

What is semantic HTML, and how is it used?

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So, semantic means meaning, essentially. So, in HTML, there's two things that HTML communicates to the browser. One is presentation. So what your content will look like once it has the HTML wrapping around it and what it means for the browser.

So, when we talk about semantic HTML, it means we're going to use the tags in a way that imparts meaning to the browser. So, as an example, if you're taking a big body of text and you decide to put a blockquote around a paragraph of text, that's telling the browser not just that the blockquote should be, say indented, because it does by default with the browser, but also that it means something, that this is a long form of a quote. And that is used outside of the browser for various purposes, you know, an SEO which we'll learn later.

But when you're marking up a document and you're using HTML in a semantic way, you're basically defining the relationship between one piece of content in the document to the other. So, when you're considering, you know, writing your document with semantics in mind, then you want to choose your markup in a way that communicates to the browser what your document is about.

So, say you have a blog post. In a blog post, you know, there's certain sections of the post that makes sense to a browser from a meaningful point of view. So, you're going to need a heading. You might have, you know, a list elements. You might have paragraphs. You might have blockquotes. Maybe you have some acronyms throughout the document. In that case, instead of choosing say a DIV element, you know, a DIV, to wrap that acronym with, you might want to choose an acronym element because it means something in particular. So, all semantic HTML means is constructing your document in a way that it's meaningful to the browser.