Theory: Inline Elements

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For many beginners, dealing with the structure of HTML documents may prove to be a challenge. Namely, it is sometimes hard to understand how the elements of the web page combine and what properties they have.

Trust us though: it's much easier than it may seem. To get through these issues, it is enough to simply know the exact type of a particular element of a web page.

In HTML up to version 4.01, it's common to distinguish two main types of page elements: **block-level** and **inline**. Each of them has its own properties. In HTML5, however, the elements are not just divided into block-level and inline, but also grouped by meaning and purpose, representing **categories of content**. This concept will be considered at length in the following topics; for now, try to understand the ins and outs of working specifically with inline elements.

Inline elements are those elements of a document that are a direct part of a line. They are intended to emphasize some part of the text and give it a certain function/meaning; they usually contain one or more words.
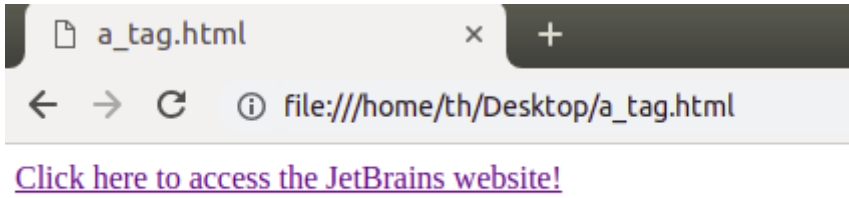
Let's now take a look at six examples of inline elements.

§1. <a> tag

`<a>` tag is probably one of the most important elements of HTML; it's designed to create links. This tag is often used with the `href` attribute, which indicates the path to the file/webpage referenced. Consider a code sample that takes us to the JetBrains website:

```
1
<a href="https://jetbrains.com">Click here to access the JetBrains website!</a>
```

This is what we get in the browser:

The text wrapped in the `<a>` tag is underlined and highlighted in color. When you click on it, you're taken to the address specified in the `href` attribute.

§2. <span> tag

In the paired tag `<span>` you can wrap the text or part of it.

```
1    <p>For the first time <span>on our site</span>?</p>
2    <span>Sign up now!</span>
```

This tag does not affect the display of text in any way:

For the first time on our site?

Sign up now!

You probably have a logical question: why and in what situations use this tag? The `<span>` tag is often used when you need to change the appearance of a part of text using CSS. CSS is the language used to describe the

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appearance of web pages. We will still learn this technology in the track "Web Developer", and in the meantime continue to get acquainted with the inline elements.

§3. <button> tag

In order to create a clickable button, there is a paired `<button>` tag. Inside it, you can put the text that will be displayed inside the button:
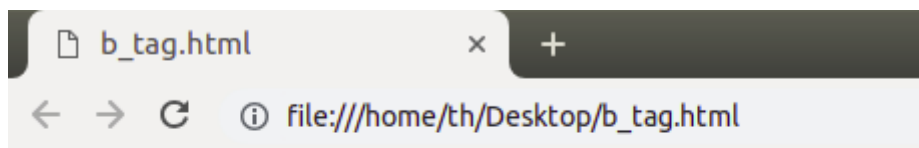
```
1   <button>Click</button>
```

Click

§4. <b> tag

This paired tag sets a bold font for any text enclosed in it. This is rather straightforward, so let's proceed to the example. The limits of the text are indicated by the `<p>` tag; the outline of a name and surname of a person is changed:

```
1   <p>I'm <b>John Doe</b>, and what's your name?</p>
```
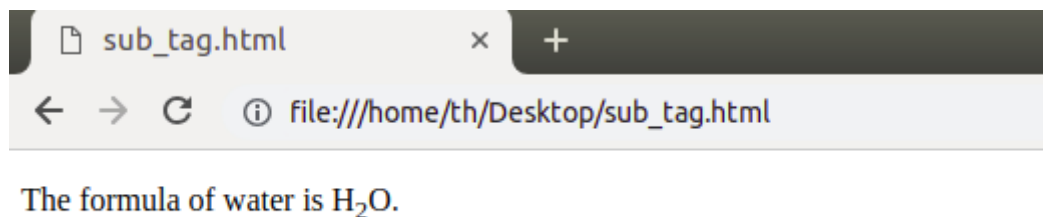
Now look at the result in the browser:

As you can see, this tag is very convenient and easy to use when you want to highlight an important part of the text.

§5. <sub> tag

This tag is used to create subscript text: that is, the text inside this paired tag will be shifted down and reduced in size. Let's see how it works:

```
1   <p>The formula of water is H<sub>2</sub>O.</p>
```
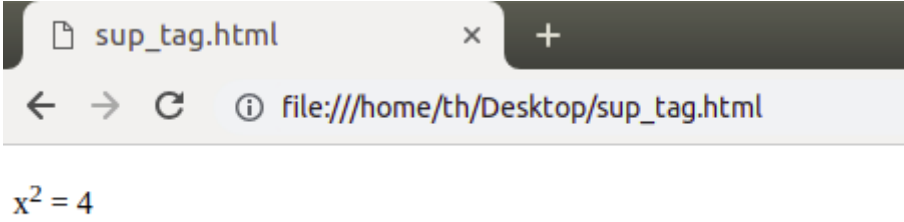
The result is the following:

This tag comes in handy when you need to write a chemical formula.

§6. <sup> tag

This tag defines superscript text. It is similar to the previous one, except that the text enclosed in this tag will be shifted upwards:

```
1   <p>x<sup>2</sup> = 4</p>
```

This is the result as seen in a browser:

$$x^2 = 4$$

With `<sup>` you can get displayed interesting mathematical equations on your web page.

This is by far not a complete list of inline elements – there are definitely [many more to know](#).

§7. Features of inline elements

The following features are characteristic of all these different inline elements:

- They can contain only data and other inline items. The exception to this rule is the `<a>` tag which can also contain block-level elements.
- Before and after, the browser doesn't make a line break. Take a look at the behavior of inline elements and compare it with that of block-level elements:

Behavior of inline elements   **Behavior of block-level elements**

- Inline elements are strictly enclosed in tags.

Now that you have learned the features of inline elements, it will be easier for you to understand the structure of web pages and how it is created.

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