

## 5: About elements

Elements are the basic building blocks of the HTML page. Each element represents something on the page, such as a paragraph or an image, or even a defined area on the page, such as a box. Nearly all elements have an 'opening' tag and a 'closing' tag. The opening tag consists of a pair of angle brackets enclosing the name (or abbreviation) of the element. The closing tag is the same, but with a forward slash before the element name.

```
<element name>                </element name>
```

A very few elements do not have a closing tag.

```
<img>                          (tag for image element – no closing tag)
```

Some element names are spelled out in full. Others are abbreviated:

```
<p>
<footer>
<img>
```

While there are many types of element used in HTML, in practice you can achieve a lot with just a small number of them. Shown below are a few common examples:

### Paragraph element

For a *paragraph* element, the opening tag is `<p>` and the closing tag is `</p>`. Note how the paragraph text goes between the opening and closing tags.

```
<p>    (text goes in here)  </p>
```

### Heading elements

There are six *heading* elements, from h1 to h6, the most important to the least important. Using heading levels appropriately gives your document a logical structure; this helps browsers and assistive technologies to function properly. Here you see h1 and h2:

```
<h1>    (biggest heading goes in here)    </h1>
<h2>    (smaller heading goes in here)    </h2>
```

You'll learn about some other common elements in the next lesson.

### Block and inline elements

By default each element is of the 'block' or 'inline' type. This affects how the element is displayed in relation to other elements.

- Block: The element will begin on a new line and by default use all the available width. The following element will begin on a new line.
- Inline: The element takes up only as much width as it needs. An inline element that follows will be displayed alongside it if there is room on the line.

You will find out more about block and inline elements when you learn about the 'Display' property in Lesson 21.

### Attributes

Elements often have an 'attribute' in the opening tag. An attribute modifies the element in some way or provides it with some functionality. The name of the attribute is followed by the value, as shown below:

```
<p attribute="value">        (text goes in here)  </p>
```