CSS ALMANAC → **SELECTORS** → **V** →

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The `:visited` pseudo-class selector can change *some* of the styling on an anchor link (`<a>`) element if the user's browser has already visited the link. It's meant to help users distinguish the difference between links they have and haven't visited.

```css
a:visited {
  color: gray;
}
```

↻ (#aa-limitations-and-usage) Limitations and usage

There is some privacy concern about `:visited`, namely that a malicious website could have links to tons of websites with `:visited` styling, then test the visual style of the links with JavaScript to report back to a server which sites the user has visited. This violates the user's privacy and could potentially reveal personally-identifying information.

As a result, most browsers restrict what styling can be changed on `:visited` links, and what styling information can be reported with the `getComputedStyle` method.

This is a good run-down of that situation. (https://developer.mozilla.org/en-US/docs/Web/CSS/Privacy_and_the_:visited_selector)

These are the properties that can be changed with `:visited`:

- `color` (https://css-tricks.com/almanac/properties/c/color/)
- `background-color` (https://css-tricks.com/almanac/properties/b/background-color/)

- `border-color` (https://css-tricks.com/almanac/properties/b/border/) (and its sub-properties)
- `outline-color` (https://css-tricks.com/almanac/properties/o/outline/)
- The color parts of the `fill` and `stroke` properties

You can only use `:visited` to change those properties if the link already has them in the "unvisited" or `:link` state. You can't use it to add properties that aren't already present on the link. For example:

You *can* change the `background-color` of a `:visited` link if the link element already had a background color.

You *can't* add a `background-color` to a `:visited` link if it did not have a background color when it was an "unvisited" link.

↺ (#aa-link-pseudo-classes-in-order) Link pseudo-classes in order

It's also useful to know that most of the link pseudo-classes should be declared in a specific order (https://css-tricks.com/snippets/css/link-pseudo-classes-in-order/). The order is:

1. Link
2. Visited
3. Hover
4. Active

If you're including `:focus` (https://css-tricks.com/almanac/selectors/f/focus/) styling for your link, it's common to add it between "hover" and "active".

↺ (#aa-extending-visited) Extending `:visited`

Though direct styling for `:visited` links is limited, there are lots of clever ways to extend your options for styling visited links. In 2015 there was a bumper crop of blog posts sharing new ideas for styling `:visited` links:

Revisiting :visited (http://joelcalifa.com/blog/revisiting-visited/) , from Joel Califa, shows an example of using `localstorage` to style visited, in-domain links.

Hacking :visited (http://una.im/hacking-visited/) , from Una Kravets, turns `:visited` on its head by adding an "unvisited" tag as `:after` (https://css-tricks.com/almanac/selectors/a/after-and-before/) content to links, which is then hidden with a background color swap after the link is visited.

Pushing the limits of :visited with CSS blend modes (http://stelian.firez.be/post/pushing-the-limits-of-visited-with-css-blend-modes/) , from Stelian Firez, combines a little HTML trick attributed to DuckDuckGo (http://www.quora.com/How-does-DuckDuckGos-new-visited-feature-work) and `background-blend-mode: screen;` (https://css-tricks.com/almanac/properties/b/background-blend-mode/) to fade a custom icon next to a visited link.

Styling Visited Links with SVG (https://thenewcode.com/1046/Styling-Visited-Links-with-SVG) , from Dudley Storey. Uses SVG images with `fill` set to match the page's background color when the link is in the `:link` state, then to another color after the link is `:visited`. The tutorial also includes an alternate method using Unicode characters instead of SVG.