

When to use @apply and @layer directive?: Tailwind Tutorial #11

In this article, you will get a complete understanding of when to use the @apply and @layer directives in Tailwind CSS. You can check out our previous articles on [@apply](#) and @layer directive respectively. Let's get started with this tutorial-

Disadvantages of using Directives

As per my experience, The amount of classes in a single element is one of the major concerns in Tailwind CSS. While using Tailwind, A number of classes are added to each of the HTML elements. Thus, The tailwind CSS has provided the feature of @apply and @layer directive but this benefit comes with a price. By using directive, You are actually shifting the maintainability of the application to the global CSS file.

For example, You have created a button and shifted all the utility classes in a custom 'btn' class in the global CSS file. In that case, You have to revisit the global CSS file repeatedly. Thus, It will be hindering your developer experience and would become similar to writing Traditional CSS.

When to Use Directives?

Eventually, You must use directives when you are in a situation to reuse the components multiple times in your application. Otherwise, If you are creating a component for single-use then you must avoid using the directives. Moreover, while using apply directive one must make sure to choose the custom class name very wisely to avoid any confusion in the future. For example, You can use the 'btn' class name to depict the button.

Conclusion

In a Nutshell, You shouldn't be overusing the directives instead You can use it to replace the utility classes when the component is being used repeatedly. Let's create a button component with lots of utility classes to understand it more precisely.

```
<button type="button" class="py-2 px-4 mr-2 mb-2 text-sm font-medium text-gray-900 bg-w
```

Eventually, one can wish to use the above button by creating custom classes with an alternate name such as btn1, btn 2, btn 3 etc. In such a case, All the classes will be listed in Global CSS and hence it would be similar to writing Traditional CSS. Therefore, while using directives, one must make sure to use them within a certain limit otherwise it would provide a similar workflow of writing the traditional CSS.