

Introduction to Dreamweaver 3

Course Description: This class introduces the Macromedia Dreamweaver program for web design and HTML editing for the experienced PC user. Topics covered include setting up your first website, familiarization with the Dreamweaver workspace, and basic design.

Prerequisites: working knowledge of the PC operating system or completion of the *Introduction to the PC* course. Familiarity with the Internet and HTML is helpful.

This document has been prepared for you by W&MF staff so that you can familiarize yourself with the basics of Dreamweaver 3. This pamphlet is meant to serve as a future reference for you--not all information mentioned in this document will be covered in today's class.

What is Dreamweaver?

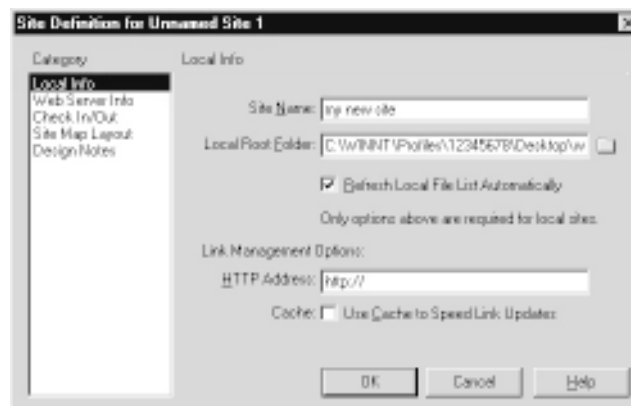
Macromedia Dreamweaver is one of the top web design programs on the market, used by professionals and beginners alike. Dreamweaver is called a WYSIWYG (What You See Is What You Get) design environment, which means that the program will take care of converting your ideas into HTML, leaving you with time to do more important things.

I. Getting Started

Launch Dreamweaver 3 by going to: *Start Menu::Programs::Networking::DreamWeaver*. Click on the icon to start the program.

Before you work on individual pages, you need to set up your site using the site management features. To set up a site in Dreamweaver, you first need to create a folder on your hard drive that will hold all of your webpages. Minimize the Dreamweaver window and then right click on an empty area of the desktop. Select **New::Folder**. Let's name this folder *website* for clarity's sake.

Now we'll go through the steps of defining a site. This means telling Dreamweaver where the *website* folder can be found and providing some other information.



1. Choose Site::New Site

The Site Definition dialog box appears. Make sure that the Local Info category is selected in the left side of the dialog box.

2. In the Site Name text box, type a name for your site.

You can call your site whatever you like. After you name it here, the name appears as an option on the drop-down list of the Site dialog box. You use this list to select the site you want to work on when you open Dreamweaver.

3. Use the Browse button next to the Local Root Folder text box to locate the *website* folder on the desktop.

4. If it isn't already selected, click to place a check mark in the box next to Refresh Local File List Automatically if you want Dreamweaver to automatically update the list of all the new pages you add to your site.

5. Under Link Management Options, type the URL of your website in the HTTP Address text box. (If you don't have a website address yet, just leave the box blank.)

6. Click OK to close the Site Definition box.

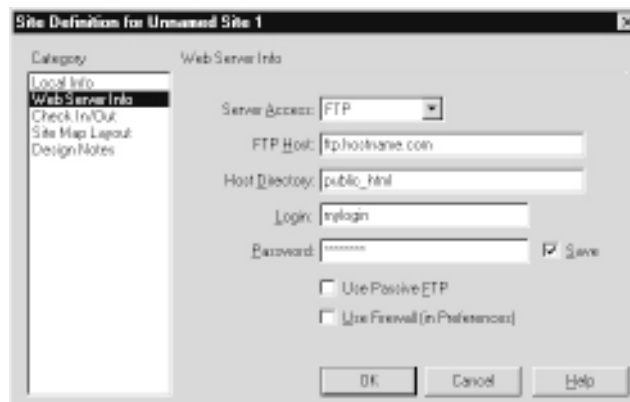
A message will appear asking if you'd like to create a cache for the site. Dreamweaver offers this option because it can work faster when there is a cache. Go ahead and say **Yes**.

II. Web Server Access

In order for people to see the website that you will create, you must have access to a web server. This is a machine that stores the files you have created and then sends them to people when they request them. You can gain access to a web server for free from providers such as geocities.com or tripod.com.

You enter information about the web server where your site will be published on the Web Server Info page of the Site Definition dialog box (See Section 1). The Web Server Info page is accessible from the right side of the Site Definition Box.

Because we won't be publishing anything today, choose None from the Server Access list on the Web Server Info page.



When you do publish your website, most likely you will be using a remote server, such as an Internet Service Provider. Ask your Internet Service Provider for the following information:

- FTP host name
- Path or host directory
- FTP login
- FTP password

Then choose FTP from the Server Access drop-down list and follow these steps:

1. **In the FTP Host text box type the hostname of your web server.**
2. **In the Host Directory text box, type the directory on the remote site in which documents visible to the public are stored (also known as the *site root*).**
It should look something like public/html/ or www/public/docs/.
3. **In the text box next to the Login and Password, type the login name and password required to gain access to your web server.**
4. **Put a check in the Use Passive FTP or Use Firewall options only if your service provider or site administrator tells you to. (Don't check any if you are in doubt.)**
5. **If you want to check any other settings, click OK to save your Web Server Info settings and close the Site Definition dialog box.**

III. The Dreamweaver Workspace

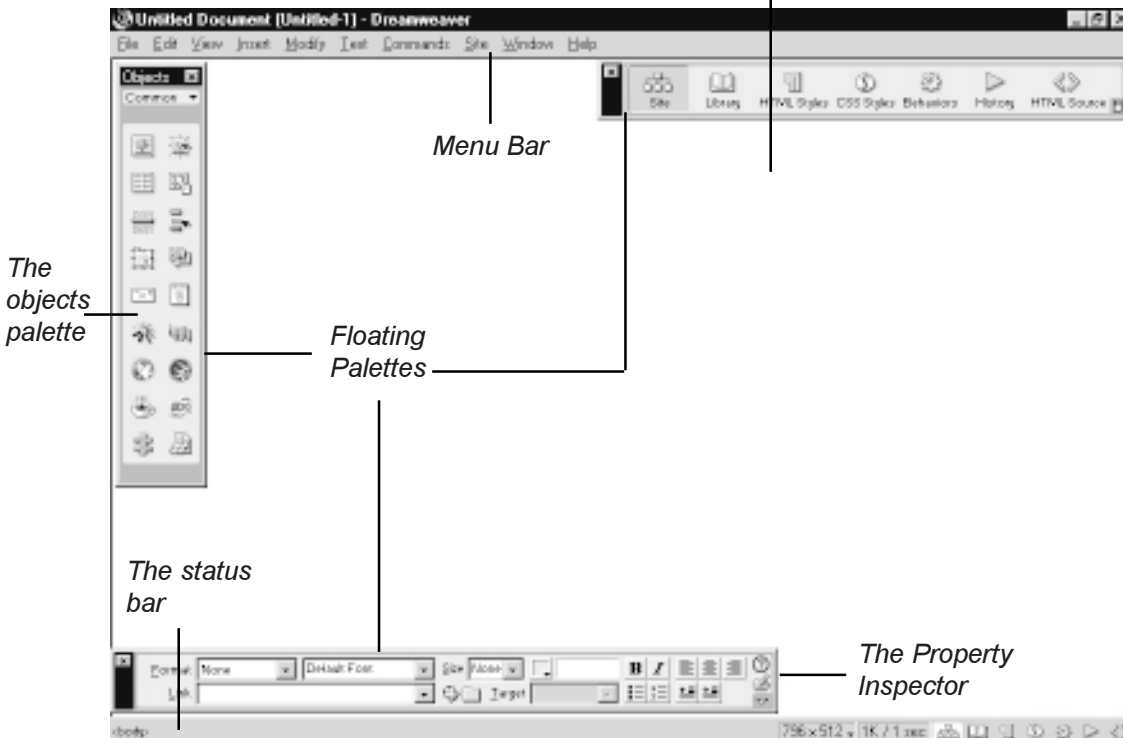
When you launch Dreamweaver, a blank page--called the *workspace*--appears automatically, much like a blank document appears in Microsoft Word. You can type text directly into the Workspace, and you can apply basic formatting, such as bold and italics, simply by selecting **Text::Style::Bold** or **Text::Style::Italics**. Webpages are built in the Workspace, which consists of a main window that shows the HTML page you're working on and a number of floating palettes and windows that provide tools to design and develop your webpages. The Dreamweaver Workspace consists of four basic components: the document window, floating palettes, menu bar and status bar.

The Document Window

The big, open area on the Workspace is the document window. It's essentially a blank page, but what you create there is automatically converted into HTML code. The document window displays text, images and other elements in the same way that a web browser does. (Though things will look slightly different depending on which version of Netscape or Internet Explorer is used to view the page--it's best to test your page on several versions to get the best design.)

The Floating Palettes

The floating palettes in Dreamweaver provide easy access to many of the program's features. You can move the palettes around or close them if they get in your way. To get them back, choose **Window** from the pull-down menus and select the palettes you'd like to use.

Document Window

Here's a list of some of the floating palettes that you will be using most frequently:

The Objects Palette: Contains buttons for creating HTML elements, such as tables, layers, and for inserting images, plug-in files and other objects. There are six menus within the objects palette--use the pull-down menu at the top of the palette to access the other features.

The Property Inspector: This palette displays the properties of a selected element (such as an image or link) on the page. A *property* is a characteristic of HTML--such as the alignment of an image or the size of a cell in a table.

The Launcher: A palette that allows for easy access to more advanced features of Dreamweaver, such as HTML and CSS Styles, Behaviors and the HTML source window.

The Menu Bar

At the top of the screen, the Dreamweaver menu bar provides easy access to all the features that you find in the floating palettes, as well as a few others that are available only from the menu.

The File Menu: Under the file menu, you find many familiar options, such as **New**, **Open**, and **Save**. You also find the **Revert** option, similar to "Undo"--this feature allows you to return to the last saved version of your page if you don't like the changes you've made.

The Edit Menu: The familiar **Cut**, **Copy**, and **Paste** reside on the edit menu. You can also find the **Preferences** settings here. This feature allows you to set up the program so that it works best for you.

The View Menu: This menu gives you access to some helpful design features, such as grids and rulers. For more advanced users, this menu allows you to turn on or off the borders of your HTML tables, frames and layers.

The Insert Menu: From this menu, you can insert elements such as a horizontal rule, a Java applet, a Flash movie, a form, or a plug-in file.

The Modify Menu: Another place where you can view and change object properties, just like the Property Inspector.

The Text Menu: You can easily format text with the Text menu by using simple options, such as **Bold** or **Italic**, as well as more complex features, such as font styles and custom style sheets.

The Commands Menu: The features on this menu are useful when you want to automate a task, such as making a certain size table. The **Start** and **Play Recording** features are similar to the Macro feature in Microsoft Word.

The Site Menu: This menu provides access to the options you need to set up your site, a process required before many of the other Dreamweaver features will work properly. (These features were covered in the first sections.)

The Window Menu: The Window menu enables you to control the display of palettes and dialog boxes. If you want to see a palette that isn't visible in the workspace, simply select that palette from the menu. Items with check marks mean that these palettes are currently visible.

The Help Menu: Easy access to help options that can assist you in figuring out the many features of Dreamweaver. You also find access to the Dreamweaver template and example files under Help. Templates and examples provide visual samples of common HTML designs, such as tables and frames, and provide design ideas and great shortcuts for creating more complex layouts.

The Status Bar

The Status Bar appears at the very bottom of the screen. On the right end of the Status Bar, you can see shortcuts to all the features on the Launcher palette. On the left end, you find HTML tags that indicate how your elements are formatted. This feature makes double-checking the kind of formatting applied to any element on your page easy. To turn the display of the Status Bar on or off, choose **View::Status Bar**.

IV. Creating New Pages

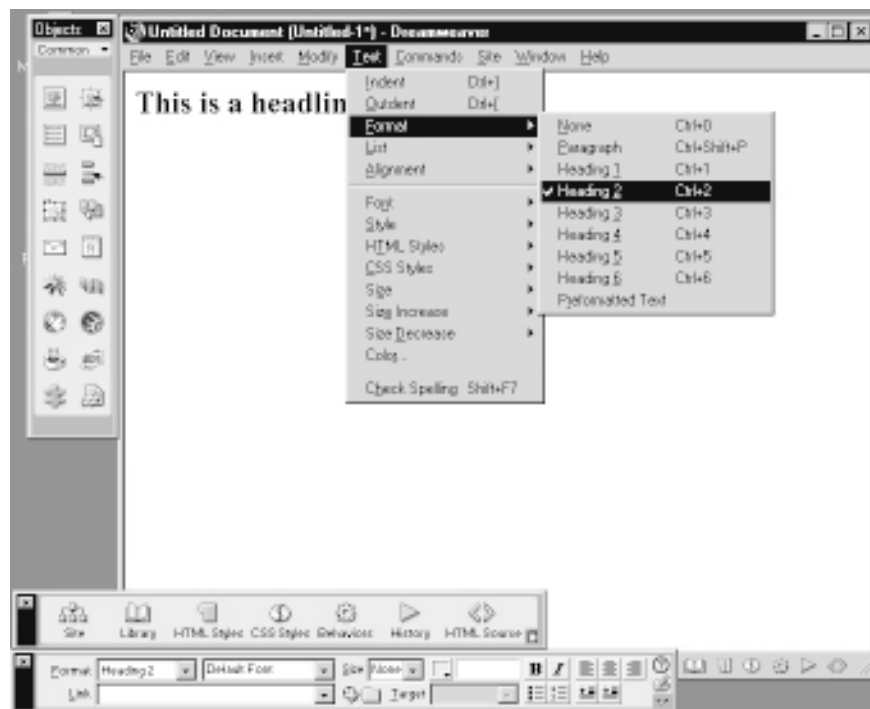
Every web page begins with a single page--the *home page*--this is a good place to start. Dreamweaver makes it easy: when the program opens, it automatically creates a new page. To create another page, choose **File::New**.

Creating a new page to start a website may seem obvious, but consider this: you may want to create a bunch of new pages before you get too far in your development, and you may even want to start organizing the new pages in subdirectories before you have anything on them. This process enables you to organize your pages before you start linking them together. After all, you can't set a link to a page that doesn't exist yet. So if you plan to have five links on your front page to other pages in your website, go ahead and create those other pages, even if you don't put anything on except a headline of what you will make the page into later.

V. Designing Your First Page

This section will give you all the basics, such as formatting text, adding images and setting links. When you're ready, click within the new document in the workspace and type anything you'd like.

Creating a Headline



Suppose you want to center a line of headline text and apply a heading tag to make it large and bold. To create a headline, follow these steps:

1. **Highlight the text that you want to format.**

2. Choose Text::Format::Heading 1.

Headline 1 is the largest option, Heading 2 is the next largest, and your choices go all the way down to Headline 6, the smallest headline size.

3. With the text still selected, choose Text::Alignment::Center.

The text will automatically center. Now you should have a headline at the top of your page.

Indenting Text

Type a little more text after your headline text. To indent that text, follow these steps:

1. Highlight the text that you want to indent.

2. Choose Text::Indent.

If you want to continue adding text and you don't want it to be indented, choose **Text::Format::None** to change back to plain text mode.

Adding Images

Adding an GIF or JPEG formatted image to your webpage is simple with Dreamweaver. There are two important things that you need to do before inserting an image onto a page. First, save your HTML page in your website's folder on your hard drive. This step is important because Dreamweaver can't properly set the path to your image until it can identify the relative locations of the HTML page and the image. Until you save the page, Dreamweaver doesn't know what folder the page will be in.

For this same reason, you need to make sure that the image file is where you want to store it on your website. Many designers create a file called *Images* so they can keep all their image files in one place. Ever see those broken picture icons when you try to look at a website? That's often because the picture was moved after the link was already set to a certain location. If for some reason you do end up breaking a link, simply delete the broken image icon that appears in its place and insert the image again by following the steps below:

1. Click the Image icon in the Objects palette.

The Image dialogue box opens.

2. Click the Select button.

A dialog box opens, displaying the files and folders in your hard drive.

3. Navigate to the folder that has the image you want to insert.

4. Double-click to select the image you want.

The image automatically appears on your webpage.

If you have not already saved your page, a warning box pops up to tell you that Dreamweaver cannot properly set the link to the image until you save the page. If you see this box, cancel the step, save your page by choosing **File::Save** and then repeat the preceding steps.

5. Click the image on your webpage to display the image options in the Property Inspector.



Use the Image Property inspector to specify the image attributes, such as alignment, horizontal and vertical spacing, and alternative text.

Setting Links

A link is essentially an address (URL) that tells a viewer's browser what page to go to when the viewer selects the text or image with the link. If that page is within your website, you want to create a *relative link* that includes the path that describes how to get from the current page to the linked page. A relative link should not include the domain name of the server. This is an example of a relative link:

```
<A HREF="staff/vanessa.html">Vanessa</A>
```

If you link to a page on a different website, you need to create an *absolute link*. An absolute link includes the full Internet address of the other site. This is an example of an absolute link:

```
<A HREF="http://www.google.com">The Best Search Engine</A>
```

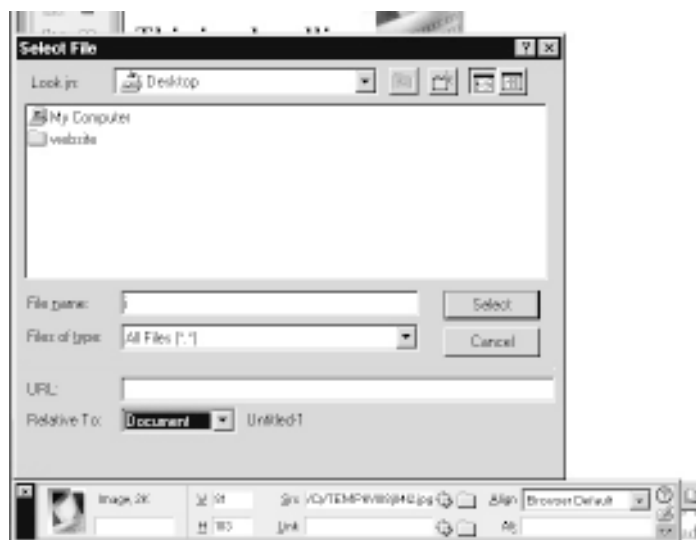
If all that HREF code stuff looks strange, don't sweat it, the next section will show you how to set links without even knowing what the code means.

Linking Pages Within Your Website

Linking from one page in your website to another--an *internal link*--is simple. The most important thing to remember is to save your pages in the folders that you want to keep them in before you start setting links. If you set a link and then move the page that you linked to a new location, you break the link. This is how you create an internal link:

1. **In Dreamweaver, open the page to which you want to create a link.**
2. **Select the text or image that you want to act as a link.**
3. **Choose Window::Properties to open the Property Inspector, if it isn't open already.**
4. **Click the folder icon to the right of the Link text box.**

The Select File dialog box appears:



5. From the Select File dialog box, click the page that you want your image or text to link to, and then click the Select button.

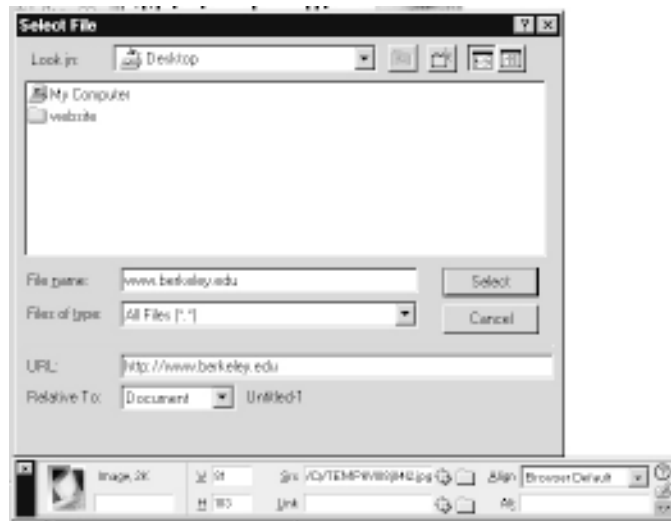
The link is automatically set and the window closes. If you haven't saved your page, a message box appears, explaining that you can only create a relative link after you save the page. You should always save the page you're working on before you insert images.

Linking to Pages Outside Your Website

Linking to a page on another website--an *external link*--is even easier than making an internal link. All you need is the URL of the page to which you want to link and you're almost done.

To create an external link, follow these steps:

- 1. In Dreamweaver, open the page from which you want to link.**
- 2. Select the text or image that you want to act as a link.**
- 3. Choose Window::Properties to open the Property Inspector**
- 4. In the Link text box, type the URL of the page that you want to link to:**



The link is automatically set.

Setting a Link to an E-mail Address

Another common link option goes to an e-mail address. E-mail links make it easy for visitors to send you a message. Before you start, you need to know the e-mail address to which you want to link. The only other thing you need to know is that e-mail links must begin with the code `mailto:`

To create an e-mail link in Dreamweaver, follow these steps:

1. **In Dreamweaver, open the page on which you want to create the link.**
2. **Select the image or text that you want to act as a link.**
3. **Choose Window::Properties to open the Property Inspector**
4. **In the Link text box, type `mailto:`, followed by the e-mail address.**

The link is automatically set. When a visitor clicks an e-mail link, the browser automatically opens an e-mail message window where the user can type a message and send it to you.



VI. Putting Your Website Online (At Home)

Section I detailed how to set up a site and enter the address, login name and password for your server. This section tells you how to put pages on your server and retrieve them using the built-in FTP capabilities of Dreamweaver.

To transfer files between your hard drive and a remote server, follow these steps:

1. Choose Site::Open Site and select a site definition.

The Site dialog box appears.

2. Click the Connect button.

If you're not already connected to the Internet, the Connect button should start your dial-up connection. Once you're online, Dreamweaver will establish a connection with your host server.

After you establish the connection to your web server, the directories on your server appear in the left pane of the Site dialog box. If the files on your local hard drive don't appear in the right pane of the dialog box, use the small arrow at the bottom-left corner of the dialog box to open the right pane.

3. To *upload* a file drag the file or folder from the right pane to the left pane.

4. To *download* a file, drag files from the left pane to the right pane.

The files are automatically copied when you transfer them. When the transfer is complete, you can open the files on your hard drive or use a web browser to see the files you've uploaded to the remote server.

VII. Conclusions

By this time, we hope that you have a fairly good understanding of the commonly used features of Dreamweaver 3. There are plenty of features that weren't covered, and you can learn more about these in our next class, *Intermediate Dreamweaver 3*. Please feel free to ask the teacher or roamers if you have any questions regarding the course material.

Please fill out an evaluation telling us what you thought of the course before you leave, and thank you for attending Introduction to Dreamweaver 3.

VIII. Other Resources

Visit the Macromedia website [www.macromedia.com] to download a 30-day trial version of Dreamweaver 3, as well as several other web development tools.

On the same website, www.macromedia.com/support, you can find Macromedia's official help center. The site is filled with tutorials, samples and other assets designed to keep developers up-to-date.

www.webmonkey.com features helpful tutorials, useful info, design tips and references, and also diagnostic tools to test your browser and find out about plug-ins and other web development tools.

www.zdnet.com provides a large database of web design resources.

Finally, look for our *Intermediate Dreamweaver 3* course on the Walk-in class schedule to take your web development skills to the next level.