

HTML BACIS STANDARDS

Do not use:

- <tbody> tags
- <th> instead of <td>
- <script> and no JS at all
- <map>, <area>- they are not working well on Outlooks
- <div>, please use tables instead
- <p> - they are interpreted differently on each webmail
- <form> and all form-like elements (<input...>)
- <style> in the head tag, also, CSS as less as possible
- - please use instead
- tags vlink, alink etc. in the <body> tag are not supported AOL email, Gmail and Hotmail. Instead, if they are **really** needed, please use css styles in <head> (not advised and not supported by e.g. Gmail)
- CSS in the <body> tag
- comments, i.e. <!-- comment...
- do not put more than 1 image per <td>
- CSS properties such as border-left, border-right, margin, padding, multiple backgrounds, etc.

Use:

Header

```
<!DOCTYPE HTML PUBLIC "-//W3C//DTD HTML 4.01 Transitional//EN"
"http://www.w3.org/TR/html4/loose.dtd">
```

The Doctype has set the standard used in the HTML source. The HTML 4.01 Transitional is one of the least restrictive standards.

- As using `style="display:block;"` for images is the only way how to avoid white lines on Hotmail, Gmail and Outlook 2007/2010, please put **only one image in a cell** (`<td>`), when they contribute to the construction of email.
- Use JPG and GIF format for images. PNGs are not supported by Lotus Webmail
- Standard fonts like Arial, Helvetica, Verdana, Garamond
- Gif animation instead of flash (1st frame should present the main content as Outlook 2007 and 2010 do not play *gif animation).
- HTML text where possible instead of images- the perfect ratio would be 50/50 of text and images.
- `<body bgcolor="#.....">` `<td bgcolor="#.....">` instead of background images as Outlook **does not display background images**
- Charset iso-8859-1, in order to avoid problems with displaying accents on various webmails. All special characters have to be converted into code, for example: à should become `à`
- replace all spacer images with an empty cell, with dimensions accordingly to the dimensions of this image. For example:

```
<td></td>
```

Should be replaced with:

```
<td width="520" height="8"></td>
```

Keep

- Mail size (width) between 630-650px
- Single image size <20kB
- Single animated gif size <50kB

- **HTML as simple as possible, without abuse of CSS- paddings, margins, floats, positioning.** Most of these effects may be done by using simple HTML
- all alts filled- It gives the opportunity to put text behind images. If the image is not displayed by the webmail, the ALT text will be.
- all necessary elements for tags must be prefilled, i.e. alt, title, width, height, border.
- make sure all HTML tags are closed- the W3C Validator is the best tool for checking that <http://validator.w3.org/>

Do not use:

- Fonts larger than 18px (size 3) or smaller than 11px (size 2)
 or
- Respectively, size="2" is 13px and size="3" is 16px.
- &, €, \$, %, #, *, / - they should be replaced with full words
- mass use of ! (i.e. !!!!)
- words like gratis, gagner, win, gana, diet, drugs, pharmaceuticals, sex, and its derivatives,
- words CAPITALIZED or s p a c e d ,especially in subject, alts and titles.

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