

Hands-On Lesson

to accompany

Curriculum Webs, 2nd edition

Weaving the Web into Teaching and Learning

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LESSON 11: Some

Advanced Features

DREAMWEAVER MX 2004

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Goals for this lesson

- Learn about some advanced features in your software that allow you to build in movements and interactivity.
- Create several examples of movements and interactivity.
- Create a simple frameset that could be used for a curriculum web.
- Create a simple form that will email you its results.

Positioning layers

Layers and positioning are ways of placing layout elements at various positions within a page.

Warning: layers and positioning only work in browsers version 4.0 and later. Also, the placement of layers is not an exact science. You may find that your layers appear in a different location when you look at them in a browser than where you placed them.

Dreamweaver

- Use Insert | Layout Objects | Layer. The layer will appear at the cursor, on the left side of the window.
- To move the layer around on the screen, you can click on the edge of the layer, selecting it, and then click and drag the tab at the top left of the layer:



Notice what happens to the layer's properties when you move it around on the screen. See Figure 11-1.



Figure 11-1: The Dreamweaver Property Inspector showing the properties of a layer.

When you move a layer, the "L" and "T" fields are changed to reflect the position of the layer, measured in pixels (px) from the left (L) and the top (T) of the page. You can also change the position by typing numbers directly into these fields.

Notice also the other fields on the Property Inspector:

- Layers can be named. This is useful when creating a behavior (about which, see [below](#)). "W" and "H" are the width and height of the layer measured in pixels. The "Z-Index" is a way of controlling which layers appear on top and which below. The higher the Z number, the closer the layer is to the "top". All the layers in a page have a different Z number. As you create the Layers, each one will (generally) have the next highest Z-index. Vis stands for visibility. This controls whether the layer is initially visible, invisible, default (set the default for new layers you create by using Edit | Preferences | Layers), or inherited (from it's "parent" if the layer is nested inside another layer, or from the page's body, which is always visible).
 - Note that when you click INSIDE the layer, the properties inspector changes to the normal text formatting choices. These choices only affect the text that is selected or that is typed immediately after the properties are set.
 - The "Overflow" field can be left blank, or set so that any overflow (that goes beyond the set size of the layer) is hidden, visible, with scroll bar always present, or with scroll bar only when necessary. Note you cannot directly make a layer too small for its content. But layer properties (including size) can be set using timelines, behaviors, or scripts, and so the Overflow field might be helpful then.
- You can see all the layers listed in the Layers palette by using Window | Layers: See Figure 11-2.

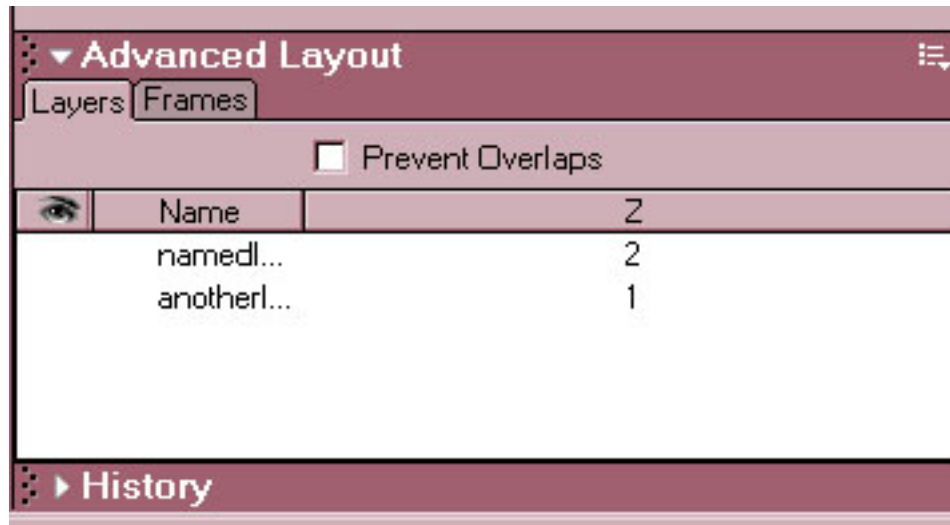


Figure 11-2: The Dreamweaver layers palette.

You may also add a background color by selecting the layer and picking a color on the properties palette and you may add a background image by clicking on the folder in the properties palette and browsing to the image. See Figure 11-3.

Once the image is in a layer, you may move it to anywhere on the page.



Figure 11-3: Two layers in Dreamweaver. One has a background color and the other has a background image.

Layers can be positioned so that they overlap one another. (Any other elements in HTML cannot overlap.) Figure 11-4 shows two layers (both selected, therefore you see the 'handles'), one partially underneath the other.

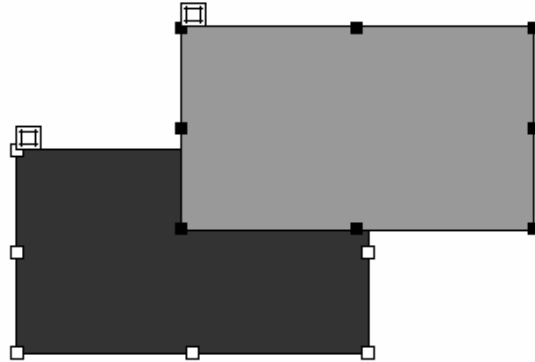


Figure 11-4: Two selected and overlapping layers in Dreamweaver.

Placing text on an image



Dreamweaver

- Place an image in a layer.
- Type some text in another layer. You can format the text by changing attributes in the Property Inspector. (Be sure to choose a color for the text so that it will show up against the picture.)
- Set the Z-Index of the layer with the picture to a lower number than the layer with the text.
- Position the text layer over the one with the image.

Animating layers

Web page animation (as opposed to GIF animation) uses something called Dynamic HTML, or DHTML.

Dreamweaver

(NOTE: the original release of Dreamweaver MX 2004 did not include a functionality for templates. This has been reinstated with the updater that brings it to version 7.0.1. Be sure your version has been updated before attempting this section. See http://www.macromedia.com/support/dreamweaver/downloads_updaters.html to get the update.)

To **animate layers**, you'll need to detach your page from any templates. (Dynamic HTML writes code into the head area of the HTML page, and this area is usually locked in a template.) Then click Window | Timelines.

The Timelines palette works like digital video editing software. Figure 8-5 shows the timeline palette with a layer containing a revolving image of the earth that will be moved across the screen.

Time proceeds from left to right. Each column represents a "frame." The frame rate can be set. (In the image it is 15 FPS or Frames per second). The red or pink thing represents the "head" of the player, and indicates the current frame.

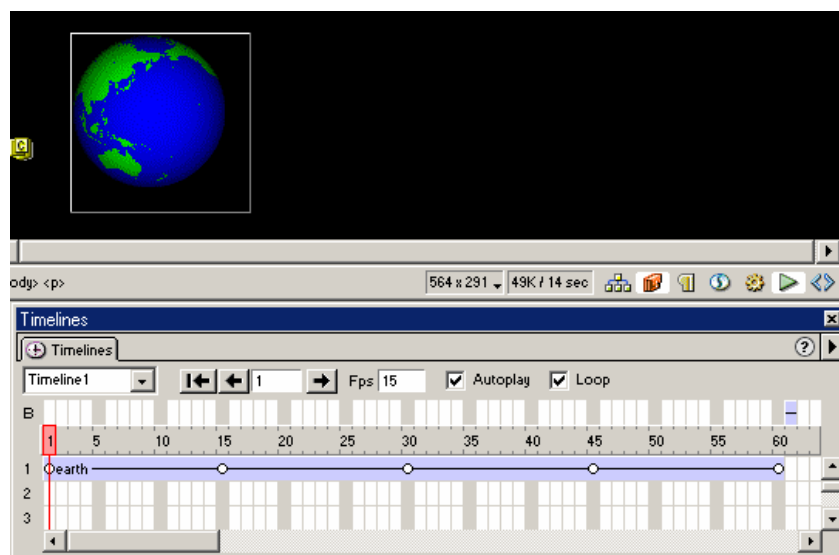



Figure 11-5: Dreamweaver's timeline panel, showing a layer the will be moved across the screen.

Each row represents a separate layer. If you animate many layers on a page, you'll use many rows.

Now, create the layer you want to animate. Name the layers. Now select a named layer (by clicking and dragging the little box that appears above the layer: ) and drag the layer onto the timeline window. You will see a blue bar in layer one of the timeline window.

At each end of the blue bar is a circle. The circles represent "keyframes," that is, frames that have been defined. (The final frame is automatically set, but can be changed.)

- Select the key frame you want to edit. If you want to make the animation longer, click and drag the final keyframe.
- Then, with the final keyframe still selected, move the Earth layer to where you want it at the end of the animation. (If you want it to return to the same place, leave it.)
- To add intermediate key frames, press Ctrl and click on the bar. A keyframe is added.
- With the new keyframe still selected, move the layer to where you want it at that point. Dreamweaver automatically smooths out the movement between keyframes. To make a fluid circular movement, need to define multiple keyframes.
- To have the animation start when the page loads, click Autoplay. To have the animation repeat, click Loop.

Swapping images

Behaviors are incredibly powerful, and we can't begin to cover them here. But let's do a sample activity. Layers (or floating boxes) can be made visible or not, moved, and sized, using behaviors. You can have one image appear in place of another when the user points the mouse to the image.

For this exercise, you need two image files that are the same size. If you wish, you can download two images from our companion web site at

<http://curriculumwebs.com/lessons/resources>. Put them in your Local Root Folder (or a subfolder).

Dreamweaver

Note: You cannot attach behaviors to your Dreamweaver page if a template is applied to it, because behaviors alter the "head" of the document and this is (usually) a locked area of the page.

Behaviors can be attached to links or to objects such as images and buttons. You cannot attach a behavior to plain text. However, if you put "javascript:;" into the "link" field of some text, that text can then initiate a behavior without actually linking to anything.

For example, if you hold the mouse over **some text**, you can make an image disappear. When you move the cursor off the text, it will reappear.

Behaviors are incredibly powerful, and we can hardly cover them here. But let's do a sample activity.

For this exercise, you need two image files that are the same size. If you wish, you can download the two images shown in Figure 8-6 from our companion web site at <http://curriculumwebs.com/lessons/resources>. Put them in your Local Root Folder (or a subfolder).



Figure 11-6: Pictures that will be swapped in this activity.

- Now, create a new layer. Call it photos. Insert the cac&ro-smaller.jpg image into the layer.

- You can name an image in Dreamweaver and you must name it in order to swap it with another image. Click on the image and put "cacrec" into the empty field on the top left of the Property Inspector: See Figure 8-7.

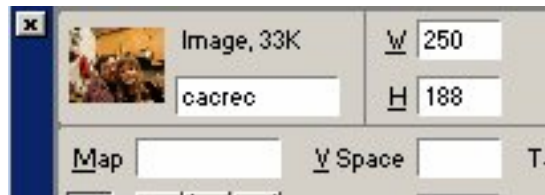


Figure 11-7: The Dreamweaver Property Inspector showing where the name “cacrec” is entered.

- Now you're ready to define your behavior. Type some text to be the anchor for the behavior, such as:

Point here to swap the image.

- Highlight the text and type "javascript;" into the link field (no quotation marks; that is a colon and then a semi-colon at the end of the word). Click on Window | Behavior to show your behavior palette. To create a new behavior, click the + button. A menu gives the choices available to you. (This will vary depending on how you set your browser preferences for each event.) Choose Swap Image. From the list of images, find "cacrec in the photos layer." Click it. Then browse to the other image, rowan&cheryl-smaller.jpg. Leave Preload images and Restore on mouse out checked.
- Now, save your file and preview it to see if it works.

You can also assign behaviors to buttons, change the text that appears in a layer, change the property of many items on the page, start and stop animations, and all sorts of other things.

Creating Frames

To create frames, you need at least three documents

- a "frameset" page that actually sets up the screen and divides it into two or more frames. The frameset contains no content, but is essential to make the frames work;

- at least two documents that will appear in the frames when the frameset first loads,
- any additional documents that will load when links are followed.

Building a sample frameset

We will build a frameset with three frames, like the one shown in Figure 11-8. We will use the left-hand frame for a menu, the top-right frame for a title, and the bottom-right frame for content.

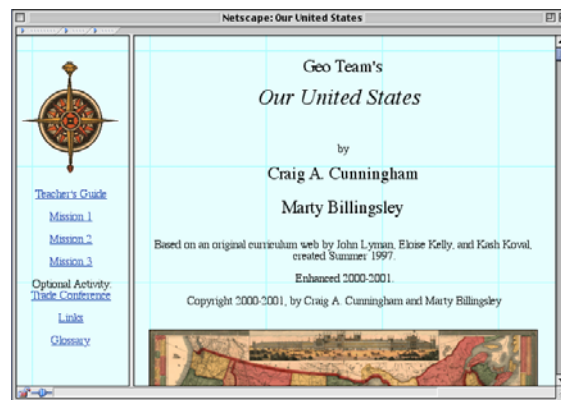


Figure 11-8: A simple frameset.

Dreamweaver

- Open a new window. Open the Frames palette by using Window | Others | Frames.
- Use Modify | Frameset | Split Frame Left.
- Make sure the cursor is in the right-hand frame, and use Modify | Frameset | Split Frame Down. Click and drag the new border to move it closer to the top.
- Then, click and drag the vertical border (the one down the middle of the page) to the left.
- Fill in some simple content.

Adjusting frameset properties

You can control the frames borders, border color, width of borders, and the size of a frame.

You can also give the frame a name, which can be used as a target for links. (Have new pages open in that frame instead of the frame with the menu, for example.)

Dreamweaver

The properties of the frameset are different from the properties of each frame.

- If you click on a frame's border, the Property Inspector will show settings for the entire frameset.
- To access the properties of an individual frame, click on the appropriate frame in the Frames Panel. That becomes the "active" frame and its properties are displayed in the Property Inspector. (The "active" frame also has a dotted line around it in the Page Edit window.)
- To shift between frames so you can edit their properties, use the Frames palette. If you click on the very edge border of the Frames palette, you'll select the Frameset and can then edit the Frameset properties.

Saving the frameset and the frames

Be careful at this point. You need to give the frames names that you will remember.

The frameset we have just made will require four files: the frameset, plus the three files that will provide the initial contents of the left frame, the top right frame, and the bottom right frame. Save the frameset as frameset1.htm, the left frame as left.htm, the top-right frame as top.htm, and the bottom-right as bottom.htm.

Dreamweaver

- Click File | Save All Frames.
- Create a new folder, called Frameset, in your local root folder.

While the Save As... dialog box is showing, you may notice a kind of highlighting around the specific frame that is being saved just then.

Naming frames

Now we will name the frames. Saving the documents is not the same as naming the frames.

Dreamweaver

- Click on each frame in the Frames palette and use the Property Inspector to give them names: Left, Top, and Bottom.

Creating additional content pages

We will make new documents will be loaded into the Bottom frame by the menu choices in left.htm.

- In the same folder you created a moment ago, create two new documents, page1.htm and page2.htm. These should be empty for now, except for a label, "Page 1" and "Page 2"

Linking the menu choices

- Now add links to the menu, which is in the left.htm file.
- "Home" should be linked to bottom.htm. "Page 1" should be linked to page1.htm, and "Page 2" to page2.htm. The Target field in each of link should be set to the "Bottom" frame.

Modifying content pages

Each page in the frameset has its own properties, and so can have different titles, background colors, text colors, or images. You might add some subtle colors to each of your documents so they are easier to distinguish for testing purposes.

Creating Forms

For this exercise, you will create a form with a few different types of fields: text and text areas, check boxes, radio buttons, and drop-down boxes. Be sure to include a Submit and a Reset button.

If you want to create a more elaborate feedback form, use the questions listed in Chapter 9 of *Curriculum Webs*.

Remember that if your browser is not configured to send email, you will not be able to submit this kind of form. See Chapter 8 of *Curriculum Webs* for more information.

Dreamweaver

- Use Insert|Form. Then use Insert|Form Objects to place desired objects inside the form's borders. (Alternatively, use the Form tab on the Insert Bar:



- To set the properties of the form, click on its border and use the Property Inspector. For this exercise, set the form's Action to <mailto:youremailaddress>.
- Set the Method to Post.
- Upload the file and browse to it. Fill in some test data on the form, and click Submit. Click OK if your browser reminds you of insecure information.
- If you don't get an error message, check your email in about five minutes and see if it arrived. If you do get an error message, fix the problem and upload again. Reload or refresh in the browser before retesting the form.