

Software Development Unit 1.7

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Candidates should be able to describe at least the following file types as open standards related to the web. HTML, txt, pdf, jpg, png, svg, mpg, mp3 (Note mp3 is an ISO standard but there are a number of patent issues associated with it. Worth mentioning .ogg as an up and coming fully open alternative.)

Creating a website requires different types of file types incorporated within the website itself. Not all image, text, music or video file types are the same. It would be ideal for website creators to be aware of the different types of file types to know which ones will be most appropriate for their website. The more open a file type is, the less likely it is to have compatibility issues with various devices and browsers. Also using a more compressed file format can be less taxing to the website's bandwidth allocation.

For instance, a lot of people use Microsoft Office (MO) which has file types of **.docx** (Word), **.ppt** (PowerPoint), **.xlsx** (Excel). However, not everyone has MO since it's not free. If a website creator uploads files like these, people who don't own MO may not be able to read these files. This is why it's important to use open standard file types to make the content accessible, regardless of what software the viewer is using.

An example will be to use **.pdf** files which display a document as it's intended to appear. For example, Word documents and PowerPoint presentations can be saved as PDF files and it takes a snapshot of your work. The file will appear the same and display consistently regardless of what device or browser is used. *Side note: You're reading this homework in PDF format, which will display to you exactly as I intended to.*

Although PDF files are great, the best solution would still be to have the content embedded within the actual **.html** file, supported by **.css**. The information will display for the viewer without the need for additional downloads. In my website, I specifically kept the content within the HTML file and used a CSS file to keep the design consistent across all my pages.

There are many other open standard file types that are predominantly used on websites. It is common to find **.jpg** which is a standard photo and **.png** files which has the ability to apply transparency within images. If you want to retain the quality of the photo without losing pixels, vector files types such as **.svg** can be used too. In my website, I used two different formats: JPG and PNG. My navigation buttons currently have curved edges and I wanted the background to be transparent; therefore, I saved these as a PNG. With regards to my art work, I've kept those as a JPG format, both for the main file and the thumbnails.

When it comes to music, the file type **.mp3** became very popular in the last couple of decades because of its compressed file size. There was a long patent issue for MP3, but it has been patent-free since 2017. Saying that there is an even better file type called **.ogg** which is used by music provider giant Spotify which compresses to even smaller files with excellent quality.

Overall, PDF, HTML, CSS, JPG, PNG, SVG, MP3, OGG etc. are open standards, meaning they are readable file formats even if you swap software. These open standard file types are recognised and accepted by most of the technological world; therefore, will make websites, including mine, more accessible.