

Course > Modul... > 6.2 Co... > 'z-inde...

'z-index' (OPTIONAL) 'z-index' (OPTIONAL)

Note: this section is optional material included for the curious. It will not appear on any graded question.

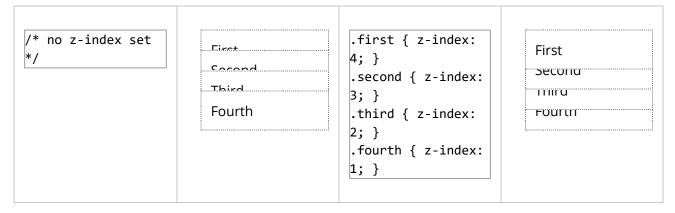
In the previous sections, we named four positioning properties: left, top, right, and bottom. With these properties, we can govern the placement of positioned elements in both the x and y axis. But there is a fifth positioning property: z-index.

z-index: 3;

Like the other positioning properties, z-index only applies to positioned elements (elements that have their position property set to relative, absolute, or fixed, but not static). With the z-index you can control overlapping - whether or not an element is in front of or behind other *sibling* positioned elements. The z-index can be an integer 0 or higher. The higher the number, the more "topmost" or "overlapping" the element will be.

In the sample below, we have two lists with relatively positioned list items and background colors. We are forcing them to overlap by making them position relative and using negative margins (margin-bottom:-20px;). The list on the left has no z-index values set, so the later elements overlap the earlier ones. But on the right, we govern the overlapping with the z-index property.

	CSS	Result
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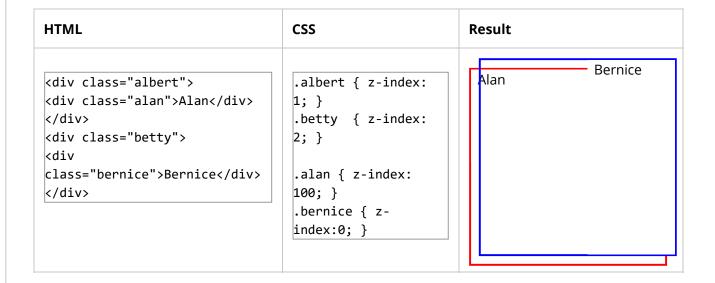
- z-index has no effect on position:static (the default) elements.
- If z-index is not set, siblings that appear later in the HTML document overlap (are "higher than") earlier siblings.
- z-index is relative between siblings, not any arbitrary elements.

Siblings and nesting

It is entirely possible that one element with z-index:100 could appear *below* another element with z-index:1;

This can happen because the z-index is used to figure out which sibling is higher than another. But if two elements are not siblings, then the z-index of their respective sibling ancestors will need to be calculated to figure out which is higher.

Below is a simple example: there are two overlapping sibling divs, "Albert" and "Betty". Albert has a red border and is z-index:1. Betty has a blue border, and is z-index:2. Therefore, Betty and her child Bernice are *higher* than Albert and his child Alan. Albert's child Alan has a z-index of 100, which is the highest z-index of any of them, but because Alan's parent Albert is lower than Betty, Alan remains behind. Alan's high z-index is only relevant to his siblings, not to cousins further out in the document.



Knowledge checks (not graded)

1. Will the z-index property work...

0 points possible (ungraded)

Will the z-index property work on an item with position:relative; ?



Answer

Correct:

Yes, the z-index property will apply to all positioned elements. So every position option except position:static.

Submit

✓ Correct

2. On an item with 'position:static;' ...

0 points possible (ungraded)

Will the z-index property work on an item with <code>position:static;</code> ?



Answer

Correct: z-index will not work on a position:static element.

Submit

✓ Correct

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