

Form and input tags

The <form> tag

The **<form>** tag is used to create a user form. It encompasses all the form fields (or form controls). A **form field** is an element within the form, such as input text box or radio button. The <form> tag is a container tag; it requires closing tag - **</form>**

<form> attributes

The <form> element has two mandatory attributes: **method** and **action**.

The **action** attribute specifies the name and location of the CGI script used to process the form. This script must reside on a web server.

Example:

```
<form action="cgi-bin/process.pl">
```

The script - file process.pl which handles the form, resides on a web server in the folder named *cgi-bin*

The **method** attribute specifies which method the browser will use to send form data to a Web server. The method attribute can take two values: "get" and "post"

With the **"get"** attribute form data is appended to the URL.

The following example illustrates the way how data is sent using the "get" method:

```
http://www.abc.com/process.php?f_name=John&email=jsmith@scf.edu
```

This method sends data in clear text and is thus less secure. In most cases, it is not used to send a user's data to the web server. It is used to retrieve the requested data from the server. This method is used in a query string (you can see a query string in the browser address box when you search for information using Google or other search engines)

With the **"post"** attribute the form data is posted to the URL specified by the action attribute as a separate data stream called **standard input**. It is more secure and reliable method for sending form data.



Apply it!

Step 1 – Adding <form> tag, adding <input type="text"/> element:

1. start a new document and add the following code between <body> and </body> tags:

```
<h1> User Registration Form </h1>
<form action="http://ss1.ciwcertified.com/cgi-bin/process.pl">
</form>
```

The form itself is not visible on the web page.

The <input/> tag

<input /> tag is not a container tag. This tag is used to create text boxes, check boxes, radio buttons, submit and reset buttons. Different types of <input/> field are specified using the **type** attribute.

The **<input type="text" />** creates a text field (input text box) into which a user can enter characters.

Each form element must have the **name** attribute. The name attribute identifies each form field and associate it with the value specified by a user. Values are case sensitive. White spaces and punctuation characters in the values are not allowed. You can use underscore.



Apply it!

Step 2. Add the following input text boxes within <form> and </form> tags:

```
<form action="http://ss1.ciwcertified.com/cgi-bin/process.pl">

<p>First Name: <input name="f_name" type="text" /></p>
<p>Last Name: <input name="l_name" type="text" /></p>
<p>Email: <input name="email" type="text" /></p>
<p>Street Address: <input name="street" type="text" /></p>
<p>City: <input name="city" type="text" value="Bradenton"/></p>

</form>
```

The **value** attribute is an optional attribute of the **<input type="text"/>** . You can add this attribute if you would like the text box to appear with some default text inside. Notice the value attribute in the following field:

```
<input name="city" type="text" value="Bradenton"/>
```

Additionally, you can use a **size** attribute to specify the **width** of the text boxes in characters.

Submit and reset buttons

To create the buttons submit and reset, use `<input />` tag specifying the *type* attribute as "submit" or "reset".

Submit button sends the data to the script specified in the **action** attribute on click on the button.

Reset button clears all form entries.



Apply it!

Step 3. Add code for Submit and Reset buttons at the end of the form (shown in bold):

```
<form action="http://ss1.ciwcertified.com/cgi-bin/process.pl">
<p>First Name: <input name="f_name" type="text" /></p>
<p>Last Name: <input name="l_name" type="text" /></p>
<p>Email: <input name="email" type="text" /></p>
<p>Street Address: <input name="street" type="text" /></p>
<p>City: <input name="city" type="text" value="Bradenton"/></p>

<p><b><input type="submit" /> <input type="reset" /></b></p>
</form>
```

Save the file and open the web page in the browser. Enter data into text boxes and then click the Submit button. You should see the results of the form processing returned from the web server.

Radio buttons - `<input type="radio" />`

Radio buttons are used for two or more mutually exclusive options. A group of radio buttons must share the same **name** attribute. Add the following to your form code (in bold):



Apply it!

Step 4. Creating a group of radio buttons. Add two radio buttons to your form code:

```
<h1> User Registration Form </h1>
<form action="http://ss1.ciwcertified.com/cgi-bin/process.pl">
<p>First Name: <input name="f_name" type="text" /></p>
<p>Last Name: <input name="l_name" type="text" /></p>
<p>Email: <input name="email" type="text" /></p>
<p>Street Address: <input name="street" type="text" /></p>
```

```
<p>City: <input name="city" type="text" value="Bradenton"/></p>
<p>Zip: <input type="text" name="zip" size="5"/></p>

<p>Gender: <br/>
<input type="radio" name="gender" value="male" checked="checked" />Male<br />
<input type="radio" name="gender" value="female" />Female<br />
</p>
<p><input type="submit" /> <input type="reset" /></p>
</form>
```

Notice, that both radio buttons share the same name - *gender*.

Creating radio buttons checked in default

The first radio button in our example, has additional attribute - **checked**. The **checked = "checked"** makes the button preselected.

Save the file and preview in a web browser. Enter some data and click Submit button to receive the results of your form processing.