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# Disable HTML Auto-Formatting in WordPress

DECEMBER 9, 2010  
By [Shaiful Borhan](#)[+ Code](#)

I find that the “HTML mode” in the WordPress editor doesn’t really provide you with total control of the HTML being generated on the frontend. Some of the auto-formatting it does are for instance wrapping your inline elements with a `<p>` and line breaks are also interpreted as `<p>`.

While this is not a bad thing at all, it is however quite cumbersome if you’re using custom shortcodes (that generate divs) in your content creation and you’re planning to arrange them nicely in the editor by giving a couple of line breaks for better readability. They will end up in the frontend as `<div>` wrapped inside a `<p>`, and you’ll get some unwanted `<br />` as well. Certainly not pretty.

The auto-formatting function will still run even if you disabled the visual editor entirely because it is not part of the TinyMCE editor. In fact it is performed via a function in WordPress called `wpautop` that runs before the content is displayed on the frontend. Thus it is possible to bypass this feature by using the `remove_filter` function in our theme function.php file. The simple code for a global site-wide effect is:

```
1 | remove_filter('the_content', 'wpautop');
```

A more elegant approach would be to use a custom field to control which content will bypass `wpautop` and which not. This way we can still take advantage of the usefulness of the `wpautop` function for pages that doesn’t require fancy HTML. The code below also goes in the function.php file.

```
1 | function WP_auto_formatting($content) {  
2 |     global $post;  
3 |     if(get_post_meta($post->ID, 'disable_auto_formatting', true) ==  
4 |     1) {  
        remove_filter('the_content', 'wpautop');
```

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```
5     }
6     return $content;
7 }
8 add_filter( "the_content", "WP_auto_formatting", 1 );
```

Using this method, you simply have to add a custom field in your post/page called `disable_auto_formatting` and give it a value of 1 to bypass the `wpautop` function. To enable auto formatting, simply change the value to 0 or delete the custom field.

Have a nice day!

**Shaiful Borhan is the Dude of Stampede Design.**

Not only a PHP dude on fire, Shaiful 'Holmes' is also very handy with his electric guitar. Be careful ladies, this guy with a sweet drawl will be able to sweep you off your feet with his guitar strummings. Follow the homie on [Twitter](#).



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2 cents : after trying out the script I found that 'add\_filter' didn't seem to quite do the trick for me... but 'add\_action' to the wp\_head did.

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