Attribute Selectors

Attribute selectors, first introduced in CSS2, allow rules to match elements with particular

attributes or attribute values. For example, a rule such as

a[href] {background-color: yellow;}

would match all **<a>** tags that simply have the **href** attribute, whereas a rule such as

a[href="http://www.htmlref.com"] {font-weight: bold;}

would match only those **<a>** tags that have an **href** value set to the book’s support site URL.

It is possible to match multiple attribute values or even pieces of the attribute values.

For example, to match a value in a space-separated list, you might use a rule like this:

p[title ~="Larry"] {font-style: italic;}

This rule would match

**<p title="Larry Curly and Moe">**This is italic.**</p>**

**<p title="Larry">**This is italic.**</p>**

**<p title="Larry-The-Stooge">**This is not italic.**</p>**

CSS3 Attribute Selectors

CSS3 introduces a number of new attribute selectors. For example, you can now match

attributes that start with a particular value using [attr^=value]. Here we match

paragraphs that have **title** attributes that start with “Start match”

p [title^="Start match"] {background-color: red;}

and apply them to the following markup:

**<p title="Start match">**This should be red.**</p>**

**<p title="No Start Match">**This should not be red.**</p>**

Using [attr$=value], we can match the end of an attribute value. For example, here

we match paragraphs with **title** attributes that end with “match end”

p.group4[title$="match end"] {background-color: red;}

which is demonstrated with this markup:

**<p class="group4" title="This should match end">**This should be red.**</p>**

**<p class="group4" title="This won't match end!">**This shouldn't be red.**</p>**

[attr\*=value]. Here we match paragraph elements with the word “found” present in the

**title** attribute:

p [title\*="found"] {background-color: red;}

This will match

**<p title="The match is found in here">**This should be red.**</p>**

but not match this paragraph

**<p title="No match can be seen here">**This shouldn't be red.**</p>**

as it is missing the word we match on. However, note that this isn’t really a word match but

more a substring match as it will match the following markup:

**<p class="group4" title="\*foundinside\*">**This should be red.**</p>**

However, as a pattern match, it is susceptible to casing, so this markup

**<p class="group4" title="\*Foundinside\*">**This shouldn't be red.**</p>**

wouldn’t match.