

TUTORIAL: STYLING A FORM

1. Open the file **11→form→global.css** in a text editor.

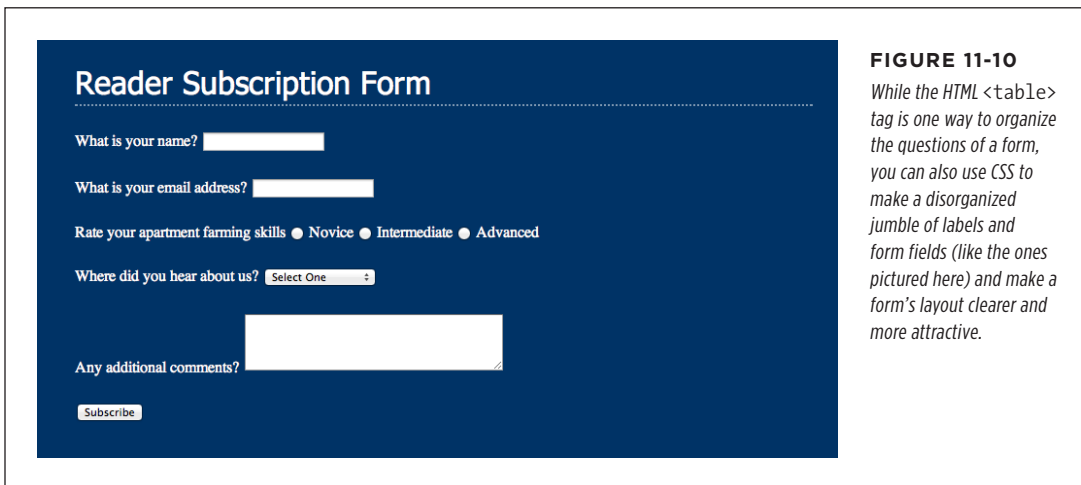
You'll add your new styles to an external style sheet that's linked to the *form.html* file. Start by increasing the size of the type in the form to make it more readable.

2. At the bottom of the style sheet, add the following style:

```
.subform {  
  font-size: 1.2em;  
  color: white;  
  font-family:Tahoma, Geneva, sans-serif;  
}
```

The subscription form has a class of `subform` applied to it, so this style sets the text size, color, and font for all text between the opening and closing `<form>` tags.

Time to work on the layout. To better align the form elements, you'll create the appearance of two columns—one for the questions (labels) and another for the answers (form fields).



3. Add another style to the style sheet:

```
.subform .label {  
  display: inline-block;  
  width: 200px;  
  vertical-align: top;  
}
```

This descendant selector identifies any element with a class of `.label` within this form. The style changes the labels from inline elements (which won't accept width values) to inline-block elements. The width setting sets the label area to 200 pixels wide, while the vertical align setting makes sure the label text aligns with the top of the form fields next to them. As a result, when you

apply this style to each of the questions in the form, you create an even-width column. But in order to see the effect, you must first apply the class to the appropriate page elements.

4. Open the file *form.html*. Locate the code `<label for="name">` and add `class="label"`, so the tag looks like this:

```
<label for="name" class="label">
```

You must do the same for each question in the form, so...

5. Repeat step 4 for the following pieces of HTML code: `<label for="email">`, `<label for="refer">`, `<label for="comments">`.

There's one additional question on the form—*Rate your apartment farming skills*. It isn't inside a label tag, since its purpose is to introduce a series of radio buttons, each of which has its own label. You need to add a `` tag to this text so you can apply the label style to it.

6. Find the text *Rate your apartment farming skills*, and then wrap it in a `` tag with a class of `label`, like so:

```
<span class="label">Rate your apartment farming skills</span>
```

Now the questions appear to be in a single column (Figure 11-11, top). But they'd look better if they stood out more and lined up with the corresponding form fields.

7. In the *global.css* file, edit the `.subform .label` style you created in step 3, so it looks like this:

```
.subform .label {  
  display: inline-block;  
  width: 200px;  
  vertical-align: top;  
  text-align: right;  
  margin-right: 10px;  
  font-weight: bold;  
  color: rgba(255,255,255,.5);  
}
```

Preview the page in a web browser. The form should look like the bottom image in Figure 11-11.

The form is shaping up, but that Subscribe button looks out of place over at the left edge. You'll align it with the other form elements next.

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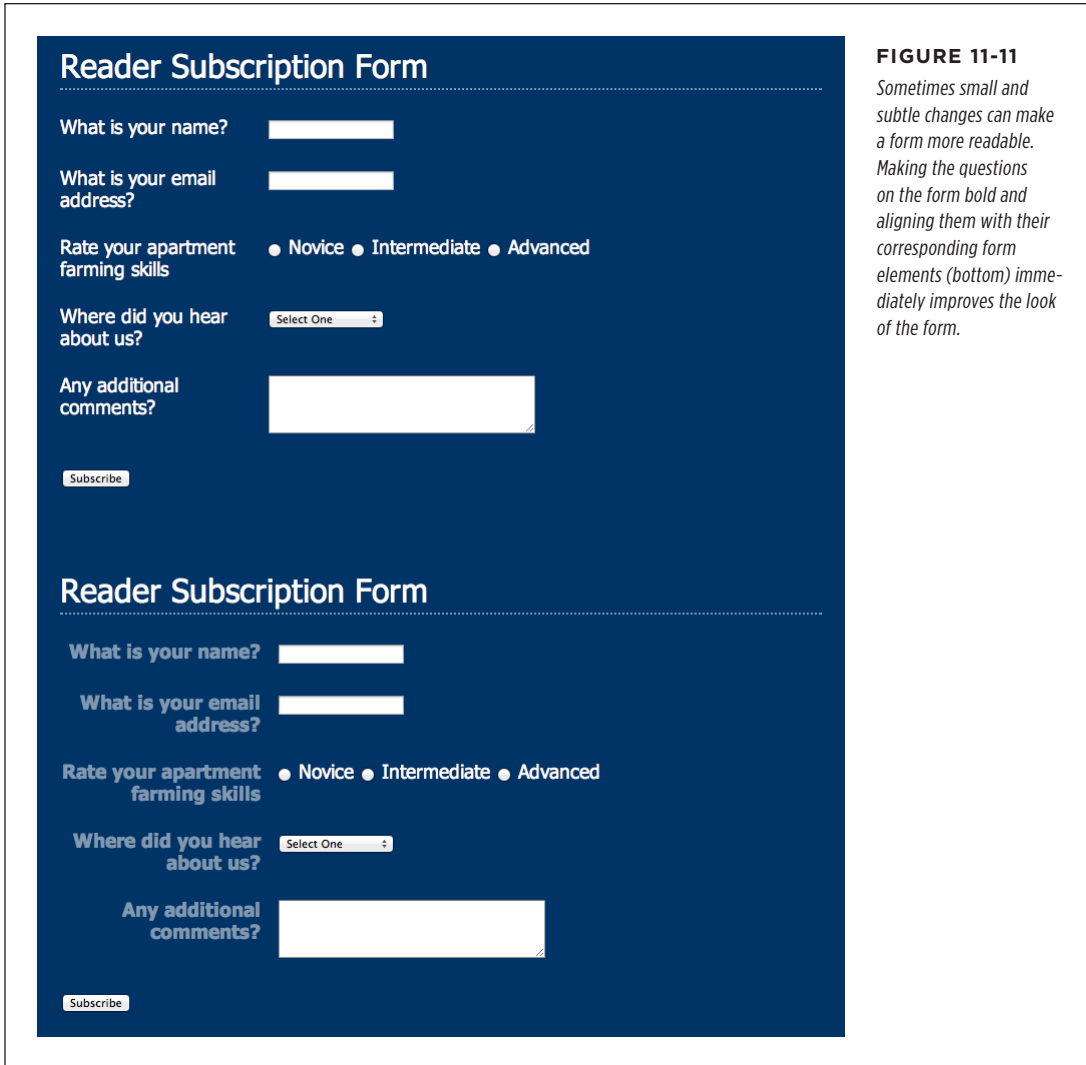


FIGURE 11-11

Sometimes small and subtle changes can make a form more readable. Making the questions on the form bold and aligning them with their corresponding form elements (bottom) immediately improves the look of the form.

8. Add another style to the *global.css* file:

```
.subform input[type="submit"] {  
    margin-left: 220px;  
}
```

Since submit buttons are created by adding `type="submit"` to an `<input>` tag, you can simply use an attribute selector (page 59) to target them. This frees you from having to create a class style and applying it to the submit button.

Most browsers let you style buttons in other ways, too, so...

9. Edit the Submit button style by adding a few more properties:

```
.subform input[type="submit"] {  
  margin-left: 220px;  
  padding: 10px 25px;  
  font-size: 1em;  
  color: white;  
}
```

Padding adds space between the text inside the button and the edges of the button, while the font-size and color properties affect the text on the button. Now you can get more creative and add a gradient to the button.

10. Edit the Submit button style again:

```
.subform input[type="submit"] {  
  margin-left: 220px;  
  padding: 10px 25px;  
  font-size: 1em;  
  color: white;  
  background: rgb(0,102,153);  
  background: linear-gradient(to bottom, rgba(255,255,255,.1) 40%,  
  rgba(255,255,255,.5));  
}
```

Here you set a standard background color (for IE9 and earlier) followed by a linear gradient. There are two color stops: The first color runs from the top to 40 percent of the way into the button, then the gradient begins (for a recap of gradients and color stops, turn to page 252).

Finally, you'll tweak the look just a bit. You'll remove the standard border, round the corners, and add a glow around the box.

11. Edit the Submit button style one last time (changes in bold):

```
.subform input[type="submit"] {  
  margin-left: 220px;  
  padding: 10px 25px;  
  font-size: 1em;  
  color: white;  
  background: rgb(0,102,153);  
  background: linear-gradient(to bottom, rgba(255,255,255,.1) 40%,  
  rgba(255,255,255,.5));  
  border-radius: 5px;  
  box-shadow: 0 0 4px white;  
}
```

Setting the border to none removes the border browsers normally draw around the button, while the border-radius property (page 199) rounds the button's

corners. Finally, by adding a drop shadow with no horizontal or vertical offset (that's the 0 0 part), you can add a glow to an element. In this case, it looks like a slight white glow coming from behind the button.

NOTE You can take this button design even farther. Try creating a rollover style for it—`.subform input[type="submit"]:hover`—and change the background color. You can even animate that transition using what you learned in the previous chapter!

You've got the text labels and Subscribe button looking great, but why stop there? Time to jazz up the form fields. Begin by changing their font and background colors.

12. Add a style for the form's Select menu:

```
.subform select {  
  font-size: 1.2em;  
}
```

This just pumps the text size up a bit. You could choose a font, add a background color, and make other changes. However, some browsers (like Safari) don't really let you style the drop-down menus much, so make sure you test out any style changes you make to drop-down menus.

Now it's time to change the text fields.

13. Create a new group selector for styling the three text boxes in the form:

```
.subform input[type="text"], .subform textarea {  
  border-radius: 5px;  
  border: none;  
  background-color: rgba(255,255,255,.5);  
  color: rgba(255,255,255,1);  
  font-size: 1.2em;  
  box-shadow: inset 0 0 10px rgba(255,255,255,.75);  
}
```

This group style selects all input elements with the type of text as well as the multiline text boxes (the `<textarea>` tag). This adds various properties that you should be familiar with by now, like `border-radius`, `background-color`, `font-size`, and `box-shadow`. The text boxes look a little small, so you'll set their widths and add a little bit of padding.

14. Edit the style you just created by setting a width and padding (changes in bold):

```
.subform input[type="text"], .subform textarea {  
  font-size: 1.2em;  
  border-radius: 5px;  
  border: none;  
  background-color: rgba(255,255,255,.5);
```

```
color: rgba(255,255,255,1);

font-size: 1.2em;
box-shadow: inset 0 0 10px rgba(255,255,255,.75);
width: 500px;
padding: 5px;
}
```

You can make your form easier for your visitors to fill out by highlighting the active form element with the special `:focus` pseudo-class (page 56). You'll add that in the next step.

15. At the end of the internal style sheet, add one last style for the pull-down menu and the three text fields:

```
.subform input[type="text"]:focus, .subform textarea:focus {
  background-color: white;
  color: black;
}
```

Preview the page in a web browser. It should now look like Figure 11-12. You can find a completed version of this tutorial in the [11_finished→form](#) folder.

