

M3 - Text Editors

The Microsoft Notepad text editor is a good basic editor that comes free with Microsoft Windows. However, in many cases there is a need to work on more than one file at a time as we shall see shortly. This can be done with Notepad, but each file is opened totally independently and this has the potential to be confusing.

As we work with increasingly more complex HTML files, keeping track of the mark-up details becomes increasingly more difficult without the use of color in the text.

There is quite a range of text editors, both free and paid, created specifically for code management. The choice of which to use can be a very personal one – Check out the following sample of free editors in the /Software/Editors folder.

Name	Color Syntax	Multiple Files	Line Numbers	Code Help	Validation	Preview	FTP
HTML-Kit	Yes	Yes	Yes	Yes	Yes	Yes	Yes
CoffeeCup	Yes	Yes	Yes	Yes	Yes	Yes	Ext
AlleyCode	Yes	Yes	Yes	Yes	No	Yes	Ext
Editra	Yes	Yes	Yes	No	No	No	No
Programmer's Notepad	Yes	Yes	Yes	No	No	No	No
SynWrite	Yes	Yes	Yes	No	No	No	No
EditPad	No	Yes	Yes	No	No	Yes	No
NoteTab	No	Yes	No	No	No	Yes	Yes

Color Syntax: It is very important to be able to distinguish the various HTML mark-up parameters in a file. Use of color makes this much easier.

Multiple files: It is common to have more than one file open at a time and an editor that facilitates movement between files is important.

Line Numbers: These help to find a particular point in a large file.

Code Help: This can often speed up the process of writing new code.

Validation: Connects to an external program to check your code.

Preview: Quick way of viewing the web page your code produces.

FTP: File Transfer Protocol – The process used to transfer your code files from your local computer to the web site host.

We will use **Editra** in as the example editor in this class, but please check out the others.