

The z-index Property

When elements are positioned, they can overlap other elements.

The `z-index` property specifies the stack order of an element (which element should be placed in front of, or behind, the others).

An element can have a positive or negative stack order:



This is a heading

Because the image has a z-index of -1, it will be placed behind the text.

Example

```
img {  
  position: absolute;  
  left: 0px;  
  top: 0px;  
  z-index: -1;  
}
```

Note: `z-index` only works on positioned elements (`position: absolute`, `position: relative`, `position: fixed`, or `position: sticky`) and flex items (elements that are direct children of `display: flex` elements).

Example

Here we see that an element with greater stack order is always above an element with a lower stack order:

```
<html>
<head>
<style>
.container {
  position: relative;
}

.black-box {
  position: relative;
  z-index: 1;
  border: 2px solid black;
  height: 100px;
  margin: 30px;
}

.gray-box {
  position: absolute;
  z-index: 3;
  background: lightgray;
  height: 60px;
  width: 70%;
  left: 50px;
  top: 50px;
}
```

```
.green-box {  
    position: absolute;  
    z-index: 2;  
    background: lightgreen;  
    width: 35%;  
    left: 270px;  
    top: -15px;  
    height: 100px;  
}  
</style>  
</head>  
<body>  
  
<div class="container">  
    <div class="black-box">Black box</div>  
    <div class="gray-box">Gray box</div>  
    <div class="green-box">Green box</div>  
</div>  
  
</body>  
</html>
```

Without z-index

If two positioned elements overlap each other without a `z-index` specified, the element defined **last in the HTML code** will be shown on top.

Example

Same example as above, but here with no z-index specified:

```
<html>
<head>
<style>
.container {
  position: relative;
}

.black-box {
  position: relative;
  border: 2px solid black;
  height: 100px;
  margin: 30px;
}
```

```
.gray-box {  
  position: absolute;  
  background: lightgray;  
  height: 60px;  
  width: 70%;  
  left: 50px;  
  top: 50px;  
}
```

```
.green-box {  
  position: absolute;  
  background: lightgreen;  
  width: 35%;  
  left: 270px;  
  top: -15px;  
  height: 100px;  
}
```

```
</style>
```

```
</head>
```

```
<body>
```

```
<div class="container">
```

```
  <div class="black-box">Black box</div>
```

```
  <div class="gray-box">Gray box</div>
```

```
  <div class="green-box">Green box</div>
```

```
</div>
```

```
</body>
```

```
</html>
```