

# Styling Tips for Forms

This lesson will go over some handy tips that can be applied to style our web forms. Let's begin!

## WE'LL COVER THE FOLLOWING ^

- Exercise-10-28
- Exercise-10-29

This course dedicated [Chapter 5](#) for forms and controls. Now, you are familiar with almost all the great CSS properties that can be used to style form elements. In this section, you will learn a number of simple techniques to make your forms more attractive.

[Chapter 5](#) demonstrated a simple conference registration form that would look very ugly without styling, as shown in the images below

Conference Registration x

127.0.0.1:8080

## Fill in this form to register to Visual Studio Smarts Conference

**Personal Data**

Salutation  ▾

First Name:

Last Name:

Email:

Your Smarts Membership status

☐ Not a member ☐ Silver member ☒ Gold member

[Read more about Smarts membership](#)

**Your Conference Account**

Login name:

Password:

Confirm Password:

**Sessions**

What are the tracks you are interested in?

☐ Development ☐ ALM ☐ ASP.NET ☐ C# ☐ Visual Basic ☐ SQL

What do you expect from sessions?

The plain form without styling

**NOTE:** You can find the HTML markup of this simple registration form in the Exercise-10-28 folder, which is not explained here for the sake of brevity.

## Exercise-10-28 #

```
<!DOCTYPE html>
<html>
<head>
```

```

<title>Conference Registration</title>
</head>
<body>

  <h2>
    Fill in this form to register to Visual Studio
    Smarts Conference
  </h2>
  <form action="#">
    <fieldset>
      <legend>Personal Data</legend>
      <label for="salutation">Salutation</label>
      <select id="salutation" name="salutation">
        <option label="" value="" />
        <option label="Mr." value="Mr." selected />
        <option label="Mrs." value="Mrs." />
        <option label="Ms." value="Ms." />
        <option label="Dr." value="Dr." />
      </select>
      <br />
      <label for="fname">First Name:</label>
      <input id="fname" type="text" name="fname"
        autofocus />
      <br />
      <label for="lname">Last Name:</label>
      <input id="lname" type="text" name="lname" />
      <br />
      <label for="email">Email:</label>
      <input id="email" type="text" name="email" />
      <br />
      <p>Your Smarts Membership status</p>
      <label class="memberoption">
        <input type="radio" name="membership"
          value="none" />
        Not a member
      </label>
      <label class="memberoption">
        <input type="radio" name="membership"
          value="silver" />
        Silver member
      </label>
      <label class="memberoption">
        <input type="radio" name="membership"
          value="gold" checked />
        Gold member
      </label>
      <br />
      <a href="#">Read more about Smarts membership</a>
    </fieldset>
    <fieldset>
      <legend>Your Conference Account</legend>
      <label for="login">Login name:</label>
      <input id="login" type="text" name="login" />
      <br />
      <label for="pwd">Password:</label>
      <input id="pwd" type="password" name="pwd" />
      <br />
      <label for="pwd2">Confirm Password:</label>
      <input id="pwd2" type="password" name="pwd2" />
      <br />
    </fieldset>
    <fieldset>
      <legend>Sessions</legend>

```

```

    <p>What are the tracks you are interested in?</p>
    <label>
      <input type="checkbox" name="dev" />
      Development
    </label>
    <label>
      <input type="checkbox" name="alm" />
      ALM
    </label>
    <label>
      <input type="checkbox" name="aspnet" />
      ASP.NET
    </label>
    <label>
      <input type="checkbox" name="csharp" />
      C#
    </label>
    <label>
      <input type="checkbox" name="vb" />
      Visual Basic
    </label>
    <label>
      <input type="checkbox" name="sql" />
      SQL
    </label>
    <p>What do you expect from sessions?</p>
    <textarea id="comments" rows="3" cols="50"
      name="comments"></textarea>
  </fieldset>
  <input type="submit" value="Register" />
</form>
</body>
</html>

```

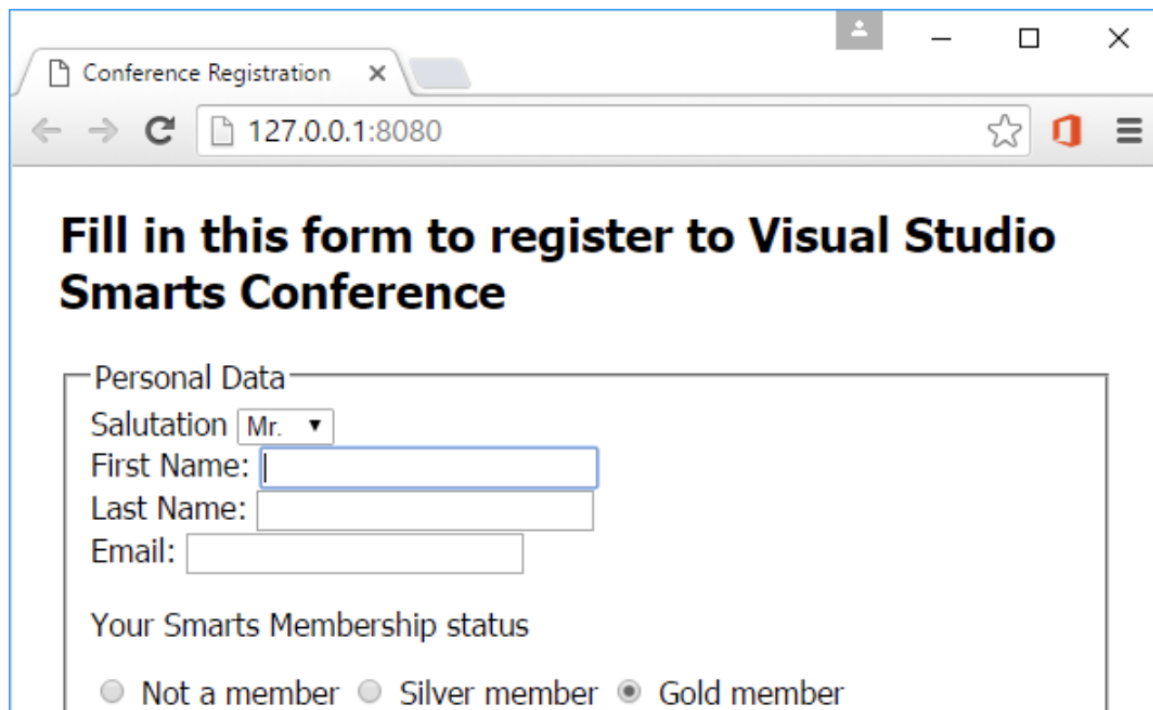
Setting up the page and font style would make only a tiny change in typography, but would not remove the fragmentation of the web page (image below):

```

body {
  width: 540px;
  margin-left: 24px;
  font-family: Tahoma, Arial, sans-serif;
}

```





Conference Registration x

127.0.0.1:8080

## Fill in this form to register to Visual Studio Smarts Conference

Personal Data

Salutation  ▼

First Name:

Last Name:

Email:

Your Smarts Membership status

☐ Not a member ☐ Silver member ☒ Gold member

Applying a few typography element

Aligning fields and their labels into columns would remove the fragmented look. As you already learned, you could use tables for this task, but this would be an old-school solution. Instead, you can set the width of labels to provide a column-like look, as shown in the image that follows:

```
fieldset label {  
  display: inline-block;  
  width: 140px;  
  margin-top: 4px;  
  margin-bottom: 4px;  
}
```



Conference Registration

127.0.0.1:8080

## Fill in this form to register to Visual Studio Smarts Conference

Personal Data

Salutation  ▼

First Name:

Last Name:

Email:

Your Smarts Membership status

☐ Not a member ☐ Silver member ☒ Gold member

Column-like look by setting label widths

The key attribute of this style is the `display, inline-block` setting. It declares that the label is considered an inline element with a settable width. Otherwise, even if you set the width of labels, the rendering engine would ignore it because the inline element's width is calculated automatically by the screen estate they need. The `inline-block` value allows setting the width of such an element explicitly.

With a few settings, you can emphasize the regions of the registration form (image below):

```
fieldset {
  padding: 8px 12px;
  background-color: skyblue;
  border: 1px solid blue;
  margin-top: 18px;
  margin-bottom: 8px;
}

fieldset legend {
  background-color: navy;
  color: white;
}
```

Conference Registration x

127.0.0.1:8080

## Fill in this form to register to Visual Studio Smarts Conference

### Personal Data

Salutation  ▼

First Name:

Last Name:

Email:

Your Smarts Membership status

☐ Not a member
 ☐ Silver member
 ☒ Gold member

[Read more about Smarts membership](#)

### Your Conference Account

Login name:

Password:

Confirm Password:

Styling the field sets and legends

And, finally, you can add a few simple styles to set up field widths, informative text parts, and the Register button (image below):

```
#salutation {
  width: 100px;
}

#fname, #lname, #login, #pwd, #pwd2 {
  width: 160px;
}

#email {
  width: 240px;
}

p {
  margin-top: 10px;
  margin-bottom: 8px;
  font-weight: bold;
  font-size: 0.9em;
}

input[type='submit'] {
  padding: 8px 16px;
```

```
padding: 5px 10px;
border: 1px solid blue;
background-color: navy;

color: white;
}
```

Conference Registration x

127.0.0.1:8080

## Fill in this form to register to Visual Studio Smarts Conference

### Personal Data

Salutation: Mr. ▼

First Name:

Last Name:

Email:

### Your Smarts Membership status

☐ Not a member
 ☐ Silver member
 ☒ Gold member

[Read more about Smarts membership](#)

### Your Conference Account

Login name:

Password:

Confirm Password:

### Sessions

What are the tracks you are interested in?

☐ Development
 ☐ ALM
 ☐ ASP.NET
 ☐ C#
 ☐ Visual Basic
 ☐ SQL

What do you expect from sessions?

**Register**

The final design of the registration form

NOTE: You can find the complete page in the Exercise-10-29 folder.

## Exercise-10-29 #

```
<!DOCTYPE html>
<html>
```



```
<head>
<title>Conference Registration</title>
<style>

  body {
    width: 540px;
    margin-left: 24px;
    font-family: Tahoma, Arial, sans-serif;
  }

  fieldset label {
    display: inline-block;
    width: 140px;
    margin-top: 4px;
    margin-bottom: 4px;
  }

  fieldset {
    padding: 8px 12px;
    background-color: skyblue;
    border: 1px solid blue;
    margin-top: 18px;
    margin-bottom: 8px;
  }

  fieldset legend {
    background-color: navy;
    color: white;
  }

  #salutation {
    width: 100px;
  }

  #fname, #lname, #login, #pwd, #pwd2 {
    width: 160px;
  }

  #email {
    width: 240px;
  }

  p {
    margin-top: 10px;
    margin-bottom: 8px;
    font-weight: bold;
    font-size: 0.9em;
  }

  input[type='submit'] {
    padding: 8px 16px;
    border: 1px solid blue;
    background-color: navy;
    color: white;
  }

</style>
</head>
<body>
  <h2>
    Fill in this form to register to Visual Studio
    Smarts Conference
  </h2>
```

```

<form action="#">
  <fieldset>
    <legend>Personal Data</legend>

    <label for="salutation">Salutation</label>
    <select id="salutation" name="salutation">
      <option label="" value="" />
      <option label="Mr." value="Mr." selected />
      <option label="Mrs." value="Mrs." />
      <option label="Ms." value="Ms." />
      <option label="Dr." value="Dr." />
    </select>
    <br />
    <label for="fname">First Name:</label>
    <input id="fname" type="text" name="fname"
      autofocus />
    <br />
    <label for="lname">Last Name:</label>
    <input id="lname" type="text" name="lname" />
    <br />
    <label for="email">Email:</label>
    <input id="email" type="text" name="email" />
    <br />
    <p>Your Smarts Membership status</p>
    <label class="memberoption">
      <input type="radio" name="membership"
        value="none" />
      Not a member
    </label>
    <label class="memberoption">
      <input type="radio" name="membership"
        value="silver" />
      Silver member
    </label>
    <label class="memberoption">
      <input type="radio" name="membership"
        value="gold" checked />
      Gold member
    </label>
    <br />
    <a href="#">Read more about Smarts membership</a>
  </fieldset>
  <fieldset>
    <legend>Your Conference Account</legend>
    <label for="login">Login name:</label>
    <input id="login" type="text" name="login" />
    <br />
    <label for="pwd">Password:</label>
    <input id="pwd" type="password" name="pwd" />
    <br />
    <label for="pwd2">Confirm Password:</label>
    <input id="pwd2" type="password" name="pwd2" />
    <br />
  </fieldset>
  <fieldset>
    <legend>Sessions</legend>
    <p>What are the tracks you are interested in?</p>
    <label>
      <input type="checkbox" name="dev" />
      Development
    </label>
    <label>
      <input type="checkbox" name="alm" />

```

```
        ALM
    </label>
    <label>
        <input type="checkbox" name="aspnet" />
        ASP.NET
    </label>
    <label>
        <input type="checkbox" name="csharp" />
        C#
    </label>
    <label>
        <input type="checkbox" name="vb" />
        Visual Basic
    </label>
    <label>
        <input type="checkbox" name="sql" />
        SQL
    </label>
    <p>What do you expect from sessions?</p>
    <textarea id="comments" rows="3" cols="50"
        name="comments"></textarea>
</fieldset>
    <input type="submit" value="Register" />
</form>
</body>
</html>
```

---

In the *next lesson*, we will summarize what we have learned so far in this chapter.

See you there!