

# Introducing Dreamweaver

Website design has come a long way since the early days when the code used to create web pages was entered manually. This required the page designers to have a reasonable knowledge of the language, Hypertext Markup Language (HTML), in which it is written. While this is not a full-blown computer language, and it can be learned reasonably quickly, it can be a time-consuming business to create websites in this fashion.

## Don't forget



For an overview of editing HTML in Dreamweaver see Chapter Four.

The next development in web-design software was the introduction of HTML editors. These are programs that help make the process of creating HTML code quicker and easier, by giving the author shortcuts for adding the elements that make up the coded page. However, this still requires a good basic knowledge of HTML: it makes the process quicker for the experienced designer, but it does not help the novice much.

The big breakthrough in web-design software, and one that introduced a huge new audience to the joys of web design, was the introduction of WYSIWYG programs. WYSIWYG stands for 'What You See Is What You Get', and they enable people to design their own web pages without even having to be aware of the existence of HTML. They work in a similar way to a word-processing or a desktop-publishing program: what you lay out on the screen is what the end user will see on their computer. With these programs, the HTML is still present (and you can edit it manually if you desire) but it is all generated automatically by the program in the background. A further development was the use of Cascading Style Sheets (CSS) that provided a facility to create the formatting for web pages in a separate file from the content.

## Don't forget



In 2005, Adobe completed the acquisition of Macromedia, the creators of Dreamweaver.

On one level Dreamweaver is a WYSIWYG web authoring program, with an excellent interface for quickly creating high-quality web pages. In addition, it contains a range of powerful tools for incorporating the latest web-design elements into sites, to give them a highly professional look. Overall, Dreamweaver is an ideal program for anyone involved in designing websites: its combination of simplicity and power makes it an excellent choice for the novice and the professional alike. For the experienced web designer, Dreamweaver CS6 also has improved functions for using CSS, and extensions can also be obtained for using the latest version of HTML(5). These can be downloaded from the Adobe website, at [www.adobe.com](http://www.adobe.com).

## Don't forget



For more information about using CSS in Dreamweaver see Chapters Five and Six.