




HTML

The Basics

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 =Shortcut  =Advice  =Caution

What Is HTML?

HTML (a much easier way to say Hyper Text Markup Language) is the building block for the customization on the Internet. From changing the size of text to creating a multi-page Web page, HTML is very flexible and versatile. It can seem intimidating, but once you get the basics, you can keep building on your knowledge. This beginning document will talk about the following basic information:

1. The HTML Language
2. Basic Elements of the HTML Document
3. Web page Basics

The HTML Language


HTML is a text file containing small mark-up tags and commands that tell Web browsers how to display the page.

- A “tag” refers to the pieces that create a command. A “command” is the combination of tags to produce the intended effect.
- Tags are created by the less than symbol (<) and the greater than symbol (>). Without those two symbols, a tag is not recognized. **Examples of tags:** <i> <u>

There are two types of tags that together, create a command:

1. Starting Tags, at the beginning.
2. Ending tags, at the end.

<beginningtag> text goes here</endingtag>

 You can tell the difference between the two because the end tag has the “/”. Always include an end tag unless otherwise specified or it can ruin the rest of your HTML.

Basic Elements Of The HTML Document

When creating an HTML page, there are four basic elements.

- **HTML**– These tags are the beginning and base of HTML documents without these tags, HTML can not be created. The beginning tag <html> opens the document, and ending tag </html> closes the document.
- **BODY**– The BODY tag holds the rest of the document. It contains tags that are the body of the page.
- **HEAD– Not Required.** This holds title information and is for advanced users. Using the <meta> tag which sits inside the head tag you can enter keywords that identify the Web site in search engines like Google or Yahoo! The For example, look at **Figure 1**.

1. **<meta name="keywords">** (Figure 1, 1)
This describes the website using keywords. When these words are searched for, the Web site will be listed.
2. **<meta name="description">** (Figure 1, 2)
A 25 words or less description about the site. In this case, the site is about "Fun Cat Toys for Cats". This is also looked at by search engines.

Figure 1

```

</head>
<title>Katy's Cat Toys</title>
<meta name="keywords"
      content="cats,cat,cat toys">
<meta name="description"
      content="Fun Cat Toys for Cats">
</head>

```

- **TITLE– Not Required.** A TITLE tag enables the author to name the page. This changes the display name of the page in an internet browser and does not have to be the file name (Figure 5, 2). The default or filename will be used otherwise.

Using all four tags, a basic outline of an html document should look like **Figure 2**. These tags all have starting and ending commands.

- ★ The alignment on the left side is not necessary. (It is just entered that way here to help identify the corresponding commands.)

Figure 2

```

<html>

  <head>

    <title>

      Title of document goes here

    </title>

  </head>

  <body>

    Body of document (this is what shows up on the page)

  </body>

</html>

```

- ! HTML commands and tags are not case sensitive. For example, <HEAD> is the same as <head> and will do the same job in HTML.

Web Page Basics

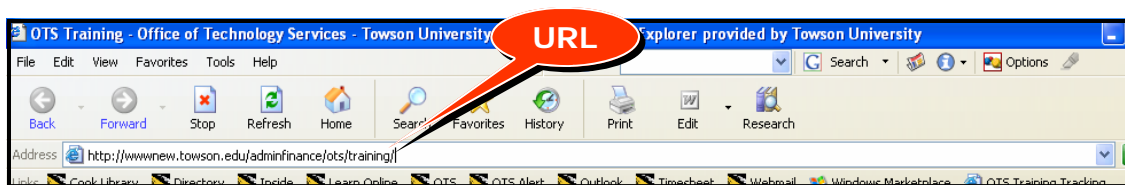
After understanding the coding, a Web page can be created. Start with having Web space. Towson University offers free Web space to faculty and students. For more information, look at this document: <http://wwwnew.towson.edu/adminfinance/OTS/training/techdocs.asp#FrontPage>

- Students have **150 MB** of space including their email, Web disk and Web site through the tiger server.
- Faculty have **200 MB** through the Pages server and WWWNew for Web space. .

The URL

URL is another word for “Uniform Resource Locator” but is better known as a Web address. It is the location of any Web published information that, unless restricted, anyone with access to the internet can view. You can see an example of where the address is located in **Figure 3**.

Figure 3



Creating The HTML

To create HTML pages, use **Notepad**, **Microsoft Word** or any other document creator. There are HTML editors that like **FrontPage 2003** that have different views like Design View that shows changes directly as you make them.

- As a beginner, use basic programs like **Notepad** and **Wordpad**. They are easier to work with. You have to be careful with making breaks in coding and forgetting to close tags. Save your work frequently and back-up any significant changes.

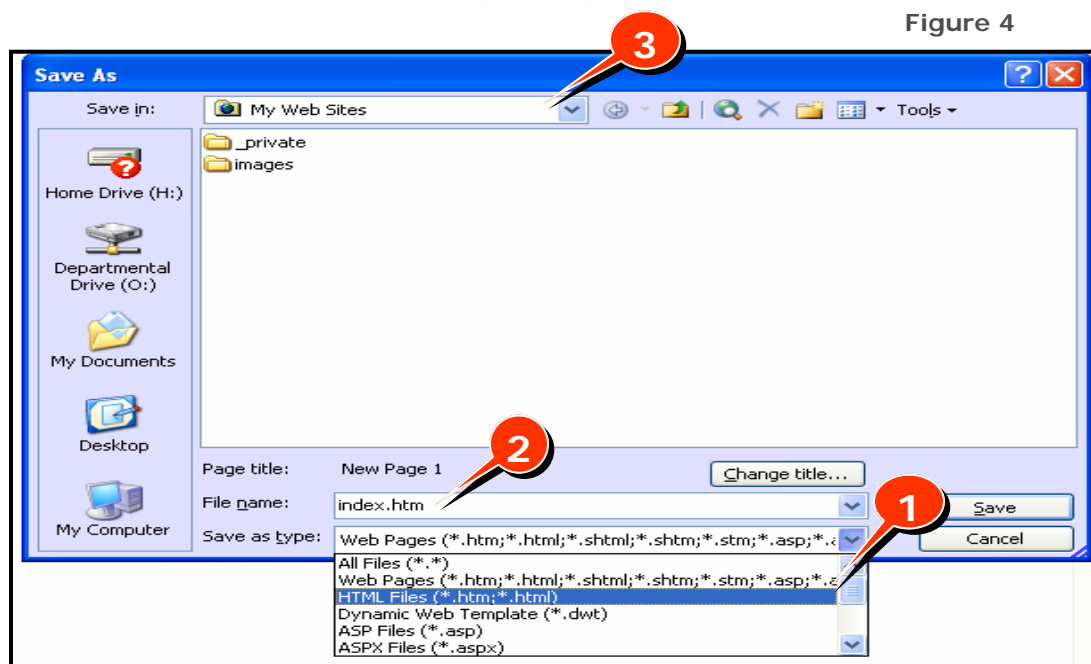


Figure 4

Saving Your Files

Depending on where you work on your Web page, you may have to Save your file as an HTML file. If you're working with an editor, it should automatically recognize it. If not, you can use **Save As** and either:

- Find in the drop down menu "HTML File" and save it as that (**Figure 4, 1**).
- or*
- Type **.html** at the end of your file name so that it looks like this: index.html, or my_website.html (**Figure 4, 2**). Do not use spaces in your file names.

★ It's important to remember where you save your files. It's best to create a special folder for your Web sites (**Figure 4, 3**).

When viewing your page, the file extension is in the URL box (**Figure 5, 1**). Note that the title in the browser title bar is not the same (**Figure 5, 2**). The title tag was used to create the name for the page.

Figure 5

