Background

Tables and lists are relatively easy HTML concepts to learn. The main mistake novices make is not using them appropriately. Tables and lists convey **semantic** information about the text they contain. They should not be used for visual effect. That's the job of CSS.

One rule of thumb for semantically well-formed HTML is whether the page makes sense when CSS styles are turned off.

Proper use of lists

Do not use lists just to indent some text. Use BLOCKQUOTE or CSS styled paragraphs for that.

Do use lists for things like a navigation bar. Even though CSS may make the navigation bar look like a set of tabs, really you have a list of links. If the CSS went away, a list would be the best way to show those links.

Use numbered (OL) lists when order matters, like steps in a recipe. Use unordered lists (UL) when you have a list of points but the order is not critical.

Proper use of tables

Do not use tables for page layout, e.g., to arrange things into columns. For this, you should use DIVs and CSS.

Do use tables for tabular data, e.g., a schedule or a list of scores.

Use TH for column and row headers. Don't use CSS to make TD elements look like headers.

Required Resources

HTML Lists and Tables

- *Build Your Own Website The Right Way Using HTML & CSS* by Ian Lloyd
  - Chapter 2 introduces the different kinds of list elements.
  - Chapter 6 describes how to put data into tables.
- **Learn to Code HTML & CSS: Develop & Style Websites** by Shay Howe
  - Lesson 8 goes over lists.
  - Lesson 11 introduces organizing data with tables.

Additional Resources

HTML Lists

- The W3Schools Page on Lists - This resource gives descriptions of the different types of lists and their usage in a website.

HTML Tables

- The W3Schools Page on Tables - This resource describes the different types of tables and they're usage.