

HTML Workshop 2



Using Dreamweaver

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Introduction

This document will cover some of the basic skills of Dreamweaver, a well known web development software, formerly made by Macromedia, now owned by Adobe. Dreamweaver MX is the most common version of the software, though now it has recently been updated to the CS version that ships with the Adobe web suite.

The most useful aspect of building with Dreamweaver is the WYSIWYG (What You See Is What You Get) interface. This means that you can design pages visually, laying out text and images as you might when you use Microsoft Word, for example. Unlike some other web page builders, the WYSIWYG interface is actually quite reliable, though is not to be used without testing the coding too.

Skills for Web Pages

Images

The next sections will cover many of the introductory skills of web page development, and how to achieve them using Dreamweaver.

In the next web workshop you will learn how to achieve some of these skills using CSS (Cascading Style Sheets), but here we will be using html to achieve these design features.

Using background images in a web page

To place an image in the body (background) of the web page, click on:

- Modify/Page Properties/Browse for your image, then click OK
- Notice in the Page Properties window you can change the colour of the page, the links, and control the 'margins'. You can also bring in a background image using 'tracing image', and then control its opacity (make it faded out) with the gradient tool underneath the tracing image field.
- The image will default to the top left hand of the page, and repeat all over the page (see below for tiling effects). If you use 'Tracing Image' it will not repeat.

Tiling a background image in a web page

Tiled images in the background of a web page are achieved by using small gifs (16px X 16px) and repeating them. Fantastic effects can be achieved in this way. Try experimenting with the results. Create an image with lines or spots that can repeat evenly, and see what happens.

Ref: Here is a very good example of a library of background 'tile' images available for use:
<http://www.squidfingers.com/patterns/>

Roll Over Images

Roll over images are very common in web pages. We have all had the experience of moving our mouse over an image, and the image then swaps for another image. When our mouse moves off the image, the original image reappears. This is achieved in Dreamweaver using the swap image and swap image restore behaviour.

1. Bring an image on to your web page (Insert/Image). Select it with your mouse.
2. To the right hand side, you will see some menu windows, one of which is called 'behaviors'. Click on this, and then click on the '+' sign.
3. A long menu will appear, scroll down and click on 'swap image'. A window opens, listing your image.
4. It is usually called 'unnamed' as you haven't given it a name. If you want to create lots of roll over effects, it is important to name your images BEFORE you create your roll-overs. So, go back and name your image. This is done in the Properties Toolbar, at the bottom of the workspace layout.
5. Then go back to 'swap image' and with your image selected in the window, browse to select an image to swap it with. A * will appear next to the image you have made a roll over with, to show it has behaviour attached.
6. Notice below the main last of images, there are 'preload images' and 'restore images on mouse out' tick boxes, leave them both ticked.

Roll Over buttons

Roll-over buttons are made in exactly the same way as above, but we also attach a hyperlink to them, as we learned in the first html workshop.

Image Maps

Image maps can be used for a number of things. They are attractive ways of presenting links, or can be used to indicate various multimedia features in a web page.

An image map is an image, with hyperlink 'hotspots' placed wherever required on to p of the image. This means that an area you select on the image can be made into a link. To do this, do the following:

1. Place a larger image into your web page (Insert/Image).
2. Select it with your mouse.
3. In the Properties Toolbar (at the bottom of the workspace), you will see something called 'Map', and below that, an arrow, a blue rectangle, a blue circle, and a blue multi-sided shape.

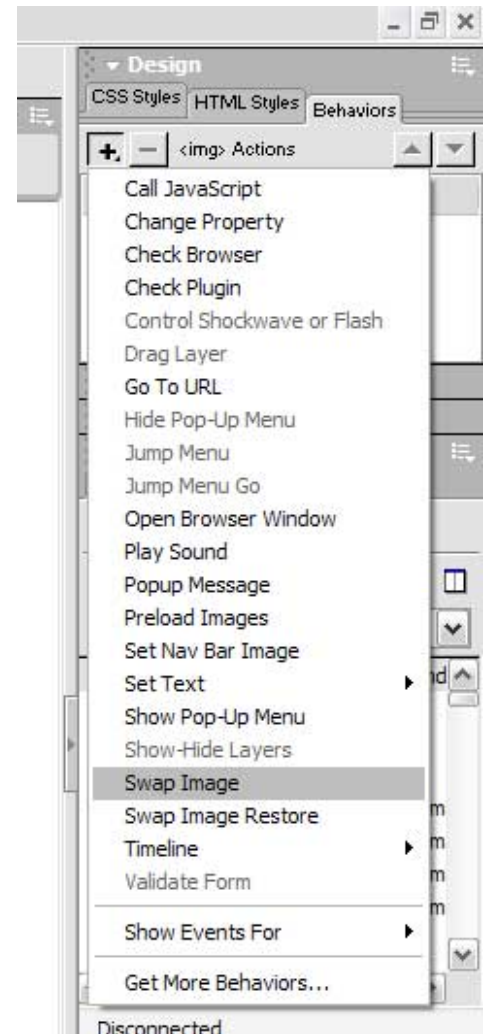


Fig1. Showing Swap Image behaviour

4. Click on the rectangle, and then 'draw' with it on your image, where you might like a 'hotspot' link. You will see it places a blue rectangle as large or small as you make it, on the image.
5. The circle will allow you to place circle hotspots, the multi-sided shape will allow you to draw any shape you like, clicking to make a selection of dots that 'fill up' to make a solid hotspot.
6. Once you have made a hotspot, you can then assign where you want the link to go, using the link field in the Properties Toolbar.

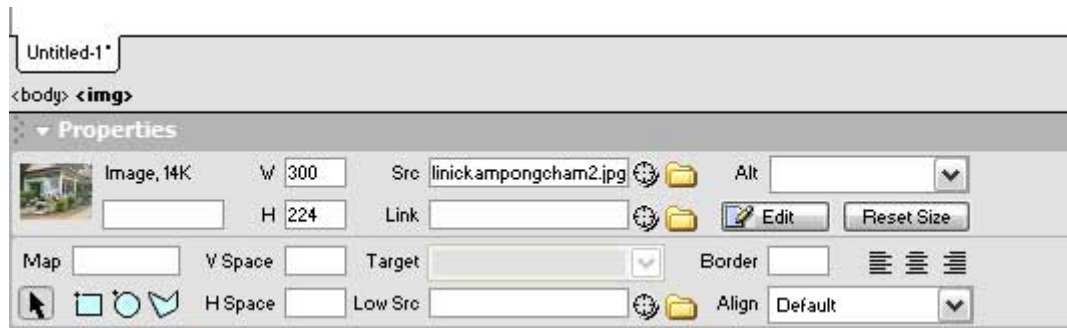


Fig2. Showing image properties and image map tools in Properties Toolbar

NB Note the place for naming the image, the different image map tools and the ability to link, align, and give borders to the image. Alt text is also specified here.

Though you can resize an image here, it is NOT recommended. Images in html pages should always be the size they are supposed to be in the page, to make sure they are best quality, and not misshapen.

Tables

Creating Tables

Creating tables is simple and straightforward using Dreamweaver. Tables can be used to make layout design in web pages. Later we will learn how to use CSS to make layout. Using tables to make web page layout has good points and drawbacks.

1. Go to 'Insert/Table, click on it
2. A window will open that presents you with a few choices: How many rows, how many columns, how much 'cell spacing' and 'cell padding' you require. The 'width' and the 'border' are also set here.
3. Select '2' rows, and '3' columns. Select '1' for cell spacing and cell padding
4. Select 99% for width, and '1' for border.
5. Click OK
6. A table will appear in your WYSIWYG view.

You can select any of the column or row borders and stretch it, but a good shape to make, to begin learning about layout using tables, is shown here:

| | | |
|--|--|--|
| | | |
| | | |

Fig3: Showing basic table layout for web page

Split or Merge Cells

Merging Cells is done in order to make the top row the header, as it needs to be one column, not three. We do this by 'merging' the cells, and that way, we can then place an image into the top row, so becomes the header of the web page. To merge the cells we do the following:

1. Select all three columns, but only the top row.
2. When all three are selected (they turn black), right click, and select Table/Merge Cells.
3. We can also do this by clicking on Modify/Table/Merge Cells, from the top menu.
4. Remember, the cells in all three columns must be selected for them to be able to merge together.
5. Splitting cells will divide one cell into two. To split cells, we use the same procedure (either way), and select 'split cells' instead of 'merge cells'.

'Valign' in Tables

V-Aligning in tables can be very useful. When you click inside a table, you may have noticed that the cursor is generally in the middle of the table, not at the top. This is because you have stretched the table, to make it bigger, but there is only one cursor reference, as there is nothing in it. This can make it difficult to control the layout of what is inside the table. To overcome this, we use the 'valign' tag. What this means is that the content placed inside a cell starts at the top, not the middle.

To achieve this, we do the following:

1. Click inside the table, where you want the content to start at the top
2. Switch to code view (or code and design), not design view on its own. This is done by clicking on the <> button at the top of the page view in the workspace, to show the html code.

3. The place where you can see the cursor flashing is the cell (td) that you want to valign.
4. The code should be written like this:

```
<table width="99%" border="1" cellspacing="1" cellpadding="1">
<tr>
<td valign="top"> &nbsp;</td>
<td>&nbsp;</td>
<td>&nbsp;</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>&nbsp;</td>
<td>&nbsp;</td>
<td>&nbsp;</td>
</tr>
</table>
```

You will notice when doing this in Dreamweaver that there is a similar thing to pre-emptive text, as it suggests what you may need in code tags. Select 'top', if this is what you like to use.

NB ' ' is html for 'space', like that which the space bar creates in Word.

Nesting Tables

You can also place tables within tables, to hold extra content in specific places:

Click inside the table cell you want the new table to be inside
 Insert/table – set your size etc, click OK

That's it! It's useful to use the valign code to control how nested tables sit – make it much easier to control layout.

Background Images in Tables

You can place images in the background of a table, which can be useful for layout or other design purposes:

Select your table with your mouse, this is done by clicking on one of the table borders until the table is 'highlighted'

Look at the Properties Toolbar – you can now see all the properties of the table:

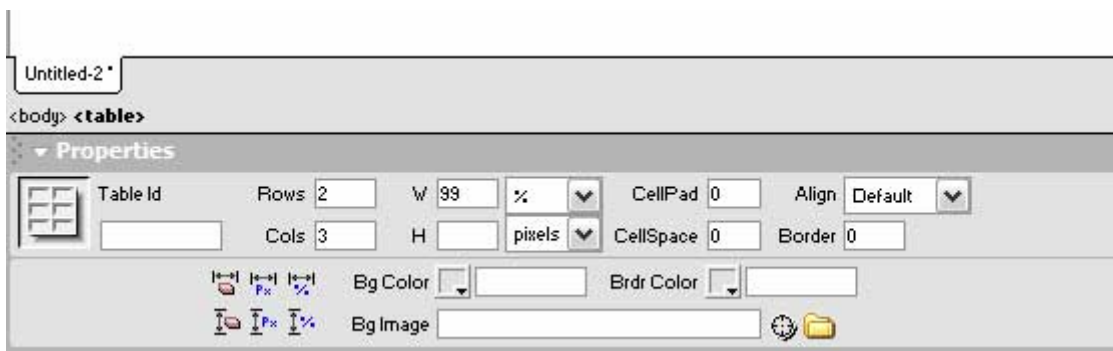


Fig4. Showing table properties in the Properties Toolbar

In the section marked 'Bg Image', click on the folder and select an image to place as the background of the table. You can either use small images to repeat (like in the background of an html page) or you can use a larger image that might be, for example, the same size as the table. The image will be placed in the background, allowing you to place content in the table as normal. Here (in the table properties) you can also control the width, height, borders, cell spacing and padding, alignment and how many rows and columns.

Text

Styling text using html in the Properties Toolbar

Before we learn how to use CSS to style text, it's a good idea to know how to style text using html tags. In Dreamweaver this is very straightforward.

1. Type some text into an html document, while in design (WYSIWYG) view
2. Select it with your mouse
3. Go to the Properties Toolbar, located at the bottom of your workspace view and see the different things it is showing:

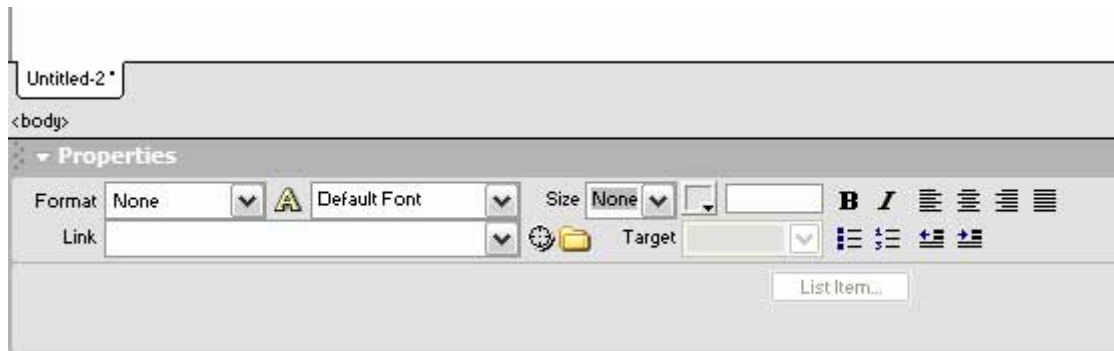


Fig5. Showing text properties in Properties Toolbar

- Format 'None' – using paragraph or other text tags like H1, H2 etc
- 'A' 'Default Font' – What sort of font and font grouping
- Size 'None' – how big the text font is
- Square box greyed out – the colour of the font
- White rectangle – the hexadecimal colour code
- **B** – if the font is bold
- *I* – if the font is italic
- The little line patterns – controlling the 'justification' – this means the alignment of the text: left, right, or fully justified (some people call this boxed text)

Remember the standard header tags we have already looked at:

```
<h1></h1>  
<h2></h2>  
<h3></h3>
```

These will produce different sizes without you changing anything in the size box. This is also how CSS controls text, but we can style these tags much more (more on this later).

Making Lists with Html

Making a list, like bullet points in Word, is easy in html. It requires a few specific tags. Later, we can learn how to style these using CSS.

Try the following code out and see what it does to a list of text items in your web page:

```
<ul>
<li>Red</li>
<li>Blue</li>
<li>Green</li>
<li>Yellow</li>
<li>Purple</li>
<li>Orange</li>
<li>Brown</li>
<li>Black</li>
</ul>
```

You can also use this technique to make a list of links for a menu, by placing a hyperlink tag around each `text`, in the way we place a hyperlink tag around an image tag. Try it and see how it looks. Try also swapping `` with `` and see what happens.

For example:

```
<ul>
<a href="index.html"><li>home</li></a>
<a href="page2.html"><li>about us</li></a>
<a href="page3.html"><li>contact</li></a>
</ul>
```

Always remember to close each of the tags you open.

Layers

Creating Layers

Layers in Dreamweaver are great to use and easy to manipulate.

To insert a layer, do the following:

1. From the top menu, go to Insert/Layer and click
2. A layer will appear, at default size of 200px X 115px
3. To adjust the size, simply select and click and drag to desired size

Selecting the layer will show the layers properties in the Properties Toolbar:

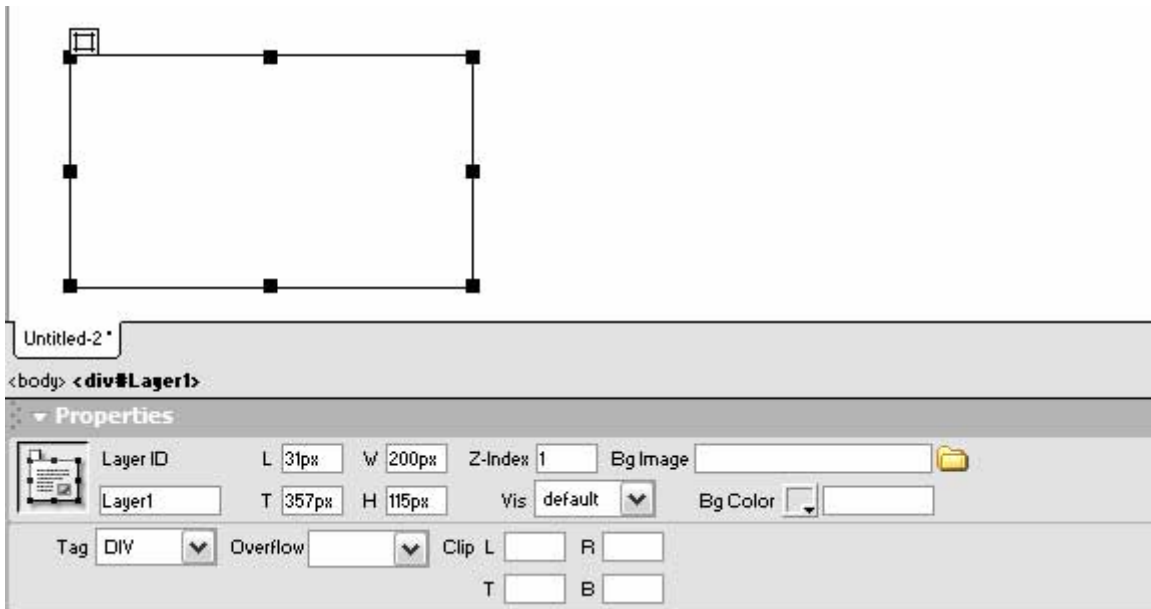


Fig6. Showing selected Layer and Layer properties in Properties Toolbar

The code that Dreamweaver makes when inserting a layer looks like this:

```
<div id="Layer1" style="position:absolute; width:200px; height:115px; z-index:1; left: 39px; top: 93px;"></div>
```

You can use layers for many things. Examples would be image rollovers or hidden content that shows when you roll over a button or click on a link. They are actually 'divs' or divisions, and CSS uses these to layout pages, more about this later.

Showing and Hiding Layers

To show and hide layers, do the following:

1. From the top menu, select Windows/Others/Layers or press F2 on your keyboard (this may vary with versions of Dreamweaver)
2. A toolbar window appears, usually in the lower right of your workspace layout, though where it is can vary
3. This 'Advanced Layout' control panel works much the same as layers in a PSD would work. You can poke the eye to turn the off or on. In this case that would be hidden or showing on page load.
4. We can also attach behaviours to links to show a layer that is hidden on page load, and will not show unless we click on the link.

Look at the code again: The 'style' part of the code is where CSS code is used to style the div. When we develop CSS further, we will include this information in a style sheet, and it won't be included here. But if we are not using a style sheet, this is how to style a div or layer. It controls the width, height, position, and can include border style and colour, background colour etc.

Other things to learn and experiment with in Dreamweaver as you go along and get used to the software:

- The different behaviours
- Building forms and understanding form objects
- Importing media like Flash or audio
- Using templates
- Using FTP with Dreamweaver

Validation and Testing

It is very important to test and validate your code. Testing should be carried out with as many different browsers and resolutions as possible. Try everything from 600 x 800 through to 1280 x 1024. Try Internet Explorer and Mozilla Firefox as a minimum but try other browsers too.

Validation can be done by using the online validation available from the World Wide Web Consortium:

<http://validator.w3.org/>

You will need to have your pages published online to validate your code. Enter your url link into the form, and see if you validate. If you do, you are entitled to use the validation badge (provided on the site) on all your web pages.

Good Books and Tutorials

Bruce, B, 2003, Teach yourself Macromedia Dreamweaver MX in 24 Hours, SAMS, USA

W3Schools HTML Tutorials: <http://www.w3schools.com/html/default.asp>

Note

Remember it takes time to learn html and Dreamweaver. If at first things seem hard and confusing, don't worry – it's like that for everyone. With patience and a little trial and error, you can master all the basic techniques in very little time at all. Keep things simple and make sure everything is working when you publish your files to the World Wide Web.

/Pen Lister. 2008