

Descendent Selectors

In this lesson, we will study descendent selectors and how they can be used to style tags differently when they come under certain other tags or styles.

Let's begin! :)

WE'LL COVER THE FOLLOWING

- [Listing 9-7](#): Taking advantage of the page hierarchy with descendent selectors



CSS: Descendent Selectors



Descendent selectors let you take advantage of the page hierarchy by styling tags differently when they appear inside certain tags or styles.

For example, let's say you have an `<h1>` tag on your web page and you want to emphasize a word within that heading with the `` tag. However, most browsers display both `<h1>` and `` in bold, so you'd like to change the `` tag within `<h1>` to use a red color. Creating a tag selector to change the `` tag's color does not help, because you end up changing the color of every `` tag on the page.

A **descendent** selector allows you to do what you really want, as shown in

Listing 9-7: Taking advantage of the page hierarchy with descendent selectors

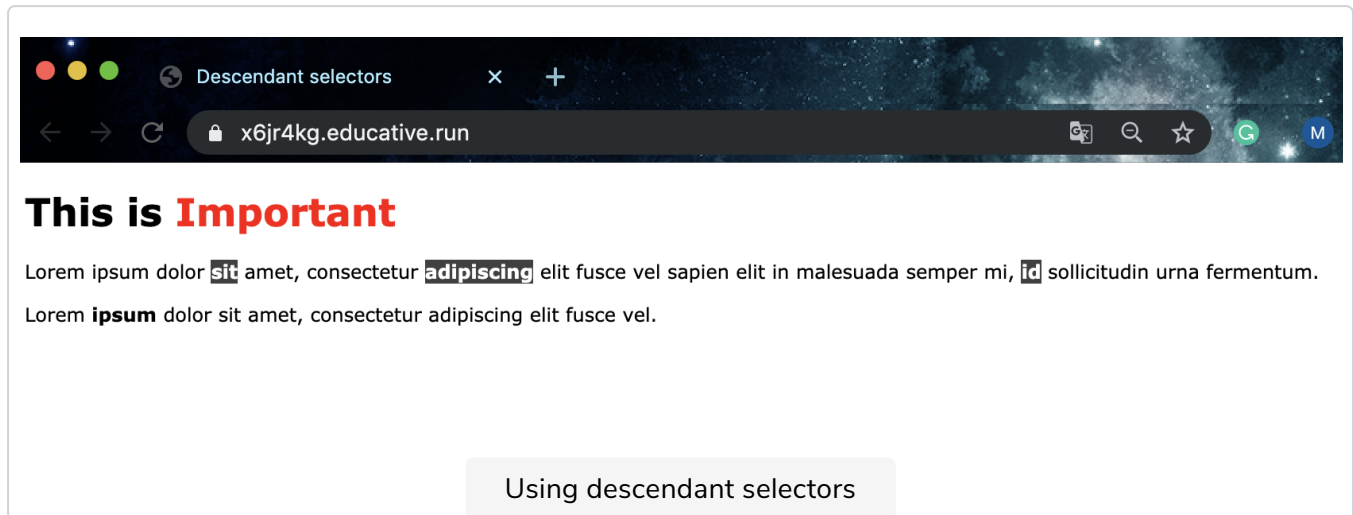
```
<!DOCTYPE html>
<html>
<head>
  <title>Descendant selectors</title>
  <style>
    body {
      font-family: Verdana, Helvetica, sans-serif;
    }

    h1 strong {
      color: red;
    }

    div.important strong {
      color: white;
      background-color: #404040;
    }
  </style>
</head>
<body>
  <h1>This is <strong>Important</strong></h1>
  <div class="important">
    <p>
      Lorem ipsum dolor <strong>sit</strong>
      amet, consectetur <strong>adipiscing</strong>
      elit fusce vel sapien elit in malesuada semper mi,
      <strong>id</strong> sollicitudin urna fermentum.
    </p>
  </div>
  <div>
    <p>
      Lorem <strong>ipsum</strong> dolor sit amet, consectetur
      adipiscing elit fusce vel.
    </p>
  </div>
</body>
</html>
```

This listing uses two rules with descendant selectors, the first is `h1 strong` and the second is `div.important strong`. Both use the `strong` name separated by a space from the preceding part of the selector. The descendant selector is used with the meaning of any direct or indirect descendant of the parent selector, `div.important` means any `<div>` tag with its class attribute set to “important.” So, `div.important strong` means any `strong` tag as a descendant of a `<div>` tag that has its class attribute set to “important”.

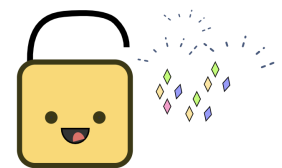
The image below shows how the page in Listing 9-7 is displayed:



You can observe that the two paragraphs use different styles for ``. The reason is that the second paragraph is within a `<div>` tag but without a class attribute, so the `div.important` strong selector is not applied on any descendant `` tags.

Achievement unlocked! 🎉

Congratulations! You've learned to make use of descendent selectors in CSS!



Good job! Give yourself a round of applause!

In the *next lesson*, we will study child selectors.

Stay tuned! :)