

Introduction to Cascading Style Sheets

What is CSS? CSS (Cascading Style Sheets) is a supplementary extension to HTML allowing web designers to style specific elements on their pages and throughout their site. CSS defines the “style” of a website--elements like typography, color, spacing, positioning, etc. HTML can be thought of as the content or structure with an organization of elements (tags) and CSS applies the style or formatting.

Why use CSS:

- 1. It has become the standard in web design and development:** tags are being eliminated and may not be supported by browsers in the future.
- 2. Faster loading for your webpages:** less code and smaller pages
- 3. Separation of design from content:** ability to control an entire site by only modifying a single file. If you decide later to change the font color of all the menus in the site, it can be done in one easy step.

How CSS works:

CSS is applied to an existing HTML web document--both working in tandem to display web pages.

CSS

```
h1 {  
  font-family: Arial;  
  text-align: center;  
}  
p {  
  font-family: Times;  
  text-align: left;  
}
```

style



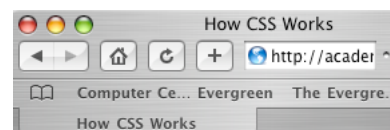
HTML

```
<h1>  
This is Header 1  
text.</h1>  
<p>  
This is Paragraph  
text.</p>
```

structure



Web Browser



This is Header 1 text.

This is Paragraph text.

webpage

Mechanics of Cascading Style Sheets

"CSS is a simple mechanism for controlling the style of a Web document without compromising its structure." (Webmonkey)

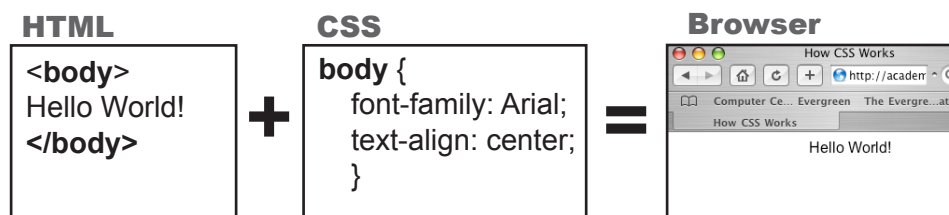
How to use CSS:

CSS can be applied to an HTML document in three different ways.

1. Using an HTML tag - redefine an existing HTML tag, e.g. <body>.

Use the existing HTML tags as selectors to define the elements of your site.

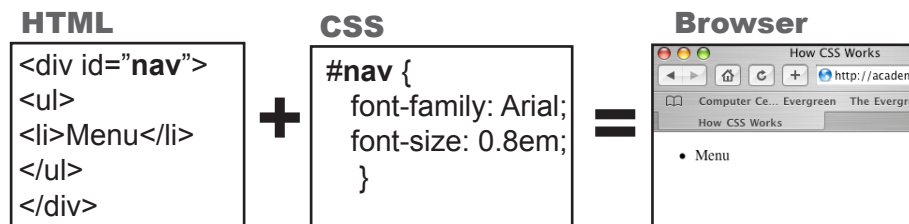
HTML Example:



2. Creating an ID attribute in a tag - create your own selector to define.

The created ID can only be used once in a page and typically works with blocks of content (e.g. using a <div> tag to define the navigational "nav" bar/menu). The pound sign (#) indicates an ID selector in your stylesheet.

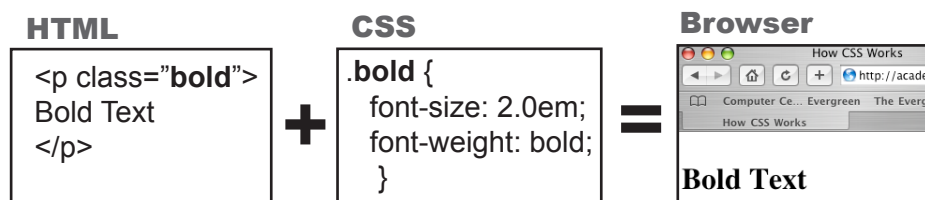
ID Example:



3. Creating a CLASS attribute in a tag - create your own selector to define.

The created CLASS can be re-used throughout your document. Let's say you want certain words to be bold and larger on your page--create a CLASS, give it a name, and you can apply it as many times as you like on the same page. The CLASS selector name is preceded by a period (.) in your stylesheet.

CLASS Example:



DEFINITIONS

Elements -->

Elements are the specific areas in your web page that you can define with tags. They act like labels that identify and structure the different parts of a web page.

Examples:

body, paragraph, images, links, sections and areas you define.

Tag -->

Tags are the principle elements that make up (X)HTML or web pages. They consist of an opening tag (the element's name and attributes, if any) and a closing tag (a forward slash, followed by the element's name) on either side of your content. They are enclosed within <> symbols and they structure and define your content.

Example:

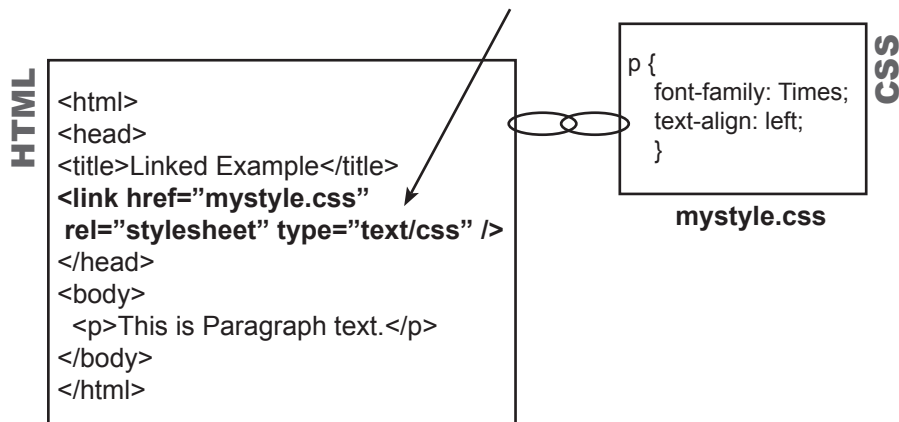
<p>Paragraph Text</p>

How to Apply CSS to your HTML:

1. LINKED - Linking to an external CSS file (or importing) in the html header is the most commonly used method -- recommended for use in the overall web site.

Example of standard syntax for linking to an external style sheet:

```
<link href="mystyle.css" rel="stylesheet" type="text/css" />
```



DEFINITIONS

Tag Attribute -->

Attributes are contained within the opening tag and provide more information about an element. An attribute also has a value. The value is usually enclosed within quotation marks.

Example:

```

```

"img" is the element, "src" is an attribute, and "green.jpg" is the value.

2. EMBEDDED - Use the <style></style> tag embedded in the html header of your HTML document. Used internally for individual web pages.

Example of internal style sheet:

```
<style type="text/css">
p {
    font-family: Times;
    text-align: left;
}
</style>
```

```
<html>
<head>
<title>Embedded Example</title>
<style type="text/css">
    p {
        font-family: Times;
        text-align: left;
    }
</style>
</head>
<body>
<p>This is Paragraph text.</p>
</body>
</html>
```

CASCADING & OVERRIDING

The later your CSS style appears, the more precedence or importance it has. Locally (inline) applied styles have the most precedence and will override any styles applied earlier in your document. Multiple style sheets can be applied to web pages -- this is where the term cascading comes from.

3. INLINE - Use the "style" attribute in any tag locally. Use for specific words, phrases, or paragraphs. It is the least used.

Example of applying local style:

```
<p style="font-family:Times;
text-align:left"></p>
```

```
<html>
<head>
<title>Inline Example</title>
</head>
<body>
<p style="font-family: Times;
text-align: left">
    This is Paragraph text.</p>
</body>
</html>
```

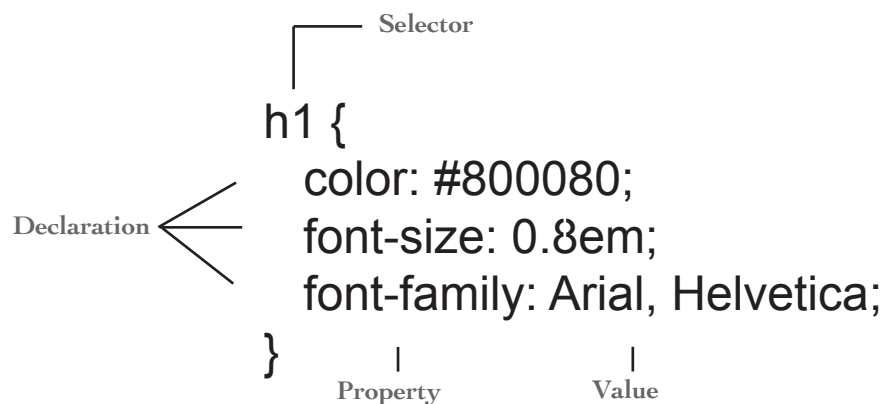
CSS Anatomy and Syntax:

CSS syntax works in the form of rules (*see example below*). Rules are composed of **selectors** and **declarations**.

A CSS declaration has two parts enclosed within an opening and closing curly bracket {}:

1. a **property** (i.e. "color") and
2. a **value** (i.e. "green")

Example of the anatomy of a CSS Rule:



DEFINITIONS

Selector -->

The **selector** is the element to which the CSS will be applied. It is referenced in the HTML by either a tag or a tag attribute.

Example:

p {color: #FF0;}, the "p" is the selector, referencing all paragraph tags in your web site.

ADDING COMMENTS TO YOUR STYLE SHEETS

It's a useful practice to include comments in your style sheets to help you quickly identify and remind yourself of the different elements or specific areas/pages in your site. You can insert a comment between rules in your style sheet by typing `/*` to begin your comments and `*/` to signal the end of your comments.

Example:

```

/* applies to the nav bar on home.htm */
.redcolor {background:red;font-style:bold}
  
```

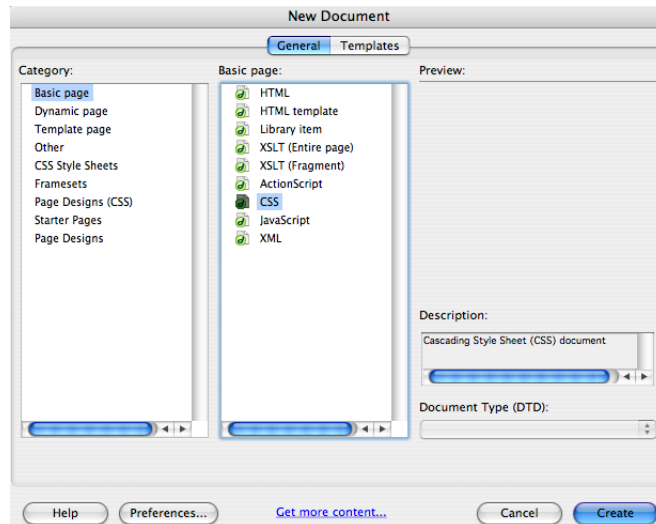
New CSS File

We recommend setting up a CSS file at the same time a new site is started.

Creating a New CSS File from the File Menu:

1. Select **File > New...**

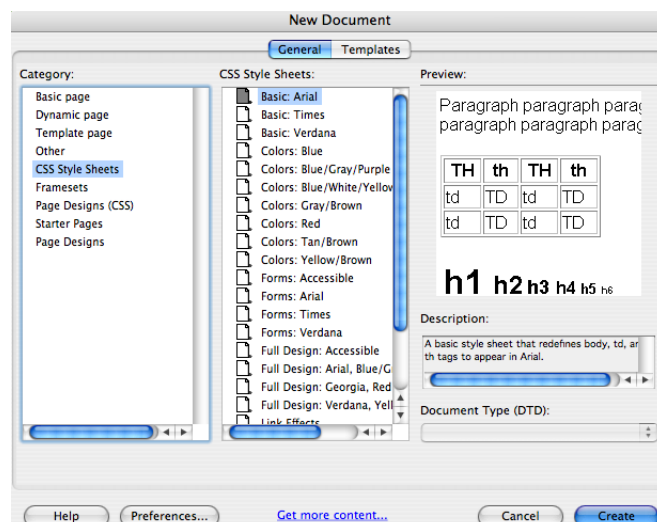
2. From the “General” tab (at the top of the window), select **Basic Page** under the left Category column and **CSS** in the middle column. Then click **Create**.



3. Select **File > Save**. Save the file to your site folder with a .css ending/ extension.

Note: You can also select a pre-made CSS Style Sheet (example below).

Now all you need to do is attach the new file (see next page).

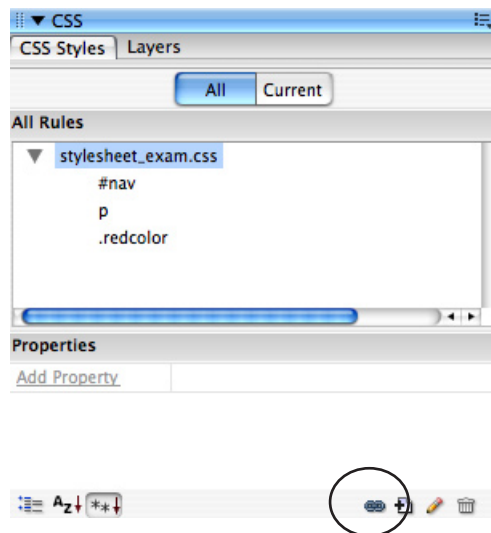


Attaching a CSS File

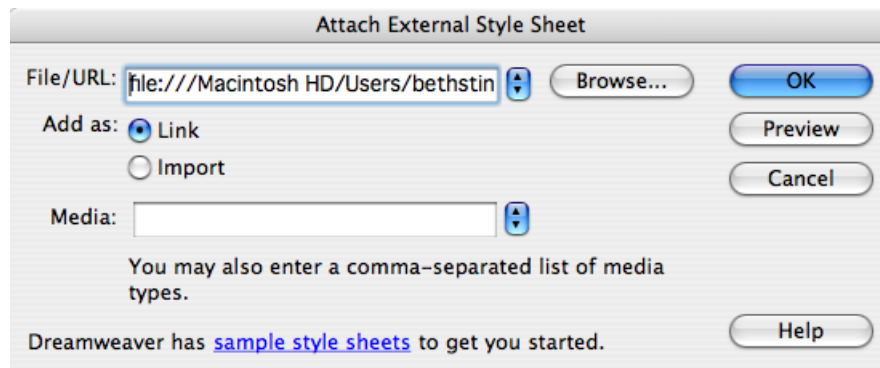
Style sheets can be attached or linked in Dreamweaver, or attached manually in the HTML header by switching to code view: `<link href="mystyle.css" rel="stylesheet" type="text/css">`. New or existing CSS files can be attached.

Attaching a CSS File in the CSS Styles Panel:

1. Make sure the HTML document you want to attach to is open and is the active document.



2. Click the **Attach Style Sheet** button, located at the bottom of the CSS Styles Panel.



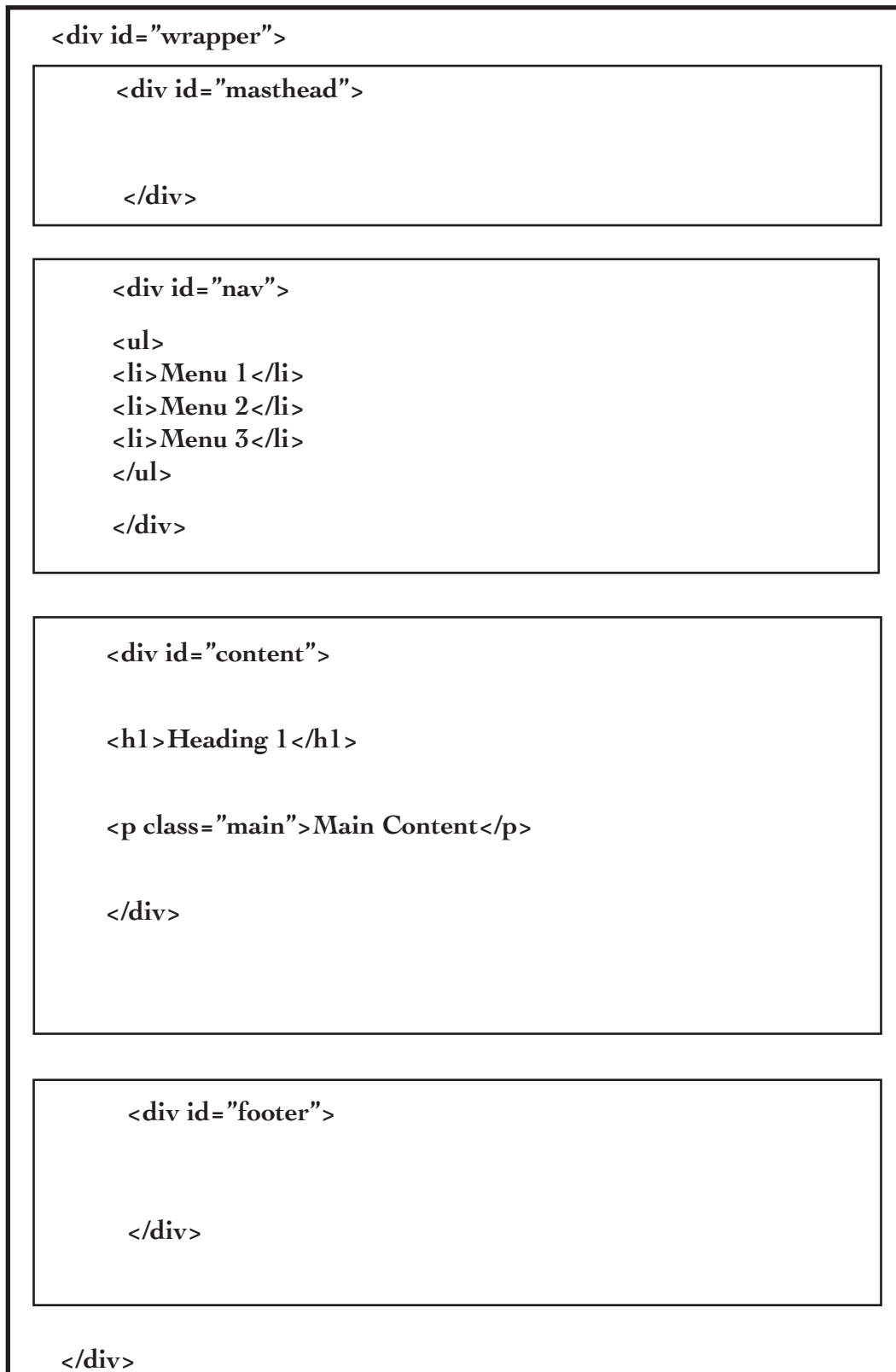
3. Click **Browse...** and navigate to your CSS file. Click **Choose**.
4. Select **Add as a "Link."** Click **OK**.

Note: You should see your CSS file (and rules) displayed in the CSS Styles Panel. Also, in Code View, take note of the HTML added to your header:

```
<link href="mystyle.css" rel="stylesheet" type="text/css">
```

Typical Document Structure Using IDs

<body>



</body>