

Boxes & sections

HTML & CSS Reference

div, span & semantic sections

A `<div>` is a generic block box that groups content on its own lines. A `<span>` is a generic inline box inside a line of text. You use them to group things so you can style or position them.

```
<div>
  <span>Price:</span> <span>$9.99</span>
</div>
<div>
  <span>Stock:</span> <span>in stock</span>
</div>
```

Semantic tags describe their role, which helps screen readers and search engines. Prefer them over plain `<div>` where they fit: `<header>`, `<nav>`, `<main>`, `<section>`, `<article>`, `<footer>`.

```
<header><h1>My Site</h1></header>
<main>
  <section>
    <h2>News</h2>
    <p>Today we launched the site.</p>
  </section>
</main>
<footer>© 2026 My Site</footer>
```

Common mistakes

- `<div>` is a block (starts a new line); `<span>` is inline (stays in the text).
- Use semantic tags like `<header>`, `<nav>` and `<footer>` where they fit, not `<div>` for everything.
- Do not use a tag just for its default look — style it with CSS instead.

div — block

```
<div>  
  block box  
full width</div>
```

span — inline

```
text <span>inline</span> text
```

Exam tip: div groups sections; span styles a word inside a line; prefer semantic tags when possible

div is a block box; span wraps inline text