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Acronyms like HTML and HTTP may conjure up images of propellerheads slaving away at their computer keyboards, but it's really very easy to create simple Worldwide Web pages that can serve many purposes.

A Web page is simply a text (or ASCII format) file that contains HTML (Hypertext Markup Language) formatting codes. HTML codes are pretty easy to understand once you see some in action. As we'll see, anyone with Web access, a Web browser, some space on a Web server and a word processing program can put up a Web page. Here are eight steps to a quickie Web page.

1. Organize your information.

Think about the information you want the page to present, and come up with a basic format for it. Web pages have a window title (the text that appears in the window's title bar when you use a graphical Web browser like Netscape), a page title, and some text, graphics, or hypertext links to other pages. If you plan to have graphics, think about where they'll go in relation to the text, and think about how much space you want them to occupy on the screen. If you want to create links to other pages, you'll need to know the Web addresses of those pages so you can refer to them in the HTML linking codes.

2. Find an example you like.

With a basic information layout in mind, surf the Web until you find a page that has pretty much the same layout.

3. Save the example as a Source file with your Web browser.

With the page example you want displayed on your screen, use the Save command on your Web browser's File menu to save the page to your own disk. There should be two file-saving options, "Text," and "Source." Be sure to choose the option to save the page as a Source file, because that format saves the HTML formatting codes along with the page text.

4. Open the Source file with your word processor.

Start your word processing program or text editor, and open the example file you saved to your disk. You'll see a screen of text with the HTML formatting codes included. All the codes appear inside angle brackets (`<`). You'll also notice that the code to turn off a particular format is the same as the one to turn the format on, except with a slash (`/`) in front of it. Study the example page and compare the codes with the page's format when viewed in your Web browser. You'll quickly learn that there are different codes to specify the page's window title (the `TITLE` code), to format text in different sizes or styles (the `H1`, `H2`, `b`, and `i` codes), to create line breaks (`p` or `br`), bullet lists (`ul`), or that insert graphics or hypertext links into the page.

5. Replace the text and graphics with your own text and graphics.

If the page's layout is what you want, replace the existing text (the text between the formatting codes) with your own text. Be aware that tabs, carriage returns, indents, and multiple spaces are ignored when the page is viewed in a Web browser, so don't use these to format your text. If you're adding graphics, you'll have to specify the names of the graphic files you want. HTML codes that call for graphics usually begin with `"img SRC="`, so all you have to do is change the file name reference after such codes. Do the same to change the addresses of any hypertext links on the page to the addresses of pages to which you want to link. (Linking commands usually begin with `"A HREF="`.)

6. Save the page as a text file.

When you've inserted your own text and graphic and link addresses, save the file as a text (ASCII) format file back to your disk. Save it with a different name so you can retain the original example you worked from. It's important to save the page in ASCII format because that's the format required by Web browsers.

7. Open the new file with your browser.

Using your Web browser program (hopefully Netscape or Mosaic, since these are the most common browsers used on the Web), open the new file you just saved. It will be formatted just as it will look when viewed with that browser program by anyone on the Web. If the graphics files you've specified are in the same disk directory, they'll also appear. Check for mistakes in spacing, spelling, and so on to make sure the page looks exactly the way you want it to look. If it doesn't, make the appropriate changes in the text file version of the page using your word processor.

Note: Web pages may look significantly different when viewed with different browser programs. A good Web tutorial or book will show you how to use formatting codes that will maintain the look of your page as closely as possible no matter which browser is used.

8. Upload the completed files to your Web space.

When the page is done, use FTP to transfer the HTML page and any graphic files or linked pages it refers to into your directory on your Web provider's server. The page will then be available to anyone for access on the Worldwide Web.

This process is even simpler than it seems from this description. Try it with this page to see for yourself. You'll quickly see that it's easy to make simple Web pages.