

CSS Float and Clear

There are two important properties in CSS which will allow you to make text appear around an image and to cancel this behaviour:

- float
- clear

Float

To allow text to flow **around** an image, you need to **float the image**. A key characteristic of float is that the **contents** of floated elements will never overlap (although parts of the element/container may overlap).

To understand how float works consider debris floating in a pool of water (e.g. some empty plastic bottles). The floating debris will bump into each other but won't overlap.

The possible values for the `float` property are:

- left
- right
- none (the default)

To float an image left, simply set `float:left;` on the image. To float right, use `right` as the value.

Tip!

If you want to float an image left or right, it's a good idea to just create a class to do this and use the class on any image you want.

Setting a margin can add some space around the floated element.

```
.image-left {  
  float: left;  
  margin: 1em; /* Set a gap around the floated image. You can remove the left margin. */  
}  
.image-right {  
  float: right;  
  margin: 1em;  
}
```

It's not a good idea to set an id on an image just to float it left or right because floating images is very common. Using an id for everything can result in cluttering your CSS with an id for every single element. This is not very effective.

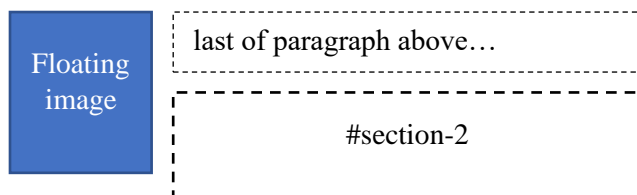
Clear

When you want to cancel floating or to prevent floating elements from appearing next to something, you need to set the `clear` property.

The possible values for the `clear` property are:

- `left`: Don't allow any floating elements to the left of the current element.
- `right`: Don't allow any floating elements to the right of the current element.
- `both`: Don't allow any floating elements on either side of the current element.

Example. In the illustration below, the floating image belongs to a subsection above. There is a new section below but you don't want `#section-2` to start next to the floated image.



To make `#section-2` sit below the floating image, you need to clear any floating to the left of `#section-2`. If you want to make sure there are also no images to the right, you should also clear to the right as well.

```
#section-2 {  
  clear: both;  
}
```

Typically, you can also create a generic class to be used for this purpose.

```
.clearboth {  
  clear: both;  
}
```

