

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

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1201



147

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:

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

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

[html](#)[html-select](#)

edited Jan 24 at 18:50



Nemus

1,994 9 18 28

asked Aug 19 '10 at 1:10

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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



Borelid

72.5k 8 94 111

-
- 16 <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
-
- 5 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
-
- 164 The `= "selected"` part is not necessary. Just `<option selected>` will do as mentioned in other answers. – [MindJuice](#) Nov 11 '14 at 16:59
-
- 53 @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. – [Borelid](#) 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

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438

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:

```
<select>
  <option value="" 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>
```

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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

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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

- 1 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>
    4
  </option>
  <option>
    5
  </option>
</select>
```

Run code snippet

[Expand snippet](#)

edited Aug 25 '16 at 22:00



Al Fouse

3,214 6 26 41

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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>
```

Read more about why [here on the React page](#)

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answered Nov 11 '14 at 15:47



MindJuice

2,260 2 23 38

-
- 2 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>

```

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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

659 5 3

-
- 13 Just to be clear, the w3 standard is <option selected="selected">3</option> – [html5drum](#) Jul 22 '12 at 21:00
-
- 39 @JRM I think what you mean is that if for your document to be XHTML compliant then an attribute must have 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
-
- 1 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

10

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```

<?php
    $selected = $_POST['select'];
?>

<select name="select" size="1">

    <option <?php if($selected == '1'){echo("selected");}?>>:
    <option <?php if($selected == '2'){echo("selected");}?>>:

</select>
</form>

```

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



28



An improvement for [nobita](#)'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>
  <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



Community ♦

1 1



Another example; using JavaScript to set a selected option.

17



(You could use this example to for loop an array of values into a drop down component)

```
<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 Pre-selected 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

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

13

When present, it specifies that an option should be pre-selected when the page loads.



The pre-selected option will be displayed first in the drop-down 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



tilak

2,886 3 26 41



If you are in react you can use `defaultValue` as attribute instead of `value` in the select tag.

7



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 default selected value

5



```
<select ng-model="sortVar" ng-init='sortVar="stargazers_co
```

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```
<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, $formatstri
{
    $retstring = "";
    for($i = $start; $i <= $end; $i = $i + $step)
    {
        $retstring = $retstring . '<OPTION ' ;
        $retstring = $retstring . 'value="' . sprintf($forma
        if($default == $i)
        {
            $retstring = $retstring . ' selected="selected"';
        }
        $retstring = $retstring . '>' . sprintf($formatstrin
    }

    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>
```

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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



Graeme

179 1 6



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.

```
<select name="hall" id="hall">
<?php
    $default = 3;
    $nr = 1;
    while($nr < 10){
        if($nr == $default){
            echo "<option selected=\"selected\">". $nr . "<";
        }
        else{
            echo "<option>". $nr . "</option>";
        }
        $nr++;
    }
}
```

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[edited Apr 12 '18 at 7:34](#)

answered Feb 20 '14 at 14:29

[Julian](#)**1,649** 2 24 38

You can use:

3

```
<option value="someValue" selected>Some Value</option>
```



instead of,

```
<option value="someValue" selected = "selected">Some Value.
```

both are equally correct.

answered May 7 '18 at 16:30

[Samim](#)**890** 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:

3

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



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```
<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">Ch
  <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>
```

Why not disabled?

When you use disabled attribute together with `<button type="reset">Reset</button>` 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](#)

474 5 18



I myself use it

2



```
<select selected=''>
  <option value=''></option>
  <option value='1'>ccc</option>
  <option value='2'>xxx</option>
  <option value='3'>zzz</option>
  <option value='4'>aaa</option>
  <option value='5'>qqq</option>
  <option value='6'>www</option>
</select>
```

edited Oct 2 '17 at 13:47



[samayo](#)

10k 9 47 68

answered Jul 7 '16 at 18:44



[Юрий Светлов](#)

427 1 5 16

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1

The problem with `<select>` 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 `onchange="changeFontSize(this)"` 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="changeFontS:
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>
```

edited Aug 9 '18 at 0:02



nilsw

2,488 1 9 21

answered Jul 7 '18 at 15:34

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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>
```

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answered Sep 11 '18 at 5:19

[Ambuj Khanna](#)

254 2 16



This is how I did it...

0



```

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

<?php
    if ( $_POST['drop_down'] == "" )
    {
        $selected = "";
    }
    else
    {
        $selected = "selected";
    }
?>

<select name="select" size="1">

    <option value="1" <?php $selected ?>>One</option>
        ////////// OR //////////
    <option value="2" $selected>Two</option>

</select>
</form>

```

answered Oct 19 '13 at 22:33

[AlexM](#)

43 1

- 4 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

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