The least amount of CSS for a decent looking site

Summary: People often over-engineer solutions, and it leads to them running into problems with their CSS. In this article, we'll take a look at the least amount of CSS that you need to make a decent looking page.

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The fun part of making a website is that if you write your HTML and nothing else, you have a responsive website.

Granted, if you have images they can cause some overflow issues.

So we can start things off by fixing that:

```
img {
  max-width: 100%;
  display: block;
}
```

It's possible you have videos or SVGs that are also causing problems (less likely with SVGs though), so if you need, you can expand upon this a little bit.

```
img,
svg,
video {
  max-width: 100%;
```

```
    display: block;
  }
```

Improving the typography

The first thing we can do is change the font family since the default is never very exciting.

We'll just use a basic `system-ui` for this example. It has pretty good support these days, and looks good on every system without having to worry about loading in any extra fonts.

In general, the font-size is a little small as well, so we can bump it up, and the default line-height is always a bit tight, so anything within the 1.5 to 1.7 range should do:

```
body {
  font-family: System UI;
  font-size: 1.25rem;
  line-height: 1.5;
}
```

Though not perfect, this is already a huge improvement over the regular defaults.

Adding Dark Mode Support

Many people love dark mode, so let's enable it based on a user's system preferences.

We can do this by using the `color-scheme` property:

```
html {
    color-scheme: light dark;
}
```

This will set the user-agent-styles to either a light or dark theme, based on the users system preferences.

If you'd prefer, we can do this without CSS as well!

```
<html lang="en" color-scheme="light dark"></html>
```

A small note on following the system preferences

While this is really handy, it is a best practice to allow users to manually toggle the color-scheme as well.

Some people prefer a dark system theme, but light website themes, and vice-versa.

Restraining Content Width

Line-length is one of the most important things when it comes to the readability of text.

We generally [want to try and fall somewhere in the 45-90 characters per line range](#) (for body text, not headlines).

To make the website more readable, we'll limit the content width using a `main` element and some CSS magic:

```
main {
  max-width: min(70ch, 100% - 4rem);
  margin-inline: auto;
}
```

The `min()` function here will pick whatever is smallest, either `70ch` or `100% - 4rem`. Because we are inside a `min()` function, we don't need to use a `calc()`.

Whatever the output from that min() function, the width is less than 100%, so the page will be stuck to the left side of the viewport.

We can then use margin-inline: auto to center it, as this acts on the margins on the inline axis, so in any horizontal writing modes, that means both the margin-left and margin-right are auto.

You might want to switch out the main selector for a .container or .wrapper so you can have more control over where you use it.

And with that, our final CSS file looks like this:

```
html {
  color-scheme: light dark;
}

body {
  font-family: system-ui;
  font-size: 1.25rem;
  line-height: 1.5;
}

img,
svg,
video {
  max-width: 100%;
  display: block;
}
```

```
main {
  max-width: min(70ch, 100% - 4rem);
  margin-inline: auto;
}
```

Build on top of this

This is just a quick start to get things off the ground, though it could be used for a very simple page as well.

For the most part, though, you'll probably want to build on top of this, but it should be able to act as a nice jumping off point!

This site is a WIP

I've just thrown this together, more is on the way.