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[width: auto; on Floats in IE](#)

By [Roger Keays](#), 5 July 2008

I think CSS 2.0 required that widths be explicitly set on floated elements, but CSS 2.1 removed this restriction. Either way, Microsoft Internet Explorer 6.0 equates `width: auto;` with `width: 100%;` for floats. Not very helpful for building CSS menus. I searched the web and didn't find any workarounds, but I came up with this simple one myself:

```
element { float: left; _width: 0px; }
```

The underscore hack targets IE 6 but not IE 7 (which behaves correctly). IE6 also automatically expands the width of the block to fit when the specified width is too small, which is why this hack works. When I say 'works' I mean it in the Microsoft sense of the word of course.

Hope it helps!

About Roger Keays



Roger Keays is an artist, an engineer, and a student of life. He has no fixed address and has left footprints on 40-something different countries around the world.

Roger is addicted to surfing. His other interests are music, psychology, languages, the proper use of semicolons, and finding good food.