

# How to use templates

You can use an Adobe Dreamweaver *template* to create multiple pages with the same layout. In a template, you control which page elements should remain constant in documents based on that template and which elements can be changed from page to page. Templates are helpful for building a website in which most pages have the same header, navigation system, and other elements. Using templates helps you save time as well as create and maintain a consistent look when more than one person is developing a site.

## Creating a template

You create templates from existing pages, setting *editable regions* on these pages that will hold content on each page created from the template.

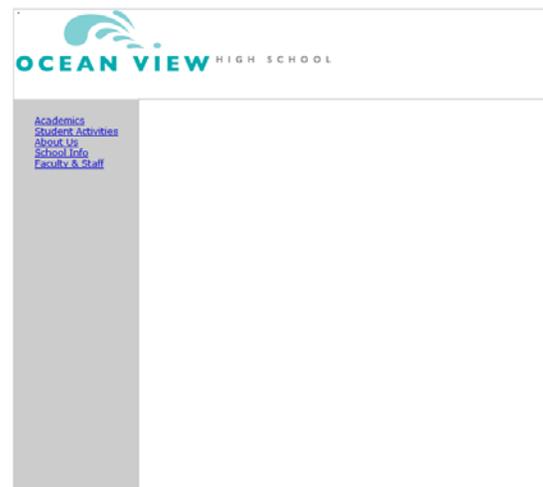
To create a template:

1. Start Dreamweaver.
2. Build a page that contains elements designed to appear on all content pages such as common graphics, a navigation bar, and common layout structures such as div tags (**Figure 1**).

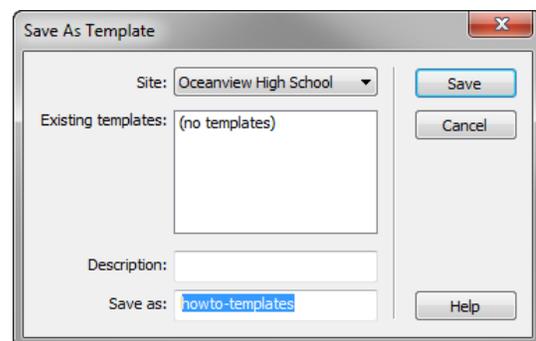
**Note:** You may want to create navigation elements in Adobe Fireworks or Photoshop and export them as HTML documents.

3. Select File > Save As Template.
4. In the Save As Template dialog box (**Figure 2**), give the template a name. You can also enter a brief description of the template. Then click Save. If Dreamweaver asks if you want to update links, click Yes.

Dreamweaver creates a Templates folder in your site root folder and saves your template in that folder. Template files have a .dwt file extension.



**Figure 1** Common elements on a web page



**Figure 2** Save As Template dialog box

To create an editable region:

1. In the Layout category of the Insert panel, click Draw AP Div, and then drag on the page to create a new div to represent the editable region in the template.

**Note:** You also click to indicate where to place the editable region, but using a div gives you more control over page layout.

2. With the div still selected, do one of the following to create an editable region:
  - Select Insert > Template Objects > Editable Region.
  - Right-click (Windows) or Control-click (Mac OS) the region and select Templates > New Editable Region from the context menu.
  - In the Common category of the Insert panel, click the Templates button (**Figure 3**), and select Editable Region from the pop-up menu.

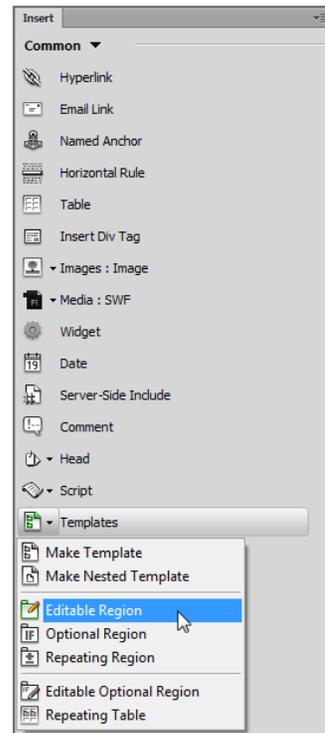
The New Editable Region dialog box opens (**Figure 4**).

3. In the dialog box, enter a unique name for the region, and click OK.

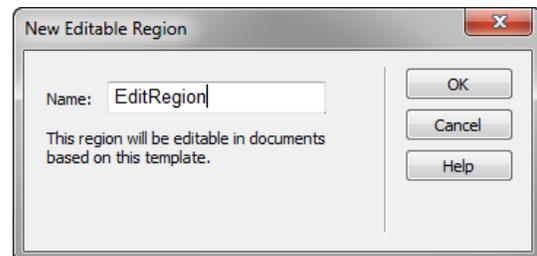
The editable region is within the selected div, and is enclosed in a light blue rectangle on the template (**Figure 5**).

**Note:** You cannot use the same name for more than one editable region in a particular template. Use only letters and numbers in the name.

4. Save and close the template.



**Figure 3** Templates button on the Insert panel



**Figure 4** New Editable Region dialog box



**Figure 5** New editable region inside the div

To create a document based on a template:

Once you create a template, you can use it to create new documents.

1. Select File > New.
2. In the New Document dialog box, select the Page From Template category.

The dialog box displays your sites and all of the templates for the selected site (**Figure 6**).

3. In the Sites list, select the site that contains the template you want to use.
4. Select the template you want to use.
5. Make sure the Update Page When Template Changes option is selected.

With this option selected, Dreamweaver can update all template-based pages if you change the template later.

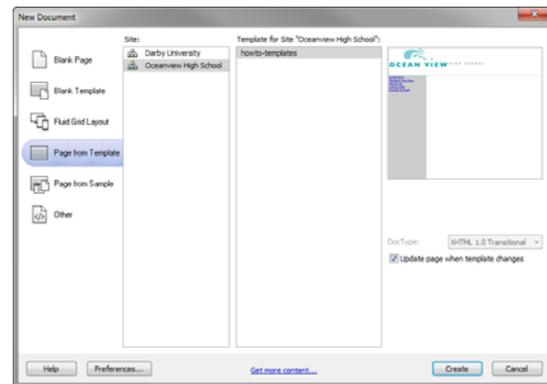
6. Click Create to create a new template-based page.  
The document opens in the Document window.
7. Click in one of the editable regions, and add text.
8. Move the pointer over a page area that is not editable, and observe that you cannot make changes.
9. Save the page.

## Editing a template

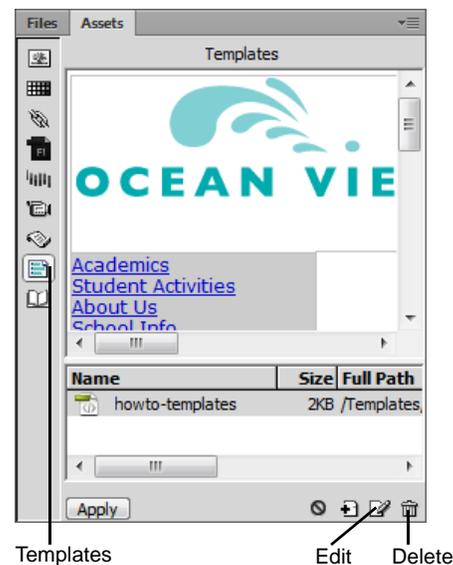
You can edit a template at any time, even if you have created pages based on the template.

To edit a template:

1. Select Window > Assets.  
The Assets panel opens.
2. Click the Templates button on the left side of the panel (**Figure 7**).  
A list of the templates for your site appears in the lower pane. The upper pane displays a preview of the selected template. (You may need to scroll the preview pane to see this.)
3. Select the template you wish to edit and do one of the following:
  - Double-click the name of the template.
  - Click the Edit button at the bottom of the panel (**Figure 7**).
4. Edit the template in the Document window, changing non-editable elements or creating editable regions in the template as desired.



**Figure 6** Page From Template category in the New Document dialog box



**Figure 7** Assets panel

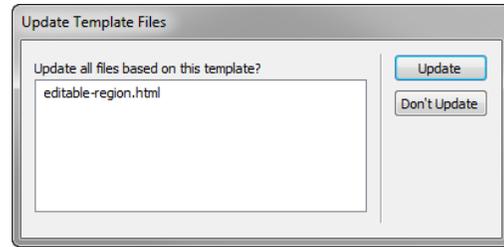
5. Save the edited template by choosing File > Save.

The Update Template Files dialog box opens, with a list of the documents based on your template (**Figure 8**).

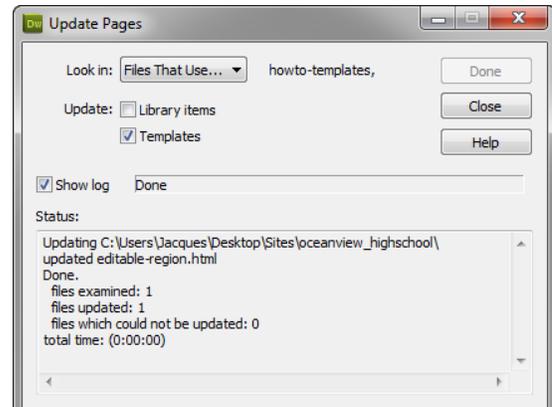
6. Click Update to update the documents based on the changes you made in your template.

The Update Pages dialog box displays a summary of the updates performed (**Figure 9**). You may need to select Show log to view the Status information.

7. Click Close.



**Figure 8** Update Template Files dialog box



**Figure 9** Update Pages dialog box

## Deleting a template

*To delete a template:*

1. Select the template in the Assets panel.
2. Click the Delete button (trash can icon) at the bottom of the panel and confirm that you want to delete the template (**Figure 7**).

The template file is deleted from your site.

Documents that were based on a template you have deleted retain the structure and editable regions the template file had before you deleted it. To turn such a document into a normal HTML file without editable or locked regions, you must detach it from the template.

## Detaching from a template

To remove the template structure and constraints from a document based on a template, you can *detach* the document from the template. When a document is detached from its template, you can edit any element, including the regions that were previously locked.

*To detach a file from a template*

1. To detach a document from a template, open the document.
2. Select Modify > Templates > Detach From Template.