

XHTML - SYNTAX

http://www.tutorialspoint.com/xhtml/xhtml_syntax.htm

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XHTML syntax is very similar to HTML syntax and almost all the valid HTML elements are valid in XHTML as well. But when you write an XHTML document, you need to pay a bit extra attention to make your HTML document compliant to XHTML.

Here are the important points to remember while writing a new XHTML document or converting existing HTML document into XHTML document –

- Write a DOCTYPE declaration at the start of the XHTML document.
- Write all XHTML tags and attributes in lower case only.
- Close all XHTML tags properly.
- Nest all the tags properly.
- Quote all the attribute values.
- Forbid Attribute minimization.
- Replace the **name** attribute with the **id** attribute.
- Deprecate the **language** attribute of the script tag.

Here is the detail explanation of the above XHTML rules –

DOCTYPE Declaration

All XHTML documents must have a DOCTYPE declaration at the start. There are three types of DOCTYPE declarations, which are discussed in detail in XHTML Doctypes chapter. Here is an example of using DOCTYPE –

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

Case Sensitivity

XHTML is case sensitive markup language. All the XHTML tags and attributes need to be written in lower case only.

```
<!-- This is invalid in XHTML -->
<A href="/xhtml/xhtml_tutorial.html">XHTML Tutorial</A>

<!-- Correct XHTML way of writing this is as follows -->
<a href="/xhtml/xhtml_tutorial.html">XHTML Tutorial</a>
```

In the example, **Href** and anchor tag **A** are not in lower case, so it is incorrect.

Closing the Tags

Each and every XHTML tag should have an equivalent closing tag, even empty elements should also have closing tags. Here is an example showing valid and invalid ways of using tags –

```
<!-- This is invalid in XHTML -->
<p>This paragraph is not written according to XHTML syntax.

<!-- This is also invalid in XHTML -->

```

The following syntax shows the correct way of writing above tags in XHTML. Difference is that, here we have closed both the tags properly.

```
<!-- This is valid in XHTML -->
<p>This paragraph is not written according to XHTML syntax.</p>

<!-- This is also valid now -->

```

Attribute Quotes

All the values of XHTML attributes must be quoted. Otherwise, your XHTML document is assumed as an invalid document. Here is the example showing syntax –

```
<!-- This is invalid in XHTML -->


<!-- Correct XHTML way of writing this is as follows -->

```

Attribute Minimization

XHTML does not allow attribute minimization. It means you need to explicitly state the attribute and its value. The following example shows the difference –

```
<!-- This is invalid in XHTML -->
<option selected>

<!-- Correct XHTML way of writing this is as follows -->
<option selected="selected">
```

Here is a list of the minimized attributes in HTML and the way you need to write them in XHTML –

HTML Style	XHTML Style
compact	compact="compact"
checked	checked="checked"
declare	declare="declare"
readonly	readonly="readonly"
disabled	disabled="disabled"
selected	selected="selected"
defer	defer="defer"
ismap	ismap="ismap"
nohref	nohref="nohref"
noshade	noshade="noshade"
nowrap	nowrap="nowrap"
multiple	multiple="multiple"
noresize	noresize="noresize"

The *id* Attribute

The id attribute replaces the name attribute. Instead of using name = "name", XHTML prefers to use id = "id". The following example shows how –

```
<!-- This is invalid in XHTML -->


<!-- Correct XHTML way of writing this is as follows -->

```

The *language* Attribute

The language attribute of the script tag is deprecated. The following example shows this difference –

```
<!-- This is invalid in XHTML -->

<script language="JavaScript" type="text/JavaScript">
  document.write("Hello XHTML!");
</script>

<!-- Correct XHTML way of writing this is as follows -->

<script type="text/JavaScript">
  document.write("Hello XHTML!");
</script>
```

Nested Tags

You must nest all the XHTML tags properly. Otherwise your document is assumed as an incorrect XHTML document. The following example shows the syntax –

```
<!-- This is invalid in XHTML -->
<b><i> This text is bold and italic</b></i>

<!-- Correct XHTML way of writing this is as follows -->
<b><i> This text is bold and italic</i></b>
```

Element Prohibitions

The following elements are not allowed to have any other element inside them. This prohibition applies to all depths of nesting. Means, it includes all the descending elements.

Element	Prohibition
<a>	Must not contain other <a> elements.
<pre>	Must not contain the , <object>, <big>, <small>, <sub>, or <sup> elements.
<button>	Must not contain the <input>, <select>, <textarea>, <label>, <button>, <form>, <fieldset>, <iframe> or <isindex> elements.
<label>	Must not contain other <label> elements.
<form>	Must not contain other <form> elements.

A Minimal XHTML Document

The following example shows you a minimum content of an XHTML 1.0 document –

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

<!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/TR/xhtml1" xml:lang="en" lang="en">
```

```
<head>
  <title>Every document must have a title</title>
</head>

<body>
  ...your content goes here...
</body>
</html>
```