

## Web Standards - What is W3C

The ones created by the World Wide Web Consortium &ndash; the people who invented the Web itself. The W3C created these standards so the Web would work better for everyone. New browsers, mainly, support these standards; old browsers, mainly, don't.

About the W3C (World Wide Web Consortium)

The World Wide Web Consortium was created in October 1994 to lead the World Wide Web to its full potential by developing common protocols that promote its evolution and ensure its interoperability. W3C has around 400 Member organizations from all over the world and has earned international recognition for its contributions to the growth of the Web.

### W3C Mission

By promoting interoperability and encouraging an open forum for discussion, W3C commits to leading the technical evolution of the Web. In just over seven years, W3C has developed more than fifty technical specifications for the Web's infrastructure. However, the Web is still young and there is still a lot of work to do, especially as computers, telecommunications, and multimedia technologies converge. To meet the growing expectations of users and the increasing power of machines, W3C is already laying the foundations for the next generation of the Web. W3C's technologies will help make the Web a robust, scalable, and adaptive infrastructure for a world of information. To understand how W3C pursues this mission, it is useful to understand the Consortium's goals and driving principles.

### W3C's Goals

W3C's long term goals for the Web are:

**Universal Access** : To make the Web accessible to all by promoting technologies that take into account the vast differences in culture, languages, education, ability, material resources, access devices, and physical limitations of users on all continents;

**Semantic Web** : To develop a software environment that permits each user to make the best use of the resources available on the Web;

**Web of Trust** : To guide the Web's development with careful consideration for the novel legal, commercial, and social issues raised by this technology.

### Design Principles of the Web

The Web is an application built on top of the Internet and, as such, has inherited its fundamental design principles.

**Interoperability** : Specifications for the Web's languages and protocols must be compatible with one another and allow (any) hardware and software used to access the Web to work together.

**Evolution** : The Web must be able to accommodate future technologies. Design principles such as simplicity, modularity, and extensibility will increase the chances that the Web will work with emerging technologies such as mobile Web devices and digital television, as well as others to come. **Decentralization** : Decentralization is without a doubt the newest principle and most difficult to apply. To allow the Web to "scale" to worldwide proportions while resisting errors and breakdowns, the architecture(like the Internet) must limit or eliminate dependencies on central registries.

These principles guide the work carried out within W3C Activities.