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# Align two inline-blocks left and right on same line

Asked 7 years, 3 months ago Active 9 months ago Viewed 134k times

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How can I align two inline-blocks so that one is left and the other is right on the same line? Why is this so hard? Is there something like LaTeX's `\hfill` that can consume the space between them to achieve this?



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**I don't want to use floats** because with inline-blocks I can line up the baselines. And when the window is too small for both of them, with inline-blocks I can just change the `text-align` to center and they will be centered one atop another. Relative(parent) + Absolute(element) positioning has the same problems as floats do.

The HTML5:

```
<header>
  <h1>Title</h1>
  <nav>
    <a>A Link</a>
    <a>Another Link</a>
    <a>A Third Link</a>
  </nav>
</header>
```

The css:

```
header {
  //text-align: center; // will set in js when the nav overflows (i think)
}

h1 {
  display: inline-block;
  margin-top: 0.321em;
}

nav {
  display: inline-block;
  vertical-align: baseline;
}
```

They're right next to each other, but I want the `nav` on the right.


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edited Apr 23 '12 at 0:34



asked Apr 22 '12 at 22:17



1 AFAIK the only way to solve this is to use floats or absolute positioning. You can achieve the same baseline position using margin-top on the nav. – [powerbuoy](#) Apr 22 '12 at 22:22

Just use margin-top and floats. It's not possible to do this without that or absolute positioning. – [jdhartley](#) Apr 22 '12 at 22:22

Use css media queries to change the css depending on the size of the viewport. You can use both `position: absolute` and `inline-block` – [elclansr](#) Apr 22 '12 at 22:31

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## 8 Answers

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**Edit:** 3 years has passed since I answered this question and I guess a more modern solution is needed, although the current one does the thing :)

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### 1. [Flexbox](#)

It's by far the shortest and most flexible. Apply `display: flex;` to the parent container and adjust the placement of its children by `justify-content: space-between;` like this:

```
.header {  
    display: flex;  
    justify-content: space-between;  
}
```

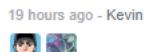
Can be seen online here - <http://jsfiddle.net/skip405/NfeVh/1073/>

Note however that [flexbox support](#) is IE10 and newer. If you need to support IE 9 or older, use the following solution:

2. You can use the `text-align: justify` technique here.

```
.header {  
    background: #ccc;  
    text-align: justify;  
  
    /* ie 7 */  
    *width: 100%;  
    *-ms-text-justify: distribute-all-lines;  
    *text-justify: distribute-all-lines;  
}  
  
.header:after{  
    content: '';  
    display: inline-block;  
    width: 100%;  
    height: 0;  
    font-size: 0;  
    line-height: 0;  
}  
  
h1 {  
    display: inline-block;  
    margin-top: 0.321em;  
  
    /* ie 7 */  
    *display: inline;  
    *zoom: 1;  
    *text-align: left;  
}  
  
.nav {  
    ...  
}
```

HTML / CSS / WebDesign



Tamil iOS, Web and Phonegap Developers  
2 days ago - sathyachinnasamy

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```
display: inline-block;
vertical-align: baseline;

/* ie 7 */
*display: inline;
*zoom:1;
{text-align: right;
}
```

The working example can be seen here: <http://jsfiddle.net/skip405/NfeVh/4/>. This code works from IE7 and above

If inline-block elements in HTML are not separated with space, this solution won't work - see example <http://jsfiddle.net/NfeVh/1408/>. This might be a case when you insert content with Javascript.

If we don't care about IE7 simply omit the star-hack properties. The working example using your markup is here - <http://jsfiddle.net/skip405/NfeVh/5/>. I just added the `header:after` part and justified the content.

In order to solve the issue of the extra space that is inserted with the `after` pseudo-element one can do a trick of setting the `font-size` to 0 for the parent element and resetting it back to say 14px for the child elements. The working example of this trick can be seen here:

<http://jsfiddle.net/skip405/NfeVh/326/>

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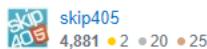
edited Nov 17 '16 at 13:56



Mateusz Wolniak

5 ● 2

answered Apr 23 '12 at 8:33



skip405

4,881 ● 2 ● 20 ● 25

- 1 Is there any way to stop it from making the banner taller though? I realize how this is working, so I would assume there isn't. – [mk12](#) Apr 23 '12 at 20:18
- 1 If you're generating your content with javascript, note that this solution only works if there is whitespace between the elements. You will need to insert a text node between the left/right elements or they will both stick to the left. – [Stephen Nelson](#) May 21 '13 at 2:13
- 1 Would you mind to paste your code in here, as well? Links to external places have a habit of dying at some point, and if that happens, this otherwise useful answer will suddenly become useless. – [O. R. Mapper](#) Nov 27 '13 at 22:53
- 5 @ValerioColtrè I agree that the empty space is the most (and possibly, only!) annoying thing about this approach. Explicitly managing your `font-size` is rather undesirable. I propose a different solution. Note that the `.header:after` decorator adds one line of height equal to `font-size`. Luckily we know how much that is. It is exactly `1em`! So, [negative margins](#) to the rescue! [This fiddle shows how](#). – [Domi](#) Oct 7 '14 at 11:58
- 1 @skip405 Note: setting the line height to 0 on the wrapper element (header) and fixing the vertical-alignment of its pseudo elem (vertical-align: top, say) can fix the extra space problem. We have to, of course, re-set the line-height on the parent elements, but it can be easier in many cases. [jsfiddle.net/bencergazda/3gL8153n/7/](http://jsfiddle.net/bencergazda/3gL8153n/7/) – [bencergazda](#) Oct 24 '16 at 11:14

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Taking advantage of @skip405's answer, I've made a Sass mixin for it:

```
@mixin inline-block-lr($container,$left,$right){
  #{$container}{

    text-align: justify;

    &:after{
      content: '';
      display: inline-block;
      width: 100%;
      height: 0;
      font-size:0;
      line-height:0;
    }
  }
}
```

0 Vertically align an inline-block next to an inline-block that is taller

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```
#{$left} {  
    display: inline-block;  
    vertical-align: middle;  
}  
  
#{$right} {  
    display: inline-block;  
    vertical-align: middle;  
}
```

It accepts 3 parameters. The container, the left and the right element. For example, to fit the question, you could use it like this:

```
@include inline-block-lr('header', 'h1', 'nav');
```

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answered Nov 4 '15 at 18:29



Pablo S G Pacheco  
1,831 ● 18 ● 21

add a comment

If you don't want to use floats, you're going to have to wrap your nav:

3

```
<header>  
<h1>Title</h1>  
<div id="navWrap">  
<nav>  
    <a>A Link</a>  
    <a>Another Link</a>  
    <a>A Third Link</a>  
</nav>  
</div>  
</header>
```

...and add some more specific css:

```
header {  
    //text-align: center; // will set in js when the nav overflows (i think)  
    width:960px; /*Change as needed*/  
    height:75px; /*Change as needed*/  
}  
  
h1 {  
    display: inline-block;  
    margin-top: 0.321em;  
}  
  
#navWrap{  
    position:absolute;  
    top:50px; /*Change as needed*/  
    right:0;  
}  
  
nav {  
    display: inline-block;  
    vertical-align: baseline;  
}
```

You may need to do a little more, but that's a start.

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answered Apr 22 '12 at 22:33



maiorano84  
9,400 ● 3 ● 25 ● 42

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If you're already using JavaScript to center stuff when the screen is too small (as per your comment for your header), why not just undo floats/margins with JavaScript while you're at it and use floats and margins normally.

You could even use CSS media queries to reduce the amount JavaScript you're using.

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edited Apr 22 '12 at 22:33

answered Apr 22 '12 at 22:26



jdhartley

468 • 3 • 11

I guess I wasn't really thinking about that yet, it just seemed like it would be easier this way. But apparently not. Any hints as to how I would hook into the nav jumping to the next line from javascript? – [mk12](#) Apr 22 '12 at 22:32

Ahh, I can use media queries for this! I thought those only were used on startup, not on resize. Thanks. – [mk12](#) Apr 22 '12 at 22:35

add a comment

I think one possible solution to this is to use `display: table`:

```
.header {  
  display: table;  
  width: 100%;  
  box-sizing: border-box;  
}  
  
.header > * {  
  display: table-cell;  
}  
  
.header > *:last-child {  
  text-align: right;  
}  
  
h1 {  
  font-size: 32px;  
}  
  
nav {  
  vertical-align: baseline;  
}
```

JSFiddle: <http://jsfiddle.net/yxxrnn7j/1/>

share improve this answer

answered May 11 '16 at 7:16



rob1

7,585 • 5 • 28 • 48

add a comment

For both elements use

```
display: inline-block;
```

the for the 'nav' element use

```
float: right;
```



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