

CSS Mastery: Advanced Web Standards Solutions
By Andy Budd
with Cameron Moll & Simon Collison

Book reviewed by Jerome Greene
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In order to understand and figure out the latest techniques and standards for CSS programming, this book should be included in any web developer's library. Starting out with a review of basic CSS and proceeding to the bug fixes and filters of the more advanced CSS topics, this text presents web developers with explanations of many modern techniques now used in web development. The table of content includes the following chapters and two case studies:

1. Setting the Foundations
2. Visual Formatting Model Recap
3. Background Images and Image Replacement
4. Styling Links
5. Styling Lists and Creating Nav Bars
6. Styling Forms and Data Tables
7. Layout
8. Hacks and Filters
9. Bugs and Bugs Fixing

CSS Mastery is aimed at anybody with basic knowledge of (X)HTML and CSS. The author, Andy Budd, lays each topic out with many easy to follow examples of code and drawings to show the concept that is being presented. There also are screen snaps to show what the web page should look like after applying the technique just covered. Topics are presented in small bits of information so as not to overwhelm the reader. The order in which chapters are read is not important and the reader can skip to a particular topic of interest. This also makes this book a good reference tool. The author points out the different effects of each technique on different web browsers and shows you how to work around them by adding additional line(s) of code.

In chapter 2 and chapter 3, the author covers such topics as the use of margins, positioning, background images, shadowing and image replacement to control various CSS elements to create a well structured web page that validates.

In chapters 4 though 6 the author covers: styling links, styling lists, creating nav bars, and styling forms and data tables.

Chapter 7 covers layouts. Topics include horizontally centering a design on a page, creating two and three float-based layouts, and creating fixed width, liquid and elastic layouts.

In the chapter “Hacks and Filters,” the author covers the difference between hacks and filters, IE conditional comments, and good versus bad filters and how to use them responsibly.

In “Bugs and Bugs Fixing,” you will find techniques for tracking down CSS bugs and the most common browser bugs and their fixes.

The author wraps things up with two case studies. The case studies begin with a list of the topics he covers in the book and which of these each study is going to cover. There is also a picture of what the author is trying to achieve with the web page.

This is a great book to add to any webmaster’s library or for anyone else who works, or plans to work, with CSS. I would highly recommend this book to anyone and everyone.

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