

Chapter 1

Introducing Your New Best Friend

In This Chapter

- ▶ Introducing the new features of Dreamweaver 8
 - ▶ Examining your Web site objectives
 - ▶ Finding your way around in Dreamweaver
-

Welcome to the wonderful world of Dreamweaver 8. If you're an experienced Web designer, you're going to love the power and sophistication of this Web editor. If you're new to building Web sites, you'll appreciate its simplicity and intuitive interface. Either way, this chapter starts you on your way to making the most of Dreamweaver by introducing you to the menus and panels that make this program so useful.

Dreamweaver can help you with every aspect of Web development, from designing simple pages, to fixing links, to publishing your pages on the World Wide Web. Dreamweaver can handle the simplest HTML, as well as some of the most complex and advanced features possible on the Web, including Cascading Style Sheets and Dynamic HTML (see Chapters 8 and 9 for more information on these features). Dreamweaver also integrates a powerful HTML text editor into its easy-to-use graphical design environment so you can work in the HTML code if you prefer.

If you already work in another Web design program or you're updating a site that was created in another program, don't worry — you can use Dreamweaver to modify existing Web pages and continue to develop your Web site without losing all the time you've already invested. For example, if you've been working in a program such as Microsoft FrontPage or Adobe GoLive, you can change to Dreamweaver to edit and develop your site further. All Web design programs create HTML pages, and those pages can be opened in any other Web design program. At the end of this chapter, in the “Working on Web Pages Created in Another Web Design Program” section, you find a few warnings about the challenges you may encounter because the code can vary slightly from program to program, but once you clean up those differences, you should be fine.

In this chapter, you find an introduction to the new features in Dreamweaver 8, get a tour of the desktop, and gain an overview of what makes Dreamweaver such a powerful Web design program.

So What's New in Dreamweaver 8?

Now the good stuff. All those requests you make to Macromedia, all that wishful thinking . . . believe it or not, they heard you and many of the little — and not so little — things we all have been wanting in this program are finally here, as well as a few extras you might expect!

The following list provides you a quick overview of some of the new features you find in version 8:

- ✔ When you first launch Dreamweaver 8, you'll notice a few changes to the Workspace. Although it has no dramatic changes, the programmers at Macromedia have added some clever new features, including a magnifying glass feature complete with a little icon in the status bar just below the work area. Much like the magnifiers common in image-editing programs, this new feature enables you to zoom in to view page elements in greater detail or zoom out to see the full layout of a larger page.
- ✔ You'll find some of the most extensive changes in the way Dreamweaver handles CSS — important upgrades as Cascading Style Sheets become increasingly popular among professional designers. Among other things, you'll find improved CSS rendering, better support for positioning, and a more unified CSS panel that includes the Rule Tracker, Property Grid, and a new Composite view.
- ✔ You can find one of my favorite new feature sets on the Edit menu. Paste Special enables you to paste formatted text (and even tables) from other programs, such as Microsoft Word or Excel, with options about what formatting is kept. You can choose to paste text with structural formatting, such as tables and paragraph marks; with or without basic formatting, such as bold and italics; and you can even opt to clean up the often problematic paragraph formatting from Word as you paste in the text. If you specify your choices in Dreamweaver's Preferences, anytime you use the paste feature your text is inserted based on your favorite options.
- ✔ Going beyond the predesigned templates included in previous versions, Dreamweaver now includes Starter Pages, which not only include topic-based designs. They actually include text. Of course, you can edit the text; but if you're creating a calendar of events or a product catalog, for example, the general text already in place on these pages gives you a head start.
- ✔ If you prefer working in Code view, where you can see all the HTML tags, you'll find a few enhancements to that interface, including a new toolbar that provides quick access to common commands and the capability to selectively expand and collapse code so you can focus on the area you are working on.

- ✓ I always recommend that you design your pages for the broadest audience, and that definitely includes designing for the disabled, such as the blind who use special browsers that read Web pages aloud. Macromedia has always been good about including accessibility features, and I'm pleased to see those features support the Priority 2 Web Content Accessibility Guidelines.

Introducing the Many Components of Dreamweaver

Dreamweaver can seem a bit overwhelming at first. It has so many features, and they are spread out in so many panels, toolbars, and dialog boxes that you can easily get lost. If you prefer to learn by poking around, have at it (and feel free to skip ahead to the next chapter where you start building your first Web page). If you want a tour before you get started, the next few sections introduce you to the interface and provide an overview of the basics of Dreamweaver. You also discover where to find common features and functions, which the rest of the book covers in more detail.

The Workspace

When you launch Dreamweaver, the Start Screen appears in the main area of the program (and it reappears anytime you don't have a file open). From the Start Screen, you can choose to create a new page from one of the many Dreamweaver pre-made templates, or you can create a new blank page by selecting HTML from the Create New options in the middle column. When you select HTML, Dreamweaver creates a new blank HTML page in the main *Workspace*, as shown in Figure 1-1. You can type text directly into any page in the Workspace and apply basic formatting with the many formatting options described later in this chapter.

You build HTML pages, templates, style sheets, and so on in the Workspace, which consists of a main window that shows the page you're working on surrounded by a number of panels and menus that provide tools you can use to design and develop your pages (shown in Figure 1-1). The Dreamweaver Workspace consists of the following basic components: the menu bar (at the very top), the Insert bar (just below it), the Document window (the main area of the screen, just below the Insert bar), the Properties inspector (at the bottom of the screen), and the Vertical Docking panels (to the right of the Document window) that expand and collapse as needed. More detailed descriptions of each of these follows.

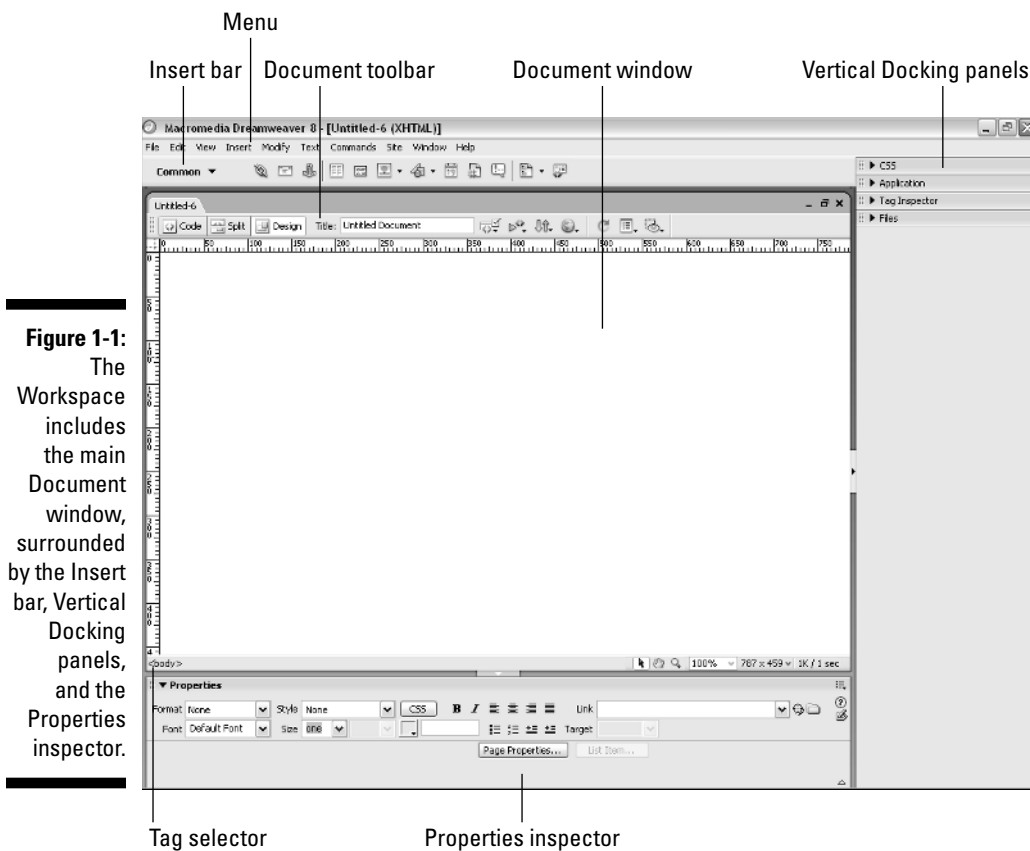


Figure 1-1:
The
Workspace
includes
the main
Document
window,
surrounded
by the Insert
bar, Vertical
Docking
panels,
and the
Properties
inspector.

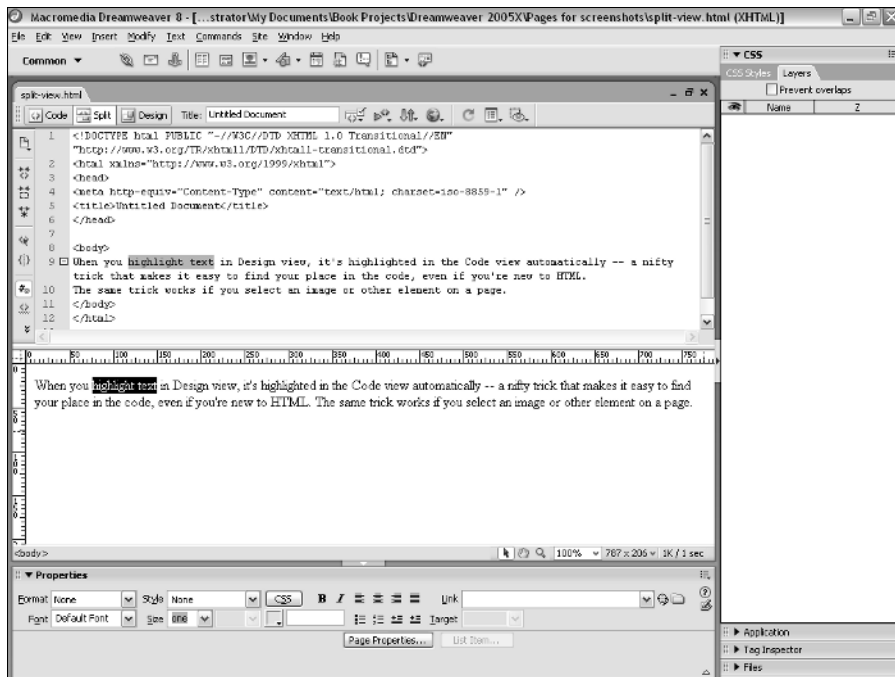
The Document window

The big, open area in the main area of the Workspace is the Document window, which is where you work on new and existing pages. If you use the Designer interface in Design view, you see your page as it would display in a Web browser. If you want to see the HTML code behind your page, click the Code button at the top of the work area. Choose the Split button to see the HTML code and Design view simultaneously (which you can see in Figure 1-2).



Pages viewed on the World Wide Web may not always look exactly the way they do in the Document window in Dreamweaver because not all browsers support the same HTML features or display them identically. For best results, always test your work in a variety of Web browsers, and design your pages to work best in the browsers that your audience are most likely to use. Fortunately, Dreamweaver includes features that help you target your page designs to specific browsers, such as the Check Target Browsers feature covered in Chapter 3.)

Figure 1-2:
When you
select text
in Design
view, the
correspond-
ing text
is auto-
matically
highlighted
in Code
view.



Customizing the interface

The docking panels, palettes, and bars in Dreamweaver provide easy access to most of the program's features. The default settings put the Properties inspector at the bottom of the page, the Insert bar at the top, and the panels on the right, but you can move these elements around the screen by selecting them and use drag and drop to move them to another part of the screen. You can also close any or all the panels on the right by clicking the tiny Options icon in the top right of each panel and selecting Close Panel from the drop-down list (it looks like three bullet points with lines next to them and a little arrow underneath, and it's really, really small). You can close them all at once by choosing Window>Hide Panels (or by clicking the arrow in the middle of the row of panels), and you can access any or all the panels through the various options on the Window menu. If you want to open a particular panel — the CSS Styles panel, for example — choose Window>CSS Styles and it expands to become visible on your screen. The Properties inspector, Insert bar, and panels are integral parts of this program, and you find a lot more information about them throughout the book. Check out the Cheat Sheet at the front of this book for a handy reference to the Properties inspector options. In Chapter 2, you discover how to use some of the most common features, such as the icon for inserting an image on the Insert bar at the top of the screen.

The Insert bar

The Insert bar, located at the top of the screen, comes with eight *subcategories*, each with a different set of icons representing common features. Click the small arrow to the right of the name to access the drop-down list to switch from displaying the buttons on one subcategory to showing the buttons for another. The options are

- ✓ **Common bar:** Displays icons for many of the most common features, including links, tables, and images.
- ✓ **Layout bar:** Displays layer and table options essential for creating complex layouts.
- ✓ **Forms bar:** Surprise! This one features all the most common form elements, such as radio buttons and boxes.
- ✓ **Text bar:** Displays common text-formatting features, including paragraphs, breaks, and lists.
- ✓ **HTML bar:** Offers a mishmash of raw HTML, such as rules, tables, frames and, scripts.
- ✓ **Application:** Use these options when building dynamic Web pages powered by database material.
- ✓ **Flash elements:** A single icon allows you to place a Flash file on your Web page.
- ✓ **Favorites:** Right-click (Windows) or Control+click (Mac) to customize your most-used HTML elements.

At the very end of the drop-down list, you find the Show as Tabs option, which enables you to display the names of the Insert bars as tabs across the top of the screen, as shown in Figure 1-3.

The Favorites Insert bar is blank by default, and you can customize it to hold your own collection of options. Simply right-click (Windows) or Control+click (Mac) in the bar and you can easily customize this bar.

Throughout the book, I refer to these Insert bars by their full names, such as the Forms Insert bar or the Layout Insert bar. You find more information on each of these in their relevant chapters. For example, Chapter 12 covers the Forms Insert bar in detail; and Chapters 13, 14, and 15 cover the Application Insert bar.

Figure 1-3 shows the Insert bar with the Common options visible and each name displayed in a tab across the top of the screen.

Figure 1-3:
The
Common
Insert bar
provides
access for
forms,
tables,
images,
and more.



The Properties inspector

The Properties inspector is docked at the bottom of the page in Dreamweaver. If you prefer it at the top of the screen, you can drag it up there, and it locks into place; but I rather like that it's handy, yet out of the way, at the bottom of the screen.

The Properties inspector displays the properties of a selected element on the page. A *property* is a characteristic of HTML — such as the alignment of an image or the size of a cell in a table — that you can assign to an element on your Web page. If you know HTML, you recognize these as HTML *attributes*.

When you select any element on a page (such as an image), the inspector changes to display the relevant properties for that element, such as the height and width of an image. You can alter these properties by changing the fields in the Properties inspector. You can also set links and create image maps using the options in the Properties inspector.

Figure 1-4 shows the image options displayed in the Properties inspector, including height and width, alignment, and the *URL* (Uniform Resource Locator or, more simply, Web address) to which the image links.



At the bottom-right corner of the Properties inspector, you see a small arrow. Click this arrow (or double-click in any open inspector space) to reveal additional attributes that let you control more advanced features, such as the image map options when a graphic is selected.

Figure 1-4:
The Properties inspector displays the attributes of any selected element, such as an image shown here.

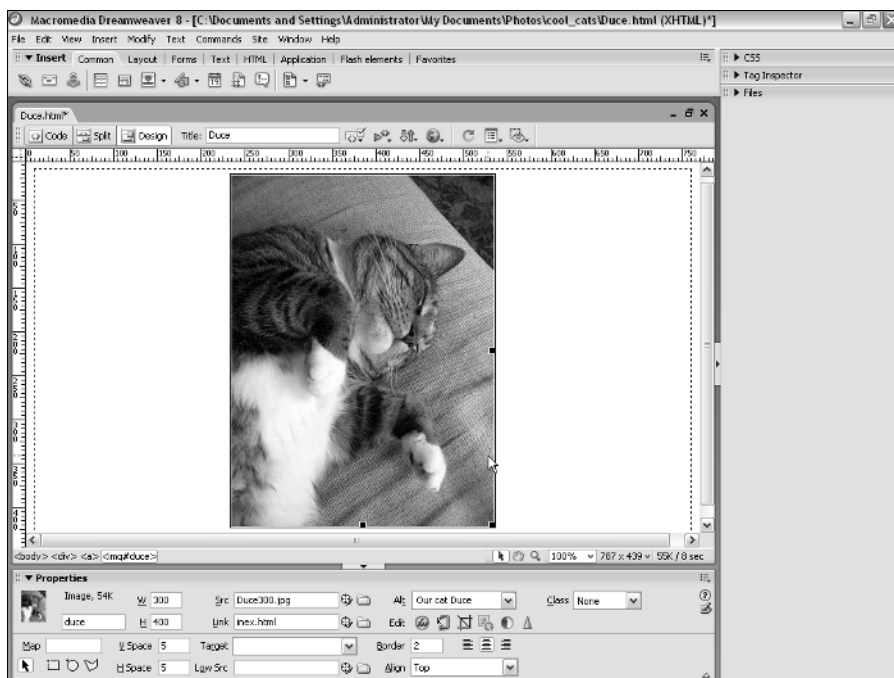


Figure 1-5 shows the Properties inspector when you select a table. Notice that the fields in the inspector reflect the attributes of an HTML table, such as the number of columns and rows. (See Chapter 6 to find out more about HTML tables.)

Figure 1-5:
Attributes of a selected HTML table or cell.



The Docking panels

The Docking panels, shown in Figure 1-6, are located to the right of the work area (although you can easily move them anywhere on the screen). The Docking panels display a variety of important features in Dreamweaver, including all the files and folders in a site (in the Files panel), Cascading Style Sheets (in the CSS

panel) and more. You can open and close panels by clicking the small arrow to the left of the panel's name. To display more panels, select the panel name from the Window menu. To hide all the visible panels at once, click the tab with the small arrow in the middle, left of the row of panels.

Figure 1-6: The Docking panels provide easy access to CSS, tags, and all the files in a Web site, such as the list shown here in Kathryn LeMieux's cartoon site.



The following list offers a description of some of the elements that you access through the Docking panels (the others are described in greater detail in their respective sections of the book).

- ✓ **Files panel:** Shown in Figure 1-6, the Files panel lists all the folders and files in a Web site and helps you manage the structure and organization of the site. You can move files in and out of folders and even create new folders in this panel, and Dreamweaver automatically adjusts any related links. The Files panel is also where you access FTP (*file transfer protocol*) capabilities to upload or download files from a server. You can use the Connect button at the top of this panel to dial quickly into your server and use the Get Files and Put Files arrows to transfer pages. (See Chapter 2 for more about the Files panel and built-in FTP features.)



- ✓ **Assets panel:** The Assets panel, shown in Figure 1-7, automatically lists all the images, colors, external links, multimedia files, scripts, templates, and Library items in a Web site. You can add a stored item, such as a graphic, to a Web page simply by dragging the element into the work area. You find more on templates and Library items in Chapter 4.

These features work only if you define your site using the Site Definition dialog box (by choosing Site→Manage Sites) and then identifying the main folder of your Web site. If you find that the Library or other options aren't available, follow the steps in Chapter 2 to define your site (a setup process you should go through for all your sites).

- ✓ **CSS panel:** The Cascading Style Sheets panel includes Layers and CSS Styles panels. CSS styles are similar to style sheets used in word processing and desktop publishing programs, such as Microsoft Word and QuarkXPress. You define a style and name it, and the style is then included in the CSS Styles panel (see Figure 1-8). The Layers panel provides access to layers options, which enable you to precisely position elements on a page. (For more information about CSS and layers, see Chapters 8 and 9.)

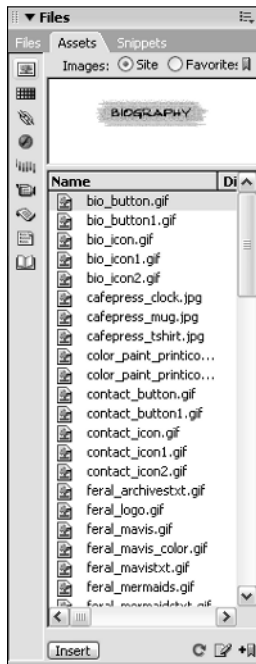


Figure 1-7:
The Assets
panel
presents
like items in
a central
place.

✔ **Tag panel:** The Tag panel provides access to attributes and behaviors. In Dreamweaver, *behaviors* are scripts (usually written in JavaScript) that you can apply to objects to add interactivity to your Web page. Essentially, a behavior is made up of a specified event that, when triggered, causes an action. For example, an *event* may be a visitor clicking an image, and the resulting action may be that a sound file plays.

Figure 1-9 shows the Tag panel's Attributes tab, which displays all the attributes of a selected element. You can change attributes in the Attributes tab as well as in the Properties inspector. (Chapter 9 provides more information on creating and applying behaviors.)

Figure 1-8:
The CSS panel makes it easy to manage styles and layers.



Figure 1-9:
The Attributes panel displays all the attributes of a selected element.



- ✔ **History panel:** The History panel, shown in Figure 1-10, keeps track of every action you take in Dreamweaver. You can use the History panel to undo multiple steps at once, to replay steps you performed, and to automate tasks. Dreamweaver automatically records the last 50 steps, but you can increase or decrease that number by choosing Edit⇨Preferences⇨General (Windows) or Dreamweaver⇨Preferences⇨General (Mac), and changing the maximum number of history steps.
- ✔ **Application panel:** This panel includes the Database, Bindings, Server Behaviors, and Components panels. These features are used only if you work with a database-driven site (the most technically complex of the features covered in this book). You find more on database options in Chapters 13, 14, and 15.
- ✔ **Frames panel:** If you create a site design that uses *frames*, a set of HTML tags that enable you to divide a screen into sections made up of separate pages, you use the Frames panel to manage the different pages on the screen, such as the three frames shown in Figure 1-11.

Figure 1-10:
The History
panel keeps
track of
all your
actions in
Dream-
weaver.

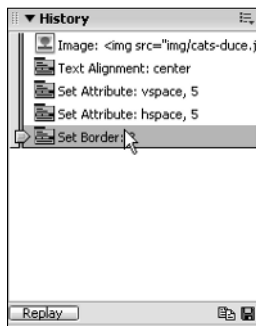
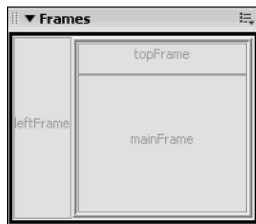


Figure 1-11:
The Frames
panel helps
manage the
different
pages that
make up a
frameset.



The menu bar

At the top of the screen, the Dreamweaver menu bar provides easy access to all the features that you find in the Insert bar, Properties inspector, and panels, as well as a few others that are available only from the menu. The following sections provide a general description of each of the menu options.

The File menu

You find many familiar options, such as New, Open, and Save, on the File menu, shown in Figure 1-12. You also find a Revert option, which is similar to the Revert feature in Adobe Photoshop. This sophisticated undo feature enables you to return your page quickly to its last-saved version if you don't like the changes you made.

The File menu also includes access to Design Notes, a unique feature that associates private notes with HTML and other files. Take a look at Chapter 4 for more information about Design Notes and other Dreamweaver features that make collaboration easier.

You can also find features useful for checking your work in Web browsers on the File menu. Most Web design programs include some way of previewing your work in a browser. Dreamweaver takes this feature two steps further by enabling you to check your work in a number of browsers and even test the compatibility of your pages in different versions of different browsers.

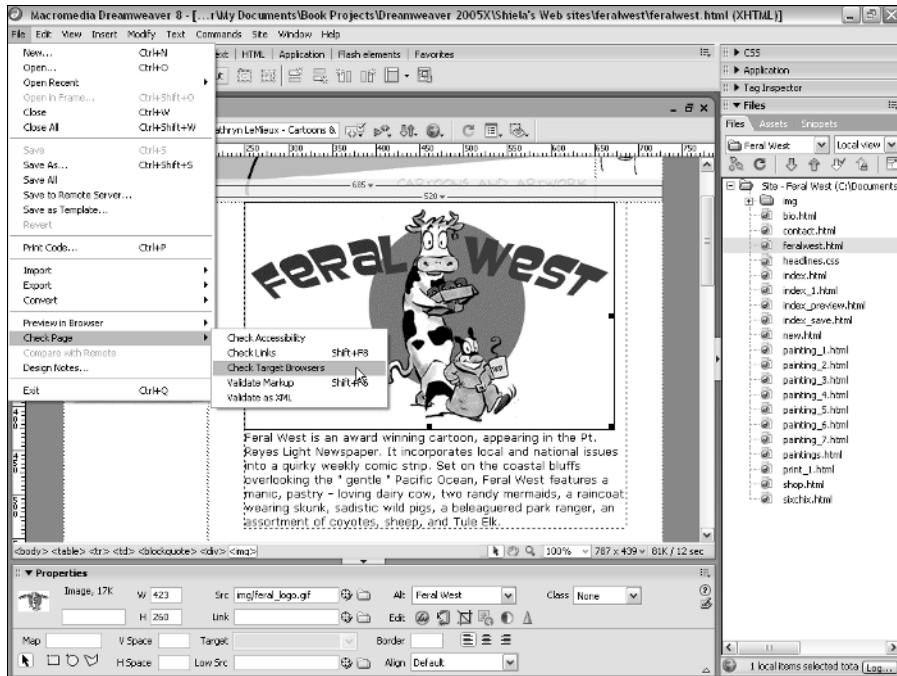
Figure 1-12 shows the Check Page options, which includes Check Accessibility, Check Links, and Check Target Browsers — all great tools for testing your work. The Check Target Browsers option enables you to specify a browser and version, such as Safari 2.0, Netscape 6, or Internet Explorer 6.0. When you do a browser check, Dreamweaver generates a report listing any HTML features you use that the chosen browser doesn't support.

The Check Links feature verifies all the links in a site and produces a report with all broken and unresolved links. The Check Accessibility feature checks to make sure the page displays properly in browsers for the blind and other systems for the disabled.

The Edit menu

The Edit menu contains many features that you may find familiar, such as Cut, Copy, and Paste. One feature that may be new to you is the Edit with External Editor option, which enables you to open an element in another program, such as an image editor, and make changes without ever closing Dreamweaver.

Figure 1-12:
The Check
Target
Browsers
feature
produces a
list of HTML
tags that
older
browsers do
not support.



You also find the Preferences settings on the Edit menu (Windows) or on the Dreamweaver (Mac). Before you start working with a new program, go through all the Preferences options to ensure that the program is set up the best way for you.

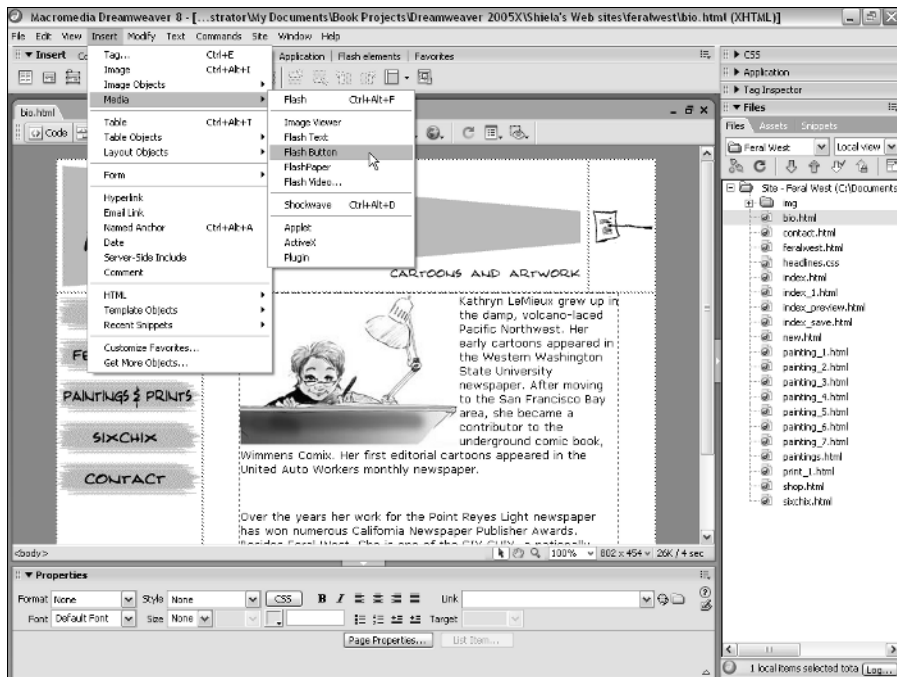
The View menu

The View menu provides access to some helpful design features, such as grids and rulers, as well as the new zoom features. The Visual Aides option on the View menu gives you the option of turning on or off the borders of your HTML tables, frames, and layers, as well as controlling visibility of image maps and other invisible elements. This option is useful because you often want to set the border attribute of these HTML tags to zero so that they're not visible when the page displays in a browser. However, while you work on the design of your page in Dreamweaver, seeing where elements, such as tables and layers, start and stop is very useful. Checking the frame options on the View menu lets you see the borders in Dreamweaver even if you don't want them visible to your site's visitors.

The Insert menu

As shown in Figure 1-13, the Insert menu offers access to a number of features unique to Web design. From this menu, you can insert elements such as a horizontal rule, a Java applet, a form, or a plug-in file.

Figure 1-13:
The Insert menu makes adding a variety of elements to your pages, including multimedia files, easy.



Dreamweaver offers extra support for inserting Flash and Shockwave Director files, both of which are products from Macromedia. (You can find out more about using multimedia files in Chapter 11.)

The Modify menu

The Modify menu is another place where you can view and change object properties, such as the table attributes shown in Figure 1-14. The properties (usually called *attributes* in HTML) let you define elements on a page by setting alignment, height, width, and other specifications.

Page Properties

To alter properties for an entire page, such as text and link colors, use the Page Properties dialog box shown in Figure 1-15. Available from the Modify menu or by clicking the Page Properties button at the bottom of the Properties inspector, the Page Properties panel also enables you to specify the background color or to use an image as a page background.

Figure 1-14:
The Modify
menu
makes
changing
object
properties,
such as
the table
attributes
shown
here, easy.

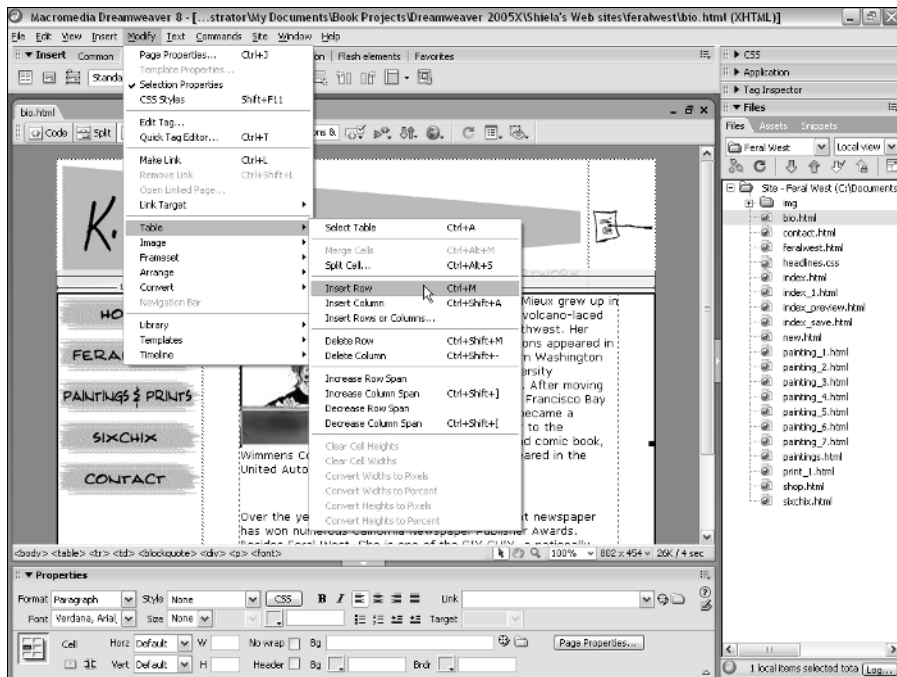
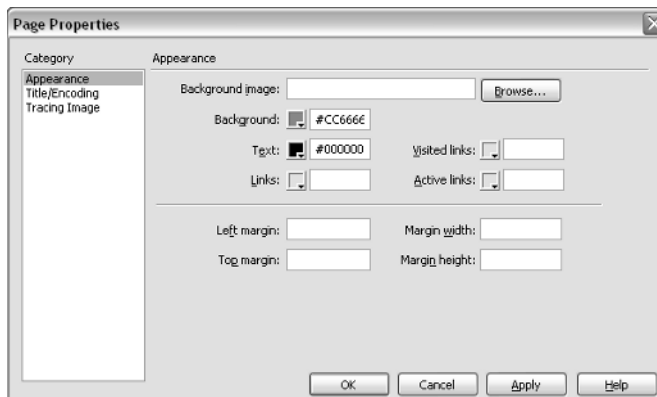


Figure 1-15:
The Page
Properties
dialog box
provides
access to
background
and text
color
attributes.



The Text menu

You can easily format text with the Text menu by using simple options, such as bold and italic, as well as more complex features, such as font styles and custom style sheets. Text formatting options have evolved dramatically on the Web. Just a few years ago, you didn't even have the option of specifying a particular font style or controlling leading and spacing. Today you have more control than ever over the look of your Web pages, although these options aren't yet universally supported. The Text menu also features options that

enable you to quickly create headers and subheads, check spelling, and create lists.

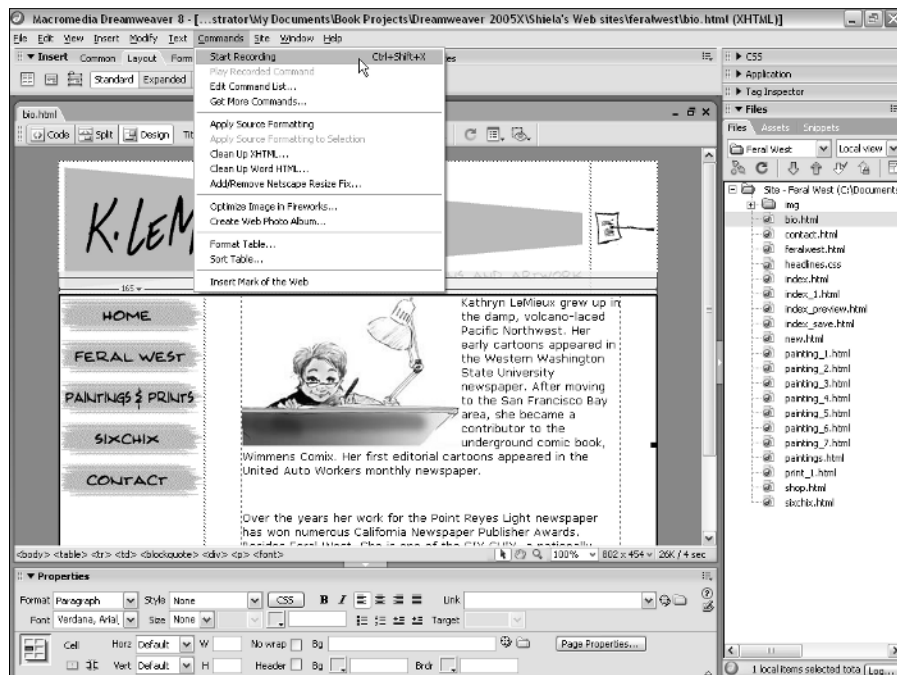
The Commands menu

The Commands menu, shown in Figure 1-16, provides access to a host of options in Dreamweaver. These options include the Start and Play Recording features, which let you quickly save a series of steps and then repeat them. To use this feature, choose **Commands**→**Start Recording**, perform whatever actions you want to record — for example, copying and pasting some text — and then choose **Stop Recording**. To perform any action again, choose **Commands**→**Play Recorded Command**. You can download an action by choosing **Commands**→**Get More Commands**, which automatically launches a browser and takes you to the Macromedia Web site. You can download new commands from the Web site that add functionality to Dreamweaver.

The **Clean Up XHTML** and **Clean up Word HTML** options on the Commands menu help you correct incorrect or redundant HTML code, and the **Clean Up Word HTML** feature is designed especially to correct the common problems caused by the **Save As HTML** feature in Microsoft Word.

The **Add/Remove Netscape Resize Fix** option on this menu inserts or removes a JavaScript script designed to help correct an old Netscape bug by automatically reloading the page when users resize their browser windows.

Figure 1-16:
The
Commands
menu offers
easy access
to some of
Dream-
weaver's
most
advanced
features.



The Create Web Photo Album option launches Macromedia Fireworks and uses it to automate the creation of a photo album with a series of images. If you choose Optimize Image in Fireworks, a selected image automatically opens in the optimization area in Fireworks. (Both these commands require that you have Fireworks installed.)

The Site menu

The Site menu provides access to the options you need to set up your site, a process required before many of the other Dreamweaver features work properly. (Chapter 2 covers this process.) The Site menu also gives you easy access to the Check In and Check Out features, which are options that can help you keep a team of designers from overwriting each other's work. (Chapter 4 talks about this feature.)

The Window menu

The Window menu lets you control the display of panels and dialog boxes, such as Insert, Properties, and Behaviors. To make these panels visible, select the panel name so that a check mark appears next to the feature you want to display; to hide them, select again to remove the check mark. Other panels and dialog boxes, such as CSS Styles and HTML Code Inspector, are also listed on the Window menu for easy access.

The Help menu

The Help menu provides easy access to help options that can assist you in figuring out many features of Dreamweaver. You also find access to the Dreamweaver template and example files on the Help menu.

Templates and examples provide visual samples of common HTML designs, such as tables and frames, and provide design ideas and great shortcuts for creating complex layouts.

The status bar

The status bar appears at the bottom left of any open Dreamweaver document. On the right end of the status bar, you can see tool icons that control the on-screen display of your document. On the left end, you find a row of HTML codes that indicate how elements on your page are tagged. If you place your cursor in bold text that is centered, for example, the status bar might display `<BODY><CENTER>`. This feature makes double-checking the kind of formatting applied to any element on your page easy.



You can also use the status bar to quickly make a selection on your page. For example, if you click the name of a tag in the status bar, the section of your page where that tag is applied is highlighted. This makes selecting a certain section of a page, such as a page, easier.

Working on Web Pages Created in Another Web Design Program

In theory, all Web design programs should be compatible because HTML files are, at their heart, just ordinary text files. You can open an HTML file in any text editor, including Macintosh TextEdit and Windows Notepad. However, HTML has evolved dramatically over the years and different Web programs follow different standards, which can cause serious conflicts when a page created in one program opens in another.

One of the reasons Dreamweaver is so popular is because it creates very clean code and is considered more accurate and more respectful of HTML standards than other programs. Dreamweaver is also better at creating pages that work in different browsers and on different platforms, but importing files created in another Web program can be challenging, even in Dreamweaver.

To help with the transition, Dreamweaver includes some special features, such as the Clean Up Word HTML option, designed to fix some of the common problems with Microsoft Word's HTML code.



Before you start working on a site that was developed in another program, you need to import the site into Dreamweaver. I recommend you make a backup of the site first so you have a copy of all the original pages (strange things can happen when you open a site created in another program). You find step-by-step instructions for importing an existing Web site in Chapter 2.

The following sections describe the most popular HTML editors and what you need to know if you're moving files from one of these programs to Dreamweaver.

Microsoft FrontPage

Microsoft FrontPage is one of the most popular HTML editors on the market, in large part because it's a part of the immensely popular Microsoft Office. FrontPage offers some powerful features as well as an attractive bundle of programs for Web developers, including Image Composer, a graphics program designed for creating images for the Web. FrontPage also includes Web components that you can use to add interactive features, such as a simple search engine or a discussion area, to your Web site. Web components work only if their corresponding programs reside on the Web server that you use, but many commercial service providers now offer FrontPage Web components.

If you are migrating a site from FrontPage to Dreamweaver, first make note of any FrontPage Web components that you use, such as search engines or forms. Dreamweaver doesn't offer these same built-in features, and you won't be able

to continue editing them in Dreamweaver the way you did in FrontPage. Although you don't need to alter the code for these components, thanks to the Dreamweaver respect for unique code, you can't edit FrontPage's built-in components in Dreamweaver.

If you use CSS or layers in FrontPage, you need to pay special attention to those features as you convert your site to Dreamweaver. Microsoft FrontPage isn't as good as Dreamweaver at creating high-end features that work in both Netscape Navigator and Microsoft Internet Explorer, so you probably want to improve your code if you expect viewers to use any browser other than Internet Explorer. Because CSS and layers are more complex than HTML to code, you probably don't want to edit this code manually — converting from other editors to Dreamweaver can get pretty tricky. Tables can also get messy when you switch from one program to another. In some cases, you may find that the simplest solution is to delete the elements that you created in FrontPage and re-create them in Dreamweaver. (For more on CSS and layers, check out Chapters 8 and 9.)

Microsoft Word

Although Microsoft Word is a word processor and is not considered an HTML editor per se, it does have HTML output capabilities. As a result, you will likely encounter pages that have been created and saved in Microsoft Word at some point. The problems you find in HTML code generated from Word are similar to the problems generated from FrontPage: They both tend to create unusual and sometimes redundant code that deviates from HTML standards. Because Word-generated HTML is so common, Dreamweaver includes a special Clean Up Word HTML command. To use this feature, choose **Commands** → **Clean Up Word HTML** and then specify the code you want altered in the Clean Up Word HTML dialog box. When you use this feature, Dreamweaver removes excess code, which can help your pages load faster and work better in different browsers.



After you use Dreamweaver to clean up Word HTML, you should not expect to edit the file in Word again. The code may be cleaner, but depending on the formatting options you've used, Word may no longer be able to read it.

Adobe GoLive

Adobe GoLive offers some great features for easy page design and a lot of similarities to Dreamweaver, so you should have little if any trouble migrating a site from GoLive to Dreamweaver.

If you have included any JavaScript actions in your pages using GoLive, you may not be able to edit them in Dreamweaver, but the actions should still work when the page displays in a browser. Likewise, CSS and other Dynamic HTML features created in GoLive do not always work well in Dreamweaver unless you know how to edit the code manually. If your page contains any actions or DHTML features, you may find re-creating the page in Dreamweaver your best option.

Not long before the writing of this book, Adobe purchased Macromedia and although, to date, no announcement has been made about changes to GoLive, I imagine that both GoLive and Dreamweaver are likely to see changes in the future that will either make them more compatible or make one of them obsolete. I'm betting on Dreamweaver, not only because I'm the author of this book, but because it has the largest market share; but it's hard to predict what will happen to GoLive, which is also a strong Web design program.

Other HTML editors

In the early days of the Web, lots of different visual HTML editors were being used. Today only a few major ones are left. The few that I discuss here seem to capture most of the market. Still, you may find yourself inheriting sites built in really old editors such as Claris HomePage, or Symantec VisualPage. Each of these programs present fewer problems than either Frontpage or GoLive because they aren't capable of creating the complex, high-end features that are hardest to migrate from one program to another.

For the most part, you can open any HTML page with Dreamweaver and continue developing it with little concern. If you run into problems, remember that you always have the option of re-creating the page from scratch in Dreamweaver — a sure way to get rid of any unwanted code. You may also want to use the Dreamweaver Clean Up XHTML feature to identify potentially problematic code. To use this feature, choose **Commands** → **Clean Up XHTML** and then select the elements you want to alter in the Clean Up HTML dialog box.



No matter what program your site is originally created in, as you consider how best to convert your work into Dreamweaver, pay special attention to unusual code output, nonstandard rules about HTML tags and syntax, and sophisticated features such as CSS, Dynamic HTML, and sophisticated programming, such as ASP, Java, or CGI scripts. These Web page elements are most likely to cause problems when you import them into Dreamweaver.

