

Hot tip

A JavaScript function simply contains a set of statements to be executed whenever that function gets called.

Calling head section script

Adding JavaScript functionality with numerous inline `<script>` elements throughout the body section of a HTML document is perfectly legitimate but it intrudes on the structural nature of the HTML elements and does not make for easy code maintenance. It is better to avoid inline script and, instead, place the JavaScript statements inside a “function” block within a single `<script>` element in the head section of the HTML document – between the `<head>` `</head>` tags.

A function block begins with the JavaScript **function** keyword, followed by a function name and trailing parentheses. These are followed by a pair of `{ }` curly brackets (braces) to enclose the statements. So its syntax looks like this:

```
function function-name( )
{
    // Statements to be executed go here.
}
```

Notice that spaces, carriage returns, and tabs are collectively known as “whitespace” and are completely ignored in JavaScript code so the function can be formatted for easy readability. Many script authors prefer to place the opening brace on the same line as the function name, but it is better to vertically align brace pairs – some statements also use braces so keeping all pairs aligned makes the code easier to read and helps prevent missing braces.

Typically a function to execute statements immediately after the HTML document has loaded in the browser is named “init” – as it performs initial tasks. This function can be called upon to execute its statements by stating its name (including the trailing parentheses) to the **onload** attribute of the `<body>` tag.



head.html

- 1 Create a HTML document and add a `<div>` element to its body section, in which to write from JavaScript, and assign its **id** attribute a value of “panel”

```
<body>
  <div id="panel">
</body>
```

- 2 In the `<div>` element, insert a `<noscript>` element for alternative text when JavaScript support is absent

```
<noscript>
  <div>! JavaScript is Not Enabled.</div>
</noscript>
```

...cont'd

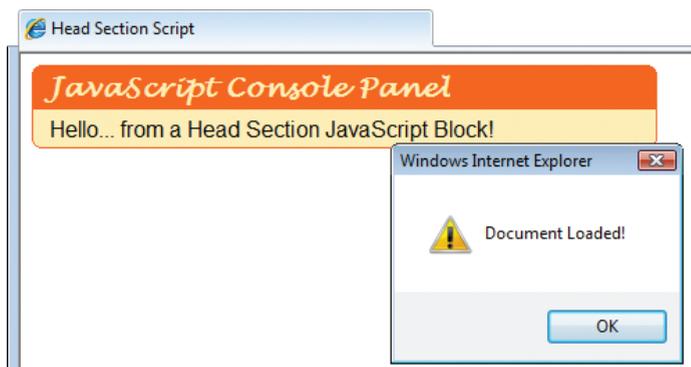
- 3 In the head section of the document, insert a `<script>` element containing an “init” function block

```
<script type="text/javascript">
function init()
{
}
</script>
```
- 4 In the function block, insert a statement to write text content in the panel after the page has loaded

```
document.getElementById( "panel" ).innerHTML=
    "Hello... from a Head Section JavaScript Block!";
```
- 5 Next within the function block, insert a statement to display a message dialog box after the page has loaded

```
window.alert( "Document Loaded!" );
```
- 6 Now add an attribute to the `<body>` tag – to call the function when the document gets loaded into the browser

```
<body onload="init()">
```
- 7 Save the HTML document then open it in a JavaScript-enabled browser to see the function write text content in the panel and open a dialog box



In this example the function calls upon the `getElementById()` method of the `document` DOM object, to reference the panel element then writes content by assigning a text string to its `innerHTML` property.

Don't forget



Finding a missing brace in a lengthy function block can be very difficult if brace pairs are not vertically aligned.

Beware



As JavaScript is a case-sensitive language you must be sure to correctly capitalize the `getElementById()` method and the `innerHTML` property.