

# Recognizing readiness

Having enabled jQuery to be used on your web page, you can add a second `<script>` element to the head section to contain statements calling jQuery functions. Each jQuery statement typically contains a “selector”, to select one or more HTML elements of the document, and an “action” to be performed on that selection. The statement syntax looks like this:

```
$( selector ).action( ) ;
```

The `$( )` function queries the HTML document to find the elements specified by the selector then returns a jQuery object that is a collection of those matched elements. Dot notation is then used to append the action to be performed on the elements.

A comprehensive collection of elements specified by a selector cannot be accurately retrieved until the HTML document has loaded and its Document Object Model (DOM) has been built. At this point a “document ready” event gets fired in the browser to signal that the document is ready for manipulation by jQuery.

Readiness of the document can be recognized by specifying the document’s own **document** object as the selector and calling the **ready()** action function when the “document ready” event fires.

It is good practice to specify an anonymous JavaScript function within the parentheses of the **ready()** action function whose statements can be executed safe in the knowledge that all elements are available. The complete code block looks like this:

## Don't forget



It is not necessary to include a **type** attribute in the `<script>` tag for HTML5 documents.

```
<script>
$( document ).ready( function() {
// Statements to be executed when the document is ready.
} ) ;
</script>
```

Every example in this book places statements within the body of this anonymous JavaScript function to ensure the document is completely loaded before attempting to manipulate its content. The HTML5 document listed opposite makes the jQuery library available then simply produces an alert dialog indicating readiness.

## ...cont'd

```

< !DOCTYPE HTML >
< html lang = "en" >
< head >
< meta charset = "UTF-8" >
< title >jQuery Ready Function< /title >

< script src = "jquery-1.11.0.min.js" >< /script >

< script >

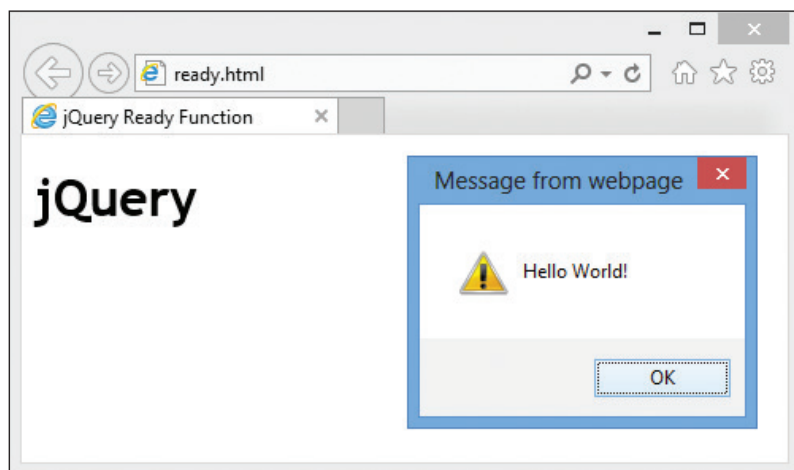
```

```

$( document ).ready( function() {
    alert( "Hello World!" );
} );

< /script >
< /head >
< body >
< h1 >jQuery< /h1 >
<!-- Elements to be added here. -->
< /body >
< /html >

```



As all statements are always wrapped inside the call to the `$( document ).ready()` function jQuery also allows this shorter alternative syntax to be used if you prefer it:

```

$( function() {
    // Statements to be executed when the document is ready.
} );

```



ready.html

## Hot tip



The examples in this book use this HTML5 document format merely changing the highlighted page title, statements in the anonymous function body, and elements in the document body.

## Beware



The call to recognize the document ready event is more easily understood using the longer syntax so the shorter alternative is not used for the examples in this book.