

# What Beautiful HTML Code Looks Like

## DOCTYPE Properly Declared

It looks like a lot of gibberish, but DOCTYPEs are important. They not only allow your code to validate, but they tell browsers things about how to render your page. Simple `<html>` tags don't cut it.

```
<!DOCTYPE html PUBLIC "-//W3C//DTD XHTML 1.0 Transitional//EN"
"http://www.w3.org/TR/xhtml1/DTD/xhtml1-transitional.dtd">
```

```
<html xmlns="http://www.w3.org/1999/xhtml">
```

```
<head>
  <title>Urban and Regional Planning</title>
  <meta http-equiv="Content-Type" content="text/html; charset=UTF-8" />
  <link rel="stylesheet" type="text/css" href="css/print.css" media="print" />
  <link rel="stylesheet" type="text/css" href="css/style.css" media="screen, projection" />
  <script src="scripts/fun.js" type="text/javascript"></script>
</head>
```

## Tidy Head Section

Title is set. Character set declared. Stylesheets linked (including a print stylesheet!). Scripts linked and NOT included in full. External files have their own related folders (e.g. "CSS" & "Scripts")

## Body IDed

Putting an ID on your body allows you to create CSS properties that are unique to that page. For instance, you may want your `<h2>` tags to look different on the homepage. In your CSS you can write: `#home h2 {}` to accomplish this and not affect `<h2>` tags elsewhere.

```
<body id="home">
```

```
  <div id="page-wrap">
```

```
    <?php include_once("menu.html") ?>
```

```
    <div id="main-content">
```

```
      
```

```
      <div id="search-area">
```

```
        <input value="Search..." onfocus="this.value='';" />
```

```
        <div style="clear: both;"></div>
```

```
      </div>
```

```
      <?php include_once("left-sidebar.html") ?>
```

```
      <div id="right-content">
```

```
        <div id="right-sidebar">
```

```
          <div class="news-box">
```

```
            <?php include_once("news.html") ?>
```

```
          </div>
```

```
          <div class="events-box">
```

```
            <?php include_once("events.html") ?>
```

```
          </div>
```

```
        </div>
```

```
      <h1>Welcome to the URPL!</h1>
```

```
      <h2>Who we are:</h2>
```

```
      <p>Over the course of the past 50 or so years, we in the <strong>Department of
Urban and Regional Planning</strong> have been active in the core missions of teaching,
research, and outreach. Since inception in the 1960s, we have granted about 1000 graduate
degrees and forwarded a progressive and interdisciplinary approach to the theory and
practice of planning. As a department of both the College of Letters and Science and the
College of Agricultural and Life Sciences, our faculty, affiliates, and students provide a
bridge between the array of academic disciplines and knowledge bases necessary to address key
planning problems found in the real-world.</p>
```

```
      <h2>Our Goals:</h2>
```

```
      <p>The department has three primary goals. First, we actively prepare quali-
fied graduate students to become competent, creative and effective practicing planners.
Second, we contribute to knowledge in the field of planning through scholarly and applied
research. And third, we undertake professional planning activities and provide service in
collaboration with the University of Wisconsin - Extension, a variety of public agencies,
planning consulting firms and other private and non-profit sector organizations.</p>
```

```
    </div>
```

```
  </div>
```

```
  <?php include_once("footer.html") ?>
```

```
</body>
```

```
</html>
```

## Semantically Clean Menu

```
<div id="menu">
```

```
  <ul>
```

```
    <li><a href="index.php">Home</a></li>
```

```
    <li><a href="about.php">About</a></li>
```

```
    <li><a href="contact.php">Contact</a></li>
```

```
  </ul>
```

```
</div>
```

## Important Content First

It is best if your most important content, like news and events, can be listed first in the HTML. If your sidebar is just navigation or less important content, it is best if it comes last in the HTML.

## Main DIV for all Page Content

Putting all the content of your page into one main "wrap" DIV gives you lots of control right off the bat. There is where you can set the width of your page for a fixed width site or maximums and minimums for a fluid width site.

## Common Content INCLUDED

A lot of web content is common from page to page. Think menu bars, sidebars, footers, "boxes", etc. This kind of content should be dynamically loaded. Either from a database or with simple PHP include statements.

## Proper Ending Tags

You started strong, now end strong. Don't be lazy and exclude closing tags for any element, even if the page renders OK without them.

## Content, Content, Content

This is where your content belongs, so go nuts. Remember to keep your paragraphs distinct and in `<p>` tags. Use lists where appropriate. Use codes like `&copy;` for `©` symbols. Don't go overboard with `<br />` tags, that's sloppy formatting.

## Code is Tabbed into Sections

If each section of code is tabbed in once, the structure of the code is much more understandable. Code that is all left-justified is horrific to read and understand.

## Hierarchy of Header Tags

Use header tags as they were designed, to create titles for sections and signify their position in the content hierarchy.

## No Styling!

Your HTML should be focused on structure and content, not styling! Keep all of your styling in your CSS, there should be no deprecated `<font>` tags in site.