



# Web Designers Roadmap

June 2011 - By: Stefan Mischook

The skills required in modern web design are constantly changing ... that's because the Web itself is always changing. If you want to be successful as either a web professional (web designer / programmer) or as web site owner, you have to keep up!

What to learn (as of 2011-2012) - in order of priority:

1. HTML
2. CSS
3. PHP basics
4. Javascript
5. JQuery
6. Wordpress
7. OOP PHP (for programmers only)
8. HTML 5 and CSS 3
9. iPad / iPhone (choice of either: Objective C or HTML 5 + CSS 3)



## Comments

### 1. HTML

This is the foundation of any site - you have to learn HTML. You'll might notice that I did not mention XHTML ... it was all the rage once but people have finally figured out that its' days are numbered. Fortunately, if you know XHTML, you pretty much know HTML since they are so similar.

[You can learn more here](#)

### 2. CSS

The sister language to HTML: where HTML provides the structure, CSS provides the style.

[You can learn more here](#)

### 3. PHP Basics

PHP is the most popular Web programming language out there. PHP is used by millions of tiny sites and on mega web sites like Facebook. As a web professional, you need to learn at least basic PHP because so many standard things that people want on websites are built with PHP - for example:

- shopping carts/e-commerce systems.
- blogs and content management systems.
- forums and contact forms.



... And that is just a small sample.

Sure, you can get by without understanding PHP (or PHP's top competitor Ruby) but you will be at great disadvantage to those who do. You'll also find your job as a web designer to be that much more difficult as you continually run into PHP based software that clients will need you to use.

[You can learn more here](#)

#### 4. Javascript

Javascript is the programming language used in web browsers ... it compliments PHP and is a 100% must learn language. Again, like PHP, so many things that we expect in websites today rely on Javascript.

[You can learn more here](#)

#### 5. JQuery

JQuery is the de facto standard when it comes to creating effects on your web pages:

- sliders
- dynamic menus
- slide shows

... etc. JQuery is helping to replace Flash.

JQuery is a Javascript library that makes all these things easy to drop into web pages (actually, you almost literally do!) and has now been widely adopted by the major players out there like Microsoft, Apple and Google. To really use JQuery effectively, it is good to know Javascript.



[You can learn more here](#)

## 6. Wordpress

Wordpress is the most popular blogging engine / content management system (CMS) out there. Many websites are built entirely out of Wordpress because using Wordpress automatically gives a website a whole bunch of capability for free:

- built-in search
- ability to add images, mp3's to pages.
- ability to edit and create new pages with no web skills.



WORDPRESS

etc .... Wordpress also does much, much more.

In fact, there is a new breed of web designer I like to call 'Wordpress Web Designers' who do 100% of their web sites based on Wordpress. They are running circles around the competition.

[You can learn more here](#)

## 7. OOP PHP

If you decide to become more of a web programmer, then you will need to learn PHP OOP. Object Oriented Programming (OOP) is the modern style of programming and everything that is anything today is built using OOP based systems. It's must learn whether you use PHP, Ruby, Java or Javascript.

[You learn more here](#)

## 8. HTML 5 and CSS 3



HTML 5 and CSS 3 is the cutting edge of these languages (HTML & CSS) and delivers power and capability that old time nerds like me used to dream and fantasize about. I did not include these with standard HTML and CSS because they are a totally different beast in terms of what you use them for.

Not all web browsers being used today will understand HTML 5 and CSS3, but that is changing very fast because Google, Apple, Microsoft and Firefox are pushing these twin towers of power, pushing everyone to upgrade to the latest browsers.

Besides standard web browsers adopting HTML 5 and CSS, all the new smartphones and tablets understand these cool new technologies - for example, iPad runs HTML 5 and CSS 3.

[You can learn more here](#)

## 9. iPad / iPhone

It is estimated there will be 100 million iPads in use by 2012! So if you want to reach that audience, you have to learn about the capabilities and limitations of iOS ... the operating system that runs on iPads and iPhones.

Here's the good news, if you know HTML 5 and CSS 3, you can build some really cool stuff for iOS. But, if you want to take full advantage of the iPad or iPhone, you will need to learn Objective C ... the programming language of iOS and Apple.



... And guess what, Objective C is object oriented ... so if you know OOP PHP, learning Objective C will be much easier than it would have been otherwise.

### About Flash:

Flash is dying partly because Apple will not allow Flash to run on the iPhone and iPad. Apple blocked Flash simply because Flash runs terribly on Mac OS ... so who can blame them?

Another thing that is killing Flash, is that there are now free alternatives that don't require a special plug-in (as Flash does) that can do pretty much everything people use Flash for ... I am talking about JQuery, HTML 5 and CSS3. I like Flash but I think it is looking like a dead-end technology and is not something I would be investing in.

### **Final Comment**

You don't need to learn all these technologies to build a website, or to be a successful web professional, but consider the following:

1. Knowing 1 and 2 is great for small web sites owners .. so you can make changes on your own.
2. Knowing 1-6 is great for web designers.
3. Web programmers should learn 1-8 and to add a little 'juice' (and cash to your bank account,) learn 9. iPad development is hot these days.

Stefan Mischook  
[www.killersites.com](http://www.killersites.com)