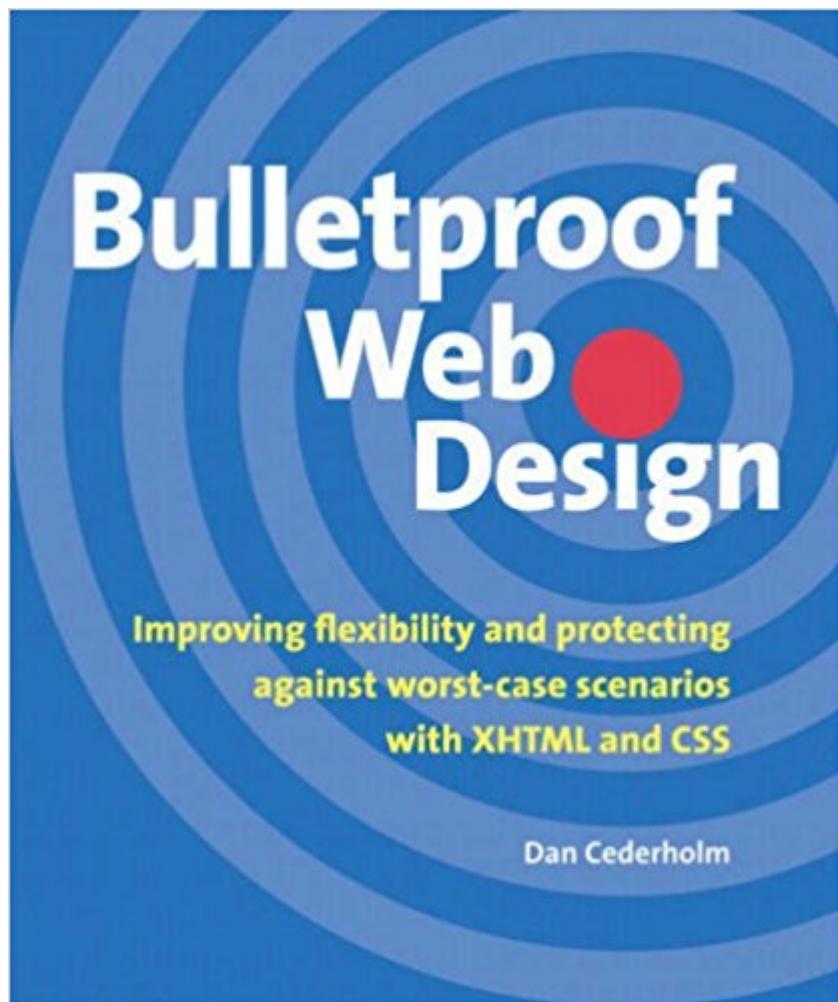


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# Bulletproof Web Design: Improving Flexibility And Protecting Against Worst-case Scenarios With XHTML And CSS



## Synopsis

No matter how visually appealing or packed with content your Web site is, it isn't succeeding if it's not reaching the widest possible audience. If you get this guide, you can be assured it will! By deconstructing a series of real-world Web sites, author and Web designer extraordinaire Dan Cederholm outlines 10 strategies for creating standards-based designs that provide flexibility, readability, and user control—the key components of every successful Web site. Each chapter starts out with an example of what Dan refers to as an “bulletproof” concept—an existing site that employs a traditional approach and its associated pitfalls. Dan then deconstructs that approach, noting its downsides and then making the site over using Cascading Style Sheets (CSS). By the end of each chapter, you'll have replaced traditional, bloated, inaccessible page components with lean markup and CSS. The guide culminates with a chapter that pieces together all of the page components discussed in prior chapters into a single page template.

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## Customer Reviews

If you are just coming over the the standards-compliant light, this book is the best for showing real, working techniques. Great examples that work. A cookbook. Cederholm won my heart and my mind with "Web Standards Solutions" and this book builds on that theme. The man is a good writer, easy to understand, and he makes compelling and lucid points. Cederholm's presentation is great: he states a problem or goal, then examines several different ways of solving it. The examinations are just a paragraph or two long -- short and to the point. He points out the strengths and weaknesses

of the various solutions, then concludes with a "best practices" solution. Finally, he builds on and refines the best practices solution to deliver a finished piece. When there is no clear-cut best way, he lays the cards on the table and lets you decide what is best for your specific application. He talks about the compromises between pixel-perfect layouts and fluid layouts and how each effects design and usability issues. It is not stand-alone because a good reference is still useful to have by your side.

I'm a Web designer for one of the big three office supply chains in the US. This book is never more than an arm's reach away from my workstation, and I consult it almost daily. Unlike other XHTML/CSS books that examine what's theoretically possible, Cederholm's book focuses on foolproof solutions to common Web design issues. It is engagingly written and beautifully laid out. With this book and a basic knowledge of CSS, you'll be creating pages that not only look great, but make the Web a better place. This is the new Web bible. Buy it, read it, live it.

Bulletproof Web Design does an incredible job of teaching, step-by-step, how to make your website 'Bulletproof.' The author introduced the book by defining what it means to have a bulletproof website. He used the example of a police officer wearing a bulletproof vest. No, it is not 100% protection against a bullet - but it decreases the chances and is extra protection. When applied to a website, this means that your website can handle the 'bullets' being thrown at it. These are things like text resizing, use of assistive devices, no CSS, no images, and a few other examples. The thing I liked most about this book is that it wasn't preaching web standards - It was simply walking you through each chapter - with each chapter building on the last - and showing you techniques that WORK. The book itself does an incredible job of keeping your attention through the use of images, highlighting, and full code listing. For those who can't quite grasp CSS (especially positioning and the like), this book is extremely helpful through its thorough explanations and visuals. Screenshots are provided each step of the way to let you see your progress. Each chapter introduces you to new ways of handling things like text display, link display, navigation, list elements, layouts, floating, positioning, and a few others. Each chapter first takes an example of a website (or aspect of a website) that is NOT bulletproof, then re-constructs that example with semantic XHTML and CSS to show you the results. The last chapter of the book brings it all together and shows you how it could be used in a production environment, with each piece of the puzzle being put together. The author doesn't dwell on the array of hacks and filters - but simply lists the ones that he uses and how they get the job done (and why they are needed). Using proper XHTML and CSS is sometimes

misunderstood. This is where many will start with a bad case of classitis and divitis and start going crazy adding extra markup. The author does a great job of creating very lean, structured, semantic XHTML. This is the XHTML that is friendly to browsers and other devices alike, as well as rich in meaning. Using proper elements to get the job done is vitally important to the meaning of the website itself. He focuses on this aspect, and with each chapter discusses the importance of the structure and not adding unnecessary presentational markup to your pages. It is this separation of presentation and content that ultimately makes using proper CSS a wise choice. Quite frankly, this is one of the best CSS books I have read - and would recommend it to both the beginner and advanced CSS developer. This review doesn't even do the book justice - mainly because you need to buy it and read it to really enjoy the context as a whole. There are many things I could explain in more detail, and there are many different things that I learned through reading this book (some of which were things that were needed immediately). This is a no-fluff CSS book that brings everything together nicely, and a must have for any web developers bookshelf!

I've read a lot of good about this book and a lot of good from Dan Cederholm so I had my hopes up when I got this book. I have to admit I was a bit let down. Don't get me wrong, it does a fantastic job in exposing how easy it is to convert old and clumsy design to new, slick, CSS based design with very little effort. It feels short though and, at times, repetitive. The entire last chapter, while meant to be a recap of all the previous chapters, feels unnecessary as the entire book is only 260 pages. There's very little need for a recap when you read the entire book in a couple of hours. It's not a great reference book either. While you can look up the chapter about indestructible boxes in order to check how Dan actually anchors all the corners, it's not laid out in a manner that encourages this (and I don't think that was the idea with the book to begin with either). I did get a lot of inspiration and the section about floats was quite informative, though I would like some more information about what we're doing instead of just enough to solve the specific problem. At times Dan hints to how to use certain tricks to achieve a certain result that's not part of the current design but most of the time the book points to various (mostly excellent) resources on the net where you need to continue your research on your own. One thing the book does great is pointing out how important it is to have "logical" and intelligent markup before you start applying CSS and that CSS isn't the solution to every single design problem on the Internet. I think the book is pricey considering that it's short and you will probably not use it as a reference guide once you get the hang of the ideas and tricks Dan teaches out. If you on the other hand need to get a kickstart as far as designing with CSS goes then it's invaluable. I'm never going to use tables the same way as I used to, for instance.

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