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Center a table with CSS

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The old way to center a table was easy:

```
<table align="center">
  ...
</table>
```

The "align" attribute has been deprecated, however, in favor of CSS (Cascading Style Sheets), and this is a good thing. However, it's not so obvious how to center a table using CSS.

The obvious way might appear to use the CSS "text-align: center;" somewhere, maybe like one of these:

```
<table style="text-align:center;">
```

OR

```
<div style="text-align:center;">
  <table>
    ...
  </table>
</div>
```

OR, if you get really desperate,

```
<body style="text-align:center;">
  <table>
    ...
  </table>
</body>
```

None of these will work. The table itself will be left-aligned, but all the content in the table cells will be centered.

Why? Because "text-align" applies to inline content, not to a block-level element like "table".

Method 1

To center a table, you need to set the margins, like this:

```
table.center {
  margin-left:auto;
  margin-right:auto;
}
```

And then do this:

```
<table class="center">
  ...
</table>
```

At this point, Mozilla and Opera will center your table. Internet Explorer 5.5 and up, however, needs you to add this to your CSS as well:

```
body {text-align:center;}
```

Method 2

If you want your table to be a certain percentage width, you can do this:

```
table#table1 {
  width:70%;
  margin-left:15%;
  margin-right:15%;
}
```

And then in your HTML/XHTML, you would do this:

```
<table id="table1">
  ...
</table>
```

Note that I was using an id to describe the table. You can only use an id once on a page. If you had many tables on a page that you wanted to be the same width and centered, you would do this in your CSS:

```
table.center {
  width:70%;
  margin-left:15%;
  margin-right:15%;
}
```

And this in your HTML:

```
<table class="center">
  ...
</table>
```

```
<table class="center">
  ...
</table>
```

Method 3

If you want your table to be of fixed width, define your CSS like this:

```
div.container {
  width:98%;
  margin:1%;
}
table#table1 {
  text-align:center;
  margin-left:auto;
  margin-right:auto;
  width:100px;
}
tr,td {text-align:left;}
```

Set "width:100px" to whatever width you need.

"text-align: center" is there for Internet Explorer, which won't work without it. Unfortunately, "text-align: center" will center all the text inside your table cells, but we counter that by setting "tr" and "td" to align left.

In your HTML, you would then do this:

```
<div class="container">
  <table id="table1">
    ...
  </table>
</div>
```

Once again, I'm using an id. If you need to center several tables the same way, use a class instead of an id.

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