

Nathan Jen
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Assignment 8

Links:

Live Site: <https://nathanjen.design/>

GitHub Repo: <https://github.com/NathanJen/portfolio>

Part 1:

The purpose of my website is to create a portfolio that showcases my design, development, and fabrication work. The information that I am attempting to convey with my website is my skills as well as my personality. I believe that the quality of my work on my project pages for design and fabrication will communicate my skills in those areas. However, in addition to the quality of my work on my development projects page, I want my development skills to also show through the quality of my portfolio. As for personality, I want the clean and organized aesthetic of my portfolio to communicate my neat design style. Additionally, I sprinkled in minor personal touches, such as a lightsaber and interesting content about me on the About page. The way that I tried to make my portfolio interesting and engaging is through interactive elements as well as motion and animation, which adds life to my content. To illustrate, hovering over the links will trigger an animation. In addition, additional content that is revealed through more scrolling will fade in when I deemed that it is acceptable and makes sense. Finally, the user is able to interact and toggle light and dark mode on my website. To make toggling the theme more engaging, I added a hover animation to the lightsaber. My target audience is recruiters and people who want to learn more about me. As such, I tried to limit the amount of text and reading my audience needs to do, and designed my website in a way where they are able to get the important information about me efficiently.

Part 2:

Header

- Click on “Nathan Jen” on the upper left corner to go home
- Hover over “Work,” “Resume,” and “About” to see an underline animation
- Click on “Work” and “About” to go to those pages
- Click on “Resume” to open my resume up in a new tab
- Hover over the lightsaber on the upper right corner to see a quick shale animation
- Click on the lightsaber to toggle dark or light mode
- If your screen is smaller than 800px, click on the hamburger menu on the top right corner to bring up the mobile nav items. The hamburger menu animates when clicked.

Home Page (nathanjen.design)

- Click on “Carnegie Mellon” to open up the HCI website in a new tab

- Hover over the project cards under “Featured Projects” to see a quick hover animation
- Click on the project cards under “Featured Projects” to go to the respective projects page.

Projects Page (nathanjen.design/work/cmu-iff)

- Scroll to see content fade in
 - Note: I only added a couple images to my film festival page and no images to my other featured project because I want to create unique custom designs for each image, which I plan to do over break.
- Click on the nav bar on the left to go to the respective section
 - Should see a scrolling animation

About Page (nathanjen.design/about)

- Click on “Email,” “LinkedIn,” or “Resume” links to open up the respective link in a new tab (or email client in the case of the email link)
- Hover over the “Click for Fun Facts About Me!” button to see a button animation
- Click on the “Click for Fun Facts About Me!” button to render components that have more personal information about me
 - The button should disappear after clicked
- Scroll to see these personal information components fade in
- Hover over the movie posters to see an animation where they transform up
- Click on the movie posters to go to their IMDB page
- Click on the “Check out my Letterboxd to see what I’m currently watching” link to go to my Letterboxd page

Work Page (nathanjen.design/work)

- Hover over the 3 category cards to see a hover animation
- Click on a category card to then see a blue border surrounding it, signifying that the category is chosen
- Scroll down to see a timeline where project cards fade in from the side.
 - Note: these project cards are not yet clickable because I have not created project pages for all of them yet. I plan on making them clickable when I finish all the project pages.

Footer

- Click on “LinkedIn,” “Film,” or “Email” icon to open up the respective link in a new tab (or email client in the case of the email link)

Part 3:

React.js: <https://reactjs.org/>

- I chose React to make developing my website easier as I have a lot of reusable components. Additionally, I wanted more practice with React as I aspire to be a frontend developer.

- I decided to use React Hooks as a learning opportunity and used contexts to implement my dark mode toggle.
- Ultimately, React gives me a lot of flexibility in how I want to build on my website in the future. There are a lot of great packages on NPM as well as a great and helpful online community.

React Vertical Timeline: <https://stephane-monnot.github.io/react-vertical-timeline/#/>

- I chose this package to help me implement my timeline component easily. However, this package is difficult to style so I will probably be looking elsewhere or implementing my own timeline component in the future.
- I used this package to create a timeline for my work in each of the 3 categories in my work page.
- This package allows me to showcase my projects in a fun and unique way.

Styled Components: <https://styled-components.com/>

- The main reason I chose to use Styled Components is because they are scoped specifically to the component that I write them in. I don't like global CSS, so I like to use both CSS modules and styled components to alleviate that problem.
- I usually use styled components when I don't think I have to reuse the same component multiple times. This ultimately allows me to keep my CSS files smaller and easier to read.
- Doesn't add anything that the user can observe as it is just a different way for me to add CSS to my app.

Intersection Observer API:

https://developer.mozilla.org/enUS/docs/Web/API/Intersection_Observer_API

- I used intersection observer for my custom FadeIn component.
- Using inspiration from a tutorial I found online, I built a component that tracks whether or not the component is currently in view using intersection observer. If it is, I make the view state true, which then makes my fade in component visible.
- The content fade ins add some animations to my website, which will help keep the user engaged.

Hamburger React: <https://www.npmjs.com/package/hamburger-react>

- I chose to use this package to make animating my hamburger menu easier.
- NPM packages are generally really easy to use, and all I had to do was import it and put it in my header component while passing it props such as the animation I want, color, and animation duration.
- It adds more animation to my website which makes it feel less static and boring.

React Scroll: <https://www.npmjs.com/package/react-scroll>

- I used the React Scroll package to highlight the section on my projects page nav that the user is currently scrolled to.

- I used the spy prop provided by the package to highlight the current div in view. To style the active nav element, I add to attach a CSS class to the active class prop. I also used the smooth prop to add a smooth scrolling animation.
- The highlighted nav added some interactivity to my projects page, which will save people time by allowing them to get to the desired section on my projects page with a click of a button.

Part 4:

The only thing I iterated on was my About page as I first got rid of the bar graph showcasing my skills. I didn't want to lie or sell myself short, and instead wanted my projects to speak about my skills. Additionally, since my target audience for this portfolio is often strapped for time and doesn't want to do a lot of reading, I decided to hide more personal details about me behind a button. That way I am able to initially draw more attention to my About and Contact information, the most important pieces of information I want my reader to get out of my About page.

Part 5:

The biggest challenge that I faced when implementing my website was figuring out how to add animations properly. Specifically, I found myself struggling to choose whether I wanted to use CSS or JS to implement my animations, as well as code my animations in a way that doesn't draw too much attention or appear unnatural. Besides animations, while a couple NPM packages that I used helped me implement some components of my portfolio a little easier, I found them incredibly hard to customize. I found that while the amount of customizable options depends on the package, there is usually a preset design language that you are not allowed to change.