

Learn CSS By Use Cases

ebook by Joe Harrison



Properties **opacity**

Along with
rgba fill-opacity



Joe Harrison
@frontendjoe

opacity

Properties

Intro

So when I say opacity, I'm also including rgba values and the modern fill-opacity SVG property. Opacity determines how invisible or transparent an element is, 0 being invisible and 1 being fully visible. Think of opacity or alpha as a percentage of 100, but that can not exceed it (unlike other CSS percentages you'll use).

Syntax

The rgba function takes four parameters, the first three are rgb color values and the last is the alpha or opacity value. The alpha parameter in rgba, opacity and fill-opacity is always a float (decimal fraction) value between 0 and 1. Think of 1 being 100% visible.

opacity

Properties

Special Power

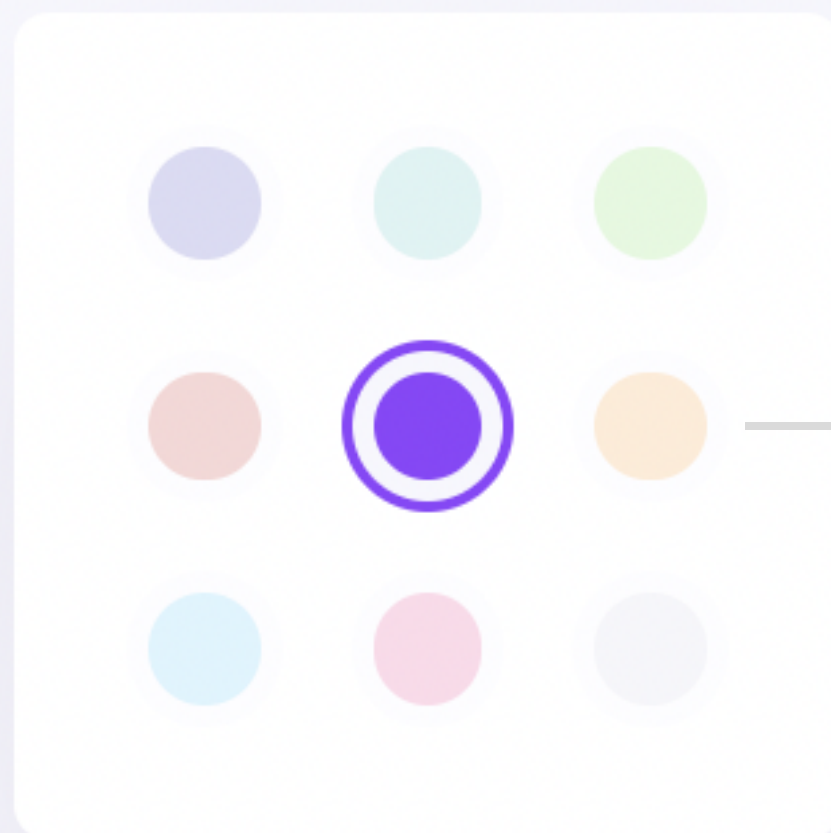
I love combining opacity with visibility to create smooth fading transitions, you'll see this powerful technique in my source code. Opacity is also useful when you have different color dark elements and need a versatile label color that will suit them all – this makes working with different UI colors and themes, a lot easier.

Tips

In my experience, CSS transitions/animations on opacity are smooth with very minimal jank – you have my permission to go crazy with them. For rgba, the settings for white and black colors are always good to remember:
White (255, 255, 255, 0.5), black (0, 0, 0, 0.5).



opacity



Make unique
elements look
inactive

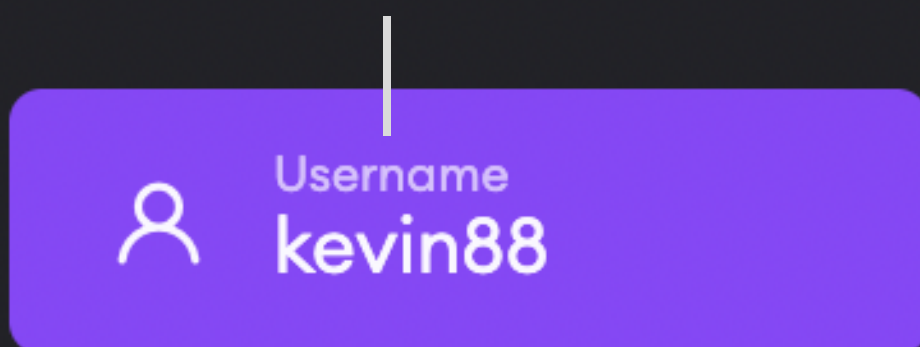
```
.color:not(.active) {  
  opacity: 0.5;  
}
```

This effect would be difficult to achieve with **rgba**,
as we would need to generate each **color** separately

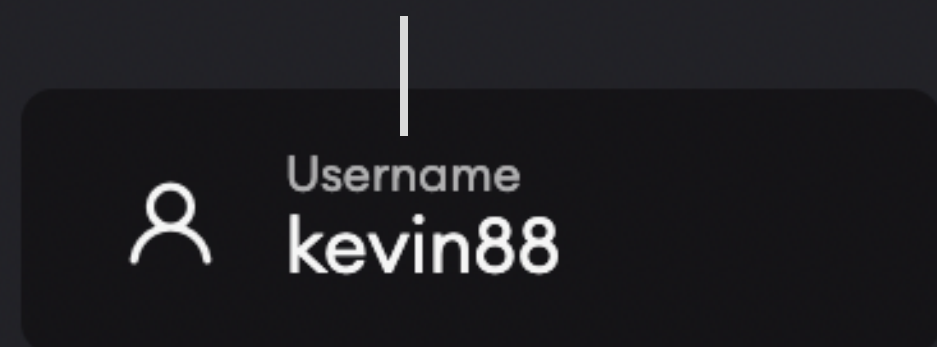


rgba()

h3 (not unique)



Style text on any
dark background



Alpha/opacity

```
h3 {  
  color: rgba(255, 255, 255, 0.7);  
}
```

This is more long winded to achieve with **opacity** as we would need to set the **color** property to **white** too

fill-opacity



```
.area {  
  fill: #955bfc;  
  fill-opacity: 0.5;  
}
```

When styling SVG's we can use the longhand syntax.
Alternatively we can apply an **rgba** value to **fill**

Knowledge Gained



Opacity set's how invisible an element is



Opacity accepts a fractional decimal property value between 0 and 1



Rgba colors utilise an opacity argument



Opacity can be combined with visibility to create smooth fading transitions



Opacity is useful when styling text that appears over a colored background that can change

