

How to set up a local root folder and site structure

A Dreamweaver site is a collection of all the files and assets in your website. You can create web pages on your computer, upload them to a web server, and maintain the site by transferring updated files whenever you save them. You can also edit and maintain websites that were created without using Dreamweaver.

What is a Dreamweaver “site”?

In Dreamweaver the term “site” refers to a local or remote storage location for the documents that belong to a website. A Dreamweaver site provides a way to organize and manage all of your web documents, upload your site to a web server, track and maintain your links, and manage and share files. You should define a site to take full advantage of Dreamweaver features.

Note: To define a Dreamweaver site, you only need to set up a local folder. To transfer files to a web server or to develop web applications, you must also add information for a remote site and testing server.

A Dreamweaver site consists of as many as three parts, or folders, depending on your development environment and the type of website you are developing:

Local root folder stores the files you’re working on. Dreamweaver refers to this folder as your “local site.” This folder is typically on your local computer, but it can also be on a network server.

Remote folder stores your files for testing, production, collaboration, and so on. Dreamweaver refers to this folder as your “remote site” in the Files panel. Typically, your remote folder is on the computer where your web server is running. The remote folder holds the files that users access on the Internet. Together, the local and remote folders enable you to transfer files between your local hard disk and web server, making it easy to manage files in your Dreamweaver sites. You work on files in the local folder, and then publish them to the remote folder when you want other people to view them.

Testing server folder is the folder where Dreamweaver processes dynamic pages.

Understanding local and remote folder structure

When you want to use Dreamweaver to connect to a remote folder, you specify the remote folder in the Servers category of the Site Setup dialog box. The remote folder that you specify (also referred to as the “host directory”) should correspond to the local root folder of your Dreamweaver site. (The local root folder is the top-level folder of your Dreamweaver site.) Remote folders, like local folders, can have any title, but commonly, Internet Service Providers (ISPs) name the top-level remote folders for individual user accounts `public_html`, `pub_html`, or something similar. If you are in charge of your own remote server, and can name the remote folder anything you want, it is a good idea for your local root folder and remote folder to have the same name.

Figure 1 shows a sample local root folder on the left and a sample remote folder on the right. The local root folder on the local machine maps directly to the remote folder on the web server, rather than to any of the remote folder's sub folders, or folders that exist above the remote folder in the directory structure.

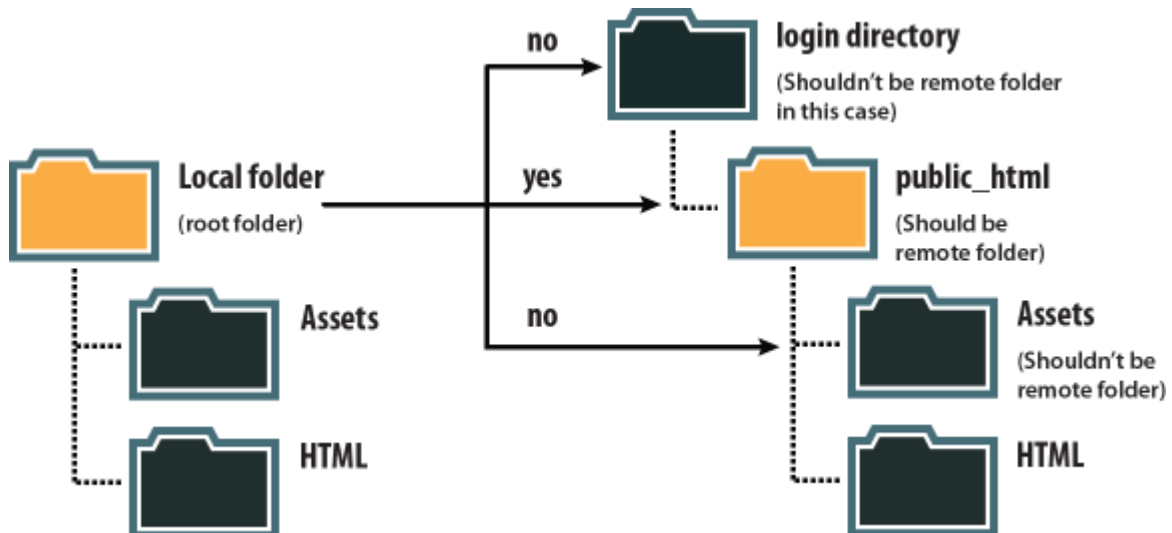


Figure 1 Sample local root folder (left), and sample remote folder (right)

Note: The above example illustrates one local root folder on the local machine, and one top-level remote folder on the remote web server. If, however, you are maintaining a number of Dreamweaver sites on your local machine, you would need an equal number of remote folders on the remote server. In such a case the above example would not apply, and you would instead create different remote folders within the `public_html` folder, and then map them to their corresponding local root folders on your local machine.

When you first establish a remote connection, the remote folder on the web server is usually empty. Then, when you use Dreamweaver to upload all of the files in your local root folder, the remote folder populates with all of your web files. The directory structure of the remote folder and the local root folder should always be the same. (That is, there should always be a one-to-one correspondence between the files and folders in your local root folder, and the files and folders in your remote folder.) If the structure of the remote folder doesn't match the structure of the local root folder, Dreamweaver uploads files to the wrong place, where they might not be visible to site visitors. Additionally, image and link paths can easily break when folder and file structures are not in synch. The remote folder must exist before Dreamweaver can connect to it. If you don't have a designated folder that acts as your remote folder on the web server, create one or ask your ISP's server administrator to create one for you.

Setting up a local root folder

To set up a local version of your site, all you need to do is specify the local folder where you'll store all of your site files. The local folder can be on your local computer or on a network server.

To set up a local root folder:

1. Identify or create the folder on your computer where you want to store the local version of your site files. (The folder can be anywhere on your computer.) You'll specify this folder as your local site in Dreamweaver.

This folder is called the *local root folder*.

2. Start Dreamweaver.

3. Choose Site > New Site.

The Site Setup dialog box opens (**Figure 2**).

4. In the Site Setup dialog box, make sure the Site category is selected. (It should be selected by default.)
5. In the Site Name text box, enter a name for your site. This name appears in the Files panel and in the Manage Sites dialog box; it does not appear in the browser.
6. In the Local Site Folder text box, click the Browse To Folder icon, browse to and select the local root folder you created, and click Select (Windows) or Choose (MacOS).
Your local root folder is defined in Dreamweaver.
7. Click Save to close the Site Setup dialog box.

You can now begin working on your local site files in Dreamweaver.

On the right side of the Dreamweaver workspace, the Files panel displays the folders and files of your site (**Figure 4**).

Note: When you're ready, you can fill out the other categories in the Site Setup dialog box, including the Servers category, where you can specify a remote folder on your remote server.

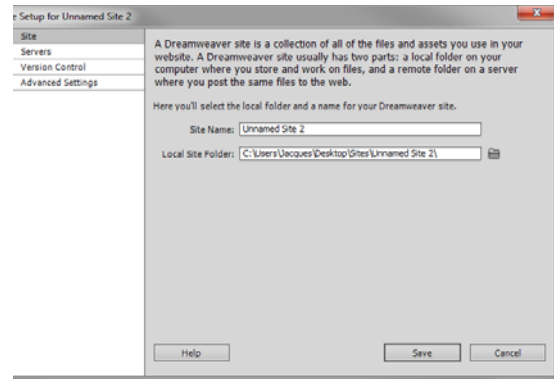


Figure 2 Site Setup dialog box, Site category

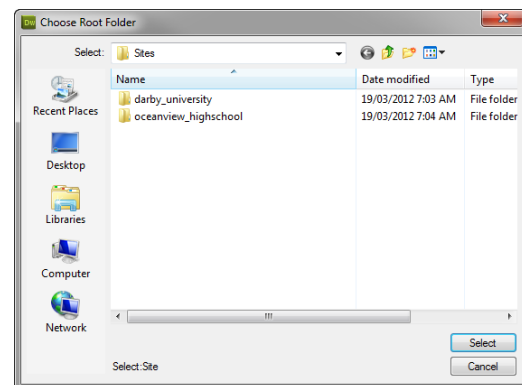


Figure 3 Choose Root Folder dialog box

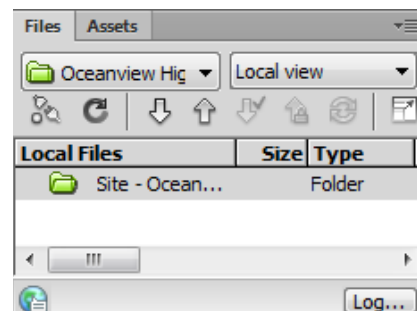


Figure 4 Files panel

Modifying site information

The Manage Sites dialog box is your gateway into various Dreamweaver site functions. From this dialog box, you can initiate the process for creating a new site, editing an existing site, duplicating a site, removing a site, or importing or exporting a site's settings.

To modify site information:

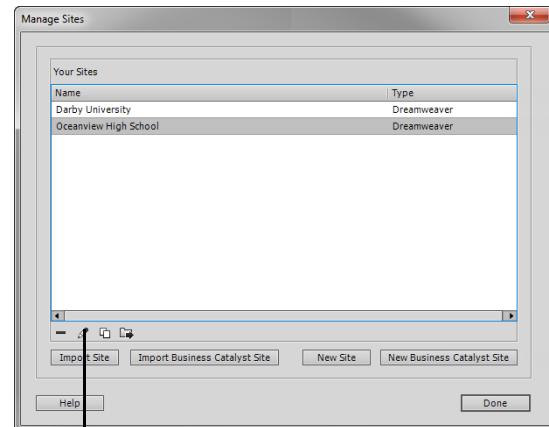
1. Select Site > Manage Sites.

The Manage Sites dialog box opens (**Figure 5**).

2. Select the site name and click the Edit button.

The Site Setup dialog box opens (**Figure 2**).

3. Click a button to select one of the options, make any changes you need to make, and click Save or Cancel to close the Site Setup dialog box. Click Done to close the Manage Sites dialog box..



Edit The Currently Selected Site

Figure 5 Manage Sites dialog box