

Web Teacher

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Make Rounded Corners with CSS3

There's a new version of Cascading Style Sheets (CSS) in the works—CSS3. With this new set of rules for styling your blogs and web pages, you can do things that previously could only be done with images.

One bit of magic that you can do with a CSS style rule now is make rounded corners. You can apply rounded corners to borders, [fieldsets](#), or anything that has a border line around it.

Everything on a web page is in a box. Every paragraph, heading or image you stick on a web page is bounded by a box. Usually you aren't aware of the box, because you don't see the borders—the boundaries of the box are not visible. If you put borders on the box, the edges of the box are made visible. Borders frame the element on the page and help separate one sort of content from another. The default borders create square cornered rectangles.

I've used rounded corners in several places on this blog. Here's a specific example. I have a slideshow from Flickr in my sidebar. I put a border around the heading and the slideshow to separate that particular bit of content on my page into a unique element. I made the border have rounded corners.

The Rounded Corner How To

Find the relevant rule in your stylesheet. Every part of your page probably already has some style rules in place. If there's already a border rule, change it. If it doesn't have a border rule yet, add it. Here's what I did in the part of my stylesheet where I styled the slideshow:

```
#womenintechslides {  
border: solid 1px #3CF;  
-webkit-border-radius: 8px;  
-moz-border-radius: 8px;  
border-radius: 8px;  
}
```

I'll explain the rule. I added the slideshow to my HTML page using a div with the ID "womenintechslides." The rule styles that div. First I set the border itself. I made it solid. I made it 1px in width. I made it an aqua color represented by the code #3CF. That much alone would add a border, but the border would have square corners.

The CSS3 property that rounds corners is **border-radius**. For that property, give a value in pixels to set how curved you want the corner to be. If you go beyond about 18px for the radius, it starts to look bad (pixelated), but try various numbers to find what you like.

CSS3 isn't set in stone yet. The various browsers are adopting bits of it at different rates. You have to add a couple of redundant border-radius declarations aimed at different browsers, at least for now. The -webkit-border-radius declaration is meant for webkit browsers like Safari and Chrome. The -moz-border-radius one is for mozilla browsers like Firefox. If you put the standards rule—border-radius—last, it will be the one used when all browsers finally get CSS3

implemented using the same rules. By that time, you'll only need the border-radius rule and the others can be dropped.

That's the whole magic trick: border-radius. Go round something off.



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This was written by vdebolt. Posted on Wednesday, June 16, 2010, at 5:14 am. Filed under [CSS](#), [WebDesign](#), [WebStandards](#), [WebTeacherTips](#). Bookmark the [permalink](#). Follow comments here with the [RSS feed](#).

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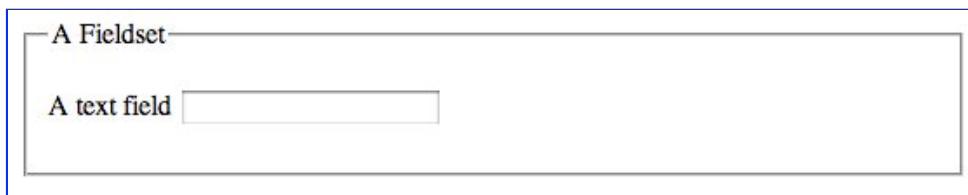
Style a fieldset with rounded corners using CSS

The default display for a fieldset is a square cornered border. In certain browsers (Firefox and Safari and perhaps others) you can use CSS to make rounded corners on the border around the fieldset and around the legend.

Look at this simple form:

```
<form id="example" name="example" method="post" action="send.php">
<fieldset>
<legend>A Fieldset</legend>
<label for="ex1">A text field</label>
<input type="text" name="ex1" id="ex1" />
</fieldset>
</form>
```

Here's how that looks in Safari, with no CSS styling.



I applied these rules to the fieldset selector in the CSS

```
fieldset {
border-radius: 8px;
-webkit-border-radius: 8px;
-moz-border-radius: 8px;
}
```

Again in Safari, here's what you see now.



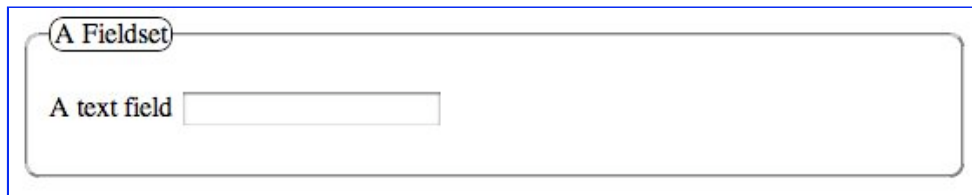
The property used to create rounded corners is the border property. The rule is repeated three times, a redundancy meant to create the effect in as many browsers as possible. The border-radius rule is CSS3, not yet in standard adoption by all browsers. The webkit-border-radius rule is understood by all webkit browsers such as Safari. The moz-border-radius is understood by all mozilla based browsers such as Firefox.

A border can be added to the legend as well. That element can also display the rounded borders. Here's the CSS.

```
legend {
border: solid 1px black;
border-radius: 8px;
-webkit-border-radius: 8px;
```

```
-moz-border-radius: 8px;  
}
```

This is how it displays in Safari.



A couple of changes to show how the legend's appearance might be improved can be made in the CSS.

```
legend {  
background: #FF9;  
border: solid 1px black;  
border-radius: 8px;  
-webkit-border-radius: 8px;  
-moz-border-radius: 8px;  
padding: 6px;  
}
```

Now the legend displays like this.



Additional articles at Web Teacher about styling fieldsets with CSS:

- [Style Fieldsets like a Pro](#)
- [Three examples of fieldsets styled with CSS](#)
- [Styling the label element with CSS](#)
- [Styling a Fieldset with CSS](#)

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This was written by vdebolt. Posted on Saturday, February 27, 2010, at 8:25 am. Filed under [CSS](#). Bookmark the [permalink](#). Follow comments here with the [RSS feed](#).

Tags: [fieldset](#)

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6 Comments

1. [Lars Gunther](#) wrote:

This is one of the things students always ask for, so keep sharing the knowledge.

I will give one additional tip. Put experimental features first and the standard rule last. Firefox current implementation differs from the W3C spec. When they get the real thing out, you do not want to have that overridden.

I have written about that at

<http://itpastorn.blogspot.com/2009/06/do-not-put-experimental-features-last.html>

Lars Gunther's last blog ..[Högre kvalitet på webb-utbildningen på gymnasiet](#) 

Saturday, February 27, 2010 at 1:32 pm | [Permalink](#) | [Edit](#)

2. [vdebolt](#) wrote:

Thanks for the great tip, Lars. To bring what Lars is saying down to the level of the cascade, the rules should be ordered thus:

```
fieldset {  
-webkit-border-radius: 8px;  
-moz-border-radius: 8px;  
border-radius: 8px;  
}
```

which makes the W3C rule for CSS3 fall last in the cascade.

Saturday, February 27, 2010 at 2:44 pm | [Permalink](#) | [Edit](#)

3. Sudhir wrote:

this css display only mozilla not an IE7

Wednesday, April 7, 2010 at 10:17 pm | [Permalink](#) | [Edit](#)

4. [vdebolt](#) wrote:

It displays as a normal square cornered box, which is still usable and functional, right?

Thursday, April 8, 2010 at 5:16 am | [Permalink](#) | [Edit](#)

5. winka wrote:

Thanks very usefull trick. It looks that broder-radius doesn't work for fieldset, but works for legend. I already reported problem on broken fieldset border radius support.

Wednesday, June 23, 2010 at 1:01 pm | [Permalink](#) | [Edit](#)

6. [vdebolt](#) wrote:

Winka, It does work for fieldset in some browsers.

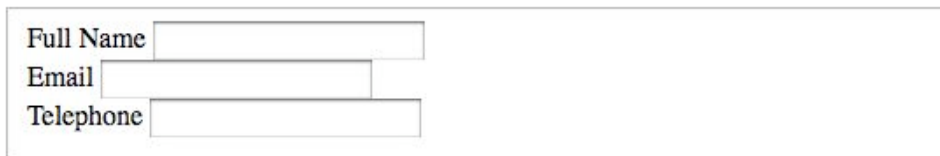
Wednesday, June 23, 2010 at 1:36 pm | [Permalink](#) | [Edit](#)

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Style Fieldsets like a Pro

Just a few CSS rules can make your fieldset look like it was styled by a pro. A fieldset is used to organize forms into sections that can be identified with labels called legends. We're going to start this discussion looking at a fieldset with no legend. We'll get to legends in a bit.

Here's a fieldset with no styling as displayed in the Firefox browser.

A screenshot of a web form in a Firefox browser. The form is enclosed in a fieldset with a thin, light gray border. Inside the fieldset, there are three labels: "Full Name", "Email", and "Telephone", each followed by a text input field. The labels are left-aligned, and the input fields are stacked vertically.

The default Firefox fieldset is a gray border around the enclosed form fields. I'll start with the border. This rule will change the make it solid, 2 pixels in width, and a dark blue.

```
fieldset {  
border: 2px solid #00F;  
}
```

This changes the appearance:

A screenshot of the same web form as before, but now the fieldset has a solid dark blue border that is 2 pixels thick. The labels and input fields remain the same.

Any border width, style or color could be used. Next, I'll round the corners. With one CSS declaration for any browsers that may support the border-radius property in the future, one declaration for webkit browsers like Safari, and one declaration for Mozilla based browsers like Firefox. Three declarations are necessary because the border-radius property is not fully adopted yet.

```
fieldset {  
border: 2px solid #00F;  
border-radius: 8px;  
-webkit-border-radius: 8px;  
-moz-border-radius: 8px;  
}
```

In Firefox, you now see this.

A screenshot of the web form in Firefox. The fieldset now has a solid dark blue border with rounded corners. The labels "Full Name", "Email", and "Telephone" and their corresponding input fields are still present.

I want to change the alignment in the form. That has nothing to do with the fieldset, but it will look better if the fields align. This is the rule added.

```
label {  
padding: 3px;  
display: block;  
}
```

The new appearance.



Full Name

Email

Telephone

Many rules can be applied to the label element. Color, font, and other aspects of the label appearance can be styled.

There are still many things that can be styled about the fieldset. Width, background-color, background-image and others. Here's the fieldset with a gradient background image added to the fieldset rule.

```
fieldset {  
border: 2px solid #00F;  
border-radius: 8px;  
-webkit-border-radius: 8px;  
-moz-border-radius: 8px;  
background: url(fieldsetbg.jpg) no-repeat left top;  
}
```

The effect is this.



Full Name

Email

Telephone

What about legends?

Web Teacher [reviewed *Fancy Form Design*](#) a few days ago. One of the things I learned in that fine little book is that screen readers such as JAWS announce the fieldset legend anew for each new field in the fieldset. The example in *Fancy Form Design* uses a fieldset with the legend "Change Password" and fields labeled "Current Password" and "New Password." The authors pointed out that hearing the screen reader say "Change Password" before each of the form labels can be quite a lot of listening to the word "password." As the authors also pointed out, not every screen reader even announces the legend at all.

Before I explain the solution from *Fancy Form Design*, here's how the fieldset would look with an unstyled legend added.



Your contact information

Full Name

Email

Telephone

So you'll see what some of the possibilities are with styling a legend, I'll show you a legend with the following rule applied.

```
legend {  
  font-weight: bold;  
  font-size: 1.5em;  
  color: #03F;  
  border: 1px solid #03F;  
  padding: 5px;  
}
```

Here's how it looks.



Your contact information

Full Name

Email

Telephone

Much more can be done to the legend with CSS. For example, the corners could be rounded, the background could be styled, the font could be changed, and so on.

For this example form, I don't think it would be too much for a screen reader to announce, "Your contact information, full name" followed by "Your contact information, email," and "Your contact information, telephone." I might decide to use the legend here.

In *Fancy Form Design*, the authors suggest using a heading before the fieldset, rather than using a legend in the fieldset. With a heading rather than a legend, the screen reader would read the heading just once. Visually, it still makes sense. Here it is with an unstyled h3 element.

Your contact information

Full Name

Email

Telephone

My advice is to decide whether or not a legend makes sense on a case-by-case basis.

Conclusion

You can style a fieldset like a pro when you realize that everything you know about CSS can be applied to the elements, classes and ids that exist as hooks for CSS rules within the HTML used to construct the form. Everything you know about styling fonts, colors, backgrounds, borders, padding, margin, width, display, and other CSS properties can be applied to styling fieldsets.

See also:

- [Three examples of fieldsets styled with CSS](#)
- [Styling a fieldset with CSS](#)

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This was written by vdebolt. Posted on Thursday,
December 10, 2009, at 8:16 am. Filed under [CSS](#), [HTML](#),
[WebTeacherTips](#), [accessibility](#), [design](#). Bookmark the
[permalink](#). Follow comments here with the [RSS feed](#).

Tags: [fieldset](#)

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Tip: Styling a fieldset with CSS

A form element that will help you organize and clarify a form is the fieldset element. A form can contain more than one fieldset. For example, there might be a fieldset containing the form elements for the user's personal information: name, email, etc. Another fieldset might collect information about a question, a product, or a service. Depending on the purpose of the form, fieldsets can help break it up into meaningful chunks and visually distinct areas.

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Reserve Your Space

Your Full Name

Email

Phone

Click the image to see the actual HTML page. (The form is nonfunctioning, submit won't get you anywhere.)

The form in the example contains one fieldset. It's simple, but it's enough to illustrate the point.

Here's the code for the field



```
<fieldset>
<legend>Reserve Your Space</legend>
<p>
<label>Your Full Name
<input type="text" name="name" id="name" />
</label>
</p>
<p>
<label>Email
<input type="text" name="email" id="email" />
</label>
</p>
<p>
<label>Phone
<input type="text" name="phone" id="phone" />
</label>
</p>
<p><input type="submit" name="button" id="button" value="Submit" />
</p>
```

```
</fieldset>
```

Look at the various elements in the form. These elements can be styled: `fieldset`, `legend`, `p`, `label`, `input`. (The `p` elements aren't necessary, the example could use `br` or `div` instead. And, in most forms, the submit button would not be part of a fieldset, particularly if the form had more than one fieldset, which is a very likely scenario.)

Any rule of CSS can be applied to any or all of the form elements present. You can write rules for fonts, colors, background, background-image, line spacing, padding, margin, border, or anything else you might want to present in a particular way.

These are the CSS rules I wrote. You could do this many other ways.

```
fieldset {
border: 1px solid #CCA383;
width: 50%;
background: #FFE8EF;
padding: 3px;
}
fieldset legend {
background: #CCA383;
padding: 6px;
font-weight: bold;
}
```

Some simple touches with CSS involving color, padding, and border make the legend stand out and visually emphasize the form on the page.

See also: [Styling the Label Element with CSS](#), which contains the same fieldset with additional styling for the label elements. Also see [Three examples of fieldsets styled with CSS](#), which gives some very different fieldset examples.

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1. [Web Teacher > Tip: Styling a fieldset with CSS | Best Web Gallery](#) on Thursday, February 26, 2009 at 9:59 pm | [Edit](#)