

## HTML Tags, Elements, Attributes and Properties

Explains the difference between tags and elements and between HTML attributes and properties 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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### Difference between `<dfn>tag</dfn>` and `<dfn>element</dfn>` in HTML

#### Definition of `<dfn>HTML tag</dfn>` and `<dfn>HTML element</dfn>`

(Some links on this page take you to details in the [HTML Tag Reference](#). Bookmark this page in your Favorites so you can come back to it later.)

A `<dfn id="tag">tag</dfn>` in HTML is a representation of an [element](#) in the serialized form of an HTML document. A `<dfn>start tag</dfn>` or `<dfn>empty tag</dfn>` contains a `<`, the element name, one or more optional attribute name/value pairs separated from the element name and other [attributes](#) by whitespace and ends with either `>`, or with `/>` for a self-closing `<dfn>standalone tag</dfn>` such as `<br />`, which is the [break tag in HTML](#). An `<dfn>end tag</dfn>` contains just `</`, the tag name and `>`, for example `</html>` which is the [end tag](#).

An `<dfn id="element">element</dfn>` is an object in the hierarchical model of a document. It always has an element name and may also have [properties](#) and/or [child elements](#). The difference between an [element](#) and a [tag](#) is that an "element" is a more abstract representation of a node in the hierarchical structure of an HTML document that encompasses its [attributes](#), [child elements](#) and other content such as text and [CDATA sections](#). In an actual document, an element is explicitly represented by either a [start tag](#) and an `<dfn>end tag</dfn>` or `<dfn>closing tag</dfn>` enclosing its [child elements](#) and other content, if any, or simply by a standalone [empty tag](#) if it has no content. In some cases, an element is implied even when the corresponding tag does not appear in the document. A good example of this is the [tbody element](#), which is often an [implied element](#) between a [table tag](#) and a [table row tag](#).

Therefore, the term `<dfn>tag</dfn>` is normally used when referring to the mark up in the serialized form of an HTML document and the term [element](#) typically refers to the internal representation of an HTML object as a node in the document's hierarchical object model, encompassing all of its descendants.

#### Style of tags and elements on this site

In an HTML document's serialized form, the name of a tag can be easily recognized because it will always be preceded by a left angle bracket ("`<`"), if it's a start tag or a standalone tag, or the by the characters "`</`" if it's an end tag. On this site, an element name with these characters and an ending delimiter ("`>`" or "`/>`") indicates that the serial representation of the element is being discussed. These delimiters will only be used when discussing [HTML tags](#), since they are used to delimit HTML code from other text in the serialized form of HTML documents.

The term `<dfn>element</dfn>` refers to a node, along with any descendants, in the hierarchical object model of the abstract representation of an HTML document, used internally by an HTML parser. On this site, an element name without the angle bracket delimiters ("`<`", "`>`", "`</`" or "`/>`") indicates that the representation of the element in the abstract object model is being discussed.

[back to top](#)

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## Difference between `<dfn>attribute</dfn>` and `<dfn>property</dfn>` in HTML

### Definition of `<dfn>HTML attribute</dfn>` and `<dfn>HTML property</dfn>`

The difference between an `<dfn>attribute</dfn>` and a `<dfn>property</dfn>` is analogous to the [difference between a `<dfn>tag</dfn>` and an `<dfn>element</dfn>`.](#)

An `<dfn id="attribute">attribute</dfn>` in HTML is a named [property](#) associated with an [element](#) as coded in the serialized form of an HTML document. In a marked-up document, attribute name/value pairs can be coded in a [start tag](#) or a [standalone tag](#) between the element name and the tag's terminating `>` or `/>` delimiter separated from the element name and other attributes by whitespace. The code for an HTML attribute *always* consists of the attribute name, an equal sign (`=`) and the value of the property enclosed in quotes, even if the attribute is a [boolean attribute](#).

A `<dfn id="property">property</dfn>` is a named characteristic of something in the internal model of an HTML document. The value of the property may be set by an attribute in the serialized form of an element, inherited from a parent element in the hierarchical model of the document or set to some default value.

[back to top](#)

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# THE END