

HTML and Stylesheet Support

HTML Web Authoring

All the cool content on the Web can be viewed in Internet Explorer 3.0 because it supports the latest HTML standards, including HTML 3.2. Plus, it is the first browser to fully implement W3C specifications for stylesheets, tables (RFC 1942), objects and scripts. Its implementation of stylesheets includes background colors and images for individual table cells, and more.

This full-scale implementation of HTML enables you to present a greater variety of information in a more interesting, dynamic format than before. A table of all the HTML tags that Microsoft Internet Explorer 3.0 supports is available in the Site Builder Workshop on <http://www.microsoft.com/workshop/author/newfeat/ie30html-f.htm>

Brand New Stylesheet Support

Internet Explorer 3.0 is the first commercial browser to support the Cascading Stylesheets (CSS), the HTML stylesheet standard set by the W3C. Stylesheets give you the same flexibility with design and layout that you have with desktop publishing programs by enabling you to attach style (for example, fonts, colors, and spacing) to HTML text tags.

By applying separate style tags to text tags, you ensure that all browsers can view the basic text and structure of your Web page while presenting more sophisticated designs for browsers that support stylesheets, such as Internet Explorer 3.0. Stylesheets give you greater Web page design flexibility by enabling you to control margins, line spacing, and placement of design elements, and specify colors, fonts, and point sizes. If you wish to change the look of a page, just update the style in one place, instead of changing all of your HTML tags throughout your page. In addition, stylesheets provide the following advantages:

- **Linked Stylesheets.** Enables you to apply a stylesheet to diverse documents to create a standard design, saving time and letting a company develop a signature Web style. This is a fundamental requirement for Intranet web site design because you can alter the look and feel of the an entire Web site with changes to a single style sheet.
- **Indexing and Searching.** Makes it easier to index pages because indexing software only has to read the structural tags.
- **Full Font Control.** Provides full font control of font families (typeface), weighting, and typographic measurement units (centimeters, inches, pixels, percentages, em's, etc.) for sizing. This means you are no longer restricted to seven Netscape font sizes. Now, you can increase or decrease a font's point size and weight—in whatever increments you want. Plus, you can change your font color, your leading (line height), choose whether a font is italic or underlined, and more.
- **Backgrounds.** Creates background colors and images for table cells, paragraphs, or anywhere else on a Web page.
- **Indenting.** Provides indenting for a line or paragraph on a Web page.
- **Non-tiled-backgrounds.** Also known as direct-position-backgrounds, Allows the content developer to place an image behind a text object, for example, a table cell, without the image being tiled as it is on most page backgrounds today.

- **Full white-space control.** Enables setting margins in typographic units around all edges of elements. This is the critical first step toward realizing real desktop publishing-style page design and layout.
- **Typographic space control.** Enables setting inter-line and intra-line spacing (font 'leading')
- **Negative margins.** Enables elements to float over other elements on a page--a very rich control.
- **CSS Layout.** An experimental specification from W3C for handling frames, floating frames, multi-column layout, 2D direct placement of elements, z-ordering and overlapping of elements, all in a rich and well-architected HTML syntax. (The HTML Layout Control, which provides desktop publishing capabilities for Web page designers, is based on this specification.)
- **Coming Soon.** Internet Explorer will enable you to include frames as part of a stylesheet.

For more information about Cascading Style Sheets, visit <http://www.microsoft.com/workshop/author/howto/css.htm>.

Enhanced Frame Support

Internet Explorer's implementation of Netscape frames, an HTML extension, improves their look and behavior by including support for borderless and floating frames. Support for frames enables you to divide a Web page into several panes, or frames. Each frame displays a different HTML page, so you can display many levels of information without requiring the user to navigate to a different page or leave your site. Microsoft Internet Explorer 3.0 support for borderless, non-scrolling, and floating frames enables you to seamlessly open several panes within the browser window or embed a single frame anywhere in the Web page where you can insert a graphic. This comprehensive implementation of frames gives you the following advantages when designing Web pages:

- Opening multiple frames (HTML pages) in one place enables a wholly new kind of Web page. With frames, you can create sophisticated layouts that add and mix a greater variety of sounds, video, animation, and different background colors and patterns in one place. You can even add a bitmap to the border of a frame, giving you complete control over the appearance of your page.



- **Figure 3 HTML Frames:** Design Web pages to display information in seamless, multiple panes.
- Elimination of borders and scroll bars on individual frames enables you to create seamless sections on your Web page that can simulate and surpass the look and feel of magazine pages.
- Plus, with multiple frames you can organize information more effectively. For example, you can include a menu in one frame from which people can select items to view in a separate frame, giving end users an easy, consistent user interface, preventing them from losing their place.
- Floating frames, an exciting new feature, enables you to embed a Web page in another Web page. While standard frames enable you to create a layout composed of several different Web pages, they also require that the Web page be divided into tiled regions. With floating frames, you can embed a frame anywhere in a Web page that you can put an image, and you specify its size and align it with the right or left margins.



Figure 4 Floating Frames: Insert a Web page into a Web Page as easily as embedding a graphic. Clicking on the icons at the bottom of the window changes the content of the frame.

- **Frames Syntax Change** Floating frames were introduced in IE 3.0 Beta 1, using the <FRAME> tag. For Beta 2, the syntax has been changed to <IFRAME> ... </IFRAME>. You must supply both an opening and closing IFRAME tag. The <IfRAME> tag is a container, and Internet Explorer 3.0 ignores any HTML in the container. Other browsers that don't support floating frames do display the HTML in the container. This allows people to author pages that look good in other browsers, and great in Internet Explorer 3.0 using floating frames. All attributes (SRC, FRAMEBORDER, HEIGHT, WIDTH, etc.) remain the same as in Beta 1. In addition, you can now supply negative values for "margin-left" and "margin-right" with stylesheets. This allows sophisticated text overlay effects.

HTML 3.2 Table Support

Support for the latest HTML 3.2 table tags gives you greater control over how you can align text and improves how you can displaying external borders and internal rules, enabling you to create more graphically interesting, easily readable tables. With Microsoft Internet Explorer 3.0's implementation, you can:

- Align text along a baseline.
- Specify that borders be displayed internally or externally. Before, you could only turn on or off borders for each cell and the table itself. You can even control which borders are visible: top, bottom, left, or right.
- Specify that a cell span more than one column or row in a table.
- Group cells



Figure 5 HTML Table tags: Provides more control over aligning text and graphics with Microsoft Explorer 3.0's support for the latest HTML table tags.

HTML 3.2 Font Support

Enables you to specify the size, face, and color of a font so that you can control exactly how your text looks. Plus, Internet Explorer enables end users to specify multiple fonts and a default font to use in case they don't have a particular font loaded on their computer.

Even greater font control is included in Internet Explorer's implementation of the W3C stylesheet standard. With stylesheets, you can specify font typeface (family), size, weight, color, underlining, italics, and more. In addition to this giving you greater control over your design, stylesheets enable you define styles that include any of these font attributes. This means you don't have to repeatedly specify font attributes on your HTML page.

TrueType Font Support

Microsoft Internet Explorer 3.0 supports TrueType® font technology, which is a standard feature of both the Windows and Macintosh operating systems. TrueType provides the highest quality screen fonts available, which is critical as people read more and more information on screen from the Internet. They use anti-aliasing, which smooths out jagged fonts, and rich hinting, which makes small text more readable on screen.

Authors can specify fonts they want to use in their HTML documents by using the tag or CSS1 Style Sheets. Microsoft provides a set of free TrueType fonts for

Webmasters to incorporate in their sites to improve readability and give them more control over the typographic image of their site. TrueType Web fonts for both Windows and the Macintosh are available free of charge on www.microsoft.com/truetype/.

Microsoft is also working closely with Adobe to develop OpenType fonts, an extension to the TrueType format aimed at streamlining the management of existing fonts and the next generation.

W3C OBJECT Tag

Internet Explorer's support for the W3C OBJECT tag enables content developers to insert objects, such as ActiveX Controls, Java applets, and proprietary Netscape Plug-ins, into a Web page. This tag specification is the first of the post 3.2 HTML specifications from the W3C. It is similar in functionality and replaces the proprietary APPLET and EMBED tags. Internet Explorer's support for the OBJECT tag provides critical functionality for content developers because it allows less sophisticated browsers to view content substitute in place of the object, applet, or plug-in that a more sophisticated browser can view.

Enhanced Multimedia Support

- **Scrolling Marquees.** By including support for the MARQUEE tag, which enables you to specify a section of text to be used as a moving marquee on a page. These eye-catching callouts are great for special sales offers and other time-critical information.
- **Inline Video Playback.** Using the W3C Object tag, you can insert and play AVIs on Web pages. You can specify whether the video plays immediately after people open the page, in response to a mouse click, or even when a user moves their mouse over the movie.
- **Background Sounds.** By including support for the BGSOUND tag, you can play background sounds in your Web page, including sounds recorded in any of the popular formats available on the Internet today including WAV, MIDI, AU, and AIFF. You can use background sounds to create dramatic introductions to pages, or to continually play in the background. You can specify that sounds overlap one another, or repeat in a continuous loop.

Enhanced Layout Support

- **HTML Layout Control.** Internet Explorer 3.0 gives you the power of graphics placement previously only found in desktop publishing. Through the innovative HTML Layout Control, you can now place graphics at precise locations on your Web page, just as you would with a desktop publishing program. The gives you exact, coordinate control over object layout, layering and transparency. Objects can be specifically placed within a fixed region with respect to the top and the left of the region, and also given specific height, width, and z-order attributes.
- The HTML Layout is based on **CSS Layout specification** from the W3C. For more information, see the HTML Layout Control in the ActiveX Controls section of this white paper.