

# Web Design Basics

Welcome to Web Design Basics. Today, we will learn the fundamentals of web design and then create a simple webpage.

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## Introduction to HTML

- **HTML** stands for **H**ypertext **M**arkup **L**anguage. HTML is the basic formatting language for creating web pages.
- A simple HTML web page is a text file with its file name ending in either **htm** or **html** (i.e., index.htm).
- You may use any text editor, such as Notepad (Windows) or SimpleText (Mac), to create an HTML file.
- A web page can have many components, including images, audio and video.
- There are programs that will 'write' the HTML code for you.

These types of programs are called **WYSIWYGs** (**W**hat **Y**ou **S**ee **I**s **W**hat **Y**ou **G**et).



Even with these programs, it is highly beneficial to know HTML.

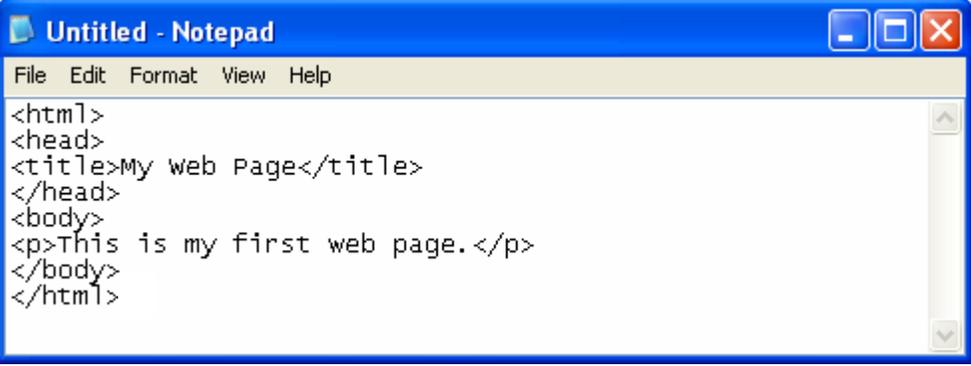


Two popular programs are Microsoft FrontPage and Adobe (Macromedia) Dreamweaver.

- HTML is only one of the languages of the Web. There are many others, including CSS, JavaScript, PHP, and ASP.
- A variety of different software is needed to create multimedia for websites.

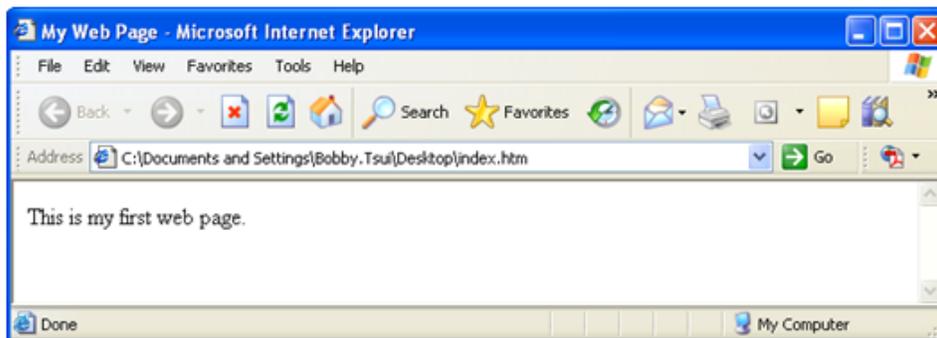
## Your First Webpage

- Open **Notepad**
  - Click on **Start > Programs > Accessories > Notepad**
- Type in the text as shown in the screenshot below:



```
Untitled - Notepad
File Edit Format View Help
<html>
<head>
<title>My web Page</title>
</head>
<body>
<p>This is my first web page.</p>
</body>
</html>
```

- Save the file as a web page:
  - Select **File**
  - Select **Save As...**
  - Next to File name, type **index.htm**
  - Set destination to Desktop
  - Click on **Save**
- To view the web page you just created:
  - Double-click on the file (icon) on your desktop.



- The basic building blocks of HTML are tags. Tags format text and objects on a web page. Most tags need to be closed.

- Detailed explanation of the HTML code:



- For more HTML instruction, go to <http://www.w3schools.com/>

## 🖨 Using WYSIWYG Builders To Create Web Pages

- In addition to the software mentioned previously – FrontPage and Dreamweaver – many web hosts include templates and WYSIWYG editors to help you build web pages quickly and easily. Examples of web hosts include:
  - Google Sites (<http://www.google.com/sites/>)
  - Intuit Small Business (<http://www.intuit.com/>)
  - GoDaddy.com (<http://www.godaddy.com/>)
  - 50Webs.com (<http://www.50webs.com/>)
  - Webstrike Solutions (<http://www.webstrikesolutions.com/>)
  - PolurNET.com (<http://polurnet.com/>)
- There are hundreds, if not thousands, of web hosting services available. An excellent resource for reviews of the best ones is: <http://www.consumersearch.com/web-hosting>
- Important considerations when deciding on a web hosting service include cost, ease of use and marketing/e-commerce services.

- There are benefits and drawbacks to using software you buy compared to a Web host's online tools:

	<b>Benefits</b>	<b>Drawbacks</b>
<b>Web Hosts' Online Tools</b>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Often available free or with paid subscription</li> <li>Easier to learn</li> <li>Guaranteed compatibility</li> <li>Built-in templates</li> <li>HTML or WYSIWYG view</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Fewer features</li> <li>May be very difficult or impossible to move an existing site to another Web host</li> </ul>
<b>Commercial Software (i.e., FrontPage, Dreamweaver)</b>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Far more powerful</li> <li>Should be compatible with any Web host</li> <li>Built-in templates</li> <li>HTML or WYSIWYG view</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Still need to set up Web hosting service</li> <li>Expensive; separate purchase required</li> <li>May need to configure to upload to Web host</li> </ul>

### I Have My Web Page, Now What?

- If you build your web site via a Web hosting service, then you can choose to have it appear live on the Web at any time. Once it's live, anyone can access your website on the Internet.
- When you build a web page on your computer using commercial software, such as FrontPage, it is only accessible to people using that computer.
- To make your web page accessible by others, you will need to upload the file(s) to a Web host or set up your own Web server.
- Basic packages are sometimes free but have limited storage and bandwidth. These basic packages usually place advertisements on your web site to offset their costs. You need to pay (subscribe) to remove the ads.
- If you want your own domain (such as [www.mypage.com](http://www.mypage.com)) and/or other features, there are additional fees involved.

 Web Design Checklist (Note: This is not a comprehensive list.)

- Does the homepage clearly show/describe the purpose of your web site?
- Design for your audience
- Reduce unnecessary scrolling
- Use clear and simple navigation (menus)
  - Use standard menu structure and location
  - Do not use “mystery meat” navigation
  - Consider incorporating breadcrumbs for larger sites
- Color scheme
  - Avoid contrasting or overly bright colors
  - Give the font color enough contrast with the background
- Do your web pages load quickly? Optimize the size of large files (such as images) on your site.
- Browser compatibility – have you tested your site in all the popular browsers? Internet Explorer? Firefox? Safari? What about mobile devices (such as the iPhone)?
- Organization logo on the top left of the page
- Include a site search box
- Design to make it as easy and fast as possible for you (and colleagues or staff, if appropriate) to make changes in the future.
- Keep it current; remove or archive past events or outdated information.
- Include a “Contact Us” link on the top or bottom (or main menu) of every page.
- Is your site printer-friendly?
  - If there are articles or information that the user may wish to print or download, then you may want to include a printer-friendly format and/or a PDF version.
- Check your links routinely, especially the external links.
- Accessibility: Is your site ADA compliant?

For a list of common mistakes that web designers make, visit the fun website, *Web Pages That Suck*: <http://www.webpagesthatsuck.com/>

## Glossary of Common Web Terms

**CSS** – Cascading Style Sheets give designers more control over formatting of web pages

**Domain Name** – the web site’s identity; examples are [www.smpl.org](http://www.smpl.org), [www.irs.gov](http://www.irs.gov), [www.microsoft.com](http://www.microsoft.com), [www.google.com](http://www.google.com)

**HTML** – Hypertext Markup Language, the formatting language of web pages

**Internet** – the infrastructure of hundreds of millions of networked computers across the world; includes the Web, email, news groups, instant messaging, and FTP

**ISP** – Internet Service Provider

**JavaScript** – the most popular scripting language for the Web, JavaScript allows the designer to add dynamic effects such as rollovers, drop-down menus, etc.

**Hyperlink** (or link) – short for hypertext link, this refers to either text or an object on a web page that directs to another file or location

**URL** – Uniform Resource Locator, this is a web page or web site’s address that appears in the address bar of your web browser

**Web Host** (or **Web Hosting Service**) – an organization that owns and maintains computers (Web servers) that keep and deliver web pages

**Web Page** (or webpage) – a location on the World Wide Web; each web page has a unique URL, or web address

**Website** – one web page or group of pages (usually) located within a single domain

**WYSIWYG** – stands for What You See Is What You Get

**XML** – Extensible Markup Language is similar to HTML; XML allows the designer to customize tags; XML holds data, but does not display them on a web page

## Recommended Web Sites:

- <http://www.consumersearch.com/web-hosting> – reviews of Web hosts
- [www.w3schools.com/](http://www.w3schools.com/) – comprehensive online tutorials
- [www.webpagethatsuck.com/](http://www.webpagethatsuck.com/) – fun site with examples of really bad sites
- [www.sxc.hu/](http://www.sxc.hu/) – Stock Exchange offers many free high-quality images