

CSS ZEN Garden

Select a Design

This would be a menu
with archives, next design,
and View all Designs

THE BEAUTY OF CSS DESIGN

A demonstration of
what can be accom-
plished through
CSS-based design.

Pushpin shape,
SVG or CSS

Select any style sheet
from the list to load it
into this page.



THE ROAD TO ENLIGHTENMENT

Littering a dark and dreary road lay the past relics of
browser-specific tags, incompatible DOMs, broken CSS
support, and abandoned browsers.

We must clear the mind of the past. Web enlightenment
has been achieved thanks to the tireless efforts of folk like
the W3C, WaSP, and the major browser creators.

The CSS Zen Garden invites you to relax and meditate on
the important lessons of the masters. Begin to see with
clarity. Learn to use the time-honored techniques in new
and invigorating fashion. Become one with the web.

SO WHAT IS THIS ABOUT?

There is a continuing need to show the power of CSS. The Zen
Garden aims to excite, inspire, and encourage participation.
To begin, view some of the existing designs in the list. Clicking
on any one will load the style sheet into this very page. The
HTML remains the same, the only thing that has changed is
the external CSS file. Yes, really.

CSS allows complete and total control over the style of a
hypertext document. The only way this can be illustrated in a
way that gets people excited is by demonstrating what it can
truly be, once the reins are placed in the hands of those able to
create beauty from structure. Designers and coders alike have
contributed to the beauty of the web; we can always push it
further.

PARTICIPATION

Strong visual design has always been our focus. You are
modifying this page, so strong CSS skills are necessary too,
but the example files are commented well enough that even
CSS novices can use them as starting points. Please see the
CSS Resource Guide for advanced tutorials and tips on
working with CSS.

You may modify the style sheet in any way you wish, but not
the HTML. This may seem daunting at first if you've never
worked this way before, but follow the listed links to learn
more, and use the sample files as a guide.

Download the sample HTML and CSS to work on a copy
locally. Once you have completed your masterpiece (and
please, don't submit half-finished work) upload your CSS
file to a web server under your control. Send us a link to an
archive of that file and all associated assets, and if we
choose to use it we will download it and place it on our
server.

BENEFITS

Why participate? For recognition, inspiration, and a
resource we can all refer to showing people how amaz-
ing CSS really can be. This site serves as equal parts
inspiration for those working on the web today, learn-
ing tool for those who will be tomorrow, and gallery of
future techniques we can all look forward to.



REQUIREMENTS

Where possible, we would like to see mostly CSS 1 & 2 usage. CSS
3 & 4 should be limited to widely-supported elements only, or
strong fallbacks should be provided. The CSS Zen Garden is
about functional, practical CSS and not the latest bleeding-edge
tricks viewable by 2% of the browsing public. The only real
requirement we have is that your CSS validates.

Luckily, designing this way shows how well various browsers have
implemented CSS by now. When sticking to the guidelines you
should see fairly consistent results across most modern browsers.

Due to the sheer number of user agents on the web these days —
especially when you factor in mobile — pixel-perfect layouts may
not be possible across every platform. That's okay, but do test in
as many as you can. Your design should work in at least IE9+ and
the latest Chrome, Firefox, iOS and Android browsers (run by
over 90% of the population).

We ask that you submit original artwork. Please respect copyright
laws. Please keep objectionable material to a minimum, and try
to incorporate unique and interesting visual themes to your work.
We're well past the point of needing another garden-related
design.

This is a learning exercise as well as a demonstration. You retain
full copyright on your graphics (with limited exceptions, see
submission guidelines), but we ask you release your CSS under a
Creative Commons license identical to the one on this site so that
others may learn from your work.

Paper could move on hover...

**Mid Century
Modern**
by Andrew
Lohman

Garments
by Dan Mal

Steel
by Steffen
Knoeller

Apothecary
by Trent
Walton

Screen Filler
by
Elliot Jay Stocks

Fountain Kiss
by Jeremy Carl-
son

A Robot Named
Jimmy
by meltmedia

Verde Moderna
by Dave Shea

Resources:

View This Design's CSS

CSS Resources

FAQ

Submit a Design

Translations



By Dave Shea. Bandwidth
graciously donated by
mediatemple.

Now available: Zen Garden,
the book.



Social Icons...