

# XHTML Rules of Thumb

- Here are some overall guidelines for defining your application structure in XHTML — for specifics and details, learn to do what most everyone else does:
  - ◆ Use the *View Source* command on your browser liberally to see how other sites do it
  - ◆ Look things up on the Web (useful sites listed later and on the course Web site)
- First, we reiterate our Web authoring grain of salt: because of the Web's history, not everyone (nor every browser) does everything in the same way; for this class, we focus on the most recent, recommended ways and standards for doing things

## Web Page Startup

Start all of your pages with this — this declares that you are trying to follow the latest, strictest standard:

```
<?xml version="1.0" encoding="iso-8859-1"?>
<!DOCTYPE html PUBLIC "-//W3C//DTD XHTML 1.1//EN" "http://www.w3.org/TR/xhtml11/
DTD/xhtml11.dtd">
<html xmlns="http://www.w3.org/1999/xhtml">
  <head>
    <!-- Fill this out... -->
  </head>
  <body>
    <!-- Really fill this out... -->
  </body>
</html>
```

# General “Tagging” Rules

- Make your tags reflect the *content structure* of your page: “this part is the menu,” “this part is the title,” “this part is a descriptive paragraph,” etc.
- To do this, you use both the built-in tags (*h*’s, *p*, *div*, *span*), and the special *class* and *id* properties
- Validate, validate, validate: use the official XHTML validator at <http://validator.w3.org> to make sure that you’re following all the rules
- Use multiple browsers, but rely on the most standards-compliant ones first

## Learn How to Learn

- As mentioned, the Web is very much a self-documenting technology: it is easy to find sites *on* the Web that are *about* its technology and standards
- Here are a few sites that I have come to rely on myself (aside from the generic Google and Wikipedia):
  - ◇ <http://www.htmlhelp.com>
  - ◇ <http://www.w3schools.com>
  - ◇ <http://zvon.org>