

## HTML Namespace FAQs

Frequently asked questions and answers about namespaces in HTML HTML-5.com is a great guide for web developers. [TV Series & Actors and Actresses](#). Follow [TV Series](#) and [HTML 5](#) on Google+.

[HTML-5.com](#) > [itemscopehttp://data-vocabulary.org/Breadcrumb](http://data-vocabulary.org/Breadcrumb)  
[itemprop="title">HTML 5</span>](#) > [itemscopehttp://data-vocabulary.org/Breadcrumb](http://data-vocabulary.org/Breadcrumb)  
[HTML Namespace FAQs](#)

---

### What are namespaces in HTML (and XML)?

A `<dfn>namespace</dfn>` is an attribute associated with the name of some object, such as a [node](#) in an HTML document, that distinguishes the type of object represented by the name from other types of objects with the same name in other namespaces. For example, in

```
<head><title>Heading Title</title></head>
```

`title` is the name of an [element](#) (the [title element](#)) in HTML while in

```
<a href="..." title="link title" ...>
```

`title` is the name of a [title attribute](#) on an [HTML <a> tag](#).

The `<dfn>HTML namespaces</dfn>` (plural) in general are the collection of various [namespaces in HTML code](#). The `<dfn>HTML namespace</dfn>` (singular) itself is the one associated with the namespace URI <http://www.w3.org/1999/xhtml>.

On this site, the notation `<a href>` refers to the `href` attribute in the [html:a element namespace](#), where `html:` is the namespace prefix for the [HTML namespace](#).

See the [HTML Namespace Tutorial](#) for more information.

[back to top](#)

---

### Why are there namespaces in HTML 5 (and XHTML)?

Names that are spelled the same and have the same namespace cannot be distinguished from one another without knowing the context in which they appear. For example, in the [RSS version 2.0](#) and [OPML version 2.0](#) code below, the three `<title>` elements with the same name in the same namespace partition (the element partition without a namespace URI in this case) all identify the same type of object:

```
<?xml version="1.0" encoding="UTF-8"?>
<rss version="2.0">
  <channel>
    <title>Feed Title</title>
    ...
    <item>
      <title>Item Title</title>
      ...
    </item>
  </channel>
</rss>

<?xml version="1.0" encoding="UTF-8"?>
<opml version="1.0">
  <head>
```

```
<title>My OPML</title>
</head>
<body>
  ...
</body>
</opml>
```

In order to differentiate the `title` elements above you would have to know that the first one was a descendant of an `rss` element and `channel` element; the second was a descendant of an `rss` element, `channel` element and `item` element; and the third was a descendant of an `opml` element and a `head` element. This type of confusion in XML content without namespaces makes it very difficult to aggregate that content into other types of content, even if the other content formats do support namespaces. For example, if portions of the content above was included in an HTML document (without overriding the namespace with `xmlns=""`), the `title` elements would be treated as a valid HTML titles, the `head` element and `body` element would be treated as duplicates of their HTML counterparts and most of the other elements would be treated as invalid HTML code.

Note that the HTML `title` element would not be confused with the `title` elements shown above, since its name is in a different namespace partition associated with the HTML namespace URI.

[back to top](#)

---

*THE END*