

King's College London

Module Two - Web Tutorials 2001 – 2002

Creating web pages using Dreamweaver

1. The Design view in Dreamweaver
2. Setting up your Local Site and Site Structure
3. Page set up
4. Inserting content (Text & Images)
5. Creating and checking links

1. The Design view in Dreamweaver

Dreamweaver offers three types of **view** with which to develop your pages. If you prefer to work directly with HTML code, you can use the full HTML view, which is an excellent text editor. For those who like to see the HTML being generated while working in the design view, then Dreamweaver offers a **split screen**, giving you the design view in a lower pane of the window and an HTML view in the upper pane (Fig. 1).

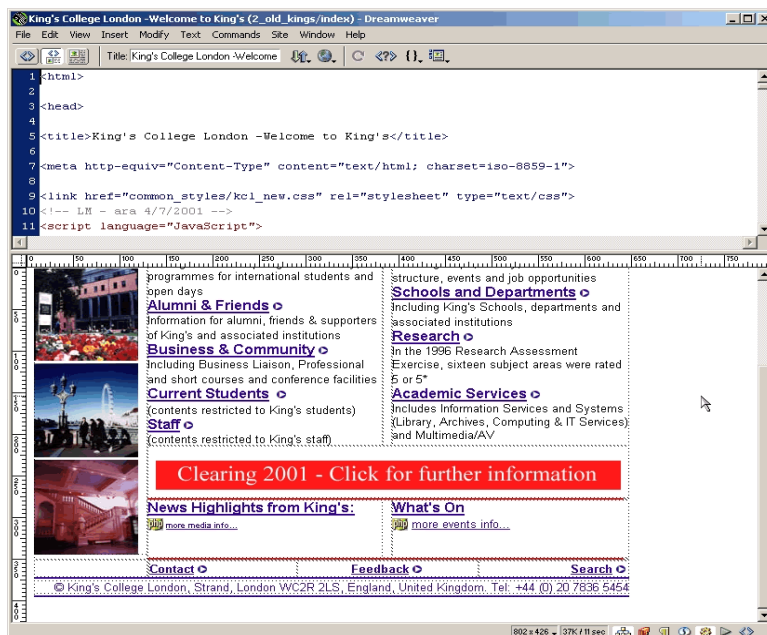


Fig. 1

This view is great if you want to enhance your HTML skills and also makes navigating your way around the HTML much easier. Just highlight the

Keywords

Text Editor

A very basic word processor that offers no formatting whatsoever, just text.

Proprietary Code

Pieces of HTML that are unique to particular software and have little or no importance to the actual page.

Redundant Tags

HTML tags that are completely unnecessary.

Local Site

The folder where all your web pages and images are saved on your desktop computer.

Remote Site

The computer that stores the actual website – the Web Server.

Web Server

The computer that stores and 'serves' your website to the world. Usually your workplace IT department or ISP (Internet Service Provider).

Root

The folder in which all your web files are saved.

component on the page in the design view and the corresponding HTML will also be highlighted.

For extra guidance with your HTML, Dreamweaver offers you the **O'Reilly Code** reference. Just click on **Window > Reference** on the page task bar to check it out. Finally and fairly obviously, you can work in the full design view. This is really what it's all about and what makes Dreamweaver so easy to use. One of the unique features about Dreamweaver is that it doesn't write any proprietary code into your pages and doesn't alter your code. This isn't to say that Dreamweaver is perfect. It isn't and you will come to learn about its strengths and weaknesses. It does however offer you the facility to clean up your code, removing **redundant tags** and getting rid of all those nasties that other software might have dropped into it, especially if you have imported some content from Microsoft Word, for example.

Tip

A Very Important Note here:

When working with web files **ALWAYS** use **lower case** names, with **NO SPACES**. If you need to distinguish between words, use an **underscore**: **my_web.html** for example

2. Setting up your Local Site and Site Structure

The **Local Site** referred to means the site on your **desktop** PC or Mac and its relationship to the **remote** site on the **web server**. When you define your local site, you are telling Dreamweaver where you are going to **save** all the files for a particular site. You will need to define a local site for each of the websites that you work on.

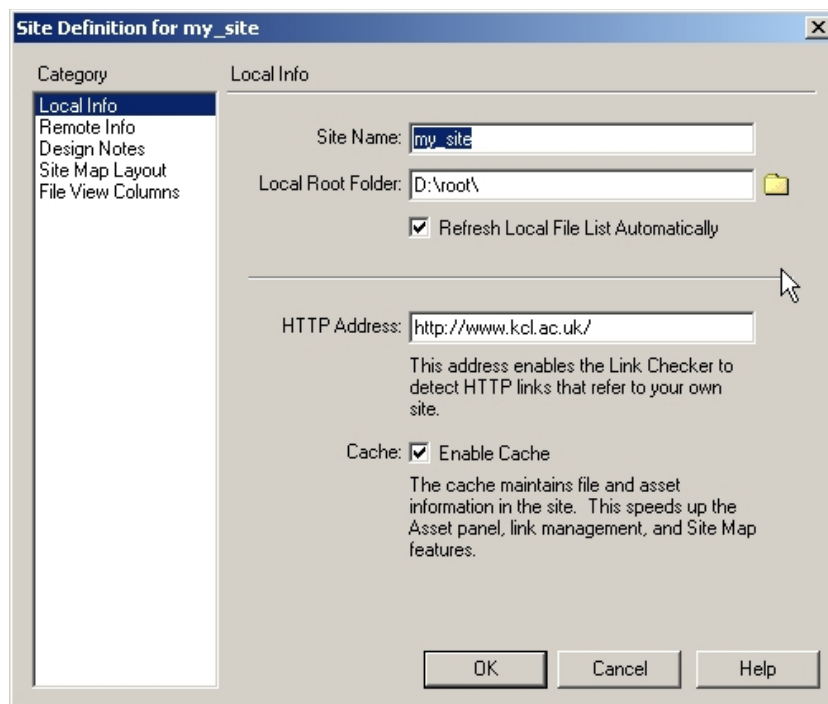



Fig. 4 Site Definition dialogue box

Exercise 1

It is essential that you create a **root** folder before opening Dreamweaver, so browse to drive D on your PAWS PC and locate the folder USR. In this folder create a folder called **root**.

1. **Open** Dreamweaver
2. A blank document will open.
3. Choose **Site > New Site**
4. In the Site Definition dialogue box (Fig. 4), make sure that **Local Info** is highlighted under the **Category** menu.
5. In the Site Name field, enter a name for your site, e.g. **my_site** (note the underscore instead of a space. Also, never use upper case letters))
6. In the **Local Root Folder** box, click the little folder icon and navigate your way to your **root** folder that you have previously created and click **select**.
7. In the **HTTP Address** box type **www.kcl.ac.uk** after the **http://**.
8. Under **Cache**, select **Enable Cache**
9. Click **OK** and **OK** to the cache message
10. Click on Site Window  at the bottom of the blank page and the Site Window will open.

You are now ready to create your site structure.

Exercise 2

- In the **Site** window (Fig. 5), in the right hand pane you will see your root web folder. This is where **ALL** your web documents will be saved. Saving folders, files and other documents outside this root folder will mean that any links made to these will not work when you publish your web files.
- Right click on your root folder and click on **New File**. A new file icon will appear

Keywords

Cache

This is an area on your hard disk that stores all the links on your site. Dreamweaver uses this cache to perform link updates whenever you change the location or name of a file or folder **WITHIN** Dreamweaver. If you change any of these things outside Dreamweaver, then the cache is not used and the links will not be updated.

underneath the root folder. By default it is named `untitled.html`. Rename this file **index.html** by right clicking on it and choosing rename. It is **VERY IMPORTANT** that you name all your files with an **.html** extension. **Do not use .htm** extensions; they may not work in the King's web site. (In any event, it is always safest to use the **.html** extension and NEVER mix the two)

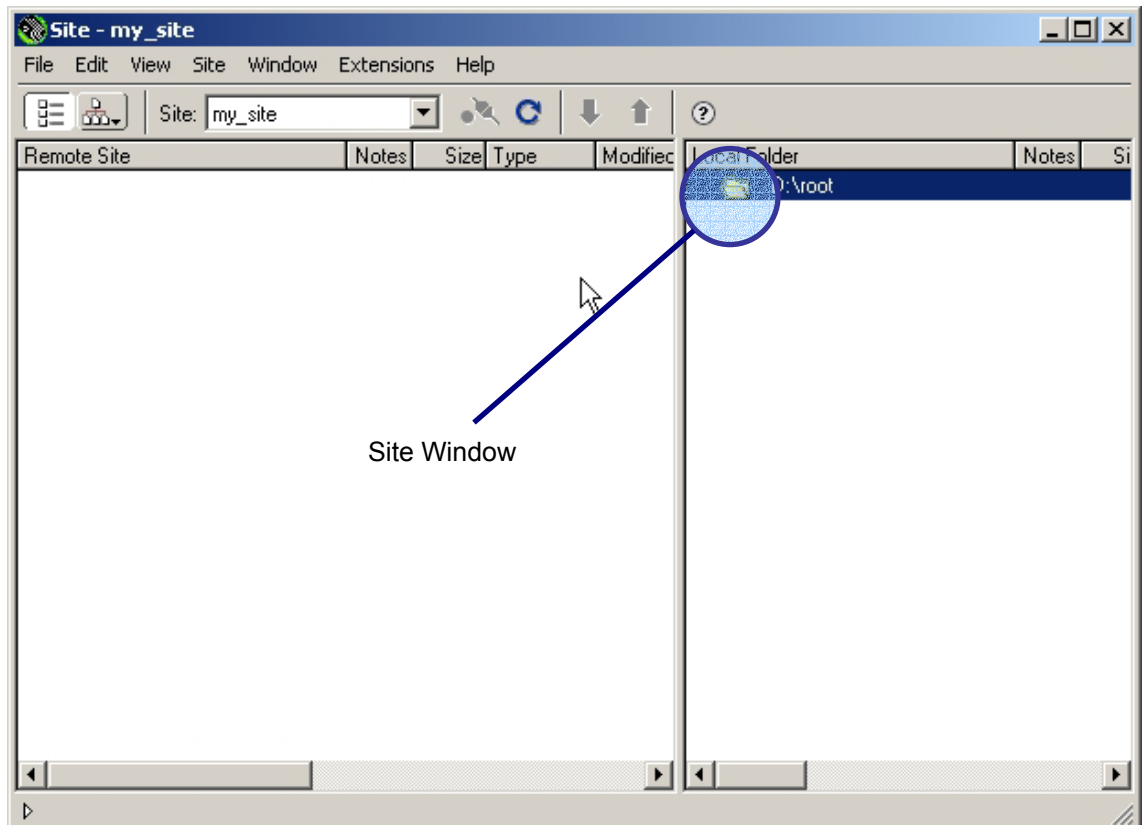


Fig. 5 The Site Window

- Next, right click on the root folder again and this time, choose **new folder**. Name this folder **images**. This is where you will save all the images – graphics, photographs etc that are common to the site as a whole. If you have multiple directories or sections in your site it is a good idea to have separate image directories for each section. When your site becomes more complex it will be much easier to administer if you have an intuitive site structure. For the King's website you will not need to create many graphics as these are all supplied and automatically included with the server-side-includes (more on this later). You may however wish to include some photographic images.

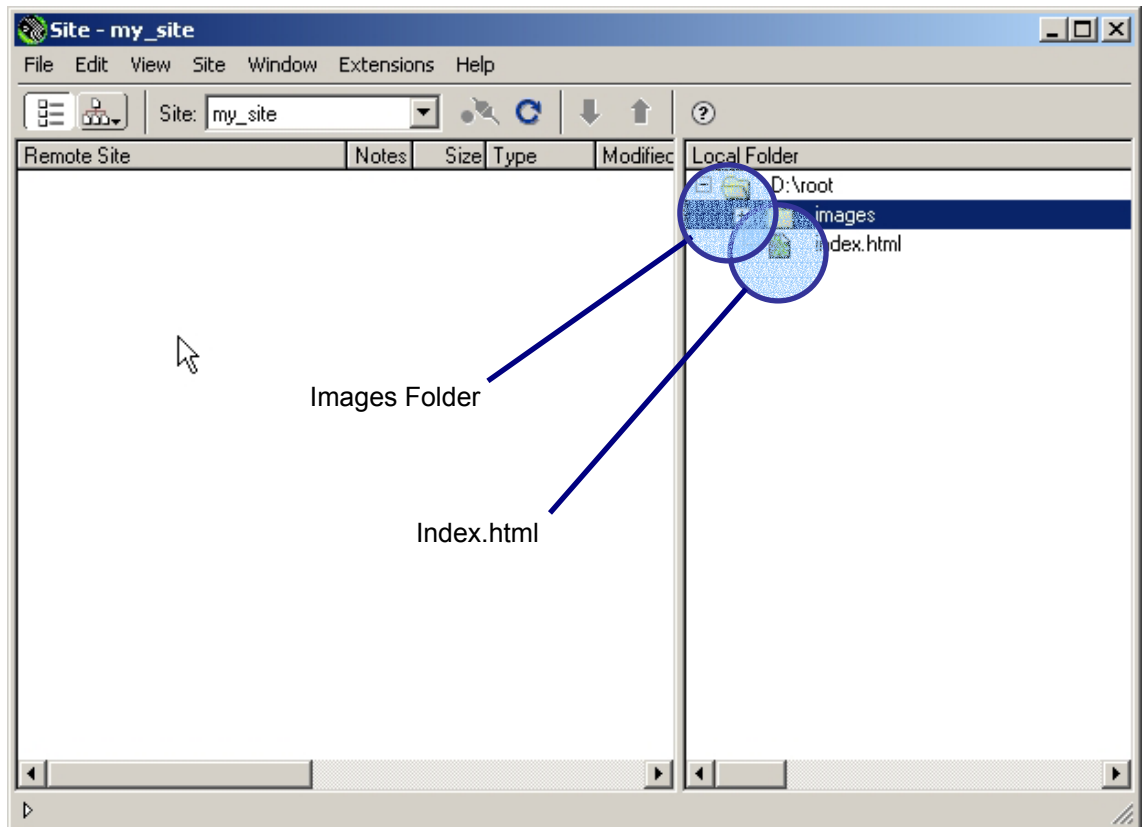


Fig. 6 Organising the Site Structure

3. Page set up

Using tables for page layout

In the old days when web pages were hand coded and all images and text were left aligned by default, **tables** were used to present tabular data. It wasn't long though, before the pioneering web designers realised that tables could be used to give more control over page layout, thus dramatically increasing their design options. Tables enable you to create quite complex layouts for whole pages.

Those of you who are used to using tables in Word for example, will know just how easy it is to manage the information within each cell of the table without it affecting the contents of adjacent cells. One of the most tiresome parts of hand coding web pages is creating tables and this is where WYSIWYG web creation tools are most convenient.

Before you start, it's a very good idea to resort to good old pencil and paper to plan out your table and its contents. It will save a lot of angst later on. When you are reasonably happy with your ideas you can get to work placing the table into your web page. Dreamweaver provides two ways of creating tables (apart from hand coding, that

Glossary and Tips

Tables

Tables are made up of rows, which cross horizontally and columns, which span the table vertically.

Cursor

Or Mouse Pointer.


Objects Pallet

Click on **Windows > Objects** to see the pallet. This is a frequently used pallet and is worth keeping open. It can be 'docked' anywhere on your desktop or left 'floating'.

is.), inserting the table in the usual way (**Insert > Table**) or use a new feature in Dreamweaver – Layout Tables (see the side bar on page7).

Exercise 3

Creating a table.

- Open index.html
- In design view, place the cursor at the location that you want to insert the table
- click on the **Insert Table** icon  on your **Objects Pallet**. The Insert Table dialogue box will appear (fig. 7).
- Complete the various boxes as seen in the fig. 7, then click **OK**.

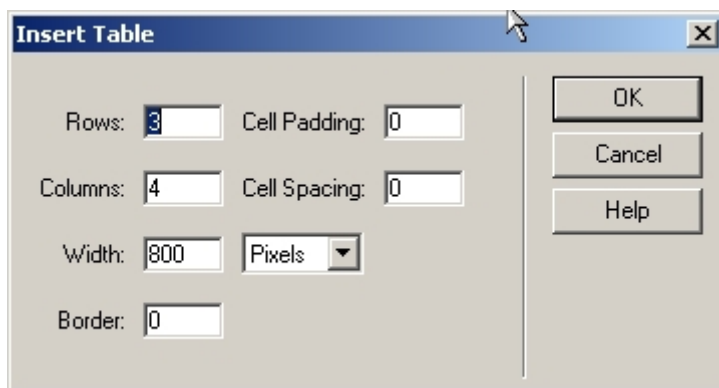


Fig. 7 Insert Table dialogue box

A table will appear on your page.

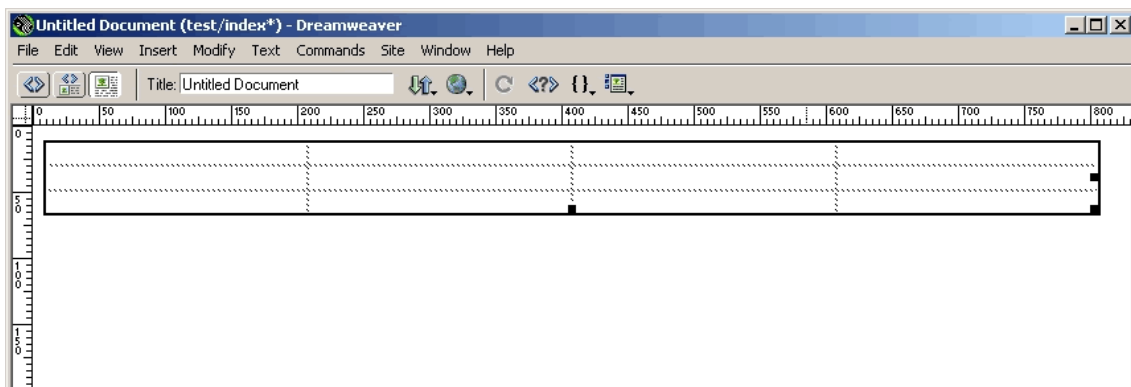



Fig. 8 a table shown within the design view

Note that the table is left aligned. This will mean that the web page will also be left aligned. You may want your pages to be centred. If so, click outside the

table to deselect it and click on the centre text button  on the taskbar.

Layout Tables

There is another way of creating and managing tables in Dreamweaver. Basically you draw some boxes on the page and then Dreamweaver fills in the HTML for an entire page design. These layouts are drawn using tables – known as layout tables. The only difference is that Dreamweaver will automatically generate spacer gifs, which are invisible, one-pixel images. These are used to force the spacing of tables. These spacer gifs have been used for some time now as a 'workaround' for some Netscape incompatibilities. They work really well in any browser and can give you much more control of your tables. The team at Macromedia have simply made the process easier by incorporating it into Dreamweaver.

About Spacer GIFs.

An 'image' spacer is a 1 pixel by 1 pixel transparent gif that is re-sized in order to force the width of a column or height of a row. Irrespective of any content present, the column or row will maintain the dimensions forced by the gif. The advantage of this is that you can use the same gif for all your pages – the dimensions are controlled within the HTML of the individual page.

All that remains to do now is populate the table with content.

4. Inserting Content (Text & Images)

Content. Now there's a word for all you budding web designers to conjure with. Content can be anything from text, through forms and graphics to photographs to flash animations. It also includes streaming media, MP3 files and almost anything else you can think of. But remember, **less is more** – especially with the King's house style.

Text

Tip

Page Preview

If you hit the F12 key on your keypad you will be able to preview the page you are working on. Notice that despite what you see in the design view, the table is invisible.

Text is made up of a series of words made up of font styles and font sizes. OK, so you knew that. But text comes in all shapes and sizes – especially on the web. It's quite a strange phenomenon that, given a folder full of different font styles, most people lose their usual reserve and reason. It seems like anything goes. Well, take my word for it – it doesn't. Apart from the fact that there are very few font styles that will render correctly in a browser, it's worth remembering that unless a font style is actually installed on the visitors' computer, it will not display on your web page. Instead, your browser will find a font that it thinks is similar. Inevitably your page will end up looking nothing like you intended. So, choose a font that is guaranteed to be resident on almost every computer (Dreamweaver thoughtfully groups them together for your convenience, in the Properties panel),

What makes some people think that green text on a grey background is cool is a mystery to others and completely invisible to some colour blind people. In saying this I am assuming that the majority of people who publish information

on the web actually want someone out there to read and understand what they have painstakingly created.

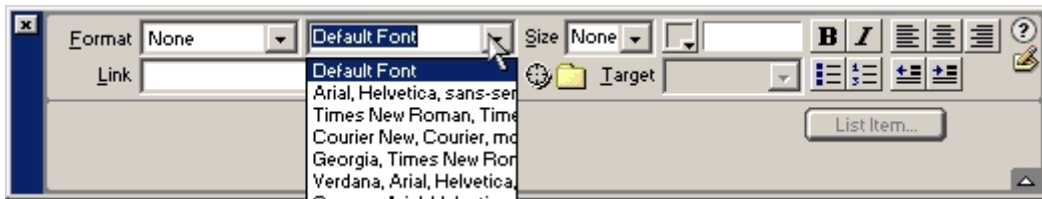


Fig. 9 The Fonts List

Use the Font drop down menu to view the fonts list and choose Arial, Helvetica, sans serif.

Tip

Comic Sans – everyone’s favourite font style. It’s fun and it’s funky. Well, actually it’s unprofessional looking, but if you want people to think the person who created your site is aged 8, go ahead.



So, let's keep it nice and simple and in keeping with the rest of the site. In any event, never use more than three font styles in a site and try not to use too many different font sizes. Do not use italics. The smaller sizes are almost impossible to read on LCD monitors. If you need to enhance a word or sentence try bolding it instead. Never use bolding and capital letters at the same time. This is over egging the pudding as my Grandmother used to say. Go easy on coloured text. You wouldn't use it for your CV, so why use it in a web page.

So, enough of the don'ts, let's look at some of the do's.

Manipulating text in Dreamweaver is very similar to using any decent word processing software. Apart from font styles and sizes, which I've mentioned above, you can spell check, find and replace, insert special characters, use numbered lists and bulleted lists.

Placing images and text in your web page.

There are a number of ways to put text into your web page using Dreamweaver. You can copy some text from another program and paste it directly into the Dreamweaver window, you can convert a word processing or text document into HTML and then open it in Dreamweaver or, most simply, you can just type text directly into the Dreamweaver window.

Tip

The whole text affair can be controlled with **Cascading Style Sheets**, but more on this later.

Exercise 4

Using the table that you created earlier in index.html, use the split view to watch the HTML code being generated:

- Drag across the first and second left column in the middle row so that the two cells are highlighted. (Fig. 10)

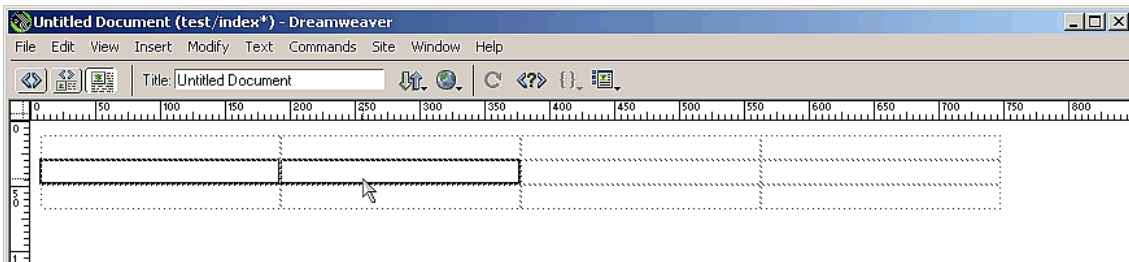


Fig. 10


In the bottom left of the Property Inspector you will notice the word **cell**. Below this you will see a small icon for **merge cells**. (Fig .11)



Fig. 11 Properties panel

- Click this button to merge the cells.
- Place your cursor in the top right hand cell.
- In the Properties Palette click into the W box and enter 100 (This will prevent this column from collapsing whilst you work with the table).
- Drag over the first and second left column in the bottom row and merge them also.

On your **floppy disk** you will find a text document – **chancery_lane.txt** and a photographic image – **chancery.jpg**

- Place your cursor in this new **middle left** hand cell and choose **Insert > Image**, or click the insert image icon  from the Objects Palette.
- Navigate to your **floppy disk** and choose **chancery.jpg**
- You will now be asked if you want to copy this image to the root folder of your site. Choose **yes**.
- Navigate to your root folder and then to the **images** folder.
- Click **Save**.

You will now see the image displayed in the table cell.

You will also see in the Properties Inspector a **thumbnail** and the properties of your image - the size in **bytes**, the dimensions in **pixels** and the **source** of the image (i.e., where it is saved in the local root).

With the image selected, notice the **Alt** box on the right of the Properties Inspector (Fig.12). This is known in HTML as the **Alt Tag**.

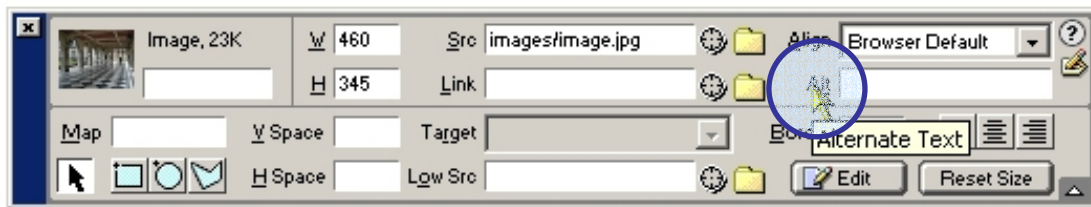


Fig. 12

Type in a familiar title for the image – in this case, **Chancery Lane**

Now, **save** this page and then preview it in the browser. In the browser window, hover your mouse pointer over the image...what do you see?

Adding Text

- Place your cursor in the **top left** hand cell.
- Navigate to your floppy disk and open **text.txt**
- Highlight the title – **Chancery Lane Library Opens to Students**
- Go back to your Dreamweaver page and **paste** the text into the top left hand cell.
- In your **text document**, highlight the **body text** and **copy** it.
- In Dreamweaver, place your cursor in the **right hand** cell and **paste** the text.
- Don't panic.
- Place your cursor into the top right hand cell and clear the value in the Properties palette.
- Hit the return key – the text will now spread out, but will still look wrong.
- Place your cursor in the cell that contains the image – you might find this easier if you highlight the image itself and then hit the **'end'** key.

Tip

Alt Tags are not only useful for identifying images in a browser but are essential for **'text to speech'** software that **'reads'** web pages to those with **impaired sight**.

- In the properties palette, click on the **Vert** drop-down menu at the **bottom left** and choose **Middle**. Your image will now move to the middle of the cell.

You will see that the body of the text takes up more space than the image.

- Now we need to cut and paste the text into the individual cells, merging them where necessary, until the text is balanced with the image.

You will notice that everything seems close together, with no margins or spacing.

- Select the table by hovering your mouse over the outside border of the table until the mouse pointer changes to a double arrow and click.
- The table boundary will have become emboldened. This shows that it is now selected.
- In the properties palette click on the Cell Pad box

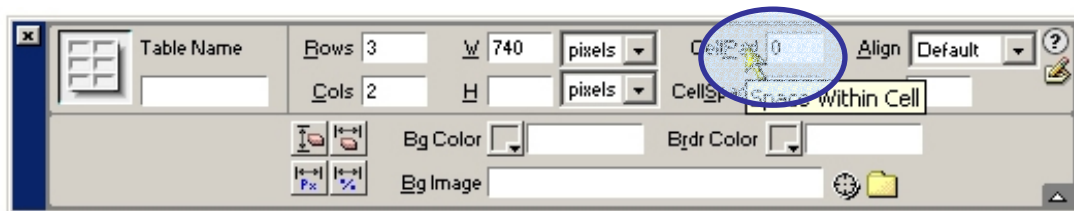


Fig 13.

- Type in **5** to give the cell a padding of five pixels

Again, everything will move to reflect the new table setting. Now, you need to format your text.

- Highlight the title.
- In the **Properties** palette use the **font drop down menu** and choose the font group **Arial**.
- Also, choose **size 4**.
- Highlight the rest of the text, **cell by cell** and choose the same font group for each.
- Choose font **size 2** for each.
- Click **outside** the table to see the effects of your changes.
- **Preview** the page in your browser.

Looks better already.

Information

The most important element of Hypertext Transfer Protocol – the http bit at the beginning of web URLs – is the word hypertext.

Careful with that link!!

Why not use the whole URL every time? Well, it's simple really. Dreamweaver can keep track of all your relative links and make sure that they are always OK. (It also saves time typing in all that http://www malarkey and it cuts down on the chances of you making a mistake.)

5. Creating and checking links

A hyperlink or simply a link is a pointer from one web page to another. The page that contains the link is called the referring page and the destination of the link is called the target.

Types of Links

You need to be aware of the different types of path names that you can use to link one document to another on the Internet. There are four different kinds that you can use.

- **Absolute pathnames** (<http://www.kcl.ac.uk/index.html>) points to a location on the Internet that is outside the site currently being viewed.
- **Document-relative pathnames** ([index.html](#), [../contacts.html](#)) point from the current page to another document within the same site, using dots and slashes to tell the browser when to look in other directories to find the page. You can link from one document to another without using the full URL (<http://www.blahblahblah.com>) Dreamweaver will keep track of what it all means and make sure that your links are correct when you update your site, so long as you make these changes in Dreamweaver.

Remember.

You can create several types of links in a web page:

- A link to **another page, document or file**
- A **'named'** link to another part of the **same page**
- An **email** link
- A link to another **web site**

- **Site-root-relative pathnames** ([/contacts.html](#)) also point from the current document to another within the same site. Instead of using dots and slashes to indicate the location of the document, the browser starts at the home directory and looks for the page from there. In a large site that might be modified outside Dreamweaver, these site-root relative links will still be correct, even if the page is moved.
- **Named anchors** ([#top](#)) link to a point within a page either the same page or to specific location on another page ([../contacts.html#theboss](#)).

Making links

Making links in Dreamweaver is so easy you could almost do it with your eyes closed. The Property Inspector will enable you to put your links just where you want them, and I mean RIGHT where you want them, so be careful what you highlight when you're putting your links in.

Using Dreamweaver, there are several ways to create links:

- Use the site map window to view, change or create links.
- Use **Modify > Make Link** to select a file to link to.
- Use the **Selection Properties** box to link to a file, by using the folder icon to browse to and select a file, using the **point to file** icon to select a file or by typing in the file path.

To make a text link

Remember to be intuitive when creating text links. Click here to go to blah, blah might sound OK but what do you click, the word here or the whole sentence? It's generally not a good idea to hyperlink more than a couple of words. Apart from anything else if the hypertext is set to be underlined and is a different colour to the rest of the text, it will look horrible.

Example:

[Click here to go to our interactive web site where you can see up-to-minute details of vacancies, the skills required and then apply on-line.](#)

A better solution would be to be a bit more literal. So..

Click [here](#) to go to our interactive web site where you can see up-to-minute details of vacancies, the skills required and then apply on-line.

Link colours

Link colours are part of Page Properties. You can specify the colours of links in order to match the rest of the document or to contrast with the rest of the document. The colour you choose should make the text remain obvious. After all, you don't want visited links to suddenly disappear after you've clicked on them. It is worth remembering though, that these colours can be overridden by users' individual settings on their local machines. This may discourage you from bothering to specify link colours in the first place.

..looks much better, don't you think?

Highlight the text that you would like to make a link from. Obvious examples are home, contacts, etc.. Links to other websites can also be accessed via text. In the Properties Inspector click inside the **link** box and type in the URL. If this is an external website remember to include the **http://** part of the address otherwise the link wont work. If you are linking to another page within the same website click on the little **folder icon** next to the link box and navigate to the file that you want to link to. Dreamweaver will automatically create the correct **relative** link, which you will be able to see in the link box when you click **select**.

Exercise 5

- Highlight The beginning of the **first** paragraph – **King's College London** and create a link to the King's website

Linking to a 'named' anchor

This is very useful for navigating a long page of information or a particular point in another page. Placing a named anchor at a strategic point in a document allows the visitor to take a 'short-cut' and quickly move to that point.

Exercise 6

To create a 'named' anchor

- In the document window, place the cursor where you want the anchor. In this case to the left of the title.
- Click on **Insert > Invisible Tags > Named Anchor**.
- In the **Anchor Field** type in the name for your anchor. Make it a name that **reminds** you of the anchor point. In this case call it **top**. You may have several anchors and it is essential to be able to distinguish between

them. The anchor marker should appear at the insertion point. If it doesn't, choose **View > Invisible Elements**.

To link to a 'Named Anchor'

- In the **Document Window** select the text or image to create a link from.
- In the **Link field** of the Selection Properties box, type a cross-hatch (#) followed by the name of the anchor. For example:
- To link to an anchor named 'top' in the current document, type **#top**.
- To link to an anchor named top in a different page in the same folder (i.e., the same section of the site) type **filename.html#top**.

To link to a named anchor using the 'point to file' method

- Choose **View > Visual Aids > Invisible Elements** to make the anchor visible.
- Select the text or image in the document window.
- Click the **'point to file'** icon to the right of the Link field in the Selection Properties box and drag to the anchor that you want to link to; either an anchor within the same document window or in another open document window.

Exercise 7

Creating an email link

Clicking an email link opens a **new message window** (using the default email programme on the users computer). In the email message window the **To** field is automatically completed with the address specified in the email link.

To create an email link using the Insert Email Link command

- We will use **Arthur Lucas** in the last paragraph to create an **email link**
- In the Document Window, position the cursor where you want the email link to appear, or select the text that you want to act as the email link.

- Choose **Insert > Email Link** or click on the email button on the Objects palette.
- In the text field of the Insert Email Link dialogue box type or edit the text, as you want it to appear in the document.
- In the Email field, type in the **email address** that you want mail to be sent to.
- Click OK.

To create an email link using the Properties Inspector

- Select the text that you want to act as the email link.
- In the Link field of the **Properties Inspector**, type in **mailto:** followed by the appropriate email address.

Checking your links

Checking links is also very easy in using Dreamweaver. This is why the cache (that should have been created when you defined your site) comes into its own.

Exercise 8

Choose **File > Check Links** and Dreamweaver will check all the links on that page. If there are any that are broken it will not only let you know, but will also highlight the broken link in the HTML view.

Bear in mind that only the links on your hard drive will be checked, so you might get a report back that says you have some broken links. These will be external links and should be checked when you publish your pages on the server.

Remember; always check your links when they have been uploaded.

There's many a slip twixt cup and lip..