

File Names

In order to prevent any problems with your web site it is useful to follow these rules when naming your site files:

1. Length – Your filenames should not exceed 8 letters in length
2. Spaces – Do not have any spaces in your filenames
3. Capitals – Do not use capital letters in your filenames
4. Numbers – Do not use a number as the first character in your file names

Site Creation Preparation

1. Create your site folder
2. Create your images sub-folder in the web site folder
3. Create the images you will need and copy them into the images folder.

Netscape Composer

To run Netscape Composer

Start – Programs – Netscape – Composer

Or use the icon in the bottom left of the Navigator window.

In Netscape Composer, the tabs in the bottom left of the screen are important. The two tabs you will be using are the Normal and the Preview tabs.



Normal View – This is the standard page creation and edit view

Preview – Selecting this tab will show you what your web page will look like as viewed through a web browser

Starting off

To Create a New Page – Select File Menu>New>Composer Page

To Save the Page - Select File Menu>Save as...**NB Watch where you're saving files**

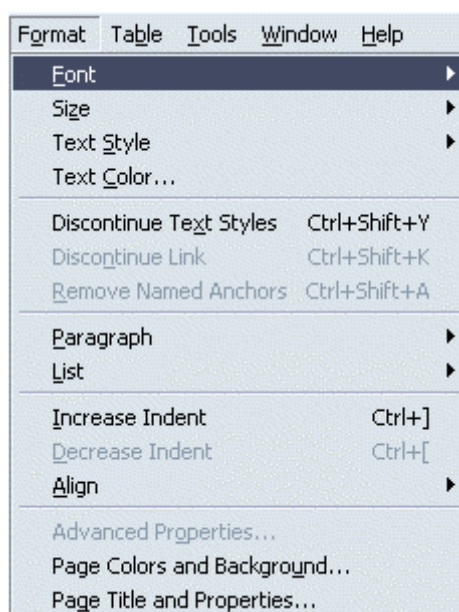
To Close the Page - Select File Menu>Close.

Page Colours and Background

Once you have created your first blank page, you can begin constructing it. The first thing to do however is to set up the page properties such as:

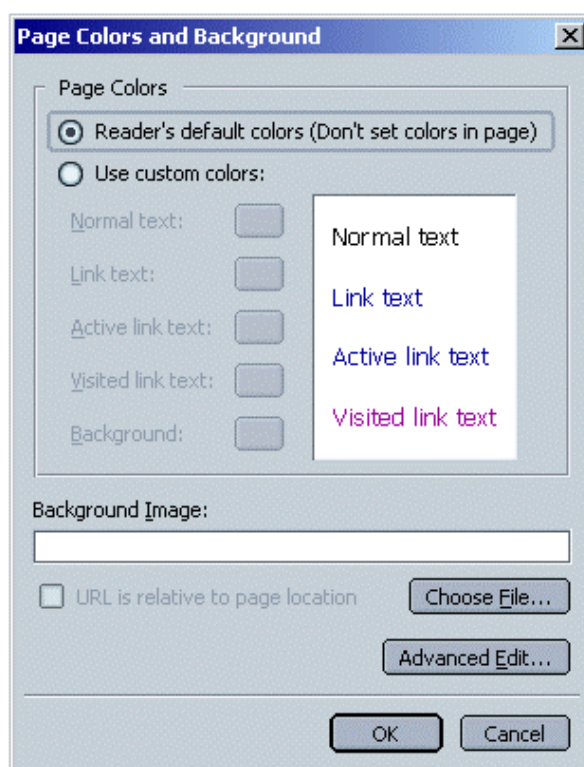
- Title in the Browser window - Page Title
- Page background colour or image
- Text and link colours

These features are found in the Format menu.



Page Colours and Background

This box allows you to set the background properties of the page. It can be a colour or an image. In this example we will set a background colour.



First select Use Custom Colours, and then click on the box next to the Background (by default this will be white). A grid of colours will appear. Select one, click on OK and your page should change colour.



Background Image

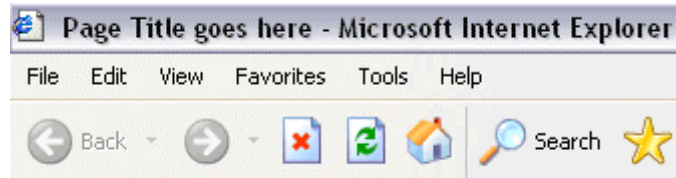
You can use an image as a background to the page. There are implications for doing this:

- Will the image take more time to download?
- Will the background image obscure the text or content?

Test this feature by opening the Page Colours and Background box and selecting *Browse*. **Locate the site folder you have been given and enter the background subfolder. Select one of the files there and see the effect on your web page.**

Page Title

Each web page needs a title. This appears in the very top left of the browser window and helps to brand the site and give some basic information to the user.



There is also the ability to enter a description of what the site contains. This will not appear to anyone visiting the site but will appear in Search Engines. The description is a useful tool in assisting in people searching for and selecting your site.

In the Format menu, select Page Title and Properties.

This box is straightforward. Just fill in the information, as it is relevant to you. Make the Page Title fairly descriptive, for example more than just one word.

Saving and Previewing Web Pages

It is important to view your web page, as it will appear in a browser regularly throughout the design process. Netscape Composer makes this process easy. If you look at the bottom left hand corner of the screen you will see a row of tabs:



Normal: This is your basic design view and is used when you are editing or creating web pages.

Show All Tags: This view shows your content with small mark to show the html formatting commands

Source: This view shows the html code that your page is described by

Preview: This shows your web page as it should appear in a web browser

In essence, you work in Normal view, regularly checking the Preview view to see how your site will actually appear.

Text Formatting

Text in Netscape Composer is handled almost the same as it would be in a word processing package. For example you type directly onto the page and then select the text (highlight it) and then format it. You can change:

- Font (Use a sans-serif font such as Arial, Comic sans or Verdana)
- Alignment
- Size
- Style

Or change the way it is presented i.e.

- Bold, Italics
- Numbered or bulleted list (like this one)

To demonstrate how easy this is, type text onto a page. Select it, by clicking and dragging your mouse over the text while holding the button down.

You can then use the commands in the Format menu, or the toolbar as shown here:



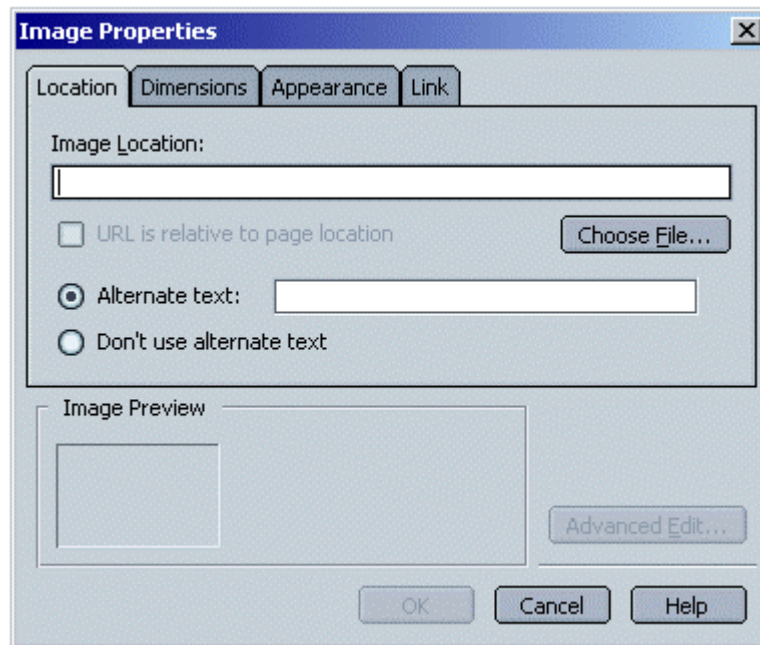
- Paragraph Format - HTML, the language of web pages, has 7 main styles pre-programmed. It is better to use headings as they will show up consistently in all browsers. They range from Heading 1 (large type) to Heading 7 (very small) and also include Body Text (standard text) and Paragraph.
- Text Colour: Click to select an alternative colour for the selected text.
- Text Size: Select to increase or decrease the size of the text.
- Bold, Italic, and Underline: As in standard word processors. Be careful about using the underlining function as this is normally reserved for the link action and can confuse users of your site.
- Lists: Use to create ordered (numbered) or Unordered (bulleted) lists.
- Indent, Outdent: Use to position text – not recommended.
- Alignment: Use to centre, right or left align, or justify text.

Inserting Images

Images are an important aspect of a web site. They can engage and inform a visitor to your web site but there are a few considerations to think about. These are dealt with at the bottom of this page, but first let's see how Netscape Composer places images.

First steps

- Prepare your image and have it located in the correct folder.
- Position the cursor at the point you wish the image to be placed in.
- Using the Insert menu, select Image, or select the Image icon from the toolbar.



Locate the image using the Choose File button. **N.B. The image must be in the same overall folder as the web page**

You should then fill in the Alternative Text for those who use Screen Readers to surf the World Wide Web. Then select OK.

Once the image is on the page you can format it by selecting the image (clicking on it once) and then use the alignment buttons on the toolbar to select left, right, or centre alignment.

Double clicking on the image will open up the Dialog box again and you can select a different file or edit the Alternative Text.

Alt Text

This is the text that will be displayed when the mouse is hovering over it and is very useful for partially sighted users who use screen readers so please always add Alt Text to your images.

Guidelines for Images

Images are large files compared to text and may take a while to display (much to the annoyance of the user). You should also have the image the correct size before you link it to the page. There are techniques for resizing the way an image is displayed but they are not always reliable.

Linking Pages

Links are key to the World Wide Web. They allow for the user to move (navigate) through your site and onto other sites of interest.

A hyperlink can be a piece of text, or an image. A hyperlink can move the user to:

1. A point in the same document
2. Another document
3. A set point in another document

Before you link two pages, you must have two pages to link.

1. Select the text or image you wish to use as a link
2. In the Link Properties box browse for the file you wish to link to by clicking on the Choose File button. Then locate the file you wish to link to and select it.
3. Don't forget to link the linked page back to the original.

If you are providing a link to a web page on another web site you have to enter the full web address into the Link Location box. For example to link text or an image to the Hibernia College site:

1. Select the text or image you wish to use as a link
2. In the Link Properties box enter the full address for the site you are linking to, i.e. <http://www.hiberniacollege.net>. Note that you must include the <http://> at the start of the address.

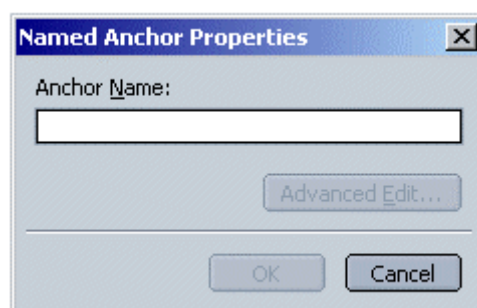
More about Links

Links can do more than just move a user to a different web page. Named Anchors can move a user to a specific point in the same web page or a specific point in another web page.

Named Anchors

An anchor tag is a location in a web page. The anchor tag is invisible to the user but allows a designer to link to that specific point.

To insert a named anchor - Firstly, place the cursor at the correct point in the document i.e. where you want the link to move to. Using the Insert menu, select Insert>Named Anchor. This will open the Named Anchor box as shown below.



Once you have given your anchor a name, select OK. This will insert the anchor at the insertion point. In Composer this will appear on the page, but this tag will be invisible to the user.



Now that the anchor is established, you can link to that point using the Link Properties box in the normal way. The difference is the use of the # to distinguish the use of a named anchor.

For example to link to a named anchor (called "bottom") within the same page as the text or link acting as the link you would select the element (text or image) to act as the link and insert #bottom in the link property box.

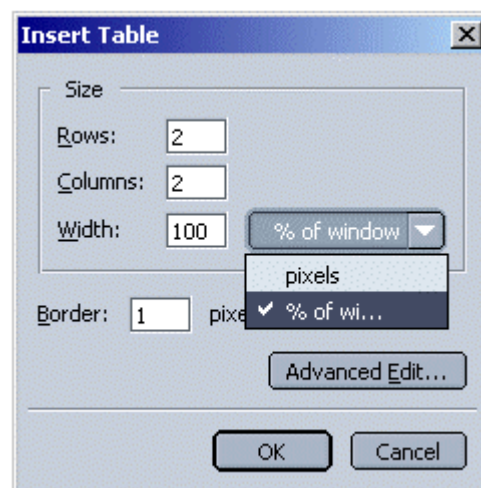
To link to a named anchor in a different page, select the element to act as the link and link to the page as normal. i.e. the link might look like page_1.htm. To link to the named anchor "bottom" in that just add #bottom to the end of the link with no spaces. i.e. the link will now look like page_1.htm#bottom.

A common application for this feature is a Top function. It is common for users of long web pages to want to return to the top of the page (where navigation is often restricted to). They can use the vertical scroll bar but a more considerate way would be to put in a named anchor. If you insert a named anchor called "Top" in the first line of the web page and then link this to a text link at the bottom of the page

Tables

Tables are very useful in web design as they allow you to place images and text on a page so that they are fixed in their position.

To insert a table, use the insert menu and when you have selected tables, the following will appear:



By using story boarding, you should know what type of table you will need though you can edit the number of rows and columns after the table is created.

The width of a table can be set in either pixels (an absolute measure) or as a percentage of the browser window (relative). An absolute table will not resize if the

user resizes their browser window. A relative table (%) will shrink to display as a percentage of the available window size.

Once you have created your table you can edit it in various ways. The Table Properties box is reached by selecting Table>Table Properties from the table menu.

You must have your cursor in the table you wish to edit to access this box.

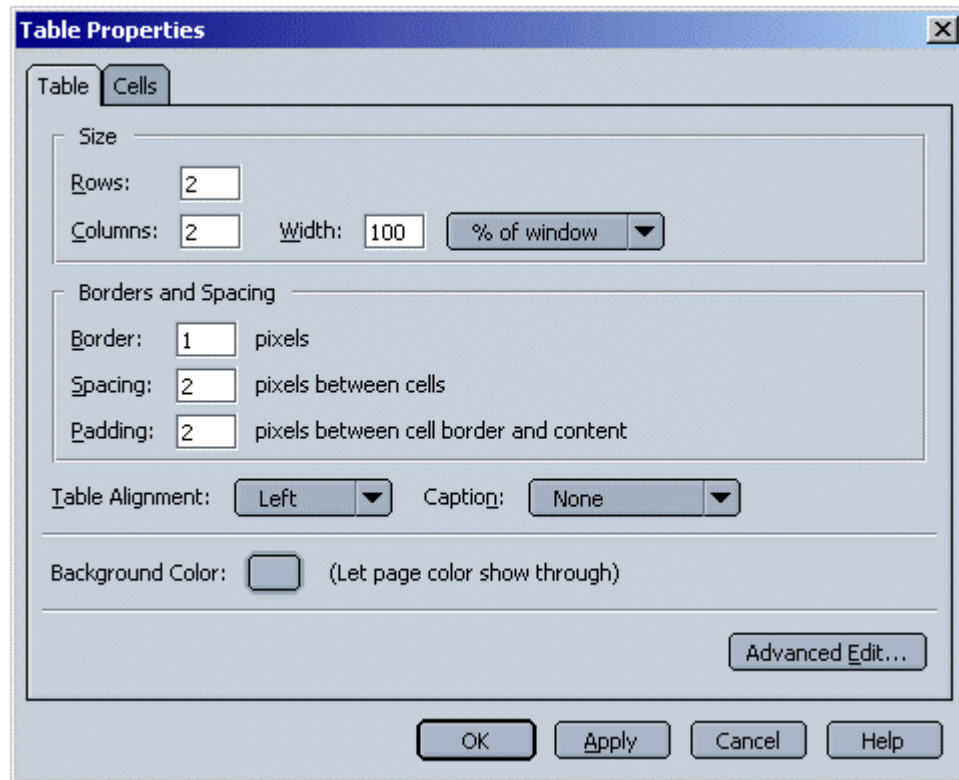


Table Tab

- Tables do not have to have a border and they are then invisible to the user.
- Cell padding is the space between the content of the cell and the cell wall.
- Cell spacing is the space between cells.
- The table can be aligned to the left, centre, or right of the page.
- A background colour can be applied to the table.

Cell Tab

- Many of the same attributes can be applied on the cell level.
- A background colour can be applied to an individual cell.

Tables for Layout

Tables, especially invisible ones, are useful for creating a consistent look and feel across the pages in a web site.

Tables without borderlines are very useful for placing text and images correctly on the page. For example, using a two-column table with an image in the right-hand column and text in the left column.

You can have a top row (a header) that contains a banner with headings as well as a row at the bottom (a footer) that contains contact information and copyright statements.

Once you have created one page that has a structure that you are happy with, you can then copy that table across all of the pages in your web site.

Putting it all together

Over the last set of pages, you have learnt how to add all of the major components of a web page. Putting it all together taking these pages and trouble shooting them, checking all of the little details that can take up so much time at the end of a project.

Checklist

- Do all of the navigation links within the site work?
- Do all of the navigation links outside the site work?
- Do all of the images have Alt Text?
- Does each page have a title in its page properties?