**:nth-child**

The :nth-child selector allows you to select one or more elements based on their source order, according to a formula.

Suppose we are building a CSS grid, and want to remove the margin on every fourth grid module:

<section class="grid">

<article class="module">One</article>

<article class="module">Two</article>

<article class="module">Three</article>

<article class="module">Four</article>

<article class="module">Five</article>

</section>

Rather than adding a class to every fourth item (e.g. .last), we can use :nth-child:

.module:nth-child(4n) {

margin-right: 0;

}

As you can see, :nth-child takes an argument: this can be a single integer, the keywords “even” or “odd”, or a formula. If an integer is specified only one element is selected—but the keywords or a formula will iterate through all the children of the parent element and select matching elements — similar to navigating items in a JavaScript array. Keywords “even” and “odd” are straightforward (2, 4, 6 etc or 1, 3, 5 respectively). The formula is constructed using the syntax an+b, where:

* “a” is an integer value
* “n” is the literal letter “n”
* “+” is an operator and may be either “+” or “-”
* “b” is an integer and is required if an operator is included in the formula

It is important to note that this formula is an equation, and iterates through each sibling element, determining which will be selected. The “n” part of the formula, if included, represents a set of increasing positive integers (just like iterating through an array). In our above example, we selected every fourth element with the formula 4n, which worked because every time an element was checked, “n” increased by one (4×0, 4×1, 4×2, 4×3, etc). If an element’s order matches the result of the equation, it gets selected (4, 8, 12, etc).