

# Dropdowns

One of the most requested things in web design is to have a navigation with any layers. Often we need to have sub items under a main item within our navigation. When this happens we will want to display the content only when a the users mouse moves over the nav item.

In the past this would need to be done with Javascript but JS can be hard to work with and adds a layer of complexity that may not be needed.

Today we can do this dropdown with a 100% css solution.

## Setup

To get started we need to understand and use HTML correct to organize our content. Lets say we have a small site that only has three main sections.

- News
- Weather
- Contact Us

We have now expanded each section to have a few subsections and made each item a link. Even if we have a sub list we should also make the top nav item a link incase someone is using a touch screen since there is no hover.

- News
  - Top Stories
  - Entertainment
- Weather
  - 5 Day
  - Weekend
- Contact Us
  - Email
  - Phone
  - Facebook
  - Skype
  - Telegraph

If we were to make this structure into HTML it would look something like this. We also wrapped it with the `<nav>` and gave it a `id="globalNav"`.

```
<nav>
  <ul id="gloablNav">
    <li>
      <a href="/lessons/lesson-5/#">News</a>
    </li>
  </ul>
</nav>
```

```

        <li><a href="/lessons/lesson-5/#">Top Stories</a></li>
        <li><a href="/lessons/lesson-5/#">Entertainment</a></
li>
        </ul>
</li>
<li>
    <a href="/lessons/lesson-5/#">Weather</a>
    <ul>
        <li><a href="/lessons/lesson-5/#">5 Day</a></li>
        <li><a href="/lessons/lesson-5/#">Weekend</a></li>
    </ul>
</li>
<li>
    <a href="/lessons/lesson-5/#">Contact Us</a>
    <ul>
        <li><a href="/lessons/lesson-5/#">Email</a></li>
        <li><a href="/lessons/lesson-5/#">Phone</a></li>
        <li><a href="/lessons/lesson-5/#">Facebook</a></li>
        <li><a href="/lessons/lesson-5/#">Skype</a></li>
        <li><a href="/lessons/lesson-5/#">Telegraph</a></li>
    </ul>
</li>
</ul>
</nav>

```

## The CSS

In other examples we have created a single level navigation by floating the <li>. We are going to build off this.

### Floating the <li>

We need to float the <li> to the left to stack them.

```

#globalNav li {
    float: left;
}

```

This will float all <li> including the second level nav. But if we change the selector a bit to target only the direct descendants only the top level will float.

```

#globalNav > li {
    float: left;
}

```

## Making the dropdown

At this point we have an issue. We do not have a dropdown. The way the dropdown works is the sub nav item overlays the rest of the content. To do this we need to add `position: absolute;` to the child `<ul>`. This will pull it from the flow but put it right back where it was.

```
#globalNav ul {  
    position: absolute;  
}
```

## Hiding the sub lists

Now we need to hide the sub list from view. This can be done by adding the `display: none;` property.

```
#globalNav ul {  
    position: absolute;  
    display: none;  
}
```

## Showing sub nav

Now we need to have the subitem display only when its parent has the mouse move over it. We need to add `:hover` to the top level `<li>` and set `display: block;` on the `<ul>`.

```
#globalNav > li:hover ul {  
    display: block;  
}
```