

Dreamweaver MX – Tables and Layout Tools

Creating a web page using the table and layouts tools provides ultimate flexibility in the design and planning stage. Use the table and layout tools to place content and images exactly where you want them in a web page.

Site Management

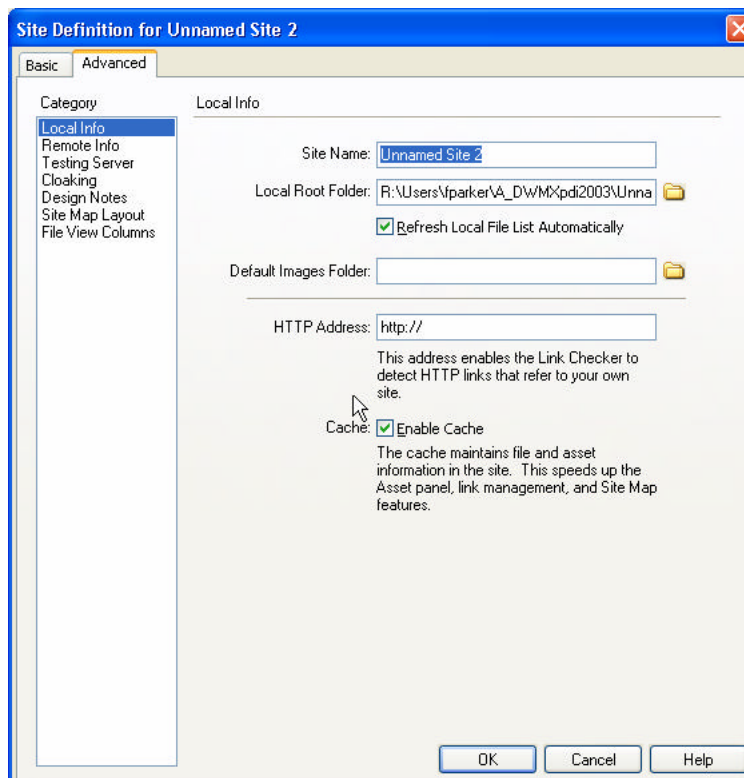
Site Management is a mechanism used to keep track of web pages you build for a specific web project and the assets you use in them. Think of Site Management as a holding tank or a central storage location for all related files, also known as a Root Folder.

Creating and Defining a Site

Create a Site prior to building any pages for your web project. The Site you create will have a unique name and a storage folder, Local Root Folder, which will be used to hold all the related pages for the web project. Note, all items used in your web project must be stored in the specified Local Root Folder, which you specified within the Site for the project.

From the Menu toolbar select Site, New or Press the **shortcut key F5** to open the Site Definition dialog box.

Tip: Select the Advanced tab to bypass the Basic Wizard setup.



Specify a Site Name by clicking with the mouse in the Site Name field.

The Site Name is an internal naming convention. When naming the Site, don't worry about spaces or capitalization. The Site Name is like a "pet name" for your project. The Site Name is never transferred to the Web or Remote server.

Select the Folder icon to the right of the Local Root Folder field to create a new Local Root Folder or browse and select the folder that will hold the web site and be known as the Local Root Folder.

All files and assets that you plan on using in your web project must be stored in the Local Root folder.

When back to the Site Definition dialog box the Local Root Folder should display the folder name just created or selected.

All the files and subfolders that you use for your Site should be stored in the specified Local Root folder so that when you create your pages, the graphics and links are relative to the that folder. When you get ready to publish, you will only need to copy the root folder, which will contain all files and subfolders, and copy (Put) them on the Remote Server (Web Server) from your Local computer.

When you **Put** your Site on the Remote Server, Dreamweaver will maintain an identical directory structure as your Local Root to ensure links and references work.

New to MX: The Site dialog box needs to know where all the images are stored within your Site. Use the Default Images Folder field to point to the folder within your Local Root Folder that will contain or hold all images for the files within the web project specified in the Site dialog box. Note, if you don't have a folder created for your images, then click with the mouse on the Folder icon to the right of the field and create a new folder to house the images.

From the Site Definition dialog box be sure to select the **Refresh Local File List Automatically** so that Dreamweaver updates the site list when it has been modified.

From the **Site Definition** dialog box be sure to select the **Enable Cache**. This feature will create a cache that will help increase the speed for link management while working in Dreamweaver. The **Site** is now defined.

Browser Preview

Dreamweaver is a WYSIWYG program, meaning what you see is what you get. However, it's still a good idea to view your page in different browsers prior to publishing to make sure they look good. Dreamweaver lets you set your preferences and specify the browsers you want to preview your creation in. Dreamweaver preferences can hold up to twenty different browsers, but the two most common are Netscape Navigator and Internet Explorer. Note: you must have these programs installed on your computer before you may use the preview option. Both browsers may be downloaded from the Internet.

Netscape Navigator	→	http://home.netscape.com/computing/download/
Microsoft Internet Explorer	→	http://www.microsoft.com/windows/ie/

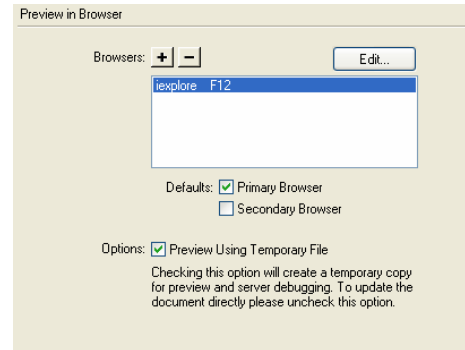
The Preview in Browser option is located in the File menu or in the Document toolbar. From the File menu select Preview in Browser and select a browser from the fly-out menu. The Preview in Browser icon located in the Document toolbar works the same way.

The shortcut key for the browser is located to the right of the browser name in the Preview in Browser fly-out menu. For example, to launch the Preview in Browser using the Internet Explorer browser, press **F12**.

Adding Browsers

To add or delete a browser, choose Edit, Preferences, and select the Preview in Browser category. From the Preview in Browser dialog box, select the Plus icon to add a new browser or the Minus icon to remove a browser.

Tip: Internet Explorer is the default primary browser.

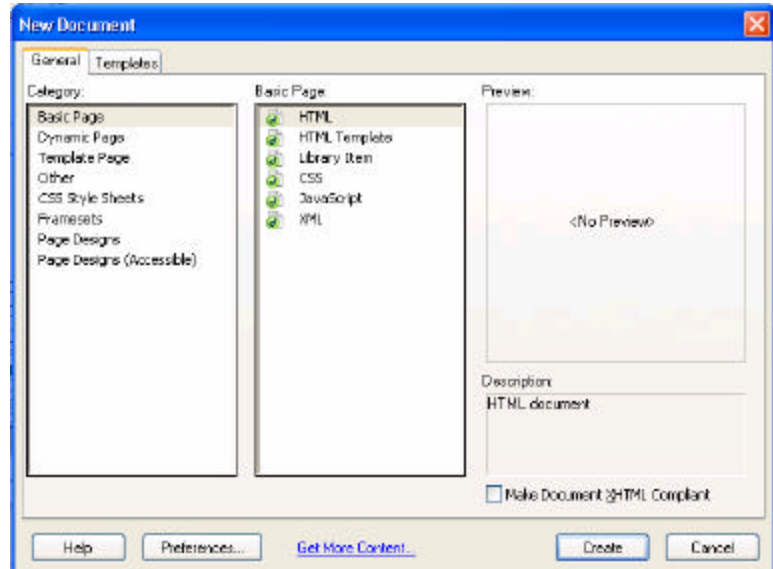


Creating A Basic Web Page

Dreamweaver opens with an empty window, ready to create or open a document. To open a new window choose File, New.

Select the Basic Page Category and the HTML Basic Page from the New Document dialog box.

Press the Create button to generate the new page.



Saving Your File

Always save your document as soon as you open a new document by choosing File, Save As. Name your files with meaningful file names and use lowercase letters or numbers for your file names. Note, when naming and saving your files don't use spaces in your file names; instead use the underscore or dash. Dreamweaver automatically adds the extension .htm to your file name when you save. You can change the file extension by choosing Edit, Preferences and change the Add Extension When saving option from the General Category.

Adding a Title

Always give every HTML document a title. The document title appears in the title bar of the Dreamweaver window and the browser title bar. It's important to give your title a meaningful name because the title name will be used as a browser bookmark or favorite.

A title can be added by using the Title field in the Toolbar



or by choosing **Modify, Page Properties**. Page Properties can also be accessed by right-clicking with the mouse and selecting Page Properties from the menu.

Notice (untitled-1*) appears to the right of the page title. This text is displayed because the file hasn't been saved yet. Once the file has been saved the (untitled-1*) will change to display filename.

Modifying Page Properties

Page Properties include the title, background color, background image, text color and hyperlink color. Choose **Modify, Page Properties** to edit properties.

Selecting Color

There are 216 web safe colors and 213 of the web safe colors appear the same in Netscape and Internet Explorer browsers on both Windows and Macintosh operating systems. Dreamweaver will replace the non-web safe web color with the closest web safe color when the Snap to Web Safe option is selected when choosing a color from Windows OS, Mac OS or Grayscale color palette. Creating or using a custom color, which isn't displayed in the color-safe palette, could have an adverse appearance in some browsers.

The cursor icon changes to an Eyedropper and it is used to select colors from the color-palette. You can also use the Eyedropper to select any color displayed on your desktop. The Eyedropper will pick up the color and display it in the Current Color box. As you move the cursor over the color swatches the color that your cursor is resting on will display in the upper left hand corner of the color-picker box. The hexadecimal number for the color will be displayed to the right of the color swatch.



Located in the upper right corner of the color palette are two icons. The first icon is the Strikethrough button and is used to clear the current color without choosing a new color. The second icon is the Color Wheel button and is used to create custom colors.

Background Color

The background default color of a web page is white. To change the background color choose the Background option from the Page Properties dialog box or use the shortcut key **Ctrl+J** to access the Page Properties dialog box. Remember to use light colored text if you choose a dark background. NOTE: Background images override background color.



Text Colors

Click on the color swatch to the right of Text Color to select a color, which will return you to the Page Properties dialog box. If you know the hexadecimal number for the color, you may type it directly in the Page Property dialog box to the right of the Text Color field.

Link Colors

Use the Page Properties dialog box to change colors for the Links, Visited Links and the Active Links. The link colors chosen from the Page Properties dialog box will apply to the entire document.

Types of Links:

The Links option is the initial color of a hyperlink, the color a user sees before clicking the link. The default browser color of Links is Blue.

The Visited Links option is the color the link changes to when a user clicks on the link. The default browser color of the Visited Link is Purple.

The Active Link option is the color the link changes to while the user holds down the mouse button after clicking the link. The default browser color of the Active Link is Red.

Page Margins

Margin tags were new in Dreamweaver 3 and work with version 4.0 of Netscape and Internet Explorer or later.

To access the Page Margins choose Modify, Page Properties or use the shortcut key **Ctrl+J**. Notice there are four different types of margins to create. Set the left margin and margin width to the same number and set the top margin and margin height to the same number if you want your pages to appear similar in both browsers, Netscape and Internet Explorer.

Note: Left Margin and Top Margin are supported by Internet Explorer 4.0 or later.

Note: Margin Width and Margin Height are supported by Netscape Navigator 4.0 or later.

Tip: Omit the Offset

Set page margins to zero to omit the offset between the way foreground and background images are displayed in html pages on Netscape and Internet Explorer. Select a different Window Size, located in the status bar, to see how your text looks with your margin settings.

Preset Color Scheme

Dreamweaver provides preset color schemes for the background, text, and links. A Color Scheme can be applied to a page at anytime by choosing **Commands, Set Color Scheme**.

Tip: Color Schemes cannot be created from the Set Color Scheme dialog box.

Adding Text

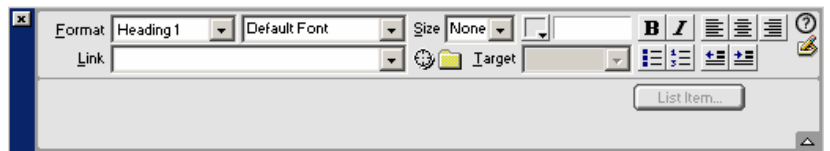
There are several different ways one can insert text on a web page in Dreamweaver. One could type the text directly on the canvas, copy text from a different file and paste it into the canvas, import a text file, or even import a web page that was created in Microsoft Office.

Typing Text Directly on the Canvas

Position the cursor on the canvas and type the text. Use the Properties Inspector to format the text by adding headings, font styles, colors and more.

Formatting Text

Formatting options are located in the Property Inspector. Access the Property Inspector by choosing **Window, Properties** or use the shortcut key **Ctrl+F3**.

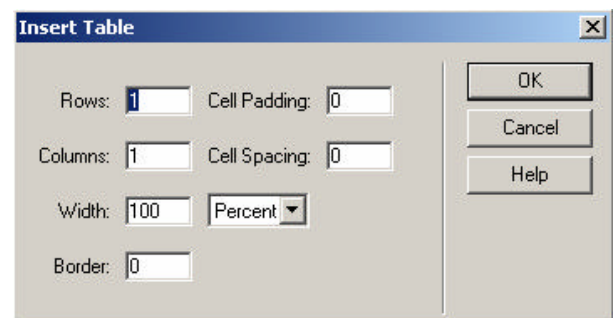


The fields in the Properties Inspector are Context Sensitive and will change to reflect properties to what is being used in the table. For example, if you are working with an image, then the Properties Inspector will change to reflect image properties.

Inserting Tables

Many web page designers use tables as a way to organize text and objects because tables offer many features such as varied colors for the table background, row, column or even a cell. A table can even be nested inside an existing table and cell, row and column sizes can vary. The user can decide where the table will be located on the page and whether or not the table should have a border.

- The Table icon is located in the Insert Panel under the Common tab.
- From the **Common** tab select the **Insert Table** icon or from the **Insert** menu choose **Table** (shortcut key **Ctrl+Alt+T**).



The Table dialog box will appear.

- Select the number of Rows and Columns.
- Width → choose either percent or pixels.
 - Percent will adjust the table to fit a specific percentage of the end users window.
 - Fixed will create a table to a specific size. The Fixed table, specific pixels, will not adjust to fit the end users window.
- If a table is created with a Border equal to one, then the border on the table will display at one pixel wide in the web browser. Use a Border equal to Zero if you plan on not displaying the table borders in your design.
- Cell Padding and Cell Spacing. This is an option that will need to be played with. Adjust the cell padding and spacing according the need and desired look.
 - Cell Padding equals the amount of padding around the borders.
 - Cell Spacing equals the amount of spacing between cells.

Example of a table with no padding or spacing:

text in a cell with zero padding	text in a cell with zero padding

Example of the same table with spacing and padding set to 4.

text in a cell with 4 as a padding	text in a cell with 4 as a padding

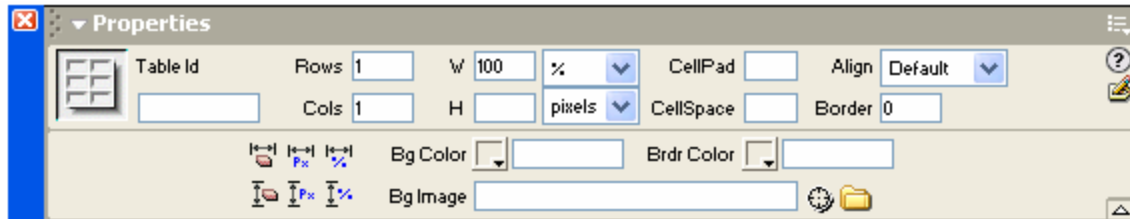
Notice how the text doesn't align exactly with the borders in Example #2 as it did in Example #1.

- The Align field by default is set up to align the table left on the page. Change the Align option for the table by selecting the table border and choosing an option from the Align pull-down menu.
- Choose **OK** when finished.

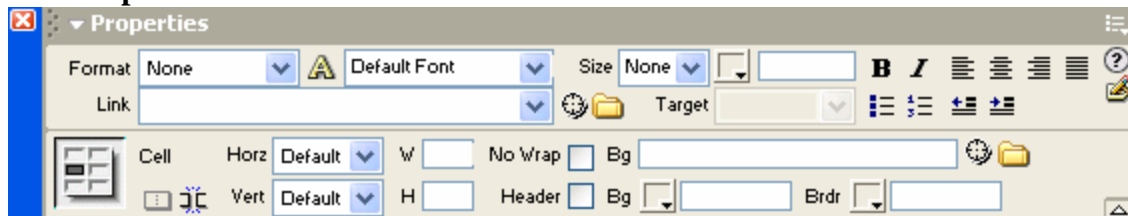
Formatting Options for a Table

When a table, column, row, or cell is selected the **Property Inspector** will change to display the corresponding properties.

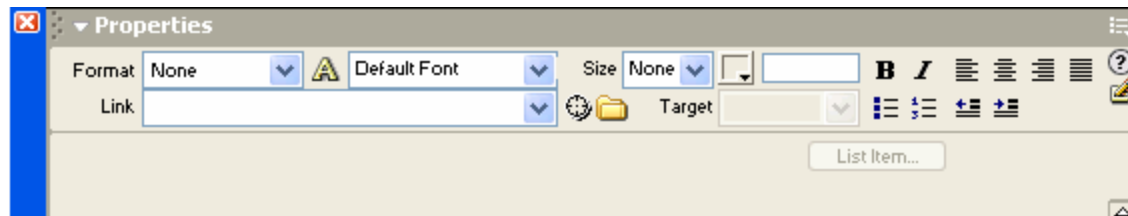
Table Properties



Cell Properties



Regular text Properties Inspector



Formatting the Table, Cell and Border

Manually set the color scheme for your table with the **Property Inspector** or select a preset table color scheme by selecting the table and choosing **Command | Format Table**.

Table Properties: Adding a Row or Column

- The easiest way to add a row or column is to first select the table border and second, change the number of rows or columns in the Properties Inspector.
- The Modify, Table menu will also work to add a row or column to an existing table. Note: when deleting a row, position the cursor in the cell when using this option. If the border is selected, the Table menu options will not be available.

Table Properties: Deleting a Table, Row or Column

There are several different ways one can delete a cell, row or column within a table.

- Choose Modify, Table, and select an option from the Table menu. Note: when deleting a row, position the cursor in the cell when using this option. If the border is selected, the Table menu options will not be available.
- Right-click in the table and select Table, and the Delete option.
- Select the table tag in the status bar and press delete key.

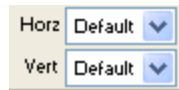
Cell Properties

Merge or Split a Cell



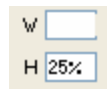
Position the cursor in the cell and select either Merge or Split from the properties inspector.

Cursor Alignment for the Cell



- Use the Horizontal menu to align the text left, center or right in the cell. Default is Left.
- Use the Vertical menu to align the text top, middle, or bottom in the cell. Default is Center.

Cell Width and Height



- Use a percent amount if you want the cell to change or resize
- Use a pixel amount if you want a fixed cell size

Tip: Leaving the Height field blank will allow the cell to automatically adjust its contents.

No Wrap



By default, the text is set up to wrap in a cell. Select the No Wrap option if you do not want text to wrap in a cell.

Images

The two standard images types that most browsers support are GIF and JPEG.

- GIF (CompuServe Graphics Interchange Format - GIF extension)
- JPEG (Joint Photographic Experts Group - JPG or JPEG extension)

GIF art images lack the higher quality of JPEG files, but are more compact and display more quickly in web browsers. GIF images work well for black and white "wireframe" or line drawings while JPEG images are more appropriate for "raster" or full color images (such as photographs).

For Your Information:

A new image format called PNG (pronounced "ping") is becoming a replacement for GIF images. PNG supports alpha channels that are useful for transparency. Microsoft Internet Explorer 4.0 and Netscape Navigator 4.0 both display PNGs but have difficulty with alpha channels and some of the more advanced characteristics of this format.

You can create your own images, scan them, or buy them as part of a commercial clip art package. You can also find GIF and JPEG images in the Internet's many image archives.

Inserting an Image

*****Save your page first.** Place the cursor where you want to insert the image. From the Insert Menu choose Image and browse to select the image. An image can also be inserted by choosing the Image icon from the Common Tab located in the Inset Bar.

Alternative Text

Alternative text can be displayed in place of an image. You should specify alternative text for those readers who use text-only browsers or have image loading turned off. In addition, use of alternative text allows visually impaired users who use speech synthesizers to read text on a web page. When inserting alternative text, be sure to use descriptive text for the images. For example, alternative text which reads "a car" is not as descriptive as "a blue 1965 Ford Mustang". Use alternative text to give meaning to your image so the information is accessible to all users. Most browsers display the alternative text as a tool tip when the mouse rolls over the image.

Adding Alternative Text:

Select the image and the Property Inspector palette will change to display image properties.

Position the cursor in the Alt field and type the alternative text.

Image Alignment

Select the image and choose the Left, Center or Right Align buttons from the Property Inspector to move the image.

Text and Image Alignment

The Align field located on the Property Inspector lets you control the way text will appear around your image. The default setting for the Align option is Browser Default, which is the same as baseline alignment.

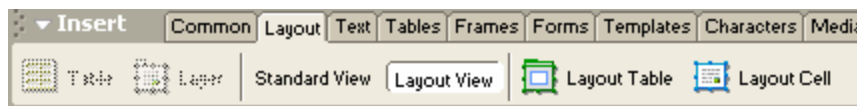
Cell Layout Tool


Dreamweaver 4/MX has a tool called the Cell Layout tool. The Cell Layout tool is similar to a cell in a table. The Cell Layout tool allows you to draw boxes on your web page that can hold objects or text in place.

Use the Cell Layout Tool to design your web page. Draw cells on the canvas where you plan to insert images and text as placeholders and then go in and insert images and text.

Using the Cell Layout Tool

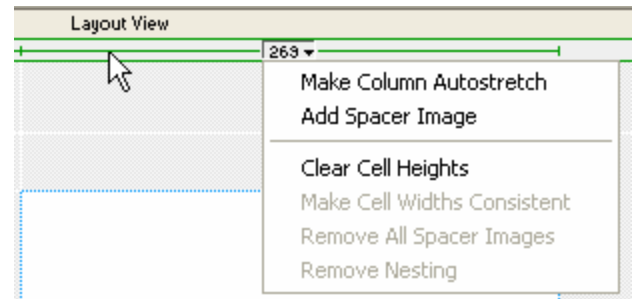
- Select the **Layout tab** from the Insert Panel. Note the Default view is the Standard View. Select the Layout view button to access the layout tools.



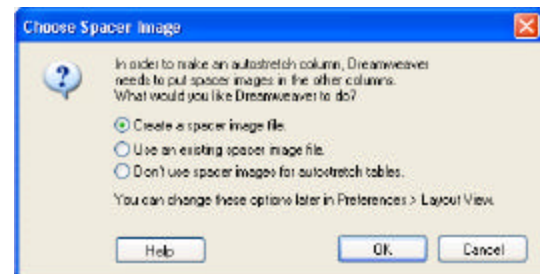
- When the Layout View icon is selected, a dialog box will display explaining how the Layout and Standard View work.
- Select the Draw Layout Cell icon to draw a cell on the page. Left-click the mouse and drag the mouse to draw a cell. The cell will display in the color blue. The 'Layout Cell' icon is a blue square with a white grid icon.
- Notice that Dreamweaver creates a table in the background to house the cell that you draw. The table in the background will display in the color green and will be tagged Layout Table.
- Select a cell to resize or drag to a new area on the page. A selected cell will display in the color blue. Note the Property Inspector can also be used to change the cell properties.
- Select a cell and use the Properties Inspector to change cell properties such as the background color of the cell.
- To delete a cell select it and press delete.

Autostretch

Use the Auto Stretch option for a column if you want Dreamweaver to resize the table to fit the browser window. From the Layout view, select the column that should be adjusted for Auto Stretch. Next, select the “green arrow” pointing down over the column.



From the menu, select Make Column Autostretch. Dreamweaver will want to create a “spacer” image for the autostrech column. Select the option to create a spacer image and save the image within your site.



Rollover Images

A Rollover image consists of two states, a display state and a rollover state. The display state is how the image appears when the user visits the web page. The rollover state will only change when the user moves the cursor over the image. The Rollover Image icon is located in the Common tab on the Insert Panel.

