**What does Validating HTML or CSS Mean?**

**HTML validator** checks to make sure the HTML code on your web page complies with the standards set by the W3 Consortium, the organization that issues the HTML standards. There are various types of HTML validators: some only check for errors, while others also make suggestions about your code, telling you when it might lead to unexpected results

The W3 Consortium has its own online validator which you can use for free. It may be found at: <http://validator.w3.org/>

A **CSS validator** checks your Cascading Style Sheet in the same manner. That is, it will check that it complies with the CSS standards set by the W3 Consortium. There are a few which will also tell you which CSS features are supported by which browsers (since not all browsers are equal in their CSS implementation)

You can get free validation for your style sheets from the W3 Consortium: <http://jigsaw.w3.org/css-validator/>

## Why Validate Your HTML and CSS Code?

### **It Helps Cross-Browser, Cross-Platform and Future Compatibility**

Although you may be able to create a web page that appears to work on your favorite browser (whatever that may be), your page may contain HTML or CSS errors that do not show up with that browser due to an existing quirk or bug. Another person using a different browser that does not share that particular bug will end up viewing a page that does not show up correctly. It is also possible that later versions of your browser will fix that bug, and your page will be broken when people use its latest incarnation.

Coding your pages so that it is correct without errors will result in pages that are more likely to work across browsers and platforms (ie, different systems). It is also a form of insurance against future versions of browsers, since all browsers aim towards compliance with the existing HTML and CSS standards.

### **Search Engine Visibility**

When there are errors in a web page, browsers typically try to compensate in different ways. Some may ignore the broken elements while others make assumptions about what the web designer was trying to achieve. The problem is that when search engines obtain your page and try to parse them for keywords, they will also have to make certain decisions about what to do with the errors. Like browsers, different search engines will probably make different decisions about those errors, resulting in certain parts of your web page (or perhaps even the entire page) not being indexed.

The safest way to make sure the search engines see the page you want them to see is to present them an error-free page. That way, there is no dispute about which part of your page comprises the content and which the formatting code

## Limitations

Validating your web page does not ensure that it will appear the way you want it to. It merely ensures that your code is without HTML or CSS errors.

If you are wondering what the difference is, an analogy from normal human language will hopefully make it clear. Let's take this sentence "Chris a sandwich ate" which is grammatically incorrect when used in a non-poetic context. It can be fixed by simply reversing the order of the last two words so that the sentence reads "Chris ate a sandwich".

But what happens if you write a sentence that says "Chris ate a pie" when you meant that he ate a sandwich? Syntactically, the sentence is correct, since all the elements of the sentence, subject ("Chris"), verb ("ate") and object ("a pie") are in the right order. Semantically, however, the sentence describes a different thing from what you meant.

HTML and CSS validators are designed to catch the first type of error, exemplified by the grammatical error of my first sentence. So if you write HTML code that has (say) the wrong order, the HTML validator will spot it and tell you. However, it cannot catch errors of the second kind, where you get the spelling and order and all other technical aspects correct, but the code you used does not match the meaning you intended.

## How Often Should I Validate?

I validate the template for pages when make a major design change. I try to validate my pages each time I make modifications.

Tools

<https://jigsaw.w3.org/css-validator/>