



ibm.com standards

Coming soon!

1x2x

1x2x is almost here. Check back regularly for updates and additional information. [Learn more about 1x2x.](#)

Last update: 20 Apr 2007. [What's new.](#)

Find it fast

Standards

A-Z

Select a region below

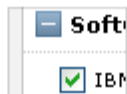


→ Standards by topic

ibm.com standards categories

**About ibm.com standards**

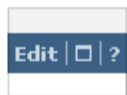
Updates and design strategies.

**Software**

Browser-based, self-contained tools.

**Page elements**

Components of ibm.com web page.

**Portlets**

Components that provide access to applications and Web-based content.

**Page types**

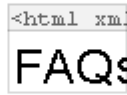
Masthead landing pages, forms, and more.

**Rich media**

Flash, animated GIFs, audio, and video assets embedded on a page.

**Writing Web marketing pages for IBM**

Company-wide editorial guide for consistent Web pages.

**Standard references**

Overarching requirements, FAQs, and related information.

Tools

- Page title generator
- Graphic tab generator
- Container generator
- Button generator
- 1x2x v15 Template generator
- Smart Link Integrity Manager

Learn about OneX

- Introduction
- Contacts
- OneX FAQs

Still can't find what you're looking for?

Go

Need help? [Contact the Standards Team.](#)

General requirements

Select a different page element:

Use of standard page elements (e.g., typography, rules, bullets, etc.) offer consistency and support the navigation system. These page elements are always found in the content space region and the right column region.

Requirements for the content space region

- Horizontal scrolling is not allowed.
- Use only the standard set of page elements presented in the ibm.com standards. Do not change or adapt ibm.com standards page elements without express permission of the [User Experience team](#).
- All page elements must be placed within standard column grids, maximum width of 443 pixels. Flush left is the default alignment for all page elements, with the exception of the "Back to top" link.
- Limit pages to 1-2 full screens of information; all critical information should display on the initial screen (in 800 x 600 resolution). Author and structure content to support scanning rather than narrative reading.
- Important note: ibm.com pages should not have any advertising or third-party promotions of any kind, except for special circumstances. Advertising is not allowed. There are no exceptions.
- Do not use trademarks or registered trademark symbols in page titles, subheads or left navigation links as these symbols would be used on the first mention of content space body copy text.

Best practices for the content space

- Place any required legal text at the bottom of the Web page. Care should be taken never to alter the content of legal notice without proper IBM General Legal counsel approval. Observe [IBM copyright and trademark policy](#).

Structuring the right column region

The 150-pixel wide column on the far right portion of the page is reserved for content and functionality that are secondary to the main content space. The right column must not be used to present core content that is critical to the user's task. The right column should be populated with:

- call to action modules for tasks that are common across ibm.com (e.g. personalization module, [ready to buy module](#))

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More about the content space

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Design principles

- Overview
- **Navigation system**
- User-centered design
- One IBM Web experience
- Personalization
- Visual design strategy
- Content management

- ↓ Components produced by the Template generator
- ↓ Content space navigation
- ↓ Right column navigation
- ↓ Task based navigation

Example

The screenshot shows an IBM web page with several key design elements highlighted by red lines and labels:

- Universal masthead:** The top navigation bar containing the IBM logo, search bar, and main menu items (Home, Products, Services & industry solutions, Support & downloads, My IBM).
- Right column:** A vertical sidebar on the right side of the page containing a search box and a list of related links.
- Content space:** The main body of the page containing the page title, navigation tabs, table of contents, and the main text content.
- Left navigation:** A vertical sidebar on the left side of the page containing a list of related links.
- Universal footer:** The bottom section of the page containing the text "About IBM | Privacy | Contact".

[View actual size](#)

Components produced by the Template generator

The ibm.com template is part of an overall effort to consolidate, organize, and manage IBM's Web presence. Using the ibm.com Template generator, you can create a standard ibm.com Web page that meets the needs of your site by entering link titles, URL's, and meta tags in an easy-to-use form.


Web pages created by the Template generator have a fixed width of 760 pixels. This width supports an 800-pixel wide display. "Liquid" expanding pages have been eliminated in favor of a single wider fixed width.

ibm.com standards >

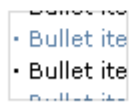
Page elements

ibm.com design principles

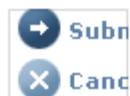
Before adding these page elements, you must review the [general requirements](#).




Anchor link list
Used for persistent links to content on the current page.



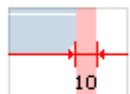
Bullet treatments
How to use bullets with links, non-linked text, and unordered lists.



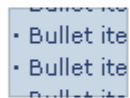
Buttons
Small graphics used to indicate actions or steps within those actions.



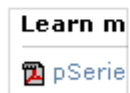
Color palette
Required colors for ibm.com pages, their links, subheads, and text, etc.




Column grids
Accepted variations for how text flows on a page.




Content link list
Used for persistent or non-persistent links to related content.




Cross links
Links to content in a separate business unit area of ibm.com.




Directory link list
Used to access links arranged alphabetically or by topic.




Microsoft tagline
How to implement the Microsoft tagline.




Navigation trail
Shows the current page's path.



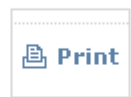
Page titles/subtitles
Concise descriptions shown at the top of a page.



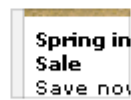
PDFs & resources
Text-based information assets embedded on a page.



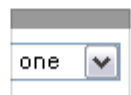
Prices
When to add prices to a page, and how to format them.



Printable version
Enables a visitor to print the currently displayed page.



Promotion module
Used to highlight a timesensitive ibm.com offering.



Pulldowns
Used to display a list when space is at a premium or the when the list is generated dynamically.



Ready to buy module

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Color palette

Select a different page element:

Anchor link list

Requirements

White must be the default color for backgrounds. Using a background color other than white reduces contrast and legibility. If you are using a background color other than white, your buttons will need to also be changed as the standard ibm.com buttons currently employ a white background. Using buttons with a different background color means that cached buttons will have to be reloaded with the new button images which would negatively impact load time.

Core brand palette to be used as the dominant scheme for ibm.com. These colors are used in the top masthead and left navigation bar as well as for elements in the content space.

Interface colors

Color name	HEX value	Comments
 Navy blue	#293d6b	Default hyperlink color on blue background, top-nav, left-nav, tab base.
 Dark blue	#3c5f84	Default subhead background, primary rule.
 Blue	#5c81a7	Default hyperlink color on white background, inactive tab base, icons, arrows.
 Violet	#996699	Default visited hyperlink color on white background.
 Medium blue	#98b1c4	Alternate subhead background, secondary rule, divider on blue background, left-nav.
 Pale blue*	#c8d7e3	Left-nav background,

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Column grids

Select a different page element:

- ↓ [3-unit split](#)
- ↓ [4-unit split](#)
- ↓ [Modified 4-unit split](#)
- ↓ [Modified 4-unit 2/3 - 1/3 split](#)
- ↓ [5-unit split](#)

All pages must conform to our standard 5-column grid system — which may be divided into four possible grid layouts:

- **3-unit split:** 1 - 3 - 1
- **4-unit split:** 1 - 1.5 - 1.5 - 1
- **Modified 4-unit split:** 1 - 1.5 - 1.5 - 1 (with 60-pixel spaces for graphics)
- **Modified 4-unit 2/3 - 1/3 split:** 1 - 2 - 1 - 1
- **5-unit split:** 1 - 1 - 1 - 1 - 1

Each grid layout includes, from left to right, a 150-pixel wide left navigation area, then a 10-pixel wide gutter, a 443-pixel wide content space, a 7-pixel wide gutter, and finally a 150-pixel wide right column.

Depending on your content needs, you may format the center content space with one, two, or three columns. When sub-dividing the 443-pixel wide content space, all sub-divisions should be evenly spaced and separated by 7-pixel wide gutters. Unless the site is an on-line application, where technical requirements are driving compliance issues, the maximum line length is 443 pixels. Content must not extend beyond the 600-pixel page width, as horizontal scrolling negatively impacts usability.

The 150-pixel right column must always be included, even if it is blank.

Requirements

3-unit split

Displays the content space in the center as a single column. From left to right, there is a 150-pixel column for navigation, a 10-pixel wide gutter, the single 443-pixel content column, a 7-pixel gutter, and a 150-pixel wide right column. The content column (443-pixels) may be divided to include a 60-pixel column on the left side to be used for graphics — and this would include a 5-pixel gutter between the graphic and the copy in the content

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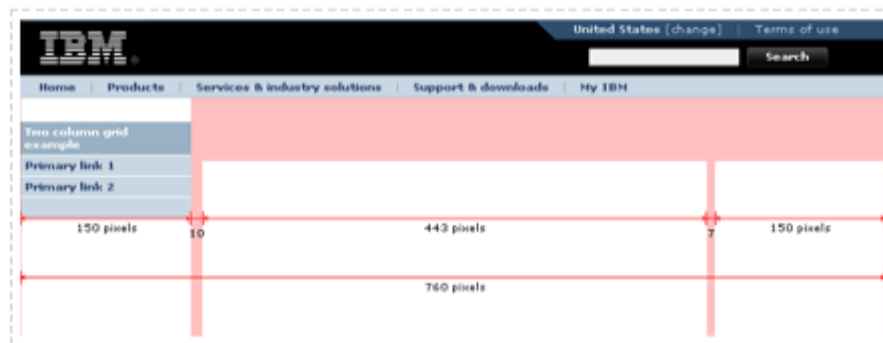
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3-unit split

Displays the content space in the center as a single column. From left to right, there is a 150-pixel column for navigation, a 10-pixel wide gutter, the single 443-pixel content column, a 7-pixel gutter, and a 150-pixel wide right column. The content column (443-pixels) may be divided to include a 60-pixel column on the left side to be used for graphics — and this would include a 5-pixel gutter between the graphic and the copy in the content space.



[View actual size](#)

Note: The standard 3-unit split requires id attributes in the main td cell of the main content space and the main td cell of the right column to support print functionality.

Code sample

```
<!-- LEFTNAV_END -->
</td>
<td width="610"><a name="main"></a>
<table width="610" cellpadding="0" cellspacing="0" border="0"
id="content-table">
<tr valign="top">
<td width="10">&nbsp;</td>
<td width="443">%%page title code goes here%%</td>
<td width="7">&nbsp;</td>
<td width="150">&nbsp;</td>
</tr>
<tr valign="top">
<td width="10">&nbsp;</td>
<td width="443" id="content">%%443px cell%%</td>
<td width="7">&nbsp;</td>
<td width="150" id="right-nav">%%150px cell%%</td>
</tr>
</table>
<!-- FOOTER_BEGIN -->
```

[↑ Back to top](#)

Standard 4-unit split

Divides the content space into two columns that are 218 pixels wide each, with a 7-pixel wide gutter between them.