

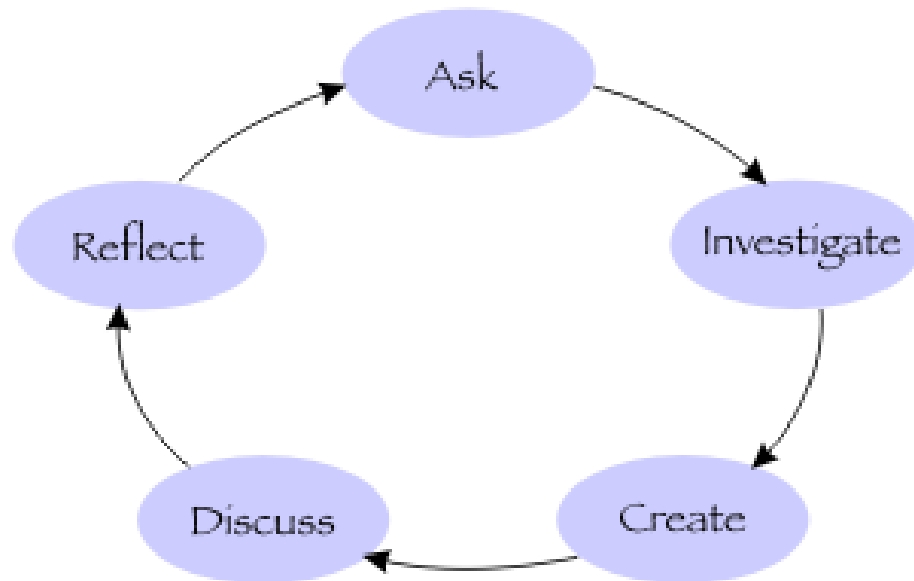
Welcome to Community Inquiry Labs (iLabs) Version 3 Instructions: Part III

Welcome to iLabs - a free, web-based tool to help you and your community communicate, collaborate, and develop a shared capacity for problem-solving. iLabs are a part of the Community Informatics Initiative (CII) (<http://www.cii.uiuc.edu/>) which works with people to develop information and communication technologies to achieve their goals and fosters collaborations across campus, local, national and international communities.

iLabs software is developed continuously, through an open process of inquiry in which users participate. People around the world have used iLabs to create interactive websites for school and university courses, research projects, neighborhood action, and other projects.

This instruction guide will help you create your own iLab. Using iLabs you can easily insert text and images, upload documents and images, create lists (such as bulletin boards, links, contact list, and blogs) and PART I of the instruction guide discusses ways to create and manipulate your iLab using the webpage. PART II discusses ways to use style sheets to change background color and images, change font color, change the size of fonts and bricks, etc.

iLabs: <http://ilabs.inquiry.uiuc.edu>
InquiryPage: <http://www.inquiry.uiuc.edu/>
Comments/Questions: help@inquiry.uiuc.edu



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WHAT ARE STYLE SHEETS?

Styles sheets (Cascading Style Sheets (.css)) are used to describe the presentation of a document written in a markup language. Its most common application is to style web pages written in HTML and XHTML. Within iLabs, they allow you to change items such as background color, column width, brick color, font size, and more.

VIEWING THE ILAB STYLE SHEET

To view or work on style sheets it is best to use software that can display and edit .css documents. TopStyle Lite for Windows is free software and can be downloaded at:

<http://www.newsgator.com/download/products/ts3lite.exe>

After you have downloaded the software, you need to open an iLab style sheet to work on. This can be opened at:

<http://ilabs.inquiry.uiuc.edu/templates/default/ilabs3.css>

This should automatically open in TopStyle Lite. Save this style sheet template (the file extension should be .css).

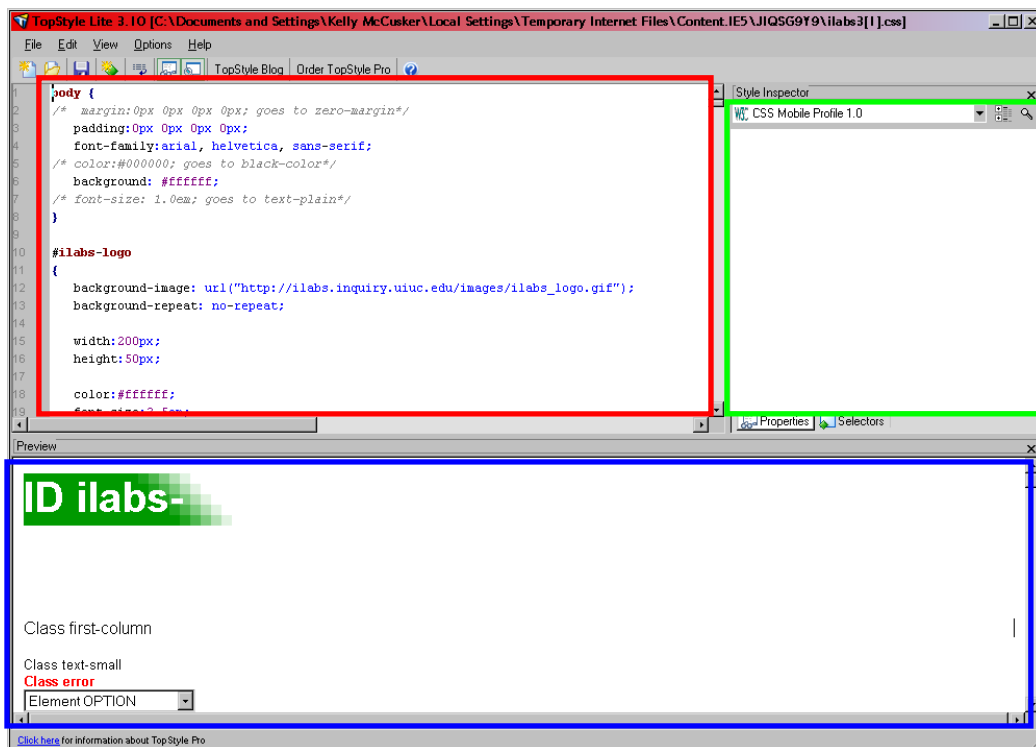


Figure 1: Style sheet for iLabs (unchanged)

- Red Rectangle: iLab items that can be changed.
- Green Rectangle: Changes to the style sheet are made here.
- Blue Rectangle: Example iLab to help you understand the items in the style sheet and allows you to see the change immediately.

ALTERING THE STYLE SHEET

Place your mouse on the area you want to change in the left column. For example, if you would like to change the background color of the body of your iLab, click somewhere between 'margin' and 'background' under 'body'. You will notice that the Style Inspector on the right changes. All items that are black in the Style Inspector can be changed; items that are gray cannot be changed. If there is a minus sign, click on it to show a list of more choices, then click on a specific item. Some items in the style sheet cannot be changed; these items will be light gray in the Style Inspector. Some items in the style sheets only make changes in certain bricks; for example the items with 'post,' 'topic' and 'new post' change bulletin boards.

Body (not the bricks' background)

- background: color or image (To insert a background image, upload the image into a document folder in your iLab, copy the short cut and insert the URL here. See Part 1 Creating a Document Center and Creating a Text Display Brick for more information)
- font: scroll to see multiple options (Will change fonts for items such as brick titles, iLab page, etc. Will not change the font in text boxes).

iLabs-Logo

- background image: see Body or none
- color: color of the iLabs word
- font: size, weight, and height
- padding: amount of space between the logo and the next item
- background: see Body
- border: color, type and size

First-column

- right border: style, width and padding

Text

- -plain: brick box title text size
- -bold: brick box title text weight

White-color

- color: text color in brick titles

Narrow-column (left)

- width: pixels

Wide-Column (middle)

- width: pixels

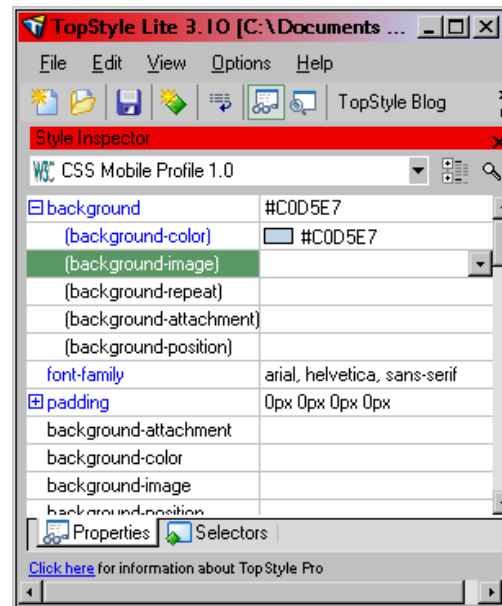


Figure 2: Body Style Inspector

Brick-title

- text-align: center, right or left
- background: color of the brick title
- padding: space between edge and next item

Brick-box

- background: match this color to body background to make the entire iLab background the same color
- padding: amount of space between box and next brick
- border-bottom: width or style
- padding-bottom: space between border and text

Select (scroll bars)

- background: color
- other options do not change anything

Horizontal-rule (line separating custom permission groups in For All Bricks)

- padding: amount of space between horizontal-ruler and next item
- border-width: pixel
- border-- style: dashed, dotted, solid, etc
- border-color
- width: of ruler

Breadcrumbs (description of where you are in the iLab, e.g. iLabs Home :: Instructions :: Blog)

- background: color

Post, Topic, and New Post (for Bulletin Boards)

- border: color, style, and weight
- background: color
- text-align
- height: pixel
- font-size

Document-archive (document center)

- background : color
- border-color

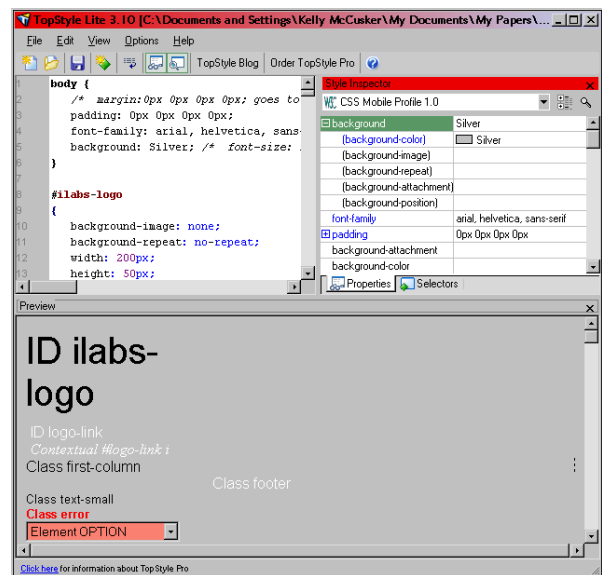


Figure 3: Style sheet for iLabs (changed)

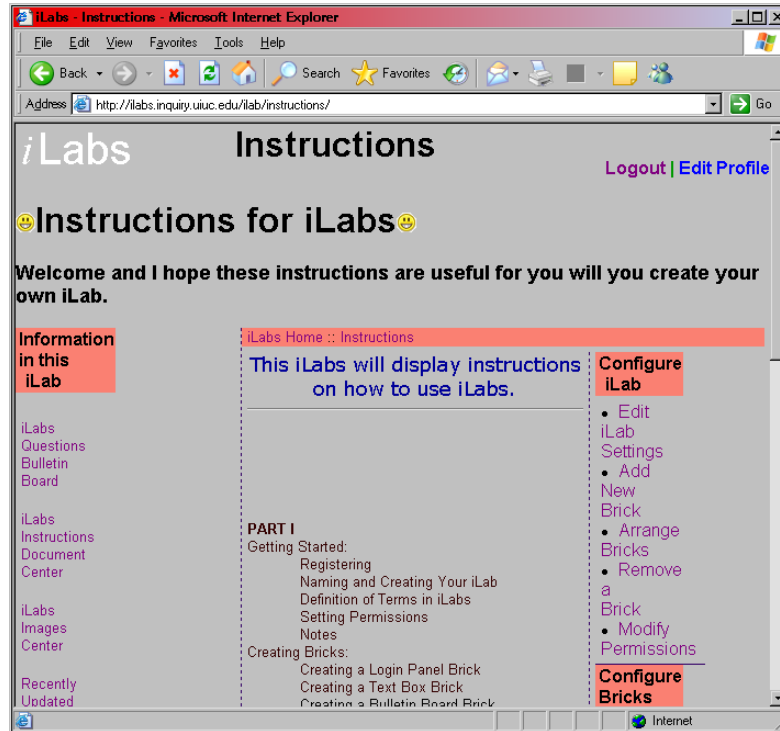


Figure 4: Instructions iLab using a style sheet

Notes

- You will notice as you change colors that each color has a 6 digit number/letter combination. Use this when you need to match colors exactly instead of scanning through various shades.
- Be careful that the font and background are not close in color or the font will be unreadable.

APPLYING THE STYLE SHEET TO YOUR ILAB

Once you have made all the changes, you need to upload the style sheet to your iLab (remember to save your style sheet!). Create a Document Center brick. The Folder Type will be documents (See Creating a Document Center Brick in Part 1 for more information). Upload your style sheet to this folder. Once it is uploaded right click on the file and click on 'Save Shortcut.' Return to your iLab homepage. Click on Edit iLab Settings in the Configure iLab brick. In the 'You can also specify the URL of a custom style sheet with your own style definitions' paste the shortcut. Delete any characters after the .css. Click on update iLab.

Notes

- Make this Document Center Brick invisible using the Arrange Bricks link (See Arrange Bricks).
- Create multiple, different style sheets and upload all of them to your iLab. Then you can apply them to compare the styles and decide on the best one for you.

TRIAL AND ERROR

Style sheets can be confusing, even with the iLab example below it. Many of the changeable items on the style sheet were not discussed due to the large quantity or infrequency of use. If you are unsure how your iLab is modified when something is changed in the style sheet start with the default style sheet, change the one item and apply the style sheet to your iLab. Then search through your entire iLab to see what was modified.

At any point in time, you can remove the style sheet from your iLab and return to the default iLab style by deleting the shortcut in the 'You can also specify the URL of a custom style sheet with your own style definitions' area.

Examples of iLabs that use style sheets:

CHAMP: <http://champ.uiuc.edu>

BeeSpace: <http://www.beespace.uiuc.edu>