In this lesson you learn that HTML ignores line breaks in most cases. It also ignores extra tabs and spaces.

This allows you to make your code more readable by breaking up your HTML tags onto separate lines and indenting the code inside tags.

The HTML code examples in this course use indents to help you read and understand the code you are writing, but the code will work just as well without them.

Some HTML editors have the ability to automatically apply indents to your code, including Notepad++ and Visual Studio. This could speed up your work if you want everything to be indented perfectly.

Some programmers like to remove all of the line breaks and spaces from their HTML code before uploading it to the internet (a process known as *minifying*). This makes the files slightly smaller, but much harder to read and edit.

Lesson 3: Work with paragraphs and line breaks

You added some text to your HTML document in the previous lesson. In this lesson you'll see how to break it into separate lines and paragraphs.

1. Open *Lesson1.html* for editing (if it isn't open already).

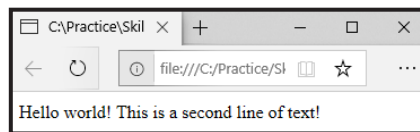   You saw how to do this in the previous lesson.

2. Add a second line of text to your page.

    1. Edit the HTML code to:

        ```
        <html>
            <head></head>
            <body>
                Hello world!
                This is a second line of text!
            </body>
        </html>
        ```

    2. Save the file as: **Lesson3.html**

    3. Open *Lesson3.html* in your web browser.

        Even though you placed the text on a separate line in your code, it is all shown on one line when it is rendered by the web browser. HTML ignores line breaks by default, but you can break text into paragraphs using the *<p>* tag.

3. Use the <p> tag to break the text into two paragraphs.

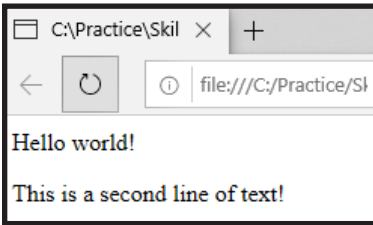   The <p> tag is used to split text into paragraphs.

    1. Edit the HTML code to:

        ```
        <html>
            <head></head>
            <body>
                <p>Hello world!</p>
                <p>This is a second line of text!</p>
            </body>
        </html>
        ```

        Just like the other HTML tags that you have used, everything between *<p>* and *</p>* is considered to be inside the *<p>* tag and will be treated as a paragraph of text.

    2. Save the file by clicking *File > Save*.

note

The <pre> tag

You saw in this lesson that HTML ignores line breaks in text by default. The *<pre>* tag overrides this behavior. It is intended to be used for "preformatted" text, ie. text that has already been formatted correctly.

Any text placed inside *<pre>* tags will be displayed on the page exactly as it is, including any line breaks and white space.

Most web browsers also apply a fixed-width font to text inside the *<pre>* tag. This means that every letter will be the same width.

The *<pre>* tag is rarely used, since CSS allows for more flexible text formatting. It's usually a better choice to use *<p>* and *
* tags than to rely on *<pre>*.

If you don't save your changes they will not be displayed when you open the file in your web browser. You can also save using the *Ctrl+S* keyboard shortcut.

3. Open *Lesson3.html* in your web browser.

   You can see that a line break has been added between the two paragraphs with a space separating them. The size of the space between paragraphs cannot be changed using HTML alone, but it can be changed by using CSS, which you'll learn about later in this course.

4.   Add another line within the second paragraph.

1. Edit the HTML code to:

```
<html>
    <head></head>
    <body>
        <p>Hello world!</p>
        <p>
            This is a second line of text!
            Another line in the second paragraph.
        </p>
    </body>
</html>
```

   You already know that HTML ignores line breaks by default, so the new line that you have added will not appear on a separate line if you view the page in your browser.

   You also know that spaces are automatically inserted between paragraphs, so adding another set of <p> tags is not a solution.

   To add line breaks within paragraphs, you can use the *
* tag.

2. Edit the HTML code to:

```
<html>
    <head></head>
    <body>
        <p>Hello world!</p>
        <p>
            This is a second line of text!<br />
            Another line in the second paragraph.
        </p>
    </body>
</html>
```

   Notice that the *
* tag is different to the tags you have used so far. Instead of having an opening tag and a closing tag it has a forward slash at the end of the tag. This indicates that it is a *self-closing* tag.

3. Save the file and open it in your web browser.