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## How To Use DL, DT And DD HTML Tags To List Data vs Table List Data (<http://www.onextrapixel.com/2009/05/13/how-to-use-dl-dt-and-dd-html-tags-to-list-data-vs-table-list-data/>)

May 13th, 2009 by Terrance (<http://www.onextrapixel.com/author/terrance/>) | Tutorials (<http://www.onextrapixel.com/category/tutorials/>) | 48 Comments (<http://www.onextrapixel.com/2009/05/13/how-to-use-dl-dt-and-dd-html-tags-to-list-data-vs-table-list-data/#comments>)

Many past web designers would love to create web design using table and it has been the Achilles point for web developers when it comes to debugging. Now, however when it come to listing data on a web page, example listing data of a profile, many people would use a HTML table instead. In fact, by using HTML `dl`, `dt`, `dd` tags, you will save on writing more codes and add more semantic value to the content. Whereas table are best use for tabular data, and should not be use in listing data, web form or web layout.

If you are still creating list data using table, look below and compare on how to make your life easier with HTML `dl`, `dt`, `dd` tags.

### DL, DT, DD Tags List Data

Name:	John Don
Age:	23
Gender:	Male
Day of Birth:	12th May 1986

VS.

### Table List Data

Name:	John Don
Age:	23
Gender:	Male
Day of Birth:	12th May 1986

Which is better?

Demo (<http://www.onextrapixel.com/examples/dl-tags-vs-table/>) Download (<http://www.onextrapixel.com/examples/dl-tags-vs-table/dl-tags-vs-table.zip>)

It may both look identical, but look closely behind the codes.

## Table List Data

A typical listing data using table can be as follow. First we have a `tr` table row to hold the title and the data `td` table cell. Then when we need to style the **title** element, we will need to give a class to that `td` table cell.

```
1 <table>
2   <tr>
3     <td class="title">Name: </td>
4     <td class="text">John Don</td>
5   </tr>
6 </table>
```

```

7         <td class="title">Age: </td>
8         <td class="text">23</td>
9     </tr>
10    <tr>
11        <td class="title">Gender: </td>
12        <td class="text">Male</td>
13    </tr>
14    <tr>
15        <td class="title">Day of Birth:</td>
16        <td class="text">12th May 1986</td>
17    </tr>
18 </table>

```

So over here in the CSS, we style the title class that we had declare in the HTML.

```

1  /*TABLE LIST DATA*/
2  table {
3      margin-bottom:50px;
4  }
5
6  table tr .title {
7      background:#5f9be3;
8      color:#fff;
9      font-weight:bold;
10     padding:5px;
11     width:100px;
12 }
13
14 table tr .text {
15     padding-left:10px;
16 }

```

From here you can see that if you want to change the design or format for the title in the CSS, you will need to give each `td` for the title a class. If you want to style the data as well, you will need to give a class to it as well, so you are actually writing a lot of codes. More codes mean larger file size to download, more chances for bugs and harder for you to maintain.

## DL, DT, DD List Data

Now, let's look at using HTML `dl`, `dt`, `dd` tags for listing the data. First we have the `dl` (definition list) tag to hold the whole set of data, next we have `dt` (defines the item in the list) tag and `dd` (describes the item in the list) tag to hold the title and the data.

```

1  <dl>
2      <dt>Name: </dt>
3      <dd>John Don</dd>
4
5      <dt>Age: </dt>
6      <dd>23</dd>
7
8      <dt>Gender: </dt>
9      <dd>Male</dd>
10
11     <dt>Day of Birth:</dt>
12     <dd>12th May 1986</dd>
13 </dl>

```

Over at CSS, we will need to float the `dt` tag, so that the title for the list data will align to the left. The rest of the styling is up to you.

```

1  /*DL, DT, DD TAGS LIST DATA*/
2  dl {
3      margin-bottom:50px;
4  }
5
6  dl dt {

```

```
7      background:#5f9be3;
8      color:#fff;
9      float:left;
10     font-weight:bold;
11     margin-right:10px;
12     padding:5px;
13     width:100px;
14 }
15
16 dl dd {
17     margin:2px 0;
18     padding:5px 0;
19 }
```

From `dl`, `dt`, `dd` tags example, you can see that the codes are lesser, sleeker and much more semantic.

Demo (<http://www.onextrapixel.com/examples/dl-tags-vs-table/>) Download (<http://www.onextrapixel.com/examples/dl-tags-vs-table/dl-tags-vs-table.zip>)

So if you are still using table to consolidate or list your data on the web form and web layout, it's really time now to make the switch. It's definitely going to make your life a lot more easier.

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