madcap software

USER GUIDE

MADCAP FLARE ONLINE

Styles Guide

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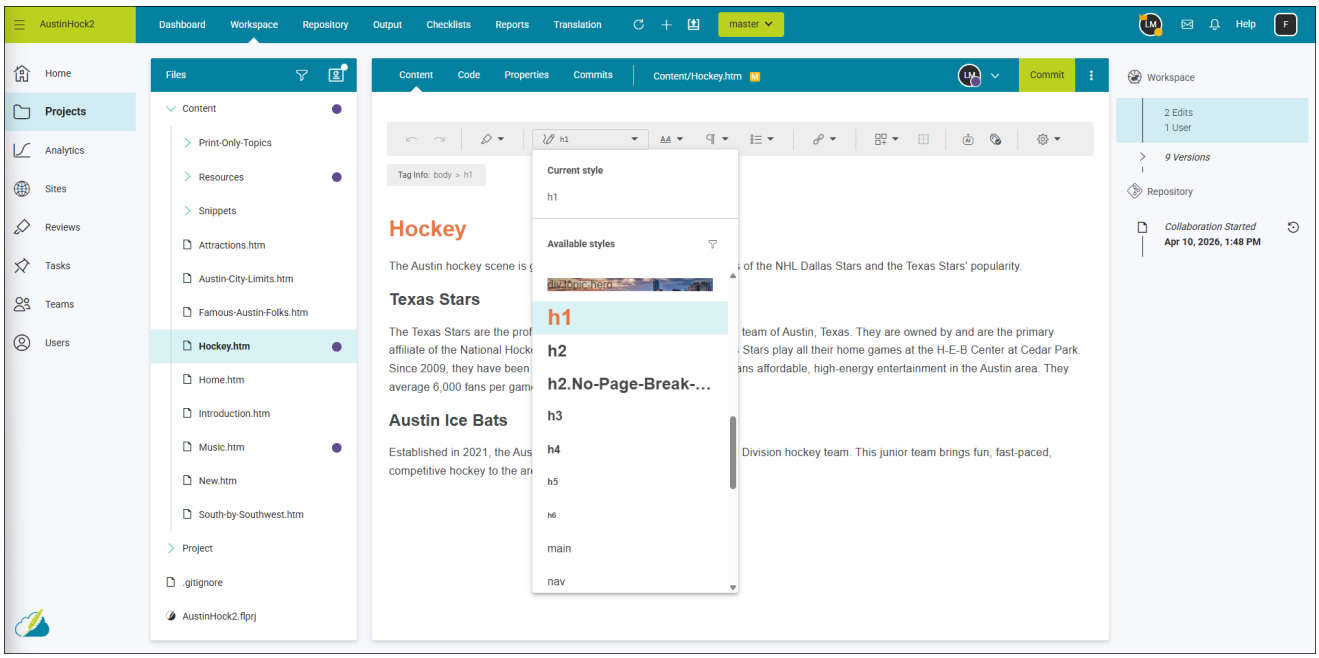
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CHAPTER 1

Introduction

Styles are used to control the look and feel of your documentation, and keep the content separate from its presentation. The styling is based on cascading stylesheets (CSS), which is an international standard for formatting web content, developed by the World Wide Web Consortium.

As much as possible, you should avoid the opposite of styles, which is local formatting. For example, you can highlight some text and make it italic right where that content exists. But if you make that same change in many places, it takes a lot longer and it's a lot more work to control the look of that content if you later change your mind.



General Information

- "Style Rendering" on page 7
- "Cascading Stylesheets" on page 10

Main Activities

- "Adding Regular Stylesheets" on page 14
- "Applying Styles to Content" on page 19
- "Associating a Regular Stylesheet With a Project" on page 28
- "Associating a Regular Stylesheet With a Target" on page 30

NOTE For more information about CSS and styles in a project, see the Flare Desktop Help system.

CHAPTER 2

General Information for Styles

There are various pieces of general information you should know if you plan to use this feature.

This chapter discusses the following:

Style Rendering 7
Cascading Stylesheets 10

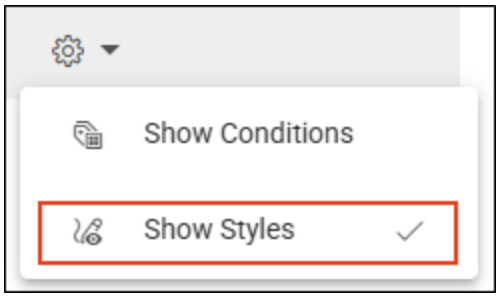
Style Rendering

You can see your styles display in the workspace. This means that factory and custom styles defined in your cascading stylesheet (CSS) render in the editor where you work and in your output. Styles from Flare Desktop are respected in Flare Online, as well as styles from stylesheets created using Flare Online. Styles are rendered in both the Content Editor and Review Editor.

Show/Hide Styles

Styles render in the editor by default.

If you want to disable the render, select the **Settings** drop-down, and click **Show Styles**. If you switch topics, the current setting is remembered.



Style Markers

Styles render well in the editor—especially since Flare Online is browser-based. However, some tags and markup represented by markers are necessary. These provide a visual cue that more than plain text is present.

Marker	Elements
Banner 	Bookmarks
Dashed Border Condition	Conditions
Dotted Border This is micro content	Micro Content
Gray Box  Code not rendered will most likely display in gray boxes.	3D Models, Multimedia, Concept Links, Page Breaks, Concepts, Proxies, Index Keywords, Related Topic Links, Keyword Links, Scripts

Marker	Elements
Solid Border Example	Snippets Variables Page Footer Page Header

What’s Noteworthy?

NOTE Flare Online supports rendering and applying styles in the workspace. To edit or maintain your regular CSS file, use the Stylesheet Editor feature in Flare Desktop. Alternatively, in Flare Online you can use the stylesheet's Code view, but be advised that editing code is an advanced skill.

Cascading Stylesheets

The appearance of your output can come from more than one stylesheet in your Flare project, meaning that style settings can originate elsewhere. In addition, these settings can be applied differently in a stylesheet, and they "cascade" (combine) to create the final look of your content.

Stylesheet Types

Flare Online supports the following cascading stylesheet (CSS) and formatting options:

- Branding Stylesheet This CSS file lets you define your project's look and feel for branding purposes, including tables. If you create your project with the Start New Project Wizard, the CSS variables are automatically linked to various places throughout the project where they point to the branding stylesheet.
- Regular Stylesheet This CSS file lets you store styles for general content in your project, including tables, to control how that content looks.
- Other Tools Some inline styles (e.g., bold, italic, underline) can be applied using the local toolbar in the Content Editor and Review Editor. Although these styles are “inline” they point to a stylesheet and are controlled by it.

NOTE Table stylesheets, which allow you to create customizable patterns and control the appearance for tables only, are not supported in Flare Online. However, you can use a regular stylesheet to design your tables. For more information refer to the Flare Desktop Help system.

Order of Precedence

The order of precedence for style rendering refers to the cascading order of stylesheets. Flare Online lets you have multiple stylesheets set at different levels. The rendering order is as follows:

1. Topic level This refers to topic-level CSS, which means you can have a topic directly associated with a particular stylesheet.
2. Branding level Use branding to give your project a custom look (e.g., logo, hero image, font, color palette). When a project is created, a new branding file is automatically added that specifically identifies values for the branding elements.
3. Target level You can associate a stylesheet with a particular target.
4. Project level A very common use case is to use one main stylesheet at the project level. This ensures that all pages within your project have the same appearance.

You might have conflicting style settings at times (e.g., one style says “red” while another says “blue”). A cascade algorithm is used to resolve conflicting issues and dictate which style “wins” in the end. The algorithm considers criteria such as importance, origin, specificity, and source order when determining style precedence.

Be aware that other concepts like inheritance, or how styles and stylesheets are applied (i.e., inline, embedded, linked external stylesheets) to a particular content file also determines how content will eventually look in the output.



NOTE A general rule regarding precedence (in the editors and output), is that the closer something is to the source, the higher its precedence will be. For example, a style set at the topic-level is close, whereas a style from the browser or a factory stylesheet is farther away. (If no styles are set, then styles come from browser defaults.) It is smart to first broadly set styles (e.g., at the project or branding level). If necessary, you can override broadly applied styles by setting styles at a granular level (e.g., at the topic level).

What's Noteworthy?

NOTE This topic is not to provide an exhaustive explanation of cascading. There are many resources online to increase your knowledge.

NOTE It might be beneficial to use one stylesheet for your project if you can get away with it. This means there is only one stylesheet to maintain. However, you might have a project where you need more than one stylesheet to meet your needs.

NOTE Linking stylesheets is supported, only in that Flare Online can see linked stylesheets in the Apply CSS Styles drop-down. At this time, you cannot link or merge multiple stylesheets together, unless you use the Code tab in the Stylesheet Editor. Note that editing code is an advanced skill.

CHAPTER 3

Main Activities for Styles

Some activities are particularly common and important when it comes to this feature.

This chapter discusses the following:

Adding Regular Stylesheets 14

Applying Styles to Content 19

Associating a Regular Stylesheet With a Project 28

Associating a Regular Stylesheet With a Target 30

Adding Regular Stylesheets

In many cases, you will already have a regular stylesheet that was automatically added when you created a project. If you want to add another stylesheet, you can use the following steps to create a new stylesheet.

Permission Required?

Editing content and project files is an activity available to users with the Author status. By default, users with Author status have the following permissions set:

- ☑ Create/Edit Files

  If this is deselected, then viewing files in a read-only mode is allowed. On the left side of the page, the Files vertical three-dot menu is not available.

- ☑ Edit Code

  If this is deselected, the XHTML in the Code view is read-only.

  Editing code is regarded as a capability for an advanced user. If not done properly, the code can become malformed quickly. Administrators can prevent users from editing the code by deselecting the Edit Code permission.

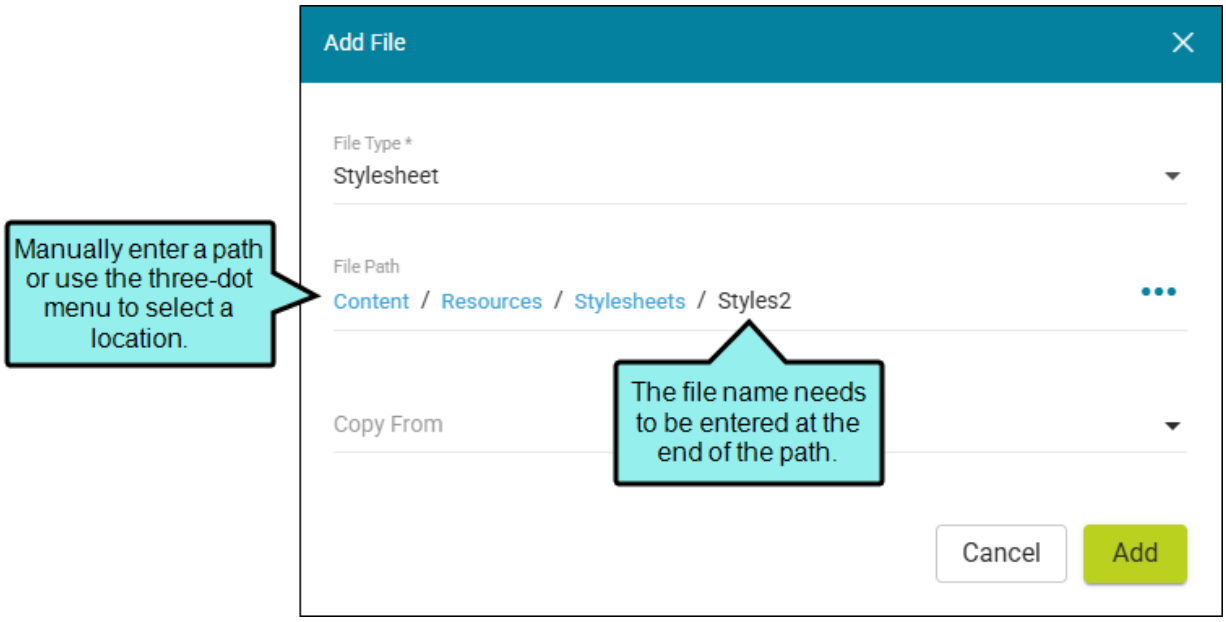
How to Add a Regular Stylesheet

1. Open a project, and select the **Workspace** tab at the top.
2. From the main toolbar, click  to add a new file.

   > NOTE Alternatively, you can upload an external file into your project.

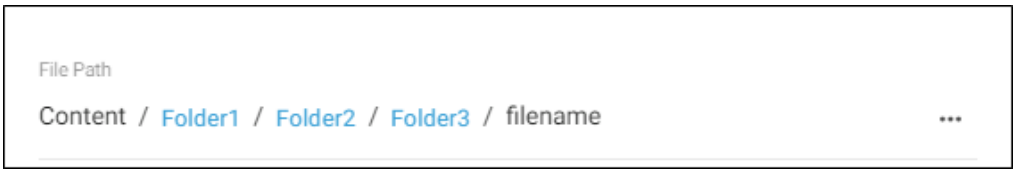
3. In the Add File dialog, click the **File Type** drop-down, and select **Stylesheet**.
4. In the **File Path** field, enter a path and a name for the new file. The recommended path for regular stylesheets is Content > Resources > Stylesheets. However, you can add the stylesheet anywhere in the Content folder that you want.

Alternatively, click ••• to select a location for the file in the project, and **Accept** the file path. Then in the **File Path** field, enter a name for the file.



NOTE You might notice the File Path displays black or blue lettering. The blue items are folders, and you can click the item to jump to that folder.

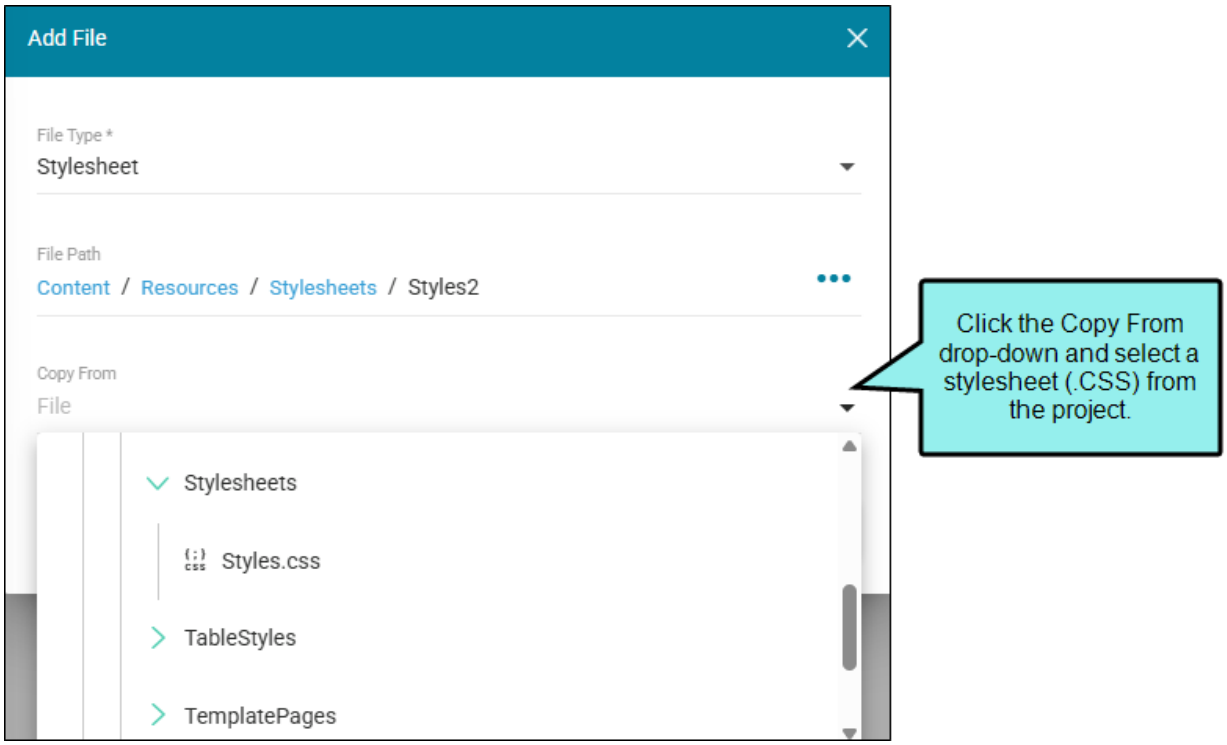
For example, in the Add File dialog, a file path contains several folders (indicated by blue lettering) before the filename.



If the "Folder1" item is clicked, you know longer see the subfolders.



5. (Optional) In the Add File dialog, from the **Copy From** drop-down, you can select an existing stylesheet file to use. This copies all the settings from the existing file to the new file, providing a base of settings to start with for your file. If you choose not to do this, then your new stylesheet is populated with a set of factory default settings.



6. Click **Add**. A new file is created.
7. Click the **Code** tab to view the contents of the stylesheet.

> NOTE Flare Online supports rendering and applying styles in the workspace. To edit or maintain your regular CSS file, use the Stylesheet Editor feature in Flare Desktop. Alternatively, in Flare Online you can use the stylesheet's Code view, but be advised that editing code is an advanced skill.

8. Click **Commit**.
9. In the Create New Commit dialog, verify the new file path, and enter a **Commit Message**.
10. Click **Commit**. (Or click **Cancel**, to back out of the process.)

Applying Styles to Content

Authors can select and apply styles to content for topic or snippet files in the Content Editor. This includes basic HTML elements, inline formatting, and existing style tags and style classes defined in a cascading stylesheet (CSS).

Reviewers can see styles applied to content in the Review Editor for a better viewing experience, but have limitations when applying styles.

Permission Required?

Editing content and project files is an activity available to users with the Author status. By default, users with Author status have the following permissions set:

- 

  If this is deselected, then viewing files in a read-only mode is allowed. On the left side of the page, the Files vertical three-dot menu is not available.

- 

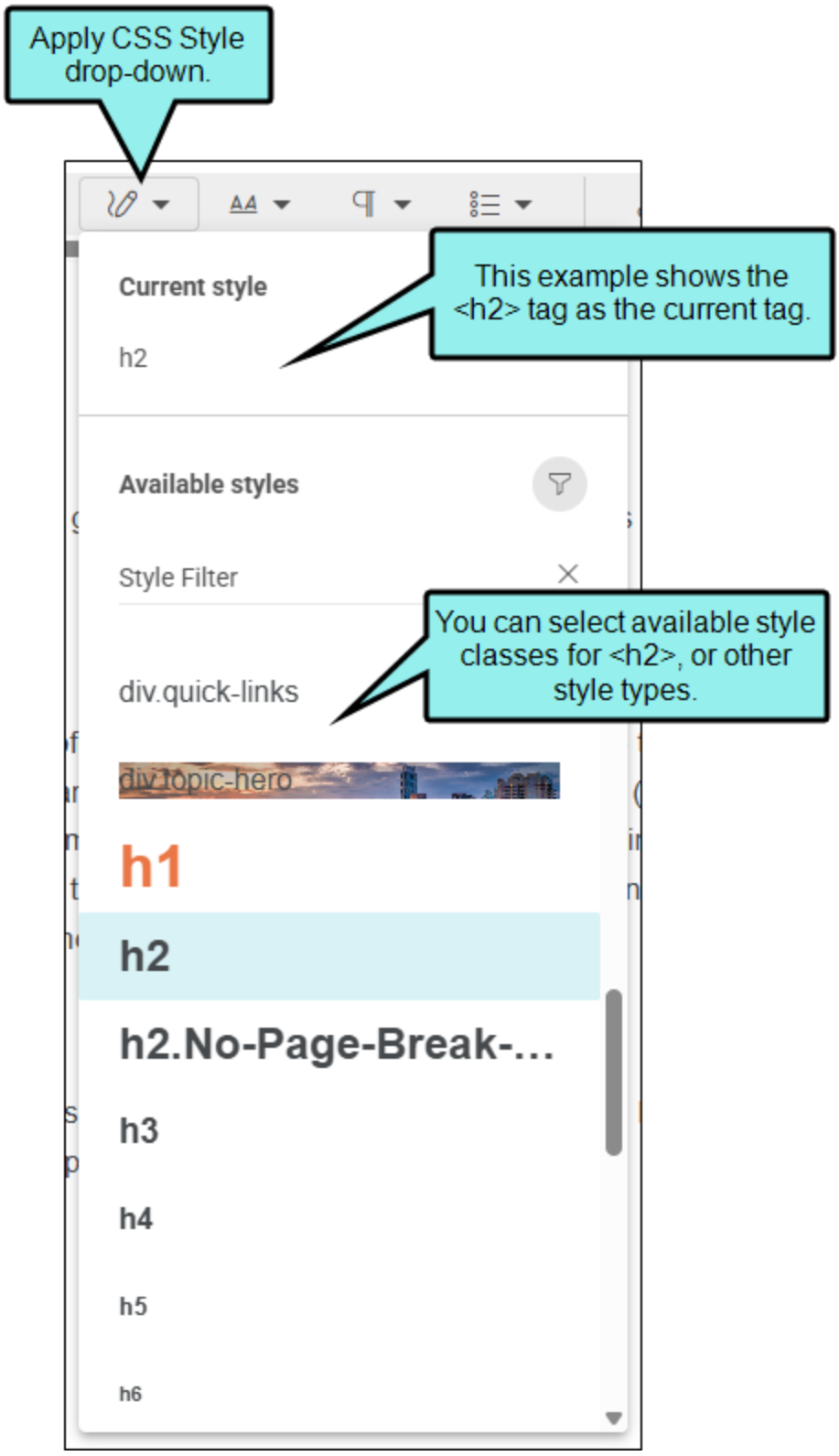
  If this is deselected, the XHTML in the Code view is read-only.

  Editing code is regarded as a capability for an advanced user. If not done properly, the code can become malformed quickly. Administrators can prevent users from editing the code by deselecting the Edit Code permission.

Selecting Styles

When you select a style in the editor, it becomes the active current style. From the local toolbar, click the Apply CSS Style drop-down to view style classes for the current style tag selected (e.g., the <p> tag might have the class <p.footer>). It also lists other style tags that you can change to (e.g., switch from <h1> to <h2>).

The drop-down is dynamic to the content selected, and is valid for block-level (e.g., <h3>, <p>,) content, as well as character-level (e.g., , <b>) content.


Apply CSS Style drop-down.
Current style
h2
This example shows the <h2> tag as the current tag.
Available styles
Style Filter
div.quick-links
You can select available style classes for <h2>, or other style types.
div.topic-hero
h1
h2
h2.No-Page-Break-...
h3
h4
h5
h6

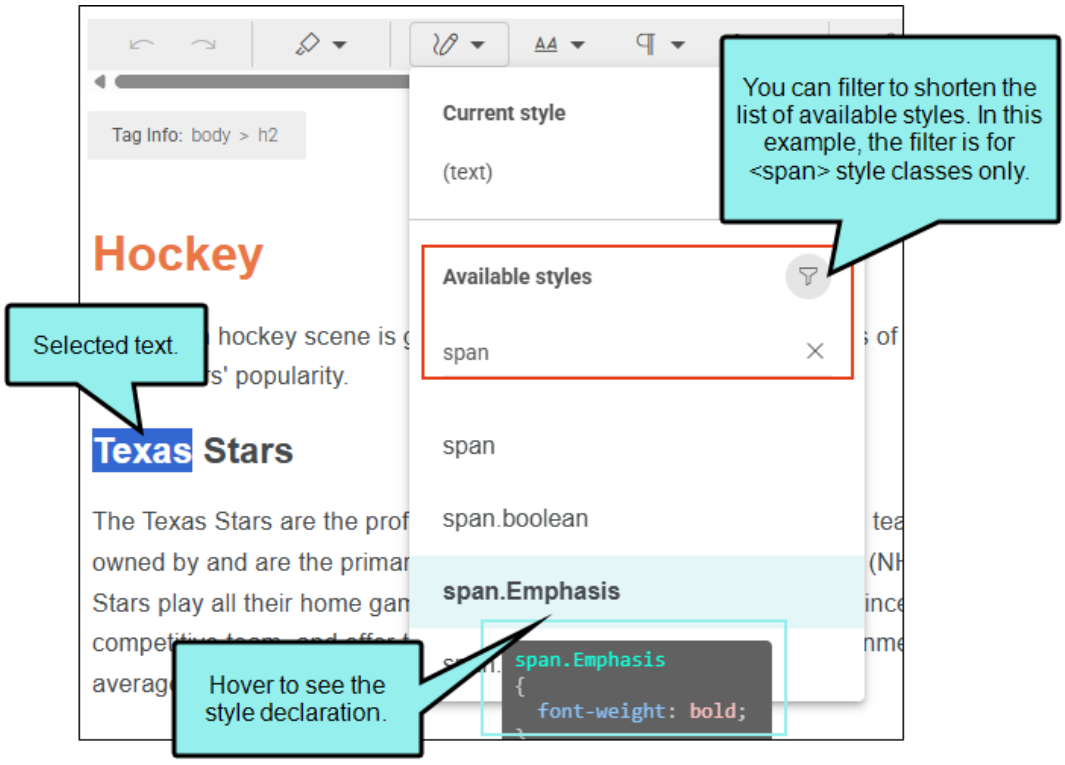
How to Apply a CSS Style

You can apply styles to the editor that are defined in your existing CSS file.

1. Open a project, and select the Workspace tab at the top.
2. From the left side of the page, expand the Content folder (and any subfolders if necessary).
3. Locate a topic or snippet and click it. The file opens to the right in the Content Editor.
4. Click or select the appropriate content in the file. (Styles from the CSS file render by default.)
5. From the local toolbar, click the Apply CSS Styles drop-down. (Since the editor is responsive the drop-down may display as a collapsed or expanded element.)
6. From the drop-down, choose a style to apply to your selected content. The content in the editor updates to the selected style.
7. Click Commit.
8. In the Create New Commit dialog, verify the new file path, and enter a Commit Message.
9. Click Commit. (Or click Cancel, to back out of the process.)

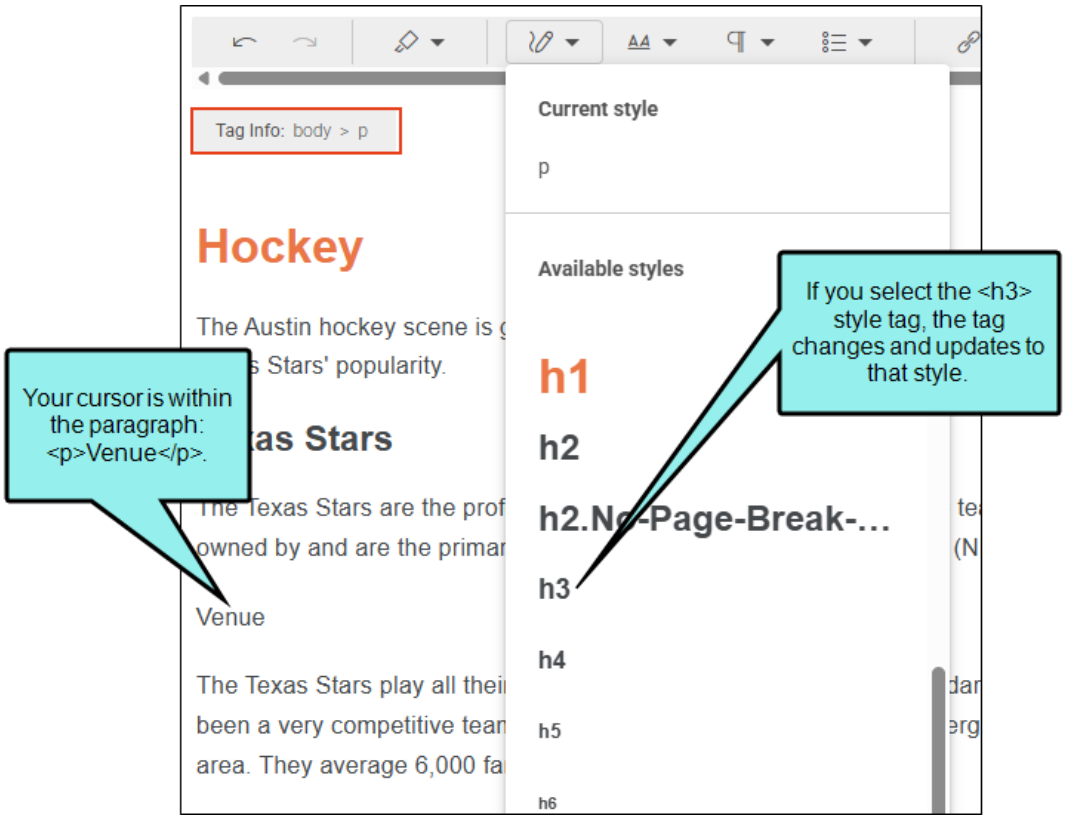
☆ EXAMPLE You might identify text within a paragraph where you want to apply a style (e.g., span). After the text is selected, click the Apply CSS Style drop-down.

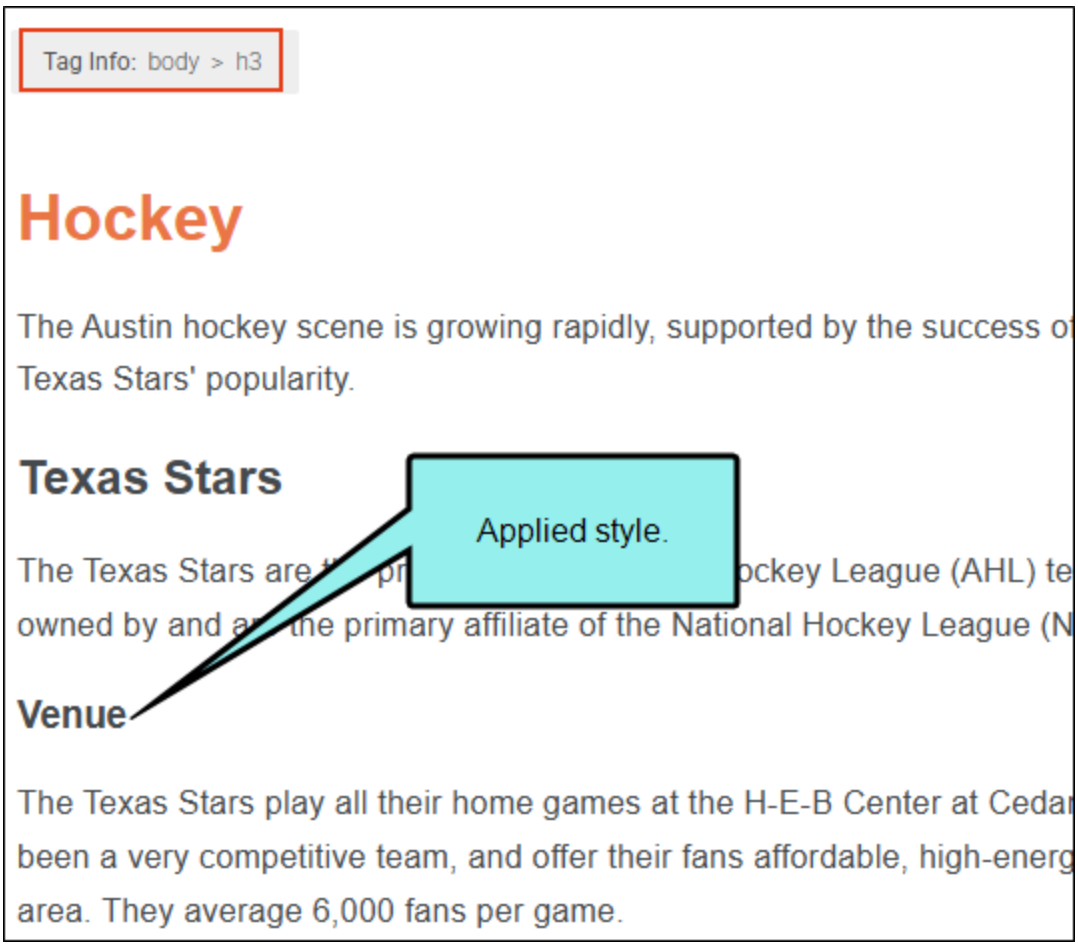
If the list of available styles is long, the drop-down lets you to filter for specific styles.



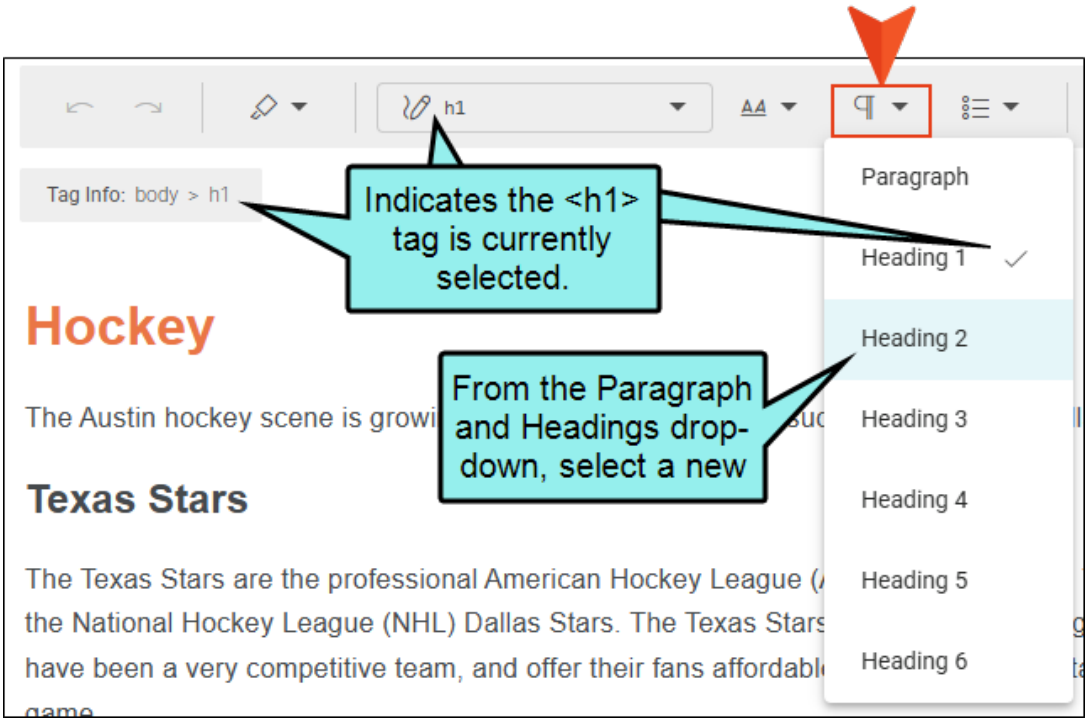
EXAMPLE You have some content that needs to be changed to a heading 3 and render according to your CSS file.

Your cursor is on the regular paragraph where you want to apply the heading style to it. You then click the Apply CSS Style drop-down, and select <h3>.



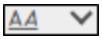

Tag Info: body > h3
Hockey
The Austin hockey scene is growing rapidly, supported by the success o
Texas Stars' popularity.
Texas Stars
Applied style.
The Texas Stars are
ockey League (AHL) te
owned by and a
the primary affiliate of the National Hockey League (N
Venue
The Texas Stars play all their home games at the H-E-B Center at Ceda
been a very competitive team, and offer their fans affordable, high-energ
area. They average 6,000 fans per game.

☆ EXAMPLE As an alternative, you can change the style tag type using the Paragraph and Headings drop-down in the local toolbar. If you place your cursor in the top heading (e.g., the <h1> tag) and want to change it to a second heading style (e.g., the <h2> tag), you can then simply select **Heading 2** from the drop-down.



Basic Formatting Options

In addition to applying CSS styles, the local toolbar has other options to format content.

Option	Description
	Applies bold typeface to the content selected in the topic. Applies italic typeface to the content selected in the topic. Underlines the content selected in the topic. This formatting does not replace a style tag but "wraps" inline to the style node (e.g., text becomes text).
	Lets you apply basic styles to block-level content: ■ Paragraph Applies a paragraph tag to the content. ■ Heading 1 - Heading 6 Applies a heading tag (<h1> through <h6>) to the content. Elements in the Paragraph and Headings drop-down replace the selected block-level content to a different tag (e.g., text becomes <h2>text</h2>).
	Lets you create and set list styles on content: Applies a bulleted list tag to the content. Applies a numbered list tag to the content. Applies definition list tags to the content. Outdents the list item(s). This option pertains only to lists, not other kinds of content. Indents the list item(s). This option pertains only to lists, not other kinds of content.

What’s Noteworthy?

NOTE Flare Online's lightweight editor is responsive. This means that elements of the workspace—local toolbar items, shift automatically if you resize the UI, move from a large screen to a smaller one, or change the resolution on your monitor.

Associating a Regular Stylesheet With a Project

Supported In:



When you want to use styles in your content, the stylesheet needs to be made available for the content in question. If you associate a stylesheet at the project level the styles will be available for the content in the project. If you specify a stylesheet at the project level and another at a target level, the stylesheet at the target takes precedence.

> NOTE To learn more about setting a stylesheet at the file level and inheritance, see the Flare Desktop Help system.

Permission Required?

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  Editing code is regarded as a capability for an advanced user. If not done properly, the code can become malformed quickly. Administrators can prevent users from editing the code by deselecting the Edit Code permission.

How to Associate a Regular Stylesheet With a Project

1. On the left side of the Flare Online interface, click Projects.
2. Select a project to open it.
3. Click the Workspace tab at the top of the screen.
4. From the left side of the page, click the project file (FLPRJ).
5. In the editor, from the Stylesheet drop-down, select the name of the stylesheet, which is usually located under Resources > Stylesheets.
6. Click Commit.
7. In the Create New Commit dialog, enter a Commit Message.
8. Click Commit. (Or click Cancel, to back out of the process.)

Associating a Regular Stylesheet With a Target

Supported In:



When you want to use styles in your content, the stylesheet needs to be made available for the content in question. In Flare Online, you can associate a stylesheet at the target level, which means that the stylesheet will automatically be applied to all topics and micro content that are included in that target. (You also have the option of associating a regular stylesheet at the project level.)

> NOTE To learn more about setting a stylesheet at the project level and inheritance, see the Flare Desktop Help system.

Permission Required?

Editing content and project files is an activity available to users with the Author status. By default, users with Author status have the following permissions set:

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How to Associate a Regular Stylesheet With a Target

1. From the **Projects** page (**Workspace** tab), open a target.
2. On the left, select **Appearance**.
3. Click the **Stylesheet** field. Navigate to and select the name of the stylesheet, which is usually located under Resources > Stylesheets.
4. Click **Commit**.
5. In the Create New Commit dialog, enter a **Commit Message**.
6. Click **Commit**. (Or click **Cancel**, to back out of the process.)

PDFs

The following PDFs are available for download from the Help system.

AI Assist Guide

Analytics Guide

Authoring Guide

Branding Guide

Building Output Guide

Checklists Guide

Conditions Guide

Getting Started Guide

Images and Multimedia Guide

License Management Guide

Links Guide

Projects Guide

Reports Guide

Reviews Guide

Security Whitepaper

Sites Guide

Snippets Guide

Source Control Guide

Styles Guide

Targets Guide

Tasks Guide

TOC Guide

Topics Guide

Translation Guide

Users and Teams Guide

Variables Guide

What's New Guide

Widgets Guide