

# Leaping Walls Consulting & Services

## Cheat Sheet - Basic HTML

Basic HTML code isn't that hard to learn. Instances where you may have to use it are minimal, but it sure is handy to know when you have problems getting your post to look like it should for other readers. Occasionally, issues with spacing, bullets, and linking can come up and be difficult if not impossible to overcome without basic HTML knowledge.

These styles are used for most website coding, but there are other versions that you'll run across on occasion. These are not the most widely accepted code styles for email formatting, however. The problem with basic HTML in email is that some services don't transfer the code well and an email you thought looked great could be a real mess to someone else. This cheat-sheet will be great for blog post and page formatting, particularly used with WordPress websites.



*tip:* Print these pages and use them as a cheat sheet until you memorize it. I thumb-tacked this to the wall in front of my computer when I was learning it.

If you have been writing in your visual editor and you're having problems with:

- **Bold**
- **Italics**
- **Underline**
- **Links**

For more information, call Susan Hamilton at 214-714-0495 or email [Susan@LeapingWalls.com](mailto:Susan@LeapingWalls.com)

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- **Anchor text links, or**
- **Making your company name appear linkable,**

Try using some HTML. In WordPress websites, the tab next to the word 'Visual' is 'HTML.' In others, simply look for an icon that says 'html' and click on that. Using code in the visual editor won't work.

Every line in code will start with a less than < sign, like you learned in 2nd grade math. A line of code telling you where a paragraph starts for instance, would look like `<p>and then the words in the paragraph. You would then close the paragraph with</p>` Notice that the 'less than' and 'greater than' signs have no spacing between the words and the symbols.

These codes are commands, and often called 'tags'. Not to be confused with blog post tagging, HTML tags command a formatting choice listed above.

For a command that is started with a <, you must close using the same command with the addition of a slash mark </.

If the code you attempt to use in the HTML editor isn't working, it most often is a result of not closing a tag, <p instead of <p> at the beginning of a command, or </p instead of </p> at the close of the command. Tags must be closed or the command repeats.

Also, it's easy to mistakenly add code to the Visual Editor window instead of the HTML editor. Code entered in Visual will show up in your published work, so if that happens, go back into 'edit' page and click on the HTML editor tab to work in the correct editor.

To make a word **bold**, `<strong>this word or sentence would be bold if you did this in code</strong>`. A variation to use if the <strong> tag won't work would be `<b>bold</b>`.

To cause *italics*, `<em>would make this sentence, word, or phrase italic if you did this</em>`. Rarely, it might take this code instead `<i>italics</i>`

If you want to underline, `<u>would underline your text</u>` in the HTML view, BUT you should never underline text that is not used in a link.

You may want to make your Web address link and it won't link through the crazy eight in the toolbar, or maybe you're leaving a comment on another company's post and want to leave your company name in a link.

To add a working link to your website, Acme.com, you'd use the following code:

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`<a href="http://www.acme.com">Acme Corporation, manufacturers of absolutely everything</a>`

To break that down, the `<a href="http://www.acme.com">` is the opening tag to your anchor link. Notice the quotation marks enclosing the URL ... miss one and your link won't work. The words between the `>` and the `</a>` are the words that will be visible to the public. `</a>` is the closing tag. The publicly visible words in the middle are your link (anchor) text. Anchor text is considered highly relevant by the search engines; if you can naturally work in a keyword phrase, so much the better.

Bulleted (unordered) lists, abbreviated as `<ul>` are easier, and start with

```
<ul>
<li>and then</li>
<li>again</li>
<li>for as long as your list is</li>
</ul>
```

To number your list, you create an ordered list `<ol>`:

```
<ol>
<li>would be your first point</li>
<li>second point</li>
<li>third, and so on</li>
</ol>
```

Note that both lists have a starting code before they begin, and that should appear directly before the actual list, and not before the sentence leading up to the list. To end the list requires a close list tag (`</ul>` or `</ol>`). Forget that and it will MESS YOU UP.

*tip:* Open up the page you are editing from two tabs, one from inside the site you're working in, and another tab from the viewer's perspective outside of the dashboard. When checking to verify whether or not you've actually solved your problem, depend on refreshed pages from outside the site before you depend on the preview post button. Always save first in draft after any change, and always refresh the page from outside to see if it was truly updated.

Anyway, this should help you if you need to work in HTML. Print it out and keep it handy!