How to create buttons and navigation bars

Adobe Fireworks CS3 enables you to design the look and functionality of buttons, including links and rollover features. After you export these buttons from Fireworks, you can import them into Adobe Dreamweaver CS3.

Build a button

1. Start Fireworks. Create a new document. Type 200 pixels for Width and 200 pixels for Height. Type 72 pixels/inch for Resolution.

    Note: At the end of this exercise, you will trim the canvas to fit the button.

2. Save the document in the images folder of your Dreamweaver website.

3. Select Edit > Insert > New Button.

    The Button Editor opens (**Figure 1**).

    Buttons contain four states:

    - *Up* (button untouched)

    - *Over* (pointer over button)

    - *Down* (button being clicked)

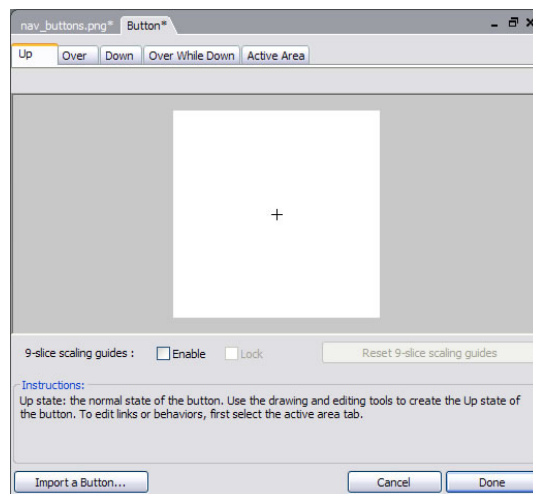   - *Over While Down* (pointer over while button held down)

Figure 1 Button Editor with Up state

4. Make sure the Enable option for 9-Slice Scaling Guides is deselected.

    (To learn about 9-Slice Scaling Guides, select Help > What's New In Fireworks CS3.)

5. Use the Rectangle tool or the Ellipse tool from the Tools panel to draw a shape for the Up state. Make the dimensions of the shape fit the size of your navigation bar.

6. To add depth to the button, click the Add Live Filters button in the Property inspector (the plus sign next to Filters), and then select a bevel option from the pop-up menu:

    - Bevel and Emboss > Inner Bevel

    - Bevel and Emboss > Outer Bevel

7. Using the Property inspector, add color to the button. Using the Text tool, add text to the button.

These should match the color and font design of your page.

8. Switch to the Pointer tool. Hold down Shift. Click on both the button and the text box to select both.

9. Select Modify > Align > Center Vertical to align the text with the vertical center of the button.

10. Select Modify > Align > Center Horizontal to align the text with the horizontal center of the button.

Later you will duplicate this first button to create the other buttons. If the text is centered, button labels with varying numbers of characters will all be well aligned.

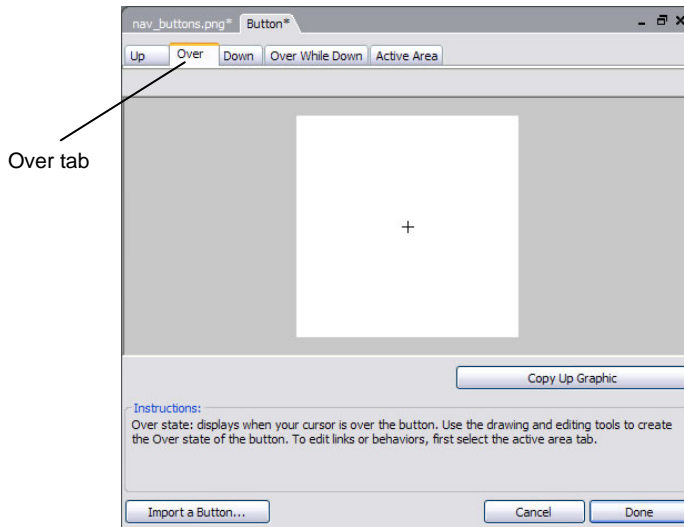**11.** Click the Over tab at the top of the Button Editor (**Figure 2**).

Figure 2 Over tab in Button Editor

12. Click **Copy Up Graphic** to copy the Up graphic to the Over button state (**Figure 3**).

This saves you time and helps keep the look of the button consistent.
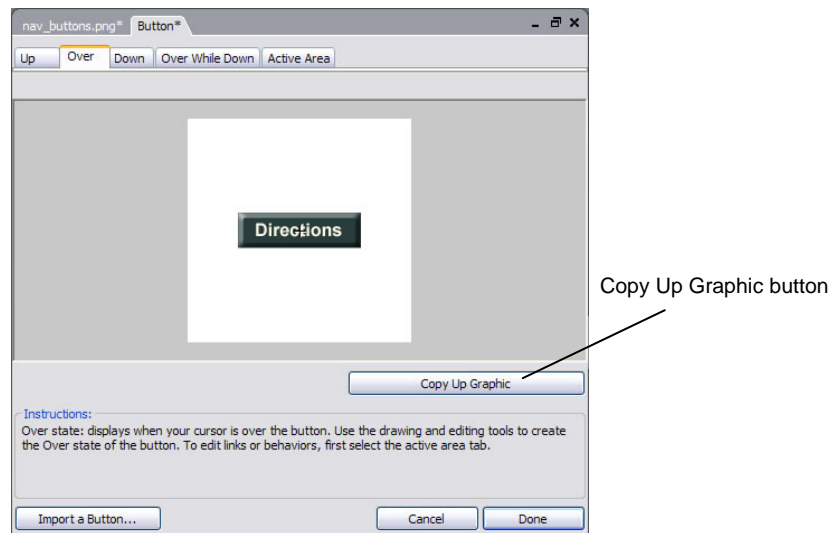

Figure 3 Copy Up Graphic button

13. Decide how you want the button to look when the pointer rolls over the button. Then change the copied graphic by modifying the color or effects of the text or the shape of the button.

14. Click the Down tab.

15. Click Copy Over Graphic to copy the Over graphic to this button state.

16. Decide how you want the button to look when visitors click the button. Add effects such as darkening the color. You can add a drop shadow to the shape by clicking Add Filters in the Property inspector, and then selecting Shadow And Glow > Drop Shadow.

17. For this project, skip the Over While Down state.

18. Click the Active Area tab.

    The active area of the button is shown by green shading and red lines. This shading indicates the area visitors can click to activate the button.

19. To change the size of the active area, drag the red guides (Windows) or green shading (Mac OS) to extend or decrease the green shaded active area.

20. When you are satisfied with the states of your button in the Button Editor, click Done.

    Your button appears on the Fireworks canvas.

21. Click the button to select it. In the Link text box in the Property inspector, enter the name of a web page to link to this button (**Figure 4**).
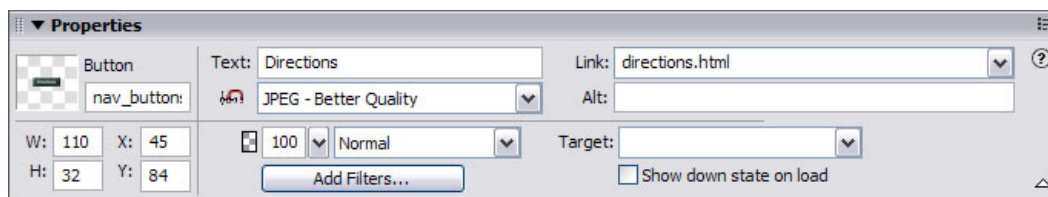

Figure 4 Web page in Link text box

22. In the Alt text box, enter an alternative text label for the button.

    Alternative text is displayed in place of the image when visitors elect not to display images in their browsers. Such text can also be voiced by screen readers for visitors who use them. Typically, alternative text for a button should be the same as the text displayed on the button.

23. Select Modify > Canvas > Fit Canvas to fit the canvas to the size of your button.

Copy buttons and make the navigation bar

1. Change the size of the canvas to accommodate all the buttons on your navigation bar. Select Modify > Canvas > Canvas Size and edit the value for height or width in the Canvas Size dialog box.

   If you have four buttons, for example, multiply the height or width of the first button by four (depending on whether your navigation bar is vertical or horizontal).

2. Select the first button. Move it to the top of the canvas. Select Edit > Clone.

   A new instance of the button appears on top of the original button.

3. Drag the new button instance below the original button. You can also use the arrow keys to move the button.

4. Repeat steps 2 and 3 as many times as necessary to create the rest of your navigation bar (**Figure 5**).

5. Click the second button and use the Property inspector to edit it. In the Text box, change the text to the name of the second button. Edit the information in the Link text box and the Alt text box as appropriate for this button.

6. Repeat step 5 for the remaining buttons (**Figure 6**).

7. Fit the canvas to your navigation bar: Select Modify > Canvas > Fit Canvas.
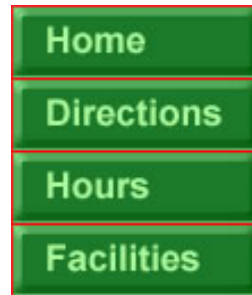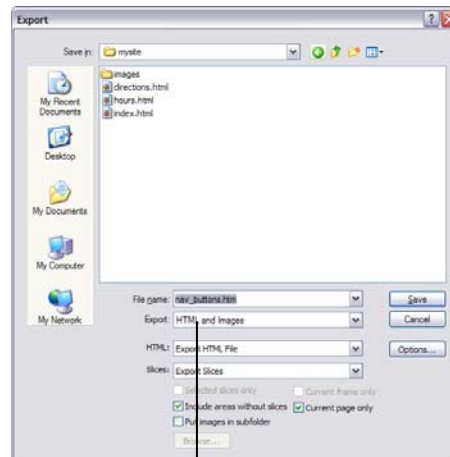
8. Save the file.

Figure 5 Cloned buttons

Figure 6 Buttons with edited text labels

Export a navigation bar for use in Dreamweaver

Fireworks enables you to save interactive graphics (a button, for instance) as HTML so you can import working buttons into a Dreamweaver document.

1. To export your navigation bar, choose File > Export.

   The Export dialog box opens (**Figure 7**).

2. Navigate to the folder in your local root folder where you want to save the navigation bar.

3. Give the navigation bar file a short descriptive name.

4. Make sure the HTML And Images option is selected in the Export pop-up menu.

5. Make sure the Include Areas Without Slices option is selected.

6. Select the Put Images In Subfolder option.

7. Click Export.

8. Close Fireworks.

Export pop-up menu

Figure 7 Export dialog box

Insert the navigation bar into a Dreamweaver document

1. Start Dreamweaver.

2. Open the page in which you want to insert the navigation bar.

3. Position the insertion point where you want the navigation bar to appear.

4. In the Common category on the Insert bar, click the Images pop-up menu and select Fireworks HTML.

   The Insert Fireworks HTML dialog box opens (**Figure 8**).

5. In the Insert Fireworks HTML dialog box, click the Browse button, and then locate and select your navigation bar HTML file. Click Open.

6. In the Insert Fireworks HTML dialog box, click OK.

   The navigation bar appears on the page.

7. To edit a button, select the button and then use the Property inspector to change settings such as the link or alternative text.

8. Check that the link address and the alternative text label are correct for each button.

9. Select File > Preview In Browser and choose a browser from the submenu to test the buttons and their links in a browser (**Figure 9**).

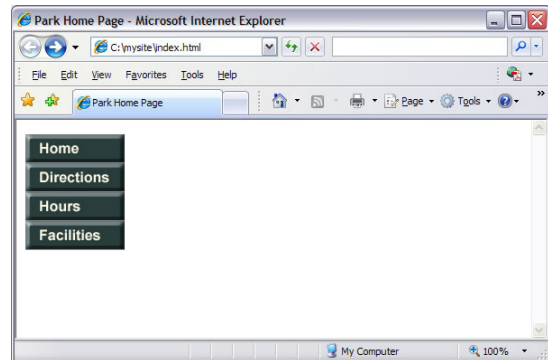10. Save the Dreamweaver document.

Figure 8 Fireworks HTML dialog box

Figure 9 Page previewed in browser