


MAX 2006 Beyond Boundaries

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Biography


- Founder/Principal - W3Conversions LLC - Web Standards and Accessibility
- Speaker and Corporate Trainer
- Consultant & sub-contractor for XHTML/CSS development
- Adobe Community Expert
- Dreamweaver Task Force for WaSP
- Partner - CommunityMX.com
- Author - DW MX 2004 Magic, Web Developer's & Designer's Journal (formerly MXDJ), Adobe's DevNet Center, and other web publications
- International Advisory Board for Web Developer's and Designer's Journal
- List Mom for WebWeavers & moderator for SEM 2.0

CSS Part 2: Designing Multi-Column Layouts and more

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Session Overview

- Concept Review
- Analyzing the designs layout
- Slicing for lowest page weight
- When to use AP and when to float
- Faux columns
- Creating a two column layout
- Clearing Floats
- Adding a third column
- Nesting columns
- "Gotchas" to watch for

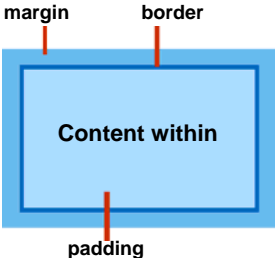


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Quick Review

- What is the Box Model?



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Quick Review

- What is an inline element?
- What is a block element?
- What is meant by the "flow of the document?"
- What are the different positioning methods?
 - Static
 - Relative
 - Absolute
 - Fixed

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Quick Review

- How do you write efficient CSS?
 - Class vs. ID
 - Avoid "classitis" using type and descendant selectors
 - Use shorthand
- What is a descendant selector?
 - #nav a:link
 - #content .pod h1
 - ul ul li

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Using CSS for Layout

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Analyzing the Layout

- Where do you start?
 - Analyze page requirements
 - Fixed width centered (or left aligned)?
 - Stretchy fluid page?
 - Fluid page with fixed-width columns or elements?
 - Analyze graphics
 - Decide how to slice
 - What can be pure CSS and still look like a graphic?

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Picture it

- Header
- Main content
- Left column
- Right column
- Footer

•Begin by thinking in rectangles for overall div layout and flow of the page
•Later, you'll drop those into your HTML document as empty divs

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What can be done as pure CSS?

- Look for areas of flat color
- Look for simple borders
- Look for common fonts which can be used in a cascade

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What should be a jpg or gif?

- gifs should be used for areas of flat color that can't be pure CSS
- jpgs should be used for photos, gradients and drop shadows or glows

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What can be created as a reverse matte?

- Look for areas where the image can be exported as a transparent gif and matted to the color it will be positioned on
- Then, use CSS for the background color of the div below it

peach, rounded box on rust background column
Slice - peach with transparent Background matted to rust color
matte color

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What can be created as a reverse matte?

- Other creative uses for reverse matting - faking a transition between two areas

My Fake Company

Link One
Link Two
Link Three
Link Four

Background image placed on corner of header - meeting with right column. Matted to header background

- Making a div or navigational device appear to have a creative shape


Button

Background image placed on right side of button - matches color of the column below. Matted to column background

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Which areas can be repeating graphics?

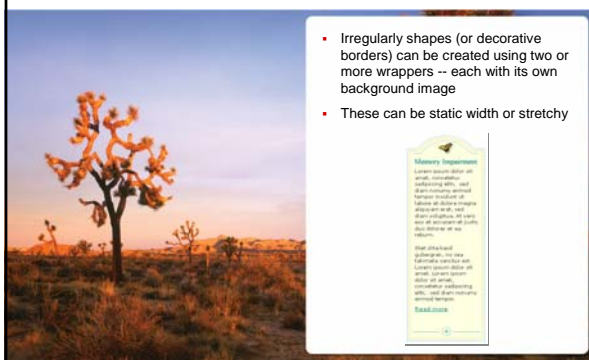
- Page backgrounds
- With centered designs - holder may have a drop shadow or glow - repeat those on the y axis
- Headings - usually repeat on the x axis (though a fixed width with a left to right gradient might repeat on the y axis)
- Faux columns - repeat on the y axis



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What elements can use multiple wrappers?

- Irregularly shapes (or decorative borders) can be created using two or more wrappers -- each with its own background image
- These can be static width or stretchy



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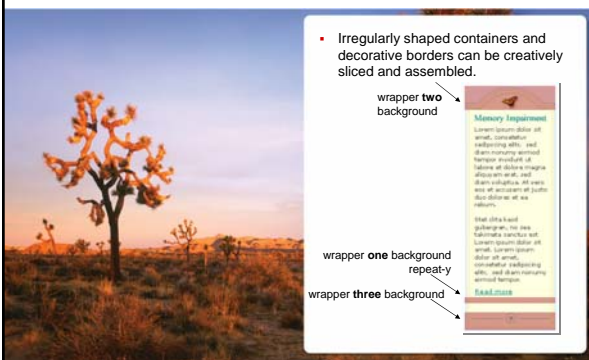
What elements can use multiple wrappers?

- Irregularly shaped containers and decorative borders can be creatively sliced and assembled.

wrapper two background

wrapper one background repeat-y

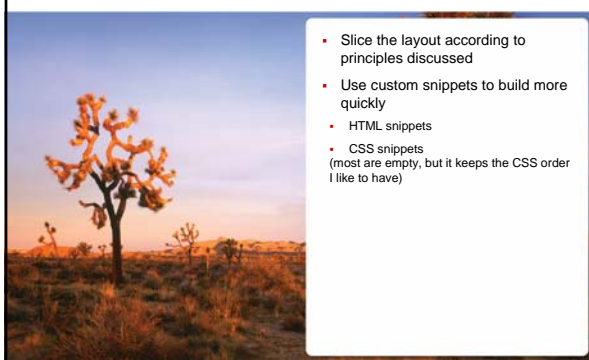
wrapper three background



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Code it!

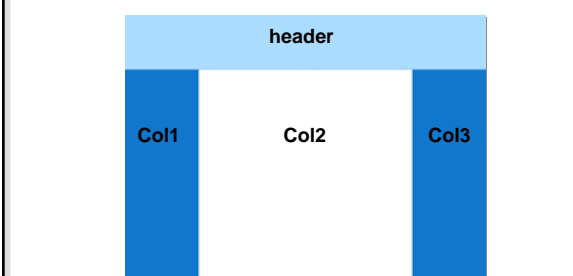
- Slice the layout according to principles discussed
- Use custom snippets to build more quickly
- HTML snippets
- CSS snippets (most are empty, but it keeps the CSS order I like to have)



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Three Column Layout

- Basic 3 column layout (DW will let you absolutely position or draw layers)



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Add the Footer

- What happens when a footer is added to an absolutely positioned page?

Diagram illustrating the effect of adding a footer to an absolutely positioned page. The footer is positioned at the bottom center, overlapping the space between the two sidebars.

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Positioning and Flowing

- Use, don't fight, the flow of the document
- It's simply the HTML source order

```
<div id="header"> content </div>
<div id="sidebar"> content </div>
<div id="mainContent"> content </div>
<div id="news"> content </div>
<div id="footer"> content </div>
```

- Increase text size to illustrate

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Principles of Floating

- A float must be given a width
- A float must be given a directional value of left or right (there is no top or bottom)
- If you want a float to appear alongside another element, it must precede that element in the source order of the document
- A float never covers text or inline images
- Avoid using a width on a block element following a float; use a margin on the same side of the float instead
- Since a float is taken "out of the flow" of the document, a float inside another container must be cleared in order for the parent container to enclose it properly

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Building a Basic Two-Column Page

Diagram illustrating the layout of a two-column page. The page is divided into two columns, with a grid overlay showing the layout structure.

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Building a Basic Two-Column Page

<p>1) Insert Header</p> <pre><div id="header">Content</div></pre>	<p>1) Place right side column</p> <pre><div id="sidebar">Content</div></pre>
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Place main content div <pre><div id="mainContent">Content</div></pre>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Place footer div <pre><div id="footer">Content</div></pre>

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Clear it!

- A clearing element should be the last thing in the div that should contain the floats
- XHTML code:**

```
<div class="clearfloat"></div>
OR
<br class="clearfloat" />
```
- CSS class:**

```
.clearfloat {
  clear: both;
  height: 0;
  margin: 0;
  font-size: 1px;
  line-height: 0px;
}
```

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Adding a third column

News
Three columns content goes here as a demonstration of where it would sit in the page.

Main Content
Lorem ipsum dolor sit amet, consectetur adipiscing elit. Praesent aliquam, justo convalle luctus nunc, et nulla fermentum diam, at nonummy quam ante ac quam. Phasellus luctus, fermentum id, mollis in, commodo porttitor, Nisi. Nam faucibus quam ut lacus. Quisque ornare tristique quis ligula. Phasellus tristique diam in augue condictamentum adipiscing. Aenean sagittis. Etiam leo nulla, rhoncus venenatis, tristique in, nunc lobortis ac, velit. Donec at ipsum et sapien volutate nonummy. Suscipit nec partur.

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Adding a third column

- The space for the third column will be "stolen" from the main content area
- Remember that the floated columns must, in the source order, come before the non-floated one. Then, you can put them in order, right to left, or left to right.
- Third column is created just like the second -- but floated the opposite direction.

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Adding a third column

```

<div id="news">Content</div>
<div id="sidebar">Content</div>
<div id="mainContent">Content</div>

#news {
  width: 175px;
  float: left;
  padding: 21px 10px 10px 15px;
}

#mainContent {
  margin: 0 150px 20px 200px; /* changed to create space */
}

```

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Nesting Columns and Pods

- The same principles apply for splitting a column or adding a split column area in the middle of another column

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Nesting Columns and Pods

```

<div class="splitpod">
<div><p>Content</p></div>
<div class="border"><p>Content</p></div>
<br class="clearfloat" />
</div>

.splitpod { /* this allows clearing within */
float: left;
width: 297px;
padding: 0;
margin-bottom: 20px;
}

.splitpod div { /* this applies to any div within .splitpod */
width: 135px;
float: left;
padding: 0 9px 0 0;
}

.splitpod p { *margin-bottom: 0 !important; } /* !important overrides selectors with greater specificity */
.splitpod div.border {
border-left: 1px solid #666;
padding-right: 0;
padding-left: 16px;
}

```

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Be Careful of Float Drop

- Evident when one div starts below the level of the div next to it

Causes:

- An element, like an image, that is wider than can fit in the space provided. The div will move down until it can fit next to the floats. (Make sure clients who are taking care of their own sites with Contribute are aware of their size specs and limitations.)
- 3px text jog in Internet Explorer (unaccounted for in your math)

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Dealing with Bugs and Coding Issues

- Is it really a bug?
- Could it be a cascade issue?
- Use Tag Inspector - Relevant CSS panel in Dreamweaver
- Click into element
- View the panel for a value farther up the cascade that overrides your desired outcome
- Validate your HTML and CSS to verify they are to standards with no errors
- It's simpler to code to standards (using a browser like Firefox to test along the way) and hack as needed for IE

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Ways to Debug

- Place background colors in the CSS for each div
- Use Firefox with Chris Pederick's Web Developer's Toolbar
- Outline > Outline Block Level Elements
- Outline > Outline Custom Elements
- CSS > Edit CSS
- CSS > View Style Information
- Create a test case with only the basic divs



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Most Common Bugs

- Float Drop due to 3px bug or doubling margins (star filter)
- List white space, and other *unaccounted for* white space differences (strip white space or add display:inline)
- IE requires a container to have dimensions - Holly hack previously used and now zoom:1 in an IE Conditional Comment (IECC)
- Various IE Mac issues (tan hack -- <http://www.l-c-n.com> for more info) IF you're still worrying about a completely unsupported browser
- Mozilla's issue with margins protruding from a container causing space (remove top and/or bottom margins of element inside)
- Dealing with the upcoming IE7 release
 - many previous bugs fixed
 - Also "fixed" the star filter hack - * html #selectorName - you can still use it to select versions of IE prior to IE7 within your IE CC

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Magic Bullets - sometimes

- Add position: relative;
- We have been using the Holly hack -- but now, we switch from:


```
/* Hides from IE5-mac */
* html .buggybox {height: 18;}
/* End hide From IE5-mac */
```

 To: zoom: 1 for IE7 - must be in IE Conditional Comment to validate


```
<!--[if IE]>
<style type="text/css">
.buggybox {zoom: 1;}
</style>
<![endif]-->
```
- Community MX has Custom bug snippets for most every browser. No need to memorize them.



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Reference

- My site: www.w3conversions.com
- Reference page for this session: www.w3conversions.com/max/css2/
- Community MX - almost 1800 tutorials, forums, JumpStarts (CSS page layout), and Design Elements (PNG files): www.communitymx.com
- Position is Everything: www.positioniseverything.net

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