Node: previousSibling property

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The read-only **`previousSibling`** property of the Node interface returns the node immediately preceding the specified one in its parent's childNodes list, or `null` if the specified node is the first in that list.

> **NOTE:** Browsers insert text nodes into a document to represent whitespace in the source markup. Therefore a node obtained, for example, using `Node.firstChild` or `Node.previousSibling` may refer to a whitespace text node rather than the actual element the author intended to get.
>
> See Working with whitespace in the DOM for more information.
>
> You can use `previousElementSibling` to get the previous element node (skipping text nodes and any other non-element nodes).
>
> To navigate the opposite way through the child nodes list use Node.nextSibling.

Value

A Node representing the previous sibling of the current node, or `null` if there are none.

Examples

The following examples demonstrate how `previousSibling` works with and without text nodes mixed in with elements.

First example

In this example, we have a series of span elements directly adjacent to each other, with no whitespace between them.

```
<span id="b0"></span><span id="b1"></span><span id="b2"></span>
```

```
document.getElementById("b1").previousSibling; // <span id="b0">
document.getElementById("b2").previousSibling.id; // "b1"
```

Second example

In this example, there are whitespace text nodes (line breaks) between the span elements.

```
<span id="b0"></span>
<span id="b1"></span>
<span id="b2"></span>
```

```
document.getElementById("b1").previousSibling; // #text
document.getElementById("b1").previousSibling.previousSibling; // <span id="b0">
document.getElementById("b2").previousSibling.previousSibling; // <span id="b1">
document.getElementById("b2").previousSibling; // #text
document.getElementById("b2").previousSibling.id; // undefined
```

Specifications

Browser compatibility

See also

- Node.nextSibling
- Element.previousElementSibling

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