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Syntax of the <!DOCTYPE html> Tag for HTML 5

```
<a mode="pre" href=" ../xml-declaration/index.html#syntax"><?xml version="1.0" encoding="UTF-8"?></a>
<a mode="pre" href=" ../xml-stylesheet-instruction/index.html#syntax"><?xml-stylesheet ...?></a>
<b mode="pre"><!DOCTYPE html></b>
<a mode="pre" href=" ../html-tag/index.html#syntax"><html xmlns="http://www.w3.org/1999/xhtml"></a>
...
</html>
```

Rules for coding the DOCTYPE declaration for HTML 5

- Code the **DOCTYPE** declaration just before the beginning [<html> tag](#), below the [xml declaration](#) and any processing instructions such as an [xml-stylesheet processing instruction](#).
- The **DOCTYPE** declaration starts with the characters `<!`. This indicates that the element is a [SGML](#) declaration rather than an HTML tag. (Besides the DOCTYPE declaration, the only other HTML code that starts with the characters `<!` are [HTML comments](#).)
- Code the name of the [top element](#) of the document. The DOCTYPE for HTML documents is `html`. This is not a named attribute value, and therefore is *not* enclosed in quotes.
- Do *not* include a [PUBLIC](#) DTD identifier or [SYSTEM](#) URL. There is [no DTD in HTML 5](#).
- The **DOCTYPE** declaration ends with the character `>`. (There is no `!` or self-closing `/` before the `>` terminating delimiter.)
- The **DOCTYPE** declaration does *not* have a corresponding end tag.

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Attributes of the <!DOCTYPE html> Declaration

The `<!DOCTYPE html>` tag is an SGML declaration and therefore does not have any named attributes like those used when coding other HTML tags.

The tag name of the top element of the HTML document follows the **DOCTYPE** keyword.

```
<!DOCTYPE html>
```

The **PUBLIC** identifier should *never* be coded on the **DOCTYPE** declaration.

If software generating HTML code requires that either a **PUBLIC** or **SYSTEM** identifier be included, then the **SYSTEM** keyword may be coded followed by the value `"about:legacy-compat"` enclosed in double quotes.

```
<!DOCTYPE html SYSTEM "about:legacy-compat">
```

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DOCTYPE Declaration Examples

Examples of the DOCTYPE declaration in HTML 5

<!DOCTYPE html> with no additional entity declarations

```
<?<a mode="pre" href=" ../xml-declaration/">xml</a> version="1.0" encoding="UTF-8"?>
<?<a mode="pre" href=" ../xml-stylesheet-instruction/">xml-stylesheet</a> type="text/xsl" href="/s
```

```
<b mode="pre"><!DOCTYPE html></b>
<a mode="pre" href=" ../html-tag/index.html#syntax"><html xmlns="http://www.w3.org/1999/xhtml">
  ...
</html>
```

<!> indicates that this is a [SGML](#) declaration, **DOCTYPE** indicates the declaration is for the document type, **html** is the tag name of the top element of the document and **>** ends the declaration.

If software generating HTML code does not allow the DTD to be omitted, the URI `about:legacy-compat` may be specified as a **SYSTEM** identifier:

```
<!DOCTYPE html SYSTEM "about:legacy-compat">
```

<!DOCTYPE html> with entities defined in an internal subset

```
<?<a mode="pre" href=" ../xml-declaration/">xml</a> version="1.0" encoding="UTF-8"?>
<?<a mode="pre" href=" ../xml-stylesheet-instruction/">xml-stylesheet</a> type="text/xsl" href="
<b mode="pre"><!DOCTYPE html [
  <!ENTITY nbsp "&#160;">
]></b>
<a mode="pre" href=" ../html-tag/index.html#" title="<html> tag"><html xmlns="http://www.w3.org
  ...
</html>
```

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Changes in HTML 5 - <!DOCTYPE html> Declaration

What's new in HTML 5

There is [no DTD in HTML 5](#). Therefore, the `<!DOCTYPE html>` tag should never contain a **PUBLIC FPI** and preferably should not include a **SYSTEM** identifier either. If the **SYSTEM** identifier *is* specified, the value should always be `about:legacy-compat`.

Differences between HTML 5 and earlier versions of HTML

In HTML 5, there is no more `<dfn>transitional DOCTYPE</dfn>`, which allowed [deprecated presentational elements](#) to be included in the HTML code. In previous [versions of HTML](#) the `<dfn>separation of content from presentation</dfn>` using the `<dfn>strict DOCTYPE</dfn>` with [style sheets](#) was optional. Going forward, web developers should *always* use [style sheets](#).

The new `<!DOCTYPE html>` declaration is much simpler and easier to remember. The **PUBLIC** and **SYSTEM** DTD identifiers should be removed from these declarations:

```
<!DOCTYPE html <span mode="pre" class="incorrect">PUBLIC "-//W3C//DTD HTML 4.0 Strict//EN" "ht
<!DOCTYPE html <span mode="pre" class="incorrect">PUBLIC "-//W3C//DTD HTML 4.0 Transitional//EN
<!DOCTYPE html <span mode="pre" class="incorrect">PUBLIC "-//W3C//DTD HTML 4.01 Strict//EN" "h
<!DOCTYPE html <span mode="pre" class="incorrect">PUBLIC "-//W3C//DTD HTML 4.01 Transitional//
<!DOCTYPE html <span mode="pre" class="incorrect">PUBLIC "-//W3C//DTD XHTML 1.0 Strict//EN" "h
<!DOCTYPE html <span mode="pre" class="incorrect">PUBLIC "-//W3C//DTD XHTML 1.0 Transitional//
<!DOCTYPE html <span mode="pre" class="incorrect">PUBLIC "-//W3C//DTD XHTML 1.1//EN" "http://w
```

HTML pages that include a `<dfn>DTD</dfn>` (DOCTYPE definition) in the document type declaration as shown above may be interpreted as one of the older (1997, 1999, 2000 or 2001) [versions of HTML](#) or, worse yet, using `<dfn>quirks mode</dfn>`. Once the **PUBLIC**

[FPI](#) and DTD identifiers have been removed, the pages should only be interpreted as HTML 5 <dfn>standards mode</dfn> documents.

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THE END