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Adobe RoboHelp: Using JavaScript Syntax Highlighter

By Willam van Weelden on 5th July 2014

If you write technical help, such as help for developers, there is a good chance that you are familiar with [Alex Gorbatchev's](#)

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[SyntaxHighlighter](#). This nifty JavaScript allows you to easily embed example code with syntax highlighting in web pages. In this tutorial I show you how you can get the SyntaxHighlighter to work in WebHelp created with RoboHelp. The steps in this article work on RoboHelp 9 and later. With the exception of the search highlighting fix, the instructions from this page will work on RoboHelp and prior as well.

- [View an example output](#)
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Add SyntaxHighlighter to a Project

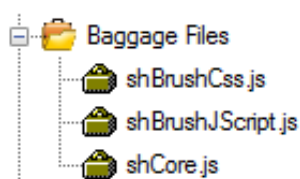
First, you need to download the SyntaxHighlighter files from <http://alexgorbatchev.com/SyntaxHighlighter/download/>. It doesn't matter which version you pick, as RoboHelp supports all versions.

When you downloaded the files, go to the folder scripts. From this folder, add the following files as baggage files to your product:

- shCore.js
- shBrush<your language>.js

You must add the brush file for every language you want to use for syntax highlighting. For example, if you want to use syntax highlighting for JavaScript and CSS, add the following files as baggage files:

- shBrushCss.js
- shBrushJScript.js



Update your CSS

Now that the scripts are added to the project, you must add the CSS styles for the syntax highlighter to your project. The syntax highlighter contains several CSS files for different stylings in the folder styles. You need only one style sheet and the default shCoreDefault.css

Lists LMS
Merged Help
Mobile Navigation
Navigation Pane
Patch
Responsive HTML5
Review RoboHelp
RoboSource Control
Scripts SharePoint
Social Media
Source Control
Subversion
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TFS Video
Visual Studio
WebHelp Widget
YouTube
ZoomSearch

Archives

November 2018
August 2017
July 2017
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March 2016

is always a good choice.

The best way to make the styles available in your project is to copy one of the style sheets into your own style sheet.

1. Open the file shCoreDefault.css with a text editor.
2. Select the contents of the file and copy it.
3. Find the CSS file of your project and open it with a text editor.
4. At the bottom of your CSS file, paste the contents of shCoreDefault.css.
5. Save your style sheet.
6. The styles are now available in your style sheet.

Note: if you use the RoboHelp CSS editor, the editor may corrupt the styles of the syntax highlighter. If that happens, remove the styles of the syntax highlighter and add them again.

Alternatively, you can link the syntax highlighter style sheet to your topics. But that means that some topics will use multiple style sheets. And RoboHelp doesn't work well with multiple style sheet per topic, so I advise you to follow the steps above to copy the styles into your own style sheet.

Add code to your topic

Now that your project is set up, you can add code snippets to your topics. This consists in two steps: (1) Add code snippets and (2) add the syntax highlighter script.

Add code snippets

November 2015

May 2015

November 2014

September 2014

August 2014

July 2014

March 2014

February 2014

January 2014

October 2013

September 2013

January 2013

December 2012

November 2012

October 2012

September 2012

August 2012

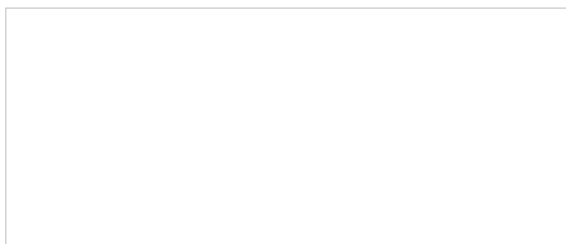
July 2012

You add a code snippet to a topic as follows:

1. Open the topic.
2. Switch to HTML mode.
3. Add the following text to your topic:

```
<pre class="brush: css">
</pre>
```

4. Change the text `css` with the code you want to add in the snippet.
5. Paste the code inside the tags. In this example, I added some CSS markup:



6. Save the topic.

The code snippet has been added. To enable highlighting, you now have to add the required scripts.

Add the syntax highlighter scripts

You can choose to add the syntax highlighter scripts in every topic, but you can also make the scripts available through the header or footer of your master page. In this tutorial, I will show you how to add the code to the topic itself.

1. Open the topic that contains the code snippet.

2. Switch to HTML mode.

1. Just after the `<body>` tag, add the following text:

```
<script type="text/javascript" src="/shCo
<script type="text/javascript" src="/shBr
<script type="text/javascript">//<![CDATA
SyntaxHighlighter.defaults['toolbar'] = f
SyntaxHighlighter.all();
//]]></script>
```

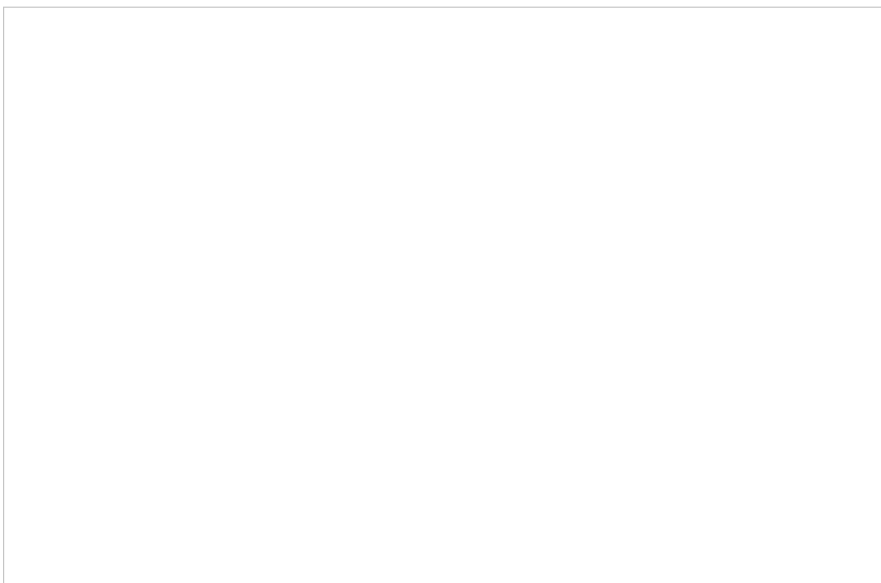
4. Amend the path to the scripts. The above code assumes the script files are in the same folder as your topic. For more information about paths, see the this tutorial.
5. Change shBrushCss.js to point to the file with the brush of the language of your code snippet. If you use code snippets with different languages in one topic, you must add a link to the brush file of every language. Simply add a new line for every language.
6. Save your changes.

If you switch to Design mode, your topic will look like this:



Generate the Help

You are now set to generate your output. There are no special instructions or requirements for your output. After you generate, don't forget to patch RoboHelp's search function. The result:



Fix the RoboHelp Search

Once you generated, there is only one thing left to do: change the RoboHelp search highlighting. This is required because search highlighting may break the

syntax highlight. To fix this, follow these steps:

1. Open whtopic.js with a text editor.

2. Search for the function

```
doHighLightDomElement
```

(Line 489 in RoboHelp 11.)

3. Inside this function, find the code

```
if ( doesTagRecursiveProcess( node )  
)
```

(Line 506 in RoboHelp 11.)

4. Place the following text before the line you found in the previous step:

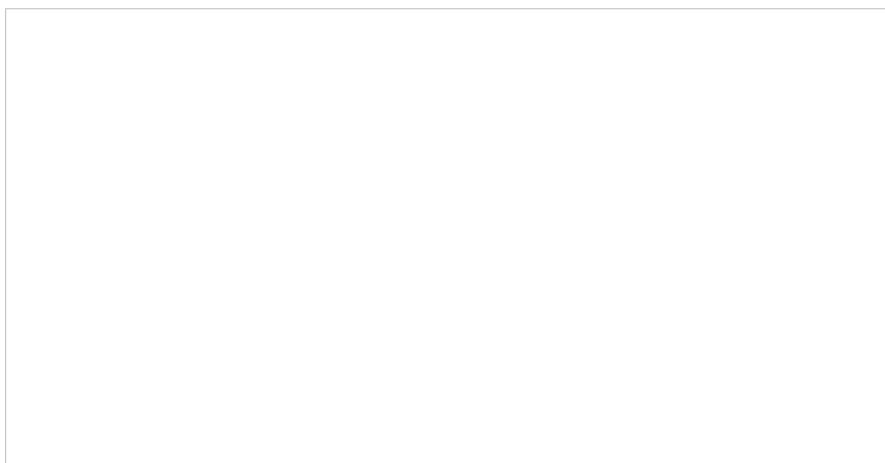
```
if(node.nodeName != "PRE") {
```

5. Now find the code

```
doHighLightDomElement(  
a_aSuspendedNodes, node );
```

(Line 513 in RoboHelp 11.)

6. Add a closing bracket `}` behind this line. The function must now look like this:



1. Save the file.

The search function is patched. Search results in code snippets will be highlighted in Chrome and Internet Explorer. Unfortunately, code snippets are longer be highlighted in Firefox, but searching won't break the syntax highlighting either. (And Firefox still finds search

results in code snippets, only the highlighting is removed.)

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