How do I make an editable DIV look like a text field?

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I've got a `DIV` which has `contentEditable=true` so the user can edit it. The problem is that it doesn't look like a text field, so it may not be clear to the user that it can be edited.

Is there a way that I can style the `DIV` so that it appears to the user like a text input field?

html   css

edited Aug 22 '14 at 20:28   asked Jan 21 '12 at 20:48

Joffrey Maheo   sanity
2,719   2   15   23   **17.1k**   38   123   212

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2   background: white; border: 1px solid #666; cursor: text; ? :P see my demo — mkk Jan 21 '12 at 20:49 ✎

I suppose make it look like a `textarea` ? jsfiddle.net/vwPgT — Jared Farrish Jan 21 '12 at 20:51 ✎

Maybe an inset border? — j08691 Jan 21 '12 at 20:52

1   @mkk - Might help a *little* if you added some sample text: jsfiddle.net/ZevvE/1 — Jared Farrish Jan 21 '12 at 21:02

@Jared :) good job! ;-) now it is much harder to confuse it with div.. oh it is a div, i forgot :) — mkk Jan 21 '12 at 21:04

7 Answers

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These look the same as their real counterparts in Safari, Chrome, and Firefox. They degrade gracefully and look OK in Opera and IE9, too.

Demo: http://jsfiddle.net/ThinkingStiff/AbKTQ/

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```css
    }

    #textarea {
        -moz-appearance: textfield-multiline;
        -webkit-appearance: textarea;
        border: 1px solid gray;
        font: medium -moz-fixed;
        font: -webkit-small-control;
        height: 28px;
        overflow: auto;
        padding: 2px;
        resize: both;
        width: 400px;
    }

    input {
        margin-top: 5px;
        width: 400px;
    }

    #input {
        -moz-appearance: textfield;
        -webkit-appearance: textfield;
        background-color: white;
        background-color: -moz-field;
        border: 1px solid darkgray;
        box-shadow: 1px 1px 1px 0 lightgray inset;
        font: -moz-field;
        font: -webkit-small-control;
        margin-top: 5px;
        padding: 2px 3px;
        width: 398px;
    }
```

HTML:

```html
<textarea>I am a textarea</textarea>
<div id="textarea" contenteditable>I look like textarea</div>

<input value="I am an input" />
<div id="input" contenteditable>I look like an input</div>
```

```
I am a textarea
```

```
I look like textarea
```

```
I am an input
```

```
I look like an input
```

edited Jan 21 '12 at 23:55   answered Jan 21 '12 at 23:09

ThinkingStiff
58.7k   27   133   230

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1   What exactly does *-webkit-small-control* and *medium -moz-fixed* do? They seem to make the font look monospaced in Firefox v13.0 – Hengjie Jul 2 '12 at 14:17

1   @Hengjie Those are the default styles that the browsers use when displaying input fields. – ThinkingStiff Jul 2 '12 at 18:53

1   here is an usecase, try do a copy paste html contents in them. You will see the difference. – Praveen Sep 30 '14 at 5:42

1   Should also add - background:white; – Brana Apr 26 '16 at 14:10

1   What if I want another div inside this div, which I don't want it to be editable? – FrenkyB Jun 21 '16 at 10:50

If you use bootstrap just add `form-control` class. For example:

17

```
class="form-control"
```

edited Apr 21 '16 at 21:54   answered Apr 21 '16 at 20:54

αηjiβ
1,521   5   35   73

paraplu
170   1   7

This is a great answer and I feel is the cleanest. My vote is for this to be the right answer. – aholtry Sep 2 '16 at 15:44

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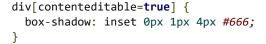answered Jan 21 '12 at 20:57

Abhi Beckert
27.1k   11   73   105

9   Well, that's just too convenient. – Jared Farrish Jan 21 '12 at 20:59

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You could go for an inner box shadow:

```
div[contenteditable=true] {
    box-shadow: inset 0px 1px 4px #666;
}
```

I updated the jsfiddle from Jarish: http://jsfiddle.net/ZevvE/2/

answered Jan 21 '12 at 22:56

timing
5,125   1   13   14

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I would suggest this for matching Chrome's style, extended from Jarish's example. Notice the cursor property which previous answers have omitted.

```
cursor: text;
border: 1px solid #ccc;
font: medium -moz-fixed;
font: -webkit-small-control;
height: 200px;
overflow: auto;
padding: 2px;
resize: both;
-moz-box-shadow: inset 0px 1px 2px #ccc;
-webkit-box-shadow: inset 0px 1px 2px #ccc;
box-shadow: inset 0px 1px 2px #ccc;
```
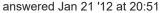
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You can place a TEXTAREA of similar size under your DIV, so the standard control's frame would be visible around div.

It's probably good to set it to be disabled, to prevent accidental focus stealing.

answered Jan 21 '12 at 20:51

wizzard0
1,280   10   32

Yeah, not sure this is what the OP is looking for in the answer. – Jared Farrish Jan 21 '12 at 20:54

1   lol :) nice joke :) – mkk Jan 21 '12 at 20:55

If you want the textfield to scale automatically with the contents of the div this is getting hard. – timing Jan 21 '12 at 22:54

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The problem with all these is they don't address if the lines of text are long and much wider that the div overflow:auto does not ad a scroll bar that works right. Here is the perfect solution I found:

Create two divs. An inner div that is wide enough to handle the widest line of text and then a smaller outer one which acts at the holder for the inner div:

```
<div style="border:2px inset #AAA;cursor:text;height:120px;overflow:auto;width:500px;">
    <div style="width:800px;">

    now really long text like this can be put in the text area and it will really <br/>
    look and act more like a real text area bla bla bla <br/>

    </div>
</div>
```

answered Dec 19 '14 at 6:41

evan toder