9 ADDING SOME SIMPLE TEXT FORMATTING

One of the advantages of setting up a website in wospweb is that you do not need any web design experience - in other words you do not need to know how to specify the layout of a page, how to specify which typeface is used, how to create columns and lists and so on. All this is done for you when you fill out a template. The only design decision you have to make is to choose which template you want to use.

However, if you have tried copying and pasting some text you have already prepared in a word processor such as Microsoft Word, you will have discovered that all the formatting (line breaks, paragraph breaks, bold text etc.) is completely lost. This is because currently wospweb does not recognise any of the formatting incorporated in a word-processed document.

There is a way, however, of ensuring that any formatting you specified is preserved. You can use some simple formatting tags which tell your web browser how to display the text – for example, you could add a tag which says some text should be in bold or a tag which indicates a line or paragraph break. These tags can be used in text you prepare in advance (i.e. in a word processor or text editor) or in text you enter directly in a wospweb template (this allows you to add some of your own design ideas to a standard template).

These simple formatting tags form the basis of HTML a so-called *mark-up* language (the term *mark up* comes from the time when manuscripts had to be *marked up* with instructions to tell the printer how the text had to be laid out). Similarly, HTML (Hyper Text Mark-up Language) uses simple abbreviations called tags to tell a web browser how the author wants their web page displayed.

What is a tag?

A tag is short instruction which tells a web browser how to display some text. Tags must be enclosed in angle brackets < > and you can write a tag in upper or lower case (some people prefer upper case because they are easier to identify within a document).

Tags typically come in pairs – an opening tag and a closing tag. A closing tag must also include a slash </>. For example <P> indicates the start of a new paragraph and </P> indicates the end of the paragraph.

Although there are many different HTML tags available to control text on a web page, in the following sections we will simply look at some of the more basic layout tags. You can include these tags in text you prepare in advance or in text you enter directly in to a template.

Creating a new paragraph

In a word processor you would simply press the Return or Enter key to start a new line for a paragraph. However, a web browser does not recognise these line breaks and so you must use a paragraph tag to indicate the start of a new paragraph on your web page.

To create a new paragraph:

- type <P> in the front of the text you want to start as the new paragraph
- type </P> to mark the end of the paragraph

Your text is then displayed as a paragraph with extra space before and after.

Example

If you include paragraph tags in the following text:

In a word processor you would simply press the Return or Enter key to start a new line for a paragraph. **<P>**However, a web browser does not recognise these line breaks and so you must use a paragraph tag to indicate the start of a new paragraph on your web page. **</P>**

It would look like this on your web page:

In a word processor you would simply press the Return or Enter key to start a new line for a paragraph.

However, a web browser does not recognise these line breaks and so you must use a paragraph tag to indicate the start of a new paragraph on your web page.

Adding a line break

Typically a web browser will automatically wrap text to the next line when it reaches the right-hand edge of the browser window or display area. If, however, you want some text to start on a new line, you can use the line break tag.

To add a line break:

- type <BR> in front of or at the end of the text you want to be displayed as a new line

Note that you do not need to use a closing tag for a line break. You can use the <BR> tag as often as you want within some text.

Example

If you include line break tags in the following text:

Typically a web browser will automatically wrap text to the next line when it reaches the right-hand edge of the browser window or display area. **
If, however, you want some text to start on a new line, you can use the line break tag.</BR>**

It would look like this on your web page:

Typically a web browser will automatically wrap text to the next line when it reaches the right-hand edge of the browser window or display area.
If, however, you want some text to start on a new line, you can use the line break tag.

Making text bold

You can use bold in your text to make something stand out (for example, the name of your organisation) or to make your page more visually interesting.

To make some text bold:

- type <B> in front of the text/word you want to be bold
- type </B> at the end of the text/bold

Example

If you include a bold tag in the following text:

You can use bold in your text to make something **<B>**stand out**</B>**.

It would look like this on your web page:

You can use bold in your text to make something **stand out**.

Italicising some text

Once again you can use italics in your text to make something stand out or to make your page more visually interesting.

To italicise some text:

- type in front of the text/word you want to italicise
- type at the end of the text/word

Example

If you include an italic tag in the following text:

Once again you can use italics in your text to make something ****stand out**** or to make your page more visually interesting.

It would look like this on your web page:

Once again you can use italics in your text to make something *stand out* or to make your page more visually interesting.

Underlining text

You can also underline some text or word for emphasis.

To underline some text:

- type <U> in front of the text/word you want to underline
- type </U> at the end of the text/word

Example

If you include an underline tag in the following text :

You can also **<U>**underline**</U>** some text or word for emphasis.

It would look like this on your web page:

You can also <u>underline</u> some text or word for emphasis.

Creating lists

You now know about the tags used to emphasise text and insert line and paragraph breaks. Well, the principle for creating lists is just the same. You simply use the appropriate tag to create the type of list you want (for example, numbered, bulleted, definition).

Creating a bulleted list

You can use bulleted lists for lists of items which do not need to be displayed in a particular order (also known as an unordered list).

To create a bulleted list:

- type <UL> in front of the text you want to turn into a bulleted list
- type <LI> before each item you want to include in the list
- type </LI> at the end of each item
- type </UL> after the last item in the list

Your text is then displayed as a bulleted list on your web page. Note that the bullets are automatically displayed as solid black circles. You can use a different bullet style by adding another instruction within the <UL> tag, but this is not covered in this tutorial.

Example

If you include a bulleted-list tag in the following text:

You can create a bulleted list for a list of items that does not need to be displayed in a particular order. **<UL> <LI>**This is an item**.</LI> <LI>**This is another item.**</LI> <LI>**And this is the final item.**</LI> </UL>** This is what follows the list.

It would look like this on your web page:

You can create a bulleted list for a list of items that does not need to be displayed in a particular order.

- This is an item
- This is another item
- And this is the final item

This is what follows the list.

Creating a numbered list

You can use numbered lists for items which need to be followed in a specific order.

To create a numbered list:

- type <OL> in front of the text you want to turn into a numbered list
- type <LI> before each item you want to include in the list
- type </LI> at the end of each item
- type </OL> after the last item in the list

Your text is then displayed as a numbered list using 1, 2, 3, etc as the automatic numbering system. You can specify a different style of numbering and/or choose to start with a number other than one by including additional instructions within the <OL> tag, but these are not covered in this tutorial.

Example

If you include a numbered-list tag in the following text:

> You can use numbered lists for items which need to be followed in a specific order. **<OL> <LI>**This is an item**.</LI> <LI>**This is another item**.</LI> <LI>**And this is the final item**.</LI> </OL>** This is what follows the list.

It would look like this on your web page:

> You can use numbered lists for items which need to be followed in a specific order.
>
> 1. This is an item.
> 2. This is another item.
> 3. And this is the final item.
>
> This is what follows the list.

Creating a definition list

A definition list is used to create lists which include a term and a definition (for example, the format used in a dictionary or glossary).

To create a definition list:

- type <DL> in front of the text you want to turn into a definition list
- type <DT> before each term and </DT> at the end of each term
- type <DD> before each definition and </DD> at the end of each definition
- type </DL> after the last definition in the list

Your text is then displayed with the definitions indented to separate them from the terms.

Example

If you include a definition tag in the following text:

> **<DL><DT>**Term One**</DT><DD>**An explanation of term one**.</DD<DT>**Term Two **</DT><DD>**An explanation of term two**.</DD><DT>**Term Three**</DT><DD>**An explanation of term three**.</DD>**

It would look like this on your web page:

> Term One
>   An explanation of term one
> Term Two
>   An explanation of term two
> Term Three
>   An explanation of term three.

Adding quotes and block quotes

You can insert two types of quotes. The *quote* tag is used for short snippets of quoted text within a paragraph. The *block quote* tag is used for longer quotations – the web browser displays block quotes indented to set them off from the rest of the page.

To specify a short quote:

- type <Q> in front of the text/phrase you want to display as a quote
- type </Q> at the end of the text/phrase

Example

- If you include a quote tag in the following text:
- He asked me **<Q>**what is wospweb all about?**</Q>** and I suggested he visited the site to find out.
- It would look like this on your web page:
- He asked me "what is wospweb all about?" and I suggested he visited the site to find out.
-
- To specify a block quote:
- type <BLOCKQUOTE> in front of the text you want to display as a block quote
- type </BLOCKQUOTE> at the end of the text

Example

- If you include a block quote tag in the following text:

The West Oxfordshire community website has been especially set up to enable local voluntary and community groups to set up website completely free of charge. The manager of the website said, **<BLOCKQUOTE>**"It is so easy to set up a website you really don't need any previous technical or web design experience."**</BLOCKQUOTE>**To find out how many people have already registered and set up site why not visit wospweb.com.

- It would look like this on your web page:

The West Oxfordshire community website has been especially set up to enable local voluntary and community groups to set up website completely free of charge. The manager of the website said,

> "It is so easy to set up a website you really don't need any previous technical or web design experience."

To find out how many people have already registered and set up site why not visit wospweb.com.

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And finally

The tags that have been described in this lesson will enable you to format your text in a number of different ways. However, as you can probably guess, there are many more tags available in HTML. If you want to become a real HTML expert, you can find plenty of information on the internet or in one of the numerous books available.