
Glossary

!important — A CSS keyword that lets the user override the author's style setting for a particular element.

active white space — White space used deliberately as an integral part of your design that provides structure and separates content.

audience definition — A profile of your average user.

banding — An effort to match the closest colors from the GIF's palette to the original colors in a photo.

box model — A CSS element that describes the rectangular boxes containing content on a Web page.

browser-safe colors — The 216 colors shared by PCs and Macintoshes. These colors display properly across both platforms without dithering.

cache — The browser's temporary storage area for Web pages and images. There are two types of caches: memory cache and hard drive cache.

canvas area — The part of the browser window that displays the content of the Web page.

cascade — Style sheets originate from three sources: the author, the user, and the browser. The cascading feature of CSS lets these multiple style sheets and style rules interact in the same document.

Cascading Style Sheets (CSS) — A style language, created by the W3C, that allows complete specifications of style for XHTML documents. CSS allows XHTML authors to use over 50 properties that affect the display of Web pages. CSS style information is contained either within an XHTML document, or in external documents called style sheets.

child element — An XHTML element contained within another element.

color depth — The amount of data used to create color on a display. The three common color depths are 8-bit, 16-bit, and 24-bit. Not all displays support all color depths.

Common Gateway Interface (CGI) — The communications bridge between the Internet and the server. Using programs called scripts, CGI can collect data sent by a user via the Hypertext Transfer Protocol (HTTP) and transfer it to a variety of data processing programs including spreadsheets, databases, or other software running on the server.

complete URL — A complete Uniform Resource Locator (URL) is an address of documents and other resources on the Web that includes the protocol the browser uses to access the file, server or domain name, the relative path, and the filename.

containing box — The containing rectangle, or parent element, of any child element. The absolute containing element is the window area of the browser. All other elements are displayed within this containing box, which equates to the <body> element of an XHTML document. Within <body>, elements such as <div> or <p> are parents, or containing boxes, for their child elements.

contextual link — A link that allows users to jump to related ideas or cross-references by clicking the word or item that interests them. You can embed contextual links directly in your content by choosing the key terms and concepts you anticipate your users will want to follow.

core attribute — One of the four attributes that can be used with any element. They include id, title, style, and class.

CSS — *See* Cascading Style Sheets.

cursive — A generic value for the CSS font-family property. Cursive fonts are designed to resemble handwriting. Most browsers do not support this font family.

declaration — The declaration portion of a style rule consists of a property name and value. The browser applies the declaration to the selected element.

deprecated element — An element that the W3C has identified as obsolete in future releases of XHTML.

dithering — This color mixing process occurs when a browser encounters a color on a Web page that it does not support. The browser is forced to mix the color. The resulting color may be grainy or unacceptable. To avoid dithering, work with browser-safe colors.

Extensible Hypertext Markup Language (XHTML) — XHTML is HTML 4.01 reformulated as an application of XML.

extranet — A private part of a company's intranet that uses the Internet to securely share part of the organization's information.

fantasy — A generic value for the CSS font-family property. Fantasy fonts are primarily decorative. Most browsers do not support this font family.

File Transfer Protocol (FTP) — A standard communications protocol for transferring files over the Internet.

font — A typeface in a particular size, such as Times Roman 24 point.

form controls — These are the input elements that make up an HTML form, such as radio buttons, text boxes, and check boxes.

fragment identifier — The use of the <a> element and NAME attribute to name a segment of an XHTML file. You can then reference the fragment name in a hypertext link.

GIF — *See* Graphics Interchange Format.

Graphics Interchange Format (GIF) — The Graphic Interchange Format (GIF) is designed for online delivery of graphics. The color depth of GIF is 8-bit, allowing a palette of no more than 256 colors. The GIF file format excels at compressing and displaying flat color areas, making it the logical choice for line art and graphics with simple colors.

grid — A layout device that organizes the Web page, providing visual consistency.

hypertext — A nonlinear way of organizing information. When you are using a hypertext system, you can skip from one related topic to another, find the information that interests you, and then return to your starting point or move on to another related topic of interest.

Hypertext Markup Language (HTML) — The markup language that defines the structure and display properties of a Web page. The HTML code is interpreted by the browser to create the displayed results. HTML is an application of SGML. (*See* Standard Generalized Markup Language.)

interlacing — The gradual display of a graphic in a series of passes as the data arrives in the browser. Each additional pass of data creates a clearer view of the image until the complete image is displayed. You can choose an interlacing process when you are creating GIFs.

Internet service provider (ISP) — A company that provides Internet access and Web site hosting services to individuals and organizations.

intranet — A private collection of networks contained within an organization. Intranet users gain access to the Internet through a firewall that prevents unauthorized users from getting in to the intranet.

Joint Photographic Experts Group (JPEG or JPG) — A file format, commonly shortened to JPG, designed for the transfer of photographic images over the Internet. JPGs are best for photos and images that contain feathering, complex shadows, or gradations.

JPEG — *See* Joint Photographic Experts Group.

JPG — *See* Joint Photographic Experts Group.

markup language — A structured language that lets you identify common elements of a document such as headings, paragraphs, and lists.

metalanguage — A language that lets you describe the characteristics of a markup language. The Extensible Markup Language (XML) is a metalanguage.

monospace — A generic value for the CSS font-family property. Monospace fonts are fixed-width fonts. Every letter has the same horizontal width.

parent element — An XHTML element that contains child elements.

parser — A program built into a browser that interprets the markup tags in an XHTML file and displays the results in the canvas area of the browser interface.

partial URL — A Uniform Resource Locator (URL) that omits the protocol and server name, and only specifies the path to the file relative to one another on the same server.

passive white space — The blank area that borders the screen or is the result of mismatched shapes.

plug-in — A helper application that assists a browser in rendering a special effect.

PNG — *See* Portable Network Graphic.

points of presence (POP) — Dial-up access points to your service provider's network. Your service provider should have at least one POP available so you can dial a local number to get access. Major ISPs such as AT&T have POPs throughout the United States, where a local ISP will cover only the area that includes their subscriber base.

POP — *See* points of presence.

Portable Network Graphic (PNG) — A graphics file format for the Web that supports many of the same features as GIF.

processing instruction — A special type of XML element that contains information that doesn't fit into a standard XHTML structure.

property — A quality or characteristic stated in a style rule, such as color, font-size, or margin. The property is a part of the style rule declaration.

raster graphics — Images represented pixel-by-pixel for the entire image. GIFs and JPGs are raster formats.

sans-serif — A generic value for the CSS font-family property. Sans-serif fonts have no serifs. The most common sans-serif fonts are Helvetica and Arial.

Scalable Vector Graphics (SVG) — A language for describing two-dimensional graphics using XML. SVG files can contain shapes such as lines and curves, images, text, animation, and interactive events.

screen resolution — The horizontal and vertical height and width of the computer screen in pixels. The three most common screen resolutions (traditionally expressed as width × height) are 640 × 480, 800 × 600, and 1024 × 768.

search engine — A software program that searches out and indexes Web sites in a catalog.

Secure Sockets Layer (SSL) — Communications software that allows transmission of encrypted secure messages over the Internet.

selector — The part of a style rule that determines which HTML element to match. Style rules are applied to any element in the document that matches the selector.

serif — A generic value for the CSS font-family property. Serif is the traditional printing letter form, with strokes (or serifs) that finish off the top and bottom of the letter. The most common serif fonts on the Web are Times and Times Roman.

SGML — *See* Standard Generalized Markup Language.

shareware — Software that is distributed free so users can try before they buy. Users then can register the software for a relatively small fee compared to software produced commercially. Shareware usually is developed by individuals or very small software companies, so registering the software is important.

site specification — The design document for your Web site.

Standard Generalized Markup Language (SGML) — A standard system for specifying document structure using markup tags.

Structured Query Language (SQL) — A programming language that lets you select information from a database.

style rule — The basic unit of expression in CSS. A style rule is composed of two parts: a selector and a declaration. The style rule expresses the style information for an element.

style sheet — A set of style rules that describes a document's display characteristics. There are two types of style sheets: internal and external.

SVG — *See Scalable Vector Graphics.*

type selector — A CSS selector that applies a rule to every instance of the element in the document.

typeface — The name of the type family, such as Times Roman or Futura Condensed.

Uniform Resource Locator (URL) — The global address of documents and other resources on the Web.

value — The precise specification of a property in a style rule, based on the allowable values for the property.

vector graphics — Images represented as geometrical formulas, as compared with a raster graphics format, which represents images pixel by pixel for the entire image. GIFs and JPGs are raster formats. SVG is a vector graphic format. Vector graphics are scalable and cross-platform compatible.

W3C — *See World Wide Web Consortium.*

Web hosting service — Commercial service that provides Web server space only and may be more capable of hosting a more complex commercial site. This service does not include Internet access.

Web palette — The 216 colors shared by PCs and Macintoshes. These colors display properly across both platforms without dithering.

Web server — A computer connected to the Internet that runs server software. The software lets the computer use the Hypertext Transfer Protocol to serve XHTML files to Web browser clients.

well-formed — A syntactically-correct XML or XHTML file.

World Wide Web Consortium (W3C) — Founded in 1994 at the Massachusetts Institute of Technology to standardize Web markup languages. The W3C, led by Tim Berners-Lee, sets standards for markup languages and provides an open, non-proprietary forum for industry and academic representatives to add to the evolution of HTML.

XHTML — *See Extensible Hypertext Markup Language.*
