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HTML for Blogger

Introduction

HTML is a language. It is the language your browser (Internet Explorer, Firefox, Safari, etc.) reads and then converts into the text and images you see when you visit a web page. While it is a fairly simple language (you never have to conjugate anything!) the biggest frustration is any tiny mistake will cause your page to display incorrectly.

The Basics

HTML is a series of tags. Each tag tells the browser something different. Tags are defined by brackets. A start (opening) tag looks like this `<tag>` and an end (closing) tag looks like this `</tag>`. Any tag you open must be closed.

Here is a short list of examples:

Paragraph

```
<p>You write your paragraph text here.</p>
```

Bolded Text

```
<strong>bolded text</strong>
```

Italic Text

```
<em>italic text</em>
```

HTML tags can be nested, one inside the other. However, it is very important when you nest tags that you open and close them in the same order.

A Paragraph of text with the word "bold" in bold, the word "italic" in italics

```
<p>This is sample text. This word is <strong>bold</strong> and this word is <em>italic</em>. Amazing!</p>
```

In Blogger, you can safely use the buttons at the top of the compose window to add simple text formatting (like bold, italic and underline). It is important to keep in mind, however, that the other buttons on the formatting bar are somewhat primitive by nature and they are not fully equipped to write good HTML. Using them may give you a rather inconsistent outcome.

Advanced Formatting in Blogger

There are a few keys to understanding and applying HTML formatting to a Blogger post, although this may all seem complex initially, following some basic rules and guides will help you get started.

Don't Copy and Paste

If you type your blog post first in a word document or an email, when you copy your text and paste it into the Blogger compose window, invisible HTML tags will often be added to the text and these can cause all sorts of problems in terms of how your post looks once published. To avoid this, type directly in the Blogger compose window or paste text first in a basic text editor like notepad, then copy again and paste into Blogger. This will strip any formatting.

The DIV is Your Best Friend

When it comes to doing things more elaborate than just applying style to various words in your post, the safest and easiest way to proceed is to use the <div> tag. A div can be wrapped around any sort of content, from your entire post to one single word. It is invisible unless you tell it not to be. Once a div is in place, you can add modifiers to its start tag to affect the text or images it contains.

Alignment

Sometimes getting text to align correctly in HTML is difficult. If you want to align text in some way other than the standard left-side, simply click the "Edit HTML" tab above your post window. **This is important! If you type HTML in the "compose" tab, it won't take.** Then create a div around the text you want to align differently.

```
<div>  
I want to be centered!  
</div>
```

Then go back to the initial tag and edit the tag by adding an alignment property:

```
To center: <div align="center">  
To align right: <div align="right">  
To align left: <div align="left">
```

So let's center our text. The modified HTML looks like this (the new code is in blue):

```
<div align="center">  
I want to be centered!  
</div>
```

In your blog post, the text inside the div will be centered.

(Keep in mind you will not see the effect of any of your formatting in the "edit html" window. To preview your changes you can click the "preview" button below the post editing window.)

Introducing CSS (Cascading Style Sheets)

HTML can do a lot, but in all the fun stuff comes from CSS. CSS is a sister language to HTML, and you can use it to apply color changes, spacing and all sorts of other features to different HTML tags.

Background Color

Say let's say you want a certain part of your post to be displayed in a box, centered, and you want the background to be a light blue.

First write you text and place a div around it:

```
<div>  
I want to be centered inside a box with a blue background.  
</div>
```

As before, we can add the align tag to the div to center the text:

```
<div align="center">  
I want to be centered inside a box with a blue background.  
</div>
```

Now, we want to take it to the next level. You add what's called a style tag to the div, (this can be in addition to the existing alignment tag). The style tag will contain the CSS that will tell the div how it should look. CSS always contain two elements. The first is the special CSS name for the type of style you are applying, the second is the specific formatting you want to add. There is also some special punctuation that needs to be put in place. The CSS name is followed by a colon and the specific style is followed by a semi-colon.

A CSS designation will always look like this:

CSSname: specific-style;

For example, if I want the text inside the div to be all uppercase, I can use the following designation:

text-transform: uppercase;

When adding CSS to a div tag, the CSS has to be contained within a style tag as part of the div. So if we want our box to have a light blue background, we add the following code to div: (the new code is highlighted)

```
<div align="center" style="background-color: #B7F6EF;">  
I want to be centered inside a box with a blue background.  
</div>
```

In your blog post, your box will now looks like this:

I want to be centered inside a box with a blue background.

When getting into this more complicated realm, it is extremely important to be vigilant about punctuation. If you forget a semi-colon or colon, the HTML will not work. Also pay attention to the quotation marks that contain the style. These must always be in place for the style to take.

HTML and Color

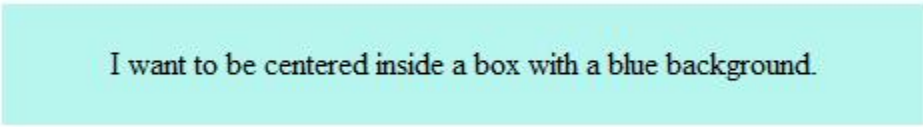
HTML understands color by use of hex codes. Every color on the spectrum has its own six-digit series of numbers and letters, starting first with the # sign. You can find the hex code for the color you want to use simply by using a hex code chart of generator [like this one](#). The hex code for white is #FFFFFF. For black, it is #000000.

Padding

A box is no good if it is crowding right up against the edge of your text, so we need to add some breathing room. HTML understands space in terms of pixels. A pixel is very small, so generally 10 or 20 pixels is enough to give a nice margin. So back with our box, let's say we want to add 20 pixels worth of space between the edge of the box and the text. We do this by applying padding to the style tag. To do this we have to add another CSS designation after the first, inside the quotation marks that contain the style tag attributes.

```
<div align="center" style="background-color: #B7F6EF; padding: 20px;">  
I want to be centered inside a box with a blue background.  
</div>
```

Our box now looks like this:



I want to be centered inside a box with a blue background.

Borders

What good is a box without a border? Let's say we want to add a thin border to the box we've been creating. We can do this by adding more CSS to the style tag. A border tag consists of three parts. First is the pixel width of the border, second is the border style (you will almost always want to use "solid" and finally the hex code for the color you want the border to be.)

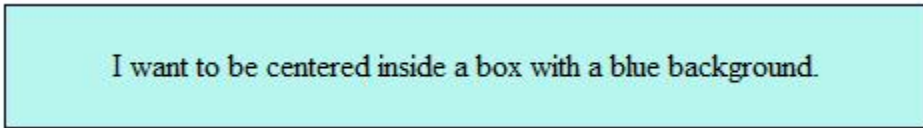
The CSS for a dark blue border would look like this:

```
border: 1px solid #000033;
```

To add this to our box, we simply insert this new CSS into the style tag, after the semi-colon ending the previous designation but before the end quote around the style tag:

```
<div align="center" style="background-color: #B7F6EF; padding: 20px; border: 1px solid  
#000033;">  
I want to be centered inside a box with a blue background.  
</div>
```

Our box now looks like this:



I want to be centered inside a box with a blue background.

Width

Sometimes you don't want your width to go the full width of the page. You can set a width either by percentage, or a particular pixel amount.

The CSS for a box that is 300 pixels wide would look like this:

```
width: 300px;
```

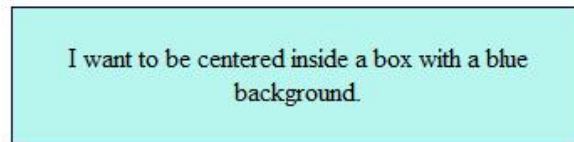
The CSS for a box that is 80% of the available space wide would look like this:

```
width: 80%;
```

To add this to our box, we simply insert this new CSS into the style tag, after the semi-colon ending the previous designation but before the end quote around the style tag:

```
<div align="center" style="background-color: #B7F6EF; padding: 20px; border: 1px solid  
#000033; width: 300px;">  
I want to be centered inside a box with a blue background.  
</div>
```

Our box now looks like this:



Conclusion

Editors like the one provided in the Blogger interface can only do so much, but if you spend a little time playing, you'll be surprised at how quickly you can make an impact on the look of your posts with just the <div> tag and some basic CSS.

happy blogging!

PLEASE CONTACT US FOR MORE INFORMATION

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