Embedding/Linking to CSS

CSS code can either be *embedded* in your HTML page or can be *external*, which is much more efficient because one CSS file can feed many HTML files (so you can change the appearance of an entire site with just one change).

To embed the CSS you need the following code in the header:
<style type="text/css">
// CSS code goes here
</style>

To link to an external CSS file, use the following code in the header:
< link rel="stylesheet" type="text/css" href="filename.css" />

CSS Structure

Instructions in CSS come in 3 stages:

Identifier { *Parameter*: *variable*; }

The Identifier is usually the HTML tag you want to effect, the parameter is the specific aspect you want to modify and the variable is the new value. e.g.:

p { color:red; }

This would make all of the text encapsulated with in paragraph tags red.

Sample Parameters [variables in brackets]

color: [red, #FF0000]
background-color: [as above]
text-align: [left, right, center]
font-family" ["arial", "times new roman"]
font-size: [could be in px, pt, even in or cm]
margin-left: [either absolute, eg. 10px, or relative, eg. 10%]

CSS Classes

You can define a CSS class by using a period (.) in the name of the identifier (e.g. .sidebar). You can refer to this class within the HTML code thus:

<p class="sidebar">.

The advantage of using classes is that you can refer to specific paragraph elements (for example) without altering all of them. Classes can be referred to many times.

CSS ID

You can also define a unique ID, in the same way as using CSS classes. This time use a hash (#) prefix (e.g. #footer). The HTML code would go:

<p id="footer">

CSS IDs can only be referred to once (they are unique), which makes them a bit less useful than classes for the most part. The advantage is that there is a specific Javascript code (getElementByID). Although we don't need to use it, it can be a useful tool in some circumstances.