

# 37: Where to now?

## Your journey has just begun

Congratulations! You've just completed your introduction to web design.

What you have learnt is consistent with the current versions of HTML and CSS, so you have a firm footing upon which to develop your skills. However, you have only taken the first steps of a never-ending journey. There will always be something you would like to do, some new trick or technique to allow you to achieve a desired effect, so you will be frequently searching for answers.

With some carefully chosen keywords, you will most likely find what you need at one of the wonderful sites I've credited at the beginning of this course. They are your friends.

## Your priorities now

But before feeling too chuffed, you should be aware you have only learned to design for fully abled users using desktop devices. With the content of this course mastered, overcoming these limitations should be your priority.

### Accessibility

Designing for accessibility is very important. The *Usability Geek* website offers a brief guide to making your website accessible. Here's a summary:

- Choose colours that meet the needs of people with a visual impairment
- Links should be distinctive and descriptive
- Images should have an alt attribute. The exception is images that are merely 'eye candy', in which case the alt attribute should be left empty
- Carefully write your code using the appropriate heading (h1, h2 etc) and semantic elements. This allows assistive technologies to do their job
- Test your work, preferably using humans as well as online tools

For a much more comprehensive guide, refer to the archived website of accessibility expert Jim Thatcher and his surprisingly readable tutorial on website accessibility.

### Designing for portable devices

Most web browsing is done on portable devices, such as tablets and phones, so this is hardly a trivial consideration. And what's more, Google searches give greater prominence to 'mobile friendly' sites. So you'd be smart to learn about designing websites for different devices ('responsive design') as soon as you gain a little confidence.

### Validating

Another thing you should be aware of is the W3C markup validation service. This free service checks your work to ensure it conforms to the web standards.

Go to the W3C validator website, navigate to your HTML file and click on 'Check'. You will then be presented with a list of any errors.

The list will at first look a little intimidating, but, even if you cannot fully understand it, you will at least be aware of exactly where to look. This service will show up any markup typos, duplications and omissions, so it's well worth using.

## Learning more

### Other topics to look up

You are probably aware that you have a long way to go before you can say you've mastered web design. This course certainly makes no pretence at being comprehensive. Much has been left out for the sake of getting you up and running, yet it contains all you need for a firm foundation upon which you can develop your skills. Now is the time for more reading so you can get an idea of what HTML and CSS have to offer. For now, here are a few topics to investigate:

- Positioning elements. There are position values that have not been covered here.
- Display property. There are display values that have not been covered here.
- CSS grid
- 'Flex' layout
- Column layout using CSS
- The 'head' section of the HTML page

## Learn from other people's code

You'll always be finding a site with some nifty new feature you'd like on your own site, and you can often get a few clues from looking at their code. You can view the code for any webpage by right-clicking on the page and selecting 'view source' (or similar, depending on the browser).