# C# - How to change HTML elements attributes

Ask Question

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**17**

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My master page contains a list as shown here. What I'd like to do though, is add the "class=active" attribute to the list li thats currently active but I have no idea how to do this. I know that the code goes in the aspx page's page_load event, but no idea how to access the li I need to add the attribute. Please enlighten me. Many thanks.

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```html
<div id="menu">
  <ul id="nav">
    <li class="forcePadding"><img src="css/site-style-images/menu_corner_right.jpg" />
</li>
    <li id="screenshots"><a href="screenshots.aspx" title="Screenshots">Screenshots</a>
</li>
    <li id="future"><a href="future.aspx" title="Future">Future</a></li>
    <li id="news"><a href="news.aspx" title="News">News</a></li>
    <li id="download"><a href="download.aspx" title="Download">Download</a></li>
    <li id="home"><a href="index.aspx" title="Home">Home</a></li>
    <li class="forcePadding"><img src="css/site-style-images/menu_corner_left.jpg" />
</li>
  </ul>
</div>
```

| c# | html | asp.net |

edited Feb 1 '15 at 16:58

Deduplicator
**35k**   6   50   90

asked Oct 9 '08 at 11:56

## 11 Answers

In order to access these controls from the server-side, you need to make them runat="server"

27

```
<ul id="nav" runat="server">
  <li class="forcePadding"><img src="css/site-style-images/menu_corn
</li>
  <li id="screenshots"><a href="screenshots.aspx" title="Screenshots
</li>
  <li id="future"><a href="future.aspx" title="Future">Future</a></l
  <li id="news"><a href="news.aspx" title="News">News</a></li>
  <li id="download"><a href="download.aspx" title="Download">Downloa
  <li id="home"><a href="index.aspx" title="Home">Home</a></li>
  <li class="forcePadding"><img src="css/site-style-images/menu_corn
</ul>
```

in the code-behind:

```
foreach(Control ctrl in nav.controls)
{
    if(!ctrl is HtmlAnchor)
    {
        string url = ((HtmlAnchor)ctrl).Href;
        if(url == GetCurrentPage())  // <-- you'd need to write that
            ctrl.Parent.Attributes.Add("class", "active");
    }
}
```

edited Jul 29 '10 at 17:24

answered Oct 9 '08 at 12:26

Ben Scheirman
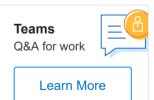
**32.4k**    20    93    133

2    this is a great answer, helped me, thanks so much! – iamserious Jul 29
     '10 at 11:25

     Does the code behind means the master page or the content page? –
     Nipuna Mar 24 '11 at 15:25

▲

0    Thanks For the solution.

     Mininized code.

▼    Master page control can also find in the child page..

     i mean master page contains html contol

     and chilld page can find the master page html conrol like this

```
((HtmlControl)this.Master.FindControl("dpohome1")).Attributes.Add("c
```

edited Oct 21 '12 at 11:54

Uwe Keim
**27.7k**    32    135    216

answered May 29 '12 at 7:57
shivanand nagarabetta
**1**

▲

     Try this the great example for future use. i know this thread is old,
     but for future queries...

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http://community.discountasp.net/showthread.php?p=33271

answered Oct 2 '09 at 8:16

sus2bhai

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Add runat="server" on the li tags in the masterpage then add this to the appropriate page_load event to add the 'active' class to the li in the masterpage

HtmlGenericControl li = HtmlGenericControl)Page.Master.FindControl("screenshots"); li.Attributes.Add("class", "active");

answered Jan 21 '09 at 23:35

Bevan
**121**    5     16

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I found a link that works using CSS and involves only changing the body tag's class attribute. This means there's no Javascript and there's no for loops or anything.

```
#navbar a:hover,
  .articles #navbar #articles a,
  .topics #navbar #topics a,
  .about #navbar #about a,
  .contact #navbar #contact a,
  .contribute #navbar #contribute a,
  .feed #navbar #feed a {
  background: url(/pix/navbarlinkbg.gif) top left repeat-x; color: #5:
}

....

<body class="articles" onload="">

<ul id="navbar">
```

```html
<li id="articles"><a href="/articles/" title="Articles">Articles</a
<li id="topics"><a href="/topics/" title="Topics">Topics</a></li>
<li id="about"><a href="/about/" title="About">About</a></li>
<li id="contact"><a href="/contact/" title="Contact">Contact</a></
<li id="contribute"><a href="/contribute/" title="Contribute">Contr
<li id="feed"><a href="/feed/" title="Feed">Feed</a></li>
</ul>
```

Read more here
http://www.websiteoptimization.com/speed/tweak/current/

answered Oct 11 '08 at 0:59

Vince Panuccio
**8,832**   19   82   132

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All the parts have already been provided in previous answers, but to put the whole thing together, you'll need to:

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- add the runat="server" attribute to the `<ul>` and `<li>` elements
- add a public method to do the work on the master page that can be called from the pages using the master page
- call the method from the Page_Load of the pages

Alternatively you could also add the code to the OnLoad(...) method of the master page, so you don't have to add the method call to the Page_Load on every page.

answered Oct 9 '08 at 13:59

csgero
**2,666**   14   14

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The code below can be used to find a named control anywhere within the control hierarchy:

```csharp
public static Control FindControlRecursive(Control rootControl, stri
{
    if (rootControl != null)
    {
        if (rootControl.ID == id)
        {
            return rootControl;
        }

        for (int i = 0; i < rootControl.Controls.Count; i++)
        {
            Control child;

            if ((child = FindControlRecursive(rootControl.Controls[i
            {
                return child;
            }
        }
    }

    return null;
}
```

So you could do something like:

```csharp
Control foundControl= FindControlRecursive(Page.Master,
"theIdOfTheControlYouWantToFind");
((HtmlControl)foundControl).Attributes.Add("class", "active");
```

Forgot to mention previously, that you do need runat="server" on any
control you want to be able to find in this way =)

answered Oct 9 '08 at 12:25

Rob
**37.8k**   21   104   131

You can expose the li's on the master page to any content pages by
wrapping them in properties on the master page:

**0**

```
public GenericHtmlControl Li1
{
    get
    {
        return this.LiWhatever;
    }
}
```

Then on the content page:

```
MasterPage2 asd = ((MasterPage2)Page.Master).Li1.Attributes.Add("cla
```

If i've got that right!

answered Oct 9 '08 at 12:23

Adam Naylor
**2,879**   9   41   61

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**0**

In order to find that particular control it will need to be defined as public (in the generated designer)

Or will need to be wrapped by a public get in the codebehind.

answered Oct 9 '08 at 12:10

Adam Naylor
**2,879**   9   41   61

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**1**

You could register a client script like this:

(set id to the id of the li that you want to set to active)

```
ClientScript.RegisterStartupScript(this.GetType(), "setActiveLI",
"document.getElementById(\""+id+"\").setAttribute(\"class\", \"activ
```

This generates a JavaScript call on the page near the bottom after elements have already been rendered.

answered Oct 9 '08 at 12:09

**Lou Franco**
**75.2k**   14   116   176

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If they were runat=server you could use the attributes property.

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answered Oct 9 '08 at 11:57

**Adam Naylor**
**2,879**   9   41   61

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