

What is HTML?

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So, HTML stands for Hypertext Markup Language. It's important to remember that HTML is not a programming language. It's a markup language. And so, the difference between a programming language and a markup language is that in a programming language, you have logic and kind of more complex things you can do with the language.

In a markup language, what you're doing is setting definitions for the browser. So, what does that mean? I like to think of the analogy of a book. And so, back in the old days, when we were still typesetting books, what manuscript editors would do is they would have to go through the content of the book and mark up each part of the text to give it a meaning.

So, for example, they'd have to, you know, label the title with tags to say, this is, you know, the title of the book versus this is the chapter of the book versus this is a paragraph. And those tags then defined what the sections of the pages were inside of a book.

So, HTML markup is very similar. The browser needs to understand the content that's being fed to it (so, the browser meaning, you know, Chrome or Firefox or whatever).

So, what you're doing when you're dealing with HTML is you have a predefined set of tags, things like paragraph, you know, bold, strong, em for italics, things like that. And you're going through all of the content in your site, and you're marking up that content with those tags.

So, you might, for example, have a heading, you know, on your page. And so you'd have an h1 that opens the tag and then a closing h1, so /h1 that encloses that heading. And so, now the browser knows that's a heading. And what the browser does with that is, once it sees those tags, it has built-in styles, which is the look and feel for the tag that it then applies to that text. So, the same is true of a paragraph. It treats it differently.

And so, essentially, HTML markup allows you to mark up the page and give it both presentation and meaning.