



# Dreamweaver MX Designing and Implementing a Web Site That Uses Frames

Skills for the Electronic Workplace

---

## Contents

Designing the Layout of the Screen.....	2
Setting Up the Frames.....	2
Frame Properties .....	3
Frame Names .....	3
Attaching a Web Page to a Frame.....	5
Web Pages Created Directly in a Frame .....	5
Modifying the Frame Borders.....	6
Changing the Background Colour of a Document in a Frame.....	7
Links .....	7
Redirecting Links to a Particular Frame .....	8
Title Attributes for Frames.....	9
Leaving a Framed Page.....	10
A Link to Another Page .....	10
Browsers That Don't Support Frames .....	11
No-Frames Content.....	11

---

**Copyright © 2002 IST**

Permission to use this document for non-commercial purposes, in original or modified form, is granted, provided that the original source of the document is acknowledged as Skills for the Electronic Workplace, Information Systems and Technology, University of Waterloo.

## Dreamweaver Frames

Frames provide a way to divide a browser window into multiple regions, each of which can display a different HTML document. In the most common use of frames, one frame displays a document containing navigation controls, while another frame displays a document with content and perhaps a third frame may contain the logo and title of the website. These frames together are called a frameset.

A site that appears in a browser as a single page comprised of three frames actually consists of at least four separate HTML documents. When you design a page using framesets, you must save the frameset file and the three documents containing the content that initially appears inside the frames.

Frequently, the document displayed in the top frame never changes as the visitor navigates the site. The side frame serves as a navigation bar containing links to other pages that are displayed in the main content frame.

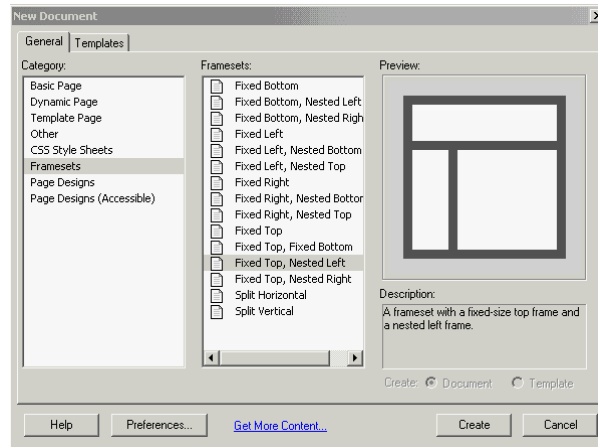
The example you will be using for this exercise is a collection of pages describing the Rock Garden in front of the Math and Computer building.

### Designing the Layout of the Screen

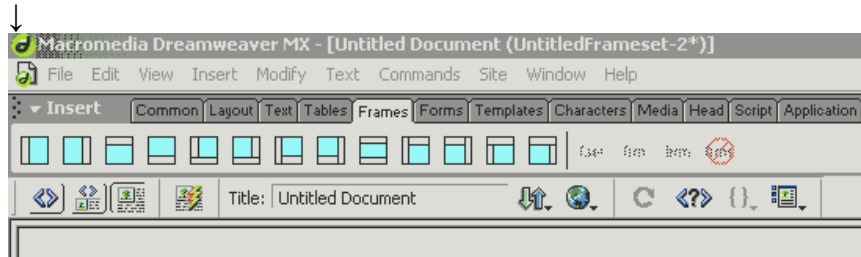
To use frames with a page, you first have to decide how you want to divide up the screen into frames. For example, if you just wanted a header that stays at the top of the page, you would divide the screen into two frames. However, for our exercise we will need to have a header at the top, a list of rocks down the left hand side and the information for each rock displayed in the bottom right frame.

#### *Setting Up the Frames*

1. Start up **Macromedia Dreamweaver**. From the **File** pull-down menu, select **New** to ensure that you are starting with a new document.
2. A **New Document** dialogue box will appear. Select **Framesets** from the **Category** options and **Fixed Top, Nested Left** from the **Frameset** selections. Click on **Create**.



Alternatively, from a basic html document you can choose to use framesets by selecting **Frames** from the **Insert Bar** and then selecting the desired frameset. If you do not see the **Insert Bar** along the top of the document window, select **Insert** from the **Window** drop-down menu.



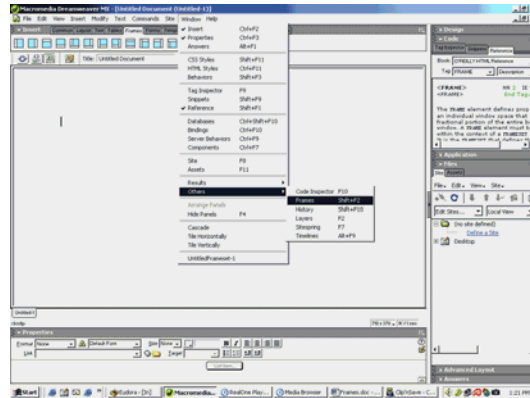
3. You can resize the areas (frames) on your document by moving your mouse over the frame lines and dragging (the cursor will change to a double headed arrow). Clicking on the frame lines will also access the Properties Inspector where you can specify an exact pixel width.

## Frame Properties

Frames, like any other object, have a number of properties that you can set, such as the source for what goes into the frame. However, unlike most objects, selecting the frame is not as simple as clicking on it. The easiest way to select and modify the frame is via the *Frames Panel*.

### Frame Names

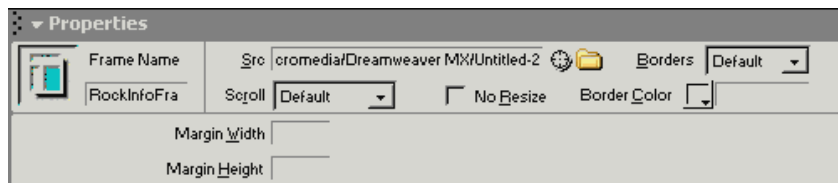
1. From the **Windows** drop-down menu, select **Others** and then **Frames**.



2. A **Frames Panel** should appear with a topFrame, mainFrame and leftFrame. Clicking on each of these areas will access the **Properties Inspector**.



3. We should change the Frame Name to mean something more meaningful. Start by clicking on the mainFrame box. Change the **Frame Name** to **RockInfoFrame**. Notice that the mainFrame is now called RockInfoFrame.



4. Rename the leftFrame to **RockListFrame** and the topFrame to **HeaderFrame**.
5. We need to save this frameset. Make sure that you have selected the frameset by clicking on <frameset> from the bottom bar of the document window.



6. From the **File** pull-down menu, select **Save Frameset**. Call this file **Frame-Page.html**.

## Attaching a Web Page to a Frame

You can associate a source page with a frame so that when the page first loads, this file will appear.

1. Select the **RockInfoFrame** by clicking this frame in the **Frames Panel**. Change the source (**Src**) to be **garden-sign.html** as shown below:



2. You should see the garden sign picture in the bottom right hand frame. Whether you have scroll bars will be determined by the size of the document window.
3. A title web page has not been created for you. So we will have to create a brand new file and include the information that we wish to have appear in the Header Frame.
4. From the **File** drop-down menu, select **New**. Choose **Basic Page** and click on **Create**. Type **Geological Garden**. You may wish to center this text, increase the font size and perhaps change the font colour. Save this file as **Title.html**. Return to your frameset. This can be done by either closing the Title.html document or clicking on the **Frame-Page.html** tab at the bottom of the window.
5. Select the **HeaderFrame** from the **Frames Panel** and change the source to the file that we created in the previous step (Title.html).

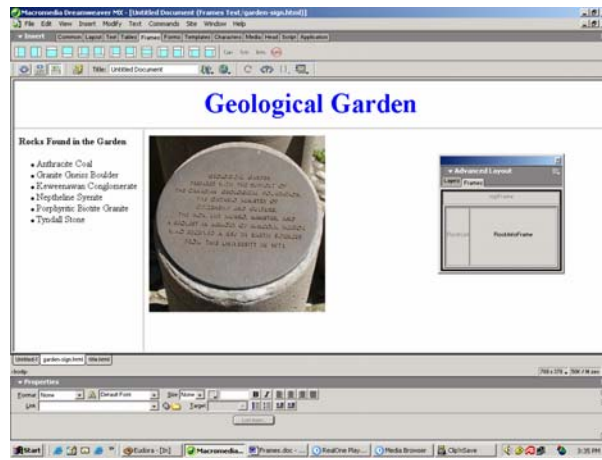
## Web Pages Created Directly in a Frame

1. It is possible to create a page directly in a frame. Click in the **RockListFrame** and type the following information:

### **Rocks Found In the Garden**

- Anthracite Coal
- Granite Gneiss Boulder
- Keweenawan Conglomerate
- Nepheline Syenite
- Porphyritic Biotite Granite
- Tyndall Stone

While you are still within this frame, choose **Save Frame** from the **File** pull-down menu and save the contents of this frame as **rockindex.html**. Your page should now resemble the one below:



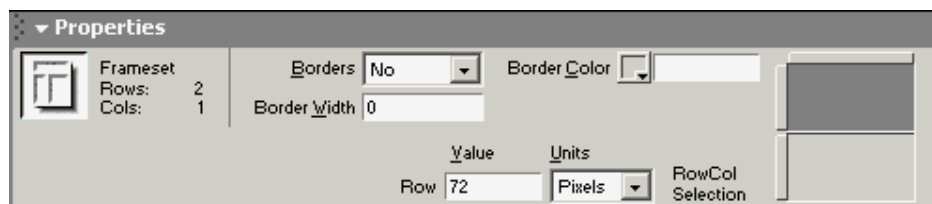
## Modifying the Frame Borders

Depending on the overall look you wish to achieve, your borders may be transparent (so that it looks like one page with a navigation bar at the left hand side) or visible (so that it is readily apparent that the web page is using frames).

1. If your frame borders are not available, select **Visual Aids** from the **View** pull-down menu and select **Frame Borders**.
2. Shrink the header Frame to as small as possible, by placing the cursor over the frame border. It will change to a double headed arrow. Then click and drag it to remove any excess space in the header area. You may need to adjust the left hand frame to completely display the rock names.

*Note: Do not set the border tight with the text. The browser displays the text slightly larger than it will appear in your source document.*

3. Select the header frame and look at the Properties Inspector. Notice that the size (in this case height) is 72 pixels. If you wanted to have a precise value, you can set it here. Under the Units, you can choose pixels, percentage or relative options. Pixels are the most common choice.

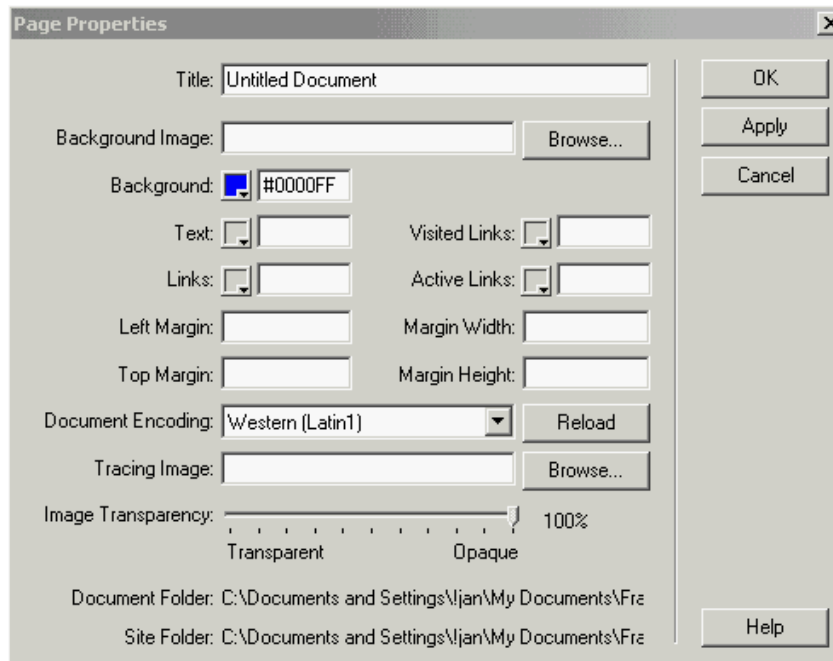


In addition, you can specify whether you want the frame borders to be shown and alter their size and colour. If you wish, you can try out some of these settings, but remember to preview your pages in the browser to see exactly how they look or respond to these settings.

## ***Changing the Background Colour of a Document in a Frame***

You can change the background colour in a frame so that it stands out from the other frames. Unlike many of other properties that pertain to a frame, the background colour is linked to the document within the frame.

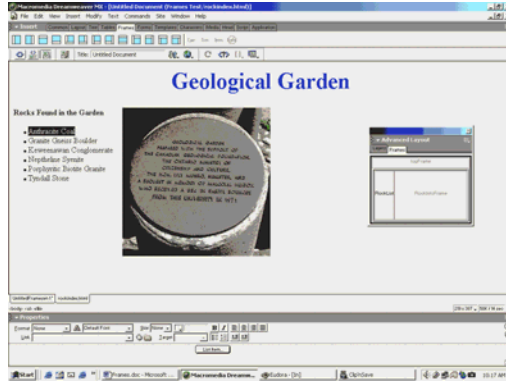
1. Click somewhere within the frame that will have its background colour changed.
2. From the **Modify** drop-down menu, select **Page Properties**.
3. Click the **Background** pop-up menu to select the desired colour.
4. Click on **OK** to apply this colour selection.



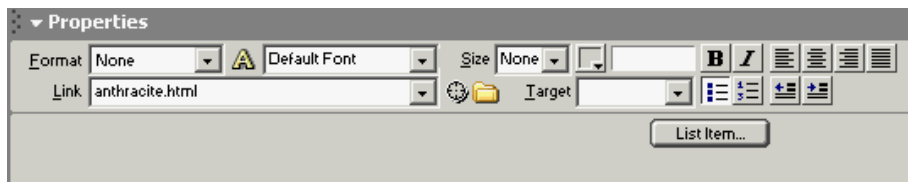
## **Links**

For the purposes of our frameset, we will want to link the names of the rocks in the left hand frame to html documents that we will want displayed in the main frame. This will allow the left hand frame to be used as a navigation tool.

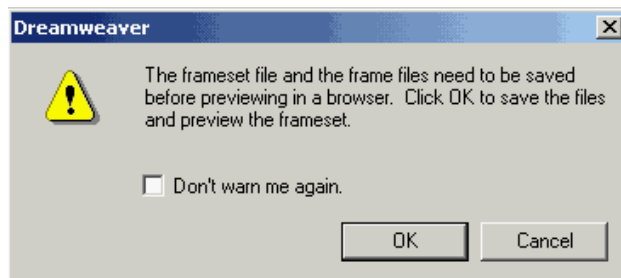
1. Select the text **Anthracite Coal** as shown below:



2. In the properties dialog window, set the Link property to **anthracite.html**.



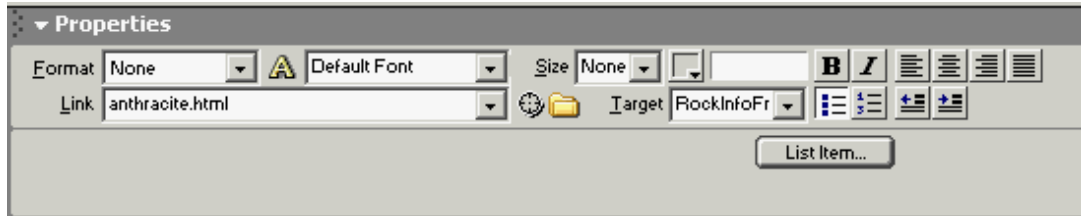
3. Preview the page in your browser. You may get the following warning:



Just click **OK** to save your changes. Once the browser presents you with your webpage, click on the link and observe the results. You will notice that the anthracite.html file has opened in the left frame. *We want this file to open in the main frame.*

## **Redirecting Links to a Particular Frame**

1. Making sure that you have the **Anthracite Coal** link selected (click on it once), redirect the opening page to the correct frame by choosing **RockInfoFrame** as the **Target** for this link.



2. Rather than having to specify a target for every link on a page, you can specify a default target by specifying it with the `<base target = "frame">` tag. For this example, add the line of html code `<base target = "RockInfoFrame">` to the header area of the **rockindex.html** page.

```

1 <!DOCTYPE HTML PUBLIC "-//W3C//DTD HTML 4.01 Transitional//EN">
2 <html>
3 <head>
4 <title>Untitled Document</title>
5 <base target="RockInfoFrame">
6 <meta http-equiv="Content-Type" content="text/html; charset=iso-8859-1">
7 </head>

```

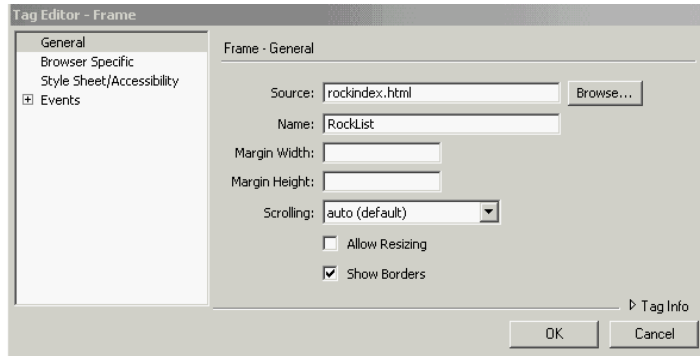
3. Link the text **Granite Gneiss Boulder** to **granite\_gneiss.html**, but don't set the target property. Preview it in the browser and confirm that the target is working properly.
4. Link up the rest of the rocks to their pages:

Keweenawan Conglomerate	→	keweenawan.html
Nepheline Syenite	→	nepheline.html
Porphyritic Biotite Granite	→	porphyritic.html
Tyndall Stone	→	tyndall.html

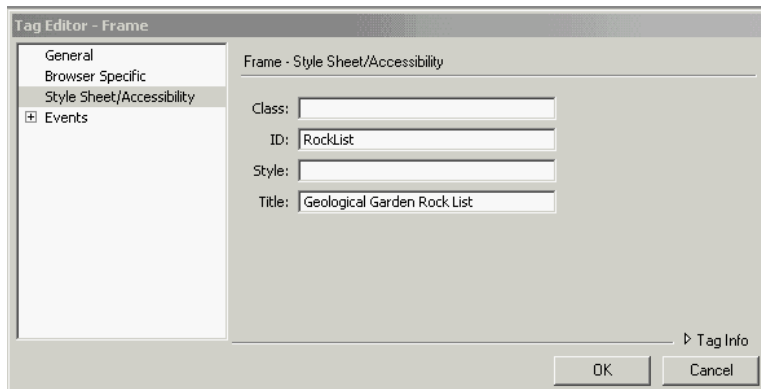
## Title Attributes for Frames

You may want to set the title attribute for a frame to improve accessibility (when visitors to your site choose to Bookmark or Add to Favourites from their browsers).

1. From the **Frames Panel** select the **RockListInfo** frame.
2. From the **Modify** pull-down menu, select **Edit Tag**.



3. Select **Style Sheet/Accessibility** category.
4. Type in **Geological Garden Rock List** across from the **Title** option.



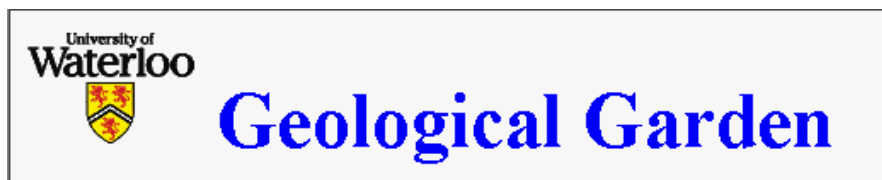
5. Click on **OK**.

## Leaving a Framed Page

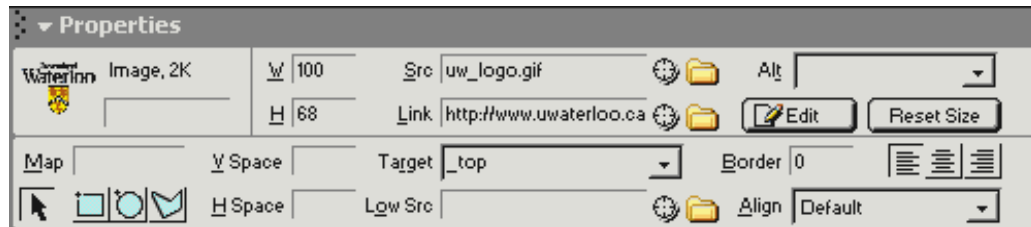
If you have links that take the user outside of the framed page, such as to the University of Waterloo's home page, you need to specify a target of “\_top” to indicate that the link page opens not in a frame, but in the entire browser window.

### ***A Link to Another Page***

1. We will add the University of Waterloo logo to the header frame. Your page should look similar to the example below.



2. Add a link to the image so that it points to the University of Waterloo's Home Page (<http://www.uwaterloo.ca>).
3. Set the target to be **\_top**.



Preview in the browser to confirm that the link works properly.

*Note: A number of main size pages have code in them so that they “breakout” of a framed page. The University of Waterloo’s home page is one of these. If you wish, remove the target and try the page again. Even though the University’s page would work without the target set, it is a very good idea and style to set the target when leaving your framed page.*

Here are some other options for setting the **Target** property:

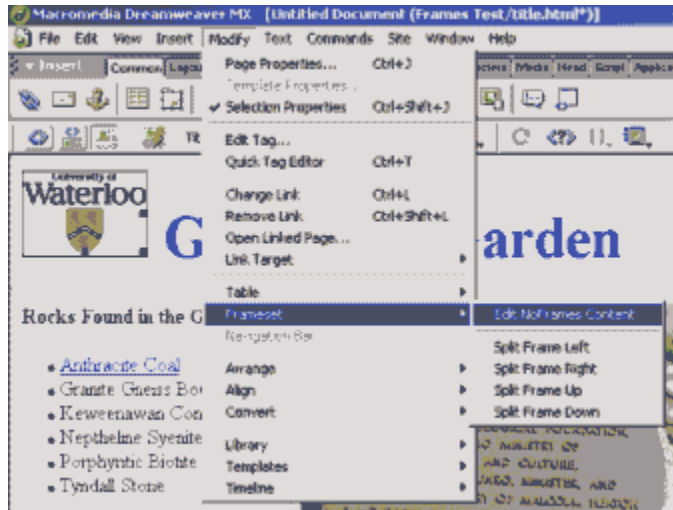
- **\_blank** opens the linked document in a new browser window, leaving the current window untouched.
- **\_parent** opens the linked document in the parent frameset of the frame the link appears in, replacing the entire frameset
- **\_self** opens the link in the current frame, replacing the content in that frame.

## Browsers That Don't Support Frames

Older browsers and text browsers may not support frames, so it is good practice to provide for such situations. You may either tell visitors to your web page that they need a frame compatible browser to view the site or supply a non-framed page for them.

### **No-Frames Content**

1. To specify what is to appear if the browser doesn't support frames, you need to edit the no frames content of the frameset. From the **Modify** pull-down menu, select **Frameset** and choose **Edit NoFrames Content**.



2. This opens a “new” document where you can put in the text and graphics that you want to appear, if the browser does not support frames.

NoFrames Content

---

Sorry, you need to have a frames compatible browser to view the **Geological Garden** website.

3. To return to the framed version of the page, just uncheck the **Edit NoFrames Content** option by accessing the **Modify** pull-down menu and selecting **Frameset** again.