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## TABLES

The basic layout of almost all HTML web pages is controlled using tables. Dreamweaver makes table creation easier and much less time consuming than hand coding.

### **BASIC TABLE CREATION RULES**

There are a few rules that, if followed, will make your table building life much happier.

1. Columns width needs to be the same *all the way down*. You can't have a cell one width and the cell above or below it a different width. This is a basic rule of HTML.

The problem is that Dreamweaver will allow you to manually input different widths for different cells in a the same column. Don't do it. The browser will freak out when it tries to open your page.

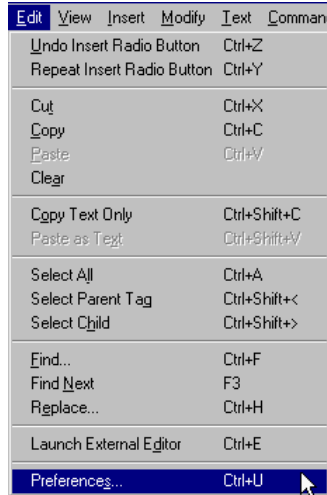
I've found that this is the biggest error Dreamweaver newbies make when building tables. If your tables are freaking out, click in each cell in each column. Make sure they either have the same width, or no width at all.

2. Read rule number one again. It's an important one.
3. If things get complicated, use nested tables instead of merging cells. A nested table is a table kept in another table. Nested tables are much easier to deal with than merged cells.
4. Draw your table by hand before attempting to build it in Dreamweaver. Adding or removing cells and rows can sometimes be problematic after tables start getting complicated.

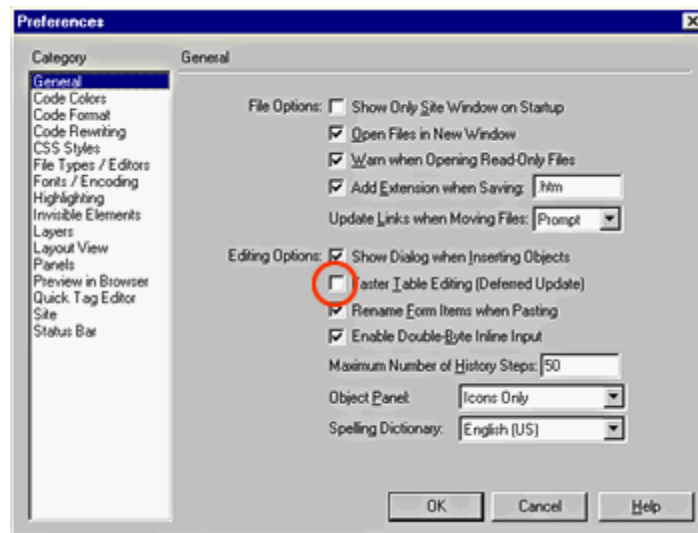
### **Really Important Thing to do First**

Dreamweaver uses, by default, a feature called faster table editing. The feature requires Dreamweaver to wait until you save or click out of the table before it will show you structural changes you've made. The idea is that your computer might not be fast enough to display the changes right away. This feature really messes beginners up, and besides, computers are plenty fast enough to show changes. It's areally good idea to shut this feature off. Go To:

## EDIT-> PREFERENCES



The "Preferences" menu will display. Take the check **OUT** of **Faster Table Editing**.



## Building Tables in Dreamweaver

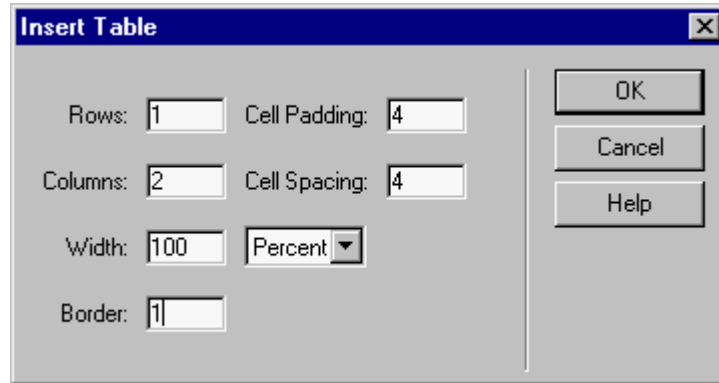
To insert a table in Dreamweaver:

Click **INSERT -> TABLE**

The Insert Table window will open. You can set the number of rows and columns, Cell Spacing and Padding in pixels, the table width in percent or pixels, and the border width in pixels.

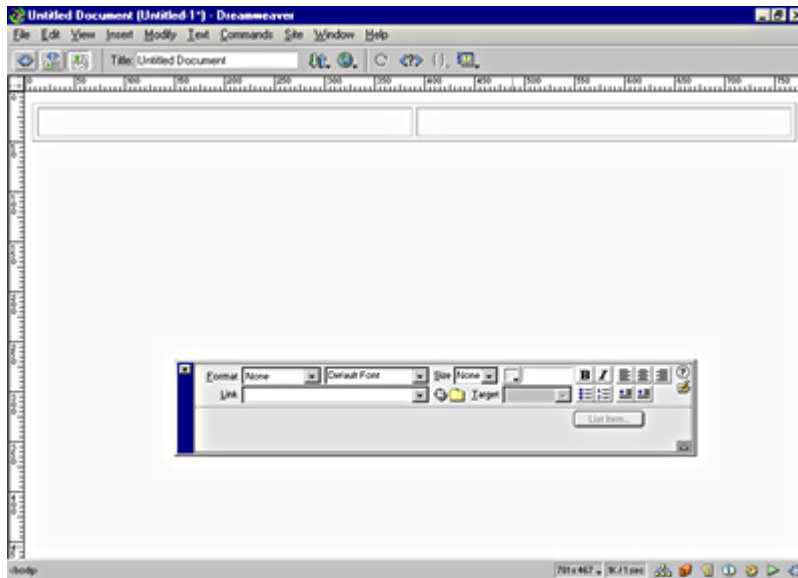
If you choose a border width of "0", Dreamweaver will still show you a line, but it'll be gone in the browser.

**\*\* IMPORTANT:** A blank window field in Dreamweaver does not mean "0". A blank window field means "use the HTML default". For example, if you leave the Cell Padding window blank, Dreamweaver will automatically use cellpadding=4. If you want "0", you'll have to insert "0".



1. Fill in the Insert Table window with the above values.
2. Hit **OK**

Your table will insert!



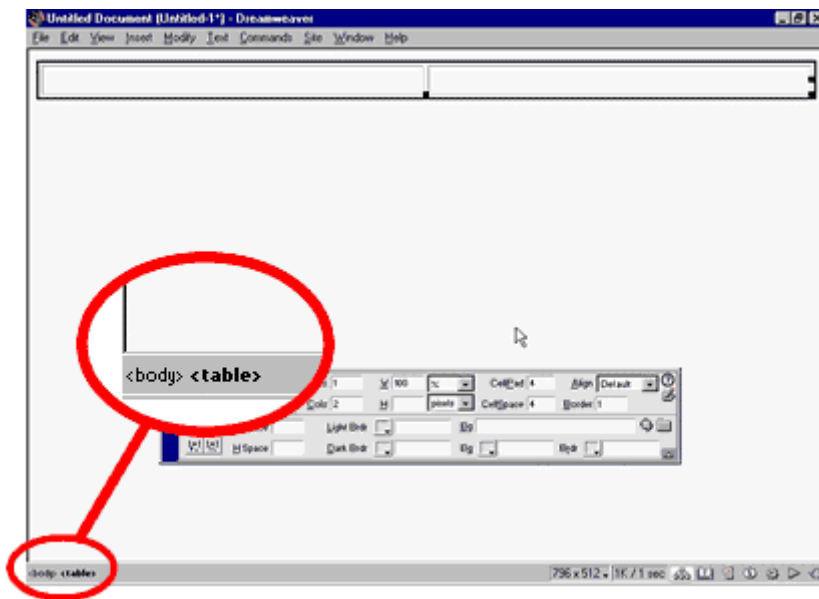
3. Click inside the first cell and type your name. Notice that the cell stretches. We haven't set it's width yet.

4. Make sure the Properties Palette is open. (WINDOW-> PROPERTIES)



Right now, the Properties Palette is displaying information for the cell you just clicked in. Sometimes it is hard to tell what area of the table the Properties inspector thinks you are editing. There is an easy way to select different parts of a table and to determine what part of the table is selected.

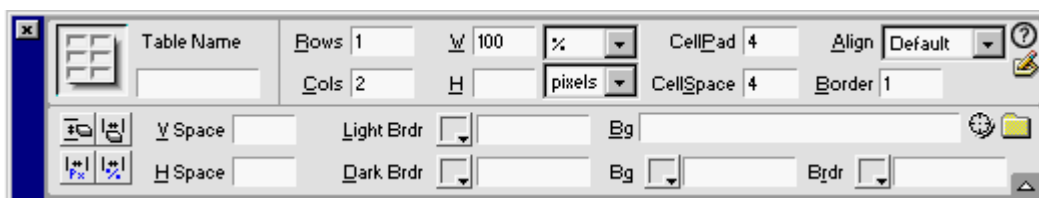
5. When editing a table: In the lower left corner of the Dreamweaver window you will see different table tags, like <TD> <TR> and <TABLE>



By clicking the appropriate tag, you can select the desired table area.

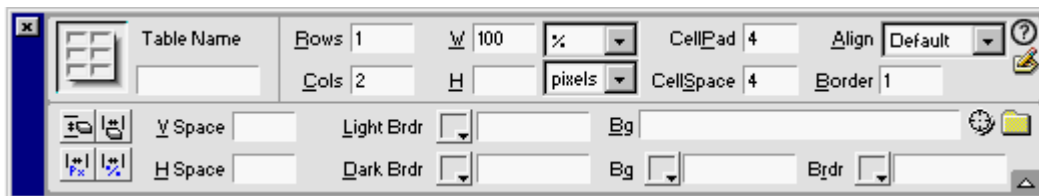
6. Click **<table>**

You will notice that the Properties Palette changes to display table attributes.



Later, when you start nesting tables, it will be much easier to accurately select elements using the table selector in the lower left corner of the Dreamweaver window.

## Changing Table Attributes



**The following are table attributes you can change on the top row of the Properties Palette:**

Change the settings to see what happens. Have fun. You can't hurt anything. If you're really worried you can set them back to what they used to be.

**Rows:** The total number of rows in the table

**Cols:** The total number of Columns in the table

**W:** Table width, in pixels or %

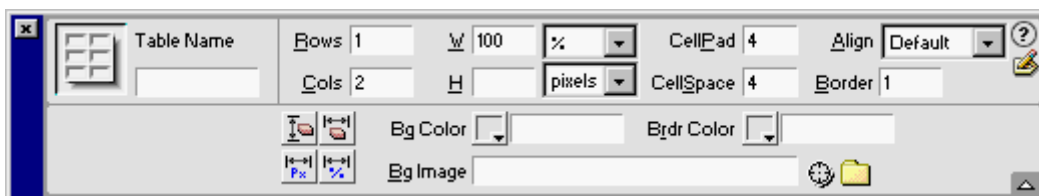
**H:** Table height, in pixels or %

**CellPad:** Cell padding for the table. Cell padding is the space between each cell wall and the cell's contents

**CellSpace:** Cell Spacing for the table. Cell Spacing is the space in pixels between each cell.

**Align:** The table's alignment relative to the page.

**Border:** The table border in pixels.



**The following are table attributes you can change on the bottom row of the Properties Palette:**



**Clear Column/Row heights/widths:** these buttons can be used to clear out all the Column and row settings if your table gets seriously messed up. You'll have to re-input your width and height values, but at least you won't have to rebuild the whole table. This button is for bad little Dreamweaver users who ignored the rule about keeping your column widths the same all the way down.



**Change Pixels to Percent / Percent to Pixels:** These buttons convert percentage based tables to pixel and vice versa. Not the most useful button

**Vspace:** (Vertical Space) Space between the table and anything above or below it.

**Hspace:** (Horizontal Space) Space between the table and anything to the left or right of it.

**Light Brdr / Dark Brdr:** (Light & Dark Cell Borders) In each cell the top and left border is darker to create a slight shadow. You can change these colors. Clever designers sometimes match one color to the background color to create an accent.

**Bg:** You can set a background color or image. Note that Netscape will not support table background images.

**Brdr:** You can set the outside border color for the table here. If you want all the borders in the site to change you'll have to adjust the cell border colors, too.

7. Build a 100% table with the following attributes:  
3 rows, 4 columns, and a red 1 pixel border

## Changing Cell Attributes

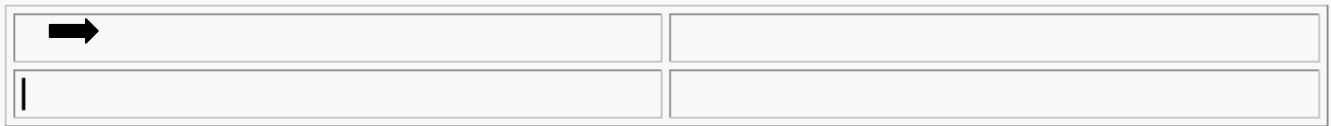
### Selecting Multiple Cells

By selecting multiple cells you can apply the same formatting to many cells at the same time.

To select multiple cells:

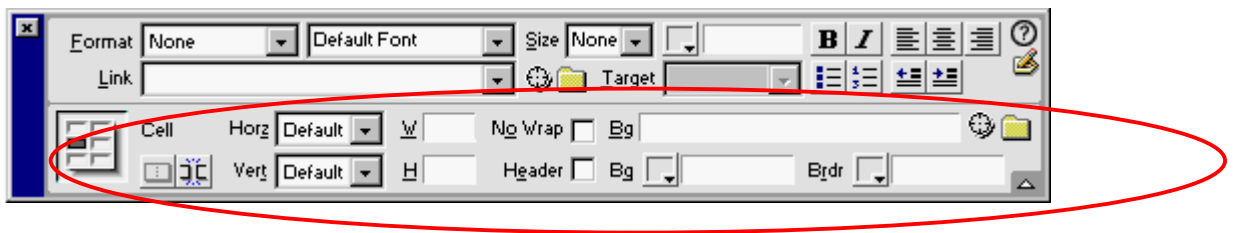
- \* **Click and drag** over the cells you want to select
- \* **CTRL+Click or CMD+Click**

- \* **Shift+Click.** If you click one cell and then shift+click another Dreamweaver will select both cells *and any cells in-between*
- \* **Select a whole row or column:** If place your cursor directly to the right of any row or directly above any column, your cursor will become a black arrow. Click, and the whole row/column will become selected.



## Editing Cell Properties with the Properties Palette

1. Click a cell. Notice that the Properties palette changes to display changeable values for the cell. The top row of the Properties palette is for text in the cell. Each cell is treated like it's own little page. You'll have to reset your font formatting.



### The following are cell attributes you can change on the Properties Palette:



**Merge/Split Cells:** To merge or split cells using ROWSPAN and CELLSPAN, select the cells to merge/split and click this button. Remember that for complicated tables you are much better off nesting tables than merging/splitting cells.

\*\*NOTE you must select multiple cells to merge cells.

**Horz:** (Horizontal cell alignment) Horizontally aligns text in a cell

**Vert:** (Vertical Cell Alignment) Vertically aligns text in a cell. Remember that text lines up to the middle of a cell by default.

**W:** Cell Width. If you want %, you'll have to manually add the %. Leave this attribute blank if you want the column to resize itself automatically based on the screen size.

\*\*\*NOTE: You're better off setting width before you put text in the cells.

**H:** Cell Height. You can set a cell's height, but it is usually best not to mess with height. The cell may need to re-size depending on the viewer's monitor settings.

**Bg:** You can set a background color or image for each cell. Cell background colors and images supercede table colors or images.

**Bdr:** Border color for individual cells.

2. See if you can build the following table:



### Using Spacer Images

Images will stretch a cell if the image is larger than the cell. This can be useful because a column will collapse if it has nothing in it. You can use a transparent gif, called a spacer image or shim, to keep a column from collapsing. Properly sized, a gif will hold a cell open to the image's height or width. You will learn how to make a transparent gif later on. Right now, you can get one here:

<http://www.awdsf.com/courseware/images/shim.htm>

Go get it!

The gif is only one pixel square. This is the smallest file you can make. After inserting the gif, you can immediately resize it using HEIGHT and WIDTH.

1. Insert the gif into a cell.
2. Resize the gif to **H:200**

**\*\*You are better off setting either height or width, but not both. Netscape shows a stupid graphic surrounded by a box while loading images. The graphic is confusing and looks bad, but users can't see the graphic if it's only 1 pixel high (or wide)**



Stupid Netscape Loading Image

## Nested Tables

Remember that you will use nested tables to make complicated tables easier. Most people have a pretty hard time hand coding nested tables in HTML, but Dreamweaver makes nesting tables incredibly easy.

## To Create a Nested Table in Dreamweaver

1. Click inside a cell
2. Click **INSERT-> TABLE**

## Selecting What You Want to Select

Selecting an entire nested table can sometimes get tricky. Remember that you have the table tags in the lower left hand corner of the Dreamweaver window.

To select the following red bordered nested table:

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You would click the nested `<table>` tag in the below example. Notice that there are two table tags. The first one is for the main table.



## Creating Tables Using the Table Layout View

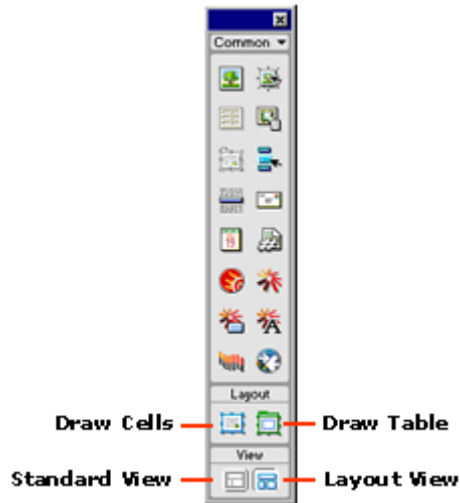
Dreamweaver 4 has a new feature that allows you to draw tables in what it calls *Layout View*. Although drawing tables is easy, you still have to understand standard table view to correctly use Dreamweaver.


To open Table Layout View, Click:

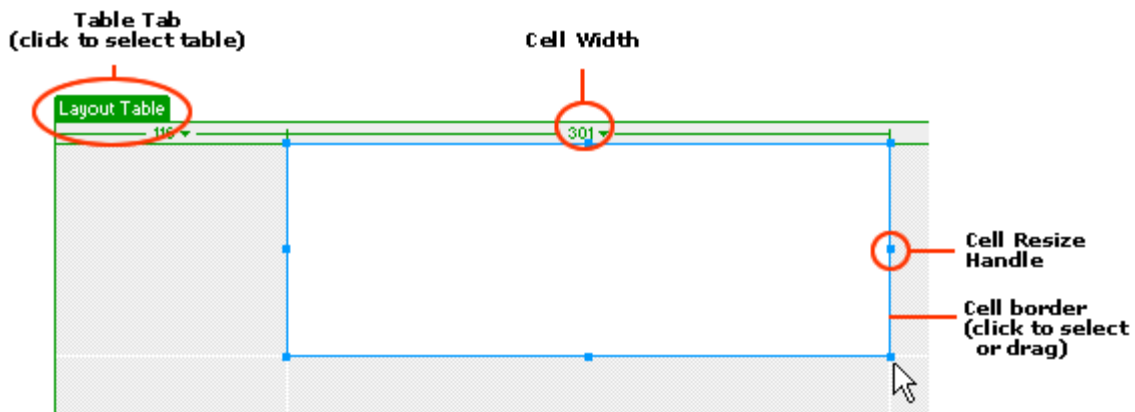
**VIEW-> TABLE VIEW-> LAYOUT VIEW**

(An annoying pop-up will open. You can close it)

When you enter into Layout View, you'll notice that the Objects Pallet automatically opened. At the bottom of the Objects Palette are the buttons that you'll use to control building tables in Layout View.



**Draw Cells:**  Draw cells is the most useful button. You can just, well, draw cells. It is unnecessary to draw a table first. When you draw a cell, Dreamweaver automatically draws a table. The table height look too large at first, but the table will resize to fit any cells you draw.



After you draw a cell you can resize it by dragging it's handles or changing the width and height on the Properties Inspector.

Hold **Ctrl/Cmd** to draw multiple cells.

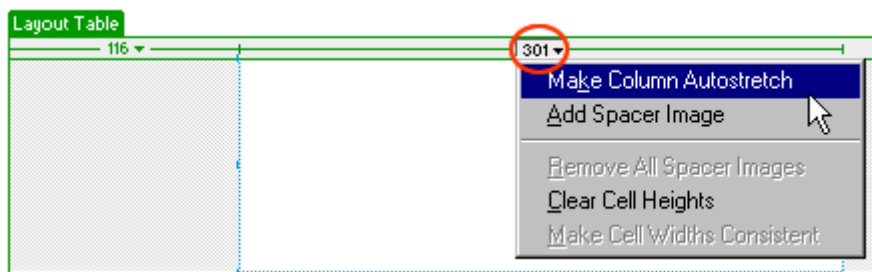
**Draw Layout Table** 

Dreamweaver will automatically create a table when you first begin drawing cells, but if you want to nest tables, you'll have to use the Draw Layout Table button to draw them.

### Setting a Column to Automatically Resize

Setting a column to automatically stretch on larger monitors is easy in Layout Mode. First you must make sure that the column is a single column all the way down. If the column is part of a merged cell, or if a merged cell intersects the column, it will not resize correctly.

Simply click on the column width pull-down and choose **Make Column Autostretch**.



Dreamweaver will want to insert a **spacer image** in the remaining cells to insure that they hold their correct size. Go ahead and let it.

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## ADVANCED BUTTONS

We've already learned how to make a simple button; you insert an image and attach a link to it. But what about all those fancy buttons you see on the web like rollovers, pull down menus, and image maps? Dreamweaver can do those, too! It's easy. Dreamweaver will even help you build navigation menus.

Well, lets get to it!

### Image Maps

You can define click-able areas on an image. Any single image may have more than one click-able area, each area linking to a different page. Coordinates laid out on the image define the click-able sections. The click-able coordinates make a map of sorts; that map is called an "Image Map". Image maps are almost impossible to accurately define when hand coding, but Dreamweaver makes them easy.

#### To Make an Image Map:

1. First you'll need an image. You can use the Academy of Web Design SF sample image map image at:

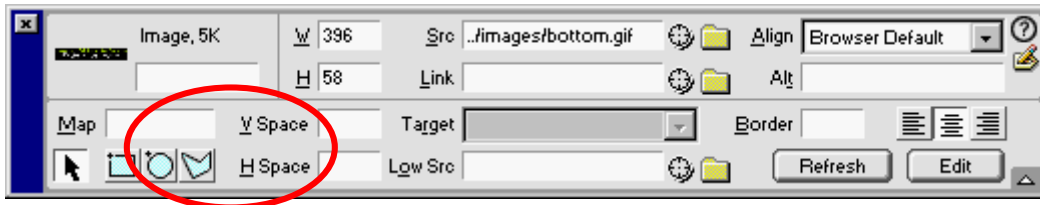
[www.awdsf.com/downloads/sample\\_buttons.htm](http://www.awdsf.com/downloads/sample_buttons.htm)






The above image is one file, but we will create an image map that will allow users to click on "Academy of Web Design" to go to the school's homepage. If they click on the e-mail address they'll activate a mail link.

2. Insert the Image

3. Look at the Properties palette. It should be displaying images properties. If it's not, click the image to activate the image properties. The image map buttons are in the lower left corner of the Properties inspector.



4. To draw a click-able area, select the shape that you wish to draw. Click the shape, then click and drag over the desired image map area.

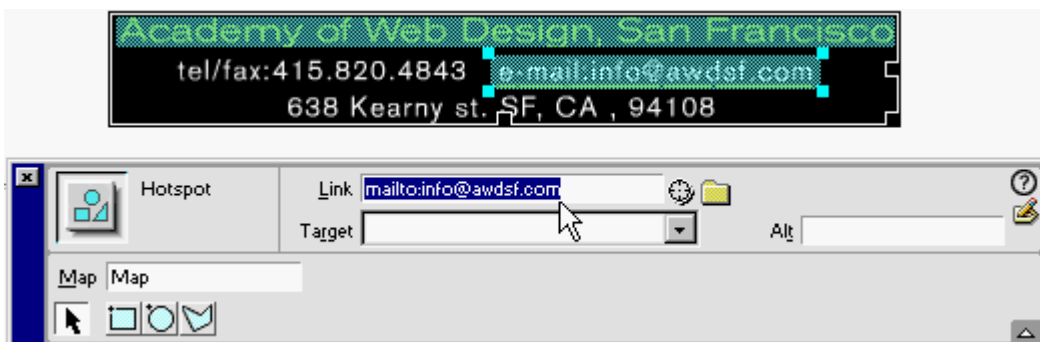
-  Draws rectangle image map areas.
-  Draws circular image map areas.
-  Draws irregular shapes. Click to add a point. Click to add another point. Double click when finished.

5. Draw rectangular shapes over "Academy of Web Design, San Francisco" and "david@awdsf.com"



Take care not to overlap the images map areas.

6. Click a green image map area and define the link for that area in the properties inspector. Then define the other areas.



You can have as many image maps as you want on one image.

## Rollover Buttons

You've all seen rollover buttons on the web. You move your mouse over a button and it starts glowing or changes in some way. Rollover buttons are actually made of more than one image. When you rollover the first image, the button is switched to a totally different image. If it looks like the button is glowing, it's because the computer is switching the buttons out so quickly that you can't tell. You only see the differences between the two images.

Rollover buttons are made using JavaScript, which Dreamweaver will happily create for you.

### To Create a Rollover Button

1. You'll need two images of the same size. One should differ from the other in some way. You'll use one image for the button's "up" stage, and one for the "over" stage. Don't insert them on the screen yet, just make sure they're in your root folder.

If you need buttons you can get samples at:

[www.awdsf.com/downloads/sample\\_buttons.htm](http://www.awdsf.com/downloads/sample_buttons.htm)



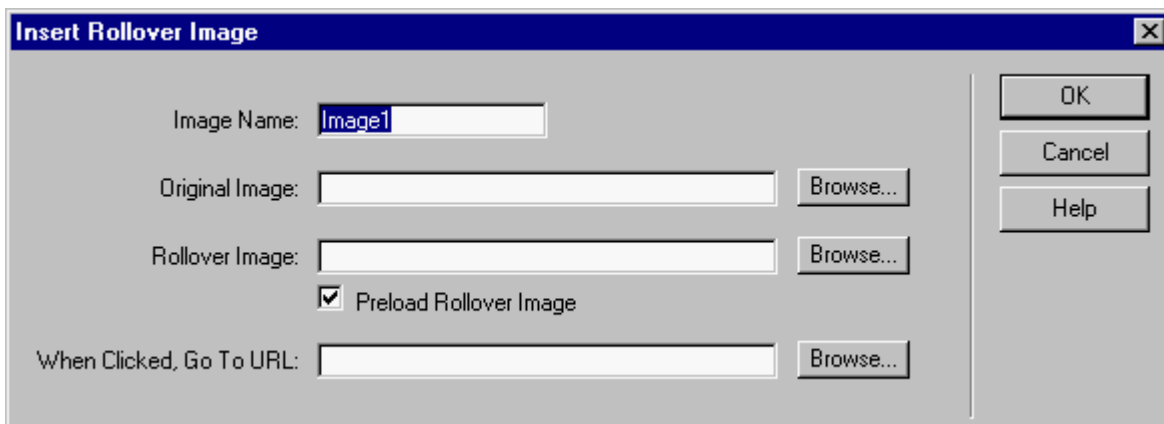
button\_up



button\_over

2. Click **INSERT-> INTERACTIVE IMAGES-> ROLLOVER IMAGE**

The Dreamweaver "Insert Rollover" window should pop up:



3. Click **Browse** to choose the original, or *up*, image

4. Click **Browse** to choose the image to choose the *Rollover Image*. The Rollover image will display when a user rolls over your button.
5. Click **Browse** to choose which page to link to when your button is clicked.
6. Make sure **Preload Rollover Image** is checked. If your page doesn't preload rollover images it'll try to load them at the instant a user rolls over your button. Even high-speed users will experience jerky load times.
7. You don't have to worry about the **Image Name**. Some advanced JavaScript functions require a name, but in those cases, the name that Dreamweaver assigns will do fine.
8. Hit **OK**. Then hit **F12** to preview in the browser. Roll over your image!

Check your HTML code. Look at all that JavaScript!

### **Using Animated GIFs with Rollover Images**

Animated GIFs are basically a number of images thrown together to approximate motion. The nice thing about an animated GIF is that the separate images are nicely wrapped in one file. You can freely use animated GIFs in any state of a rollover button.

### **Automatically Inserting Flash Buttons**

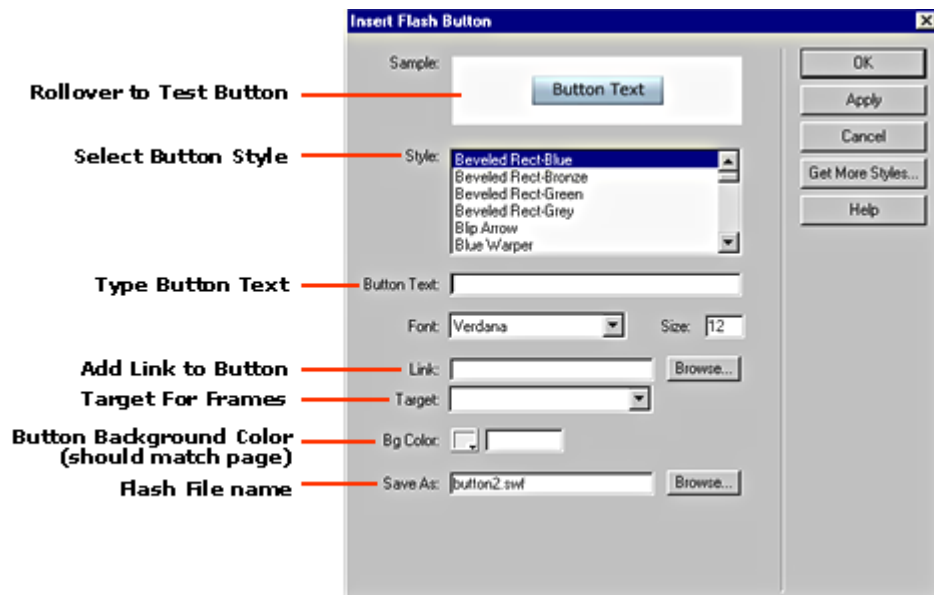
Dreamweaver 4 gives you the ability to automatically insert buttons made with Macromedia Flash. I'm not in love with this feature for a couple of reasons:

- \* Flash requires a plug-in to be viewed. Dreamweaver does not set up a good script to automatically detect the Flash plug-in when you insert a Flash button. This could leave many of your viewers with buttons they can't see. During the Flash section, you will learn about scripts that you can use to detect the Flash Player
- \* The buttons that come with Dreamweaver are by and large ugly. Most of them don't have any special Flash animation, and could have just as easily been made with animated GIFs.

The Flash buttons do give you the ability to use the same button over and over with a different label, which is kind of nice...

## To Insert Flash Buttons

Click **INSERT-> INTERACTIVE IMAGES-> FLASH BUTTON**



Once inserted, you can double click the button if you need to edit it.

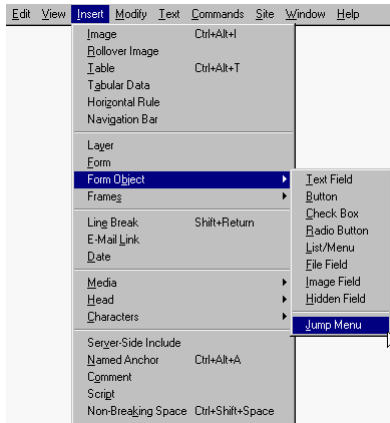
## Pull-Down Jump Menus

A Pull-down jump menu is a normal pull down list that links users to a page when they make a choice. Jump menus can save screen space and remove clutter. Studies have also shown that people are more likely to find what they're looking for on a large site if they are lead through well-labeled jump menus.

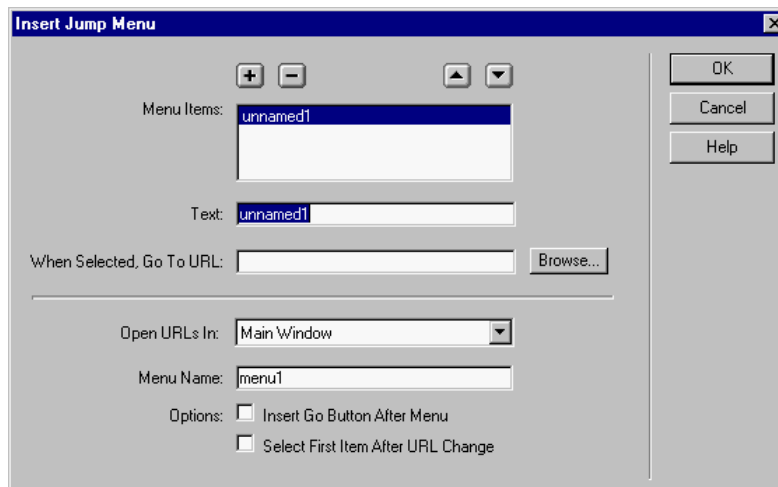
Dreamweaver is kind of weird in the way it makes you build a jump menu. It takes advantage of the fact that forms already have pull down menus, and so to create a jump menu, Dreamweaver has you build a form, and insert the jump-menu in the form area. Don't worry too much about building the form. We'll be building Internet commerce forms soon enough. The jump menu is really simple.

## To Build a Jump Menu


1. Click **INSERT-> FORM OBJECT-> JUMP MENU**



The Jump Menu Window should pop-up:



### To Use The Insert Jump Menu Window:

1. Click in "Text". Whatever you type in this field will appear on the screen
2. Click Browse or fill in a URL to jump to when your choice is selected.
3. Hit the  to add the menu choice
4. Add another choice.
5. Hit OK when done.

The red dotted lines on the screen show where the <formset> tags are active.