

Get the inner XML using XPath?

Asked 8 years, 11 months ago  
Modified 6 years, 2 months ago  
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This is my XML

```
<my_xml>
<record>
<p>hello <b>world</b> this is some html</p>
</record>
</my_xml>
```

Can I use XPath to return the following?

```
<p>hello <b>world</b> this is some html</p>
```

[xpath](#)

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asked Aug 20, 2013 at 10:09

[user2699446](#)  
101 ● 2 ● 3

You can get the p node, then you can serialize it back to a string. in which context (application, language, ...) are you using xpath?

– [mata](#)  
Aug 20, 2013 at 10:17

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It depends what you mean by "return". How are you actually executing the XPath expression - what programming language and what tool/library are you using, and can you post a relevant snippet of the code you've tried so far?

– [Jan Roberts](#)  
Aug 20, 2013 at 10:18

which language you are using like Ruby , Pyhton etc..?

– [Arup Rakshit](#)  
Aug 20, 2013 at 16:04

3 Answers

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`my_xml/record/child:*`

`child:*` selects all element children of the context node [see details](#)

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answered Nov 14, 2014 at 11:46

[sajith](#)  
2,394 ● 8 ● 37 ● 55



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The quick answer is, no. You can't accomplish this with XPath, but, once you select the parent node (i.e. "record" in your example), you should be able to manipulate it in whichever language you are using to parse the XML. Unfortunately, it may not be "easy".

It sounds like you would want something like the [innerHTML](#) property, but for XML DOM instead of the HTML DOM. Unfortunately, nothing like this exists for the XML DOM. If you don't care about the nodes themselves, you could use the [textContent](#) property; in the case of your example, you would get "hello world this is some html" , which doesn't seem to be what you want.

Check out [this similar question](#), which includes a parsing algorithm in Java. It seems that you will need to write a similar algorithm in whichever language you're using to parse the XML.

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edited May 23, 2017 at 11:58

[CommunityBot](#)  
1 ● 1

answered Aug 20, 2013 at 18:10

[hemelamed](#)  
56 ● 4

Most languages already provide XML parsers with methods like `asXML` that would serialize an object corresponding to a node to XML.

– [choroba](#)  
Aug 20, 2013 at 18:35



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For anyone looking for this in the future, this IS very much possible to do using a DOT, that will return the entire node content as text (at least in MSSQL xpath it does).

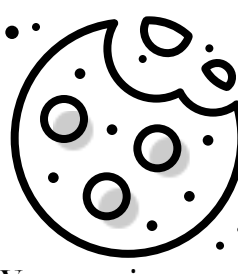
```
'(/my_xml/record/.)[1]'
```

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answered Jun 1, 2016 at 8:48

[NIKER](#)  
444 ● 2 ● 9



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