HTML is written in the form of [HTML elements](http://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/HTML_element) consisting of *tags*, enclosed in [angle brackets](http://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Bracket#Angle_brackets_or_chevrons_.E2.9F.A8_.E2.9F.A9) (like <html>), within the web page content. HTML tags normally come in pairs like <h1> and </h1>. The first tag in a pair is the *start tag*, the second tag is the *end tag* (they are also called *opening tags* and *closing tags*). In between these tags web designers can add text, tables, images, etc.

The purpose of a [web browser](http://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Web_browser) is to read HTML documents and compose them into visual or audible web pages. The browser does not display the HTML tags, but uses the tags to interpret the content of the page.

HTML elements form the building blocks of all websites. HTML allows [images and objects](http://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/HTML_element#Images_and_objects) to be embedded and can be used to create [interactive forms](http://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/HTML_element#Forms). It provides a means to create [structured documents](http://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Structured_document) by denoting structural [semantics](http://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Semantic) for text such as headings, paragraphs, lists, links, quotes and other items. It can embed [scripts](http://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Scripting_language) in languages such as [JavaScript](http://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/JavaScript) which affect the behavior of HTML webpages.

Web browsers can also refer to [Cascading Style Sheets](http://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Cascading_Style_Sheets) (CSS) to define the appearance and layout of text and other material. The [W3C](http://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/W3C), maintainer of both the HTML and the CSS standards, encourages the use of CSS over explicitly presentational HTML markup.

HTML is a [markup language](http://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Markup_language) that [web browsers](http://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Web_browser) use to interpret and [compose](http://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Typesetting) text, images and other material into visual or audible web pages. Default characteristics for every item of HTML markup are defined in the browser, and these characteristics can be altered or enhanced by the web page designer's additional use of [CSS](http://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Cascading_Style_Sheets). Many of the text elements are found in the 1988 ISO technical report TR 9537 *Techniques for using SGML*, which in turn covers the features of early text formatting languages such as that used by the [RUNOFF command](http://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/TYPSET_and_RUNOFF) developed in the early 1960s for the [CTSS](http://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/CTSS) (Compatible Time-Sharing System) operating system: these formatting commands were derived from the commands used by typesetters to manually format documents. However, the SGML concept of generalized markup is based on elements (nested annotated ranges with attributes) rather than merely print effects, with also the separation of structure and processing; HTML has been progressively moved in this direction with [CSS](http://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/CSS).

**What is HTML?**

HTML is a language for describing web pages.

* HTML stands for **H**yper **T**ext **M**arkup **L**anguage
* HTML is not a programming language, it is a **markup language**
* A markup language is a set of **markup tags**
* HTML uses **markup tags** to describe web pages

**HTML Tags**

HTML markup tags are usually called HTML tags

* HTML tags are keywords surrounded by **angle brackets** like <html>
* HTML tags normally **come in pairs** like <b> and </b>
* The first tag in a pair is the **start tag,** the second tag is the **end tag**
* Start and end tags are also called **opening tags** and **closing tags**

**HTML Documents = Web Pages**

* HTML documents **describe web pages**
* HTML documents **contain HTML tags** and plain text
* HTML documents are also **called web pages**