

Basic Web Page Authoring with Dreamweaver

Macromedia Dreamweaver is a sophisticated graphical HTML editor for the creation of professional-quality Web pages. Dreamweaver can be used to author a single Web page or to create and manage a multi-page site. The software allows the user to modify his or her work using a graphical WYSIWYG (What You See Is What You Get) interface while simultaneously viewing and editing the HTML source code.

This handout will walk you through the process of creating a single Web page, including:

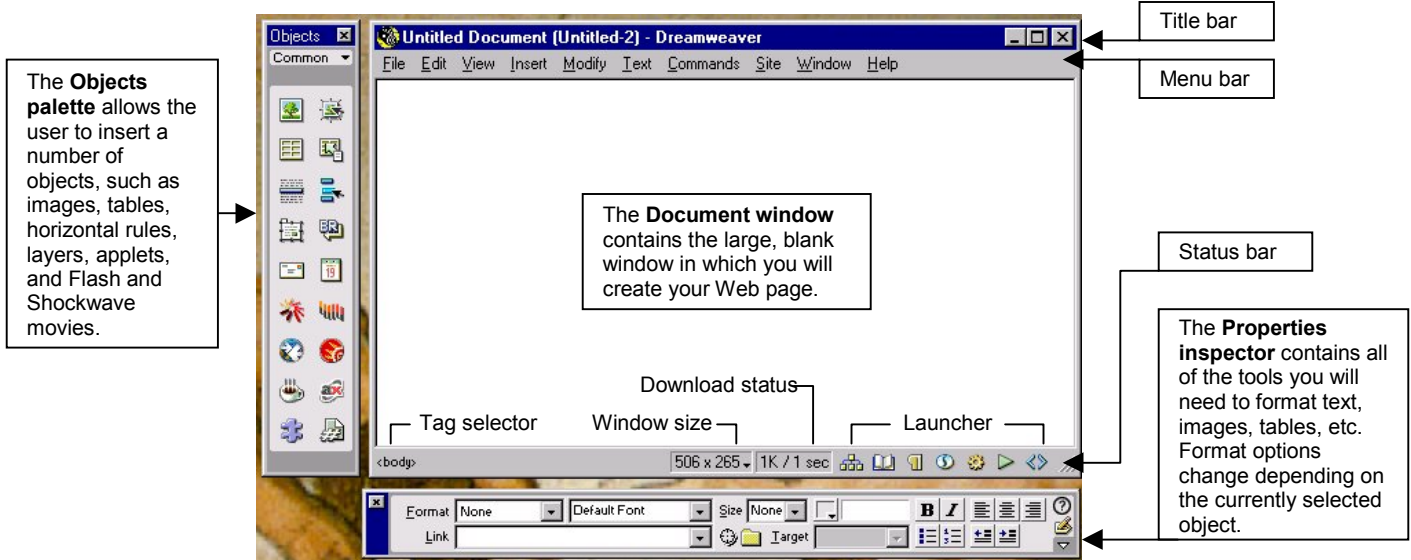
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Getting Started – Palettes and Windows

1. Double-click the desktop icon to open the Dreamweaver program.



2. Several windows open. These are the three we will use today:



If your Objects and Properties windows are not open, select **Window>Objects** or **Window>Properties** from the Menu. A checkmark to the left of the window name indicates that it is open.

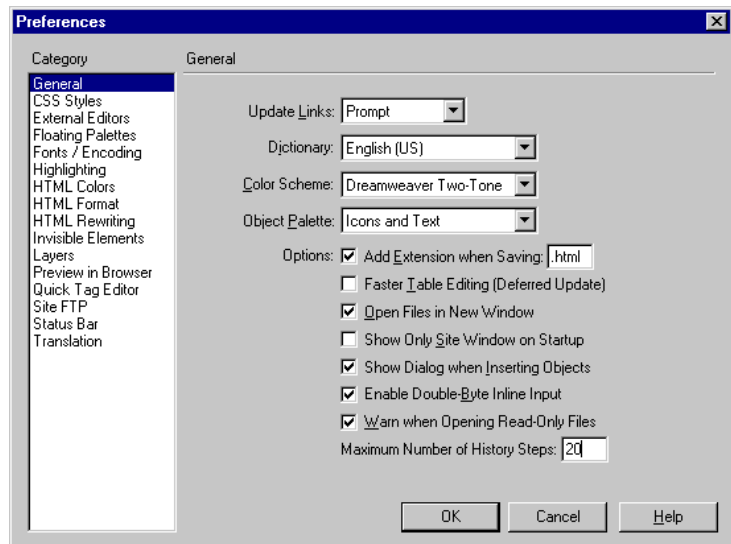


3. Changing program preferences affects the appearance of the Objects palette and the Status bar in the Document window.

Select **Edit>Preferences** from the menu to open the Preferences dialog box.

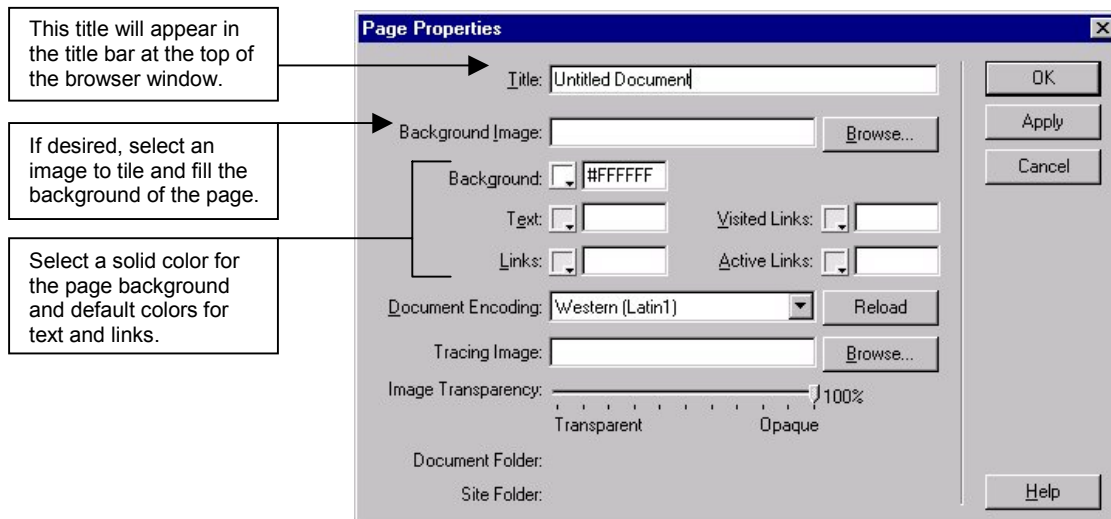
With the **General** category selected, you can set the Objects palette to display icons and text; customize the extension to be added to filenames (.htm or .html); and set the number of History steps (levels of undo), among other things.

With the **Status Bar** category selected, set the connection speed most likely used by your audience. This will customize the download status information in the Status bar and tailor it to your users.



Page Properties

Begin by setting the page properties. These are global properties that remain constant throughout the entire page (but not throughout the site). Select **Modify>Page Properties** from the Menu. The Page Properties dialog box appears.



1. In the blank title field, type a title to appear in the title bar at the top of the browser window.

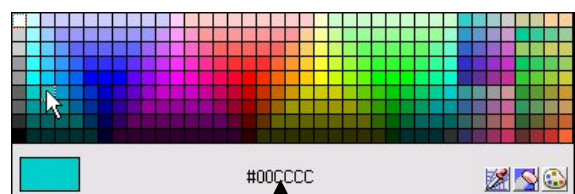


Page titles can contain several words separated by spaces. Any combination of letters, numbers, and punctuation is appropriate. This is not always the case when working with Web pages – spaces and punctuation can not be used in the naming of images and HTML files.

2. The background of the Web page can be filled with a solid color or an image. Background images are usually small (no more than 200x200 pixels) images that tile to fill the entire browser window. Background images should be used sparingly, as they easily overwhelm the rest of the page and make text difficult to read. Most professional Web pages have solid-colored backgrounds, perhaps with a patterned bar down one side of the screen.

Select a background color by clicking on the small gray box next to the word “Background.” 

The Colors palette pops up. Use the eyedropper tool to select a color (note: many of the colors are repeated). Click **Apply** to preview the background color in the Document Window. Test different colors until you find one you like.



This hex code represents the selected color

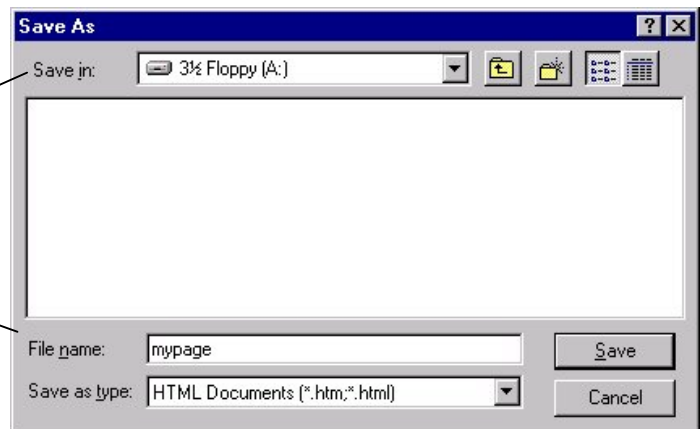
3. Use the color palette to select a text color for the page. Text will appear in this color as it is typed, but color applied to individual characters, words, or sentences overrides this setting. If no color is specified the text will be black.

4. Click in the appropriate color swatches to choose colors for text that appears as links, visited links, and active links.
 - A link is a character, word, or line of text that is clicked to take the user to another page. Links customarily differ in color from other text and are underlined, showing users where they should click to navigate a page. The default color for links is blue.
 - A visited link is a link to a page that was recently visited by the user. Links usually change color after they are visited to show users where they have and have not been. The default color for visited links is purple, and such links often stay purple for several days, even if the Web browser and/or computer are shut down and restarted. The amount of time that visited links remain purple (or whatever color you choose) depends on settings within the user's Web browser.
 - An active link is a link that is being clicked. Active link colors often escape notice because they are displayed only while the mouse button is depressed, creating a flash of color. The default color for active links is red.
5. Page properties can be previewed at any time while the dialog box is open – simply click the **Apply** button. Once you are satisfied with your color choices, click OK. Page properties can be modified at any time if the dialog box is reopened.

Save and Preview

1. Name and save the file. It is important to save early when working in Dreamweaver to create **document-relative paths** for links and images that will be added later. Document-relative paths ensure that the images will display in the page and the links will work correctly once you transfer your page to a Web server. If you insert images in the page before it has been saved the first time, a pop-up box will warn you that you need to save the file.

- a) Select **File>Save** from the Menu. The **Save As** dialog box appears.
- b) Choose a directory in which to save your file. Remember that an HTML document should be saved in the same directory with its associated image files.
- c) Name your file. There should be **no spaces** in your file name.
- d) The correct file extension will be added to the filename.
- e) Click **Save**. Continue to save often as you work on your page.



2. Preview your work in a Web browser by pressing the **F12** key or selecting **File>Preview in Browser>Netscape** from the Menu. This will launch Netscape. You can preview in a browser at any time while working in Dreamweaver. Close the browser window when you are finished.


It is a good idea to preview your page in a browser before posting it to a Web server, as this is the only way to test links and other interactive features such as JavaScript rollovers.

WARNING: Sometimes, after previewing your page in a Web browser, Dreamweaver displays a pop-up window warning that your page has been modified in another program and asking if you would like to save changes. Say **NO** – if you don't, you will lose all of the changes made since the last save.

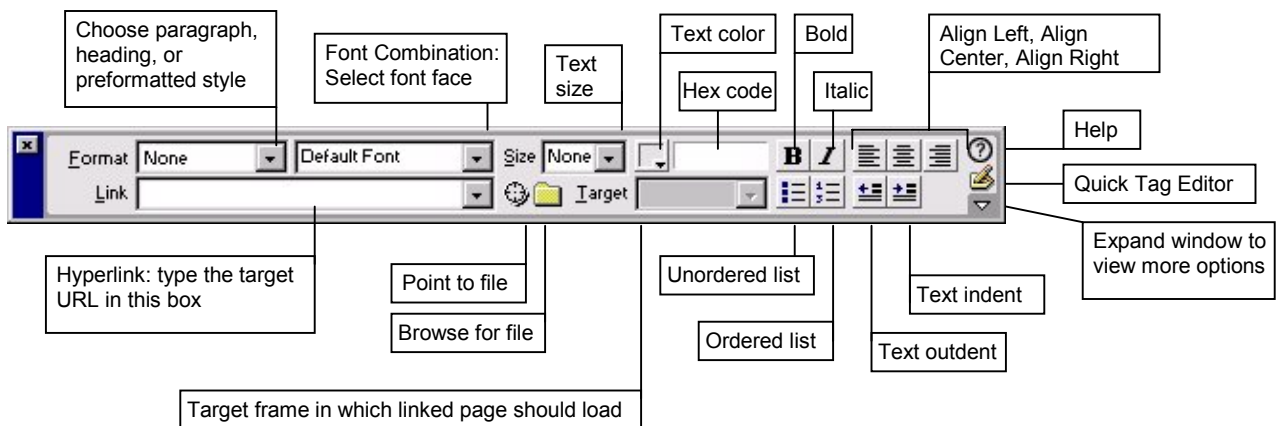
Text

To create text in Dreamweaver, position the cursor in the Document window where you would like the text to begin and start typing. Formatting is applied to text after it is typed. At the end of a line, the text will wrap to the next line. Text in Web pages wraps to fit the width of the browser window.

If you do not want text to wrap, insert manual line breaks or paragraph breaks.

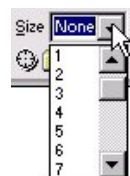
- Press **Shift-Enter** or click the **Insert Line Break** icon (in the Objects palette) to insert a single line break. This creates the equivalent of single-spaced text. 
- Press **Enter** to insert a **paragraph break** (this adds a blank line between lines of text, similar to double-spacing).

Text appears in size 3 Times New Roman font, the default font face and size for the World Wide Web. The options in the **Properties inspector** are used to format text (the same options can be accessed by choosing **Text** from the menu). Highlight (select) the text to be modified and change any of the properties:



1. Make the text larger. Select a number from the **Text Size** pull-down menu.

If desired, assign a size relative to the basefont (default) size of 3 by selecting **+ or - 1** through **+ or - 7**. This method is not recommended – it is best to stick to font sizes of 1 – 7.



A word about text sizes: Dreamweaver specifies text size in the way Web browsers recognize it: as a number between 1 and 7. HTML is a very simple programming language, and, as a result, browsers do not understand common text sizes like “12 point.” Unfortunately, the sizes 1 to 7 are completely arbitrary – they do not correspond with point or pixel sizes. The only way to choose a text size is to try them all out and see which looks best.


2. Click in the **Text Color** box and select a color from the Colors palette. 


This color overrides the global text and link colors set in the Page Properties dialog box.


- Choose a font face from the **Font Combination** pull-down menu. Browsers display the first font from the selected group that is installed on the user's system.



If the font you want to use is not listed, select **Edit Font List** to create a custom font list. Be aware, however, that a user will not see that font unless it is installed on his or her computer. Dreamweaver's pre-set font lists contain the most common fonts – the ones found on most computer systems, regardless of platform or operating system.

- Use the **alignment** icons to select left, center, or right justification for text.  These icons change the alignment of a word, line, or paragraph of text.


- Click on the **Text Indent** icon to indent a single line of text or an entire paragraph. This simulates the effect of a left page margin. Indent is handy for offsetting sections of text such as quotes. Unfortunately, it is not possible to indent just the first line of a paragraph. 

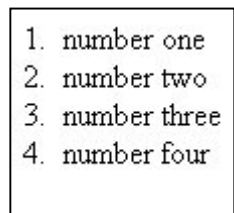
- Use the Bold and Italics icons to change the text style. 

- Check Spelling: Place the cursor at the top of the Document window and select **Text>Check Spelling** from the Menu, or use the keyboard shortcut **Shift+F7**.


Lists

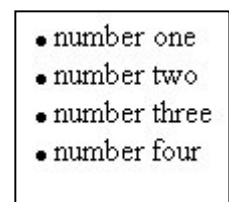
Text can be arranged into **numbered** (ordered) or **bulleted** (unordered) lists.

- Place the cursor on a new, blank line and click on the **Ordered List** icon. 
- Type your first list item next to the number 1.
- Press the **Enter** key to create number 2 on the next line. Type the next list item.
- When you have finished your list, press the **Enter** key **twice**.



Change the ordered list to an unordered list:

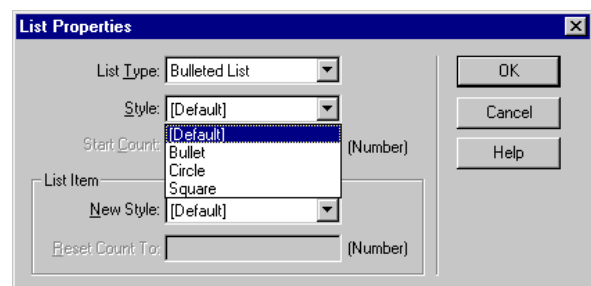
- Highlight all of the list items.
- Click on the **Unordered List** icon.  The numbers become bullets.



Bullet size and color can not be easily changed. To change the bullet shape, place the cursor next to the first item in the list and click on the **List Item** button in the Properties inspector. 

The List Properties dialog box opens. Click on the Style pull-down menu to see available styles.


- Bulleted (unordered) lists can have bullet, circle, or square style.
- Numbered (ordered) lists can have numbers, Roman numerals (small or large), or alphabet characters (small or large).



Links

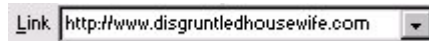
Text can easily be made into a link to another Web page. Links can take the user to another page within your Web site, to a completely separate Web site, or to an e-mail composition window (this will only work if your Web browser is configured for e-mail).

Link to a Page Within Your Site:

- a) Select the word or words that will become a link.
- b) Click on the **Browse for File** icon in the Properties inspector.  The Select HTML File dialog box appears.
- c) Browse for the desired .html file. Click **Select**. The selected word/s in the Document window change color and become underlined to indicate that they are now a link.
- d) If you know the name of the file you want to link to, there is no need to browse for it – just type the filename and extension (ex: page2.html) in the **Link** field. Linking to a page in a different folder or directory requires that the entire path be entered in the Link field (ex: ../homepage/images/pix.html).

Link to a Separate Web Site:

- a) Select the word/s that will become the link.
- b) Type the URL (address) of the target site in the blank **Hyperlink** field and press the **Enter** key. You must include the **http://** portion of the address, or your links will not work.



Create an E-mail Link:

Method One:

- a) Place the cursor where the e-mail link should appear.
- b) Click on the **Insert E-Mail Link** icon in the objects palette. The Insert E-Mail Link dialog box appears.
- c) Enter link text in the **Text** field.
- d) Enter the e-mail address in the **E-mail** field.
- e) Click OK.



Method Two:

- a) Select the text that will become the link.
- b) Type **mailto:** in the text field, followed by the desired e-mail address. Do **not** include a space after the colon. If the address is not preceded by mailto:, Web browsers will not recognize it as an address.




Links must be previewed in a Web browser – they do not work in the Dreamweaver interface!

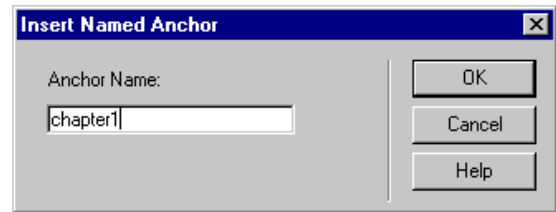
Named Anchors

Long text documents on the Web often have a menu at the top of the page that links to other parts of the same page. **Named anchors** are used to create links to another part of a page or to a particular point in another page. An anchor is a position placemaker in a document, and attaching a name to that anchor allows the anchor to be referenced in hyperlinks.

When a link to an anchor is clicked, the Web browser jumps directly to the desired portion of the page, and the line that contains the anchor is lined up with the top of the browser window. Named anchors are often used to jump to a specific topic or to the top of a document, quickly taking your visitor to the selected position.

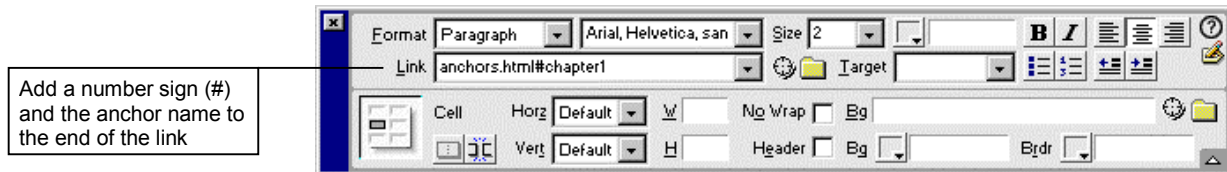
Insert an Anchor:

1. Place the cursor in the page where the anchor should be placed.
2. Select **Insert>Named Anchor** from the menu. The Insert Named Anchor dialog box appears.
3. Type the anchor name in the dialog box. Anchor names are subject to the same restrictions as file names: no punctuation, no spaces, and the text is case-sensitive. Click OK.
4. A yellow anchor symbol appears in the Document window.  If no symbol is visible, select **View>Invisible Elements** from the menu. This symbol will not be visible when the page is viewed in a Web browser.



Link to an Anchor:

1. In the Document window, select the text or image from which to link.
2. In the Link field of the Property inspector, type a number sign (#) and the name of the anchor. For example:
 - To link to an anchor named "chapter1" in the current document, type **#chapter1**.
 - To link to an anchor named "chapter1" in a different document in the same folder, type **filename.html#chapter1**.



Modify an Anchor:

1. To move an anchor, click and drag it to a new location.
2. To change an anchor name, click on the yellow anchor symbol in the Document window. Type a new name in the Properties inspector.



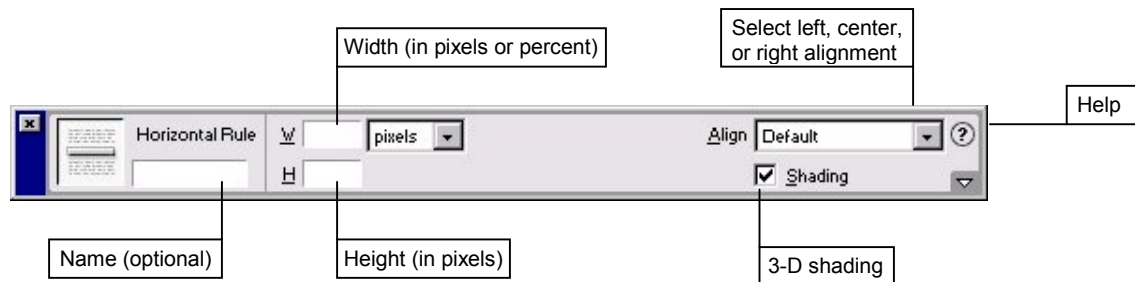
Horizontal Rules

Horizontal rules provide quick dividers between sections of page content.

1. Place the cursor where you would like the horizontal rule to appear.
2. Click on the **Insert Horizontal Rule** icon in the Objects palette (or select **Insert>Horizontal Rule** from the Menu).



A horizontal rule appears in your document window with the default attributes of 100 percent width, center alignment, and 3-D shading. The Properties inspector changes to display the horizontal rule options.



3. Change the width of the horizontal rule in one of two ways:
 - To set a width relative to the width of the browser window, select **%** from the **W** drop-down menu. Type a value in the **W** field. The horizontal rule will automatically resize depending on the size of the browser window.
 - To set an absolute width, select **pixels** from the drop-down menu. Type a value in the **W** field. The horizontal rule will always be that number of pixels wide, regardless of the width of the browser window.
4. Change the height of the horizontal rule by typing a value (in pixels) in the **H** field. The default height is 3 pixels.
5. Change the alignment by selecting **Left** or **Right** from the **Align** drop-down menu. The default setting is center.
6. Un-check the **Shading** box. Notice that the horizontal rule now appears as a solid gray line. When the box is checked, the horizontal rule appears embossed or raised.

With shading deselected, it is especially important to preview pages in both Internet Explorer and Netscape Navigator, as the browsers display horizontal rules differently. Netscape displays unshaded rules with rounded corners, while corners are squared in Internet Explorer.

Repositioning

Objects in the Document window can easily be moved and arranged.

- a) To move text, select the text and choose **Edit>Cut** from the Menu. Reposition the cursor where you would like the text to appear and choose **Edit>Paste**.
- b) To move an object such as an image or horizontal rule, click and drag the object to a new location. Objects can be dragged higher or lower in a page, but not to the right or left. Use the alignment icons to change the horizontal positioning of an object.

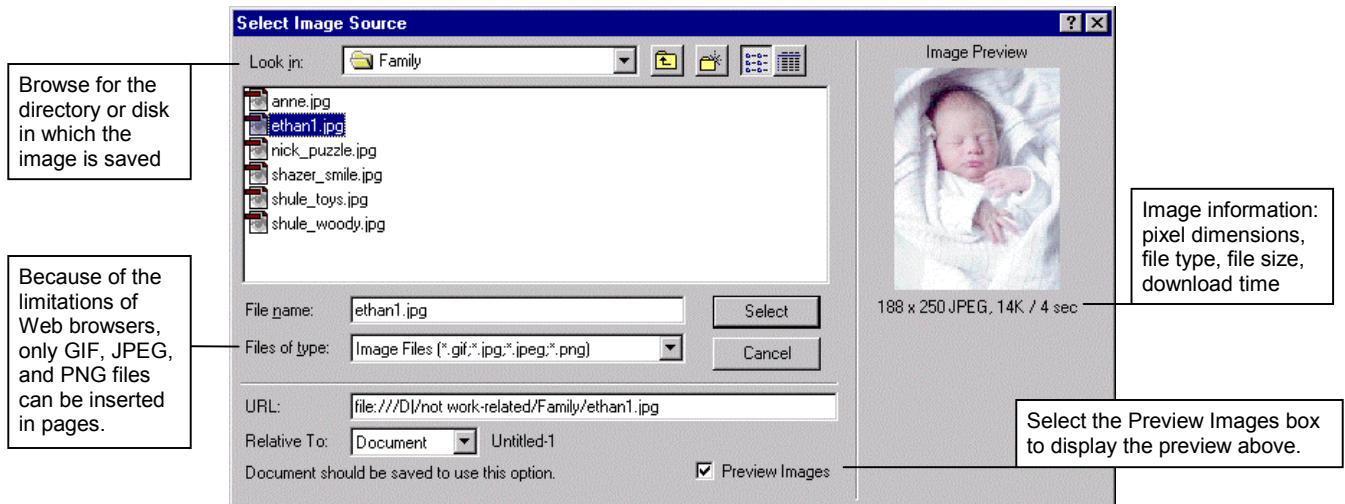
Images

Insert an image in the page:

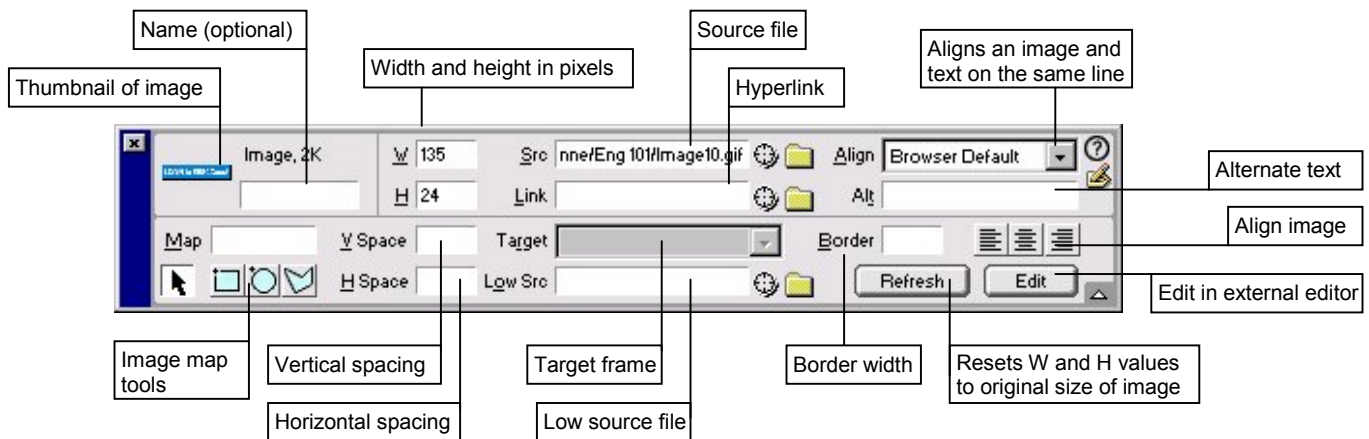
1. Place your cursor where you would like the image to appear.
2. Click on the **Insert Image** icon in the Objects palette (or select **Insert>Image** from the Menu).



The **Select Image Source** dialog box appears. Browse for the image to insert, then click once on the desired image. A preview of the selected image appears in the image preview area. If you do not see a preview of the image, select the **Preview** box at the bottom of the dialog box.



3. Click **Select**. The image appears in the document window and the Properties inspector changes to reflect the appropriate options.



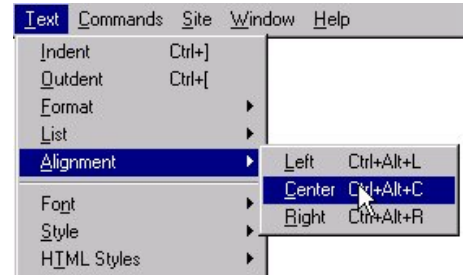
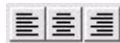
4. Although it is a **bad idea** to do so, images can be resized in Dreamweaver. This process changes the size at which the image is displayed rather than changing the dimensions of the source image. The image might appear quite small on the screen but still be a large file that takes a long time to download. To shrink the image dimensions **AND** file size, edit the image in an external editor (Photoshop, Paint Shop Pro, etc.). Making an image larger in Dreamweaver is also a bad idea because it results in a grainy, pixellated image. The image should be rescanned or recreated at a larger size.

- To change the image dimensions, type a new value in the **W** and **H** text boxes, **OR**

- Click and drag one of the handles on the side, corner, or bottom of the image, **OR**
- Resize the image proportionately by clicking and dragging a corner handle **while holding down the Shift key**.
- If your image becomes distorted or you change your mind about resizing, click on the **Refresh** button to return to the original dimensions of the image.

5. Change where the image appears on the page. Your image can be left-justified (default), centered, or right-justified. **Warning: the Align setting in the Properties inspector does not change image alignment.** It only modifies the alignment of text that appears next to an image.

To center the image in the Document window, select **Text>Alignment>Center** from the Menu, or click on one of the alignment icons in the lower half of the Properties inspector.



6. Alternate text is an important addition to any Web page that contains images. **Alt text** is the text label that pops up when the cursor is held over an image without clicking (see example at right).

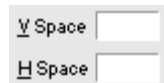
Alt text is a nice touch for users who can see your Web page, but it is essential for those who can not see it. Users with visual impairments depend on screen reader software (such as JAWS) to read all of the text and links on Web pages. Unless you include an Alt text tag with a description, these users will not know what the images are and will be unable to navigate images used as links.

Users choose to browse Web pages in a text only format, either to shorten download times on a home computer or to access the Web via a cellular phone or Personal Digital Assistant (i.e. Palm Pilot), also benefit from the use of Alt text.




7. Although they are seldom seen on the WWW, images can have borders. Type a pixel size in the **Border** field in the Properties inspector to add a border of that width on all sides of the image. The drawback: borders will be one of only two different colors. Borders around image links will be the link color selected in the Page Properties dialog box, and all other borders will be the text color set in the Page Properties.

8. Horizontal and Vertical space are minor adjustments that can make a big difference in a Web page. Unless empty space is added manually, images, text, and all other objects in a page will be so close together that they touch. To make text more readable and keep pages from looking cluttered, add a few pixels of empty horizontal space (left and right sides) or vertical space (top and bottom) to an image or table.



9. An image can be a link to another Web page. The process is very similar to creating a text link:


- Type a URL (Web address), .html file name, or e-mail address (including mailto:) in the **Link** text box, **OR**
- Use the **Browse for File** icon to search for a file 

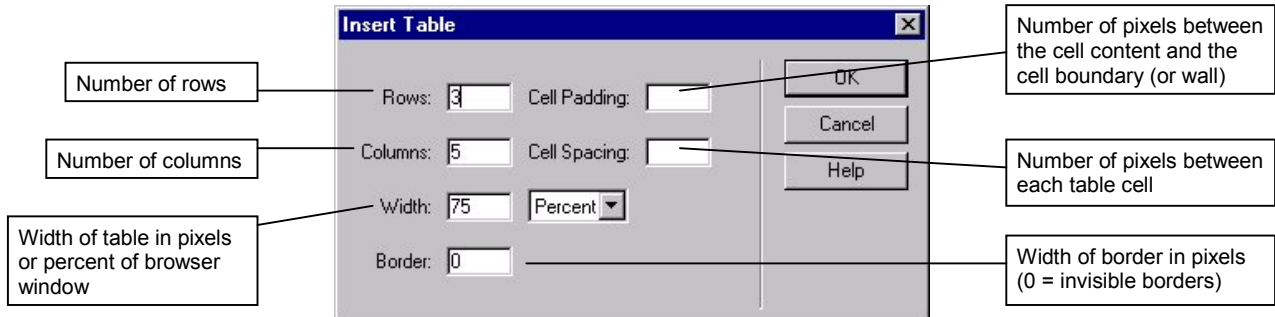
10. Place your cursor to the right of an image and type few sentences. Notice how the first line of text appears on the same line as the image, and the rest wraps below the image. If you want to place more than one line of text next to an image you must use a table for layout. Read on for more information . . .

Tables

Tables are a very useful HTML tool. Two common uses:

- A traditional table with cells to display data in an organized fashion
- Page layout with tables. Using tables with invisible borders for Web page layout allows for increased control over the appearance of a page. Tables can display images and paragraphs of text side-by-side and simulate page margins, among other things.

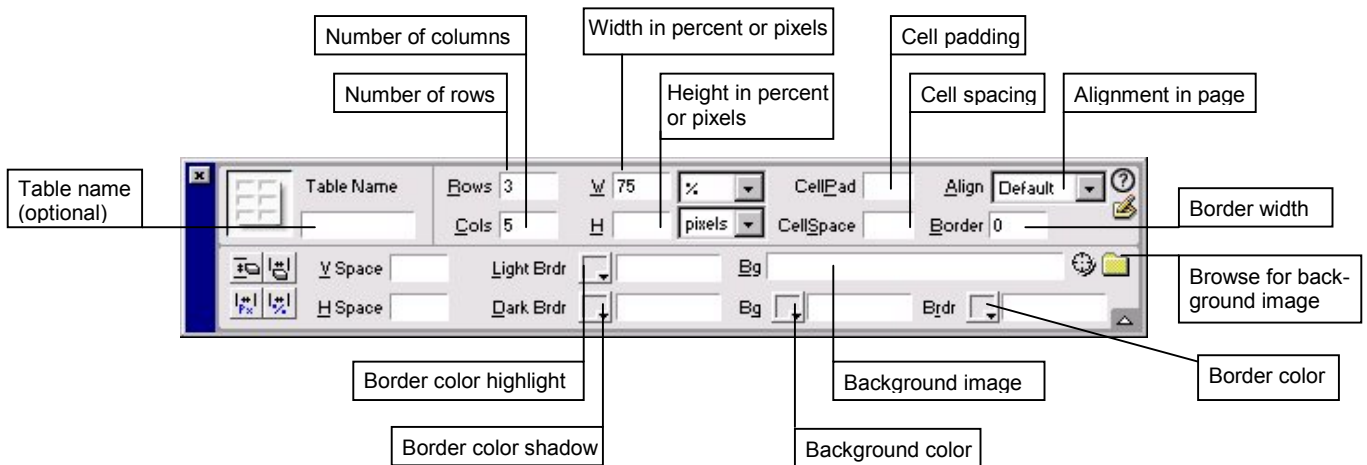
1. Add a table to your document. Place your cursor in the desired location and click the **Insert Table** icon  (or select **Insert>Table** from the menu). The **Insert Table** dialog box appears.



2. Select the number of rows and columns you want in your table. Set the width of the table and its borders. All of these selections can easily be changed later.

Although the **Cell Padding** and **Cell Spacing** boxes appear blank, the default values for those settings are one pixel each. To change them to zero (if desired), you must manually type **0** in the boxes.

3. Click **OK** to add the table to you Web page. The table appears in the document window, and the Properties inspector changes to display table options. To modify the table at any time, click on the border to select it, then change the properties.

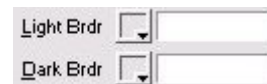


4. Table cells can contain text, images, or even other tables. Place the cursor in an empty cell and insert an image or begin typing. Images can also be dragged and dropped into table cells.

Cell borders automatically adjust to accommodate an image placed in a cell, but cells containing text must be resized manually. Click and drag cell borders to resize the table cells, or click and drag the right table border to change the width of the entire table.

- Tables can contain **background colors** and **images** different from the background of the entire page. Click the Browse for file icon to search for a background image, or click in the Background Color swatch to select a background color for the entire table.
- Border colors** are also customizable, but may not display correctly in some Web browsers. By default, table borders are gray with highlights on the top and left sides and shadows on the bottom and right sides.

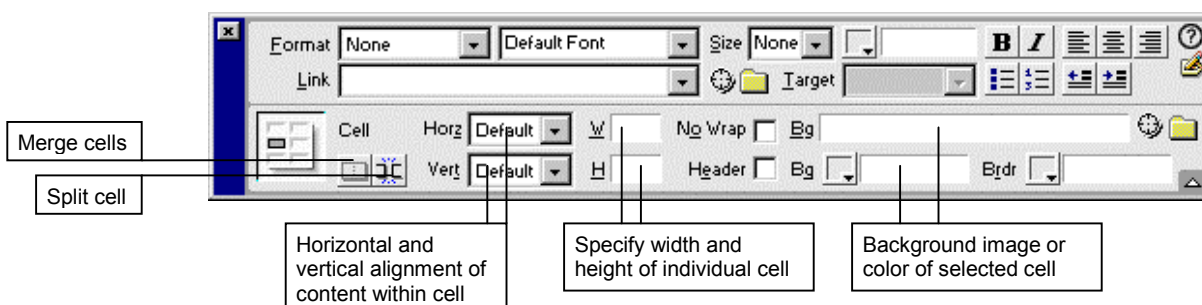
- Shaded borders in various colors are created by specifying Light Border and Dark Border colors in the Properties inspector.



- For a solid-colored border with no shading, specify a single border color in the lower right corner of the properties inspector.



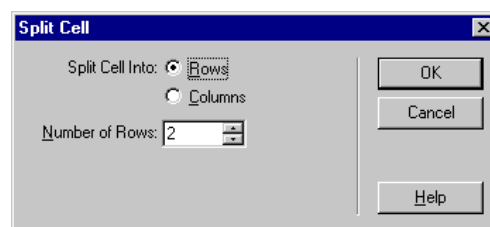
- More table properties are applied to individual cells. Click inside a table cell to select it and reveal the rest of the options in the lower half of the Properties inspector.



- The **Merge** and **Split** icons are used to customize tables by creating the precise size and number of cells needed to achieve the desired layout.

- To merge cells, click and drag (vertically, horizontally, or both) to select two or more adjacent cells, then click the **Merge** icon.
- To split cells, place the cursor in the cell to be divided, then click the **Split** icon. The Split Cell dialog box appears.

Select either Rows or Columns in the top portion of the dialog box, then type the desired number of rows or columns in the box below. Click OK. The cell is subdivided into several rows or columns without adding any additional rows or columns to the table.



- Set a specific width for a cell by typing a number in the width box. Notice that these numbers appear as percentages of the total table width.
- Choose a background color or image for each table cell – a different color in each cell, if desired – by browsing for a background image or selecting a color from the palette. Individual cell colors override the background color set for the entire table.

HINT: To view your HTML code at any time, click on the **Show HTML Source** icon in the lower right corner of the Document window (in the status bar). The **HTML Source** window opens, allowing the user to edit source code directly and work in both windows simultaneously.

