

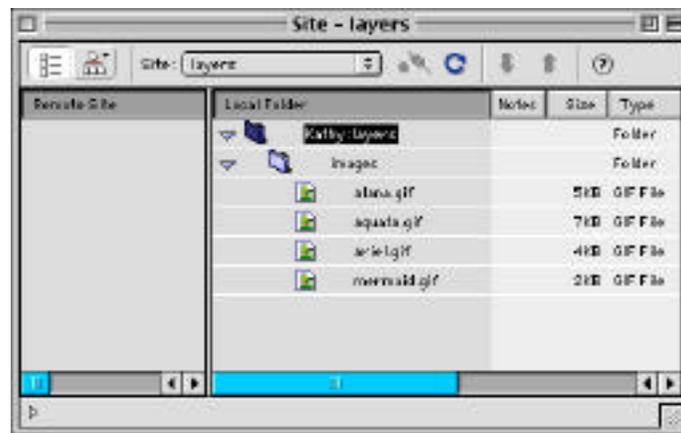
Layers

Introduction

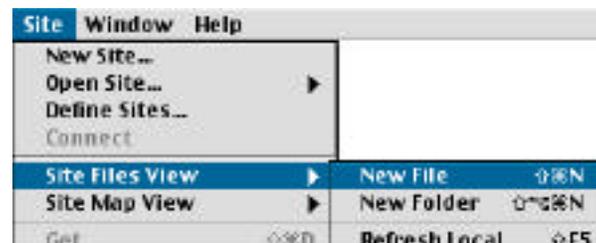
Layers are little page elements that allow you to place things anywhere on a page that you want. You can easily move layers around. You can even place items on top of each other using layers. However, layers are not for everyone! They don't work with browsers prior to 4.0. So if your audience is using older browsers, layers won't work for them.

Adding Layers

1. Launch DreamWeaver.
2. Using the Site window (the F8 key), define the **layers** folder as your ROOT folder. Notice that although there are images already in this folder, there are no documents yet.



3. Choose **Site** \odot **Site Files View** \odot **New File**. This creates a new, untitled document inside your root folder. Drag over the word **untitled** (don't include the **.html** part) and give this document the name of **index.html**. Double-click on the name to open the document.



4. Open the Page Properties window (**⌘+J**). Give your document the title **Mermaids**. Close the Page Properties window.

We want to insert 3 pictures of mermaids, one title graphic, and a block of text onto this page. Because we're not sure exactly where we want the elements, we'll just add them in layers and then move them around until we're happy with the appearance.

5. On the Objects Palette, click on the Draw Layers icon.



6. There are a couple of different ways to place the layer on the page.
 - If you just move your cursor onto the page and click, you'll get a default-sized layer box.
 - You can click and drag a box of whatever size you wish. When you insert a picture into a layer, if the layer box is too large, you have to resize it using the resize handles around the edge.
 - My favorite way to create a layer is to click and drag a very little box. Then when I insert pictures, the box automatically expands just enough to enclose the picture.

Using whichever method most appeals to you, create five layer boxes on your page.

7. Click in one of the layer boxes you just created. From the Objects Palette, click on the Insert Image icon.



8. Select the image in the **Layers** > **Images** folder called **mermaid.gif** and click **Open**. You'll see the picture inside the layer. At the top left of the page is a little yellow tag. This is an invisible element associated with the layer.

If your layer box was too large for the image, drag the corner selection handle in to make the layer box smaller. It will resize small enough so that the entire image shows. You can't use this as a method to crop the image. You can move the layer to anywhere on the page by holding down on the little tag in the upper left corner and dragging.



9. Using this procedure, insert the mermaid images: **alana.gif**, **aquata.gif**, and **ariel.gif**.

10. Click inside the last layer box and type:

Triton's Daughters

King Triton has seven daughters, each one year apart in age.

On each girl's 15th birthday, she is allowed to visit the world above the waves for the first time.

11. Select all the text, and in the Properties Inspector, change the settings to:

format: paragraph,
font: **Verdana, Arial, Helvetica, sans serif**
size: **3**

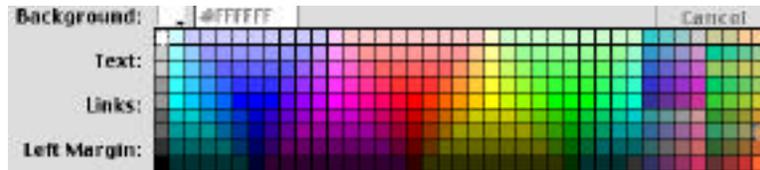


12. Select only the title, **Triton's Daughters**, and change that format to **Heading 3**
13. In the upper left corner of your page you'll see a little yellow layer tag for each layer you created. Don't worry about them. They are invisible and won't be seen in the browser.

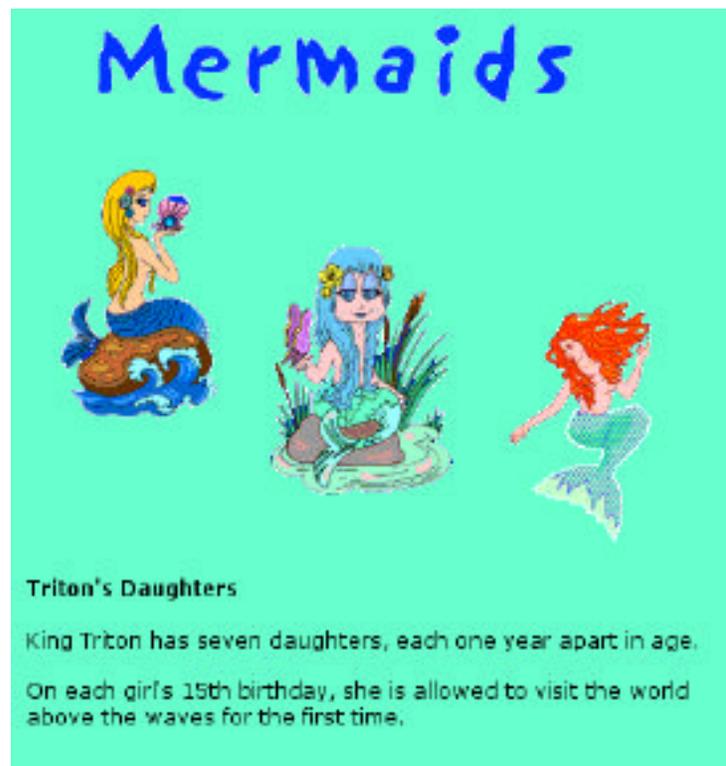
Arrange your layers into a pleasing order.



14. The page might look better with a colored background. Open up the Page Properties window (**⌘+J**). In the Background area, choose a color from the color picker and click **OK**.



15. Press **F12** to preview the page in your browser. Close the browser and save your work. Don't close the Dreamweaver page yet.

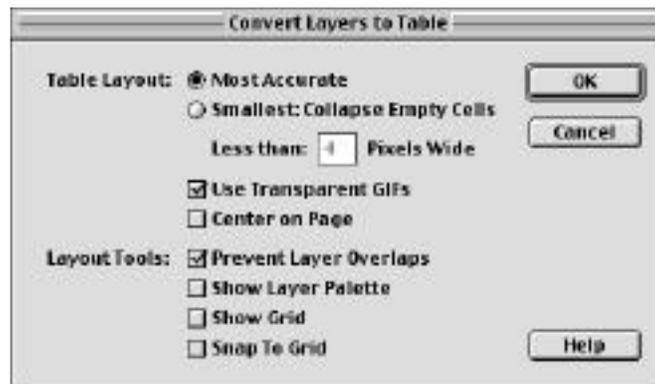


Converting Layers to Tables

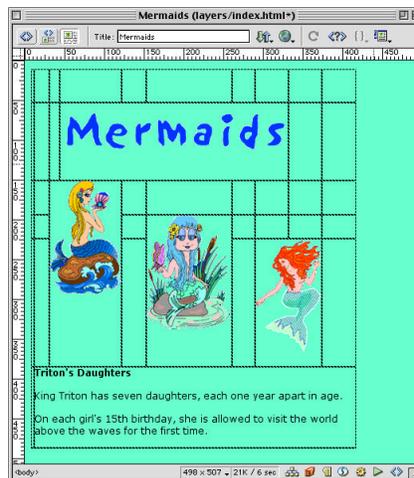
Although the layers document we just created is easy to do and allows you great flexibility in laying out your page, layers aren't for all viewers. Anyone using a browser before version 4.0 won't see the page the way it was designed. They'll see all the layers on top of each other in an incomprehensible jumble. Obviously, this is a problem.

Luckily for you, there is a solution. Tables! Dreamweaver can easily and quickly change a page of layers into a page of tables, which are much more widely accepted by various browsers.

1. Be sure your layers document (**index.html**) is open.
2. Choose **Modify** ⌘ **Convert** ⌘ **Layers to Table...**



3. The default settings are probably just fine: Most Accurate, Use Transparent GIFs, Prevent Layer Overlaps. Click the **OK** button.
4. Your document will appear with lots of little cells:



5. **When you preview with your browser (F12), you won't be able to tell if it was created in layers or tables, and neither will your viewers.**
6. **Save and close this document. We're finished with it.**
7. **Look in your Site Folder. You'll now see a new document (transparent.gif). This is a placeholder for all the empty cells formed in your new table.**