# Meta tag in HTML

Overview

Metadata defines information about data on your web page.

Metadata will not be displayed on the page but will be machine parsable. The meta tag is a self-closing tag, and the data stored in it is known as metadata.

Meta elements are typically used to specify page description, keywords, author of the document, title, image etc.

You must have seen card views of a website at many places like this :
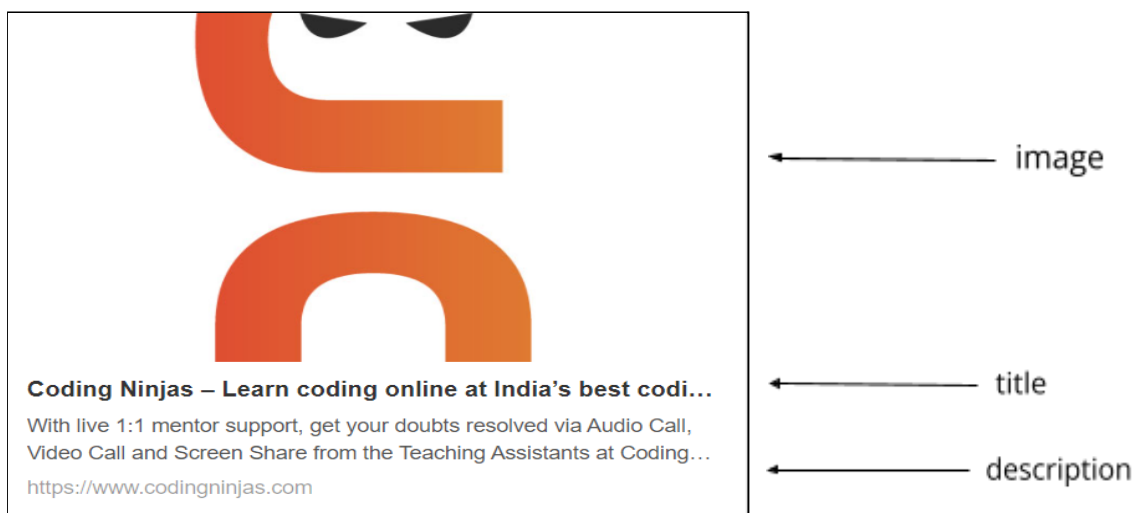
In the above card, you can see the meta image, title and description. If metadata is not specified in the HTML code, the browser will automatically fetch this data from the web page, which could also lead to unexpected results.

Attributes that are used in a meta tag:

- name
- Content
- property
- charset
- http-equiv

Meta tags have been one of the essential elements of SEO. They are used to provide details about your site to search engines. Search engine optimization (SEO) is defined as the process of affecting the online visibility of a website or a web page in a web search engine's results.

Search engines such as Google often display the meta description in search results where they can highly affect user visits to websites. So, it's very important to add meta tags to your web pages.

NOTE : There can be any number of meta tags defined within a page inside the head.

name Attribute

The name attribute is used to specify the name for the metadata. The name attribute is used **together with the content attribute**. This attribute specifies a name for the information/value of the content attribute.

The name attribute can have one of the 6 values:

- **author** - specifies the name of the author of the document
- **keywords** - specifies a comma-separated list of words for SEO purposes
- **viewport** - specifies the control of the viewport on different devices
- **application-name** - specifies the name of the application that the page represents
- **description** - specifies a description of the page
- **generator** - specifies the software packages used to generate the document

Syntax : <meta **name**="value">

NOTE : If the http-equiv attribute is set, the name attribute should not be set. SEO is used by the search engines like google and bing to search for the website's content relevant to the user search. This increases the quality and quantity of traffic on one's website.

content Attribute

The content attribute gives the value associated with the http-equiv or name attribute.

Syntax : <meta name/http-equiv="value" **content**="text">

> **Example :** <meta name="viewport"
> content="width=device-width,initial-scale=0.5,minimum-scale=0.5">

property Attribute

This attribute tells the type of data that should be given to the metadata. It is used with the content attribute.

> **Example :** <meta **property**="og:image" content="cn.jpg" />
>
> <meta **property**="og:title" content="Coding NInjas" />
>
> <meta **property**="og:description" content="Welcome to Coding Ninjas " />

charset Attribute

The charset attribute is used for declaring the character encoding for the page. It is a good practice to use UTF-8 encoding. However, this must be taken care of that the declared character set matches the one on the page and is defined for every page of the website.

> **Syntax** : <meta charset="character_set">

http-equiv Attribute

The http-equiv attribute provides an HTTP header for the information/value of the content attribute. The value of this attribute can be used to alter servers and user agents behaviour.

> **Syntax** : <meta **http-equiv**="content-type|default-style|refresh">

Example: the **refresh** value is used to specify the seconds after which the page will be refreshed. And if, along with the time, a URL is mentioned as '5;url=https://www.codingninjas.in/', then after 5 seconds, the user would be redirected to the mentioned URL.