

CSS: The Missing Manual  
By David Sawyer McFarland  
From Pogue Press/O'Reilly  
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Find this book online at <http://www.oreilly.com/catalog/csstmm/>

I loved this book! It held my attention, moved fast, I learned a lot and I had fun doing it. I expected a book on Cascading Style Sheets to be a bit on the dry side but found McFarland's writing style not only easy to read but very enjoyable. His sense of humor would occasionally have me laughing out loud. The book is filled with information that is presented clearly. Some of the things about CSS that have left me a bit baffled in the past suddenly made sense.

The book begins with a brief overview of HTML that includes the reasons why Cascading Style Sheets are a better way to style web pages. It covers what HTML tags to eliminate and why to replace them with CSS. The chapters are set up with the information presented first and end with hands on tutorials complete with downloadable files. Being able to actually write CSS and apply what I'd learned was a great reinforcement.

CSS is covered from basic to advanced techniques leading in a way that keeps building on skills just learned. The attention focused on making it work in a variety of browsers including older ones was wonderful. For people like me that are not true professionals, browser variances are always a mystery. Not only are solutions to problems presented but the logic behind fixing them is shared.

The book also is loaded with CSS resources that include links to tutorials, bulletin boards and other sites for further education or help. You can find them both appropriately placed throughout the book as well as listed at the end. The only thing I would have liked to have included is a CD. The book ends with three Appendixes which recap CSS properties cover Adobe's Dreamweaver and list resources. That in itself was well worth the price of the book.