

## essentials (<http://www.zeldman.com/essentials/>):

# printer-friendly

This site now sports a print style sheet. Try printing this page in your favorite browser. Where did the nav bar go? The print style sheet hid it. You don't need nav bars in a printout. Where did the sidebar go? The print style sheet hid it. The print style sheet is Ted Turner in reverse. It de-colorizes the site for easier printing. The print style sheet turns off justification, changes the font and line-height. In Gecko-based browsers like Netscape and Mozilla, and in recent versions of Opera, it pecks out URLs.

**Our print style sheet** (<http://www.zeldman.com/c/print.css>) is a work in progress. The navigational elements it hides double as brand identifiers. An alternate brand ID is needed for printouts. A few additional tweaks and changes would not be amiss. Some rules could be consolidated to save bandwidth. Even so, this first draft print style sheet may help designers who are crafting their own printer-friendly styles.

Note the use of pts. We're designing for paper, here, not for the screen:

```
body    {
    margin: 0;
    padding: 0;
    font-family: verdana, arial, sans-serif;

    font-size: 10pt;
    color: black;
    background-color: white;
}
```

Note the use of `display: none` to hide whole chunks of screen stuff from the printer:

```
#secondarynav {

    display: none;
}
```

Note that nearly all whitespace values given in px for **screen** (<http://www.zeldman.com/c/basicus.css>) **styles**

<http://www.zeldman.com/c/sophisto.css> have been converted to ems for print.

The screen version:

```
#table h3      {  
  
    margin-top: 25px;  
    margin-bottom: 25px;  
}
```

The print version:

```
#table h3      {  
  
    margin-top: 2em;  
    margin-bottom: 2em;  
}
```

Why the change from px to ems? The screen styles control numerous elements arranged on a grid. The grid requires the precision of pixels. The print styles show only the primary content. Hence no grid. Hence relative values (ems) are good enough. In fact, they're better, because they avoid potential px-to-pt conversion errors.

Eric Meyer's "[Going to Print](http://www.alistapart.com/stories/goingtoprint/)" (A List Apart No. 144) can help you learn to conceptualize and design print styles. A [French translation](http://pompage.net/pompe/impression/) is available at pompage.net.



<http://www.zeldman.com/>

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ISSN No. 1534-0309. [XHTML](http://validator.w3.org/check/referer), [CSS](http://jigsaw.w3.org/css-validator/check/referer)

<http://jigsaw.w3.org/css-validator/check/referer>, **508**

<http://bobby.cast.org/bobby/bobbyServlet?URL=http%3A%2F%2Fwww.zeldman.com%2F>