

HTML Syntax

HTML documents are composed of **elements**

- Elements are marked with **tags**
- Tags begin with a `<` and end with a `>`
- Many tags occur in pairs, such as the bold tag ``. The `` is the start tag, and the `` is the end tag. Whatever you put between the start and end tags is the **content** of the element. In this case, it will be bold text.
- Some tags do not require an end tag, such as `<hr>`, which draws a horizontal line across the page. However, you are advised to use end tags, as your code will then comply with the XHTML standard. For so-called empty tags, such as `
` and `<hr>`, add an end tag like this: `
` Note the location of the slash. This single tag is the same as `
</br>`
- Many tags have optional end tags. An example is `<p>`, the paragraph tag. Many programs which generate HTML code insert these optional tags, so we mention them here for completeness. Also, XML and other recent technologies require ending tags.
- Some tags have attributes. Attributes alter the effect of the tag, and appear inside the tag's brackets. Sometimes attributes have values associated with them. An example of a tag with an attribute is: `<h1 align="center">`, which specifies a heading size, and further modifies the heading to be centered on the line. To find out which tags support which attributes, and which values are allowed for a particular attribute, you need to check an HTML reference.
- HTML is NOT case-sensitive, which means `<h1>` and `<H1>` are interpreted by the browser in exactly the same way. It is your preference, although many authors find lower-case text easier to read.
- The `<html></html>` tags establish this as an HTML document.
- The content between the `<body></body>` tags is the visible portion of your page.
- The `<head></head>` tags represent information that is not generally displayed on the page -- we will use it later in the course. However, one element is visible--the `<title></title>` tags hold the content which will display in the title bar of the page.