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## **WordPress Child Themes Part 3**

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## References:

reference for this PDF:

- 1) <http://themeshaper.com/2009/04/30/modular-css-wordpress-child-themes/>
- 2) <http://themeshaper.com/2009/05/03/filters-wordpress-child-themes/>
- 3) <http://themeshaper.com/modify-wordpress-themes/>
- 4) [http://premium.wpmudev.org/blog/how-to-create-wordpress-child-theme/?utm\\_expid=3606929-46.O3zA8dlfQ7OjzdOy6sld8g.0&utm\\_referrer=https%3A%2F%2Fwww.google.com.au](http://premium.wpmudev.org/blog/how-to-create-wordpress-child-theme/?utm_expid=3606929-46.O3zA8dlfQ7OjzdOy6sld8g.0&utm_referrer=https%3A%2F%2Fwww.google.com.au)

## Resources

Be aware that some of these resources recommend using @import from your child theme's stylesheet as the method of importing the parent theme stylesheet. Please use the `wp_enqueue_script()` method described in this PDF.

### Theme Development

[How to Modify WordPress Themes the Smart Way \(four part series\)](#)

[How To Make Your Own Child Theme - Includes Screencast](#)

[Guide to WordPress Child Theme Development](#)

[How to: Create a Child Theme based on Twenty Eleven](#)

[Customizing your WordPress theme using Firebug](#)

[Tutorial: Child Themes basics and creating Child Themes in WordPress](#)

[How to modify the Parent Theme behavior within the Child Theme](#)

[Child Theme Plugins](#)

[WordPress Child Theme The Why and How](#)

Extra reading - gives actual examples of style.css and function.php pages:

[How to create Twentythirteen child theme for WordPress](#)

Theme Downloads (will add more soon):

[Extra Themes](#)

[Big Theme](#)

### Customising 2015 theme

## What is Modular CSS?

The idea of Modular CSS is simple. You separate commonly reused chunks of CSS into distinct files for bringing together in a master CSS file or a series of links in the document head. It's pretty straightforward and it's been around for a while. What does this mean? The development time for new projects gets exponentially shorter as you refine the basic style sheets that make up your modular CSS Toolbox.

Unless someone made those stylesheets for you. Then, well, your development time would be really short.

The WordPress Parent Theme we'll be using in the following demonstrations—the Thematic Theme—includes a host of basic style sheets that can be leveraged by WordPress Child Themes and have even the newest WordPress developers off and running with a fully realized theme in seconds. Not minutes. Seconds.

### Getting Started with Modular CSS

We're going to start with a Child Theme of Thematic I'm going to call Chiron. Chiron was the centaur that taught all the Greek heroes of legend to be, well, heroes. Guys like, Jason, Achilles, and Hercules. We're going to keep going back to the Chiron Theme as this post series progresses. By the end, you should be an expert in WordPress Child Themes and on your way to becoming a WordPress design hero.

Here's the beginning of the Chiron Theme style.css. You know the drill: save this file to wp-content/themes/chiron and activate your new theme from the Themes panel in the WordPress admin. Don't forget: you'll need the Thematic Theme installed for this demonstration to work.

```
/*
Theme Name: Chiron
Description: A Child Theme of Thematic.
Template: thematic
*/
```

### Grabbing Style Sheets From The Parent Theme

This is the easiest part—and where things start to get really fun—we're going to add a few lines to our Child Theme style sheet and start grabbing styles.

```
/*
Theme Name: Chiron
Description: A Child Theme of Thematic.
Template: thematic
*/

/* Using @import, we can borrow style sheets from the Parent Theme */

/* Reset the browser defaults */
@import url('../thematic/library/styles/reset.css');

/* Apply default typography */
@import url('../thematic/library/styles/typography.css');

/* Add WordPress image styles */
@import url('../thematic/library/styles/images.css');

/* Add a basic layout */
```

```
@import url('../thematic/library/layouts/2c-1-fixed.css');

/* Start with some default styles */
@import url('../thematic/library/styles/18px.css');
```

The 5 extra lines of CSS we've added (excepting the commented out bits) that all start with @import will take our bare HTML page and turn it into something approaching a more finished layout.

## before-after

Do you see what we did there? With 4 lines of simple CSS we've just eliminated hours of the design work involved in creating a WordPress Theme. Have a look inside your favorite WordPress Theme and see how the CSS is structured. With a theme like Thematic you've got a lot of options for mixing and matching styles and creating the ultimate WordPress Theme starting point.

## A Technical Matter: Parallel Style Sheet Downloading

On the High Performance Web Sites Blog Steve Souders compares the performance of the **tag vs. @import**. Here's the issue in a nutshell: a series of @import declarations will be processed by the browser sequentially but a series of tags will be processed in parallel. What does this mean? If you had 10 style sheets that each took 2 seconds to process, you'd add 20 seconds to the rendering time using @import but only 2 seconds using tags—because the tags are processed alongside each other in parallel.

Of course, if your style sheets are taking 2 seconds each to process you've got bigger problems. But on high performance web sites every fraction of a second counts. Here's how to take advantage of Modular CSS in your WordPress Child Theme and have a high performance web site.

## Solution 1: Copy Your Stylesheets

The first solution is the simplest: only use @import in production. When your site production is finished simply copy the style sheet modules into your main style sheet in place of each @import declaration. While it's the simplest solution, you lose all the advantages of the constantly refined CSS of a Parent Theme this way. And that's one of the reasons you're interested in using a WordPress Child Theme, right?

## Solution 2: Filter The Parent Theme

Of course, there's a better solution. And, of course, it's really easy to do when your Parent Theme is the Thematic Theme.

Remove all those @import declarations from your Child Theme **style.css** and create a **functions.php** file in your Child Theme directory. Drop the following code snippet in there.

```
<?php

function childtheme_create_stylesheet() {
    $templatedir = get_bloginfo('template_directory');
    $stylesheetdir = get_bloginfo('stylesheet_directory');
    ?>
    <link rel="stylesheet" type="text/css" href="<?php echo $templatedir ?>/library/styles/reset.css" />
    <link rel="stylesheet" type="text/css" href="<?php echo $templatedir ?>/library/styles/typography.css" />
    <link rel="stylesheet" type="text/css" href="<?php echo $templatedir ?>/library/styles/images.css" />
    <link rel="stylesheet" type="text/css" href="<?php echo $templatedir ?>/library/layouts/2c-1-fixed.css" />
```

```
<link rel="stylesheet" type="text/css" href="<?php echo $templatedir ?>/library/
styles/18px.css" />
<link rel="stylesheet" type="text/css" href="<?php echo $stylesheetdir ?>/style.css" />

<?php
}
add_filter('thematic_create_stylesheet', 'childtheme_create_stylesheet');

?>
```

What we're doing here is creating a function that filters an existing Thematic Theme function. Function filtering is a powerful tool that lets WordPress Child Themes take full control over crucial elements of what's output to the screen. It's something we'll be covering in more depth in a future post.

In this case, with that code snippet, we're moving the series of import declarations to a series of links in the head section of your theme (use View Source in you favourite browser to check it out). J

