

WUNDERLANDMEDIA

10 Figma Plugins You Can Replace with CSS

Your Printable Quick-Reference Checklist

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Plugin Replacement Checklist

Tick off each CSS trick as you learn it. Once checked, you can uninstall the Figma plugin.

Figma Plugin	CSS Replacement	Browser Support
☐ Beautiful Shadows / Shadow Maker	Multi-value box-shadow	All browsers
☐ Mesh Gradient / CoolHue	Layered radial-gradient + oklch	All browsers
☐ Color Shades / Tint & Shade	Relative Color Syntax in oklch	All browsers
☐ A11y Contrast Checker / Stark	oklch lightness reasoning	Keep plugin for now
☐ Spacing Manager / Paddi	gap, subgrid, container queries	All browsers
☐ Text Resizer / Font Scale	text-wrap, clamp(), text-box-trim	Chrome, Edge, Firefox
☐ Dark Mode / Theme Switcher	light-dark() + color-scheme	All browsers
☐ Animation Plugins	animation-timeline: view()	Chrome, Edge
☐ Image Cropping Plugins	aspect-ratio + object-fit	All browsers
☐ All of the above	Design closer to the platform!	

Key Principle

Every abstraction you remove between your design and the browser is one less thing that can break, one less dependency to update, one less plugin that freezes your Figma panel.

Smooth Shadows

Replaces: Beautiful Shadows, Shadow Maker

Stack multiple soft shadows with increasing blur and offset:

```
box-shadow:
  0 1px 2px rgba(0,0,0,0.04),
  0 2px 4px rgba(0,0,0,0.04),
  0 4px 8px rgba(0,0,0,0.04),
  0 8px 16px rgba(0,0,0,0.04);
```

Mesh-Like Gradients

Replaces: Mesh Gradient, Noisy Gradients, CoolHue

Layer radial gradients in oklch for perceptually smooth color blending:

```
background:
  radial-gradient(at 30% 20%, oklch(0.8 0.15 30) 0%, transparent 50%),
  radial-gradient(at 70% 60%, oklch(0.7 0.2 250) 0%, transparent 50%),
  oklch(0.95 0.01 250);
```

Color Palettes from One Base Color

Replaces: Color Shades, Tint & Shade Generator

Relative Color Syntax derives variants mathematically:

```
--brand: oklch(0.6 0.2 250);
--brand-light: oklch(from var(--brand) calc(1 + 0.15) c h);
--brand-dark: oklch(from var(--brand) calc(1 - 0.15) c h);
```

Why oklch?

Regular RGB gradients go through muddy grey midpoints. oklch produces perceptually uniform color transitions. All major browsers support it in 2026.

Dark Mode (Native CSS)

Replaces: Dark Mode plugins, Theme Switcher

```
:root { color-scheme: light dark; }

body {
  background: light-dark(#fff, #1a1a1a);
  color: light-dark(#333, #e0e0e0);
}
```

No JavaScript toggle needed. Browser respects system preference automatically.

Layout: Gap, Subgrid & Container Queries

Replaces: Spacing Manager, Paddi

Feature	What It Does
gap	Consistent spacing in flex/grid. No margin hacks or last-child resets.
subgrid	Nested children align to parent grid tracks. True design system consistency.
container queries	Components respond to container size, not viewport. Portable layouts.

```
.card-grid {
  display: grid;
  grid-template-columns: repeat(auto-fill, minmax(300px, 1fr));
  gap: 2rem;
}

.card {
  display: grid;
  grid-template-rows: subgrid;
  grid-row: span 3;
}
```

Typography: Text Wrapping & Fluid Sizing

Replaces: Text Resizer, Font Scale Plugins

Property	What It Does
text-wrap: balance	Distributes text evenly across lines. No awkward one-word last lines.
text-wrap: pretty	Prevents orphans in body text.
clamp()	Responsive font sizes without breakpoints.
text-box-trim	Trims extra whitespace above/below text for pixel-perfect alignment.

```
h1 { text-wrap: balance; }
p { text-wrap: pretty; }

font-size: clamp(1rem, 0.5rem + 2vw, 2rem);
```

Scroll Animations (No JavaScript)

Replaces: Animation and Prototype Plugins

```
.fade-in {
  animation: fadeIn linear both;
  animation-timeline: view();
  animation-range: entry 0% entry 100%;
}

@keyframes fadeIn {
  from { opacity: 0; transform: translateY(20px); }
  to   { opacity: 1; transform: translateY(0); }
}
```

CSS animations run on the compositor thread, so they perform better than JS alternatives. Better for Core Web Vitals.

Aspect Ratio & Object Fit

Replaces: Image Cropping Plugins

No wrapper divs or padding hacks needed:

```
.video-container { aspect-ratio: 16 / 9; }

img {
  object-fit: cover;
  width: 100%;
  height: 100%;
}
```

Contrast & Accessibility

Replaces (eventually): A11y Contrast Checker, Stark

Honest Take

Keep the Figma plugin for now. CSS `color-contrast()` has limited browser support. But understanding `oklch` lightness lets you reason about contrast mathematically: base color at $L=0.4$ means text needs $L>0.85$ or $L<0.15$ for strong contrast.

Quick Reference: oklch Cheat Sheet

Component	Range	What It Controls
L (Lightness)	0 to 1	0 = black, 1 = white
C (Chroma)	0 to ~0.4	0 = grey, higher = more vivid
H (Hue)	0 to 360	Color wheel angle (0=red, 120=green, 250=blue)

When to Keep the Plugin

Plugin	Keep If...
Stark	You need the vision disability simulator (no CSS equivalent)
A11y Contrast Checker	You need WCAG compliance reports for clients
Mesh Gradient	You need complex 4+ point mesh gradients beyond layered radials

"CSS in 2026 is not the CSS you learned in 2018. It's worth a second look."

From the blog post

"Start with one trick. Next time you reach for a Figma plugin, stop and ask: can CSS do this natively? Nine times out of ten, the answer is yes. The gap between design tools and the web platform is shrinking every year. Designers who understand what CSS can do natively design things that are easier to build, perform better, and break less."

Kemal, Wunderlandmedia

Your Action Plan

- ☐ **This week:** Replace one shadow plugin usage with multi-value box-shadow
Easiest win, works in every browser
- ☐ **This week:** Try oklch for one gradient or color palette
Compare the smoothness to your old RGB gradients
- ☐ **Next week:** Add text-wrap: balance to all headings in a project
One line, instant improvement
- ☐ **Next week:** Set up light-dark() for a dark mode without JS
Your users' system preferences do the work
- ☐ **This month:** Use subgrid and container queries in a card layout
True design system consistency in code

Read the Full Post

This checklist is a companion to the full blog post with detailed explanations, more code examples, and browser support notes.

wunderlandmedia.com/figma-plugins-replace-with-css

Need a developer who writes CSS the way it's meant to be written?

wunderlandmedia.com — No plugins required.