

# How do I set focus on an HTML element with Angular?

Posted At : January 21, 2020 9:00 AM | Posted By : Jeffrey Houser  
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I've been working on a project where we wanted to load a screen and set it to the default state. It isn't that hard to do with Angular. This will show you how.

## Set up a Basic Project

I started by creating a default Angular project with `ng new`. This will run you through the wizard and create a default component. For the purposes of this sample we're going to just modify the default component, `app.component`.

You can run the project using `ng serve`.

## Create the Inputs

In a real world app there are plenty of ways to create your inputs. For the sake of this, we're going to create a bunch of inputs in a loop. Open up the `app.component.html` file:

```
<div *ngFor="let x of [0, 1, 2, 3, 4]">
  <b>Input {{x}}</b>: <input #input> <button (click)="onClick(x)">Set Focus</button><br/>
</div>
```

The code uses `ngFor` to loop over an array. We give each input a label and a button. The button calls a method named `onClick()` which will give focus to the correct input.

## Set focus on a click

Open up the `app.component.ts` file. First step is to get access to the `ViewChildren`:

```
@ViewChildren('input') inputs: QueryList<ElementRef>;
```

The input string in the `ViewChildren()` metadata refers to the `#input` text in the HTML input. Since we are referring to an array of inputs we use `ViewChildren` and `QueryList` instead of `ViewChild` and `ElementRef`. The `QueryList` is sort of like an array of all the HTML elements.

Now, create the `onClick()` method:

```
onClick(index) {
  this.inputs.toArray()[index].nativeElement.focus();
}
```

The argument into the method is an index, referring to the item we want to put focus on. The method converts the `QueryList` inputs into an array using the `toArray()` method. Then it references the specific element using the index, accesses the `nativeElement`. The `nativeElement` references the actual HTML DOM element and is only supposed to be used or accessed sparingly. Finally, call the `focus()` method on the `nativeElement`.

We should be good to go.

## Run the Code

Run the code in a browser. You should see something like this:



Click the buttons on the right and you should see focus being set to the proper input:



Now you know how to set focus on an input within Angular.

[Play with the code here](#)

Next week I'm going to show you how to test the `onClick()` method