

Why do we need a XML schema file ?

A XML Schema file is a contract between two XML Users.

i.e if application 1 and application 2 are exchanging messages for data, without a contract defined for what xml elements and attributes should be present in this xml application 1 can send in any data which application 2 does not understand and application 2 can also do the same.

That is where XML Schema definition comes in to picture and these two applications right when they are being developed can agree on a contract by defining all the elements and attributes in the xml schema definition file for this xml.

Another example , lets assume that we have bought an employee management software for our company and this software needs to access our employee database. The third party software uses a xml configuration file using which we tell the software where our database is and how to access it.

The third party software will provide us the schema file using which we can come up with the configuration file following the rules in the schema file. The software will then validate the XML we create against the schema file.

So wherever and whenever we use XML to make sure that the XML is valid we need a valid contract