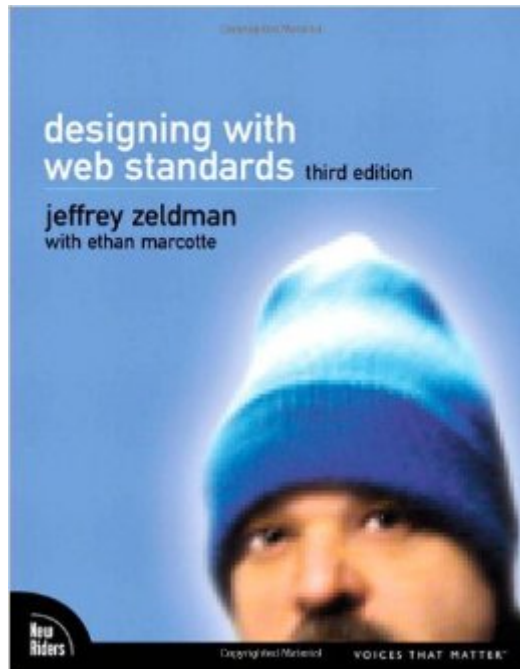


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# Designing With Web Standards (3rd Edition)



## Synopsis

Best-selling author, designer, and web standards evangelist Jeffrey Zeldman has revisited his classic, industry-shaking guidebook. Updated in collaboration with co-author Ethan Marcotte, this third edition covers improvements and challenges in the changing environment of standards-based design. Written in the same engaging and witty style, making even the most complex information easy to digest, *Designing with Web Standards* remains your essential guide to creating sites that load faster, reach more users, and cost less to design and maintain. Substantially revised—packed with new ideas—How will HTML5, CSS3, and web fonts change your work? Learn new strategies for selling standards. Change what “E6 support” means. Occasionally (very occasionally) you come across an author who makes you think, “This guy is smart! And he makes me feel smarter, because now I finally understand this concept.” — Steve Krug, author of *Don't Make Me Think* and *Rocket Surgery Made Easy* — “A web designer without a copy of *Designing with Web Standards* is like a carpenter without a level. With this third edition, Zeldman continues to be the voice of clarity; explaining the complex in plain English for the rest of us.” — Dan Cederholm, author, *Bulletproof Web Design* and *Handcrafted CSS* — “Jeffrey Zeldman sits somewhere between “guru” and “god” in this industry” and manages to fold wisdom and wit into a tale about WHAT web standards are, HOW standards-based coding works, and WHY we should care.” — Kelly Goto, author, *Web ReDesign 2.0: Workflow that Works* — “Some books are meant to be read. *Designing with Web Standards* is even more: intended to be highlighted, dogeared, bookmarked, shared, passed around, and evangelized, it goes beyond reading to revolution.” — Liz Danzico, Chair, MFA Interaction Design, School of Visual Arts

## Book Information

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## Customer Reviews

There have undoubtedly been enough useful reviews of this book already written to enable anyone interested to form an accurate assessment of its contents. Some reviewers have rated it poorly because it was not the comprehensive CSS instruction book they expected. Perhaps they were misled, in part, by some of the five-star reviews that were a bit over-zealous in their praise of it as a book about CSS. With that in mind, I'm hoping another short review will help clear up some of these misunderstandings. First, the book is NOT a comprehensive treatment of (X)HTML or CSS. It is, however, perhaps the best book around about WHY web standards are important and how they can be utilized to produce semantic markup properly separated from presentational styling, improve code weight, increase accessibility, and deal with cross-browser incompatibilities. Toward this end, Zeldman uses enough good code examples to get his message across. Although it is true that a large portion of the book is dedicated to hard-core preaching about the value of modern standards, the included code is succinct and useful. In particular, his dissection of an actual well-designed website in the last chapter is a gold mine of valuable information. Zeldman has been at the forefront of the effort to evangelize web standards for many years. He and others (e.g., Cederholm, Marcotte, Moll, Budd, etc.) deserve much of the credit for informing designers about the advantages of standards-based design techniques and getting browser manufacturers to shift from their history of internecine warfare toward endorsing common standards. That has not been an easy task. I suggest that we should all cut Zeldman a little slack if he seems at times to be a bit too passionate.

I can't understand the extreme popularity of this book. I think there are much better titles on the topic, from which "Web Standards: Mastering HTML5, CSS3, and XML" by Leslie F. Sikos is my new favourite, and it is superior compared to this book. The readers of Designing with Web standards cannot learn the top reasons why so many websites are invalid, and--what's even more important--how to create fully-standard compliant websites while considering the most aspects without crossing the line of unreasonable support for obsolete browsers. One thing is for sure: the authors might be famous Web developers but they are not good writers at all. They provide very few sample code, many of which apply various hacks for backward compatibility (mainly to support IE6). For example, providing hack for a transparent PNG image using JavaScript just to support IE6 is a huge mistake (writing about IE3 and Netscape 4 is another). One of the golden rules in website

standardization is to avoid browser targeting, and writing clean, fully standards-complaint markup and styles instead, and provide a less advanced user experience in earlier browsers (still the information is there). Version targeting is a bad practice true standardistas do not use. There are no skeleton documents that could be used for step-by-step development, especially when starting Web documents from scratch. Evidently, the authors are not true hand coders even if their knowledge and influence on Web standards are unquestionable. Although Zeldman correctly interprets some advantages of XHTML over HTML, he recommends the Transitional variant of XHTML 1.0, which actually allows strictly presentational elements and attributes that have been deprecated in the Transitional variant of HTML 4.01 way back in 1999.

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