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The Most Commonly Asked CSS Interview Questions

🕒 December 21st, 2018 👤 Ray King 📖 11 Min Read



In order for a company to be successful, it needs to have many professionals from different fields of expertise. Programmers, designers, writers, marketing specialists – you name it! The job market has noticed that CSS composers and designers are becoming more and more needed. With this increase in demand, there's also an increased number of CSS-related job interviews happening all around. That's why today we'll talk about some of the most popular CSS interview questions.

I'll provide examples of CSS interview questions and answers which you could study in preparation for your job interview. These will be some of the main things that employers ask potential employees during the interviews. We'll cover everything from basic CSS up to CSS3 interview questions – all in the chapters ahead!

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Introduction

This first part will mostly be made out of some basic and more general questions concerning CSS. These are going to be the types of questions that employers would ask you towards the beginning of the job interview, just to see if you even know what CSS is. On that note, let's go straight to the first question.

Question 1: What is CSS?

Cascading Style Sheets (most often simply referred to as *CSS*) is a language that is used to explain and describe the way that things that are written by markup languages (such as HTML) should be presented.

Quite a mouthful, isn't it?

To put it simply, **CSS** is used to *visualize the things that are written using HTML*, such as images, fonts, backgrounds and so on.

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When it comes to such basic CSS interview questions, employers are often looking for people who can explain things in their own words and not recite walls of texts like a robot. That's why you should try to stick with the most simple definitions!

Question 2: What's the difference between CSS and HTML?

You would be surprised how many people don't actually know the difference between these two languages.

The actual difference itself is quite simple: **HTML** is used to write and create content on the webpage, while **CSS** is used for the design part – this includes background designs, fonts, images, etc.

Question 3: How can you apply CSS styles on a webpage?

In total, there are **three** ways you can apply styles by using CSS.

The **link** command is the method that's most used – you simply load another CSS file (with its attributes) into the one that you're currently working on. This is very convenient because you'll definitely be reusing the same files over and over again.

You can also use the **style** attribute if you only want to alter one single element (you would use the attribute in the same line with the element), or you can simply use **style** on top of your HTML file, where **head** is located.

Question 4: How many types of CSS are there?

In total, there are currently **five** types of CSS: **CSS 1**, **CSS 2**, **CSS 2.1**, **CSS 3** and **CSS 4**.

You are most likely to get a lot of **CSS3** interview questions, for it is one of the most commonly used versions.

Question 5: What's a CSS 'framework'?

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In CSS, **frameworks** are simply *libraries of pre-created files* that can be used in designing sites that require some more common, default CSS designs.

Question 6: What is 'element targeting'?

This is a good example of some of the CSS interview questions that you'll probably get during your job interview – at least in the beginning. Asking to explain certain specific elements from a program or a programming language is common practice between employers around the globe.

Element targeting is when you specify certain elements that you want to style or alter in any other way. In total, there are **three** ways you could do this – by **tagging**, **class** or by the **ID** of the element that you've specified in the HTML.

Question 7: How would you specify a color in CSS?

There are **two** ways of specifying colors in CSS – the **RGB** one and the **hexadecimal color code** one.

RGB stands for *red*, *green* and *blue*. Various different combinations of these colors (depending on the percentage of each one used) can create many different hues.

A **hexadecimal color code** is a code representing *a specific color*. These codes are made



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Question 8: What are 'pseudo elements'?

If a paragraph of text was your element, yet you would only want to style the first letter of that paragraph, you would have to use a **pseudo element** for this task. These elements are used by placing a double colon in front of the part of the main element that you want to style.

Question 9: What are 'pseudo classes'?

Pseudo classes work almost identically as pseudo elements, but the one main difference is that they alter the appearance of an element when it is in a specific state.

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You know when you place your mouse cursor over some sort of a button on the screen and that button gets highlighted or styled in any other way? That's an example of an element that's been altered with a pseudo class.

Question 10: How can you integrate CSS into a website?

A final example of the more basic CSS interview questions, there are actually **three** ways you could achieve this task – **inline**, **embedded** and **imported** integrations.

The **inline** method of integration is used to insert a CSS style sheet into an HTML document. **Embedded** allows you to insert unique styles into a single document, while the **imported** method lets you make changes on multiple documents.

CSS interview questions – Advanced

Don't get intimidated by the word "*advanced*" in that subtitle. Advanced CSS interview questions simply mean that your interviewers are going to expect more detailed answers and explanations for their questions. By doing so, they are going to assess just how much you really do know about CSS.

Question 1: Explain the concept of 'specificity'.

This might be one of the trickier CSS interview questions because your employers might expect you to not only explain the concept itself, but to also rate the types of specificity in CSS.

The concept itself simply means that certain CSS rules replace (override) others by being more specific. This is a tricky concept because it might cause some issues later on – employing too many high-specificity types of rules can make it really difficult when you actually see that you need to change something after you've finished working.

There are **three** levels of specificity – **type**, **class** and **ID**. The type selector is of the lowest specificity, while the ID one is the highest.

Question 2: Explain 'web-safe' and 'fallback' fonts.

When you try to pick fonts for your website, you should keep in mind that not every web browser can recognize all of the different varieties of fonts – this is where **web-safe fonts** come in. These fonts are the most commonly used and well-known ones, like *Times New Roman*, *Arial* or *Calibri*. If for some reason your web browser does not recognize these fonts (though that shouldn't be the case), there are **fallback fonts** – these are the fonts that your browser will pick automatically for you.

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Types of fonts might be some of the more common CSS interview questions, so do make sure to memorize them well.

Question 3: What's 'file splitting'?

One of the more self-explanatory CSS interview questions, **file splitting** allows you to split your big files into smaller ones for the sake of helping the program run faster and smoother. In order to be able to split files, you are going to need a CSS *preprocessor*.

The files can be split in any way that you want, but it is advisable to keep it tidy and think the splitting through. This will help you manage your website faster, without the need to wait for the excess style sheets to load.

Question 4: What is 'opacity'?

Out of all of the CSS interview questions and answers that you could think of, this one might seem like the easiest one – **opacity** in CSS is *the level of transparency that an image possesses*.

Now, you might think: *This isn't even close to advanced CSS interview questions!*

Well, the catch here is that your interviewers might ask you to demonstrate how you can configure opacity with CSS. You may find an example of how to do that below:

Question 5: Define a 'rule set'.

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In CSS, **rule sets** are made out of declaration blocks that follow specific set selectors. These sets of rules basically tell the server of how a certain document should look like.

Question 6: Define 'universal selector' and give an example.

Universal selectors are those who let you pick all of the files with the same name (no matter what type of an element it is) instead of picking out specifically typed ones.

An example of a universal selector would be:

Question 7: What do 'class' and 'ID' selectors pick when they are issued?

A **class selector** will pick an entire block of information, while the **ID selector** lets you pick a specific element that possesses a unique type of an ID number.

We went over classes and IDs a bit earlier on, but this is truly one of the more important CSS interview questions. Knowing the differences and varying features between classes, types and IDs can be the turning point of any CSS-based job interview.

Question 8: What's 'float' in CSS?

The *float* property allows you to move images through a wall of text within your HTML document without actually breaking the text. Same as in Google Docs, the text is able to wrap around the image.

Question 9: What is a 'Z index'?

A **Z index** in CSS highlights any and all parts that are overlapping between :

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quite useful.

Question 10: Why use `import` on the top of the file?

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`import` is most commonly used on the top of the file since there is a big fear of overriding already-existing sets of rules. By placing `import` on the top, this issue is usually avoided.

Tips for the Interview

So – we’ve talked about some of the more common CSS questions that employers like to ask their potential employees. There are many, many more CSS interview questions out there – we’ve covered just a few of the main ones.

Now that you have the information in front of you – what’s next? Well... I have a couple of tips that you could use.

While actually preparing for the interview, write down all of the CSS interview questions and answers on sticky notes or simple sheets of paper. You can test yourself with writing answers on the other side, but the simple act of writing it down will be beneficial for your memory.

Don’t spend too much time actually working on CSS. I know it probably sounds counter-intuitive, but trust me – the closer the interview, the more you will want to do, the bigger the number of possible options you’ll see, which will lead to you overthinking things and feeling like you know nothing.

On the day of the interview, just remember one thing – your future employers want to see **you as a person**, not some sort of a soulless machine. Give it what you’ve got, but remember to be yourself – that might be the ultimate factor that’ll win them over.

After the interview, be patient. I know it might seem like an eternity until you get that call and find out if you got the position or not, but calling the company every day to ask isn’t an option, either.

Conclusions

Along with HTML, CSS is one of the most important tools for web development. Proficient CSS experts are needed more and more. It has truly become an area worth specializing in. With such an increasing popularity, it’s no wonder that there are more and more CSS questions that people have started to ask – and one of the most popular of these questions is “*how to get a job with CSS?*”.

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Since CSS is so important for the creation of various websites, employers usually look for people that are quite proficient in this topic and have at least some prior experience. However, if you haven’t worked in any similar field before, don’t stress about it – many companies are willing to formally train the people that they hire. These companies are more concerned about the personality and willingness to work of the person that they are trying to hire – that’s why I said that you should be yourself.

In this guide, we’ve covered some of the more general CSS questions, most of them being CSS3 interview questions. I hope that you’ve found the information within this tutorial use



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