Cascading Style Sheets

Cascading Style Sheets: a page-layout system that allows for better control over the appearance and positioning of elements on the web page

Style sheets allow the designer to define a particular style to body elements, such as font size, style, color, line spacing, and more, and then assign that style to whatever elements he wants. Then if he decides to change the style, he only has to change the definition, instead of choosing each individual element and changing it one-by-one. It is a great time saver.

The disadvantage to style sheets is that older browsers (before Netscape 4 or IE 4) don't support style sheets, so a person using one of these older browsers wouldn't see the page just like the designer created it.

Types of Style Sheets

There are three types of style sheets:

❖ **Embedded:** the style code is written inside the <head> of the document and the style only affects a single document.

❖ **Inline:** this style is very similar to the embedded style, except that the code is written directly in the <body> of the document, and therefore affect only a small portion of the document. They can, however, be used to override styles from an external style sheet.

❖ **External:** this style is the most powerful style sheet. One single file is used to format many pages. Then, with one change, all of those pages can be instantly changed to have a new style. The coding of an external CSS looks just like the other two types listed above, but instead of being located on an HTML page, this coding is in it's own separate document. Then the HTML document links to this external CSS file.

In this workshop we will create an external style sheet.

Creating an External Style Sheet

1. Inside your class Dreamweaver folder there is a **css** folder. Using the Site Window (F8), define that **css** folder as your ROOT folder.

2. Already created and saved into the **css** folder is a document called **csstrial.html**. Open up that document.

3. Right now no formatting has been done on the document . . . everything is formatted as Paragraph style, default font, no size.

    Select the first line and give it the style of Heading 1.

    Select the second line and give it the style of Heading 2.

    Select the third line and give it the style of Heading 3.

    The paragraph style is already assigned to the fourth paragraph, so no need to change it, or the table, or the quote. Save your changes. It should now look similar to the example below:
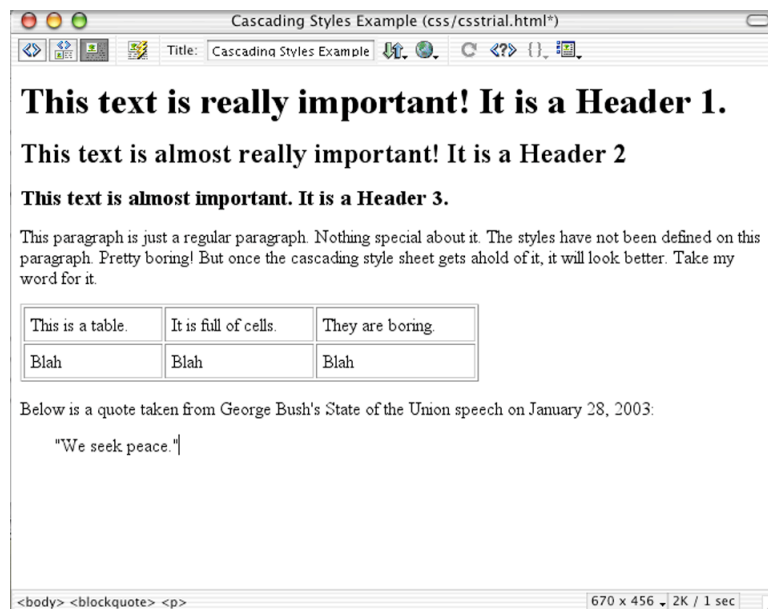

4. In the example above, each of the styles takes on a default set of commands for how it looks. Heading 1 style is to be very large and bold. Heading 2 style is large and bold, but not as large as Heading 1. And so on. And every paragraph that you want to be Heading 1 style needs to be selected and changed.

    But if you want your Heading 1 style to be Big and Bold and Red and Underlined and Centered, then you have to make all those changes every single time you assign the Heading 1 style to text.

5. We will set up a cascading style sheet so that once some text is assigned the Heading 1 style, then all of those changes will be made automatically. Then if we change the definition of Heading 1 style to Big and Bold and Blue, but not Underlined, and Left-Justified, all the changes will take place immediately without having to do every change manually.

6. From the Text Menu, drag down to CSS Styles, then drag right over to New Style.

Type: Redefine HTML Tag
Tag: body
Define in: (New Style Sheet)
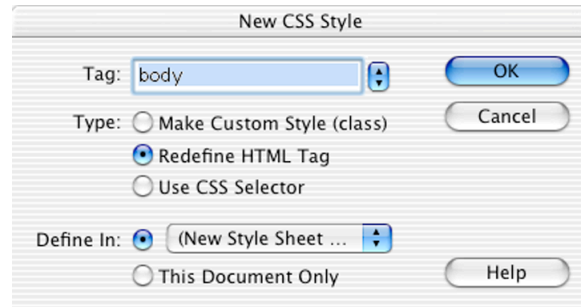
7. The first thing you have to do is save your new cascading style sheet. The save box comes up automatically. Title your sheet some name you'll remember and **BE SURE** to keep the **.css** suffix, which lets DreamWeaver know that is a cascading style sheet. Also, save it into the **css** folder!
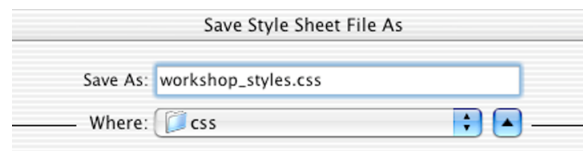
8. The next window to appear allows you to set whatever definitions you want for the body of the document. On the left is a category section, and on the right, the choices change depending on which category you have chosen.
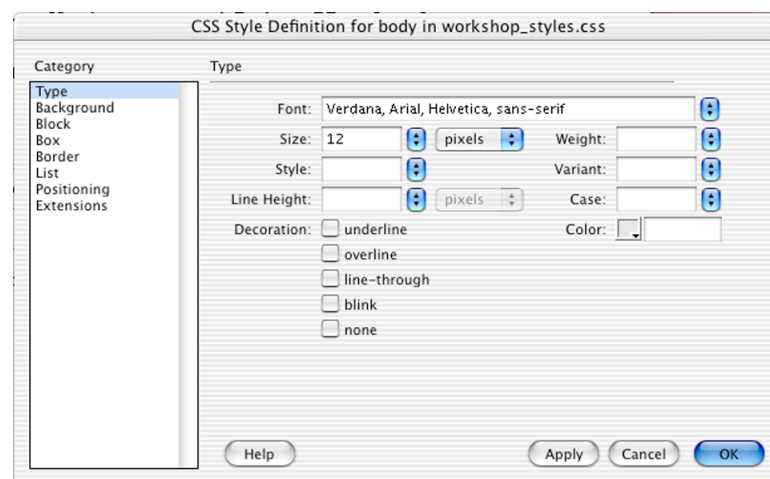
9. In the Type category, choose a font style, a size for regular text, and any other type styles you want. Then switch to the Background category.

   In the Background choices, click on the Background Color box and choose a color for your page background.

   Then click on the OK button at the bottom of the window.
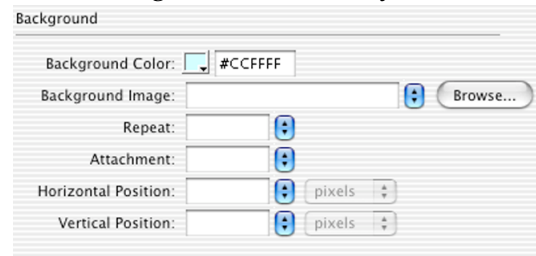
For this exercise, what we've done so far is set the background of the page to be a color instead of white, and set ALL text to be a particular font (and color if you chose a text color). Continue on to define the other styles used in your document.

1. To edit a style sheet (which is what we want to do), choose **Text ➩ CSS Styles ➩ Edit Style Sheet…** A list of defined style sheets will appear. Of course, we will only have one because that's all we've defined so far. So click on the name of your sheet to select it, and then click on the New button to create a style definition for a new style.
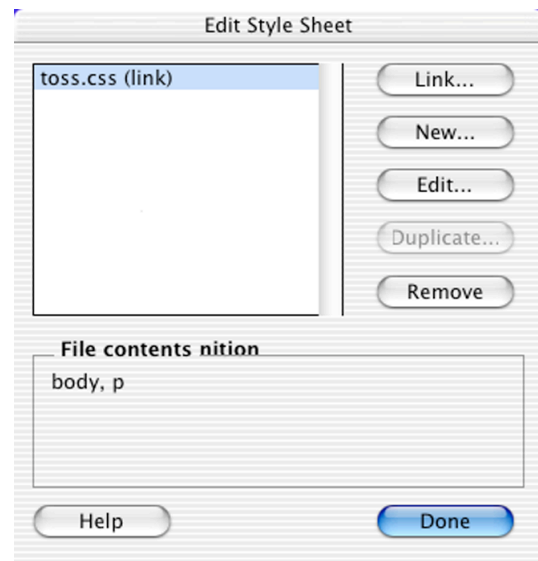
2. If the **"p"** tag is not already selected as the tag to edit, then choose it from the list and click the OK button. In the next window, choose what font you'd like to use, and a size and a color. You may want to choose the same settings you used when you created the "body" style. Don't change the background color. Click on the OK button when you've made all the changes you want to the **"p"** style. But don't click on the **"Done"** button in the Edit Style Sheet window yet.

3. To change other styles, click on the New button again. Choose a style from the list and click OK. Make the desired changes and click the OK button. When you're all done defining styles, then click on the Done button at the bottom of the Edit Style Sheet window.

When you look at your document now, all those formatting changes should automatically have taken effect. You may notice, however, that some text did not change. The text inside the table is not defined as Paragraph, so it might not look like the regular paragraphs.

1. To edit the Table style, re-enter the Edit CSS Styles and choose table from the list. Many any changes you want to the font style. Try clicking on some of the other categories and changing things like the alignment of the text, the color of the cells. Just play around a lot.

2. Click Done at the bottom of the Edit Style Sheet window to return to your document. You should immediately see your changes in the table.

3. Save and Preview **(F12)**. See if all your changes take effect in the browser. Close your browser window and click on your DreamWeaver document. Try opening your document in the other browser **(Command-F12)**. The table may look different. For some reason, the Table style doesn't always work well in both browsers. You may need to edit the style sheet a little more (edit the TR, TD, and TH tags). Or you may not.

So far all the styles we've defined have been styles that already exist in DreamWeaver. Now we'd like to create a new style and apply it to the quote (and then be able to use it with any other text we'd like defined as quotes.)

4. Once again, choose **Text ⇨ CSS Styles ⇨ Edit Style Sheet…** Click on the name of your sheet to select it, and then click on the New button.
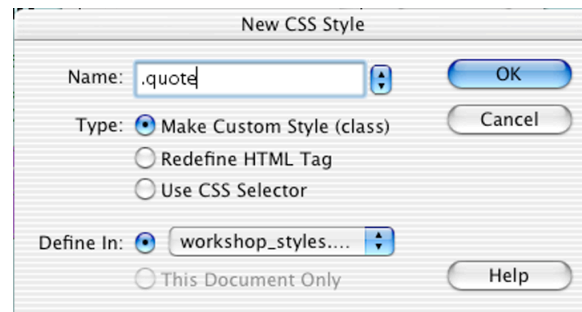
5. Change the Type to Make Custom Style (class) and then give this style a name: **.quote** (notice the period in front of the name). Click OK.

6. Choose all the formatting you'd like this style to have. Then click OK and Done.

7. When you are returned to the document, you'll notice that things haven't changed on the page. That's because there is no text on the page that is assigned the quote style. And when you look at the formatting list on the Properties Inspector, there is no quote style in the list. However, there is a Design palette on your desktop, from which you can choose the quote style. So drag across the quote ("We seek peace.") and then click on the quote style from the Design palette. The text will be updated.
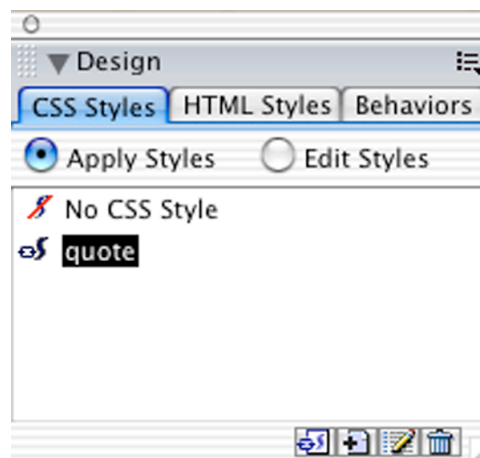
Your finished document will contain all of
your style changes:
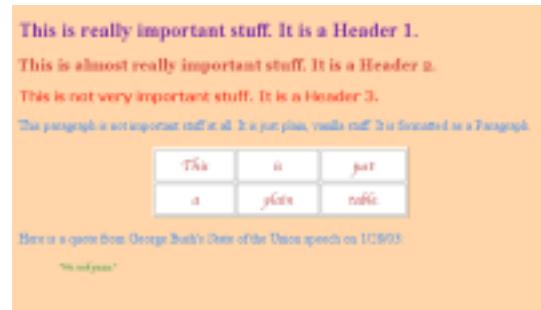
Apply Styles to Other Documents

So, now how do you apply this Cascading Style Sheet to new or existing documents?

1. Open a new document. Save it into your css folder. Type up 5 paragraphs of text (see example). When you type this text, it will be formatted as Paragraph.

2. Select the 1st paragraph and change the format to Heading 1. Change the format of the 2nd paragraph to Heading 2. Change the format of the 3rd paragraph to Heading 3. Leave the rest of the paragraphs alone.

3. Insert a simple table and type something into each cell.

4. So far, everything is boring.

5. To assign the Cascading Style Sheet to this document, choose **Text ➪ CSS Styles ➪ Attach Style Sheet…** In the Link External Style Sheet dialog box, browse to your css folder and choose the style sheet you created earlier. Click OK.
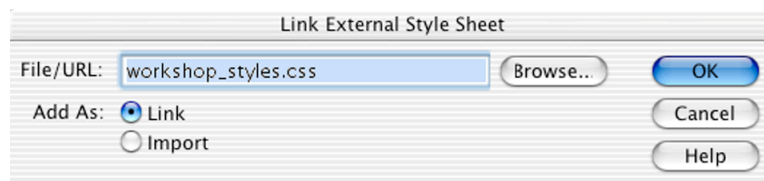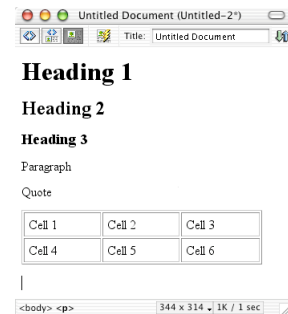
6. When you are returned to your document, all the styles have been updated except for the quote style. Drag across the 5th paragraph, and choose Quote from the Design palette to assign that style.

7. TA DA! YOU'RE DONE!