Chapter 3

Creating XHTML Documents
Introduction

XHTML is less forgiving than HTML in the structure and content of XHTML documents. In this chapter we are going to look at how to structure an XHTML document and use some basic elements and attributes. To check that the document is valid we are going to use the W3C validity check program. This useful application can verify that your XHTML has been written in accordance with the standard definitions.

Starting an XHTML document

There are three components which must be given to start an XHTML document:

- An XML statement.
- A DOCTYPE statement.
- A namespace statement.

We are going to look at these three in turn.

The XML statement

The XML statement announces that this document meets the specified XML standard and uses the specified character encoding. It is optional, but if it is used it may cause problems with some older browsers - Internet Explorer 5 and Netscape 4.7 or earlier, which are not XML aware.

If included, it must appear first in your document, on the first line, without any preceding white space. Note that there is no corresponding closing statement. It indicates that this document meets the XML specification, states the encoding scheme and whether there are declarations within another document which affect this document.