

Creating Technology  
For Today's  
Digital Workforce



**Web Design &  
Dreamweaver MX  
2004  
Part III**

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In Pursuit of Excellence Through People and Technology

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## Introduction to Style Sheets

### What are Cascading Style Sheets?

Separate documents within a Web site which contain the descriptions for displaying or printing Web documents. When these documents are attached to Web pages, they tell the browsers how to layout the Web page. CSS means cascading styles since these documents can contain many styles, which “cascade” down the document.

### What is the purpose for CSS?

HTML (a derivative of SGML) was designed primarily as a content-based mark up language. The past few years have seen the introduction of many new Physical Formatting and other elements/attributes by browser vendors which has muddied the intention of HTML. One of the main reasons for Style Sheets is to stop the creation of new HTML Physical Formatting elements (like **FONT**) by browser vendors that specify style information. The means the separation of document structure from the document's layout.

### Advantages of Style Sheets

- Increases download speed (using CSS syntax instead of images or sound files)
- Designs become easier to manage through the elimination of inline tags such as <font> - as well as the benefit of site-wide changes through the use of external style sheets
- Pages render more quickly (when using CSS-P) through the elimination of nested <table> tags (P stands for positioning)
- Pages become more accessible (Section 508) to visitors using assistive technologies
- Properties are specified using common desktop publishing terminology
- Easy to author and read
- Produces nicer HTML markup that is more flexible and maintainable
- Easy transition from HTML extensions
- Many new visual control features
- Easy extension for future capabilities

### CSS and Style

CSS governs the separation of style (or presentation) from actual content. This means that CSS can define the style of much of the content in Web pages.

### **CSS is a W3C (World Wide Web Consortium) standard.**

The World Wide Web Consortium develops specifications, guidelines, software, and tools so that the Web can be used to its full potential.

- CSS 1 was ratified for use in December 1996
  - CSS 1 Contains properties for fonts margins, colors, etc. that nearly all profiles of CSS need
- CSS 2 came out in 2000 with a addition of image location in a document.

### **Why didn't we use CSS before?**

CSS suffered from slow adoption

- Limited browser support
- Limited tools for development

### **Today all major browsers support CSS**

Implementation still varies-but the differences are relatively slight and they are getting better.

## The Rational

### Okay, so why do we need CSS?

HTML is limited in its design capabilities. This is because HTML was designed to “mark up” or in layman’s terms, identify content, not to create complex designs used in Web pages today. Once designers learned that they could take HTML tags that were designed to identify content and use those as design tools, they lost the ability to modify the presentation of the mark up easily. The problem is that by doing this you end up with using tags repeatedly throughout a Web page to define styles of different elements in the page. An example would be the font tag.

### Font Tags

A typical font tag found in a document defines the attributes of a given set of text:

```
<font ="Arial, Helvetica, sans-serif" color="#990000" size="+1">
```

Font tags such as the one above can be found throughout 95% Web pages today. They add to length and complexity of the code and time needed when revisions are needed.

Other culprits are the table tags and body tags.

### DIV Tags

The key to successfully designing with CSS is to DIVide it up! (using <DIV> tags)

The <div> tag is used to define page elements or “containers” – although all HTML tags are actually containers as well.

If it is helpful for you, you can think of a <div> as a table cell that doesn’t have a table!

By default, only a single <div> tag can exist on any horizontal band, or line. The float attribute removes the <div> tag from the flow of the document and allows other elements to flow around the <div>.

Elements such as the <div> tag, can also be positioned using the position attribute. There are four options for position: absolute, relative, fixed, static.

## Where does CSS come in?

### How will CSS help?

CSS replaces the presentational markup in HTML documents. Presentational markup refers to the way a browsing device displays a piece of content.

### **Revising and Updating**

Revising and updating pages with new styles will require much less time and labor. Changing the style in one location will update the all applied areas including the entire site!

### **Going Table-less**

For a completely table-less design, or CSS-P design, all of the presentational HTML tags should be removed from the page:

- `<table>`, `<td>`, `<tr>`, `<th>`
  - These tags will be replaced through the use of the `<div>` tag, with either a class or an ID assigned to the `<div>`
- `<font>`
  - Text styling will be done through the use of either a tag definition, class or ID
- Presentational attributes such as cell padding, alignment, color and backgrounds. These attributes become part of the tag definition, class or ID

### **Possible problems?**

Older browsers do not recognize some CSS styles.

### **Check Browser Support**

Since there are problems with using CSS for users still holding on their older browsers, in Dreamweaver you can select the result panel and see the problems and browsers that will have problems.

## **Demonstration of CSS in action**

**The following URL will take you to a video created by the developers at Macromedia that will walk you through using CSS:**

**<http://www.macromedia.com/cfusion/ondemand/index.cfm?id=242&type=2>**

**A great resource for Learning CSS:**

**Macromedia Dreamweaver Developer Center: CSS in Dreamweaver MX 2004**

**<http://www.macromedia.com/devnet/mx/dreamweaver/css.html>**

## Using CSS in HTML Documents

There are three ways to use CSS in HTML.

- **Inline styles** – styles found in the body of the HTML document as they are applied.  
Frowned on.

```
<div id="housepicture" style = "position: fixed; right: 300px; top: 200px; width: 240px; height:240px z-index:1">
```

- **Local** – style definitions contained in the head section of an HTML document.

```
<HEAD>  
<TITLE>Info and Updates</TITLE>  
<style type="text/css">  
<!--  
body {  
font-family: Arial, Helvetica, sans-serif;  
}  
-->  
</style>  
</HEAD>
```

- **External** – styles defined in a separate CSS file and linked to one or more pages in a site

```
<HEAD>  
<TITLE>Electronic Portfolio - Home</TITLE>  
<link href="styles.css" rel="stylesheet" type="text/css">  
</HEAD>
```

## Definitions of CSS Styles

- Class definition – Defines the appearance of the container to which it is assigned. This is what a class style would look like:

```
.content {  
font-size: 2 em;  
margin-right: 0 px;  
margin-left: 0 px;  
margin-top: 0 px;  
margin-bottom: 0 px;  
}
```

- ID definition– Defines the appearance of a unique container on a page. Apply to things that will stand out as different. Used rarely. IDs can only be applied once on a page. When would you use an ID? If you want to use Java script to show and hide elements or if you set a display to none or to show. Example: A popup menu – needs a unique idea on a page. Therefore, you have a piece of Java script that will show the unique ID on the page. This is what an ID style would look like:

```
#navigation{  
background-color: #000000  
width: 300px;  
border-bottom-width: 1px;  
border-bottom-style: solid;  
border-bottom-color: #014055;  
}
```

Notice the only major difference is the # instead of the period (.) in front of the style name.

- Tag definition – defines the appearance of every instance of a given tag.

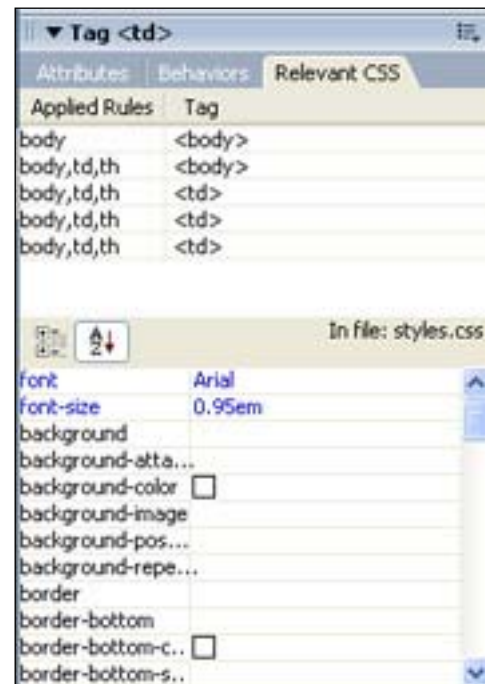
```
h4{  
font-family: Verdana, Arial, Helvetica, sans-serif;  
font-size: 0.85em;  
font-style: normal;  
font-weight: bolder;  
color: #002D62;  
}
```

Notice in this case, the name of the style changes to the name of the tag.

## CSS in Dreamweaver:

CSS styles applied to text are reflected in both the CSS Styles panel and the Property inspector. Additionally, styles can be applied from either panel, or from the Text menu (Text > Style submenu). If you are unable to see the CSS Panel select Window > CSS Styles. This will open the panel box on the right of your screen.

### The Dreamweaver CSS Styles Panel:



### Tag Selector Panel- Relevant CSS

When editing styles do one of the following:

- Right click on the style in the CSS Styles Panel

Or

- Click on the Relevant CSS tab under the Tag Panel.

## Setting Page Properties using the <Body> Tag

The body tag sets the attributes for a page. This means how the page elements will display in a browser.

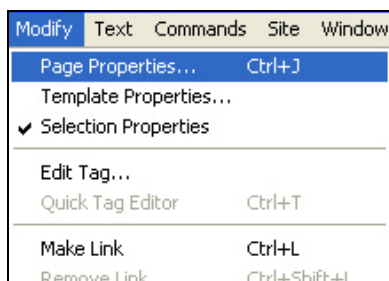
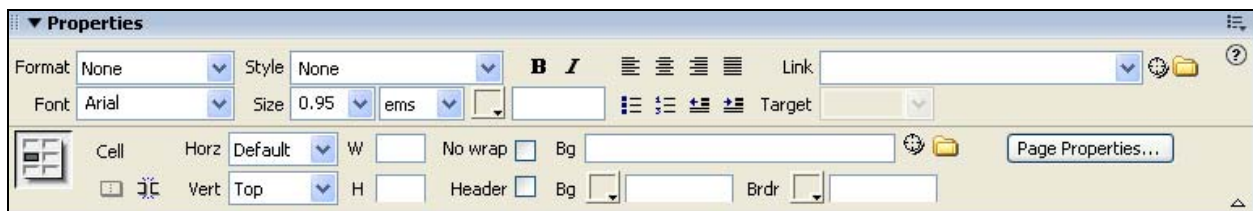
To redefine the <body> tag in Dreamweaver MX 2004, you have two options. You can use the Page Properties command or define the style manually using the CSS Styles panel.

The disadvantage of using the Page Properties dialog box to define the style, is the addition of the style to the document itself instead an external style sheet.

If the style will only be used in the current document this not a concern, however, if the style will be used in repeated styles throughout the Web site, you'll eventually want to put the styles in an external style sheet. It may be easier to work locally and then export the styles when you know they are properly defined.

Follow these steps to redefine the <body> tag:

1. Select Modify > Page Properties or Press the Page Properties button in the Properties Panel



2. Define a default font and font size, and any other attributes desired

Once you defined the page properties the style and its attributes will be displayed in the <Head> of the page.

```
<HEAD>

<TITLE></TITLE>

<style type="text/css">
<!--

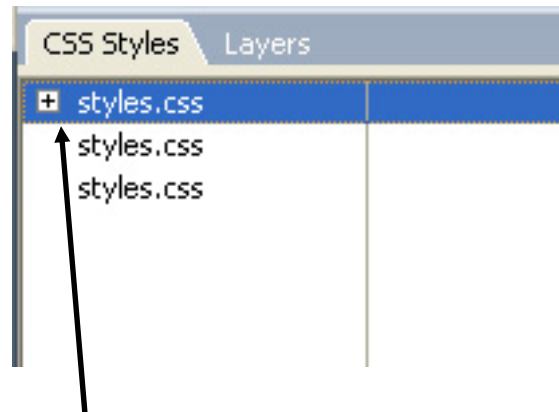
body,td,th {
  color: #FFFFFF;
}

body {
  background-color: #000000;
  margin-left: 0px;
  margin-top: 0px;
  margin-right: 0px;
  margin-bottom: 0px;
}

-->
</style>

</HEAD>
```

3. To see the style definition, open the CSS Styles Panel (select Window > CSS Styles) and expand the <style> tag.

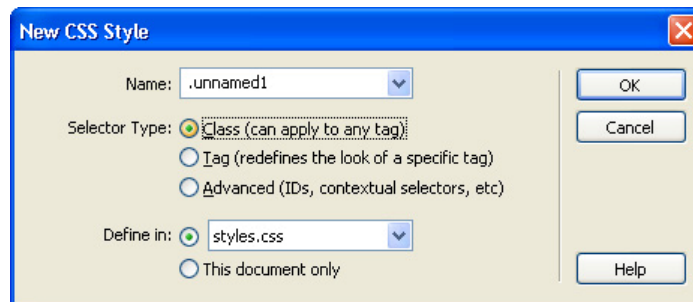


## Creating new CSS Styles

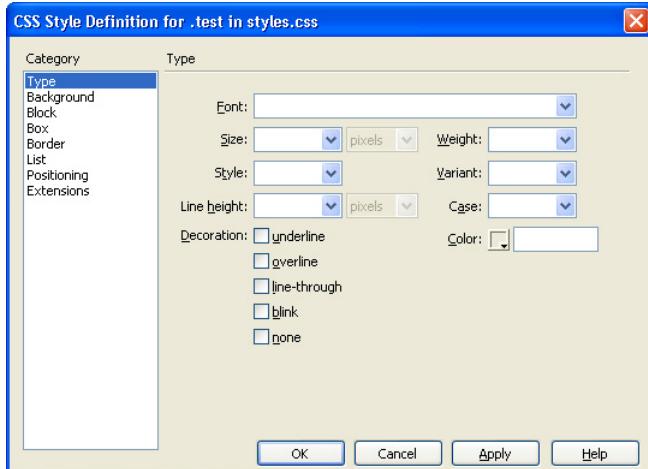


To create a new style:

1. Click the **New CSS Style button** (at the bottom of the CSS Styles panel).
2. In the dialogue box that appears give your style a name and define the style as either a Class, and ID, or a Tag. In most cases you will define your styles as a Class because you will be able to use the style many times on the page.
3. Select either **this document only** or **external style sheet**. This document only means the style will appear in the head of the document while external style sheet will place the new style in a style sheet you have attached to the document.

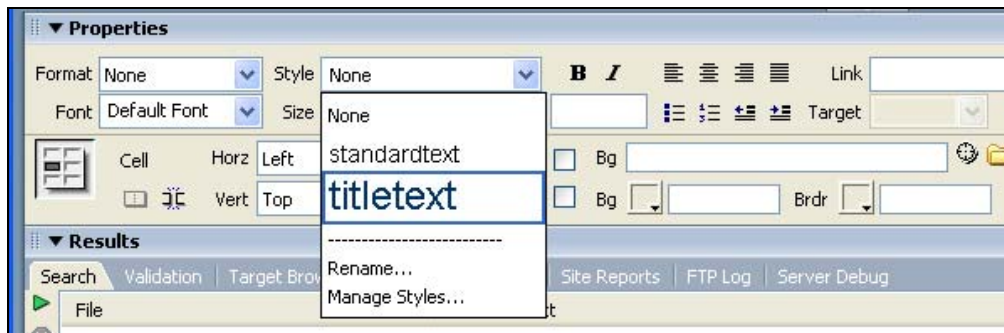


In the Definition Dialogue box define the attributes for the new style. If the style will use the same font style as the Page Properties Body tag you will only need to define other elements.



## Applying a Style

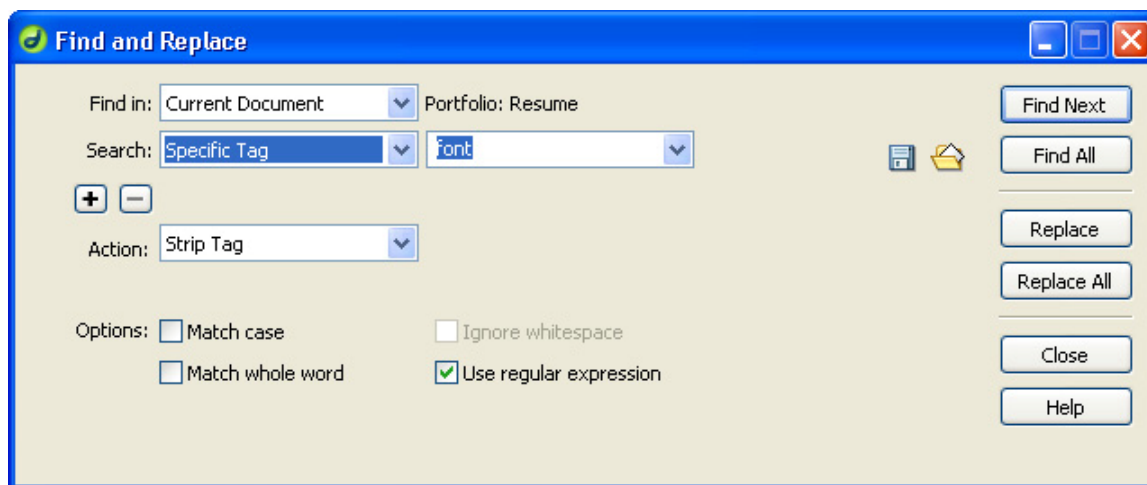
To apply the style, simply select the text on the page—or, if the text is by itself in a table cell, select the table cell. Using the Property inspector, select the new style (the style you just created) from the Style pop-up menu.



## Removing the <Font> tag or other tags from older Web pages

1. Remove the <font> tags from the document by selecting **Edit > Find and Replace**.
2. In the Find and Replace dialog box, select **Specific Tag** in the Search pop-up menu and choose **Font** from the subsequent pop-up menu to the right. Because you are looking for all <font> tags in the document, regardless of their attributes, click the minus (-) button to remove the attribute criteria.
3. From the Action pop-up menu, choose **Strip Tag** and then click the **Replace All** button.
4. With all of the <font> tags gone, you can now create a rule for all the text on the page by modifying the body, td, th, rule that Dreamweaver has already created. Simply open the Page Properties dialog box again. From the Page font list, select the appropriate font set.

Edit	View	Insert	Modify	Text	Commar
Undo Apply	<span>			Ctrl+Z	
Redo Apply	<span>			Ctrl+Y	
<hr/>					
Cut				Ctrl+X	
Copy				Ctrl+C	
Paste				Ctrl+V	
Clear					
<hr/>					
Copy HTML				Ctrl+Shift+C	
Paste HTML				Ctrl+Shift+V	
Paste Text					
<hr/>					
Select All				Ctrl+A	
Select Parent Tag				Ctrl+[	
Select Child				Ctrl+]	
<hr/>					
Find and Replace...				Ctrl+F	
Find Next				F3	
<hr/>					
Go to Line				Ctrl+G	
Show Code Hints				Ctrl+Space	



### What other attributes should be removed from older Web pages?

You can use the Dreamweaver Find and Replace command to remove other attributes from your document and replace them with CSS styles. Some other attributes that should be removed eventually are:

- <br> tags
- bgcolor and background attributes
- align and valign attributes
- table attributes such as border and cell padding

### Exporting document styles to an external style sheet

Use the following steps to export styles:

1. Return to the CSS Styles panel and right-click (Control-click on Mac) the style name.
2. In the context menu, select Export.
3. An Export Styles dialog box opens, asking you to specify a name for the new style sheet. Name the style sheet **site.css** or any other name you choose and click OK.
4. Although Dreamweaver exports the styles, they are still in the document. To remove them from the document, select the <style> tag in the CSS Styles panel and click the Trash icon in the lower right corner of the CSS Styles panel.
5. To attach a style sheet, click the Attach Style Sheet icon at the bottom of the CSS Styles panel and browse to your new external style sheet, site.css.

## **CSS tutorials and samples**

Macromedia's Developer Center:

<http://www.macromedia.com/devnet/topics/css.html>

## **Official CSS specifications**

World Wide Web Consortium:

<http://www.w3c.org/style>