

Hands-On Lesson

to accompany

Curriculum Webs, 2nd edition

Weaving the Web into Teaching and Learning

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LESSON 10: Creating

a Navigation Bar

DREAMWEAVER MX 2004

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Goals for this lesson

- Create a navigation bar for the small curriculum web site you designed in Lesson 8.

Building a navigation bar

A navigation bar, often referred to as a “nav bar,” is a set of buttons that are used to access the major sections of a web site. These buttons usually appear on every page of the site, and often have various effects applied, such as a visual change when you point to a button with the mouse, or a clicking sound when you click on a button.

To create a nav bar, you either create your own buttons in a graphics editing program, or else use pre-designed buttons. Dreamweaver includes easy-to-use Flash buttons (you don’t need to know any Flash to use them) and FrontPages include tools to help you create rollover effects on images you create or download. (The Web is full of sites offering button sets that can be used and sometimes edited for your use. See the companion web site at <http://curriculumwebs.com> for some links.)

Good tools for creating your own images are Photoshop and Fireworks. You can use any web-supported file format: JPEG, GIF, or PNG. See Chapter 9 in *Curriculum Webs* for more information about image formats.

Getting the buttons

For this lesson, you can use rollover buttons that we have created. They are available Resources page for the Hands-On Lessons at the companion web site, at <http://curriculumwebs.com>. You can use either the GIF files or the PNG files (which are smaller, but which may not work with all software packages).

- To use the buttons off the web site, download all of them into a folder called "img" in your local root folder. You can get all of them at once in a self-extracting zip file. Or right-click each individual file and choose Save Image As....

There are 21 images in all. Each rollover button requires three images and can use up to four, one for each one "state" of the button. The states are known as Up, Down, Over and Hit (in Dreamweaver). We will make 7 buttons, each with 3 states. (The Hit state is only necessary if you want the "clickable" area of a button to be smaller or larger than the images in the button.)

The buttons are labeled Home, Demo 1, Demo 2, Demo 3, Demo 4, Demo 5, and Activity.

Building the bar

A nav bar can be located anywhere on your page, but usually on the left or the top. We will make our nav bar along the left.

Dreamweaver

Dreamweaver includes a tool to make it easy to create a nav bar. We will use it to make nav bar on template for a simple curriculum web.

- Open a new file and save it as a template.
- Make a 100% wide table with one row and two columns. Set the left column to 130 pixels (10 more than the buttons). Split the right cell into two cells (right-click in the cell and choose Split cells...). The top cell on the right will hold the page title and the bottom one will be for the variable page content.
- Click in the longer cell on the left. Use Insert | Interactive Images | Navigation Bar.
- Name each element in turn. Set the locations for all three images by browsing to them. Set the URL for the link by browsing, and set a target for the link, if desired. See Figure 10-1 for a filled-in example of the screen..

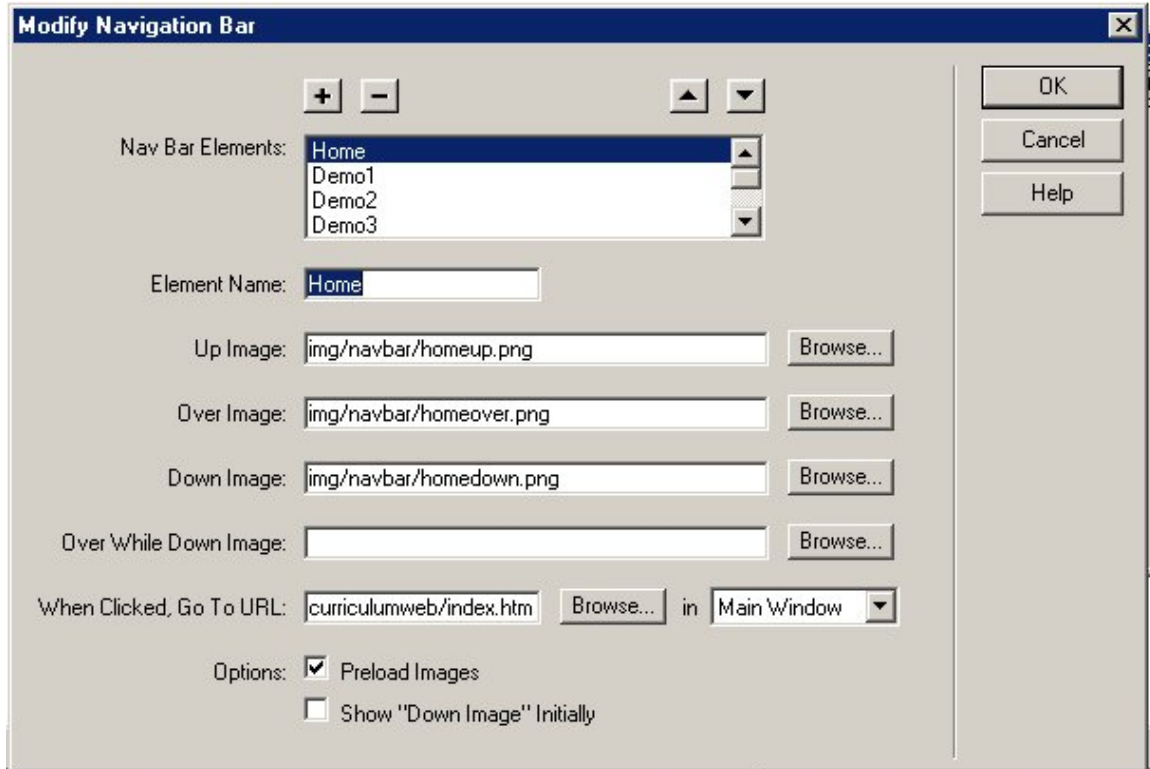


Figure 10-1 The Dreamweaver Modify Navigation Bar screen.

Figure 10-2 shows the nav bar you get as a result.



Figure 10-3: The resulting nav bar. All the buttons are in the up state.

- Put a title into the Table cell on the top right. Format it to match the look of the buttons.
- Save your file, and apply the template to at least one of the files in your curriculum web from Lesson 8.
- Upload and test.