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CSS SELECTORS BEST PRACTICES

01

SELECTOR INTENT

Selector Intent is the process of deciding and defining what you want to style and how you will go about selecting it.

e.g. If we want to select the main navigation menu:



```
header ul {  
  /* */  
}
```

A diagram shows a grey dot at the end of the `ul` selector in the code block above, with a curved arrow pointing from it down to the explanatory text below.

This selector's intent is to style any `ul` inside any `header` element, whereas our intent was to style the site's main navigation.



```
.site-navigation {  
  /* */  
}
```

01

SELECTOR INTENT



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“your selectors should be as explicit and well reasoned as your reason for wanting to select something.”

Harry Roberts

More info on <https://cssguidelin.es/#css-selectors>

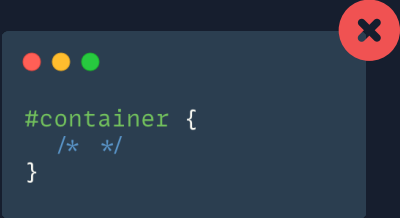
02



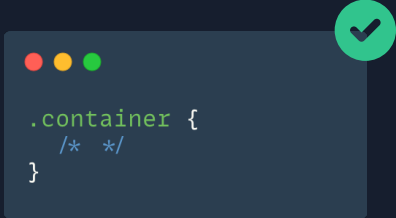
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REUSABILITY

Everything you choose, from the type of selector to its name, should lend itself toward being reused.



```
#container {  
  /* */  
}
```



```
.container {  
  /* */  
}
```

03

LOCATION INDEPENDENCE

Don't style things based on where they are, but on what they are.

e.g. We want to style a promotion call-to-action button:



```
.promo a {  
  /* */  
}
```

A diagram shows a curved arrow pointing from the `a` selector in the code to the text below, illustrating that the styling is tied to the element's location within the `.promo` container.

Locationally dependent: we can't reuse that button with its correct styling outside of `.promo`




```
.btn {  
  /* */  
}  
  
.btn--promo {  
  /* */  
}
```

04


PERFORMANCE

Keep selectors as short as possible, this will keep specificity down and performance up.

e.g. We want to style a navigation menu link:



```
nav ul li a {  
  /* */  
}
```



```
.navigation-menu__link {  
  /* */  
}
```