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CSS Secrets: Better Solutions To Everyday Web Design Problems



Synopsis

In this practical guide, CSS expert Lea Verou provides 47 undocumented techniques and tips to help intermediate-to advanced CSS developers devise elegant solutions to a wide range of everyday web design problems. Rather than focus on design, CSS Secrets shows you how to solve problems with code. You'll learn how to apply Lea's analytical approach to practically every CSS problem you face to attain DRY, maintainable, flexible, lightweight, and standards-compliant results. Inspired by her popular talks at over 60 international web development conferences, Lea Verou provides a wealth of information for topics including: Backgrounds and Borders Shapes Visual Effects Typography User Experience Structure and Layout Transitions and Animations

Book Information

Paperback: 392 pages

Publisher: O'Reilly Media; 1 edition (July 3, 2015)

Language: English

ISBN-10: 1449372635

ISBN-13: 978-1449372637

Product Dimensions: 7.9 x 0.8 x 9.7 inches

Shipping Weight: 2.3 pounds (View shipping rates and policies)

Average Customer Review: 4.9 out of 5 stars [See all reviews](#) (60 customer reviews)

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Customer Reviews

Reviews have been stellar both here and on @LeaVerou's Twitter account which finally led me to get my hands on a copy. First, there were a number of completely new bits that I was glad to put in my CSS quiver as well as novel ways of putting together familiar concepts to achieve results or work around peculiar issues. The former included `font-variant-ligatures`, `unicode-range` (and descriptor vs. property), `steps()` animation method, and the `resize` property which open a lot of opportunities for enhancing CSS, while the latter comprised a good number of the tips/recipes. I think my favorite thing about the book is that, while you don't *need* a strong math background, she doesn't shy away from handing you the formulas from which she derives certain magic numbers. Too few design books are willing to do things as radical (pun intended) as using an actual square-root

symbol, equations, or offering the linear algebra for `transform` properties (the linear algebra was high-level "transform to the origin, rotate, transform back" but still more mathy than any other CSS book that isn't a technical specification). There might be those designers who get scared off by a little math, but the book would be almost as useful even if you ignored the math bits. Another highlight is the format of "here's what we're trying to accomplish, here's a mostly-obvious solution that comes close but has these issues (maybe with another one or two iterations)" followed by the final "let's address these issues and do it in a way that solves as many of those issues as we can".

Lea Verou's new book CSS Secrets is for frontend webdevelopers who use CSS in their daily work. The book assumes you already know, for example, CSS2 selectors, transforms and ::before/::after pseudo elements. But the book is still useful if you don't. You do need to have a basic understanding of CSS, so if you're still struggling with position: relative and position: absolute, you'll better start with a beginner level book. The book shows 47 "CSS Secrets": problems you might encounter in your work and are not trivial to fix. This approach works very well. It's much better than having long lists of features you still don't know how to apply exactly. Every secret has nice illustrations and clear explanations of what the code does. With some secrets, Lea takes you through the thought process to the final solution. The book is certainly not just a list of 47 problems and solutions, but it also shows you best practices, caveats and how to make your code backwards compatible. What's really clever about this book is that it touches every important technology you should know about. Not only all important CSS features like CSS Animations, but also SASS, JavaScript and SVG. It doesn't explain everything you can do, but it shows that it exists, how to use it in practice and it might trigger you to read more about it. Lea put a lot of effort in this book and it shows: the layout and illustrations are beautiful and I didn't find any errors or inconsistencies, although I do find them in most other computer books. Since this book is published by O'Reilly, you might wonder why the book is not called CSS Cookbook, since it seems to fit in the popular cookbook series.

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