

CSS Text, Colors, and Backgrounds

Week 8 deepens readability, hierarchy, and visual atmosphere

- Week 7 introduced CSS as the language of presentation.
- Week 8 goes deeper into how text feels, how colors communicate, and how backgrounds shape mood.
- Students move from "I can style a page" to "I can style a page intentionally."
- Goal: better readability, stronger hierarchy, and cleaner visual choices.

What to Notice

Keep every concept tied to visible change: students should read the code and predict the result before they run it.

Copy-paste CSS

- `body { background:#f8fafc; font-family:Arial,sans-serif; }`
- `h1 { color:#0f172a; }`
- `p { color:#334155; line-height:1.7; }`

Connection to the Updated Syllabus

Week 8 prepares the ground for spacing, layout, and responsive design

- The revised syllabus places Week 8 before box model, flexbox, and responsive design.
- This order matters: students first learn to style text and surfaces, then they arrange larger layouts.
- A clean visual foundation makes later layout work easier to understand.
- Today's lesson should feel practical and directly reusable in mini projects.

Why This Order Works

When students understand readability and contrast first, later layout decisions become more meaningful and less random.

Copy-paste CSS

- `.page { max-width:1100px; margin:0 auto; padding:32px; }`
- `.card { background:#fff; border-radius:24px; padding:24px; }`

Week 8 Learning Outcomes

What students should be able to do by the end of class

- Choose readable font stacks and clear text sizes.
- Use text properties to create hierarchy and comfort.
- Apply color systems with better contrast and consistency.
- Style backgrounds with solid colors, images, gradients, and shorthand.

Application Outcome

Students should be able to build a polished card, banner, or profile block using HTML plus CSS from this week.

Copy-paste CSS

- `ul { line-height:1.8; }`
- `li { margin-bottom:8px; }`
- `strong { color:#1d4ed8; }`

From Basic CSS to Intentional Design

Week 7 answered "how"; Week 8 asks "why this style?"

- A beginner page often works but still feels flat, crowded, or visually weak.
- Intentional styling means choosing values for a reason: readability, emphasis, calmness, energy, or contrast.
- Good CSS is not decoration for its own sake.
- It helps users understand the page faster.

Key Idea

The best beginner upgrade is not "more CSS"; it is "better-chosen CSS."

Copy-paste CSS

- `:root { --primary:#1d4ed8; --text:#0f172a; --muted:#64748b; }`
- `body { color:var(--text); background:#f8fafc; }`

Text Styling Map

The main CSS properties that shape how text feels

- Typography in CSS is not one property; it is a group of decisions.
- Common text properties include font-family, font-size, font-weight, font-style, line-height, text-align, text-transform, and text-decoration.
- Color also belongs to readable text design.
- Each decision changes tone, emphasis, and ease of reading.

What to Notice

Students should start seeing text styling as a system rather than isolated tricks.

Copy-paste CSS

- `body { font:16px/1.6 Arial,sans-serif; }`
- `h1 { font-size:40px; }`
- `.label { text-transform:uppercase; letter-spacing:1.5px; }`

Font Family and Tone

Type choices change personality before a word is even read

- font-family chooses the typeface used for an element.
- Example stacks: Arial, sans-serif | Georgia, serif | "Trebuchet MS", sans-serif.
- Sans-serif fonts often feel modern and clean.
- Serif fonts often feel formal, editorial, or classic.

Good Beginner Rule

Choose one clear body font and one supportive heading font, or keep the whole page in a single strong family.

Copy-paste CSS

- `body { font-family:"Trebuchet MS",Arial,sans-serif; }`
- `h1, h2 { font-family:Georgia,serif; }`

Font Size and Visual Hierarchy

Readers scan size differences before they read the full content

- font-size controls how large text appears.
- Larger text usually signals higher importance.
- A page should have a clear hierarchy: heading, subheading, body text, and small supporting text.
- Use size changes to guide the eye, not to create chaos.

Example Values

**h1: 36px | h2: 28px | body: 16px |
note: 14px**

Copy-paste CSS

- `h1 { font-size:42px; }`
- `h2 { font-size:30px; }`
- `p { font-size:16px; }`
- `small { font-size:14px; }`

Font Weight and Font Style

Emphasis should be clear, limited, and meaningful

- font-weight changes thickness: 400 is regular, 700 is bold.
- font-style is often normal or italic.
- Use bold for emphasis, labels, and headings.
- Use italic carefully for quotes, notes, or small accents.

Common Problem

If too many things are bold, nothing feels important anymore.

Copy-paste CSS

- `strong, .label { font-weight:700; }`
- `em, .quote { font-style:italic; }`

Line Height and Reading Comfort

The space between lines can make text inviting or exhausting

- line-height controls vertical space inside a paragraph.
- Tight lines feel crowded.
- Very loose lines can feel disconnected.
- For normal paragraph text, values around 1.4 to 1.7 are often comfortable.

Readable Example

```
p { font-size: 16px; line-height: 1.6; }
```

Copy-paste CSS

- `p { line-height:1.75; }`
- `.compact { line-height:1.3; }`

Letter Spacing and Word Spacing

Small spacing changes can create elegance or damage readability

- letter-spacing adjusts distance between letters.
- word-spacing adjusts distance between words.
- A small increase can improve all-caps labels or short headings.
- Too much spacing quickly makes text hard to read.

Best Use

Use these properties as accents, not as default body text settings.

Copy-paste CSS

- `.badge { letter-spacing:2px; text-transform:uppercase; }`
- `.wide { word-spacing:4px; }`

Text Alignment

Alignment affects scanning, balance, and reading speed

- text-align can be left, center, right, or justify.
- Left alignment is usually best for normal paragraph reading.
- Centered text can work well for short titles, hero blocks, and announcements.
- Alignment should follow content purpose, not habit.

Quick Rule

Center short content; keep longer body content left-aligned.

Copy-paste CSS

- `.hero { text-align:center; }`
- `.content { text-align:left; }`

Text Transform

Case changes can create labels, headings, and visual rhythm

- text-transform can change how text is displayed: uppercase, lowercase, or capitalize.
- Uppercase works well for small labels, buttons, or navigation items.
- It should be paired with spacing and size choices.
- Long uppercase paragraphs are usually difficult to read.

Example

```
.section-label { text-transform:  
uppercase; letter-spacing: 1.5px; }
```

Copy-paste CSS

- `.section-label { text-transform:uppercase; }`
- `.section-label { letter-spacing:1.8px; font-size:13px; }`

Text Decoration and Link States

Decoration can signal interaction, emphasis, or visual polish

- text-decoration is often used with links.
- Common values: none, underline, overline, line-through.
- When removing an underline from a link, add another clear visual signal such as color or hover feedback.
- Interaction should never become invisible.

Example

```
a { text-decoration: none; color: #155e75; } a:hover { text-decoration: underline; }
```

Copy-paste CSS

- `a { text-decoration:none; color:#155e75; }`
- `a:hover { text-decoration:underline; }`

Text Shadow

A small effect that must be used with restraint

- text-shadow adds a shadow behind text.
- It can help a title stand out on a busy background.
- It can also make text look cheap or blurry if overused.
- Use subtle values and only when the background really needs support.

Safe Example

```
text-shadow: 0 2px 6px rgba(0, 0, 0, 0.25);
```

Copy-paste CSS

- .hero-title { color:#fff; }
- .hero-title { text-shadow:0 2px 8px rgba(0,0,0,.22); }

Color Systems in CSS

Different ways to write the same visual idea

- CSS accepts named colors, hex values, `rgb()`, and `hsl()`.
- Examples: `navy` | `#1d4ed8` | `rgb(29, 78, 216)` | `hsl(221, 83%, 48%)`.
- Hex is common in beginner work.
- `rgb()` and `hsl()` become useful when adjusting lightness, transparency, or consistency.

What to Notice

Students do not need every system equally today, but they should recognize each one.

Copy-paste CSS

- `.hex { color:#1d4ed8; }`
- `.rgb { color:rgb(29,78,216); }`
- `.hsl { color:hsl(221,83%,48%); }`

Building a Simple Color Palette

Primary, secondary, accent, surface, and text roles

- Good beginner pages usually need fewer colors than students expect.
- A practical palette often includes one primary color, one accent color, one light surface color, one dark text color, and one muted support color.
- Role-based thinking creates consistency.
- Random color picking creates visual noise.

Example Palette

**Primary #1d4ed8 | Accent #f97316 |
Surface #eff6ff | Text #0f172a |
Muted #64748b**

Copy-paste CSS

- `:root { --primary:#1d4ed8; --accent:#f97316; }`
- `:root { --surface:#eff6ff; --text:#0f172a; --muted:#64748b; }`

Contrast and Readability

Color choices should support reading before they support style

- High contrast between text and background improves readability.
- Light gray text on a white background may look modern but can be difficult to read.
- Dark text on a light surface is often the safest default.
- Always test with real paragraph text, not only with one short word.

Practical Rule

If students need to squint, the contrast is not strong enough.

Copy-paste CSS

- `.good-contrast { background:#fff; color:#0f172a; }`
- `.bad-contrast { background:#fff; color:#cbd5e1; }`

Color for Hierarchy

Not every text element should have the same visual strength

- Headings, supporting notes, labels, and links can use different shades to show importance.
- Example: dark heading, softer paragraph, muted metadata, brighter accent link.
- A good hierarchy uses limited contrast shifts, not random color changes.
- Color should guide attention calmly.

Example Pattern

**h1: #0f172a | p: #334155 | .meta:
#64748b | a: #1d4ed8**

Copy-paste CSS

- `h1 { color:#0f172a; }`
- `p { color:#334155; }`
- `.meta { color:#64748b; }`
- `a { color:#1d4ed8; }`

Background Color as Structure

Surfaces help separate sections even before layout becomes advanced

- background-color can be used on the body, on cards, on callouts, and on whole sections.
- A light surface behind content can make a block feel intentional.
- Surface colors help the eye group related elements.
- This is one of the easiest ways to improve beginner pages.

Example

```
.card { background-color: #ffffff; }  
body { background-color: #f8fafc; }
```

Copy-paste CSS

- `body { background:#f8fafc; }`
- `.card { background:#fff; padding:24px; border-radius:24px; }`

Background Image Basics

An image can become a mood-setting surface behind content

- background-image places an image behind an element.
- It is commonly used for hero sections, banners, and decorative panels.
- Readable text on image backgrounds usually needs extra support such as overlays or shadows.
- The image should support the content, not fight it.

CSS Pattern

```
.hero { background-image:  
url("banner.jpg"); }
```

Copy-paste CSS

- `.hero { background-image:url("banner.jpg"); }`
- `.hero { background-size:cover; background-position:center; }`

Linear Gradients

Color can create depth even without external images

- `linear-gradient()` creates a background made from two or more color stops.
- Gradients are excellent for banners, cards, callouts, and hero sections.
- They can feel modern and polished without adding files.
- The best beginner gradients stay simple and readable.

Example

```
background-image: linear-  
gradient(135deg, #1d4ed8, #0f172a);
```

Copy-paste CSS

- `.hero { background-image:linear-gradient(135deg,#1d4ed8,#0f172a); }`
- `.hero { color:#fff; }`

Background Repeat, Size, and Position

Control how a background behaves inside its container

- background-repeat decides whether an image tiles.
- background-size controls scaling: cover and contain are common values.
- background-position chooses where the image focuses.
- These properties are often used together.

Useful Combination

background-repeat: no-repeat;
background-size: cover; background-
position: center;

Copy-paste CSS

- `.panel { background-repeat:no-repeat; }`
- `.panel { background-size:cover; background-position:center; }`

Background Shorthand

Multiple background decisions can be written in a compact form

- The background shorthand can combine color, image, repeat, position, and size.
- Example: `background: linear-gradient(135deg, #1d4ed8, #0f172a) center / cover no-repeat;`
- Shorthand is efficient once students know the pieces.
- Use it after the long form is understood.

What to Notice

Do not introduce shorthand before students know what the separate properties do.

Copy-paste CSS

- `.banner { background:linear-gradient(135deg,#0f172a,#1d4ed8) center / cover no-repeat; }`
- `.banner { color:#fff; }`

Design Example 1 Overview

Article highlight card: typography plus calm surfaces

- This example combines heading hierarchy, muted metadata, readable paragraph text, and a soft card background.
- Students will see how small text decisions and color roles work together.
- No advanced layout is required.
- The visual goal is clean, editorial, and readable.

What to Notice

Ask students to predict which text properties and color roles will appear before showing the CSS.

Copy-paste CSS

- `.article-card { max-width:560px; background:#fff; }`
- `.article-card { padding:28px; border-radius:24px; }`
- `.eyebrow { color:#1d4ed8; text-transform:uppercase; }`
- `.eyebrow { letter-spacing:1.6px; font-weight:700; }`

Example 1 HTML: Article Highlight Card

A small content block with title, tag, metadata, and summary

- `<article class="article-card">`
- `<p class="eyebrow">Front-end Lab</p>`
- `<h2>Readable CSS starts with calm decisions</h2>`
- `<p class="meta">Week 8 | 15 min read</p>`
- `<p class="summary">Use text hierarchy, contrast, and surface color to make content easier to scan.</p>`
- `</article>`

Why This HTML Works

The structure is semantic, compact, and ready for class-based styling.

Copy-paste CSS

- `.article-card h1 { font-family:Georgia,serif; font-size:36px; }`
- `.meta { color:#64748b; font-size:14px; }`
- `.summary { color:#334155; line-height:1.75; }`

Example 1 CSS: Article Highlight Card

Typography, spacing, and color hierarchy in a reusable pattern

- `.article-card { background:#ffffff; color:#1e293b; padding:24px; max-width:520px; }`
- `.eyebrow { color:#1d4ed8; text-transform:uppercase; letter-spacing:1.4px; font-weight:700; }`
- `.article-card h2 { font-family: Georgia, serif; font-size:30px; line-height:1.2; margin:10px 0; }`
- `.meta { color:#64748b; font-size:14px; }`
- `.summary { line-height:1.7; color:#334155; }`

Properties in Action

This example uses hierarchy, contrast, transform, spacing, and a restrained palette instead of flashy effects.

Copy-paste CSS

- `.announcement-banner { background:linear-gradient(135deg,#0f172a,#1d4ed8); }`
- `.announcement-banner { padding:56px 40px; text-align:center; }`
- `.label { color:#bfdbfe; text-transform:uppercase; }`
- `.label { letter-spacing:2px; font-weight:700; }`
- `.announcement-banner h1 { color:#fff; }`

Example 2 HTML: Announcement Banner

A short hero-style block built from heading, paragraph, and action link

- `<section class="announcement-banner">`
- `<p class="label">Workshop</p>`
- `<h1>Design with contrast before decoration</h1>`
- `<p>Build banners that stay readable even when the background becomes dramatic.</p>`
- `Reserve a seat`
- `</section>`

Why This HTML Works

The content is short, so centered alignment and stronger visual treatment can work without harming readability.

Copy-paste CSS

- `.announcement-banner p { color:#dbeafe; line-height:1.7; }`
- `.announcement-banner a { color:#fff; text-decoration:underline; }`

Example 2 CSS: Announcement Banner

Gradient background, centered text, and controlled emphasis

- `.announcement-banner { background:linear-gradient(135deg, #0f172a, #1d4ed8); color:#ffffff; padding:48px 32px; text-align:center; }`
- `.label { text-transform:uppercase; letter-spacing:2px; color:#bfdbfe; font-weight:700; }`
- `.announcement-banner h1 { font-size:42px; line-height:1.1; text-shadow:0 2px 8px rgba(0,0,0,.22); }`
- `.announcement-banner a { color:#ffffff; text-decoration:underline; font-weight:700; }`

Properties in Action

The banner uses stronger contrast and atmosphere, but every choice still protects readability.

Copy-paste CSS

- `.profile-showcase { background:#fff7ed; color:#7c2d12; }`
- `.profile-showcase { padding:30px; border-radius:28px; }`

Example 3 HTML: Profile Showcase

A profile component with role label, short bio, and contact link

- `<section class="profile-showcase">`
- `<p class="role">Guest Speaker</p>`
- `<h2>Elif Demir</h2>`
- `<p class="bio">Front-end mentor focused on clean interfaces, reading comfort, and reusable CSS patterns.</p>`
- `View session notes`
- `</section>`

Why This HTML Works

The structure is minimal, yet it gives enough layers for hierarchy, tone, and surface styling.

Copy-paste CSS

- `.role { color:#ea580c; text-transform:uppercase; }`
- `.role { letter-spacing:1.8px; font-weight:700; }`
- `.bio { color:#9a3412; line-height:1.75; }`

Example 3 CSS: Profile Showcase

Warm background, typographic hierarchy, and a calmer mood

- `.profile-showcase { background:#fff7ed; color:#7c2d12; padding:30px; max-width:480px; }`
- `.role { color:#ea580c; text-transform:uppercase; letter-spacing:1.8px; font-size:13px; font-weight:700; }`
- `.profile-showcase h2 { font-size:34px; margin:8px 0 12px; }`
- `.bio { color:#9a3412; line-height:1.7; }`
- `.profile-showcase a { color:#c2410c; text-decoration:none; border-bottom:2px solid #fdb744; }`

Properties in Action

A softer palette changes tone immediately, while the same hierarchy principles still apply.

Copy-paste CSS

- `.profile-showcase a { color:#c2410c; text-decoration:none; }`
- `.profile-showcase a { border-bottom:2px solid #fdb744; }`

Students Can Practice with Real Files

The lesson examples are also saved as separate HTML and CSS files

- week-08-examples/article-card.html + article-card.css
- week-08-examples/announcement-banner.html + announcement-banner.css
- week-08-examples/profile-showcase.html + profile-showcase.css
- Students can open, edit, and restyle these files after the lesson.

What to Notice

Move from slide viewing to direct hands-on editing as quickly as possible.

Copy-paste CSS

- `.grid { display:grid; gap:22px; }`
- `.grid { grid-template-columns:repeat(auto-fit,minmax(240px,1fr)); }`

Guided In-Class Activity

A safe first task: restyle one example without changing the HTML structure

- Task 1: make the article card feel more formal.
- Task 2: make the banner feel brighter but still readable.
- Task 3: make the profile showcase feel more modern with a cooler palette.
- Students should only change CSS values at first.

Why This Activity Works

Students focus on design decisions, not on HTML debugging, so they can see faster results.

Copy-paste CSS

- `.practice-box { max-width:520px; background:#fff; }`
- `.practice-box { padding:24px; border-radius:24px; }`

Improvement Checklist

Questions students should ask before saying "my design is finished"

- Can I immediately see the main heading?
- Is the paragraph comfortable to read?
- Do the colors feel related or random?
- Does the background help the content stand out?

Classroom Habit

A short checklist improves quality faster than random trial and error.

Copy-paste CSS

- `.checklist { background:#fff; padding:24px; }`
- `.checklist { border-left:6px solid #1d4ed8; }`
- `.checklist li { margin-bottom:8px; }`

Common Mistakes in Text and Background Styling

What often makes a beginner design harder to use

- Too many colors on one page.
- Very small text or very weak contrast.
- Centering long paragraphs.
- Using a dramatic background image without protecting readability.

Debugging Advice

If the design feels messy, simplify first: fewer colors, calmer backgrounds, stronger contrast, clearer hierarchy.

Copy-paste CSS

- `body { background:#f8fafc; color:#0f172a; }`
- `p { line-height:1.7; }`
- `a { color:#1d4ed8; }`

Mini Challenge / Homework

Create one original component using only the HTML and CSS ideas from Weeks 7 and 8

- Choose one: event card, blog teaser, speaker card, product spotlight, or course announcement.
- Include a heading, support text, one accent label, one action link, and a designed background.
- Use at least six CSS properties from Week 8.
- Keep the design readable and consistent.

Submission Standard

Students should be able to explain their font, color, and background choices in one or two sentences.

Copy-paste CSS

- `.component { max-width:560px; background:#fff; }`
- `.component { padding:28px; border-radius:24px; }`
- `.component .label { letter-spacing:1.5px; }`

Week 8 Summary

The strongest pages are readable, consistent, and intentional

- Text properties build hierarchy and reading comfort.
- Color choices should create contrast and consistency.
- Backgrounds shape atmosphere and section structure.
- A small number of thoughtful CSS rules can transform a plain page.

Main Memory Sentence

Use CSS to help the user understand the content faster.

Copy-paste CSS

- `:root { --primary:#1d4ed8; --text:#0f172a; }`
- `:root { --muted:#64748b; --surface:#ffffff; }`
- `body { background:#f8fafc; color:var(--text); }`

Week 7 Reference Table (1)

Core syntax, selectors, and first styling tools from the previous lesson

- Concept | Purpose | Example
- selector | chooses what to style | p or .card or #mainTitle
- property | names the style type | color
- value | gives the chosen style | blue
- element selector | styles all matching tags | `h1 { color: navy; }`
- class selector | reusable styling | `.card { padding: 12px; }`
- id selector | unique target | `#mainTitle { color: maroon; }`
- grouping | reuse one rule for many selectors | `h1, h2, h3 { color: #1f4e79; }`

How to Use This Table

Tell students this is a memory sheet, not a new theory slide.

Copy-paste CSS

- `p { color:navy; }`
- `.card { padding:12px; }`
- `#mainTitle { color:maroon; }`

Week 7 Reference Table (2)

Spacing, surfaces, and early component styling from Week 7

- Property | Purpose | Example
- color | text color | color: #1f4e79;
- background-color | surface color | background-color: #f4f6fb;
- font-size | text size | font-size: 18px;
- font-family | typeface choice | font-family: Arial, sans-serif;
- text-align | alignment | text-align: center;
- border | outline around box | border: 1px solid #444;
- padding | inner space | padding: 16px;
- margin | outer space | margin: 20px auto;
- width / max-width | content width control | max-width: 520px;

Memory Tip

Week 7 gave the first toolbox; Week 8 makes that toolbox more expressive and intentional.

Copy-paste CSS

- `.card { background:#f4f6fb; border:1px solid #444; }`
- `.card { padding:16px; margin:20px auto; max-width:520px; }`

Week 8 Reference Table (1)

Text and typography properties introduced or deepened this week

- Property | Purpose | Example
- font-family | sets tone and fallback fonts | font-family: Georgia, serif;
- font-size | creates hierarchy | font-size: 36px;
- font-weight | controls emphasis | font-weight: 700;
- font-style | adds italic or normal style | font-style: italic;
- line-height | improves reading comfort | line-height: 1.6;
- letter-spacing | adjusts distance between letters | letter-spacing: 1.5px;
- word-spacing | adjusts distance between words | word-spacing: 4px;
- text-transform | changes visible case | text-transform: uppercase;
- text-decoration | styles links or marked text | text-decoration: underline;
- text-shadow | adds subtle depth when needed | text-shadow: 0 2px 6px rgba(0,0,0,.25);

How to Remember

Typography properties answer one question: how should the text feel while being read?

Copy-paste CSS

- `body { font-family:Arial,sans-serif; }`
- `h1 { font-size:36px; font-weight:700; }`
- `p { line-height:1.6; }`

Week 8 Reference Table (2)

Colors and backgrounds from this week in one review slide

- Property / Syntax | Purpose | Example
- hex / rgb() / hsl() | write color values in CSS | #1d4ed8 or rgb(29,78,216)
- background-color | adds a solid surface | background-color: #fff7ed;
- background-image | adds an image or gradient surface | background-image: url("banner.jpg");
- linear-gradient() | creates a color-to-color background | linear-gradient(135deg, #0f172a, #1d4ed8)
- background-repeat | controls tiling | background-repeat: no-repeat;
- background-size | scales background inside area | background-size: cover;
- background-position | chooses focus point | background-position: center;
- background shorthand | combines multiple background settings | background: linear-gradient(...) center / cover no-repeat;
- color contrast | keeps text readable on any surface | dark text on light, light text on dark

Final Message

Students should leave with a usable visual vocabulary for both text and surfaces.

Copy-paste CSS

- `.hero { background:linear-gradient(135deg,#0f172a,#1d4ed8) center / cover no-repeat; }`
- `.hero { color:#fff; }`