

26: Lists

Types of list

There are three types of list:

- Unordered (like this one)
- Ordered (numbered)
- Description (a list of terms, each with a description)

Unordered and ordered lists

Unordered and ordered lists differ in that the former have bullets and the latter numbers.

The HTML for them is essentially the same, too, as each comprises the same two parts:

- The list 'container'
- The list items themselves, which all live within the container

The list container

Like almost any element, list containers have opening and closing tags, as shown below.

```
<ul>                                </ul>                                (unordered list)
<ol>                                  </ol>                                (ordered list)
```

The list items

Each list item also has its own opening and closing tag. They're the same for both types of list:

```
<li>                                  </li>
```

Putting it all together – unordered and ordered lists

Putting the above together, this is what the code for an unordered list looks like.

```
<ul>                                (open container)
  <li>    (list item)    </li>      (list item)
  <li>    (list item)    </li>      (list item)
  <li>    (list item)    </li>      (list item)
</ul>                                (close container)
```

This is what the code for an ordered list looks like.

```
<ol>                                (open container)
  <li>    (list item)    </li>      (list item)
  <li>    (list item)    </li>      (list item)
  <li>    (list item)    </li>      (list item)
</ol>                                (close container)
```

Description list

Each list item in a description list has two parts: a term and a description. Here is a sample description list:

List item 1

Description of list item 1

List item 2

Description of list item 2

The list container

Like the other list types, description lists have a 'container' for the list items. The HTML tags for the container are as follows:

```
<d1>                                (description list container)
```

List items and descriptions

Each list term is followed by its description. The HTML tags are shown below:

```
<dt>                                (term)
<dd>                                (description)
```

Putting it all together

Putting the above together, this is what the code for the description list above looks like:

```
<d1>                                (open container)
<dt>List item 1</dt>                (term)
<dd>Description of list item 1</dd> (description)
<dt>List item 2</dt>                (term)
<dd>Description of list item 2</dd> (description)
</d1>                                (close container)
```

Styling lists

By default, the browser will display an unordered list with plain black round bullets, and ordered lists with plain 1,2,3 numbering. However, you can change these and more by changing the settings for the list container and/or the list items.

List container

- You can position it (e.g. shifting the whole list across using a margin)
- Specify the type of list marker (e.g. bullet/numbering style, a small image, none)
- Specify the font size, weight etc (due to inheritance)
- Specify the sequence of ordered list markers
- Position the list marker in line with or to the left of the text
- Add a background colour to the list container

List items

You can style the individual list items to:

- Position or space them within the container (e.g. margins)
- Add a background colour to each item
- Specify the font size, weight etc

Horizontal list – Menu bar

A menu bar is nothing more than a list laid out horizontally. By default, list items are 'block' elements (Lesson 5), which is why a list is vertical, with items from top to bottom. However, if you change the list items from 'block' to 'inline', they line up next to each other instead of each being on a new line.

The example below shows two lists, identical except that the items in the second one are 'inline' instead of 'block' (Lesson 5). Both lists belong to the same class, but the latter also has an ID ('horiz'). In the CSS box on the right you can see the 'inline' styling for the 'horiz' list items (#horiz li). The other styling is there just for looks – to hide the bullets, centre the list and space the list items.

HTML

```
<ul class="nobullet">
  <li><a href="#">Item</a></li>
  <li><a href="#">Item</a></li>
  <li><a href="#">Item</a></li>
  <li><a href="#">Item</a></li>
</ul>

<ul class="nobullet" id="horiz">
  <li><a href="#">Item</a></li>
  <li><a href="#">Item</a></li>
  <li><a href="#">Item</a></li>
  <li><a href="#">Item</a></li>
</ul>
```

CSS

```
.nobullet {
  list-style-type: none;
}

#horiz {
  text-align: center;
}

#horiz li{
  display: inline;
  margin-right: 1vw;
  margin-left: 1vw;
}
```

Result

- [Item](#)
- [Item](#)
- [Item](#)
- [Item](#)

[Item](#) [Item](#) [Item](#) [Item](#)

More about lists

When you start creating web pages you will soon wish to find out more about lists. The 'Creating lists' web page from Shay Howe may be a good place to start.