

Creating a CSS driven menu system – Part 2

Appearance and position in life are everything – so they say!

Lets start by adding in some <a> elements to provide our hyperlinks and some real world menu items.

```
<div id='navigation'>
  <ul class='level1'>
    <li><a href='home.html'>Home</a></li>
    <li><a href='about.html'>About us</a></li>
    <li class='submenu' >Services
      <ul class='level2' id='sub1'>
        <li><a href='design.html'>Web site design</a></li>
        <li><a href='hosting.html'>Web site hosting</a></li>
        <li><a href='search.html'>Search engine submission</a></li>
      </ul>
    </li>
    <li><a href='contact.html'>Contact us</a></li>
  </ul>
</div>
```

Display this version in your browser and you will see that as well as looking a bit on the dull side there is some overlap of text. Lets start fixing these problems.

```
div#navigation {
  /* Coding as required for page location*/
  position: relative;
  font-size: 12px;
  font-family: Verdana, Arial, sans-serif;
}
```

Good time to add some font styling.

```
div#navigation ul {
  list-style: none;
  list-image: none;
  margin: 0;
  padding: 0;
  position: absolute;
  border: 1px solid #000;
  border-bottom: none;
  background-color: #C8C8C8;
  width: 80px;
}
```

Add a border to the menu blocks but not to the bottom.
Set the width to accommodate the longest menu item.

```
div#navigation ul.level1 li {
  position: relative;
  border-bottom: 1px solid #000;
}
```

Set the bottom border for each menu item.

```
div#navigation li.submenu:hover ul.level2{
  display: block;
  left: 79px;
  top: 0px;
}
```

Set the left offset for where the sub-menu appears.

```
div#navigation ul#sub1 {
  width: 170px;
}
```

Set the width of the sub-menu 1.

```
div#navigation li a {
  display: block;
  padding: 3px 0 3px 3px;
  text-decoration: none;
}
```

By default an `<a>` element is an inline element which means it only takes up as much space as it needs. By making it a block element, it will occupy all the space available to it. The padding gives us some space around the text, all except the right side.

```
div#navigation ul.level1 a {
  width: 77px;
}
```

These two set the width of our `<a>` elements to the width of their respective menu blocks minus 3px for the left-hand padding.

```
div#navigation ul#sub1 a {
  width: 167px;
}
```

```
div#navigation li a:hover {
  color: #FFF;
  background-color: #00F;
}
```

Apply this to our menu structure and the first level of the menu now displays like this:



Role the cursor over one of the hyperlinks and you get this:



Notice how the full width of the menu item is active when you move the cursor over it and not just the text of the menu item.

When we move the cursor over the 'Services' menu item we get:



If you look back in the styling code to the left offset we set for the sub-menu, you will see that its 1px short of the width of the first level menu. This keeps the sub-menu just inside its parent and avoids the need to rush the cursor movement going from one to the other.

Where's my menu gone?

There's a common problem that catches people out with menus and it's to do with the way the browser give default z-index to the block elements as they resolve the page. If you haven't come across this term before, z-index reflects the front to back position of an element (in other words, layers) in the same way that x and y reflect the left to right and top to bottom position. What follows is deliberately contrived to make a point.

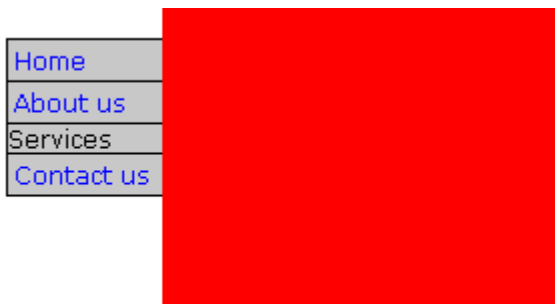
Add this piece of code below the menu structure,

```
<div id='spoiler'>  
  
</div>
```

and this style coding to the bottom of the coding block,

```
div#spoiler {  
  position: absolute;  
  top: 0;  
  left: 88px;  
  width: 200px;  
  height: 150px;  
  background-color: #F00;  
}
```

display your page and you see this:



Move the cursor over the 'Services' menu item and – no sub-menu. In fact it has displayed but its behind the red block. Revisit the styling code for the navigation <div> element and give it a z-index greater than 0.

```
div#navigation {  
  /* Coding as required for page location. */  
  position: relative;  
  z-index: 1;  
  font-size: 12px;  
  font-family: Verdana, Arial, sans-serif;  
}
```

Now try it!

The 'Services' menu item is looking a bit forgotten. I leave it as an exercise for you to style. Hint – its element belongs to the class of 'submenu'. You might try something that marks it out as having a sub-menu rather than it being just another menu item.