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HTML5 Semantic Elements

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Semantics is the study of the meanings of words and phrases in a language.

Semantic elements = elements with a meaning.

What are Semantic Elements?

A semantic element clearly describes its meaning to both the browser and the developer.

Examples of **non-semantic** elements: `<div>` and `` - Tells nothing about its content.

Examples of **semantic** elements: `<form>`, `<table>`, and `<article>` - Clearly defines its content.

Browser Support

Yes	Yes	Yes	Yes	Yes

HTML5 semantic elements are supported in all modern browsers.

✕ [Read about it in HTML5 Browser Support.](#)

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[HTML Forms](#)[HTML Form Elements](#)[HTML Input Types](#)[HTML Input Attributes](#)

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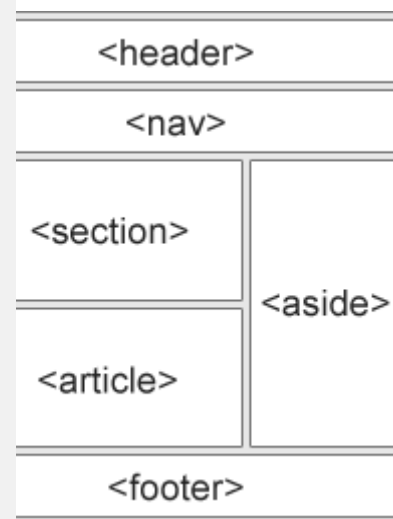
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New Semantic Elements in HTML5

Many web sites contain HTML code like: `<div id="nav">` `<div class="header">` `<div id="footer">` to indicate navigation, header, and footer.

HTML5 offers new semantic elements to define different parts of a web page:

- `<article>`
- `<aside>`
- `<details>`
- `<figcaption>`
- `<figure>`
- `<footer>`
- `<header>`
- `<main>`
- `<mark>`
- `<nav>`
- `<section>`
- `<summary>`
- `<time>`



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- HTML JavaScript
- HTML File Paths
- HTML Head
- HTML Layout
- HTML Responsive
- HTML Entities
- HTML Symbols
- HTML Charset
- HTML URL Encode
- HTML XHTML

HTML Forms

- HTML Forms
- HTML Form Elements
- HTML Input Types
- HTML Input Attributes

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- HTML5 Intro
- HTML5 Support
- HTML5 Elements
- HTML5 Semantics
- HTML5 Migration
- HTML5 Style Guide

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- HTML Canvas



The <section> element defines a section in a document.

According to W3C's HTML5 documentation: "A section is a semantic grouping of content, typically with a heading."

Some page could normally be split into sections for introduction, content, and contact information.

Example

```
<section>
  <h1>WWF</h1>
  <p>The World Wide Fund for Nature (WWF) is....
</p>
</section>
```

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HTML5 <article> Element

The <article> element specifies independent, self-contained content.

An article should make sense on its own, and it should be possible to read it independently from the rest of the web site.

Examples of where an <article> element can be used:

- Forum post
- Blog post
- Newspaper article

Example

```
<article>
  <h1>What Does WWF Do?</h1>
  <p>WWF's mission is to stop the degradation of
```

```

x harmony with nature.</p>
  </article>

```

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HTML Entities

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HTML Forms

HTML Forms

HTML Form Elements

HTML Input Types

HTML Input Attributes

HTML5

HTML5 Intro

HTML5 Support

HTML5 Elements

HTML5 Semantics

HTML5 Migration

HTML5 Style Guide

HTML Graphics

HTML Canvas

esting <article> in <section> or ce Versa?

The <article> element specifies independent, self-contained content.

The <section> element defines section in a document.

How do we use the definitions to decide how to nest those elements? No, we cannot!

On the Internet, you will find HTML pages with <section> elements containing <article> elements, and <article> elements containing <sections> elements.

You will also find pages with <section> elements containing <section> elements, and <article> elements containing <article> elements.

Example for a newspaper: The sport **articles** in the sport **section**, may have a technical **section** in each **article**.

HTML5 <header> Element

The <header> element specifies a header for a document or section.

The <header> element should be used as a container for introductory content.

A document can have several <header> elements in one document.

× Example

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- HTML JavaScript
- HTML File Paths
- HTML Head
- HTML Layout
- HTML Responsive
- HTML Entities
- HTML Symbols
- HTML Charset
- HTML URL Encode
- HTML XHTML

```

<article>
  <header>
    <h1>What Does WWF Do?</h1>
    <p>WWF's mission:</p>
  </header>
  <p>WWF's mission is to stop the degradation of
our planet's natural environment,
and build a future in which humans live in
harmony with nature.</p>
</article>

```

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- HTML Form Elements
- HTML Input Types
- HTML Input Attributes

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- HTML5 Intro
- HTML5 Support
- HTML5 Elements
- HTML5 Semantics
- HTML5 Migration
- HTML5 Style Guide

HTML Graphics

- HTML Canvas

HTML5 <footer> Element

The <footer> element specifies a footer for a document or section.

The <footer> element should contain information about its containing element.

A footer typically contains the author of the document, copyright information, links to terms of use, contact information, etc.

A document may have several <footer> elements in one document.

Example

```

<footer>
  <p>Posted by: Hege Refsnes</p>
  <p>Contact information: <a
href="mailto:someone@example.com">
someone@example.com</a>.</p>
</footer>

```

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HTML Forms

[HTML Forms](#)[HTML Form Elements](#)[HTML Input Types](#)[HTML Input Attributes](#)

HTML5

[HTML5 Intro](#)[HTML5 Support](#)[HTML5 Elements](#)[HTML5 Semantics](#)[HTML5 Migration](#)[HTML5 Style Guide](#)

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HTML5 <nav> Element

The <nav> element defines a set of navigation links.

Notice that NOT all links of a document should be inside a <nav> element. The <nav> element is intended only for a major block of navigation links.

Example

```
<nav>
  <a href="/html/">HTML</a> |
  <a href="/css/">CSS</a> |
  <a href="/js/">JavaScript</a> |
  <a href="/jquery/">jQuery</a>
</nav>
```

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HTML5 <aside> Element

The <aside> element defines some content aside from the content it is placed in (like a sidebar).

The aside content should be related to the surrounding content.

Example

```
<p>My family and I visited The Epcot center this
summer.</p>

<aside>
  <h4>Epcot Center</h4>
```

x </aside>

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- HTML Iframes
- HTML JavaScript
- HTML File Paths
- HTML Head
- HTML Layout
- HTML Responsive
- HTML Entities
- HTML Symbols
- HTML Charset
- HTML URL Encode
- HTML XHTML

HTML Forms

- HTML Forms
- HTML Form Elements
- HTML Input Types
- HTML Input Attributes

HTML5

- HTML5 Intro
- HTML5 Support
- HTML5 Elements
- HTML5 Semantics
- HTML5 Migration
- HTML5 Style Guide

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- HTML Canvas

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HTML5 <figure> and <figcaption> elements

The purpose of a figure caption is to add a visual explanation to an image.

In HTML5, an image and a caption can be grouped together in a <figure> element:

Example

```
<figure>
  
  <figcaption>Fig1. - The Pulpit Rock, Norway.
</figcaption>
</figure>
```

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The element defines the image, the <figcaption> element defines the caption.

Why Semantic Elements?

In HTML4, developers used their own id/class names to style elements: header, top, bottom, footer, menu, navigation, main, container, content, article, sidebar, topnav, etc.

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HTML Forms

[HTML Forms](#)[HTML Form Elements](#)[HTML Input Types](#)[HTML Input Attributes](#)

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[HTML5 Intro](#)[HTML5 Support](#)[HTML5 Elements](#)[HTML5 Semantics](#)[HTML5 Migration](#)[HTML5 Style Guide](#)

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With the new HTML5 elements (<header> <footer> <nav> <section> <article>), this will become easier.

According to the W3C, a Semantic Web: "Allows data to be shared and reused across applications, enterprises, and communities."

Semantic Elements in HTML5

Below is an alphabetical list of the new semantic elements in HTML5.

The links go to our complete [HTML5 Reference](#).

Tag	Description
<article>	Defines an article
<aside>	Defines content aside from the page content
<details>	Defines additional details that the user can view or hide
<figcaption>	Defines a caption for a <figure> element
<figure>	Specifies self-contained content, like illustrations, diagrams, photos, code listings, etc.
<footer>	Defines a footer for a document or section
<header>	Specifies a header for a document or section
<main>	Specifies the main content of a document
<mark>	Defines marked/highlighted text
<nav>	Defines navigation links
<section>	Defines a section in a document
<summary>	Defines a visible heading for a <details> element

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- HTML Classes
- HTML Iframes
- HTML JavaScript
- HTML File Paths
- HTML Head
- HTML Layout
- HTML Responsive
- HTML Entities
- HTML Symbols
- HTML Charset
- HTML URL Encode
- HTML XHTML

Previous

Next >



HTML Forms

- HTML Forms
- HTML Form Elements
- HTML Input Types
- HTML Input Attributes

HTML5

- HTML5 Intro
- HTML5 Support
- HTML5 Elements
- HTML5 Semantics
- HTML5 Migration
- HTML5 Style Guide

HTML Graphics

- HTML Canvas



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[HTML Symbols](#)
[HTML Charset](#)
[HTML URL Encode](#)
[HTML XHTML](#)

HTML Forms

[HTML Forms](#)
[HTML Form Elements](#)
[HTML Input Types](#)
[HTML Input Attributes](#)

HTML5

[HTML5 Intro](#)
[HTML5 Support](#)
[HTML5 Elements](#)
[HTML5 Semantics](#)
[HTML5 Migration](#)
[HTML5 Style Guide](#)

HTML Graphics

[HTML Canvas](#)

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HTML URL Encode
HTML XHTML

HTML Forms

HTML Forms
HTML Form Elements
HTML Input Types
HTML Input Attributes

HTML5

HTML5 Intro
HTML5 Support
HTML5 Elements
HTML5 Semantics
HTML5 Migration
HTML5 Style Guide

HTML Graphics

HTML Canvas



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HTML Forms

HTML Form Elements

HTML Input Types

HTML Input Attributes

HTML5

HTML5 Intro

HTML5 Support

HTML5 Elements

HTML5 Semantics

HTML5 Migration

HTML5 Style Guide

HTML Graphics

HTML Canvas



- HTML Classes
- HTML Iframes
- HTML JavaScript
- HTML File Paths
- HTML Head
- HTML Layout
- HTML Responsive
- HTML Entities
- HTML Symbols
- HTML Charset
- HTML URL Encode
- HTML XHTML

HTML Forms

- HTML Forms
- HTML Form Elements
- HTML Input Types
- HTML Input Attributes

HTML5

- HTML5 Intro
- HTML5 Support
- HTML5 Elements
- HTML5 Semantics
- HTML5 Migration
- HTML5 Style Guide

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- HTML Canvas

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- HTML Classes
- HTML Iframes
- HTML JavaScript
- HTML File Paths
- HTML Head
- HTML Layout
- HTML Responsive
- HTML Entities
- HTML Symbols
- HTML Charset
- HTML URL Encode
- HTML XHTML

HTML Forms

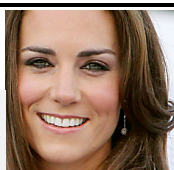
- HTML Forms
- HTML Form Elements
- HTML Input Types
- HTML Input Attributes

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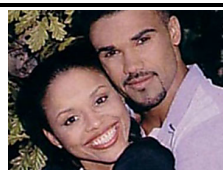
- HTML5 Intro
- HTML5 Support
- HTML5 Elements
- HTML5 Semantics
- HTML5 Migration
- HTML5 Style Guide

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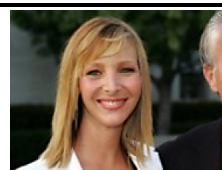
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HTML5

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