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Style active state of Links in Styled Components

Conditional styling of menu items



Mario Kandut Mar 7 · 2 min read

This story was originally published [here](#).

Handling activeClassName with React Router

The `activeClassName` property is used to give a CSS class to an element when it is active. The default given class is `active`. This will be joined with the `className` prop, see [NavLink Docs](#). A simple implementation would look like this:

```
import { NavLink } from 'react-router-dom';

// ... some other code

<NavLink to="/" activeClassName="selected">
  Home
</NavLink>

<NavLink to="/blog" activeClassName="selected">
  Blog
</NavLink>

<NavLink to="/about" activeClassName="selected">
  About
</NavLink>
```

A different style can be applied on the navigation link with the `selected` CSS class.

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Another option to style the active route would be to use the `activeStyle` property on `NavLink`. It applies the styles when `NavLink` is active, see example below:

```
<NavLink
  to="/faq"
  activeStyle={{
    fontWeight: 'bold',
    color: #ff0000, // red
  }}
>
  FAQs
</NavLink>
```

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Styled Components Approach

Styled components are visual primitives to style your React App, see [github](#).

To use the `activeClassName` property from `react-router` you have three options:

1. Styled Components [attrs](#) method
2. Passing `activeClassName` as [styled component prop](#)
3. Using [activeStyle](#) from `react-router`

.attrs Method

The `.attrs` method is a chainable method that attaches some props to a styled component. The first and only argument is an object that will be merged into the rest of the component's props. The `attrs` object accepts the following values:

```
export const StyledNavLink = styled(NavLink).attrs({
  activeClassName,
})`
  &.${activeClassName} {
    color: red;
  }
`;
```

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Passing activeClassName property

A `Styled Component` passes all HTML attributes if it is a simple element, like a `div` or `button` or ..., and all props if it is a `React Component`.

To get the `activeClassName` pass it as a prop and get it in the styled component and apply the conditional styles.

```
export const StyledLink = styled(NavLink) `
  color: blue;

  &.${props => props.activeClassName} {
    color: red;
  }
`;

<StyledLink activeClassName="any" />;
```

Using activeStyle

`react-router` has the `activeStyle` prop for styling active links.

```
const StyledActiveLink = styled(NavLink) `
  color: blue;
`;

<StyledActiveLink
  activeStyle={{
    color: 'red',
  }}
></StyledActiveLink>;
```

TL;DR

There are three options to use the `activeClassName` in your styled components.

1. `attrs` method
2. Passing `activeClassName` as prop
3. Using `activeStyle`

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these [React Tutorials](#).

References (and Big thanks):

[React Router](#), [Stack Overflow](#)

[React](#)[JavaScript](#)[Styledcomponents](#)[About](#) [Write](#) [Help](#) [Legal](#)

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