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## Dreamweaver Article

### Creating your first website – Part 1: Setting up your site and project files

This tutorial introduces you to the concept of an Adobe Dreamweaver CS3 site and shows you how to set up the project files for the Café Townsend sample website. In Dreamweaver, a site generally consists of two parts: a collection of files on a local computer (the local site) and a location on a remote web server to which you upload files when you're ready to make them publicly available (the remote site). You use the Dreamweaver Files panel to manage the files for your site.

The most common approach to creating a website with Dreamweaver is to create and edit pages on your local drive, and then upload copies of those pages to a remote web server for viewing on the web. In this tutorial you'll learn only how to set up the local site so you can begin building web pages right away. Later, after you've completed the website, you'll learn how to create a remote site so that you can upload your files to a web server.

In this tutorial, you will complete the following tasks:

- Learn about Dreamweaver sites
- Set up your project files
- Define a local folder

#### Requirements

To complete this tutorial you will need to install the following software and files:

#### Dreamweaver CS3

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#### Sample files:

[cafe\\_townsend\\_cs3.zip](#) (ZIP, 2.1MB)

#### Note:

The Café Townsend tutorial files are also installed with Dreamweaver CS3. If you installed Dreamweaver to the default location, you can access the sample files by going to C:\Program Files\Adobe\Adobe Dreamweaver CS3\Sample\_files\cafe\_townsend (Windows) or Macintosh HD/Applications/Adobe Dreamweaver CS3/Sample\_files/cafe\_townsend (Mac OS X). If you use the files that come with Dreamweaver instead of the ones in the ZIP file provided with this tutorial, some file locations will differ in the instructions.

#### Learn about Dreamweaver sites

In Dreamweaver, the term *site*

can refer either to a website or a local storage location for the documents that belong to a website. The latter is what you need to establish before you begin building your website. A Dreamweaver site organizes all the documents associated with your website and lets you track and maintain links, manage files, share files, and transfer your site files to a web server. Think of your Dreamweaver site as the "bucket" that contains all of the files and assets for your website.

A typical Dreamweaver site has three parts, depending on your computing environment and the type of website you are developing:

- **Local folder**  
is your working directory. Dreamweaver refers to this folder as your local site. The local folder is usually a folder on your hard drive.
- **Remote folder**  
is where you store your files for testing, production, collaboration, and publication purposes, depending on your environment. Dreamweaver refers to this folder as your remote site. The remote folder is a folder on the computer that's running your web server. The computer running the web server is often (but not always) the computer that makes your site publicly available on the web.
- **Folder for dynamic pages**  
(Testing Server folder) is the folder where Dreamweaver processes dynamic pages. This folder is often the same folder as the remote folder. You do not need to worry about this folder unless you are developing a web application. For more information about the Testing Server folder, see [Set up a testing server](#) in Dreamweaver Help.

You can set up a Dreamweaver site by using the Site Definition Wizard, which guides you through the setup process, or by using the Site Definition Advanced settings, which let you set up local, remote, and testing folders individually, as necessary. In this tutorial you'll use the Site Definition Advanced settings to set up a local folder for your project files. In a later tutorial you'll learn how to set up a remote folder so that you can publish your pages to a web server and make them publicly available.

For more information about Dreamweaver sites in general, see [Setting up a Dreamweaver site](#) in Dreamweaver Help.

### Set up your project files

When you create a local site, you can place any existing assets (images or other pieces of content) in the local site's root folder (the main folder for the site). That way when you add content to your pages, the assets are there and ready for you to use.

The sample files included in the download ZIP file (and with Dreamweaver) contain assets for the sample website you'll build using this tutorial series. The first step in creating the site is to copy the sample files to an appropriate folder on your hard drive:

1. Create a new folder called **local\_sites** on your hard drive:
  - **(Windows)** C:\Documents and Settings\*your\_user\_name*\My Documents\local\_sites
  - **(Mac OS X)** *Macintosh HD*/Users/*your\_user\_name*/Documents/local\_sites

#### Note:

On Mac OS X, there's a folder called Sites already in your user folder. Don't use this folder as your local folder; the Sites folder is where you place your pages to make them publicly accessible when you're using your Mac as a web server.

2. Download and unzip the [cafe\\_townsend.zip](#) sample files if you haven't done so already.
3. Copy the `cafe_townsend` folder into the `local_sites` folder.

The `cafe_townsend` folder is the folder you will use as the root folder (main folder) for your Dreamweaver site.

#### Note:

The local "root" folder of your Dreamweaver site is often the main or top-level folder for your website. It usually corresponds to an identical folder on the remote site (web server). The root folder also usually defines the first part of your website's URL following the domain name. For example, if your local root folder is called `mywebsite` and you have an identical root folder defined on the remote site, the URL for your website would be something like <http://www.yahoo.com/mywebsite>.

In some cases, the local root folder may not have an exact name equivalent on the remote site. For example, if you own the domain name [www.mywebsite.com](http://www.mywebsite.com), with a remote root directory of `public_html`, your local root folder could still be called `mywebsite`. The files in both the local and remote root directories would be identical; only the folder names (`public_html` on the remote site and `mywebsite` on the local computer) would be different.

## Define a local folder

You must define a Dreamweaver local folder for each new website you create. The local folder is the folder that you use to store working copies of site files on your hard drive. If you don't define a local folder, certain features in Dreamweaver cannot work properly.

Defining a local folder also allows you to manage your files and to transfer files to and from your web server by using a number of file-transfer methods.

Next, define the `cafe_townsend` folder you copied into the `local_sites` folder as your local folder:

1. Start Dreamweaver and select Site > Manage Sites. The Manage Sites dialog box appears.
2. Click the New button and select Site. The Site Definition dialog box appears.
3. If the wizard (Basic tab) appears, click the Advanced tab and select Local Info from the Category list (it should be the default).
4. In the Site Name text box, enter **Cafe Townsend** as the name of the site.
5. In the Local Root Folder text box, specify the `cafe_townsend` folder that you copied to the `local_sites` folder in the previous section. You can click the folder icon to browse to and select the folder, or enter a path in the Local Root Folder text box.
6. In the Default Images Folder text box, specify the images folder that already exists in the `cafe_townsend` folder. You can click the folder icon to browse to and select the folder, or enter a path in the Default Images Folder text box.

The Site Definition dialog box should now look like Figure 1.

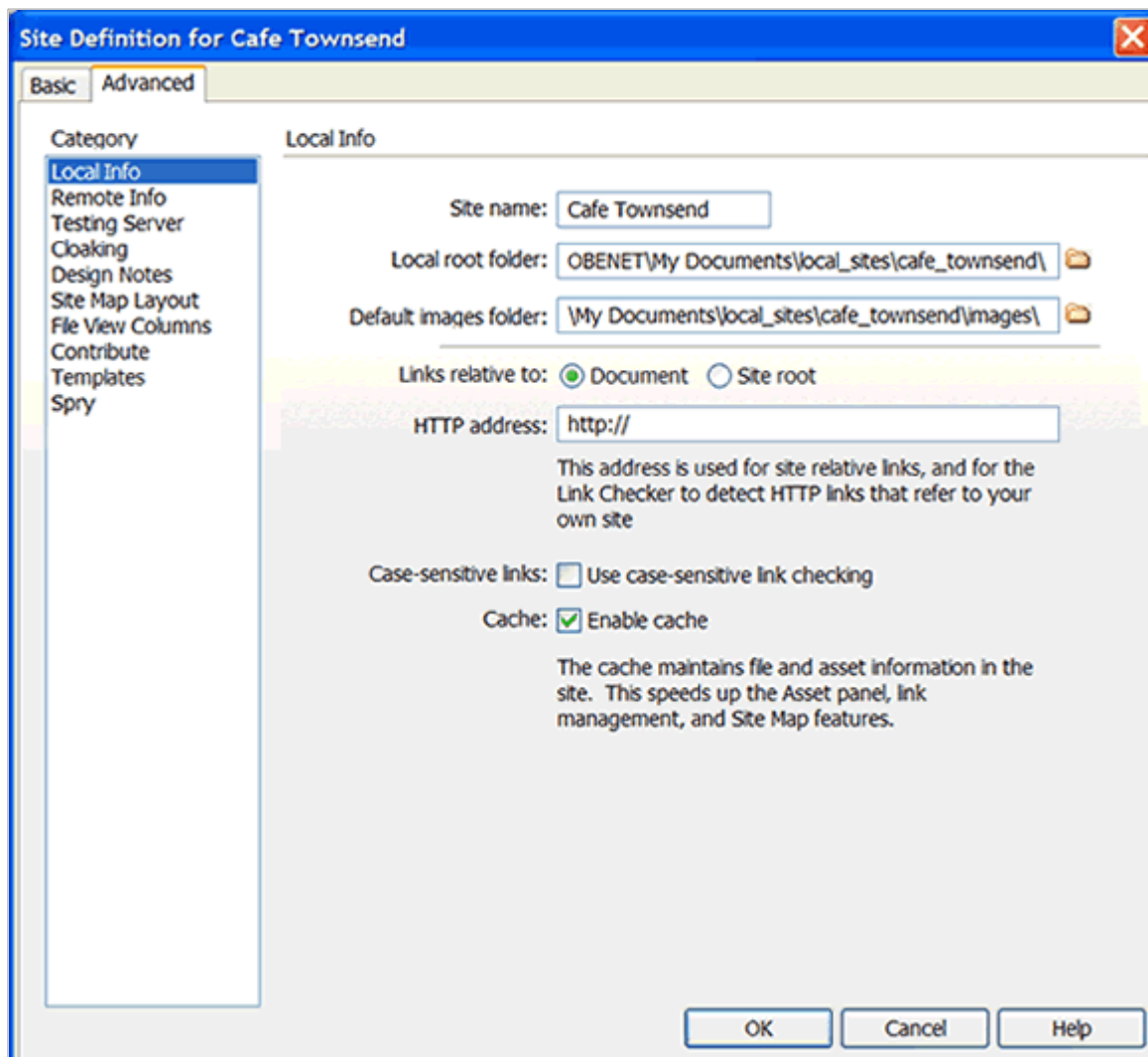
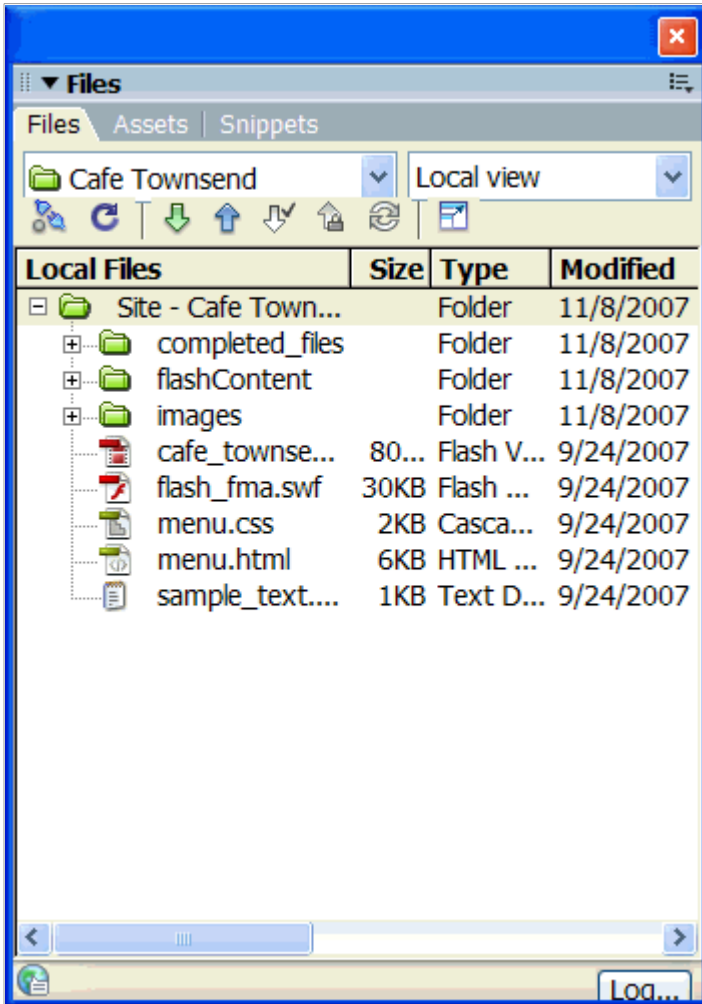


Figure 1. The Site Definition dialog box at this point.

7. Click OK. The Manage Sites dialog box appears, showing your new site.
8. Click Done to close the Manage Sites dialog box.

The Files panel in Dreamweaver now shows the new local root folder for your current site (see Figure 2). The file list in the Files panel acts as a file manager, allowing you to copy, paste, delete, move, and open files just as you would on a desktop.



**Figure 2.** List of files in the Files panel.

For more information about how the Files panel works, see [Work with files in the Files panel](#) in Dreamweaver Help.

You've now defined a local root folder for your site. The local root folder is the place on your local computer where you keep the working copies of your web pages. Later, if you want to publish your pages and make them publicly available, you'll need to define a remote folder—a place on a remote computer, running a web server that will hold published copies of your local files.

Now that you have finished defining your site, you can read the next installment of this tutorial series, [Creating your first website – Part 2: Creating the page layout](#).

**Note:**

You can follow the rest of the tutorials in this series to create the Café Townsend sample site, or you can work on your own web pages. When you're finished creating and editing pages, proceed to defining a remote folder on a server and publishing your pages. For more information, see [Creating your first website – Part 5: Publishing your site](#).

**About the author**

Jon Michael Varese is a Senior Technical Writer at Adobe, and Lead Writer for Dreamweaver. He has written web and print documentation for Dreamweaver, Fireworks, FreeHand, Flash, and ColdFusion. In the past he has held such illustrious positions as baker, clown, and funeral attendant. In addition to writing web tutorials, he is currently at work on his Ph.D. in 19th-century British Literature.