

# **A brief history of HTML**

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Hyper Text Markup Language

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Extended to:

XHTML

eXtensible Hyper Text Markup Language

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Basically, markup can either tell a program how to process text, or it can describe what text does.



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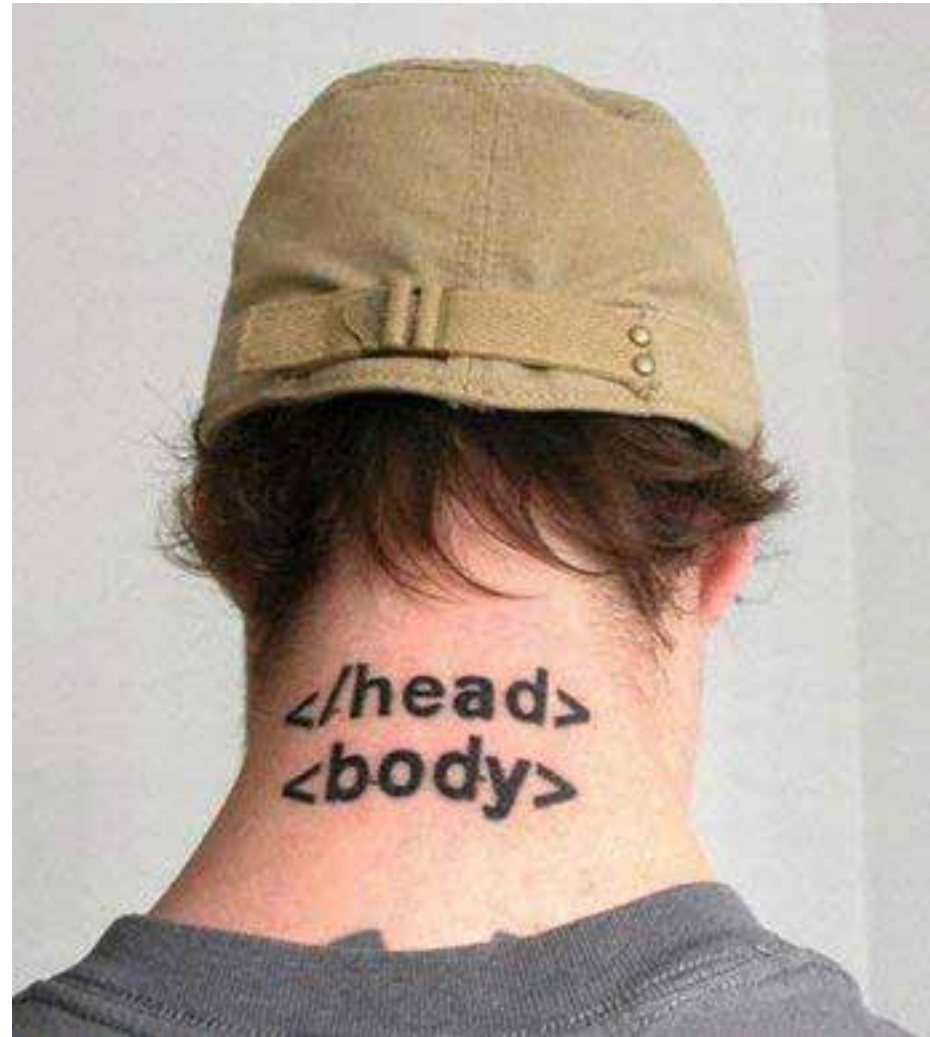
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HTML tags generally come in pairs, like so:

`<html> </html>`

`<head> </head>`

`<body> </body>`



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Those functions are properly the realm of stylesheets and scripts, about which more later.



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Tim Berners-Lee, a contractor at CERN, wrote a hypertext program in 1980 to make it easier for researchers to share documents. In 1989, he wrote a proposal to use a similar system on the Internet, and wrote the original HTML specification and server software in late 1990.

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The Internet Engineering Task Force combined Berners-Lee's spec with a competing HTML+ spec, from Dave Raggett, in 1993 to form a draft HTML specification. Raggett's draft included already-implemented features, including tables and fill-in forms.

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The IETF fell apart under the weight of competing interests after that, and the World Wide Web Consortium (W3C) is the current maintainer of the HTML specifications.

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(You'll recall that this goes against the principle that HTML should only specify how a document behaves, not how it's rendered. Browser vendors sought to create extensions to control the style of documents in an effort to gain market share.)



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HTML 4.01 is the most current accepted HTML version, published in 1999 and corrected in 2001.

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XHTML is designed to be well-formed, so it provides a better foundation for learning HTML than HTML 4.x or HTML5.

There are, however, problems with the XHTML syntax — specifically XHTML 2.0 — about which more later.

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It has new multimedia and graphical features, as well as elements intended to enhance semantic understanding of document content.

**And now,  
hamburger text markup language.**