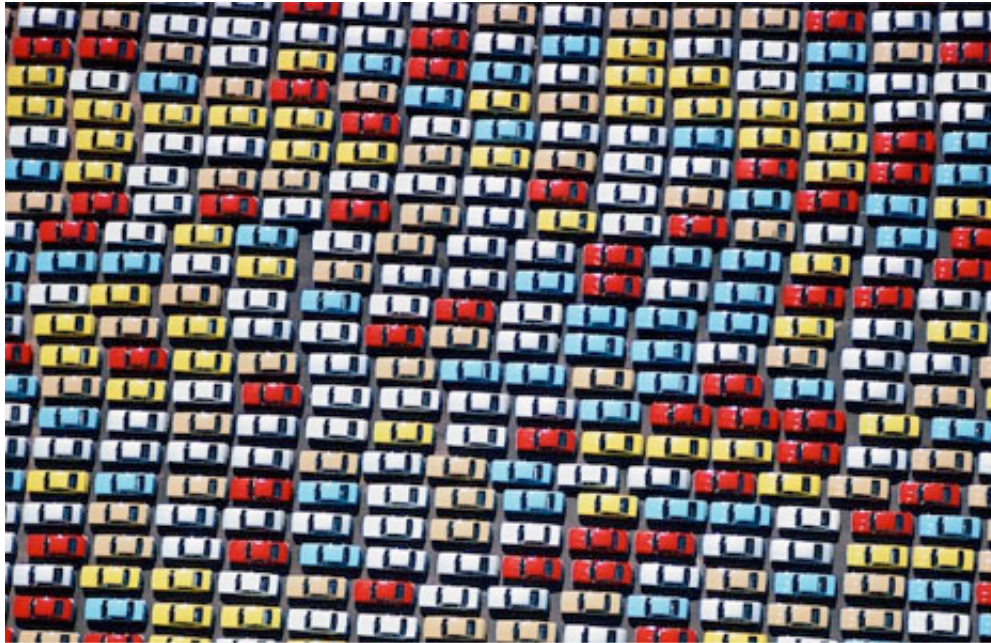# Classes and IDs

The parking lot analagy

In any HTML document we have several, possibly dozens of paragraphs. Now imagine that each paragraph is represented by a car in a parking lot.


```
<p>one</p>
<p>two</p>
<p>three</p>
<p>four</p>
```

paragraph example

Each car in this analogy is equal to an individual paragraph on the page.

If we target a paragraph with CSS, every paragraph on the page changes.

```
p{
  color: red;
}
```

The code above will turn every paragraph red. However, we know that there are more than just red cars in the parking lot. We need to be more specific. That's where classes come in.

The Class attribute

class="red"

Classes example

A class allows us to apply specificity to our paragraphs.

If we add the following code, we can target only the paragraphs (or cars) that we want to be red.

The HTML

```
<p class="red">This is a red paragraph.</p>
```

The CSS

```
.red{
  color: red;
}
```

The ID attribute

Now, if we want to be even more specific and target a *unique*

paragraph, we could use an ID. In our parking lot analogy, every car has a unique license plate, so we could target the plate number, for example.

ID example

The HTML

```
<p id="abc123">This is the ABC123 paragraph.</p>
```

The CSS

```
#abc123{
  color: purple;
}
```

Summary

IDs and classes are known as **attributes** in HTML, when we apply style to them via CSS, the code we write is referred to as a **selector**. They help us specify subsets of tags and more precisely target our HTML markup.

Best practice

- An id must be unique and only be used once per file.
- The name of the id is always started with a # in our CSS (example: `#abc123`).
- A class can be used as many times as necessary, even just once.
- When in doubt, use a class!
- The name of the class is always started with a . in CSS (example: `.red`)
- Attributes (ids and classes) should always be lowercase and without spaces
- An id should always start with a letter or underscore, not a number or any other character
- More than one class can be applied to a tag (example: `<p class="red sporty bmw">`)
- An id and a class can be used on the same tag (example: `<p id="abc123" class="red">`)

Want even more detail on class and ID specificity? Check out Smashing Magazine's article on [CSS Specificity: Things You Should Know](#)