

Before You Begin

Please read the following topics before you begin the course.

Minimum Hardware and Software Requirements

This is a hands-on web design course! You will be writing HTML, reviewing supplemental course material, and working with files on your computer. Your computer must meet the following minimum requirements in order to successfully complete the assignments.

Computer Hardware

Your computer must meet the following minimum specifications:

	Minimum
CPU	1.6GHz or faster processor
RAM	1024 MB
Display	1024 x 768 video card
Hard Disk Size	3GB available space
DVD Drive	DVD-ROM drive

Operating Systems

In order to install the course software, your computer operating system must match one of the following:

Windows XP (x86) with Service Pack 3 or above
Windows Vista (x86 and x64) with Service Pack 2 or above
Windows 7 (x86 and x64)
Windows 8 (all versions except RT)
Mac OS X 10.5.8 or greater

Supported Web Browsers

You can use nearly any web browser on any computer system to view HTML. However some browsers display HTML differently. We have tested course material on current versions of the following browsers:



Internet Explorer



Mozilla Firefox



Google Chrome



Apple Safari

Conventions Used in This Text

This course will use certain styles (fonts, borders, etc.) to highlight text of special interest.

HTML source code will be in 11-point Consolas font, in a single box like this.

Property names will be in **12-point Consolas bold** text. For example: **#content{}**.

HTML elements and important terms will be in **bold face** type such as **<body>**.



This picture highlights important concepts within a lesson.



Sidebars may contain additional information, tips, or background material.



A chapter review section is included at the end of each chapter.



Every chapter includes a “Your Turn” activity that allows you to practice the ideas you have learned.



The “Work With Me” sections will give you step-by step instructions on how to apply the material to your project. Work alongside the instructions on your computer to achieve a goal.

Many “Work With Me” and “Your Turn” activities will ask you to add new code, edit existing code, or remove old code. We will use a light gray color to represent old code and black text for new code. Any existing code that needs to be removed will be crossed out.

```
This line shows work that is already in the file  
This black text shows the work you need to add.  
This line shows another row of text that was already in the file.  
Crossed out text needs to be removed.
```

What You Will Learn and Do In This Course

KidCoder™: Beginning Web Design will teach you the basics of HTML, XHTML and CSS. It is written for students in 4th grade or higher who have an interest in building web sites. You will learn to create your own web pages and begin to understand the building blocks for developing other web sites!

Each lesson will include an explanation of concepts, examples of how concepts are used, and one or more activities that will help you understand the concept. Throughout the course, you will be challenged to apply what you have learned by building your own web site from scratch.

What You Need to Know Before Starting

You are expected to already know the basics of computer use before beginning this course. You need to know how to use the keyboard and mouse to select and run programs, use application menu systems, and work with either the Microsoft Windows or Apple Mac operating system. You should understand how to save and load files on your computer and how to use the Windows Explorer or Mac Finder to walk through your file system and directory structures. You should also have some experience with using text editors, like NotePad or TextEdit and web browsers, like Safari or FireFox.

Software Versions

You will be using either *Notepad* (PC) or *TextEdit* (Mac) software to complete this course. These programs come shipped with your operating systems. *Microsoft Paint* or *Mac Preview/iPhoto* are used in the graphics chapter, both of which also come shipped with your operating systems. All supplemental documents installed with the course material are in Adobe Acrobat (PDF) format. You must have the Adobe Acrobat Reader installed to view these documents.

Course Errata

We welcome your feedback regarding any course details that are unclear or that may need correction. You can find a list of course errata for this edition on our website.

Getting Help

Throughout the course you will be given some problem solving tips to help you find and fix problems. The earlier tips can be used to troubleshoot later exercises as well.

All courses come with a Solution Guide and fully coded solutions for all activities. Simply install the “Solution Files” from your course setup program and you will be able to refer to the solutions as needed from the “Solution Menu”. If you are confused about any activity, this will allow you to see how we solved the problem!

We also offer free technical support for students and teachers. Simply fill out the help request form in the “Support” area of our website with a detailed question and we will assist you.

Activity Starters

Some exercises and assignments require graphical images. We have provided all of those images for you in the “KidCoder/BeginningWebDesign/Activity Starters” directory. In addition, a few activities may require a lot of typing to enter text content. To make your job easier, we have also provided text files in the “Activity Starters” directory containing this text content. You can cut and paste from the starter text files into your own code to save some time. Please look at the “Activity Starters” tab in your Student Menu for details on the starter material. When starter material is available, it will be noted in the activity description.

Support for Multiple Operating Systems

This course was developed for use both on Microsoft Windows and Apple Mac OS X operating systems. While HTML can be used on nearly any computer platform, our course setup program will only run on these systems, and we give guidance using the tools and terms specific Windows and Mac OS. We will point out in text or by screen shots any differences between the operating systems. Where necessary, we will provide dedicated sets of instructions for handling each operating system. Be sure to follow the instructions that match the operating system you are using!

Directory Naming Conventions

On Windows operating systems, directory paths are traditionally represented with backslashes (“\”) between folder names like this: “**KidCoder\BeginningWebDesign**”. However, forward slashes (“/”) also work. On Mac OS, directories use forward slashes as in “**KidCoder/BeginningWebDesign**”. In order to avoid cluttering the textbook with both representations, each time we specify a path, we will simply use the forward slash (“/”) style which works on both operating systems.