

CSS Reset Technique

You can find this code in the tutorial files for McFarland's *CSS The Missing Manual* at www.sawmac.com/css2e/ inside the 15 folder (reset.css file)



```
html, body, h1, h2, h3, h4, h5, h6, p, ol,
ul, li, pre, code, address, variable, form,
fieldset, blockquote {
padding: 0;
margin: 0;
font-size: 100%;
font-weight: normal;
}
table {
border-collapse: collapse;
border-spacing: 0;
}
td, th, caption {
font-weight: normal;
text-align: left;
}
img, fieldset {
border: 0;
}
ol {
padding-left: 1.4em;
list-style: decimal;
}
ul {
padding-left: 1.4em;
list-style: square;
}
q:before, q:after {
content:"";
}
```

Web browsers contain basic, minimal formatting for HTML tags—headings and links and so on—that are best “zeroed out” to clear the decks and allow you to style a web page how you wish without fighting with those defaults that seem to come out of nowhere and jam you up. The CSS Reset Technique entails setting up some basic styles at the beginning of your style sheet that remove any browser formatting.

Another good reason for removing default formatting is that the defaults are not applied consistently among the different browsers. Who needs that?

WHAT TO ZERO OUT?

Begin by removing or zeroing the PADDING and MARGINS on block-level elements, like <p> tags. Also zero the offsets in the body tag that push the webpage content down and away left from the browser chrome and set your own, if you want them. Other tags to reset include borders around images, tables and table cells, set consistent indents and bullet types on lists, remove quote marks.

THE CASCADE DOES THE REST

Be sure to add the reset styles to the beginning of your style sheet (or linked from an external style sheet BEFORE any other linked or imported style sheet, then trust the cascade to override these reset styles when and if you write a specific rule sets the wanted values for those properties.

Some of the tags that are reset with the CSS reset code to the left may not be used on your web pages, but if you ever were to make use of some of those more specialized tags, it's nice to know that your reset styles are there, quietly waiting to save you some grief.