

Stylable form controls

A vision for appearance:base

annevk — May 2024

Motivation

- Markup for form controls is haphazard
- A fully incremental approach makes styling haphazard too
- Styling form controls should be:
 - Consistent
 - Straightforward
- Alignment on vision should help us get there

Terminology

- In-page controls — impact page layout
- Pickers — rendered in an overlay box

Terminology

- A “base” style sheet
 - Wireframe-like
 - Consistent across controls
 - Meets a11y and i18n criteria
 - Light & dark

Styling in-page controls

- Pseudo-elements
- Opt-in for “base” style sheet
 - `control { appearance: base }`

Styling pickers

- Pseudo-elements
 - `::picker(identifier)` for the overlay box
- Separate opt-in for “base” style sheet
 - `::picker(identifier) { appearance: base }`
 - (appearance: none computes to base)

Roadmap

- Milestone 1: in-page controls
 - Define pseudo-elements
 - Define the “base” style sheet
- Milestone 2-N: pickers
 - Incremental approach enabled by `::picker(identifier)`

Closing thoughts

- Would be great to hear more long term visions
- Alignment will ensure a great web developer experience
- We don't mean for this to impact <select>