The basics of CSS

Cascading style sheets (CSS) allow you to separate the content of a web page from how it is presented. This is useful if you want to be able to change how a page is printed, compared to how it is viewed on-screen. Or to allow it to be more accessible to people with disabilities: allowing them to choose a high contrast style in their browser for example. By using CSS there are many more creative things you can do to the content that are not possible with HTML alone.

1. Create a new text file called stylesheet.css
2. In the file, enter:

h1 {

 font-family: Verdana;

 font-size: medium;

 color: #039;

 background-color: #99CCFF;

 border-width: 1px;

 border-style: solid;

 border-color: #039;

 width: 50%;

 height: 30px;

}

1. Save the file as: stylesheet.css
*(Make sure that no additional extensions are added, for example, Notepad may add .txt)*
2. Now you need to link the stylesheet to the web page.
Inside the <head> section of a html page, add a link reference:

<link href="stylesheet.css" rel="stylesheet">

Note the effect that these styles have on the heading on the web page.

# Applying styles to other elements

If you want to style other sections of the page, such as a block of text with an image, you need to create a class or identifier in the CSS file. Identifiers are used for items that only exist once on a page, such as a navigation bar. Styles are used where you want to apply the mark-up to more than one aspect of a page. In reality, it doesn’t really matter if you use styles for everything.

Classes are defined with a dot like this:

.content {

 font-family: Verdana;

}

Identifiers are defined with the hash symbol like this:

#menu {

background-color: #99CCFF;

}

Whether you use classes or identifiers, you need to specify in the HTML page which elements this style applies to using the <div> tag and the class attribute or the id attribute. E.g.

<div class="content">

This is the content you want to style

</div>

Note, the dot only exists in the CSS file, not in the class attribute.