instead of `class` use `className` and instead of `for` use `HTMLfor`.

Real DOM compliant browsers will return linebreaks as text nodes in the `childNodes` collection, make sure to either remove them or test for the `nodeType`.