Carleton

Web Design Style Guide

Version 1.0

Introduction

This document is meant to provide guidance for the creation and design of web pages, modules, components, and interface elements to ensure that Carleton's public web sites maintain a consistent look, feel, and branding.

This document focuses on the visual design of web page elements. While it touches from time to time on technical, accessibility, and content-related matters, that is not its primary focus. Throughout this document you will see three major types of guidelines:

- **Requirements:** These must be followed in order to maintain basic branding consistency among public-facing Carleton web properties. There are few hard and fast rules, but these are critical. Indicated by Requirement

- **Recommendations:** A site or tool should follow most – if not all – recommendations. These are strongly recommended to ensure that a site remains visually unified with the rest of carleton.edu. If you wish to take a different path, it is best to consult with Web Services on your plans.

- **Suggestions:** These are "best practices". In general you should see if these work for your project before trying another route. Indicated by Suggestion

Unless otherwise noted, all guidelines are recommendations.

Questions about this style guide?

Please contact Matt Ryan in the Carleton College Web Services Group: mryan@carleton.edu

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Design System/Living Style Guide

Carleton maintains a "living style guide" design system and html/css/js repository. It uses a system called Patternlab to manage and present components and templates.

If you use the components and templates in this repository to build your website or interface your site will be well on its way to adhering to the guidelines presented in this document.

It is strongly recommended to use this tool to ensure that your site can be easily updated as Carleton's web branding and best practices evolve,

To use the Patternlab style guide:

- Contact Web Services for access and support

- If possible, integrate Twig templating into your project so you can use the Patternlab templates directly.

- If possible, use a dependency manager like Composer to make it easy to update components and templates

Branding

Unless otherwise specified, this document refers to Tier I Carleton sites and tools. According to Carleton's web governance guide:

> Tier I is for sites with content that represents the college, its departments, offices, or services. This is for sites where someone might say, "Carleton College states..." about the content. For these sites, Carleton requires consistent branding. Examples: office and department sites, initiatives, directory, OneCard.

Logo Usage

Requirement

Include the Carleton Logo on every page

Prominently include one of the following versions of the Carleton logo on every page.

- Carleton Word Mark
- Carleton Word Mark and Large C-Ray
- Carleton Word Mark C-Ray Left
- Carleton Word Mark Small Open-Ray

Other versions should be avoided for web use.

Render the logo in a consistent manner

Logo must be at least 125 pixels in the largest dimension. Colors

- #0B5091 / rgb(11,80,145) on #ffffff / rgb(255,255,255)
- #ffffff / rgb(255,255,255) on a color or image sufficiently dark to support WCAG Level AA

Logo must be near the top of the page and appear above the fold on all common devices.

✓ **Use**

✗ **Avoid**

These versions lose legibility or moire badly at smaller sizes on non-retina screens.

These colors are not #0B59091. Note that converting from the print CMYK blue does not result in the correct color for screen use.

These examples do not provide sufficient contrast.

Carleton

Carleton Branding *(Continued)*

Requirement **Carleton branding guidelines must be followed throughout, per the Carleton Identity Style Guide**

Note that the yellow and blue colors specified in the style guide for the web are *not* identical to those specified for print. Pantone's equivalents to Carleton's print swatches are not appealing on-screen colors. Use the web-specific colors for web design and content.

Carleton ⌂ Academics Campus Life Admissions For ⌄ A-Z Directory Search People & Pages 🔍
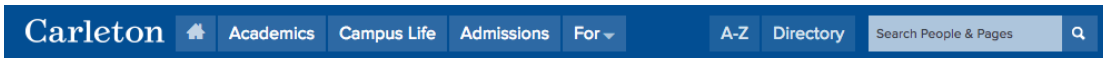
✓ **Use** **Use the Bluebar navigation**

Use the standard Carleton Website navigation ("Bluebar") wherever technically possible to ensure visual and navigation consistency across Carleton web properties. This also satisfies the requirement above.

The latest version of the Bluebar and instructions for its use are at *go.carleton.edu/bluebar* .

✓ Use	✗ Avoid
#0B5091 / rgb(11,80,145)	Pantone 280
	cmyk(100,72,0,32)
	#003EA2 / rgb(0,62,162)
#F3B61D / rgb(243,182,29)	Pantone 122
	cmyk(0,17,80,0)
	#FCD450 / rgb(252,212,80)

Typography

Type should have sufficient visual contrast with background

Type should be rendered with sufficient contrast to meet the WCAG 2.0 Level AA standard of 4.5:1. *See Accessibility.*

Use Gotham for body text; prefer Surveyor for display text

Because ithese typefaces are used throughout Carleton's standard web theme and print publications, they powerfully communicates consistency and a unified feel among Carleton communications. Instructions for web use are available from the Web Services Group (web@carleton.edu).

Use contrasting weight and size for headings

If using the same typeface for headings and bopdy copy, use very light or bold text for headings, rather than "normal" weights.

Use no more than two typefaces

If you wish to have a bit more pizazz than is available with just Gotham, select a single contrasting typeface for headings and titles. This is an axis where considerable freedom is permitted within the style guidelines, so feel free to experiment with your display type. It is also acceptable to use Gotham for display type.

Use generous type size

Body text should be a minimum of 17px. Captions and other secondary text may be smaller, but should generally be given a minimum size of 13px.

✓ **Use**

Lorem ipsum dolor sit amet, consectetur adipiscing elit. Nam in semper turpis, eget hendrerit tortor. Maecenas tincidunt tempor ipsum, a maximus velit suscipit a. Proin in enim odio. Nullam non interdum

✗ **Avoid**

Lorem ipsum dolor sit amet, consectetur adipiscing elit. Nam in semper turpis, eget hendrerit tortor. Maecenas tincidunt tempor ipsum, a maximus velit suscipit a. Proin in enim odio. Nullam non interdum

✓ **Use**

Heading 1

Lorem ipsum dolor sic amet

Heading 2

Lorem ipsum dolor sic amet

✗ **Avoid**

Heading 1

Lorem ipsum dolor sic amet

Heading 2

Lorem ipsum dolor sic amet

Typography *(Continued)*

Use generous line height for body text

Line-height should be a minimum of 1.5x body text size (e.g. 26px for 17px type) at desktop screen widths. Headings or other display type should be set with a tighter line-height, typically 1.1x-1.3x.

✓ Use	✗ Avoid
Lorem ipsum dolor sit amet, consectetur adipiscing elit. Nam in semper turpis,	Lorem ipsum dolor sit amet, consectetur adipiscing elit. Nam in semper turpis,

✓ Use	✗ Avoid
CAMS 253: The Semiotics of	CAMS 253: The Semiotics of

Left-align text

Avoid right-aligned and fully-justified type. Use centered type sparingly, and only within "boxed" content – never in body copy.

✓ Use	✗ Avoid
Heading 1 Lorem ipsum dolor sic amet	**Heading 1** Lorem ipsum dolor sic amet

Strive for comfortably readable line-lengths

Responsive layouts should manage type size and column width to achieve between 40 (narrow settings) and 100 (wide settings) characters per line for body copy. A measure of 70 characters per line is ideal, but because column widths can vary greatly on different screens, prioritize readable text *(see "Use generous type size")* over forcing an ideal width.

Use H1-H6 headings

Avoid bold and italicization on entire lines.

Avoid underlines on non-link text

Underlines should only be used to communicate links.

Color & Contrast

Carleton-branded sites should match Carleton's web branding palette to ensure consistency among Carleton web properties.

Use Carleton Web Blue (#0B5091) prominently on each page

Communicate a consistent Carleton branding by color as well as use of the logo by ensuring that a consistent blue color is used across Carleton's web properties. Color palettes should harmonize with this color. The easiest way to prominently incorporate this color is to use the standard Carleton bluebar *(see "Use the Bluebar navigation")*

Use a white (Preferred) or light page background

#ffffff/rgb(255,255,255) or no darker than #eeeeee/ rgb(238,238,238)

Use black or dark grey for body text

#333333 or rgb(51,51,51)

Use flat colors; avoid borders and shadows

Avoid patterns, textures, borders and shadows on page elements.

Use a limited-hue color palette

Use no more than 4 distinct hues.

Where text is laid on images, multiply the image with blue

Multiply background images with either #3676b3 or #0b5091

✓ Use

✓ Use

Lorem ipsum dolor sit amet, consectetur adipiscing elit. Nam in semper turpis, eget hendrerit tortor. Maecenas tincidunt tempor

✗ Avoid
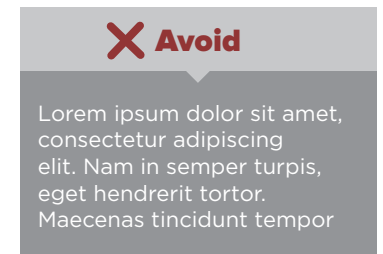
Lorem ipsum dolor sit amet, consectetur adipiscing elit. Nam in semper turpis, eget hendrerit tortor. Maecenas tincidunt tempor

✓ Use

✗ Avoid

American Studies

American Studies

Color & Contrast *(Continued)*

Use tints and shades for variation within the palette

Tints (mixes of one of the main hues with the background color, typically white) and shades (darkened and saturated versions of the hue) are recommended for variation.

These are easily produced in a css preprocessor from a set of base colors. The following examples are in LESS:

@tint: mix(@base_color, @background_color, 75%);
@shade: saturate(darken(@base_color), 10%), 10%);

Use same palette for all pages in a subsite

Maintain visual coherence within a subsite; avoid changing palette from page-to-page.

Avoid placing a box around the primary page content

Primary page content should sit directly on the page background. Secondary or callout content may be placed in a tinted box with generous padding (at least 1em/17px).

Use sufficient contrast between background colors and text colors

See above guideline *"Type should have sufficient visual contrast with background"*
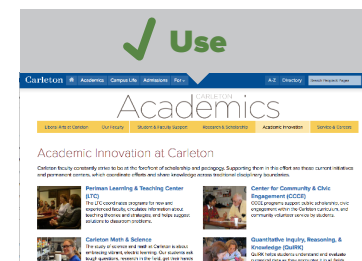
Color & Contrast (Continued)

Use "Maize and Blue" palette on key branded pages/sites

While various color palettes are used on office and department sites, use of this consistent palette by key institutional branding pages (e.g. top-level external audience pages) helps maintain an adidtional layer of brand consistency and design cohesion.
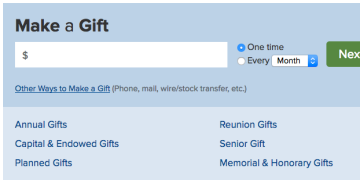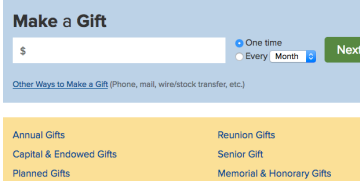
Visually separate elements with different background hues

Elements with different background hues should be separated by margins or borders of the background color. Elements with different tints of the same hue may visually touch.
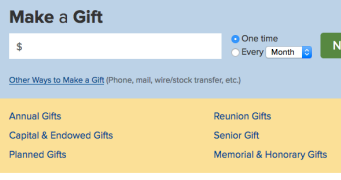
"Maize and Blue" Palette

Primary 1
#3676b3
rgb(54,118,179)

If darker blue is needed, use #0b5091

Primary 2
#f3b61d
rgb(243,182,29)

Use for primary site navigation

Accent 1
#923535
rgb(146,53,53)

Accent 2
#588745
rgb(88,135,69)

100%	100%	100%	100%
75% #6898c6	75% #f6c856	75% #ad6868	75% #82a574
50% #9bbbd9	50% #f9db8e	50% #c99a9a	50% #acc3a2
25% #cdddec	25% #fcedc7	25% #e4cdcd	25% #d5e1d1

✓ Use

✗ Avoid

Links

Indicate textual links by underlining or by placing background-colored box around link

Avoid indicating links using soley color.

Use Carleton Web Blue for links in running text

#0b5091 or rgb(11,80,145)

✓ **Use**

Lorem ipsum dolor sit amet, consectetur adipiscing elit.

Nullam non

✗ **Avoid**

Lorem ipsum dolor sit amet, consectetur adipiscing elit.

Nam in semper turpis

Layout

Ensure all design is responsive

Ensure layouts, widgets, video, images, and other elements are fluidly responsive down to a 320px wide viewport.

Show site navigation where possible

Where there is room on screen, navigation elements should not be hidden behind a menu button, but should instead be available via direct links. On small screens, open navigation at the bottom of the page with a jump-to-menu link at the top of the page is a common pattern.

Use generous margins between layout elements

Avoid placing a box around the primary page content

See recommendation in Color & Contrast.

Use a the Carleton Standard Theme custom grid

The Carleton Standard Theme uses a custom grid. For more information about this grid, see go.carleton.edu/grid

✓ **Use**

Campus Photos Home

Campus Scenery

Buildings

Sports

Student Activities

Northfield

Residence Halls and Houses

The Arb

Capture Your Carleton

✗ **Avoid**

Avoid where there is sufficent space for teatment on left

Iconography

Use flat icons

Use "flat" icon treatments. Match icon colors to page color scheme. Prefer vector (e.g. font- or svg-based icons) for scalability, resolution independence, and ease of color change.

Use consistent icons

Visit go.carleton.edu/icons to see and download a standard set of icons in SVG and webfont formats. Use of these icons promotes consistency across sites and interfaces.

Ensure icons are accessible

Ensure that screen readers will read appropriate alternate text, or follow "Combine icons with textual labels."

Suggestion

Combine icons with textual labels where possible

Avoid "mystery meat" elements by combining icons with text rather than using icons alone. For example, if there is room, use both the hamburger icon and the word "menu", a pencil with the word "edit", or a plus with the word "add". Extra bonus: if you do this you automatically fulfill "Ensure icons are accessible" above.

✔ **Use**

✘ **Avoid**

✔ **Preferred**

✘ **Caution**

☰ Menu

✏ Edit

✚ Add

✖ Delete
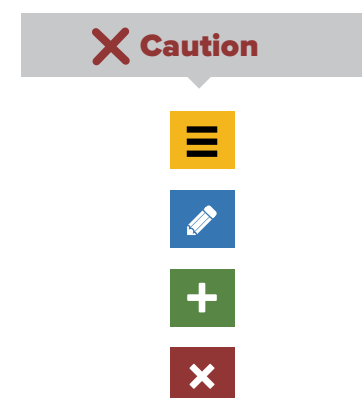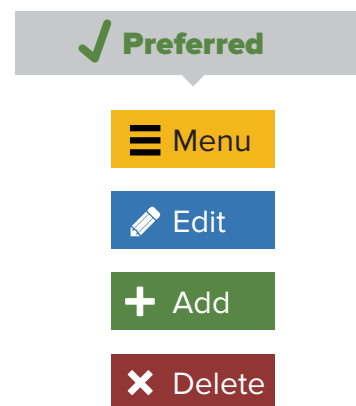
Forms

Action buttons (e.g. form submissions)

- Use rounded corners, approx. .33 em radius

- Use larger type than conventional body text

- Flat color background

- Use white text on a green (#588745) background

- Use distinct background color states for hover, focus, active: use lightened & darkened variations for these states

- Use descriptive labels where possible, e.g. "Sign Up" or "Send Request" instead of "Submit"

Text inputs

- No border-radius

- 1px "inset" border treatment

- Light neutral background colors

- Use light, colored backgrounds when field is active

Labels

- Place labels above input elements, aligned left

- Exception: for radio buttons or checkboxes, place labels to the right of the input, use fieldset & legend or aria-description or aria-describedby on a containing element.

Required elements

- Place a red asterisk to the right of the element label to indicate required fields; include a note explaining that required fields are indicated in this way

✓ **Use**

Sign up

✗ **Avoid**

Submit

✓ **Consistent**

* indicates a required field

Street*

200 Division St.

City*

Northf

✗ **Inconsistent**

Street
Required

200 Division

City
Required

Northf

Navigation & tabs

Use background color to distinguish navigation elements

Navigation elements should use a clearly different background color from the page.

Highlight currently active navigation item with color & "pointer triangle"

Indicate current item by varying tint level of navigation background color and with a triangular "pointer" in the direction of the current item content.

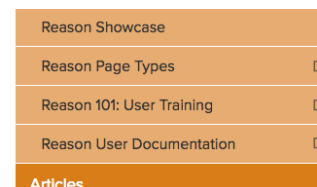**Avoid border-radius on navigation/tab elements**

Use square corners.

Ensure all navigation is screen-reader and keyboard accessible

Navigation elements should be accessible. Use appropriate ARIA attributes, html5 elements (like <nav>), and test your navigation for keyboard and screen-reader use. Links in nested unordered lists are the preferred underlying markup.

Indicate links that will remove users from navigation context with "outside page" icon

If a set of navigation links includes any that will take the user to another context, include the "outside page" icon. Note that this icon is not necessary for inline links.

✓Examples

| 1960s | 1970 | 1971 | 1972 | 1973 | 1974 | 1975 | 1976 | 1977 | 1978 | 1979 | 1980s |

| 1 | 2 | 3 | 4 | 5 | 6 | 7 |

Campus Photos Home
Campus Scenery
Buildings
Sports
Student Activities
Northfield
Residence Halls and Houses
The Arb
Capture Your Carleton

Reason Showcase
Reason Page Types
Reason 101: User Training
Reason User Documentation
Articles

Performance

Pages should load quickly

Using webpagetest.org, pages should acheive a speed index of <2.5s on desktop/cable and <5s on mobile/3G.

Interactivity

Interfaces should be touch-, mouse- and keyboard-friendly

- Touch-friendly: Avoid using hover effects to indicate interactivity or to access functionality. Ensure interface elements are at least 16x16 pixels.

- Mouse-friendly: Gesture-based interfaces should provide "point-and-click" methods rather than requiring users to perform gestures with a mouse or trackpad.

- Keyboard-friendly: All interactive elements should be accessible via keyboard-only methods.

Avoid autoplaying elements when possible

Autoplay elements pose accessibility challenges. Avoid where unneccessary; where necessary, provide a way to pause.

Accessibility

Meet WCAG 2.1 Level AA

Use both automated and manual testing to verify compliance.

Follow progressive enhancement principles

Ensure interfaces are accessible and functional regardless of tech.

General Development Considerations

Consider that content, modules, components, etc. may be re-used elsewhere on carleton.edu

Design and style elements to support the application via CSS of different color schemes, typographic treatments, and layouts. Avoid inline styles and presentational classes that reduce potential for reuse.

Implement print stylesheets

Implement a print stylesheet that strips away navigation and other page chrome and clutter.

Browser support

Browsers that represent at least 1% of visits to carleton.edu should be fully supported (e.g. all functionality works and looks consistent across browsers).

Browsers that represent less than 1% and more than 0.5% should receive basic support (e.g. visual differences acceptable, non-critical functionality may fall back to less-user-friendly but still functional interface).

Next-generation versions of fully supported browsers should be tested and supported to the same standards as their current versions.

For rapidly updating browsers like Chrome and Firefox, usage statistics should take into account visits spread across multiple versions. For example, if we have 0.5% visits from each of 6 versions of Firefox, consider that 3% (1 out of 25) visitors is visiting with one of these versions.

As of March 2019, browser support should be as follows:

Fully supported

- Internet Explorer 11
- Edge 17+
- Chrome 61+
- Safari 10+
- Firefox 60+
- iOS Safari 10+

Basic support

- Chrome 54-60
- Safari 9
- Firefox 54-59
- iOS Safari 9

This list should be reviewed and updated regularly.