Em vs. Rem



# Em vs. Rem

Em and rem are similar because they are both scalable units. Their values are always relative to the value of something else.

Most notably, em and rem differ in the way the browser converts them to px.

As mentioned before, em values are relative to the font-size of the nearest parent element, while rem values are relative to the root font-size, or the font-size of the html element. And when the root font-size is not explicitly set, rem values are relative to the browser’s default font-size of 16px.

This means that when the root font-size is 16px, a value of 1rem would be 16px \* 1 = 16px. And a value of 10rem would be 16px \* 10 = 160px.

From the above, we can see that rem values are simple and predictable, and, as a result, we can control how elements scale across the entire page easily from a single source. You can see this demonstrated below:

## What are em and rem and why use them?

Em is a CSS unit relative to the font size of the parent element, while rem is a CSS unit relative to the font size of an html element. Both of these are scalable units, meaning they give us the ability to scale elements up and down, relative to a set value. This adds more flexibility to our designs and makes our sites more responsive.

A key reason to use scalable units like em and rem is accessibility. Accessibility enables all users, particularly those with disabilities, to successfully interact with a website. Using fixed units like px to set the values of elements, fonts, and space sizes does not give us this accessibility because fixed units do not scale.

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