



HTML: The 16 Content Categories and Their Elements

Post from January 20, 2021 (🔄 May 27, 2021), filed under Web Development.

HTML puts elements into categories, so-called content categories. The specification describes these in the sections on kinds of content and element content categories.

This article serves as a boring, brief, but updated overview over the broad and overlapping categories of HTML, and which elements fall into them (without going into detail on elements with exceptions):

Metadata Content

- base
- link
- meta
- noscript
- script
- style
- template
- title

Flow Content

- a
- abbr
- address
- area (*under circumstances*)
- article
- aside
- audio
- b
- bdi

- bdo
- blockquote
- br
- button
- canvas
- cite
- code
- data
- date
- datalist
- del
- details
- dfn
- dialog
- div
- dl
- em
- embed
- fieldset
- figure
- footer
- form
- h1
- h2
- h3
- h4
- h5
- h6
- header
- hgroup
- hr
- i
- iframe

- `img`
- `input`
- `ins`
- `kbd`
- `keygen`
- `label`
- `link` (*under circumstances*)
- `main` (*under circumstances*)
- `map`
- `mark`
- `math` (*MathML*)
- `menu`
- `meta` (*under circumstances*)
- `meter`
- `nav`
- `noscript`
- `object`
- `ol`
- `output`
- `p`
- `picture`
- `pre`
- `progress`
- `q`
- `ruby`
- `s`
- `samp`
- `script`
- `section`
- `select`
- `slot`
- `small`
- `span`

- strong
- sub
- sup
- svg (*SVG*)
- table
- template
- textarea
- time
- u
- ul
- var
- video
- wbr
- autonomous custom elements
- text content (under circumstances)

Sectioning Content

- article
- aside
- nav
- section

Heading Content

- h1
- h2
- h3
- h4
- h5
- h6
- hgroup

Phrasing Content

- a (under circumstances)

- abbr
- area (*under circumstances*)
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- i
- iframe
- img
- input
- ins (*under circumstances*)
- kbd
- keygen
- label
- link (*under circumstances*)
- map (*under circumstances*)
- mark
- math (*MathML*)
- meta (*under circumstances*)
- meter
- noscript

- object
- output
- picture
- progress
- q
- ruby
- s
- samp
- script
- select
- slot
- small
- span
- strong
- sub
- sup
- svg (*SVG*)
- template
- textarea
- time
- u
- var
- video
- wbr
- autonomous custom elements
- text content (under circumstances)

Embedded Content

- audio
- canvas
- embed
- iframe
- img

- math (*MathML*)
- object
- picture
- svg (*SVG*)
- video

Interactive Content

- a (*under circumstances*)
- audio (*under circumstances*)
- button
- details
- embed
- iframe
- img (*under circumstances*)
- input (*under circumstances*)
- keygen
- label
- object (*under circumstances*)
- select
- textarea
- video (*under circumstances*)

There are also the following categories:

Sectioning Roots

- blockquote
- body
- details
- dialog
- fieldset
- figure
- td

Form-Associated Elements

- button
- fieldset
- input
- label
- object
- output
- select
- textarea
- img
- form-associated custom elements

Listed Elements

- button
- fieldset
- input
- object
- output
- select
- textarea
- form-associated custom elements

Submittable Elements

- button
- input
- object
- select
- textarea
- form-associated custom elements

Resettable Elements

- input
- output
- select

- textarea
- form-associated custom elements

Autocapitalize-Inheriting Elements

- button
- fieldset
- input
- output
- select
- textarea

Labelable Elements

- button
- input
- meter
- output
- progress
- select
- textarea
- form-associated custom elements

Palpable Content

Per the HTML specification, “palpable content” is content that makes an element non-empty by providing either some descendant non-empty text, or something else users can hear, see, or otherwise interact with.

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- aside
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- bdo
- blockquote

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- embed
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- math (*MathML*)
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- select
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- span
- strong
- sub
- sup
- svg (*SVG*)
- table
- textarea
- time
- u
- var
- video
- autonomous custom elements

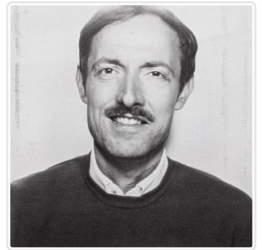
Script-Supporting Elements

- script
- template

🔗 *These categories are useful, for example to identify all available as well as the semantically appropriate elements. They can also inform sorting schemes, as with an order to sort CSS selectors by.*

About Me

I'm Jens Oliver Meiert, and I'm an engineering manager and author. I've worked as a technical lead for Google, I'm close to the W3C and the WHATWG, and I write and review books for O'Reilly. Other than that, I love trying things, sometimes including philosophy, art, and adventure. Here on meiert.com I share some of my views and experiences.



If you have questions or suggestions about what I write, please leave a comment (if available) or a message.

Found a mistake? Email me, jens@meiert.com.