

Theory: HTML page structure

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Programming is not as mechanical and alien as it may seem: in many respects, it is similar to the human world. This is very easy to notice if you look at the structure of HTML pages, which contains elements like `<head>` and `<body>`. Making a site is thus a process of creation, and as a creator, you need to be familiar with all the necessary building blocks. There is a lot to learn, but any lot starts with the essential basics: please welcome on stage, HTML tags.

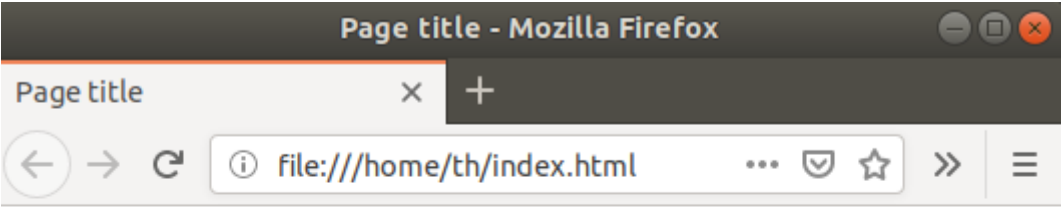
§1. Basic tags in HTML

Among numerous HTML tags that form the logical structure of a page, some are considered the base. The structure can be divided into three main sections: `<html>`, `<head>`, and `<body>`.

Take a look at the code of a simple HTML page:

```
1  <!DOCTYPE html>
2  <html>
3    <head>
4      <meta charset="utf-8">
5      <title>Page title</title>
6    </head>
7    <body>
8      <h1>This is a heading</h1>
9      <p>This is a paragraph</p>
10
11    </body>
12  </html>
```

If you save this code in the HTML format (.html) and open it in your browser, the page will look like this:



This is a heading

This is a paragraph

This looks quite basic, but with HTML you can do much more: customize the structure of the text, manage its visual presentation, and display paragraphs, forms, pictures, titles, and tables. Hypertext markup language allows you to format texts, which makes them friendlier to Internet users. It is much more convenient to read the text that has clear and logical markup rather than plow through unstructured text.

Let's get back to the code from the previous example and consider the listed tags in more detail.

- element `<!DOCTYPE>` specifies the type of the current document: **DTD (Document Type Definition)**. It is necessary that the browser understands according to which HTML standard to display the web page. As you see, this is one of the tags that aren't paired;
- the `<meta>` tag with attribute `charset` specifies document coding. If it is not specified, some browsers may display obscure characters instead of the text;
- the `<html>` tag indicates that it is an HTML document;

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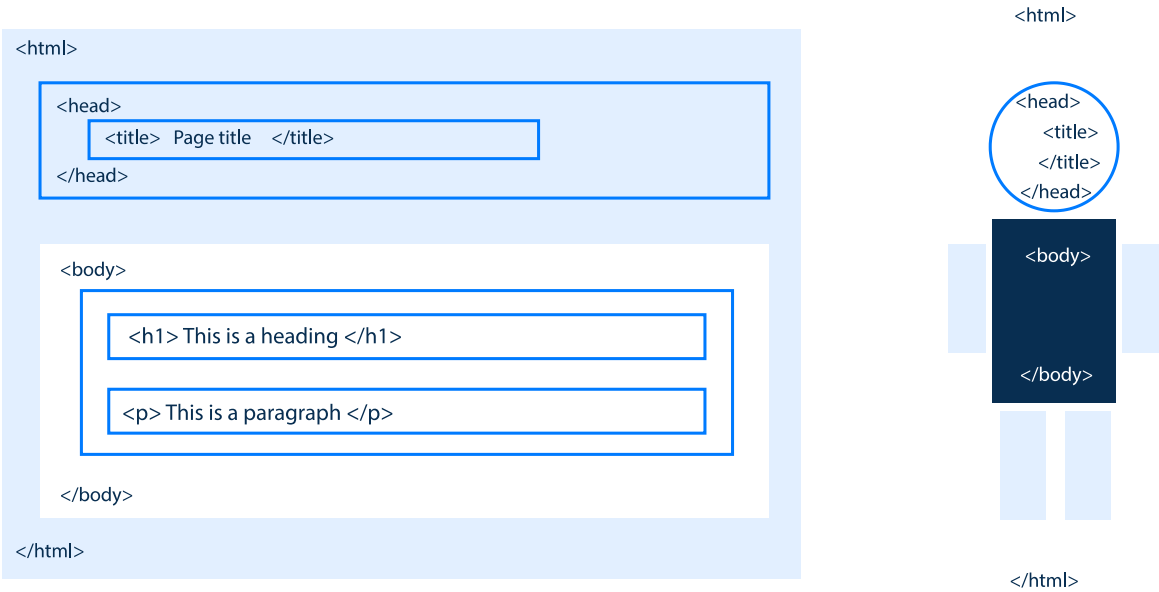
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- the `<head>` tag is designed to store elements that help the browser and search engines to work with data;
- the `<title>` contains the HTML document header. Even though this tag is not mandatory, it is still present on almost all web pages on the Internet;
- the `<body>` tag defines the page content area. It wraps the content displayed in the main browser window;
- the `<h1>` tag holds the page title within the body, and the `<p>` tag is responsible for the paragraphs. These tags are not the main sections and provided here as an example, but you're likely to find them useful in the future as you move from basic to artsy.

§2. Basic HTML Page Structure

Here is a visualization of the basic HTML page structure:



As you can see, this structure bears a resemblance to our anatomy. Hopefully, this analogy will help you understand HTML better.

§3. Conclusion

Surely, both humans and web pages are much more intricate and show a lot of variation. Modern pages can be very large and may contain a lot of different tags inside `<body>`, but their basic structure always remains the same. Come to think of it, this is also so very human.

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