

Introduction to CSS and Visual Styling

Making HTML pages clearer, cleaner, and more professional

- CSS controls the visual presentation of a web page.
- It changes colors, spacing, borders, fonts, and layout.
- Today we begin with styling students can use immediately.
- Focus: clarity, consistency, and readable design.

Teaching Focus

Students should see CSS as a practical styling tool, not as abstract syntax.

Key teaching points

- Keep examples short and visible.
- Connect every rule to a visual change.
- Let students copy, edit, and observe.

Review of the Previous Lesson

Forms and embedded media

- We learned how forms collect information from users.
- We compared input types, labels, validation, and grouping.
- We also introduced images, audio, video, and iframes.
- Today, we move from structure and content to visual styling.

Teaching Focus

Students should connect Week 7 to the HTML foundations built earlier.

Key teaching points

- Show continuity between HTML and CSS.
- Remind students that good styling supports content.
- Keep the transition simple and logical.

What Is CSS?

Cascading Style Sheets

- CSS is the language used to style HTML content.
- It controls colors, fonts, spacing, borders, and layout.
- HTML says what something is.
- CSS helps decide how it looks on the screen.

Key Idea

CSS separates presentation from structure.

Key teaching points

- Repeat the phrase structure vs appearance.
- Use one plain page and imagine it with and without styling.
- Keep the definition practical, not theoretical.

Why Do We Use CSS?

Visual consistency and easier editing

- CSS makes pages more attractive and easier to read.
- It keeps colors, spacing, and text styles consistent.
- It lets us change many elements from one place.
- Without CSS, pages often look plain and unorganized.

Teaching Focus

Students should understand the practical benefit of styling before learning syntax.

Key teaching points

- Relate styling to readability and professionalism.
- Use real examples such as menus, cards, and contact pages.
- Avoid making CSS sound decorative only.

HTML vs CSS

Two different jobs on the same page

- HTML = structure and meaning.
- CSS = style and visual presentation.
- A heading is created with HTML.
- Its color, size, and spacing are changed with CSS.

Key Idea

Students should stop mixing the roles of HTML and CSS.

Key teaching points

- Use a heading example students already know.
- Show one structural tag and then the style applied to it.
- Emphasize that both work together.

Three Ways to Apply CSS

Inline, internal, and external

- Inline CSS is written inside an HTML tag.
- Internal CSS is written inside a <style> block.
- External CSS is written in a separate .css file.
- For exam practice, internal CSS is often the most useful starting point.

Teaching Focus

Students should recognize all three methods, but begin with internal CSS confidently.

Key teaching points

- Mention all methods, but keep the lesson centered on internal CSS first.
- Connect this to exam tasks and simple classroom examples.
- Do not overload students with file management too early.

Internal CSS Example

CSS inside the HTML document

- `<style>`
- `body { background:#f4f6fb; }`
- `h1 { color:#1f4e79; }`
- `</style>`

CSS Example

Internal CSS is convenient when students are still learning basic selectors and properties.

Key teaching points

- Show where the `<style>` block belongs.
- Explain that rules inside it affect matching HTML elements.
- Keep the example small and readable.

External CSS Example

A separate stylesheet file

- `<link rel="stylesheet" href="style.css">`
- `style.css` keeps styling outside the HTML file.
- This is useful when many pages should share the same design.
- It also makes editing and reuse easier.

Key Idea

External CSS is the standard choice when a website has multiple pages.

Key teaching points

- Explain why professionals prefer reusable files.
- Do not go too deep into folder structure yet.
- Keep the example connected to a small website project.

CSS Rule Anatomy

Selector, property, and value

- `p { color: blue; }`
- Selector = `p`
- Property = `color`
- Value = `blue`

Teaching Focus

Every beginner should be able to read one CSS rule correctly.

Key teaching points

- Pause and label each part clearly.
- Make students say selector, property, and value aloud.
- This vocabulary will be reused in every later example.

Selectors Overview

How CSS chooses what to style

- Selectors decide which HTML elements receive a style.
- Common beginner selectors are element, class, and id selectors.
- We can also group selectors to reuse one rule.
- Good CSS begins with choosing the right selector.

Key Idea

A style rule is only useful if it targets the correct element.

Key teaching points

- Compare selectors to choosing the right group of objects.
- Keep the explanation concrete, not abstract.
- Use small HTML examples students can imagine.

Element Selectors

Styling all matching tags at once

- `h1 { color: darkblue; }`
- `p { font-size: 18px; }`
- Element selectors target every matching HTML tag.
- They are simple and useful for global styles.

Teaching Focus

Students should see element selectors as the fastest entry point to CSS.

Key teaching points

- Show how one rule affects all matching tags.
- Use headings and paragraphs because students already know them well.
- Stress that broad selectors affect many elements.

Class Selectors

Reusable styling for chosen elements

- `.card { border: 1px solid #333; padding: 12px; }`
- Classes begin with a dot in CSS.
- They are ideal when the same style is reused in several places.
- HTML uses `class="card"` to connect to the rule.

Key Idea

Classes are one of the most important tools in practical CSS.

Key teaching points

- Explain the dot clearly.
- Show that different HTML tags can share the same class.
- Connect classes to reusable design patterns.

ID Selectors

Styling one unique element

- #mainTitle { color: maroon; }
- IDs begin with a hash in CSS.
- An id should identify one unique element on the page.
- HTML uses id="mainTitle" to connect to the rule.

Teaching Focus

Students should distinguish clearly between classes and ids.

Key teaching points

- Compare one unique element to a reusable group.
- Use a main heading or one special section as an example.
- Do not allow students to treat id and class as the same.

Grouping and Combining Selectors

Less repetition, cleaner CSS

- `h1, h2, h3 { color: #1f4e79; }`
- Grouping lets one rule style multiple selectors.
- This reduces repetition and keeps CSS cleaner.
- It is helpful for headings, lists, and shared text styles.

Key Idea

Clean CSS often means fewer repeated rules.

Key teaching points

- Show the comma clearly.
- Explain that grouping is useful when the same visual style repeats.
- Connect this idea to cleaner maintenance.

Color in CSS

Changing the appearance of text

- color changes text color.
- Examples: blue, red, #1f4e79, rgb(34,34,34).
- Readable contrast matters more than decoration.
- Choose colors that support clarity.

Teaching Focus

Students should treat color as a communication tool, not random decoration.

Key teaching points

- Use visible and readable examples.
- Warn against low contrast text.
- Keep the first examples simple and high contrast.

Backgrounds

Styling the page or a section area

- background-color changes the background behind an element.
- It can be used on the body, a card, a table, or a note box.
- Backgrounds help separate sections visually.
- Use them carefully so the page stays clean.

Key Idea

Background styling helps structure the page visually.

Key teaching points

- Compare the full page background to a smaller content box background.
- Show how a subtle color can organize content.
- Avoid overwhelming examples.

Font Size and Font Family

Readable text matters

- font-size changes how large the text appears.
- font-family changes the typeface.
- Together they strongly affect readability and tone.
- Choose sizes and fonts that feel clear and professional.

Teaching Focus

Students should understand that typography affects usability.

Key teaching points

- Use a before-and-after comparison if possible.
- Explain that small text quickly hurts readability.
- Keep font choices familiar and safe.

Text Alignment and Spacing

Controlling the flow of reading

- text-align can be left, center, right, or justify.
- Line spacing and paragraph spacing affect comfort.
- Centered text is useful for titles, not for everything.
- Good alignment improves scanning and visual rhythm.

Key Idea

Alignment should support reading, not only decoration.

Key teaching points

- Explain when centered text works and when it becomes tiring.
- Keep body text examples left aligned.
- Connect alignment to readability and hierarchy.

Border Basics

Outlines around elements

- border adds an outline around an element.
- A border often needs width, style, and color.
- Example: border: 1px solid #444;
- Borders help define cards, tables, images, and buttons.

Teaching Focus

Students should see borders as structure, not just decoration.

Key teaching points

- Read the shorthand rule part by part.
- Point out where borders are useful in beginner layouts.
- Use cards and tables as the easiest examples.

Padding

Space inside the border

- Padding creates inner space between content and the element edge.
- Without padding, text can feel crowded.
- Padding improves comfort and readability.
- It is one of the fastest ways to make a box look better.

Key Idea

Small spacing changes can create a big visual improvement.

Key teaching points

- Use a crowded box example and then add padding.
- Let students notice the difference immediately.
- This is a very practical beginner concept.

Margin

Space outside the element

- Margin creates outer space between elements.
- It helps separate headings, cards, images, and sections.
- Without margin, elements can feel stuck together.
- Margin improves layout breathing room.

Teaching Focus

Students should learn the difference between padding and margin early.

Key teaching points

- Compare inner space and outer space directly.
- Use two boxes if possible.
- Make students describe which space is inside and which is outside.

Width and max-width

Controlling the size of content blocks

- width sets a fixed width.
- max-width limits how wide something can become.
- max-width is often better for flexible designs.
- It helps content stay readable on different screens.

Key Idea

Not every box should stretch across the whole screen.

Key teaching points

- Use a card or content box example.
- Explain that very long lines reduce readability.
- Mention that max-width supports cleaner responsive behavior.

Styling Links

Making navigation clearer

- Links can be styled with color, text-decoration, and hover effects.
- Hover states make interaction feel clearer.
- Good link styling improves navigation.
- Links should still look recognizable as links.

Teaching Focus

Students should style links without removing clarity.

Key teaching points

- Show a normal state and a hover state.
- Warn students not to make links look like plain text.
- Keep examples simple and readable.

Styling Lists

Organizing groups of items

- Lists can be styled with spacing, borders, backgrounds, and marker choices.
- Simple list styling improves menus, schedules, and notes.
- Padding and margin matter a lot here.
- Keep list design neat and consistent.

Key Idea

Even simple content becomes easier to scan when list spacing is improved.

Key teaching points

- Use a menu or to-do list example.
- Explain that styling helps grouping and readability.
- Do not make list styling too decorative.

Styling Tables

Readable row and column data

- CSS can improve tables with borders, padding, background colors, and alignment.
- Header rows often need stronger contrast.
- Clean table styling makes data easier to scan.
- Use CSS to support structure, not hide it.

Teaching Focus

Students should connect HTML table structure with CSS readability improvements.

Key teaching points

- Review th vs td briefly.
- Then show how CSS makes the table easier to read.
- Use simple borders and subtle header backgrounds.

Styling Forms

Making inputs clearer and friendlier

- CSS can style labels, inputs, buttons, and spacing between fields.
- Well-styled forms feel easier to complete.
- Padding, width, and margin are very useful here.
- Visual clarity supports better user interaction.

Key Idea

A form should look as clear as it behaves.

Key teaching points

- Connect styling to user comfort.
- Show that labels need space and inputs need visual clarity.
- Keep the example realistic.

CSS for Boxes and Cards

A beginner-friendly design pattern

- A card often uses background, border, padding, margin, and width.
- This pattern appears in profiles, products, posts, and announcements.
- Cards help group related content.
- They are excellent practice for beginner CSS.

Teaching Focus

Students should practice CSS through small reusable patterns.

Key teaching points

- Use the word card because students see it everywhere online.
- Explain that one pattern combines several basic properties.
- This makes CSS feel practical very quickly.

Reusable Class-Based Design

Write once, use many times

- Classes make reusable design easier.
- One .card rule can style many cards.
- One .btn rule can style many buttons.
- Reusable CSS saves time and keeps the page consistent.

Key Idea

Repetition should happen in HTML content, not in repeated style rules.

Key teaching points

- Connect classes to consistency.
- Show why repeating inline styles is inefficient.
- Keep the message simple: reuse is a strength.

Good CSS Order and Readability

Clean code helps future editing

- Keep CSS rules organized and easy to read.
- Use clear selectors and one property per line.
- Group related rules together.
- Readable CSS is easier to fix, extend, and explain.

Teaching Focus

Students should see code style as part of code quality.

Key teaching points

- Model neat indentation and spacing.
- Explain that messy CSS becomes harder to debug.
- Encourage simple, readable rule blocks.

Common Beginner Mistakes

What often goes wrong first

- Missing semicolons can break a rule block.
- Writing a wrong selector means the style will not apply.
- Confusing class and id is very common.
- Too many colors or too much styling can weaken the page.

Teaching Focus

Students should expect small syntax errors and learn how to spot them calmly.

Key teaching points

- Normalize debugging.
- Show that tiny mistakes can stop a visible result.
- Teach students to check selectors, brackets, colons, and semicolons.

From Plain HTML to Styled Page

The same content with better presentation

- Plain HTML can work correctly but still look unfinished.
- CSS adds hierarchy, spacing, contrast, and visual balance.
- A small amount of CSS can create a much stronger result.
- This is why styling is worth learning early.

Key Idea

Visual improvement does not always require complex CSS.

Key teaching points

- Use a before-and-after comparison if possible.
- Point out what changed, not only that it looks better.
- Name the specific properties that created the improvement.

Mini Example: Profile Card

A simple real-world CSS exercise

- `<div class="card">`
- `<h2>Student Name</h2>`
- `<p>Short bio text.</p>`
- `</div>`

Practice Goal

Use a heading, paragraph, border, padding, margin, and background in one compact example.

Key teaching points

- Walk through the visual goal, not only the code.
- Ask students which CSS rules they would add first.
- Encourage them to think in small steps.

Mini Example: Contact Section

Styling a familiar page component

- h2 for the section title.
- Paragraph or list for contact details.
- A light background, padding, and border can improve clarity.
- This shows how CSS supports real page sections.

Practice Goal

Move from isolated rules to a small meaningful section.

Key teaching points

- Use a realistic example students may include in assignments.
- Point out how spacing and contrast improve scanning.
- Connect the design to usability.

Mini Practice Activity

Try a small styling task in class

- Create a simple HTML page with a title, paragraph, list, and one box or card.
- Add at least one text color, one background color, and one border.
- Use padding and margin to improve spacing.
- Keep the design simple, readable, and consistent.

Teaching Focus

Students learn CSS best when they test rules and see the result immediately.

Key teaching points

- Give students a short, realistic task.
- Review a few examples together afterwards.
- Praise clarity and clean structure more than decoration.

Lesson Summary

What students should remember from Week 7

- CSS styles the visual side of HTML content.
- Selectors choose what to style.
- Properties and values define how it should look.
- Good beginner CSS improves readability, spacing, and consistency.

Teaching Focus

End the lesson by reinforcing the core pattern: selector + property + value.

Key teaching points

- Keep the summary short and confident.
- Return to the big ideas, not minor details.
- Make students leave with a clear mental model.

Quick Check / Exit Questions

Short questions before students leave

- What is the difference between HTML and CSS?
- What are selector, property, and value?
- When would you use a class instead of an id?
- What is the difference between padding and margin?

Teaching Focus

Use these questions to check whether students understood the main ideas, not to trap them.

Key teaching points

- Let students answer briefly in pairs or aloud.
- Listen for understanding rather than perfect terminology.
- Use their answers to decide what to review next lesson.