

File Management for web sites

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Outline

Creating web sites is very good for developing basic IT skills. Essential to these skills is file management e.g. knowing how to name files correctly and saving them into specific folders. Good file management is essential for your site to function well. Poor file management will result in lost files and broken links in your web site.

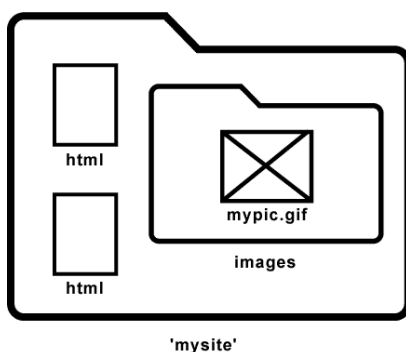
The principle of storing files is simply a matter of good housekeeping. For instance one would not store letters in a folder called "my pictures", the same is true when creating a web site. *There are some basic conventions when managing files for web sites but ultimately your aim should be to organize them for your convenience.*

Basic file organization

The functioning files for every web site that you create should be contained in its own specific folder. *Functioning files means html files, other files that are included in the web pages (e.g. graphics, sound, video etc.) and any files for download by users.* It will be the contents of this folder that will be transferred up line to form your web presence.

When beginning a web site the first thing to do is to create the folder that will contain the files for your web site. The term used for this folder is 'root folder' but you can name it anything you like e.g. use a descriptive name to do with your site.

Inside this folder you can then create any subsidiary folders for particular file types as in the illustration below.



Here we have

- the root folder which contains the HTML files and a folder called images.
- HTML files are stored directly inside the root folder (*root or first level*).
- graphics, photos etc. are contained in another folder called 'images' inside the root folder.

This illustrates the good housekeeping principle in that different file types are separated into different folders.

In this example, if the HTML needs to look for graphics it will do so inside the 'images' folder. The correct syntax in the HTML code will look like this:

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Notice that the named files and folders are contained within quotation marks.

The word 'images' followed by a forward slash (**images/**) indicates a folder. The HTML will then look for the specified file inside that folder - in this instance called **mypic.gif**.

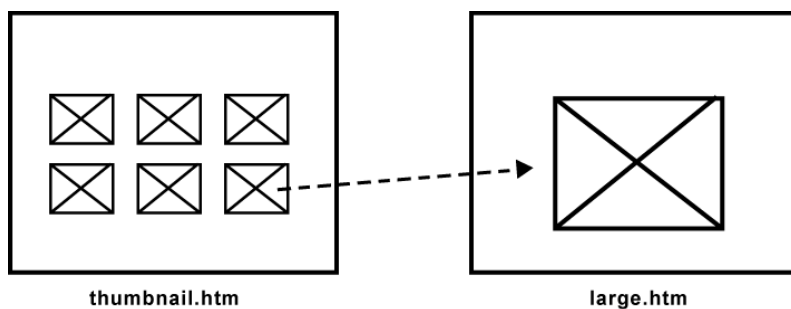
In this example "images/mypic.gif" is the file path or directory.

If your web site were to contain Flash movies, video, sound and so-on, then these should be contained in dedicated folders inside the root folder.

- **keep root folders separate e.g. do not store one root folder within another**
- **keep resources and source files, such as Photoshop or Fireworks files separately from the root folder**

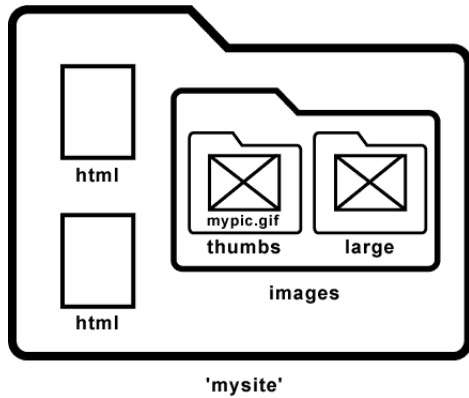
More sophisticated organization

Let us consider how an image gallery may be organised. For instance there may be a page of thumbnails with each one connecting to a separate page of a larger version:



This illustration shows a page of thumbnail images that, when clicked on, will take you to a page with the larger version of the thumbnail.

For this to happen we will need to have two versions of the same image, one small and one large. Therefore it would be advantageous to split them into different folders like so:



In this example the *images* folder contains 2 sub folders called *thumbs* and *large*. The resulting HTML to display a thumbnail would be:

**** . This is another way of saying “look inside a folder called *images* and then inside a folder called *thumbs* and there will be found the requested image.

Not only would this file organisation make life easier when you are searching for a specific file, it would also mean that we could use the same file names for the large and small versions of images because they are kept inside separate folders. This would make it simpler when using actions and batch commands in Photoshop.