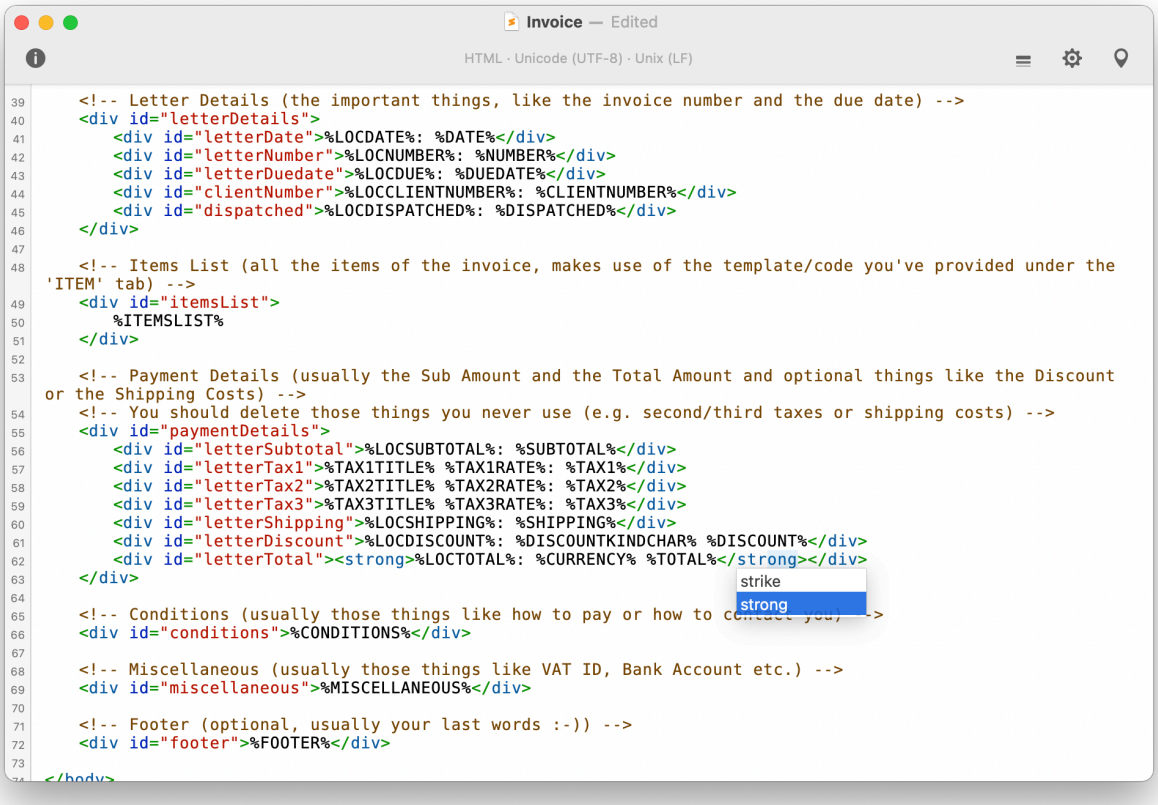
E-Bill

Invoicing made painless and fun

→E-Bill Website

DOWNLOAD
PURCHASE

PART A - **THE 'BUILD YOUR OWN DESIGN' TUTORIAL**



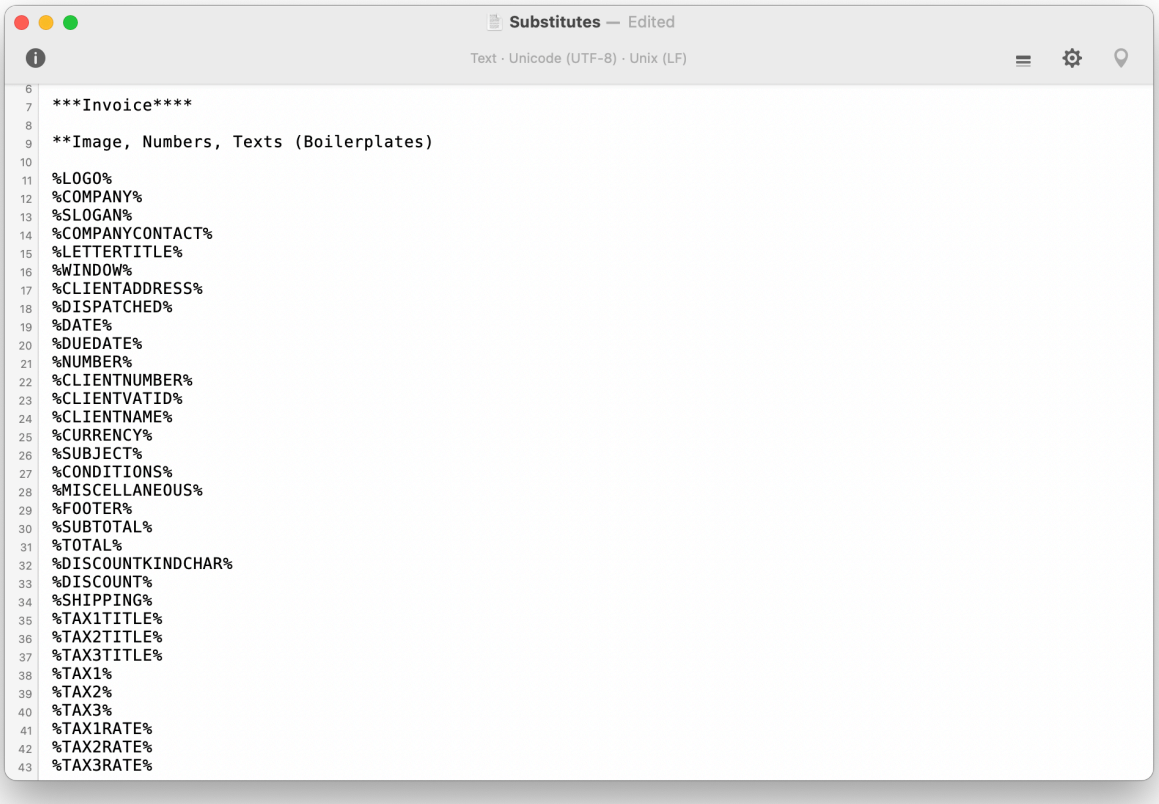
What you need to know

There's a reason why other invoicing Apps only offer three templates you can't change or if you are allowed to, it is cumbersome, limited, and annoying. Writing code for printing out things on a computer is (besides

syncing) the hardest task you can do as a developer. It is a baggage full of hurt. And that's the nice way to put it. Printing and proper pagination is the Louis Vuitton set of hurt. I decided to go down that path for you so that you can create awesome designs for your quotes and invoices with just a little knowledge of HTML and CSS.

But you need to invest some minutes. Period. And you may have to test your design for a couples of times, especially the pagination. But the result is worth it!

> If you're completely new to all things HTM and CSS - I got you covered! Just quickly scroll down to my 'DIV's for Dummies' Tutorial and come back here later :-)

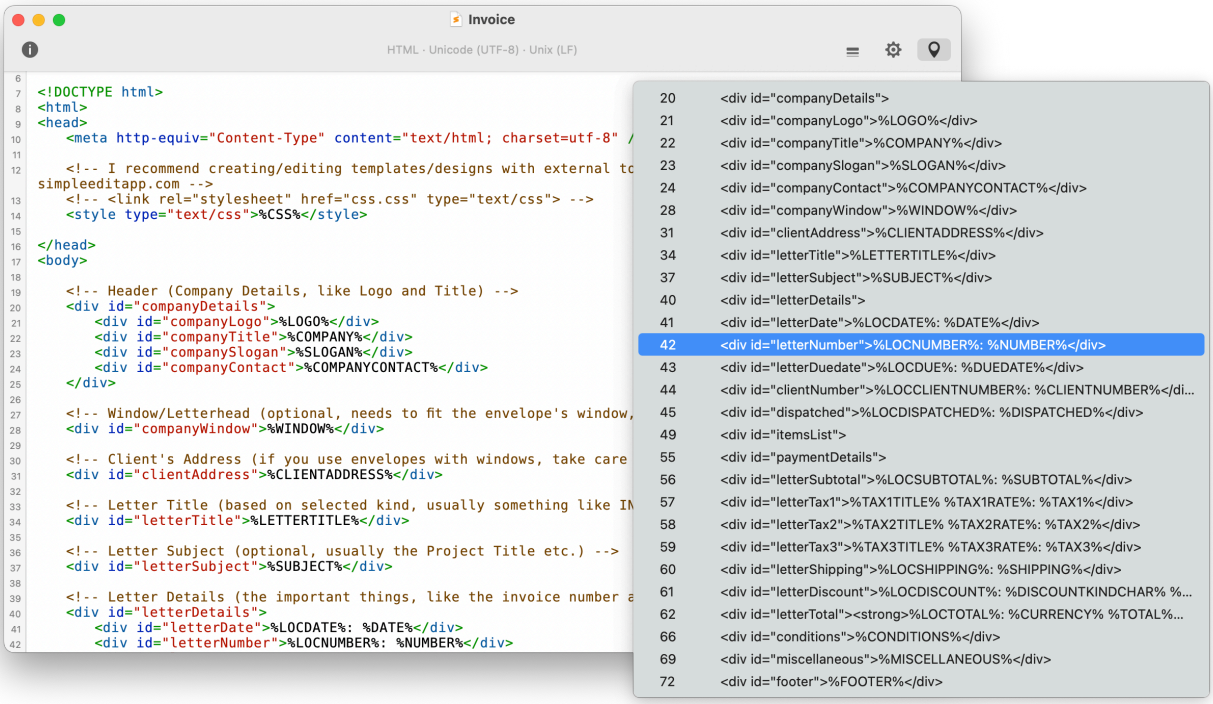


What you need to do

1. **Download the Empty Template**
2. **Unzip the downloaded folder**

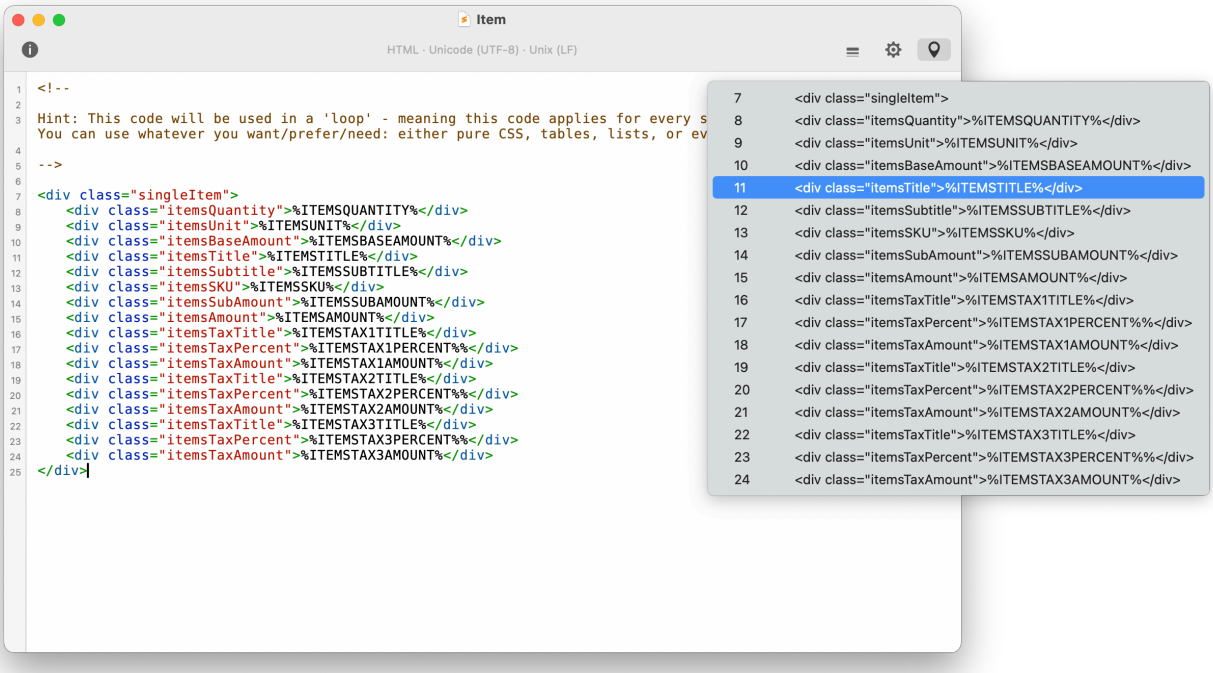
3. Take a look at the Substitutes

These substitutes are available thru-out the layout/design and will be replaced on the fly - when you preview, print, send-out an invoice - by E-Bill with the numbers, texts from your current invoice, quote, reminder, or delivery slip, and with the localized words you have provided in the E-Bill Settings.



4. Take a look at the Invoice.html file

Templates/Designs are based on HTML and CSS. You can do whatever you want with them. You can add, delete and rearrange components in every possible way. Bill will replace placeholders like: %COMPANY% with your company's title/name on the fly and style it with the CSS you've provided; for example in the 'companyTitle' div id.



5. Take a look at the Item.html file

> This item code will be used in a 'loop' - meaning this code applies for every single item on an invoice. You can use whatever you want/prefer/need: either pure CSS, tables, lists, or even other crazy solutions.

6. Take a look at the CSS.css file

> As you can see, I've added my own DIVs and styles. And that's what you can - and should - do as well. You also don't have to start with the empty template. Just use one of those already available and customize it to your needs.

WTF?

Still confused?

The Invoice Template is nothing more than an HTML file, the overall blueprint for your invoice. This file consists of ordinary HTML code and in-between you 'add' the substitutes you want and need to show up on your invoice, your quote, your reminder, or your delivery slip:

E-Bill will replace the substitute `%COMPANY%` with your company's name, which you have provided in E-Bill's Preferences.

`%DUEDATE%` - for example - will be replaced on the fly with the due date of the invoice and `%TOTAL%` with the total amount of the invoice.

In order to work in every language, E- Bill will replace `%LOCDISCOUNT%` - and everything else beginning with LOC - with the localized word for discount you've provided in the E-Bill Settings. Just as an example: In German this would be 'Rabatt'.

The Item Template is for 'designing' the way the items on your invoice should be arranged and appear. That code will be used in a loop so that every single item will just look the same. You can use whatever you want. Either pure CSS, tables, lists, or whatever works for you.

Speaking of CSS: That's the third and last part of your invoice. The CSS describes how your invoice and its components should look. Since E-Bill is a native Mac App, you can use everything WebKit supports and you don't have to care about other browsers here.

Don't know what the heck HTML and CSS is and does?

No worries! You can still use E-Bill. By design E-Bill works for any language and your individual needs out of the box since you can provide and customize every important aspect without even touching a template/design. Just provide your boilerplates, your custom localized words, and select the template that fits your taste and needs and you're good to go.

And editing the template and the CSS isn't that hard. No really, it's not! Even without a degree in web design you can easily change the font or add needed substitutes on your own. Care for an example?

Here you are:

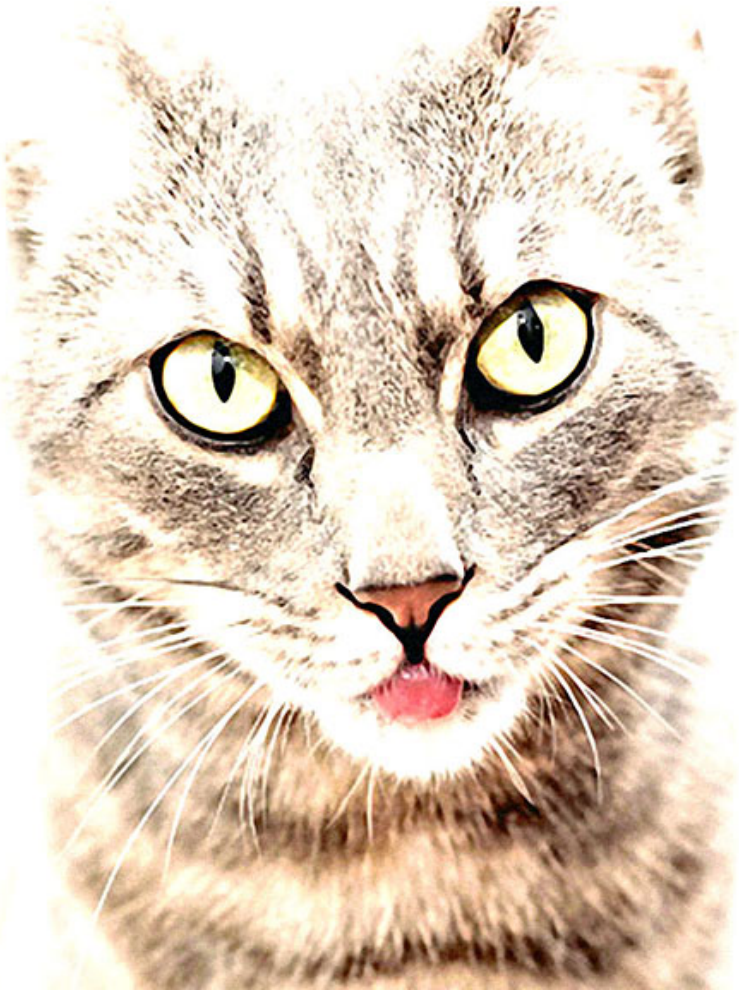
```
body { font: 13px "Helvetica Neue", sans-serif; }
```

This is taken from the CSS file of the 'Bored by Life' template. Yes, there are some gibberish thingies to find - but 'font' says it all - right?

> If you just change "Helvetica Neue" into "Times New Roman" your clients will hate you for choosing a really ugly font - but you've changed it on your own. And guess what happens if you change 13px into 19px? Yes, your clients won't need their glasses to pay you but you probably will need to buy some more paper :-)
>
> And since many thirteen year old kids can build websites in their sleep, there will be someone in your household or neighborhood eager to help you in exchange for some easily earned bucks.

And since I'm sometimes a nice person:

PART B - **THE 'DIVS FOR DUMMIES' TUTORIAL**



Almost like using Word

This is a short tutorial on how to create your own E-Bill template/design or how to edit an existing one without having a degree in web design. If you were to use a word template, you would still have to adjust and edit it.

Changing the order of DIVs or adjusting the margins or the size of the logo image is almost as simple as well.

Here you are: A simple manual on how to change the order of 'things' on your invoice, on how to adjust the space between those 'things' and on how to enlarge or shrink logo images...

ABOUT DIVS - OR HOW TO 'SORT THINGS'

Your invoice contains different blocks of information. For example, the header with your logo, company name, and your address. Then there is the part with the details about the client; like his name, client number, and address. All those blocks are nothing else then separated DIVs.

This is how a simple DIV looks like in code:

```
<div>I'm a stupid text in a DIV.</div>
```

And this is how it is displayed on your invoice:

I'm a stupid text in a DIV.

Guess what happens, if you add a second DIV:

```
<div>I'm a stupid text in a DIV.</div>
<div>I'm another stupid text in a DIV.</div>
```

Yes, you're right. This is what will be printed:

I'm a stupid text in a DIV.
I'm another stupid text in a DIV.

And now guess what happens, if you just change the sort order:

```
<div>I'm another stupid text in a DIV.</div>
<div>I'm a stupid text in a DIV.</div>
```

Congrats, you're right again:

I'm another stupid text in a DIV.
I'm a stupid text in a DIV.

That's almost nothing different from working with a Word template. But using some HTML and some CSS (what we will do in a second as well) has many advantages. Having a block in a block for example:

Let's put some blocks of information into a 'parent' block of information:

```
<div>I'm the PARENT DIV.
<div>I'm a CHILD DIV.</div>
<div>I'm another CHILD DIV.</div></div>
```

Yes, you're right. On the invoice this looks really boring:

I'm the PARENT DIV.
I'm a CHILD DIV.
I'm another CHILD DIV.

Stop. Before you start to fire up Microsoft Word and trash E-Bill we have to talk about how to 'style' those blocks of information; those DIVs. Before we can do that I have to tell you the most important information you need to know:

ALWAYS CLOSE YOUR ~~BLOCKS~~ DIVS!

If you open a DIV like this:

```
<div>I'm the PARENT DIV.
```

you always have to close it like this:

```
</div>
```

Otherwise BAD THINGS will happen!
BTW: This is true for all the other TAGS as well:

```
This is a <strong>bold</strong> word!
```

When used correctly, it will look on your invoice like this:

This is a **bold** word!

The moment you forget to close it or forget the /:

```
This is a <strong>bold word!
```

Something like this will happen:

This is a **bold word!**

And since we did not close it, this can go on forever.
That's why we better close it right now with:

```
</strong>
```

Puhh. Everything back to normal.

Since we can 'style' those blocks with lots of things - like font size, space to the 'neighbor' blocks - DIVs - you can imagine that you can mess up your design pretty badly. So in case your invoice looks like a shit Picasso painting, chances are you forgot to close a DIV or some other TAG.

Now lets do some of the actual styling - shall we?

ABOUT CSS - OR HOW TO 'STYLE THINGS'

So far we have just 'separated' blocks of information. This helps a lot on an invoice but it looks kinda boring, I know. With the help of a CSS style sheet we can tell those blocks of information (those DIVs) how to look and where to place themselves on the invoice. In order for those individual blocks of information, those individual DIVs to be 'styled' differently - we simply give them names:

Let's name our block of information for the header of the invoice:

```
<div id="invoiceHeader">MOApp Software</div>
```

Yes, on the invoice this still looks boring:

MOApp Software

That's why we tell our style sheet (the .css file) to do this to the header:

```
#invoiceHeader { font: 32px Helvetica; color: #0096ff; }
```

And now it already looks much better:

MOApp Software

Yes, for the first moment the 'code' looks like gibberish. But lets take a closer look:

```
font: 32px Helvetica;
```

Well, you told the block of information for your invoice header to use a font named **Helvetica** with the font size of **32** pixel.

It is as simple as that. Period. And no, changing the color is no brain surgery either. Just use this website: COLOR HEX

Since you probably want to use only one font for your invoice (or at least for most parts) you may want to tell your 'complete' invoice what to use...

You should use 'body' for this in your style sheet (.css file):

```
body { font: 12px Helvetica; color: #000; }
```

Sometimes 'more space' between the lines looks nice:

```
body { font: 12px Helvetica; color: #000; line-height:
19px; }
```

Since we want some margins on printed invoices, we need to tell this to our style sheet (CSS)...

For the 'main' margins we use 'body' as well:

```
body { font: 12px Helvetica; color: #000; line-height:
19px; margin-top: 1in; margin-bottom: 1in; margin-right:
1.25in; margin-left: 1.25in; }
```

And yes, you can also use centimeter (cm) or millimeter (mm) or the good old pixels (px) - this is completely up to you.

But you should stick to one unit since you can use this **margin** and **padding** information also for 'arranging' your blocks of information, your DIVs, on your invoice. With **margin** and **padding** you can tell your DIV's, for example, how much space should be between them. I recommend to make use of padding when arranging your blocks since we want it to be simple and we are not creating a real websites...

Let's fix create another DIV:

```
<div id="leftAlignedWithoutSpace">Lorem ipsum trallala…</
div>
```

And now let's tell this DIV how to dress up and behave:

```
#leftAlignedWithoutSpace { text-align: left; font-size:
11px; color: #d124bc; }
```

As already guessed (right?) this will look on the invoice like this

Lorem ipsum trallala...

Nothing new really, I know. But on an invoice we often want some space, some padding to other blocks of information and that can be done really easily...

Let's create a new DIV and this time give it some space:

```
<div id="leftAlignedWithSomeSpace">Lorem ipsum trallala…
</div>
```

This you would have to tell your style sheet:

```
#leftAlignedWithSomeSpace { text-align: left; font-size:
11px; color: #d124bc; padding-left: 129px; }
```

Et voila:

Lorem ipsum trallala...

And now let's do this for the British:

```
<div id="rightAlignedWithSomeSpace">Lorem ipsum trallala…
</div>
```

```
#rightAlignedWithSomeSpace { text-align: right; font-
size: 11px; color: #d124bc; padding-right: 129px; }
```

Don't forget that the hand break is on the wrong side now as well:

Lorem ipsum trallala...

And, of course, this works for the top and the bottom exactly the same way:

```
padding-top: 29px; padding-bottom: 59px;
```

With this little information you can style your complete invoice just fine. You don't want to win a price, it doesn't have to be valid and no one will ever see your code. All you want is a nice looking invoice when printed out.

Remember the block in the block thing we did earlier? Now you understand that you can style the parent block with, for example, a padding of 20px from the top and 'substyle' a child block within this parent block with, for example, a padding of 129px from the left. If you need to adjust the complete block of information, you only have to do this for the parent DIV. If you change the top padding of the parent DIV to 40px, all containing DIVs will inherit this top padding and the one child DIV will still have the left padding of 129px. This way crazy things are possible :-)

I recommend that you now download one of the Designs and just start to play around. When you mess up things, just re-import the design and start from scratch. That's the way we all do it, we all learn, and we all end up with something we did on our own.

When you're comfortable with re-arranging DIVs and styling them - you can go on to the last part of this short tutorial, which will probably be the most important task when creating your own design...

ABOUT IMAGES - OR HOW TO MAKE THE LOGO LOOK AWESOME

You can make use of the built-in 'image view' for your logos or background images. Please use high resolution images with lots of DPI. If you want to use it as a background image it should be at least 4000 pixels wide/long and have at least 300 DPI.

Just drop your logo in Bill's Preferences onto the 'logo image view' and style it in your design's style sheet (CSS) as just learned above:

Add this to your template:

```
<div id="companyLogo">%LOGO%</div>
```

And now you can style it anyway you want:

```
#companyLogo { width: 128px; height: 64px; padding-right:
30px; padding-bottom: 30px; }
```

IMPORTANT: THIS WILL STYLE THE COMPLETE BLOCK OF INFORMATION.
YOU COULD ADD YOUR COMPANY'S NAME INTO THAT DIV AS WELL.
THE DIV IS JUST THE SURROUNDING CONTAINER.

We will now tell the 'companyLogo' container how to 'handle' the image (IMG):

```
#companyLogo img { max-width: 128px; max-height: 128px; }
```

And you will end up with something like this:

I know, there is a lot going on here. That's why we will split it up in little pieces. First, lets take a look at the 'surrounding' container, the `companyLogo` DIV:

There is something new to be found:

```
width: 256px; height: 128px;
```

Yes, we can 'tell' a DIV its size.
We can also tell an image its size:

```
#companyLogo img { width: 128px; height: 128px; }
```

Yes, you're right. In my example I used something different:

```
#companyLogo img { max-width: 128px; max-height: 128px; }
```

Why I did this is actually quite simple:

If you give it a 'fixed' width it won't respect the ratio. And it will use up space we need for other things. So better tell it which space it can use while keeping its ratio. Now let's 'shrink' the image:

And, as expected, we end up with this:

And now let's do this for the American:

```
#companyLogo img { max-width: 512px; max-height: 512px; }
```

Yes, we supersized it:

Wait! What! That's not 512px! Yes, you're right. We forgot to tell the 'surrounding block' to grow as well. Let's quickly fix this:

```
#companyLogo { width: 512px; height: 512px; padding-right: 30px; padding-bottom: 30px; }
```

Now that's what I call a Quarter Pounder:

WTF? Are you kidding me? Well, that's why you have to use a 'large' image! Let's try that:

Finally, a badass logo!
People will want to pay their bills now immediately :-)

THERE IS MORE TO IT

For most learning all this will do the trick but there is one more thing I want you to know - it is called 'floating' and no, you don't have to search for your bathing suit:

When 'incorporating' images as learned above:

```
#companyLogo { width: 128px; height: 64px; padding-right: 30px; padding-bottom: 30px; }

#companyLogo img { max-width: 128px; max-height: 128px; }
```

and adding some text next to it, this will happen:

Some text here...

But often we want something like this:

Some text here...

To achieve this, all you have to do is this:

```
#companyLogo { width: 128px; height: 64px; padding-right:
30px; padding-bottom: 30px; float: left; }
```

Yes, you're right, this now applies to the whole 'surrounding' DIV. We can also do this:

```
#companyLogo img { max-width: 128px; max-height: 128px;
float: left; }
```

And yes, this is, of course, possible as well:

```
#companyLogo img { max-width: 128px; max-height: 128px;
float: right; }
```

When to 'style' a surrounding block, a PARENT DIV and when to only style a CHILD DIV, a CHILD ELEMENT (like an IMG) depends on what you want to do.

Let's take our invoice header for example. Do you want the company name to 'float' left to your logo and the company name is part of the #company container? Then you would probably only tell the image itself to float: left.

If you want another entire block of information to 'float' next to another block of information, you could do something like this:

```
<div id="leftFloating">INVOICE</div>
<div id="rightFloating">MOApp Software Manufactory</div>
```

And format it in the style sheet like this:

```
#leftFloating { float: left; background-color: #75d5ff;
padding: 9px; }
#rightFloating { float: right; background-color: #ff89d8;
padding: 9px; }
```

Which would look like this:

INVOICE

MOApp Software Manufactory

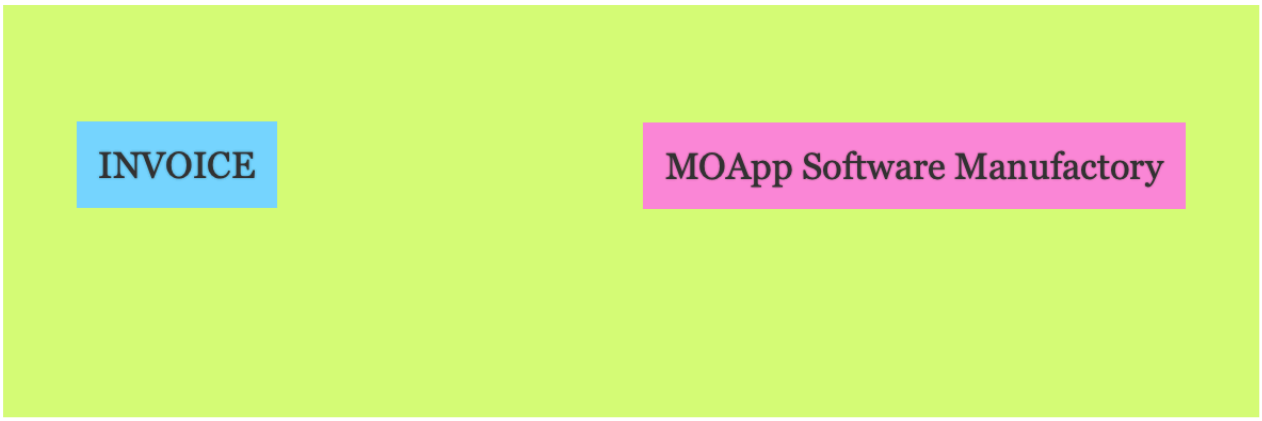
By wrapping it with an enclosing (surrounding) container:

```
<div id="surroundingHeader">
<div id="leftFloating">INVOICE</div>
<div id="rightFloating">MOApp Software Manufactory</div>
</div>
```

with a (for example) fixed size:

```
#surroundingHeader { background-color: #d4fb78; width:
512px; height: 128px; padding: 30px; }
```

you can do a lot to 'style' your invoice:



But you may want to use nicer colors, though...

LAST PIECE OF ADVICE

Even though CSS is very powerful and easy to use, sometimes the quick and dirty solution is better. Again, we don't want to win a prize - we just want a nice looking invoice:

To just add a quick line break use:

```
<br />
```

If you want to add a paragraph:

```
<p>I'm a paragraph!</p>
```

To make the font grow smaller:

```
<small>I'm written in a small font!</small>
```

And as already learned before:

```
<strong>I'm written in bold!</strong>
```

Do I have to remind you not to forget to always close the instruction? And no, line breaks don't need a 'counterpart' :-)

With this little information you will be able to create your own handmade design for E-Bill in no time. OK, in some time :-)

When in trouble: CSS Tutorial - W3Schools

I have to use this site all the time for myself. I'm not good at writing HTML/CSS code. Actually, I suck at it. So, no worries! You don't need to be good at it in order to create your own awesome design!

You can use a tool like SimpleEdit with built-in preview to play around and to immediately see what you are doing...