

HTML Author Manual



The Manual

HTML Author is a WYSIWYG editor for producing HTML files, built on top of Microsoft Word for Windows version 6. It makes the creation of HTML documents for the World Wide Web extremely simple, even (no, especially) if they consist of many linked HTML files.

Features

- What you see is what you get (WYSIWYG) display, including graphics, anchors and horizontal lines. The format for this is based on the standard display formats generated by Netscape.
- Specialized toolbar buttons on the HTML Author Toolbar for HTML editing operations.
- Pick list selection of paragraph styles using standard Word for Windows paragraph tagging.
- Dialogue box based insertion and maintenance of anchors (hypertext links between documents or parts of the same document).
- Pick list selection of filenames for anchors to local HTML files and embedded graphical images (GIF files), and of anchor names for hotlinks within the same page.
- Hot-linking, during editing, between files in documents consisting of multiple local HTML files. (Similar to jumping between documents in an HTML viewer such as Netscape.)
- All the standard Word for Windows tools are accessible whilst editing your document.
- Ease of use. To create an HTML source document, simply create a new document with the HTMLAUTH.DOT template attached. In other words, the standard Word for Windows "New" operation. No special programs to run.
- Finally ... It's FREE (But see #Registration||Registration.)

Contents

- #Introduction||Introduction
 - #Getting
 - #WYSIWYG||What
- #Entering
 - #Lists||Lists
 - #Character
- #Anchors||Anchors
 - #Creating

- #Pick
 - #Editing
 - #Opening
 - #Embedding
 - #Horizontal
 - #Generating
 - FileList||List
 - #Known
 - #Registration||Registration
-

Introduction||Introduction

The editor is provided in the form of a Microsoft Word for Windows document template containing appropriate paragraph styles and macros for editing HTML documents and for generating HTML files from them. The whole package consists of the document template (HTMLAUTH.DOT) and this manual, which has itself been produced using HTML Author and may either be printed as a Word for Windows document or generated as an HTML page, along with the associated GIF image files. A complete #FileList||list is provided below.

HTML Author does not work in native HTML format. Your documents are produced and maintained as Word for Windows (.DOC) documents (referred to here as *HTML source documents*) containing hidden fields that are used by the various macros to maintain HTML related information and to generate the HTML files when required. This process is actually very transparent, and you should never need to edit the HTML code directly.

Although it is not necessary to be an expert on HTML to use HTML Author, it is useful to have some basic knowledge of the World Wide Web, and the structure of HTML documents. The following references provide useful background information:

- <http://www.vuw.ac.nz/who/Nathan.Torkington/ideas/www-primer.html>||World
- <http://www.ncsa.uiuc.edu/General/Internet/WWW/HTMLPrimer.html>||A

This manual assumes a basic knowledge of HTML and WWW terminology, and a working knowledge of word processing in Word for Windows.

WYSIWYG||What

Most people know that WYSIWYG means “What You See Is What You Get”. However, strictly speaking, there can be no such thing as a WYSIWYG HTML authoring tool. This is because HTML is (almost) totally independent of format. The logical styles that are defined in the HTML document are turned into physical formats by the HTML viewer (such as Netscape), and these will be different depending on the viewer and the way it is configured. For the purpose of HTML Author, the formats used by default in Netscape have been used as the model for the styles you see when editing. For the main paragraph styles (headers, lists, etc.) you may change the way these look using the normal Word for Windows facilities. For anchors and character formats, these are fixed in the current version of HTML Author.

Title text does not appear in the main text window when viewing an HTML document using Netscape. (It appears as the window banner instead). For this reason, title text in HTML Author is shown (by default) as white text on a grey background.

To see samples taken from the screen of HTML Author whilst editing the manual, click on the items below:

sample1.gif|Sample

Taken from the top of the source document for the HTML Author manual, showing the appearance of headings and graphics in HTML Author and the HTML Author toolbar. You can also see the format in which “Title” style paragraphs are shown.

sample2.gif|Sample

Taken from the top end of the table of contents of the source document for the HTML Author manual, showing the appearance of lists (nested), and HTML anchors (the blue underlined text).

Getting

To use HTML Author, simply copy the HTMLAUTH.DOT template into your Microsoft Word for Windows templates directory. (This will usually be the directory C:\WINWORD\TEMPLATE). To create an HTML source document, just start up Microsoft Word for Windows, and create a new document, selecting HTMLAUTH.DOT as the template.

Entering

Text is entered in the normal way, using the paragraph styles provided in the template. These are available in the drop-down list box on the left of the HTML Author Toolbar. (The standard Word for Windows list box for selecting paragraph styles.) It is essential that you use the paragraph styles provided as HTML Author expects to see these when generating the HTML file. A good range of HTML styles is provided, and more will be added as the product develops.



Lists||Lists

These are produced using the lists styles: *List 1*, *List 2*, ... and *Numbered List 1*, *Numbered List 2*, ... The numbers relate to the level of nesting of the lists. E.g. if you want to put a list inside an item in another list, use *List 1* for the outer list, and *List 2* for the contained list. You can mix list styles in a nested list structure.

For Descriptive Lists, these are always assumed to be at level 1. The *Descriptive List Title* style is used for the title of an item, and *Descriptive List Text* is used for the description. You may put as many description paragraphs as you like after an item title.



Character

Character formatting codes may be inserted by selecting the text to be formatted and using the *Apply Formatting* command from the HT Editor menu, or clicking the *Add Formatting*



Code button  from the HTML Author Toolbar. This command inserts HTML codes directly into the source document as hidden text, and applies a suitable formatting to the text itself. It also applies a dotted underline to the text to warn you that there are hidden codes there. You may reveal the codes by clicking the *Show/Hide* button  in the toolbar

(this is a Microsoft Word for Windows button). It is important that the character formatting tags are left as hidden text, otherwise HTML Author will treat them as literal text and convert them to the appropriate HTML escape codes when generating the HTML file.

Anchor||Anchor

Two types of anchor are supported by HTML Author. These are HREF anchors and NAME anchors, and correspond to the HTML “<A HREF=...” and “<A NAME=...” anchors respectively. Anchors are held in the source document as fields (a feature of Word for Windows). You may see what these fields look like “in the flesh” by clicking the *View Field Codes* button  and the *Show/Hide* button  (the fields contain some hidden text) in the toolbar. (These are both Word for Windows buttons.) You should refrain from editing the fields directly in this mode unless you really know what you are doing.

Creating

Anchors may be created either by selecting “Create HREF” or “Create NAME” entries from the “HTML Author” menu, or clicking on the corresponding buttons   from the toolbar. If you wish to use some existing text as the text of the anchor, then you should select the required text in the document first (standard Microsoft Word for Windows select operation). You will then see a dialogue box with two fields labelled NAME and TEXT:

The text typed into these fields will be used to create the HTML anchor as follows (the dialogue box entries are emphasised):

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<A HREF="NAME">TEXT</A>
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The NAME field is the URL or local filename for the target in an HREF anchor, or is the target name in a NAME anchor. The TEXT field is the text that should appear on the screen in the document.

“HREF” anchors will appear in blue text underlined text in your source document, just like they do in Netscape. “NAME” anchors do not have a special text format in Netscape, so they are indicated by a dotted underline in your source document.

(Note: The anchor text must not be cover more than one line of text on the Word for Windows editing screen. This is a limitation of Word for Windows fields. If you do specify anchor text covering more than one line, Word for Windows will display the error message: “DisplayText cannot span more than one line!” in place of the anchor text. In this event, you should select the field by clicking on the error message, then bring up the Anchors dialogue box by pressing Alt+Shift+F9. You can then either remove the field - leaving the text in the document - or edit the text to make it shorter.)

Once you are happy with the Name and Text fields, click the *Insert* button and your anchor field will be inserted in the document.

Pick

When you are working on an HREF anchor in the #AnchorDialogue||Anchors, you can obtain some types of HREF string from pick lists.

If the required anchor is a reference to a local file, it may be selected from a directory listing by clicking on the Files button. (NOTE. For this to work, the target file must be in the same directory as the file you are currently editing.) You may select any file from the list, but it should be one that can be handled by the HTML viewer or its helper applications. You can also select files with either the .DOC extension or the .HTM extension. In both cases, HTML Author will replace the filename extension with .HTML in the anchor name.

If you wish to create a reference to an existing NAME anchor in the current document, you may pick this from a list that HTML Author will build when you click on the Names button. HTML Author will prefix the name with the # character as required by HTML.

Editing


To edit an anchor (or to see what it contains), double click the anchor text, or select the anchor field and press Alt+Shift+F9. This will bring up the #AnchorDialogue||Anchors again. You may


- edit the NAME or TEXT fields, and then insert the changes using the Insert button.
- remove the anchor (but leave the text) by clicking the Remove button.
- leave the anchor as it was by clicking the Cancel button.

Opening

You may open the source of a anchor's target file for editing if the target is a local HTML file. To do this, double click the anchor text in the document to get the #AnchorDialogue||Anchors, then click on the Open button. HTML Author will open the source (.DOC) file for the target file if it is available. If the .DOC file cannot be found, then HTML Author will open the HTML (.HTM) file itself as a text file.


Embedding

Graphics (GIF images) can be embedded in the document using the Insert Image command in the HTML Author menu, or by clicking on the Image button  in the HTML Author toolbar. HTML Author will then display a list of all the files in the same directory as the document you are editing. You should select the GIF image that you want to insert.


Note. You must avoid double clicking on embedded graphical images in the HTML source document (unless they appear in an anchor field). This causes Word for Windows to edit them, which breaks the link with the file. If you do this by accident, then close the picture, and immediately click on the Undo button  in the toolbar. (This is a Word for Windows button.)

(You can also insert GIF images by using the Picture command from the Microsoft Word for Windows Insert menu, but if you do this you must ensure that the graphic is linked to a file, or it will not be referenced in the HTML file generated.)

Horizontal

A horizontal rule may be inserted into the document using the *Insert Rule* command from the HTML Author menu, or the HRule button  in the HTML Author toolbar. HTML Author will ensure that the rule is on a separate line. You can remove the rule either by clicking it then pressing the delete key, or by double clicking it, then selecting *Remove* in the dialogue box.

Generating

When you are ready to create the actual HTML file (.HTM), select *Generate HTML* from the HTML Author menu or click on the *Generate HTML* button  in the HTML Author toolbar. Before generating the HTML file, HTML Author checks that any embedded HTML codes (held as hidden text) are paired and nested correctly. If this is not the case, it will not generate the HTML file and, where possible, will show you the point in the document at which the problem arose. Any special HTML characters appearing in the normal text of the document (i.e. not hidden text) are converted to HTML escape sequences so that they will be reproduced literally by the HTML viewer. By default, the name of the HTML file will be the same as that of the source file, but with the .DOC extension replaced by .HTM. HTML Author will give you a chance to change this if required.

(Note. For large documents, especially if you are using a 386 computer, please be patient. On my 25MHz 386SX portable, it takes 2.5 minutes to generate the HTML for this manual. It goes a lot quicker on a 486 DX2/50 mind you!)

FileList||List

The following list shows the files you should have.

HTMLAUTH.DOT

The Word for Windows template for HTML source documents.

MANUAL.DOC

This manual in the form of an HTML Author document in Word for Windows .DOC format.

MANUAL.HTM

This manual in the form of an HTML document.

*.GIF

A number of GIF images used in the manual.

Known

The following bugs are known about, and will be removed when possible in future releases of HTML Author. (I thought it was worth releasing it now anyway.)

- Small GIF images stored in 16 colour (4 bit) mode cannot be displayed in the source document in Word for Windows. An error message appears whenever the picture field is updated, and the image is shown as a box with a cross in it. This does not affect the way they appear in the final HTML file. The problem does not occur if you use 256 colour (8 bit) mode for the GIF image. (I suspect this is a bug in the GIF image translator provided with Microsoft Word for Windows 6.0. If anyone knows of a way round this, please could you let me know.)
- Due to the way lists have been implemented in HTML Author, the numbering in nested, numbered lists is incorrect in the source document when editing in Word for Windows. The numbering sequence is carried on through all levels on nesting. This does not affect the way they appear in the final HTML file.

Please let me know at the E-Mail address shown below if you find any other bugs, or have any comments. (It would also be helpful if you could tell me what version you are using.)

Registration||Registration

I have put some effort into producing this package. If you find HTML Author useful, I ask only one tiny thing. Please let me know that you are using it, where you are using it, and what you are using it for, preferably providing your email address as well. I will endeavour to keep a mailing list of people who would like to be informed of new versions. Either send an email message to <mailto:G.S.Cooper@iti.salford.ac.uk>||G.S.Cooper@iti.salford.ac.uk, or send a letter to:

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last updated on 06 March 2025*
