How can I set the default value for an HTML <select> element?

Ask Question



1201

I thought that adding a "value" attribute set on the <select> element below would cause the <option> containing my provided "value" to be selected by default:





147

However, this did not work as I had expected. How can I set which coption> element is selected by default?

html html-select



22 Answers



Set selected="selected" for the option you want to be the default.

1854



<option selected="selected">
3
</option>



edited Dec 27 '12 at 21:07

answered Aug 19 '10 at 1:12



Borealid

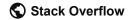
72.5k 8 94 111

- <option value="3" selected="selected"> 3 </option> The value would be passed as a string when option 3 is selected. Sree Rama Mar 19 '13 at 7:42
- And keep continue using id attribute for <Select> and it is not good to use value attribute for <select> html element. –

 Sree Rama Mar 19 '13 at 7:48
- The ="selected" part is not necessary. Just <option selected> will do as mentioned in other answers. MindJuice Nov 11 '14 at 16:59
- 63 @MindJuice What I wrote is valid polyglot HTML/XML. Using <option selected> is okay for a browser, but may cause the document to be rejected by other parsers. I find it handy to be able to use XPath/XSLT on web documents occasionally. – Borealid Nov 13 '14 at 19:24
- 62 If you're using Angular, note that ng-model overrides the the default selected value (even as undefined if you did not



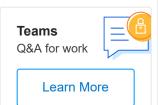
PUBLIC



Tags

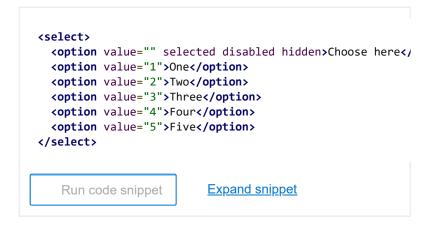
Users

Jobs





In case you want to have a default text as a sort of placeholder/hint but not considered a valid value (something like "complete here", "select your nation" ecc.) you can do something like this:



edited Aug 17 '17 at 21:58

answered May 29 '15 at 9:05



Nobita

14.2k 6 44 58

- 40 I would think this is what most people are looking for. Good answer. chrisallick Aug 22 '16 at 22:07
- 1 It was an external jsfiddle where the css was just needed not to make it appear along the border of the screen. After some months it got edited to an inline code snippet and the guy who edited simply kept it in the example. You can edit and remove it from the snippet if it really bothers you. – Nobita Oct 28 '16

```
instead. See @chong-lip-phang's answer below:
    stackoverflow.com/a/39358987/1192426 - Ivan Akulov Aug 13
'17 at 2:04

<option value="" selected disabled hidden>Choose here</option> - user8202629 Aug 25 '17 at 6:20

This in my opinion should be the accepted answer. - Wale May 12 '18 at 11:10
```



Complete example:

218



```
<select name="hall" id="hall">
  <option>
    1
  </option>
  <option>
   2
  </option>
  <option selected>
    3
  </option>
  <option>
  </option>
  <option>
  </option>
</select>
                          Expand snippet
   Run code snippet
```

edited Aug 25 '16 at 22:00



Al Fouce ж 3,214 6 26 41



137k 30 245 256

- 9 That's simpler than use selected="selected". Rodrigo Jan 13 '14 at 22:44
- 54 selected="selected" should work for all doctypes. XHTML doesn't like attributes without values. ps2goat Jul 24 '14 at 17:11
- 11 @Rodrigo Is it really that difficult to write selected="selected" ? I mean, what are you saving? Time? Size? It's negligible and if it makes the code more "compliant", why not doing it? xDaizu Feb 15 '16 at 9:41
- 12 @DanielParejoMuñoz, ok, it's negligible. But if my doctype is html, and not xhtml, why waste any byte at all? – Rodrigo Feb 15 '16 at 14:18
- 5 selected="selected" looks like an error. In a couple of months I'd probably change it to selected="3" thinking that this means that item 3 is selected. (and break my page) Paul McCarthy Jun 8 '17 at 20:49



71

I came across this question, but the accepted and highly upvoted answer didn't work for me. It turns out that if you are using React, then setting selected doesn't work.



Instead you have to set a value in the <select> tag directly as shown below:

```
<select value="B">
  <option value="A">Apple</option>
  <option value="B">Banana</option>
  <option value="C">Cranberry</option>
</select>
```

Pood more about why here on the Pood nage

answered Nov 11 '14 at 15:47



- You can set a pre-selected option in a drop-down list by using the value attribute for the <select> tag, i.e. <select value="3">, but it's not valid in the W3C validator. – Apostle May 20 '15 at 15:40
- 2 Right, but this isn't HTML, it's JSX, so it doesn't need to follow W3C rules. The HTML generated by React in the end is valid though. – MindJuice May 20 '15 at 22:15

In a perfect world this had been a comment to the question, as it is not a valid answer. But I guess it has enough value to stick around. – Justus Romijn Jul 4 '17 at 14:30

I needed a similar solution to the above suggestion, but with JQuery instead of React. In case it helps anyone in the future: \$("select").each(function(){ \$(this).find('option[value="'+\$(this).attr("value")+'"]').prop('selected', true); }); - CDK Jan 11 '18 at 14:46



You can do it like this:

65



```
<select name="hall" id="hall">
     <option> 1 </option>
     <option> 2 </option>
     <option selected> 3 </option>
     <option> 4 </option>
     <option> 5 </option>
</select>
```

Or you can also provide attribute to the option tag i.e.

<option selected="selected">3</option>

edited Jul 4 '12 at 6:20



Jason Sturges 14.5k 12 51 70

answered Jul 3 '12 at 19:39



harmender

Just to be clear, the w3 standard is <option selected="selected">3</option> − htmldrum Jul 22 '12 at 21:00

@JRM I think what you mean is that if for your document to be XHTML compliant than an attribute must have a a value. In HTML there is no need for "selected=selected". The examples on w3.org/wiki/HTML/Elements/select, developer.mozilla.org/en-US/docs/HTML/Element/select do not specify a value. The important thing to note is that selected="false" is not allowed and selected="" also makes it selected. The only way to make an options not selected is to remove the attribute. w3.org/html/wg/drafts/html/master/... – Juan Mendes Jan 15 '13 at 17:39

I never understand how questions like this ever get upvoted. They are EXACTLY like the correct answer yet.. 2 years later lol – Phil Mar 3 '18 at 21:53



if you want to use the values from a Form and keep it dynamic try this with php

ΛQ

edited Oct 16 '13 at 21:01



zero323

176k 42 521 591

answered Oct 16 '13 at 20:36



Florian

566 4 3



I prefer this:

36

<select>



<option selected hidden>Choose here</option>
<option value="1">One</option>
<option value="2">Two</option>
<option value="3">Three</option>
<option value="4">Four</option>
<option value="5">Five</option>
</select>

'Choose here' disappears after an option has been selected.

answered Sep 6 '16 at 22:59

1 I tryed this but "Choose here" isn't displayed. The first option is empty – Bogdan Mates Sep 8 '16 at 9:50

What browser are you using? – Chong Lip Phang Sep 9 '16 at 0:23

I'm using Google Chrome browser version 52.0.2743.116 m – Bogdan Mates Sep 9 '16 at 6:39

- I am using that browser too and not experiencing any problem.
 Chong Lip Phang Sep 9 '16 at 9:27
- Consider adding value="" to assure you get an empty value.
 Ryan Walton Sep 19 '16 at 22:16



An improvement for <u>nobita</u>'s answer. Also you can improve the visual view of the drop down list, by hiding the element 'Choose here'.



```
<select>
    <option selected disabled hidden>Choose here
<option value="1">One</option>
    <option value="2">Two</option>
    <option value="3">Three</option>
    <option value="4">Four</option>
    <option value="5">Five</option>
    </select>

Run code snippet

Expand snippet
```

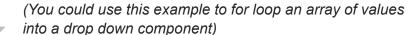
edited May 23 '17 at 12:34





Another example; using JavaScript to set a selected option.

17



<select id="yourDropDownElementId"><select/>

```
// Get the select element
var select = document.getElementById("yourDropDownElementId")
// Create a new option element
var el = document.createElement("option");
// Add our value to the option
el.textContent = "Example Value";
el.value = "Example Value";
// Set the option to selected
el.selected = true;
// Add the new option element to the select element
select.appendChild(el);
```

answered Sep 17 '13 at 6:37



Ally

1.056 9 16

shouldn't that be el.selected = "selected"; to comply with the w3 standard? - 7yl4r Oct 28 '14 at 18:01 /

4 @7yl4r No. selected is a boolean property as defined by w3c - w3.org/TR/html401/interact/forms.html ` 17.6.1 Preselected options selected [CI] - When set, this boolean attribute specifies that this option is pre-selected.` For more information on usage see w3c schools - w3schools.com/jsref/prop_option_selected.asp - Ally Oct 31 '14 at 4:34 /*



The **selected** attribute is a boolean attribute.

When present, it specifies that an option should be preselected when the page loads.



The pre-selected option will be displayed first in the dropdown list.

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

answered Oct 25 '13 at 4:12



tılak

2,886 3 26 41



If you are in react you can use <code>defaultValue</code> as attribute instead of <code>value</code> in the select tag.





answered Nov 23 '17 at 8:12



Johan

96 1 8



If you are using select with angular 1, then you need to use ng-init, otherwise, second option will not be selected since, ng-model overrides the defaul selected value



<select ng-model="sortVar" ng-init='sortVar="stargazers_col
</pre>

```
<option value="language">Language</option>
</select>
```

answered Nov 8 '17 at 6:48



Akshay Vijay Jain 2,386 1 15 18



I used this php function to generate the options, and insert it into my HTML

4



```
??php
# code to output a set of options for a numeric drop down
# parameters: (start, end, step, format, default)
function numericoptions($start, $end, $step, $formatstrin
{
    $retstring = "";
    for($i = $start; $i <= $end; $i = $i + $step)
    {
        $retstring = $retstring . '<OPTION ';
        $retstring = $retstring . 'value="' . sprintf($formatif($default == $i))
        {
            $retstring = $retstring . ' selected="selected"';
        }
        $retstring = $retstring . '>' . sprintf($formatstring)
}

return $retstring;
}
```

And then in my webpage code I use it as below;

```
<select id="endmin" name="endmin">
  <?php echo numericoptions(0,55,5,'%02d',$endmin); ?>
</select>
```

If \$endmin is created from a _POST variable every time the page is loaded (and this code is inside a form which posts) then the previously selected value is selected by default.

answered Jan 7 '14 at 13:02





value attribute of tag is missing, so it doesn't show as u desired selected. By default first option show on dropdown page load, if value attribute is set on tag.... I got solved my problem this way



answered Jun 2 '15 at 5:49



X-Coder 1,198 1 13 11



This code sets the default value for the HTML select element with PHP.

Δ



edited Apr 12 '18 at 7:34

answered Feb 20 '14 at 14:29



Julian

1,649 2 24 38



You can use:



instead of,

<option value="someValue" selected = "selected">Some Value-

both are equally correct.

answered May 7 '18 at 16:30



Samim

390 9 27



I would just simply make the first select option value the default and just hide that value in the dropdown with HTML5's new "hidden" feature. Like this:



<select name="" id="">
 <option hidden value="default">Select An Option</optio
 <option value="1">One</option>

```
<option value="4">Four</option>
</select>
```

edited Sep 4 '18 at 8:08

answered Sep 4 '18 at 8:02



Ahmedakhtar11

96 3



Best way in my opinion:

3



```
<select>
    <option value="" selected="selected" hidden="hidden">Choton value="1">One</option>
    <option value="2">Two</option>
    <option value="3">Three</option>
    <option value="4">Four</option>
    <option value="4">Five</option>
    <option value="5">Five</option>
    </select>
```

Why not disabled?

When you use disabled attribute together with type="reset">Reset</putton> value is not reset to original placeholder. Instead browser choose first not disabled option which may cause user mistakes.

Default empty value

Every production form have validation, then empty value should not be a problem. This way we may have empty not required select.

selected="selected" syntax is the only way to be compatible with both XHTML and HTML 5. It is correct XML syntax and some editors may be happy about this. It is more backward compatible. I do not have strong feeling about this, but if above-mention arguments are your requirements you should follow full syntax.

edited Feb 16 at 19:15

answered Feb 16 at 19:10



Michał Mielec



I myself use it



```
<select selected=''>
    <option value=''></option>
    <option value='1'>ccc</option>
    <option value='2'>xxxx</option>
    <option value='3'>zzzz</option>
    <option value='4'>aaa</option>
    <option value='5'>qqq</option>
    <option value='6'>wwww</option>
</select>
```

edited Oct 2 '17 at 13:47



10k 9 47 68

answered Jul 7 '16 at 18:44



Юрий Светлов



1



The problem with <code><select></code> is, it's sometimes disconnected with the state of what's currently rendered and unless something has changed in the option list, no change value is returned. This can be a problem when trying to select the first option from a list. The following code can get the first-option the first-time selected, but <code>onchange="changeFontSize(this)"</code> by its self would not. There are methods described above using a dummy option to force a user to make a change value to pickup the actual first value, such as starting the list with an empty value. Note: onclick would call the function twice, the following code does not, but solves the first-time problem.

```
<label>Font Size</label>
<select name="fontSize" id="fontSize" onfocus="changeFontSize"</pre>
onchange="changeFontSize(this)">
    <option value="small">Small</option>
    <option value="medium">Medium</option>
    <option value="large">Large</option>
    <option value="extraLarge">Extra large</option>
</select>
<script>
function changeFontSize(x){
    body=document.getElementById('body');
   if (x.value=="extraLarge") {
        body.style.fontSize="25px";
    } else {
        body.style.fontSize=x.value;
    }
</script>
```



answered Jul 7 '18 at 15:34



You just need to put attribute "selected" on a particular option instead direct to select element.

1



Here is snippet for same and multiple working example with different values.

```
Select Option 3 :-
<select name="hall" id="hall">
 <option>1</option>
 <option>2</option>
 <option selected="selected">3</option>
 <option>4</option>
 <option>5</option>
</select>
<br/>
<br/>
<br/>
Select Option 5 :-
<select name="hall" id="hall">
 <option>1</option>
 <option>2</option>
 <option>3</option>
 <option>4</option>
 <option selected="selected">5</option>
</select>
 <br/>
<br/>
<br/>
Select Option 2 :-
<select name="hall" id="hall">
 <option>1</option>
 <option selected="selected">2</option>
 <option>3</option>
 <option>4</option>
 <option>5</option>
</select>
```

answered Sep 11 '18 at 5:19



Ambuj Khanna 254 2 16



This is how I did it...



```
<form action="../<SamePage>/" method="post">
```



answered Oct 19 '13 at 22:33



AlexM

43

There seems to be some incongruity to this solution. If the name of the element is "select", shouldn't the \$_POST variable key be "select" -- where does "drop_down" come from? Also, assuming that was an error, and this is actually checking the

"selected". Maybe I'm missing something integral to this answer? – Ryan Nov 27 '13 at 7:17