

# HTML for Book Metadata

Using simple HTML (Hypertext Markup Language) leads to better, easier-to-read metadata that improves search engine optimization and consumer conversion.

## We recommend utilizing HTML for the following metadata elements:

- Description
- Contributor biography
- Table of contents
- Index

**Note that any HTML used within these fields will count towards the overall character count.**

## Paragraphs and Line Breaks

Long, text-based metadata attributes should include paragraphs to break up the text. This is especially important in your book descriptive copy.

- Paragraph tags (<p>Example text.</p>) are the preferred method for creating paragraph breaks.
- Paragraphs should be enclosed with start (<p>) and end (</p>) paragraph tags.
- Alternately, you can use two consecutive line break tags (e.g. <br><br>) to create visual space between two paragraphs
- Line break variations include: <br>, <br />, <br />, or </br>.
- Using consecutive line breaks can sometimes lead to larger-than-intended spaces between paragraphs.

HTML input	Result
<p>Example text! Example text.</p>	Example text! Example text.
<p>Example text.</p>	Example text.
Example text! Example text.	Example text! Example text.
  Example text.	Example text.

## Metadata Essentials

### HTML



### The Basics

You can use HTML in certain metadata attributes to provide structure and emphasis to large blocks of text.

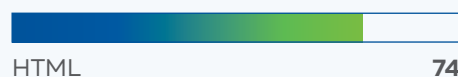


### Quick Tips

- ✓ Use basic HTML in your description, contributor bio, table of contents, and index.
- ✓ Keep your markup simple to maximize compatibility across retailers.
- ✓ Most HTML tags come in pairs, with a start tag (<i>) and an end tag (</i>).
- ✓ HTML tags count toward the maximum character count for each metadata field.



### Essentials Index



### What Retailers Say

- ✓ Most retailers support basic HTML in text-based fields.
- ✓ The top used tags include:
  - <p> for paragraph breaks
  - <b> for bold text
  - <i> for italicized text
  - <ul> and <li> for bulleted lists
  - <br> for single line breaks

## Basic Text Formatting

Use simple HTML formatting to produce more useful and readable metadata text. The most commonly used and supported text formatting include:

- `<b>` or `<strong>` for bold text
- `<em>` or `<i>` for italicized text
- `<u>` for underlined text

Formatted text should be properly enclosed with a beginning and ending tag, and tags should be in lowercase.

HTML input	Result
<code>&lt;b&gt;Example text!&lt;/b&gt;</code> or <code>&lt;strong&gt;Example text!&lt;/strong&gt;</code>	<b>Example text!</b>
<code>&lt;i&gt;Example text!&lt;/i&gt;</code> or <code>&lt;em&gt;Example text!&lt;/em&gt;</code>	<i>Example text!</i>
<code>&lt;u&gt;Example text!&lt;/u&gt;</code>	<u>Example text!</u>

## Lists

Use bulleted and numbered lists to highlight key features of your book in the product description or to properly structure your table of contents.

- Use `<ul>` to identify bulleted (unordered) lists and `<ol>` for numbered (ordered) lists.
  - Once you have specified the type of list, use `<li>` to identify individual items in the list.
  - Be sure to close each list item (`</li>`) and then close the list itself (`</ul>` or `</ol>`).
- List tags must be appropriately nested and properly closed.

HTML input	Result
<code>&lt;ul&gt;</code> <code>&lt;li&gt;Bullet list item one&lt;/li&gt;</code> <code>&lt;li&gt;List item two&lt;/li&gt;</code> <code>&lt;li&gt;Another list item&lt;/li&gt;</code> <code>&lt;/ul&gt;</code>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"><li>• Bullet list item one</li><li>• List item two</li><li>• Another list item</li></ul>
<code>&lt;ol&gt;</code> <code>&lt;li&gt;Bullet list item one&lt;/li&gt;</code> <code>&lt;li&gt;List item two&lt;/li&gt;</code> <code>&lt;li&gt;Another list item&lt;/li&gt;</code> <code>&lt;/ol&gt;</code>	<ol style="list-style-type: none"><li>1. Numbered list item one</li><li>2. List item two</li><li>3. Another list item</li></ol>

## Insider Tip: HTML Editors

There are lots of free HTML editors available online to show you a side-by-side view of your HTML tags and what your data will look like online. Try the W3Schools HTML editor ([w3schools.com/html/tryit.asp?filename=tryhtml\\_basic](https://www.w3schools.com/html/tryit.asp?filename=tryhtml_basic)) or do a quick search for "free html editor" to find a version that works for you.

Note on ONIX: ONIX allows for HTML and other markup, but not all data senders or recipients handle this the same way. Check with your metadata management team or data partner for any restrictions on the use of HTML and special characters in your product data. XHTML is strongly recommended over HTML for both ONIX 2.1 and 3.0 (textformat="05") to ensure validation and improved display across data recipients. Note that with XHTML, all tags must be properly closed and must be in lowercase.