

# HTML <abbr> Tag for Acronyms & Abbreviations

#abbr# is for both acronyms and abbreviations. #abbr# description, syntax, usage, attributes and examples. HTML-5.com is a great guide for web developers. [TV Series & Actors and Actresses](#). Follow [TV Series](#) and [HTML 5](#) on Google+.

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## The <abbr> Tag in HTML 5

The <abbr> tag is used for both abbreviations and acronyms. The **abbr** element is one of the [phrase elements in HTML](#).

Any HTML code using the [<span class="incorrect"><acronym></span> tag](#) should be changed to use the <abbr> tag instead because the [<span class="incorrect"><acronym></span> tag is deprecated](#) and no longer a valid HTML element in the HTML 5 specification.

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## <abbr> Tag Syntax

### Rules for coding HTML **abbr** elements

```
<a mode="pre" href="../body-tag/index.html#syntax"><body></a>
...
  <a mode="pre" href="../html-tag-list.html#phrasing-content-model">... phrasing content
...
</body>
```

Make sure you understand the [difference between a tag and element](#) and are familiar with the [definitions](#) of [namespace](#) and other [HTML terms](#).

1. Code the **abbr** element for an acronym or abbreviation where [phrasing content](#) is expected.
2. Begin the **abbr** element with a starting <abbr> tag. The element name uses lower case letters and should be in the [HTML namespace](#), which it will pick up automatically from the [xmlns attribute](#) on the <html> tag.
3. Include a **title** attribute on the <abbr> tag with the expanded meaning of the acronym.
4. Include the acronym or abbreviation as the content within the tags.
5. End the **abbr** element with a matching </abbr> closing tag.
6. If the abbreviation stands for a term that is being defined in the same paragraph, wrap a [<dfn> tag](#) around the **abbr** element. If the abbreviation itself is being defined, rather than what it stands for, include a **title** attribute on the <dfn> tag with the same abbreviation to override the **title** attribute inherited from the <abbr> tag. See the [examples of the <dfn> tag](#).

## Content Model

The content of the **dt** element can include [HTML comments](#), [text content](#) and only those [HTML tags that can be used in phrasing content](#).

## Optional

- The content within the tags may also be a [hyperlink](#) that links to the acronym definition and shows the user the meaning of the acronym using a pop-up tool tip:

```
<abbr>
  <a href="http://www.Acronyms.net/terms/t/Three-Letter-Acronym/" title="Three Letter Acronym">http://www.Acronyms.net/terms/t/Three-Letter-
</abbr>
```

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## <abbr> Tag Attributes

### Attributes of the <abbr> tag

<a href="#">global attributes</a>	In addition to the personal attributes of the <abbr> tag below, any of the <a href="#">common HTML attributes</a> can also be coded.
title	The <code>title</code> attribute may be coded with the expanded meaning of the acronym or abbreviation in the content of the <abbr> tag. However, browsers tend to ignore the <code>title</code> attribute of the <abbr> tag. To have the browser pop up tool tips with the meaning of acronyms or abbreviations, wrap the <abbr> tags inside <a> tags with <code>title</code> attributes instead, as described by <a href="#">Acronyms .net</a> . Line breaks in the <code>title</code> attribute are preserved. Therefore, the title should not be split across multiple lines.

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## <abbr> Tag Examples

### Examples of the <abbr> tag in HTML 5

```
<abbr title="abbreviation">abbr.</abbr>
<abbr title="Three Letter Acronym">TLA</abbr>
```

Any ampersand, double quote, less than or greater than characters in the `title` or other attributes need to be escaped using [HTML character codes](#).

```
<abbr title="Texas A&M University">
  <a href="http://www.Acronyms.net/t/tamu/#Texas-A&M-University"
    style="cursor: help"
    onclick="if(confirm('TAMU stands for Texas A&M University')) return
  false"
  title="Texas A&M University">TAMU</a>
</abbr>
```

When the cursor hovers over the acronym, the `cursor: help` style changes the cursor to a question mark to indicate that more information is available. After a brief pause, the meaning of the acronym is displayed in a pop-up tool tip.

To try it, mouse over this: `<abbr title="Texas A&M University"> TAMU </abbr>`

### Examples with <dfn>, where an acronym or its meaning is being defined

When an acronym or abbreviation is associated with a definition, it could be either the abbreviated form or its expanded meaning that is being defined. The term being defined is identified by the value of the `title` attribute of the `<dfn>` tag.

When an abbreviation is a short form of the actual term being defined, a parent `<dfn>` tag will also assume the value of the `<abbr>`'s `title` attribute, which indicates the term that is being defined is the fully expanded meaning:

```
<dfn><abbr title="Internet Corporation for Assigned Names and
Numbers">ICANN</abbr></dfn>
is the international organization which helps ensure that
Internet domain names are assigned in an orderly manner.
```

When an acronym's meaning is being clarified by expanding it, then it is the acronym itself that is being defined and the `title` attribute of the parent `<dfn>` tag also needs to be coded to indicate it is not the expanded meaning in the `<abbr>`'s title but the acronym or abbreviation itself that is being defined:

```
When we use the acronym
<dfn title="RSS"><abbr title="Really Simple Syndication">RSS</abbr></dfn>
it is the abbreviation for <b>Really Simple Syndication</b>, not RDF Site
Summary.
```

There are some good [examples of defining acronyms in HTML](#) on the Acronyms.net site.

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## Changes in HTML 5 - <abbr> Tag

### What's new in HTML 5

#### Differences between HTML 5 and earlier versions of HTML

The `<abbr>` tag should be used instead of the HTML `<acronym>` tag since the `<span class="incorrect"><acronym> tag</span>` has been deprecated.

The [2000-2010 Recommendations from the W3C HTML Working Group](#) defined the [HTML namespace](#) for the `abbr` element type name along with the names of all [HTML element types](#). In older (pre-2000) [versions of HTML](#), element type names were not associated with a namespace.

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*THE END*