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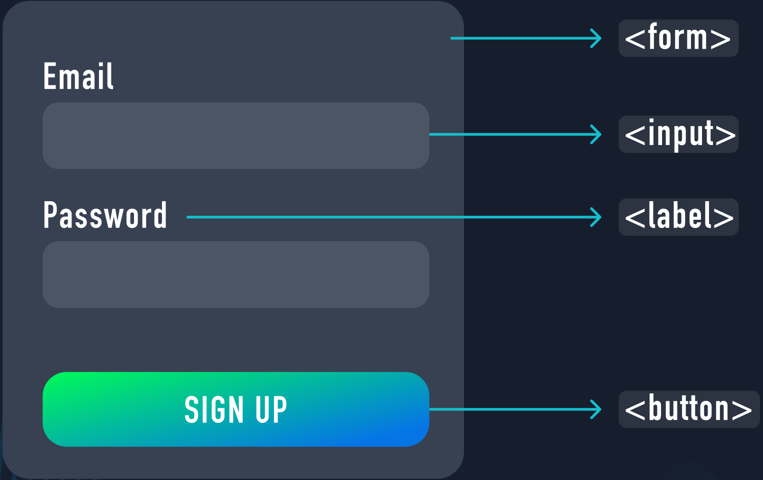
14 HTML FORMS BEST PRACTICES

01 Use meaningful HTML

Use the elements and attributes built for the job:



Email

Password

SIGN UP

<form>

<input>

<label>

<button>

02 Always use a <form> element.

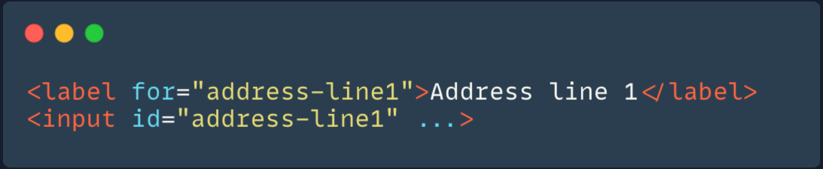
Why?

- It gives you access to a powerful set of built-in features across all modern browsers.
- Can help make your site accessible to screen readers and other assistive devices.
- Makes it simpler to build basic functionality for older browsers with limited JavaScript support.

If you have more than one page component for user input, make sure to put each in its own <form> element

03 Use <label> to label elements

Associate a label with an input by giving the label's for attribute the same value as the input's id.



```
<label for="address-line1">Address line 1</label>
<input id="address-line1" ...>
```

A tap or click on a label moves focus to the input it's associated with, and screenreaders announce label text when the label or the label's input gets focus.

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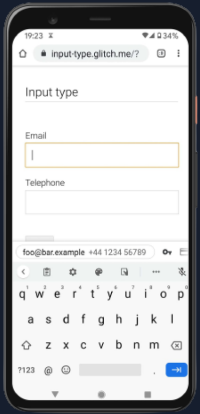
04 Make the most of HTML attributes

Use the appropriate input type attribute to provide the right keyboard on mobile and enable basic built-in validation by the browser.

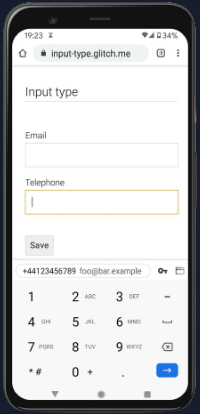


Input type

Email

Telephone

type="email"



Input type

Email

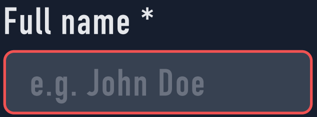
Telephone

Save

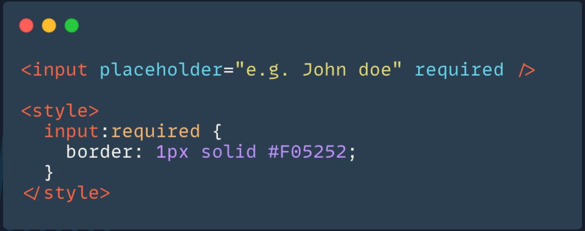
type="tel"

05 Help users avoid missing required data

- Use the `required` attribute on inputs for mandatory values.
- Add an asterisk to the label for every required field, and add a note at the start of the form to explain what the asterisk means.


Full name *

e.g. John Doe



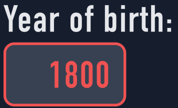
```
<input placeholder="e.g. John doe" required />

<style>
  input:required {
    border: 1px solid #F05252;
  }
</style>
```

When a form is submitted modern browsers automatically prompt and set focus on required fields with missing data, and you can use the :required pseudo-class to highlight required fields. No JavaScript required!

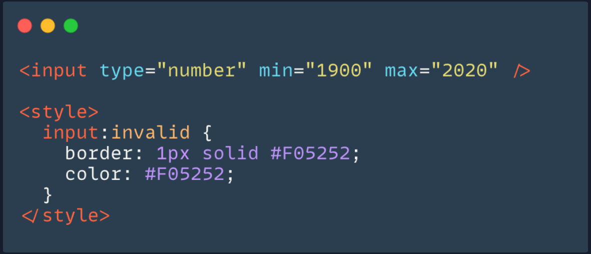
06 Help users enter the right data

- You can add constraint attributes to form elements to specify acceptable values, including min, max, and pattern.
- Make use of the `:valid` and `:invalid` CSS pseudo-classes which can be used to style elements with valid or invalid values.



Year of birth:

1800



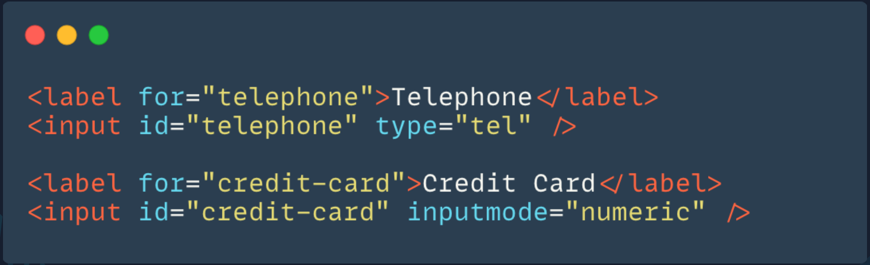
```
<input type="number" min="1900" max="2020" />

<style>
  input:invalid {
    border: 1px solid #F05252;
    color: #F05252;
  }
</style>
```

07 Don’t always use type="number"

type="number" adds an up/down arrow to increment numbers, which makes no sense for data such as telephone, payment card or account numbers.

For numbers that don’t require an up/down arrow use inputmode=”numeric”, this prompts a numeric keyboard on mobile.



```html
<label for="telephone">Telephone</label>
<input id="telephone" type="tel" />

<label for="credit-card">Credit Card</label>
<input id="credit-card" inputmode="numeric" />
```

08

Use the enterkeyhint attribute on inputs.

Use the enterkeyhint attribute on form inputs to set the mobile keyboard enter key label.

`<input enterkeyhint=”next” />`	Takes the user to the next field that accepts text
`<input enterkeyhint=”prev” />`	Takes the user to the previous field that accepts text
`<input enterkeyhint=”search” />`	Takes the user to the results of searching for the text they have typed
`<input enterkeyhint=”done” />`	Last input on the form

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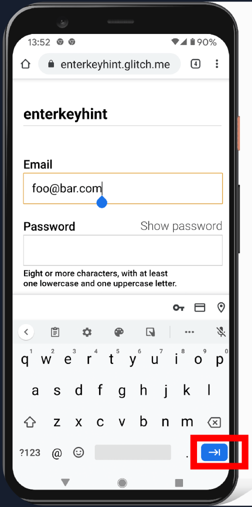
08 Use the enterkeyhint attribute on inputs.



13:52 90%

enterkeyhint.glitch.me

enterkeyhint

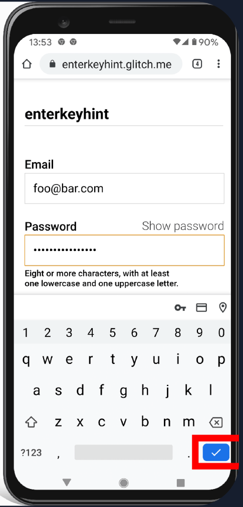
Email

foo@bar.com

Password Show password

Eight or more characters, with at least one lowercase and one uppercase letter.

enterkeyhint=”next”



13:53 90%

enterkeyhint.glitch.me

enterkeyhint

Email

foo@bar.com

Password Show password

••••••••••••••••

Eight or more characters, with at least one lowercase and one uppercase letter.

enterkeyhint=”done”

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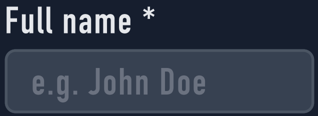
09 Use a single name input

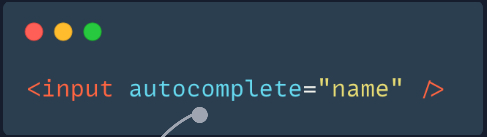
Unless you have a very good reason:

- Don’t have two separate fields for the name (like first name, last name).
- Don’t add a separate input for a prefix or title (like Mrs, Dr or Lord)



Full name *

e.g. John Doe



```html
<input autocomplete="name" />
```

When a user starts to type in a field, the browser should display options to fill in the field, in this case only name related options

10 Help users avoid re-entering payment data

Add appropriate autocomplete values in payment card forms, including the payment card number, name on the card, and the expiry month and year:

```
<input autocomplete=”cc-number” />

<input autocomplete=”cc-name” />

<input autocomplete=”cc-exp-month” />

<input autocomplete=”cc-exp-year” />
```

11 Make buttons helpful

For submit buttons you can use `<button>` or `<input type="submit">`, but don't use a div or some other random element acting as a button.

Also:

- Don't disable a submit button waiting on form completion or validation.
- Do disable a submit button once the user has tapped or clicked it.
- Give each form submit button a value that says what it does.
  e.g.
  Label the submit button on your delivery address form ‘Proceed to Payment’ rather than ‘Continue’ or ‘Save’.

12 Use autocomplete attribute

Use autocomplete to improve accessibility and help users avoid re-entering data.

Some common values:

`<input autocomplete=”on” />`	Autocomplete is enabled but no guidance is given to the browser.
`<input autocomplete=”country” />`	A country or territory code.
`<input autocomplete=”organization” />`	A company or organization name.
`<input autocomplete=”username” />`	A username or account name.

For a full list of autocomplete values:
https://developer.mozilla.org/en-US/docs/Web/HTML/Attributes/autocomplete

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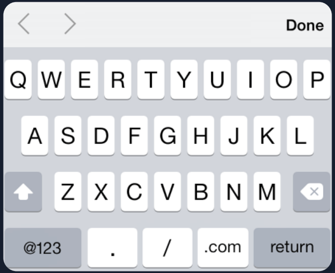
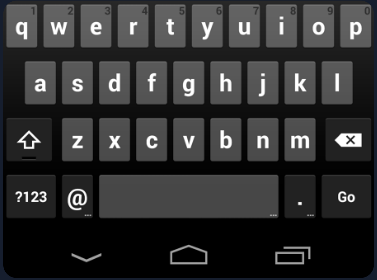
13 Choose the best input type

Choose the most appropriate input type for your data to simplify input.



```
<input type=”url” />
```

For entering a URL. It must start with a valid URI scheme, for example http://, ftp:// or mailto:.



```
<input type=”email” />
```

For entering email addresses, and hints that the @ should be shown on the keyboard by default.

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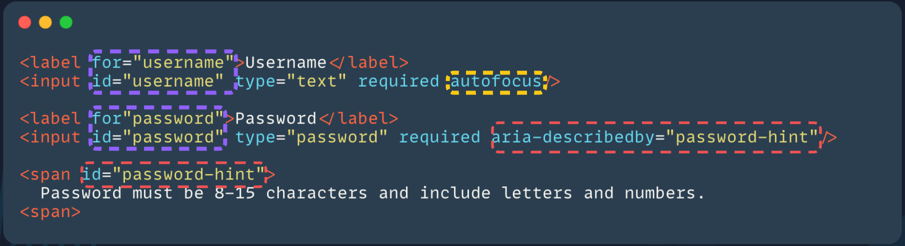
14 Make your forms accessible:

At the bare minimum, make sure:

- To set autofocus on the first form input.
- You can navigate your form with just the Tab key.
- To use a label, in cases you can't use a label, add it anyways and hide it with CSS.
- To include any instructions with specific fields using aria-describedby.



```html
<label for="username">Username</label>
<input id="username" type="text" required autofocus/>

<label for"password">Password</label>
<input id="password" type="password" required aria-describedby="password-hint"/>

<span id="password-hint">
  Password must be 8-15 characters and include letters and numbers.
<span>
```