

CSS Cookbook, Second Edition
By Christopher Schmitt
Cascading Style Sheets (CSS)

Book Review by Marcie Ridenour
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The official description of the book can be found on the publisher's web page (<http://www.oreilly.com/catalog/cssckbk2/index.html>) as follows:

"For those all-too-common dilemmas that crop up with each project, *CSS Cookbook* provides hundreds of practical examples with CSS code recipes that you can use immediately to format your web pages. Arranged in a quick-lookup format for easy reference, the second edition has been updated to explain the unique behavior of the latest browsers: Microsoft's IE 7 and Mozilla's Firefox 1.5. Also, the book has been expanded to cover the interaction of CSS and images and now includes more recipes for beginning CSS users."

The book is divided into 12 chapters followed by four appendices. The book assumes that you possess some web design or development experience prior to reading the book. This book is not an introduction to CSS and assumes that you have prior experience with CSS and this prior experience should include some experience reading and hand-coding HTML. The author, Schmidt, on p. xv, recommends that you should want to hand code both HTML and CSS in order to benefit from this book.

The first chapter is labeled as general. This chapter does an excellent job of selling CSS to the reader by showing illustrations of features and enhancements to your HTML coding through CSS. These enhancements are illustrated by showing both the code and a screen shot of the result. By page 4, the rules of CSS are presented in two parts, selectors and properties. This book is all about making the topic easy to understand for the reader by the use of examples, illustrations (drawings similar to flow charts), educational tables, and screen shots showing the results. Throughout the book, there are discussion sections to assure the reader knows the relationship of the CSS coding to the result on the screen.

The order of the book seems to be based on the topics that would be of the greatest interest to the reader; for example, fonts are covered in Chapter 2 but forms are not covered until Chapter 7. Once you have read the first two or three chapters, you should have the knowledge to read any part of the book determined by your interest in the topic. A common formation throughout the book of topic followed by the problem, solution, and discussion make this book an excellent reference source. Also at the end of some of the presentation, you are referred to related topics by the label "See Also."

I would highly recommend this book for the personal library for anyone who regularly uses CSS or plans to use CSS.

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