

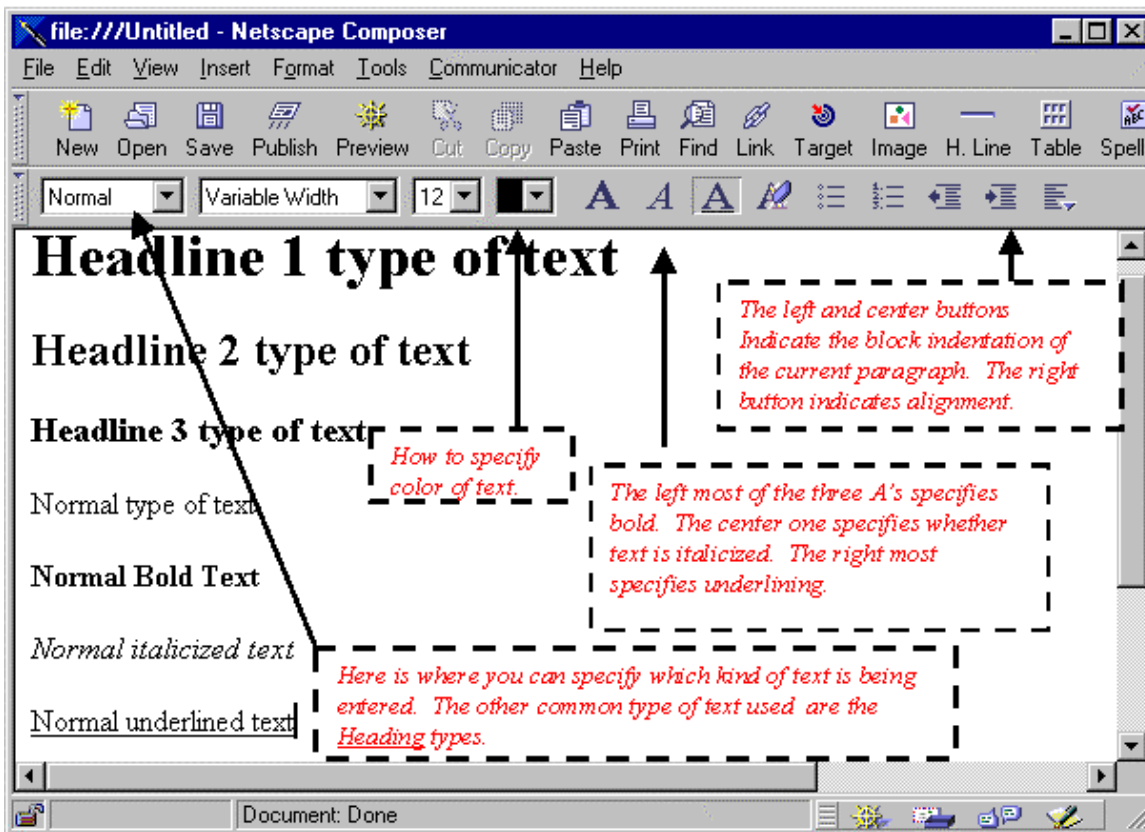
An Introduction to Netscape Composer

About Netscape Composer

The pictures and directions in this handout are for Netscape Composer that comes with the Netscape Communicator 4.7 package available for free from Netscape's web site at <http://www.netscape.com>. In other versions the design is essentially the same, though a few features may be located in other places.

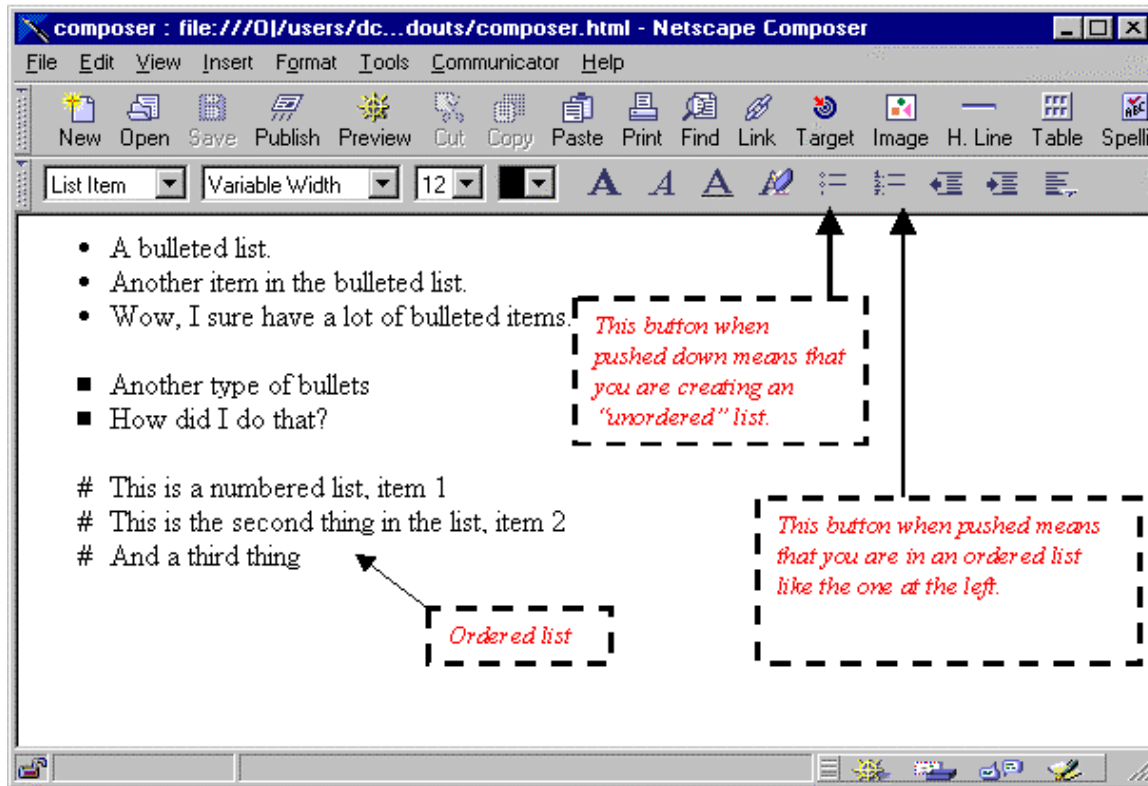
Putting Text On A Web Page

Below is what Netscape Composer looks like when started on a PC (the Macintosh version looks similar). You may begin typing any text you wish to appear on your web page at the cursor.

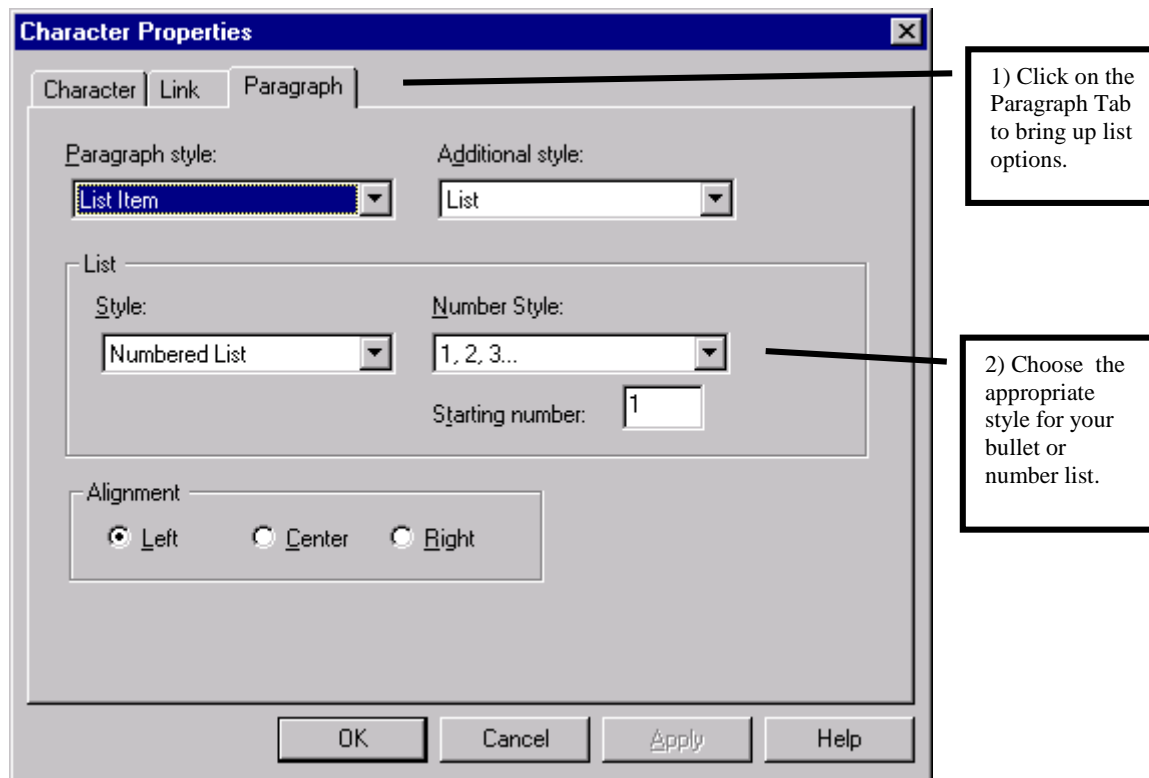


Creating Number And Bullet Lists

It is often convenient to list information, a short list often conveys the most important pieces of information that you want to present, often in order of importance. On web pages there are two categories of lists: “ordered” or “unordered” lists. “Ordered” lists are lists that are numbered in some way, such as “1, 2, 3, ...” or “A., B., C.” or “I, II, III”. Unordered lists are lists that are bulleted. Take a look at the picture below to see how Composer does this.



Sometimes you may wish to customize the bullet or number style. Click somewhere in the list that you want to customize and then hold down the “Alt” key on your keyboard while you press the “Enter” key. The image on the next page indicates how to proceed.

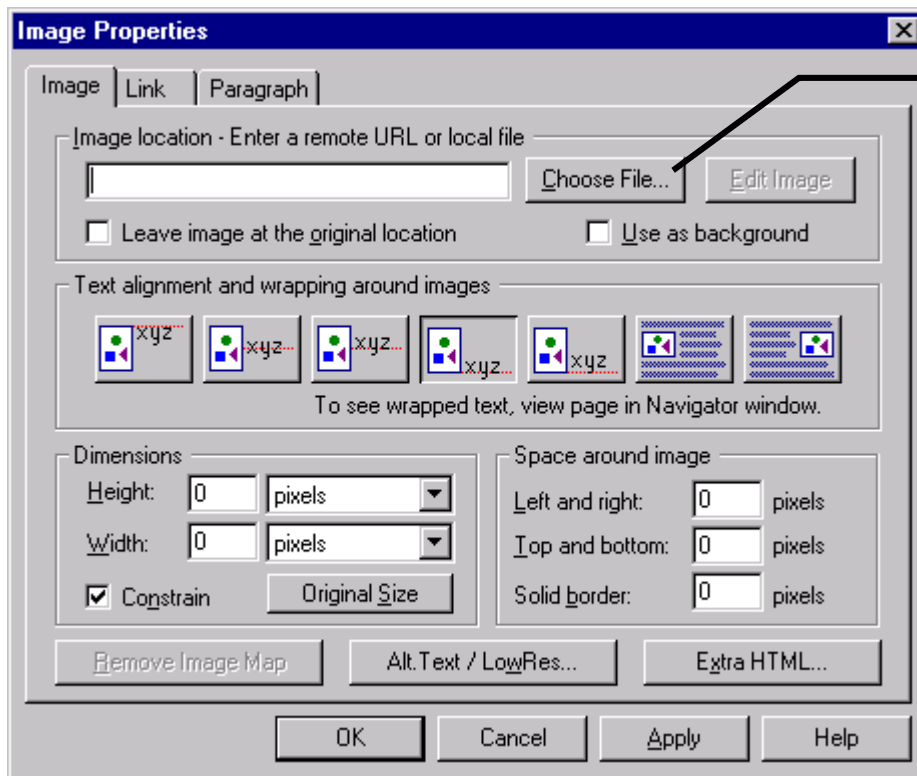


In the character properties dialogue box you can change the options for characters, links, and paragraphs. Since we are interested in lists for the moment, select the paragraph tab. You will then find a number of options for changing the appearance of your list. Experiment with the different options to see what works best for your project.

Beyond Text: Inserting Pictures On Your Web Page

The power of the web is its interactivity and its ability to use sound and pictures effectively. The hard part is finding good pictures, not inserting them. If you want to use an image from the web, you can select the image in your web browser and *copy* it. Then switch to Composer and *paste* it. However, suppose you have created your own image file and you wish to insert it into your Web page. Here are some key concepts to consider:

1. The image type must be a "gif" or "jpeg" or "png" type file. These are the most widely supported image files. Gif type files are typically used for simple designs and line drawings. JPEG type files are typically used for color photographs.
2. From the *Image* menu, choose *Insert Image*. From this dialogue box you can use *Choose file...* to identify the location of your image file, set its various properties and then insert it into your Web page by selecting **OK**.
3. You may also resize your image using this dialogue box. An issue to keep in mind is that to make sure everyone surfing the web can easily view your image, you should keep its dimensions to less than 640 pixels in width and 480 pixels in height.



The easiest way to select your image is to select **Choose file** then highlight the exact location of your image from the file tree.

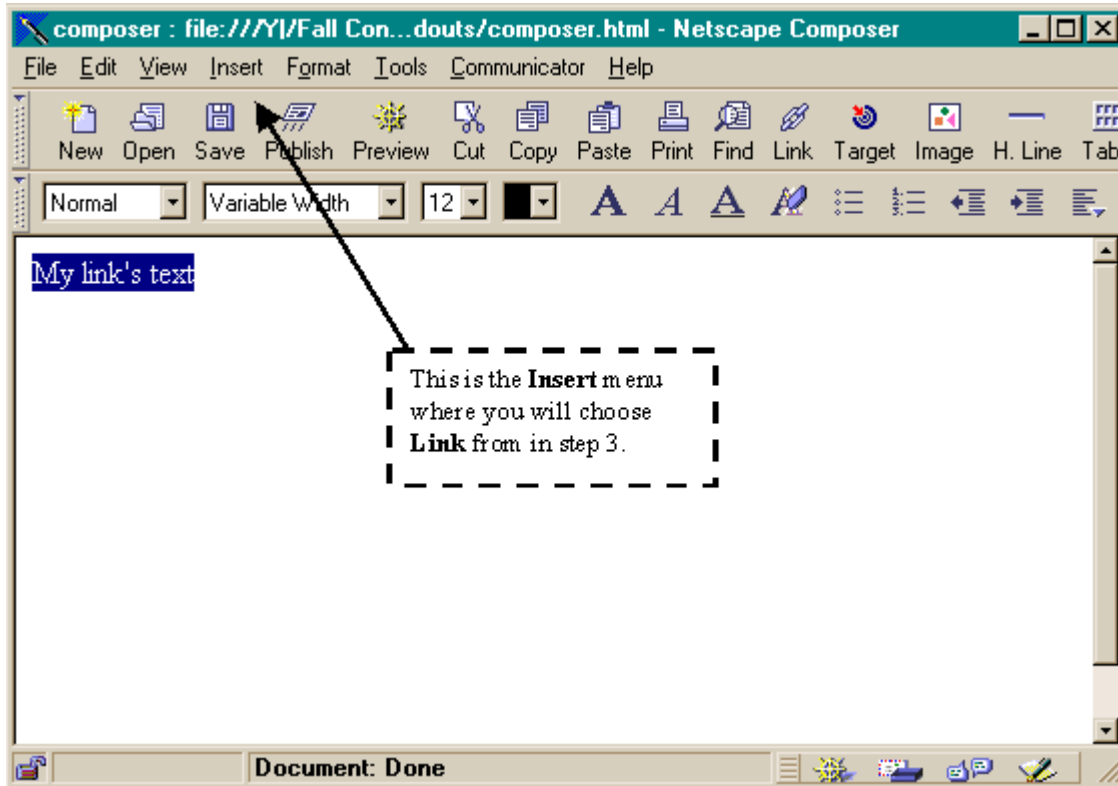
When inserting an image into your Web page, experiment with the various property settings available in this dialogue box to see what looks best for your Web page.

Hyperlinks

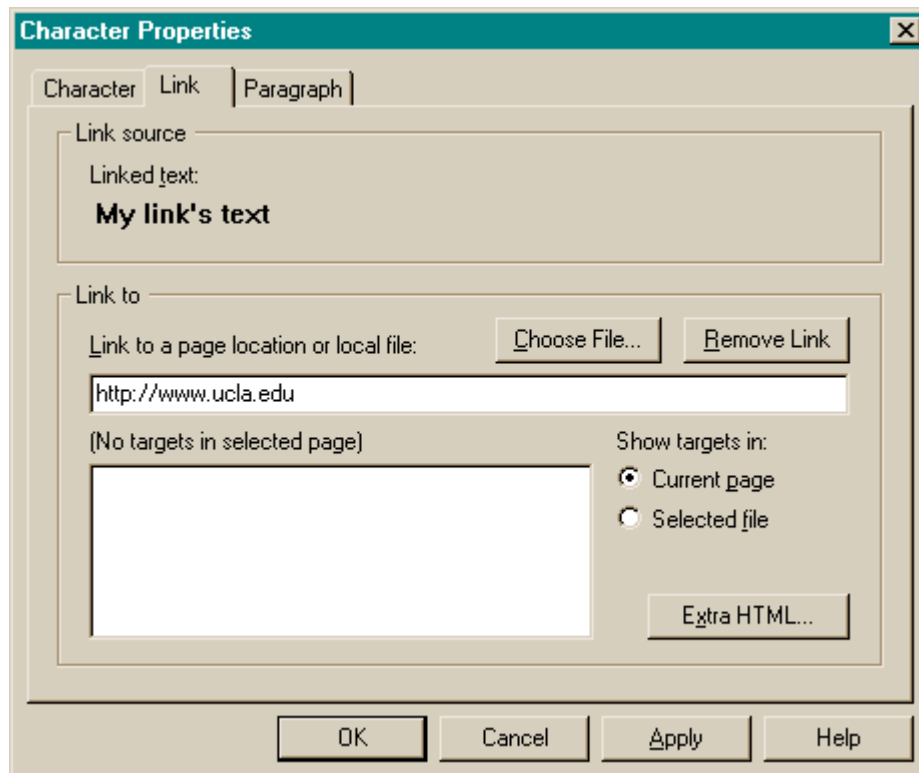
Most likely, you will want to refer people who are browsing your page to other pages of interest on the web. To do this, you need to create a hyperlink. You need to know the *URL* (aka "the address") of the web page. An example is "http://www.ucla.edu". You will also need to decide what the text of your hyperlink will be. An example is "UCLA's Web Page".

1. Type the text of your link onto the page, as you would with normal text.
2. Highlight that text.
3. Then choose *Link* from the *Insert* menu.
4. In the dialog box that appears, enter the URL of the page you want to link to.

Steps 1 & 2

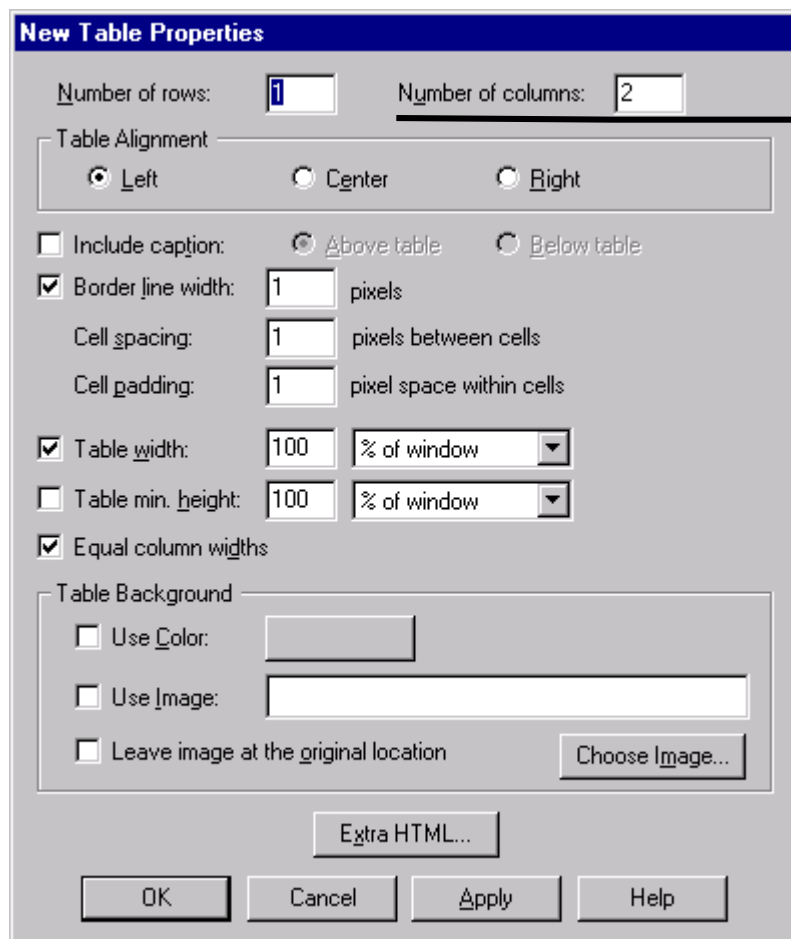
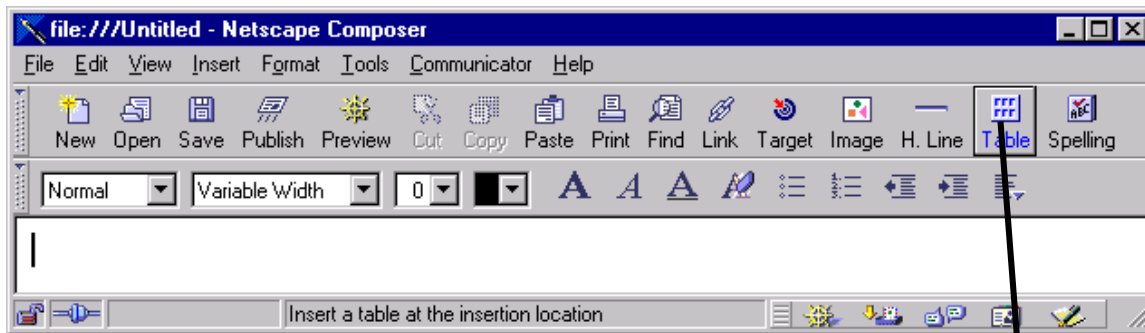


Steps 3 & 4



Tables

In time, you may wish to insert tables into your documents. To do so is also easy using Netscape Composer. Again when you are ready to insert a table, go to the *Insert* menu and choose *Table*. It will bring up a dialog box that looks like the image on the following page. You could also use the "Tables" icon to get the same menu.



Specify the number of rows and columns in your table

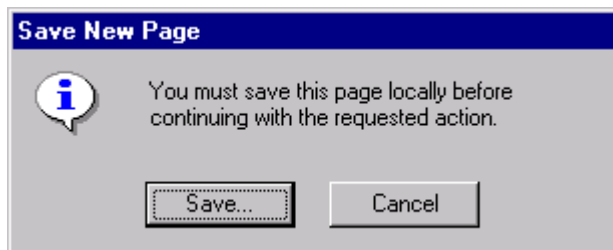
Click once on the Table Icon to pull up the "New Table Properties" dialogue box.

It is common to change the border width, cell padding and cell spacing of your table. If you do not wish for the border lines of your table to show, set **Border Line Width** to 0. **Cell padding and Cell spacing** can enhance the readability of your table. *Cell padding* defines the amount of space between the text in a cell and the borders of that cell. *Cell spacing* defines the space between individual cells (external to the cells). You can also set the overall width and height of your table. As a matter of style you should set your table width using pixels rather than percentage. Using Pixels will insure that your table is always the same size no matter what the screen resolution.

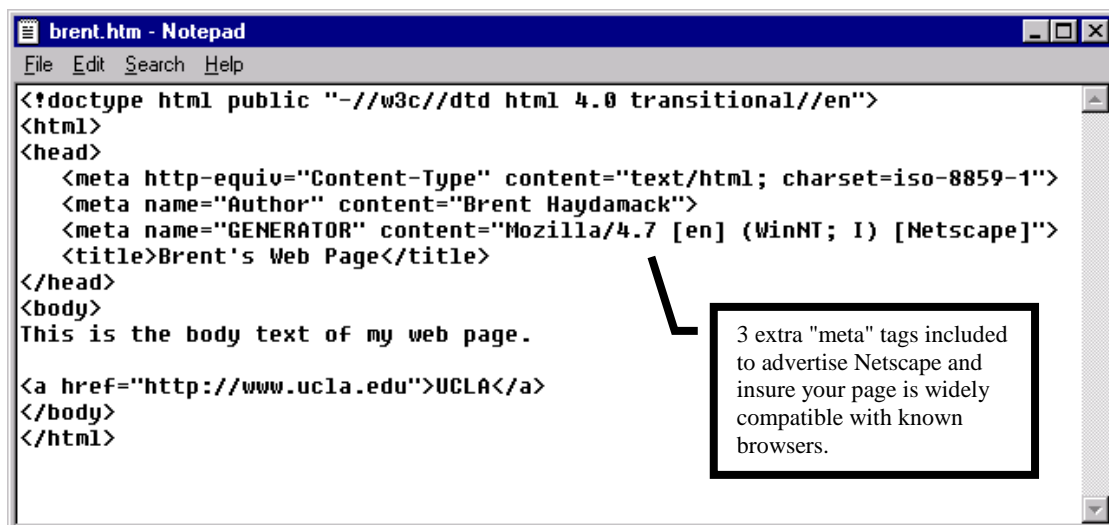
Also, it is often the case that a line of text may look readable at a lower resolution only to become one long run-on line (30-40 words on a single line) at very high resolutions. To prevent this from happening, enclose the text of your page within a single table with 1 row and 1 column. Set the width of your table to 450-550 pixels.

What About HTML Code?

Given its WYSIWYG interface, you should not have to deal directly with HTML code when using Composer. However, as your skills advance you may reach the limitations of this software, and thus want to dig around in the HTML Code directly. If you do want to tweak the code yourself, pull down the *Edit* menu and select *HTML Source*. Composer will probably ask you to save your Web page locally first. Saving your page is always a good idea!



Once you have saved your page, Composer will then open the HTML code of your page in a text editor (most likely it will be Window's Notepad). You can then manually edit your HTML text to your heart's content.



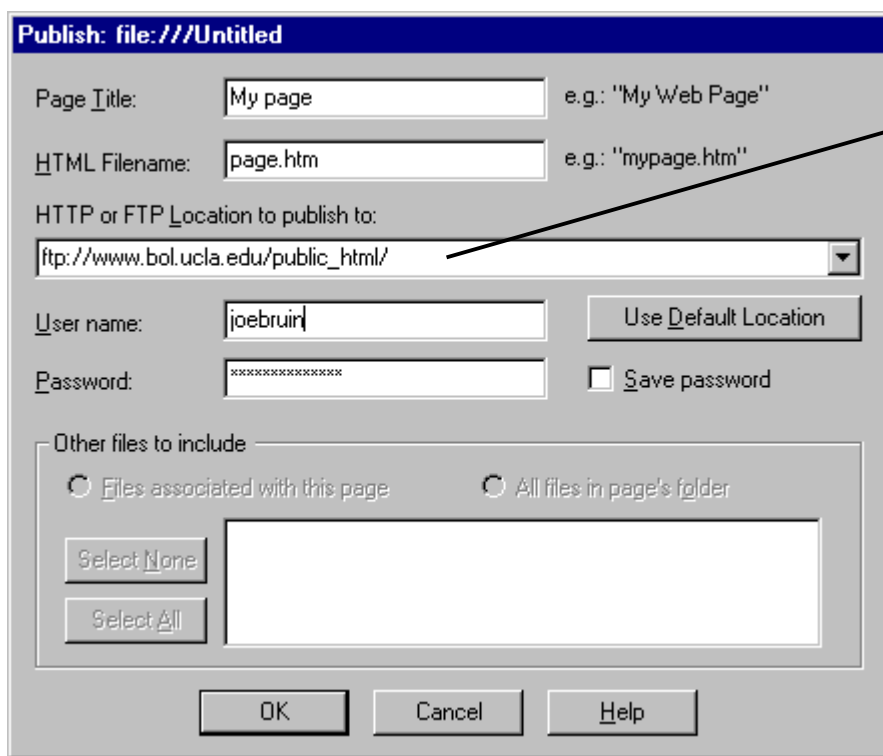
When you edit the HTML code from a page created in Netscape, you will notice some unfamiliar tags have been included on your page. These are nothing to worry about, they are simply extra tags to insure that your Web page is read properly by the various browsers on the market and to advertise that your page was created using Netscape Composer. However, the remainder of the HTML code should look somewhat familiar.

How do I put my HTML and image files on the Web?

This depends upon what sort of Web page account or hosting account you have set up. There are many free services on the Internet that will host your web page (with some advertising included on your page, of course).

While it may not work for everyone, Netscape does include some options to upload your web page and images using File Transfer Protocol (FTP for short). You can use FTP through the following steps:

1. Click on the *Publish* button on the toolbar, or select the *File* pull down menu and then select *Publish* from the list.
2. In the Publish dialogue box, enter the title of your page, the file name of your page, and the location to which you wish to send your file (in the example below we are publishing our page to a Bruin Online account at UCLA using FTP). Of course, you will also need to enter your username and password.



Here we use UCLA's Bruin Online system, however you could use any account that accepts FTP connections.

Viewing Your Web Page

You can now view your page at <http://www.bol.ucla.edu/~jbruin/page.htm>. (replacing jbruin with your Bruin Online ID and replacing page.htm with the name of your file. Don't forget the ~ before your Bruin Online ID!) For those that do not use Bruin Online, you can still use the publish feature, however you will need to get your account settings from the host of your Web Page or your departmental computer administrator.

What are some other resources on the Web that may help me with my web page?

Office of Instructional Development, UCLA

<http://www.oid.ucla.edu>

A number of programs at OID have posted resources regarding the use and incorporation of technology in the classroom. The Faculty New Media Center and the Technology TA Consultants Web Pages are particularly good resources. They offer specific online technology tutorials and commentary on the use to technology in higher education.

Faculty New Media Center

<http://www.oid.ucla.edu/fnmc>

Technology TA Consultants Program

<http://www.oid.ucla.edu/fipse>

Social Science Computing Network (SSCNET)

<http://www.sscnet.ucla.edu>

SSCNET offers Social Science Faculty and TAs the Classweb system for the creation and maintenance of course websites. Every undergraduate Social Science course will have a website created automatically.

E-Campus at Humanities Computing Network

<http://ecampus.humnet.ucla.edu/>

E-Campus offers Humanities Faculty and TAs the WebCT system for the creation and maintenance of course websites. Every undergraduate Humanities course will have a website through E-Campus.

Bruin OnLine Personal Web Pages

<http://www.bol.ucla.edu>

Everyone who has a Bruin OnLine account is automatically give 5 megabytes of space on the Bruin OnLine webserver to create and maintain a personal web page.

Web Developer's Virtual Library

<http://wdvl.com>

This is probably the best site on the net for learning about Web page construction, design, and Web programming. Ever wonder about HTML code, Java, CGI, Active Server Pages, or other Web and Internet technologies? This is the place to go. It is suitable for both beginners and advanced programmers. Best of all, everything at this site is free!

Webmonkey: The Web Developer's Resource

<http://hotwired.lycos.com/webmonkey>

This site offers comprehensive and easy to read tips and tutorials for creating and maintaining web sites. Specifically, check out their links to "Authoring" and "Design".

Web Style Guide

<http://info.med.yale.edu/caim/manual>

This site approaches Web page and site design "as a challenge that combines traditional editorial approaches to documents with graphic design, user interface design, information design, and the technical authoring skills required to optimize the HTML code, graphics, and text within Web pages."