HTML <form> tag

Definition and Usage

The form element creates a form for user input. A form can contain textfields, checkboxes, radio-buttons and more. Forms are used to pass user-data to a specified URL.

Differences Between HTML and XHTML

NONE

Example

Source	Output
<form action="form_action.asp" method="get"> First name: <input type="text" name="fname" value="Mickey" /> Last name: <input type="text" name="lname" value="Mouse" /> <input type="submit" value="Submit" /> </form> If you click the "Submit" button, you will send your input to a new page called form_action.asp. 	First name: Mickey Last name: Mouse Submit If you click the "Submit" button, you will send your input to a new page called form_action.asp.

Required Attributes

DTD indicates in which <u>DTD</u> the attribute is allowed. S=Strict, T=Transitional, and F=Frameset.

Attribute	Value	Description	DTD
action	URL	A URL that defines where to send the data when the submit button is pushed	STF

Optional Attributes

Attribute	Value	Description	DTD
accept	list of contenttypes	A comma separated list of content types that the server that processes this form will handle correctly	STF
accept-charset	charset_list	A comma separated list of possible character sets for the form data. The default value is "unknown"	STF
enctype	mimetype	The mime type used to encode the content of the form	STF
method	get post	The HTTP method for sending data to the action URL. Default is get. **method="get":** This method sends the form contents in the URL: URL?name=value&name=value. **Note:** If the form values contains non-ASCII characters or	STF

		exceeds 100 characters you MUST use method="post". **method="post":** This method sends the form contents in the body of the request. **Note:** Most browsers are unable to bookmark post requests.	
name	form_name	Defines a unique name for the form	TF
target	_blank _self _parent _top	Where to open the target URL. _blank - the target URL will open in a new window _self - the target URL will open in the same frame as it was clicked _parent - the target URL will open in the parent frameset _top - the target URL will open in the full body of the window	TF

Standard Attributes

id, class, title, style, dir, lang, xml:lang

Event Attributes

onsubmit, onreset, onclick, ondblclick, onmousedown, onmouseup, onmouseover, onmousemove, onmouseout, onkeypress, onkeydown, onkeyup

HTML Forms are used to select different kinds of user input.

Examples

Text fields
This example demonstrates how to create text fields on an HTML page. A user can write text in a text field.
Password fields
This example demonstrates how to create a password field on an HTML page.
(You can find more examples at the bottom of this page)

Forms

A form is an area that can contain form elements.
Form elements are elements that allow the user to enter information (like text fields, textarea fields, drop-down menus, radio buttons, checkboxes, etc.) in a form.
A form is defined with the <form> tag.

```
<form>
  <input>
  <input>
</form>
```

Input

The most used form tag is the <input> tag. The type of input is specified with the type attribute. The most commonly used input types are explained below.

Text Fields

Text fields are used when you want the user to type letters, numbers, etc. in a form.

```
<form>
First name:
<input type="text" name="firstname">
<br>
Last name:
<input type="text" name="lastname">
</form>
```

How it looks in a browser:

First name:

Last name:

Note that the form itself is not visible. Also note that in most browsers, the width of the text field is 20 characters by default.

Radio Buttons

Radio Buttons are used when you want the user to select one of a limited number of choices.

```
<form>
<input type="radio" name="sex" value="male"> Male
<br>
<input type="radio" name="sex" value="female"> Female
</form>
```

How it looks in a browser:

Male

Female

Note that only one option can be chosen.

Checkboxes

Checkboxes are used when you want the user to select one or more options of a limited number of choices.

```
<form>
<input type="checkbox" name="bike">
I have a bike
<br>
<input type="checkbox" name="car">
I have a car
</form>
```

How it looks in a browser:

I have a bike

I have a car

The Form's Action Attribute and the Submit Button

When the user clicks on the "Submit" button, the content of the form is sent to another file. The form's action attribute defines the name of the file to send the content to. The file defined in the action attribute usually does something with the received input.

```
<form name="input" action="html_form_action.asp"
method="get">
Username:
```

```
<input type="text" name="user">
<input type="submit" value="Submit">
</form>
```
How it looks in a browser:

Username: [   ] Submit

If you type some characters in the text field above, and click the "Submit" button, you will send your input to a page called "html_form_action.asp". That page will show you the received input.

Form Tags

Tag	Description
<form>	Defines a form for user input
<input>	Defines an input field
<textarea>	Defines a text-area (a multi-line text input control)
<label>	Defines a label to a control
<fieldset>	Defines a fieldset
<legend>	Defines a caption for a fieldset
<select>	Defines a selectable list (a drop-down box)
<optgroup>	Defines an option group
<option>	Defines an option in the drop-down box
<button>	Defines a push button
<isindex>	Deprecated. Use <input> instead

HTML <input> tag

Definition and Usage

The <input> tag defines the start of an input field where the user can enter data.

Differences Between HTML and XHTML

In HTML the <input> tag has no end tag.
In XHTML the <input> tag must be properly closed.

Tips and Notes

Note: The input element is empty, it contains attributes only.
Tip: Use the label element to define a label to a form control.

Example

Source	Output
<form action="form_action.asp" method="get"> First name: <input type="text" name="fname" value="Mickey" />	First name: [Mickey] Last name: [Mouse]

```
<br />
Last name:
<input type="text" name="lname"
value="Mouse" />
<br />
<input type="submit" value="Submit" />

</form>

<p>
If you click the "Submit" button, you will send
your input to a new page called form_action.asp.
</p>
```

Submit

If you click the "Submit" button, you will send your input to a new page called form_action.asp.

Optional Attributes

DTD indicates in which DTD the attribute is allowed. S=Strict, T=Transitional, and F=Frameset.

Attribute	Value	Description	DTD
accept	list_of_mime_types	A comma-separated list of MIME types that indicates the MIME type of the file transfer. **Note:** Only used with type="file"	STF
align	left right top texttop middle absmiddle baseline bottom absbottom	Defines the alignment of text following the image. **Note:** Only used with type="image"	TF
alt	text	Defines an alternate text for the image. **Note:** Only used with type="image"	STF
checked	checked	Indicates that the input element should be checked when it first loads. **Note:** Used with type="checkbox" and type="radio"	STF
disabled	disabled	Disables the input element when it first loads so that the user can not write text in it, or select it. **Note:** Cannot be used with type="hidden"	STF
maxlength	number	Defines the maximum number of characters allowed in a text field. **Note:** Only used with type="text"	STF
name	field_name	Defines a unique name for the input element. **Note:** This attribute is required with type="button", type="checkbox", type="file", type="hidden", type="image", type="password", type="text", and type="radio"	STF
readonly	readonly	Indicates that the value of this field cannot be modified. **Note:** Only used with type="text"	STF

size	number_of_char	Defines the size of the input element. **Note:** Cannot be used with type="hidden"	STF
src	URL	Defines the URL of the image to display. **Note:** Only used with type="image"	STF
type	button checkbox file hidden image password radio reset submit text	Indicates the type of the input element. The default value is "text" **Note:** This is not a required attribute, but we think you should include it. If omitted, IE 5.5 will still display a text field, but Netscape 4.7 will not.	STF
value	value	**For buttons, reset buttons and submit buttons:** Defines the text on the button. **For image buttons:** Defines the symbolic result of the field passed to a script. **For checkboxes and radio buttons:** Defines the result of the input element when clicked. The result is sent to the form's action URL. **For hidden, password, and text fields:** Defines the default value of the element. **Note:** Cannot be used with type="file" **Note:** This attribute is required with type="checkbox" and type="radio"	STF

HTML <option> tag

Definition and Usage

The option element defines an option in the drop-down list.

Differences Between HTML and XHTML

In HTML the <option> tag has no end tag.
In XHTML the <option> tag must be properly closed.

Tips and Notes

Note: The <option> tag can be used without any attributes, but you usually need the **value** attribute, which indicates what is sent to the server.
Note: Use this tag in conjunction with the select element, elsewhere it is meaningless.

Example

Source	Output

```
<select>
<option value ="volvo">Volvo</option>
<option value ="saab">Saab</option>
<option value ="opel" selected="selected">Opel</option>
<option value ="audi">Audi</option>
</select>
```

Opel ▾

Optional Attributes

DTD indicates in which DTD the attribute is allowed. S=Strict, T=Transitional, and F=Frameset.

Attribute	Value	Description	DTD
disabled	disabled	Specifies that the option should be disabled when it first loads	STF
label	text	Defines a label to use when using <optgroup>	STF
selected	selected	Specifies that the option should appear selected (will be displayed first in the list)	STF
value	text	Defines the value of the option to be sent to the server	STF