

Creating Lists

Now we will continue where Chapter 15 left off and discuss creating lists. We'll continue to step up the pace a bit. From ordered lists to unordered lists, this chapter has what you need to get started.

Introducing Lists

Lists are absolutely essential to good Web page design. You need to break up your page into digestible chunks whenever you can. Too often, Web pages are long collections of paragraphs, which can get monotonous for the reader. If you've got material that lends itself to presentation in a list form, try it. You'll be surprised how much a simple list can make key points stand out, even if your content is best presented in paragraph form. By offering this type of summary in an eye-catching manner, you'll be able to convey the purpose of your text to grab the attention of the casual browser, and to let readers quickly determine if this material is what they're seeking.

Creating bulleted lists: The UL element

The list type you see most commonly is the bulleted list, also called the *unordered list*. You create a bulleted list using the `UL` element. Every list worth its salt also has list items. The list items are created with the `LI` element. In fact, a list created with the `UL` element with no `LI` elements within it isn't a list at all!



In This Chapter

Creating bulleted lists with the `UL` element

Creating numbered lists with the `OL` element

Creating definition lists with the `DL` element

Interesting effects of nesting block elements



Unordered List **Start Tag:** Required**Content:** List items**End Tag:** Required**Attributes:** `id`, `class`: used in conjunction with style sheets`lang`, `dir`: indicate language and text direction; better specified in the `BODY` element unless this element is an exception to the rest of the page`title`: title of this element`style`: define style here to override that in a style sheet`type`: deprecated; indicates the bullet type; should be specified in style sheet`compact`: deprecated; tells the browser to display the list in a more compact way; results vary by browser`events`: see Chapter 48

Whether you are creating a bulleted list or a numbered list, you won't have anything in your list unless you use the `LI` element.

List Item **Start Tag:** Required**Content:** Inline elements**End Tag:** Optional**Attributes:** `id`, `class`: used in conjunction with style sheets`lang`, `dir`: indicate language and text direction; better specified in the `BODY` element unless this element is an exception to the rest of the page`title`: title of this element`compact`: Boolean attribute renders the list in a more compact way. The interpretation of this attribute depends on the user agent.`style`: define style here to override that in a style sheet`value`: deprecated; used to tell the browser what number to associate with this list item (works only with numbered lists)`type`: deprecated; indicates the bullet type; should be specified in style sheet; but even in a style sheet, you don't want to indicate the bullet type separately for each item in the list; this is better indicated in the list element`events`: see Chapter 48

An example using UL follows:

```
Common symptoms of early pregnancy include:
<UL>
  <LI> nausea
  <LI> vomiting
  <LI> loss of appetite
  <LI> strange food cravings
  <LI> exhaustion
  <LI> mood swings
  <LI> crying for no reason
</UL>
```

Creating numbered lists: The OL element

The other popular kind of list is the *ordered list*, which you can create using the OL element. The OL element is every bit as easy to create as the UL element. Again, you need an LI element for each item on your list.

Ordered List

Start Tag: Required

Content: List items

End Tag: Required

Attributes: id, class: used in conjunction with style sheets

lang, dir: indicate language and text direction; better specified in the BODY element unless this element is an exception to the rest of the page

title: title of this element

style: define style here to override that in a style sheet

type: deprecated; indicates the numbering style; should be specified in style sheet

start: deprecated; tells the browser what number it should use to start the numbering; should be specified in style sheet

compact: deprecated; tells the browser to display the list in a more compact way; results vary by browser

events: see Chapter 48

An example using OL follows:

```
When you first get into your car, before you turn the key in
the ignition, be sure that
<OL>
  <LI> Your seat is adjusted properly
  <LI> Your seatbelt is fastened
  <LI> Your rearview mirror is adjusted properly
```

```
<LI> Your outside rearview mirror is adjusted properly
</OL>
```

Creating definition lists: The DL element

The definition list is used far less frequently than the other two kinds of lists and it has three parts: the definition list (DL), the definition term (DT), and the definition description (DD). The DL element works just like the OL and UL elements. The DT element works much the same way as the LI element. The DD element is different: It contains the term's actual definition. How this type of list renders depends on your browser.

Definition List <DL>

Start Tag: Required

Content: Definition terms
Definition descriptions

End Tag: Required

Attributes: id, class: used in conjunction with style sheets

lang, dir: indicate language and text direction; better specified in the BODY element unless this element is an exception to the rest of the page

title: title of this element

style: define style here to override that in a style sheet

events: see Chapter 48

Definition Term <DT>

Start Tag: Required

Content: Inline elements

End Tag: Optional

Attributes: id, class: used in conjunction with style sheets

lang, dir: indicate language and text direction; better specified in the BODY element unless this element is an exception to the rest of the page

title: title of this element

style: define style here to override that in a style sheet

events: see Chapter 48

Definition Description <DD>

Start Tag: Required

Content: Inline elements

End Tag: Optional

- Attributes:** `id, class`: used in conjunction with style sheets
- `lang, dir`: indicate language and text direction; better specified in the `BODY` element unless this element is an exception to the rest of the page
- `title`: title of this element
- `style`: define style here to override that in a style sheet
- `events`: see Chapter 48

Because you don't see too many definition lists, an example is in order:

```
<DL>
  <DT>chop
  <DD>to cut into random-sized pieces
  <DT>grate
  <DD>to shred into small irregular strips
  <DT>dice
  <DD>to cut with a knife into regular-sized cubes
</DL>
```

Figure 16-1 shows how the text renders in Netscape.

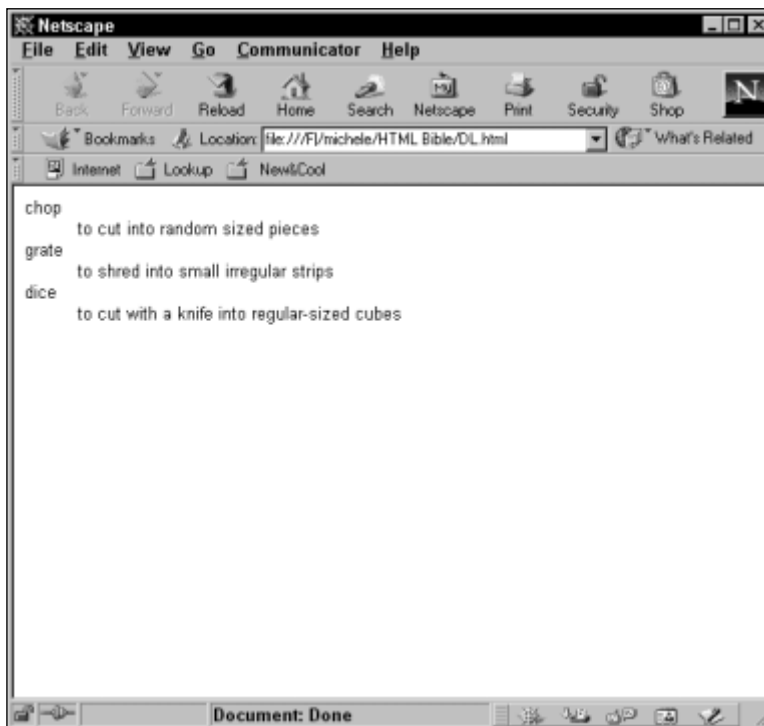


Figure 16-1: Definition list in Netscape Communicator 4.7



You might want to use style sheets to make that look a little bit nicer. Check out Chapter 25 to learn more about CSS.

Nesting Block Elements

You might want to nest block-level elements occasionally, but in some conditions you can't. You can't nest `P` elements because the presence of the second start tag for the `P` element ends the previous `P` element. You can, however, nest lists. This is a great thing, too. You can also nest paragraphs within lists. Consider the following:

```
<P>Suggestions for adding flavor to your low-fat recipes.</P>
<UL>
<LI> Always invite a member of the onion family to every dish!
  <UL>
    <LI> white onions
    <LI> Vidalia onions (in season)
    <LI> shallots, finely chopped
    <LI> purple onions as a garnish
    <LI> green onions for crunch
  </UL>
<LI> Use only freshly ground pepper; invest in an attractive
pepper mill.
<LI> Sprinkle your plain vegetables with a small amount of
freshly grated parmesan cheese—so much flavor for so little
fat.
</UL>
```

Figure 16-2 shows how the text renders in Netscape.

You could, of course, spiff up the presentation of that subordinate list by using square bullets, as defined in your external style sheet, but what is shown is what renders in the absence of a style sheet.

From Here



Jump to Chapter 26 and start learning CSS syntax.

Proceed to Chapter 17 and master inline elements.

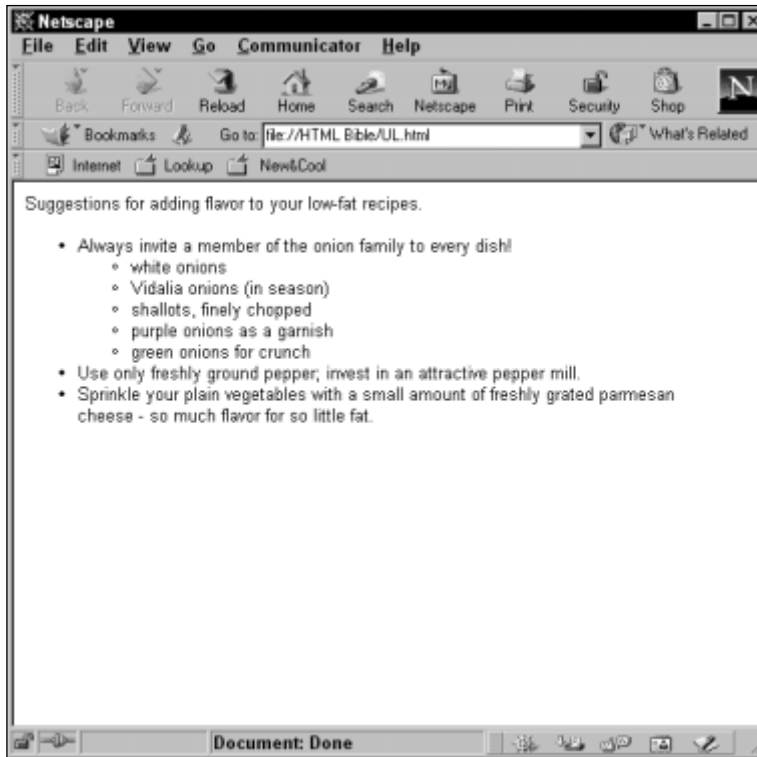


Figure 16-2: Nested list in Netscape Communicator 4.7

Summary

In this chapter, you learned how to create the three different types of lists. You also got a taste for nesting these elements to create a multilevel list. Lists are an often underutilized block-level element, and one that can help you convey your message more clearly. You are well on your way to having mastered the elements of HTML 4.



