

Keep-It-Simple Website Construction Workshop

By Patrick Staley

I. Goals

The goal of this workshop is to build a functional website. Participants who finish the workshop will end up with an online website of their own creation. This is not a complete course in web design but a minimal introduction to the basic steps for website construction. The resultant website is a starting point and not a polished product.

Using Dreamweaver MX the participants will setup local and remote sites, establish color schemes, insert and modify tables, add graphics/images, insert text, make links, implement simple navigation, and upload to a remote server. Using Adobe Acrobat, participants will create Portable Document Format (PDF) files including password protection. Optionally participants may create a web photo album.

II. Consultation

Participants will meet individually with the workshop coordinator. The Participant should have a general idea of what type of site they would like to produce: informative for students, travel photos, dance news, etc. The result of the consultation will be a folder structure, homepage design, and an assignment for gathering/producing the website content.

III. Preparation

Prior to the first workshop participants will:

A. Make a site folder with subfolders as specified in the folder structure from the consultation (II). This “local site” should be on a removable medium compatible with the computers used in the workshop classroom.

B. Procure graphics for the homepage. There are many sources of graphics: www.clip-art.com, MS Word Clip Art, The Big Box of Art (Office Depot), etc. The graphic for the homepage title should be ~200 pixels high. Graphics used for links within the page should be 50-100 pixels high. Photoshop is a good tool for sizing images.

C. Gather source documents—practice tests, syllabi, assignment sheets, grade sheets, etc. Convert all Word and Excel documents to PDF files. Hand written material can be scanned to a PDF file. Adobe Acrobat is a good tool for converting to PDF. Office Support services can assist in producing PDF files.

D. Produce a hand sketch of the proposed homepage including all titles and text.

E. Produce a text file of all web text longer than one sentence. WordPad or Notepad are good tools for producing a simple text file.

F. If you are doing a photo website, size your photos to less than 800 pixels wide and less than 583 pixels high. Photoshop is a good tool for sizing images.

IV. Homepage Design

The homepage should consist of a title, a graphic, and a list of links to other pages or resources. Long recitations can be put on a separate page. Typical homepage:

Graphic	Title
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Topic 1
Topic 2
Topic 2
Email Me

V. Site Folder Structure

The site folder itself (root folder) should be named to identify the site, e.g. schoolsite, photosite, danceinfosite, etc. For file and folder names do not use spaces or special characters other than hyphen and underscore. For the most part content and notes will be kept in a folder called assets. The structure of the site will be determined during the consultation (II).

VI. Dreamweaver Sessions

Participants enter the Dreamweaver portion with: 1) their local site folder (V) and content material (III) on a removable medium and 2) a sketch of their homepage.

A. User Interface

The normal Dreamweaver user interface has the following components: document window—page or pages being edited; property inspector—options for the selected item in the document window; files panel—for managing/selecting files on your site.

1. Document Window. This window displays the page elements of the current page being edited. To open a new page Files>New>Basic HTML page. To edit an existing page double click the page (.htm file) in the files panel (3 below). For edits to be accepted the page must be saved (File>Save or ctrl-s). If the file name has a * on the name then the latest edits have not been saved. When starting a new page it is often helpful to duplicate an existing page (ctrl-d in the files panel) and edit the copy. The document window has three views: Design, Code, and Split. Design shows the page elements, Code shows the underlying code, and split shows both.

2. Property Inspector. To change or augment some feature on a page you generally select that item and then use the property inspector below the document window to specify the stuff for that item.

3. Files Panel. The files panel located to the right of the document window shows all the files in your site. Be sure you have 1) defined the local site (VI.B below), 2) chosen the site in the pull down menu, and 3) chosen the local view. The files/folders shown are only updated when the refresh button is clicked. For later workshop sessions (VI.L below) we will use the put button (blue) and the show both sites view to upload to the remote site.

B. Define Local Site.

Sites>Manage sites>new then enter a name to refer to the site, e.g. school, photos, travel, etc. When you have two or more sites you will choose this name to work on this site.

Advanced tab>local site tab>browse for the local site folder (III.A above).

C. Open a new page.

File>New>Basic page>HTML

D. Set Color Scheme.

Commands>Set Color Scheme then choose the one you like. Watch the [movie](#) .

E. Set the title for your homepage in the title field on the document window. Save your homepage (File>Save or ctrl-s). The homepage file should be named index.htm and reside at in the top folder of the site.

F. Insert Table.

The Keep-It-Simple approach is to put most everything in tables. Your homepage design (IV above) will determine the structure of the tables used. Watch the [movie](#).

G. Insert text.

Click in the table cell you want to contain text and type the text. For text longer than a few words copy and paste from the prepared file of website text (III.E above). For larger fonts: select the text, right click and chose paragraph formatting for one of the header settings. Starting a new line with the enter key actually starts a new paragraph which entails inserting a blank line. For a new line without the blank line use shift-enter (watch the [movie](#)). Multiple consecutive spaces are compressed to a single space. To force additional spaces use ctrl-shift-space.

H. Making Links.

1. For text links—select the text; right click; choose make link; browse to the page, PDF file, or image file; enter. Watch the [movie](#) .

2. Modify text links--click anywhere in the existing text link, drag the link pointer in the property inspector to the target file.
3. Graphic links—click on the image, drag the link pointer in the property inspector to the target file.
4. External links—select the hot item (text or graphic) type or copy and paste the URL into the link box in the property inspector (VI.A.2 above).

I. Testing Page Edits.

Select the page, save the page, F12. This should open the page in a browser window. Close the window when finished.

J. Web Photo Album.

If you are creating a web photo album watch the [movie](#) . During the consultation (II above) you will be given the folder structure for your web photo album.

K. Define Remote Site.

Participants may initially host their sites on mr-ideahamster if they do not have their own hosting site. If you have your own hosting service call them and ask for the FTP host name, your FTP Login name, your FTP Password, and your website address.

1. Information needed.
 - a. FTP host URL**—this is the internet address for uploading your site. If you are using mr-ideahamster your FTP host is mr-ideahamster.com.
 - b. Login name**—this identifies you to the FTP host. If you are using mr-ideahamster your login name is your first name and the first letter of your last name.
 - c. Password**-- If you are using mr-ideahamster tell the workshop leader what password you want to use.
 - d. Website address**--If you are using mr-ideahamster your website address will be www.mr-ideahamster.com/yourlastname.
2. Steps

Site>Manage Sites>select site>edit>remote tab
Enter Access: FTP; for mr-ideahamster use the following--FTP host: mr-ideahamster.com; Login: your first name last initial; Password: whatever.
Click on test connection.
Fix parameters if the connection fails. If you still cannot connect contact your hosting site representative.

L. Uploading Website.

1. In the files panel select all the files in your local site and click on the put button, it looks like a blue up arrow. Wait until all the files have been transferred.

2. Go to your browser, type your website address (K.1.d above) into the address field, enter. CHECKOUT YOUR ONLINE WEBSITE!

VII. What Is Next?

Continue working on your website, adding pages, new content, graphics, etc. Test the changes locally (F12 see VI.I above). Then choose the new pages and upload them (put button in the files panel).