

What's New in Adobe Dreamweaver CS4

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What's New in Adobe Dreamweaver CS4

In the CS4 version of the Dreamweaver software, Adobe has updated the user interface and added features in order to do two things:

- Support the integration of technologies like AJAX with traditional XHTML page development
- Maintain consistency with other Adobe products

Now that CS4 is available for free to the IU community, there's little reason not to try it.

The Bottom Line

If you are new to web page development or Dreamweaver, the bottom line is that you can use whichever version of Dreamweaver you can get your hands on – CS4 has added elements to the interface for more advanced users, but for beginning users, these won't pertain to you.

Perhaps the most useful addition or change is that Dreamweaver's interface is now fully streamlined with the interfaces for other Adobe applications like Photoshop, which may make your learning curve easier.

If you are advanced enough to use CSS in your pages, two additions to CS4 will be especially helpful to you:

- The new Code Navigator allows you to quickly target and troubleshoot CSS affecting element(s) of your page.
- The CSS panel and Property Inspector have been updated to help you not only create CSS, but also encourage you to adhere to best practices.

If you are advanced enough to use client-side script-

ing or server-side programming, you probably haven't been using Dreamweaver as your primary integrated development environment (IDE). Another IDE like Eclipse will still be your best bet if you need robust support for non-ColdFusion server-side languages like ASP.NET, JSP, PHP, Ruby, decent debugging, and/or integration of source control other than Subversion. But with the release of CS4, you may want to take a look at Dreamweaver again for the following reasons:

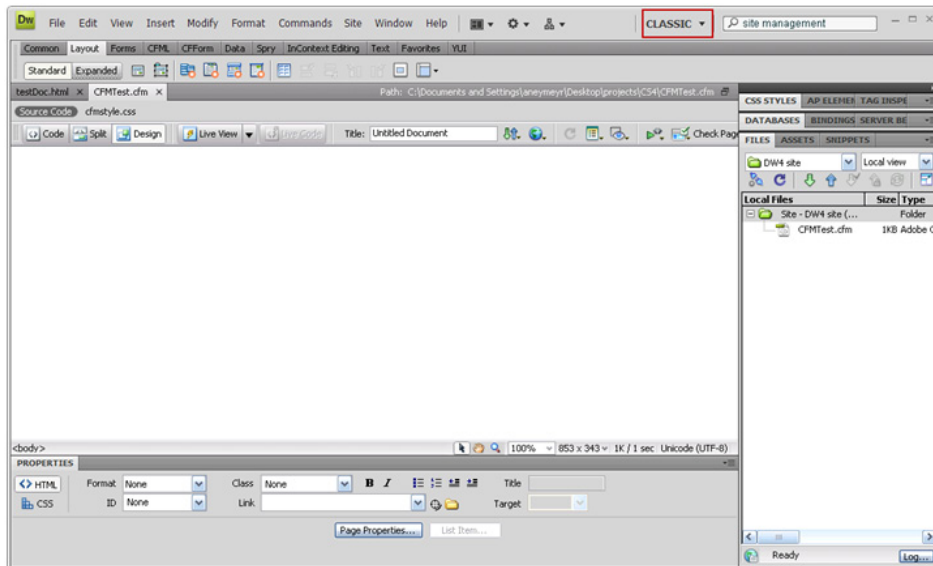
- The functionality of the tremendously popular Firefox add-ons Web Developer and Firebug have been replicated with the inclusion of Live View and Live Code, which uses the WebKit engine to allow you to see and interact with your pages in real-time, view the pertinent code, and change it on the fly – including CSS and Javascript (and not just the Adobe-built Spry framework – CS4 has added support for JQuery, Yahoo's YUI, etc.)
- When you open a source file (for example, an .html, .php, or .cfm file) Dreamweaver now automatically opens the helper CSS, Javascript, and/or other helper files used in conjunction with it – a handy time-saver, assuming you've got the associate files locally available.
- The site setup and management features of Dreamweaver, although not new in CS4, still offer useful functionality not currently available in Eclipse, especially when you need to strictly work off of a remote server or are in maintenance mode with multiple sites.

More Details about New Features

It is in Adobe's interests to make each release sound as though it contains features and capabilities you simply cannot do without; let's separate the hype from reality.


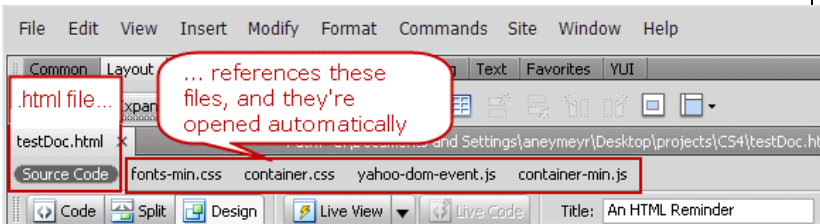
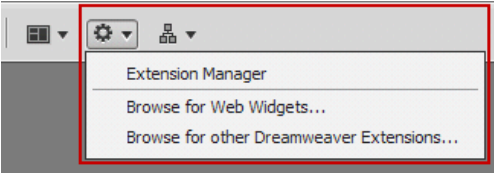
How To Make CS4 Look like CS3 or Earlier versions:

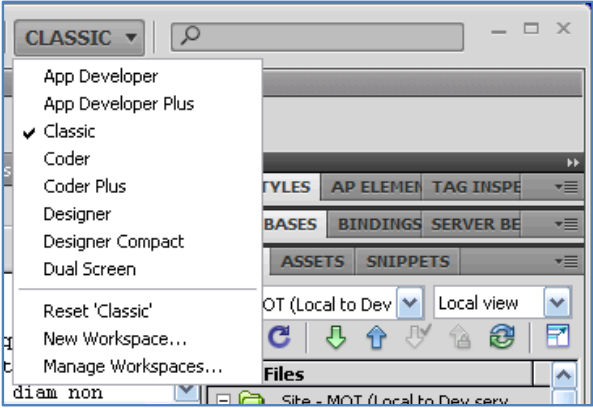
Stick with the Classic workspace:



This will give you the standard Insert bar running horizontally across the top of the layout, the Property Inspector below the main content window, and the usual panels down the right-hand side.

To find more training and information about Dreamweaver, go to: <http://ittraining.iu.edu/dreamweaver>.

NEW FEATURE		Who Cares?			
		Potentially Everyone	Beginning Web Page Builders <small>(Just HTML)</small>	Intermediate Web Page Builders <small>(CSS)</small>	<i>Advanced Web Page Builders</i> <small>(CSS, with ColdFusion or PHP, and Javascript-based client-side interactivity)</small>
INTERFACE					
	Streamlined Interface, with all elements in panels on right side, and consistent with other Adobe products (tearoff tabs, customizable layout, etc.)	✓			
	<p>integrated Search bar to look for help in Community Help on the Adobe site:</p>  <p>“Community Help”, despite its name, does not point you to an Adobe Forum. Community Help is a service in public Beta that uses a Google search algorithm to attempt to pull the most helpful support documentation, both from within Adobe (in Forums, the Knowledgebase, etc.) or other non-Adobe providers, like CreativePro.com</p>	✓			
	<p>Related files open automatically:</p> 	✓			
	<p>New button to quickly access Web Widgets (from Adobe Extensions) to add additional functionality to your pages; usually, these come in the form of client-side Javascript.</p> 			✓	✓

NEW FEATURE	WHO CARES? →	Potentially Everyone	Beginning Web Page Builders (Just HTML)	Intermediate Web Page Builders (CSS)	<i>Advanced Web Page Builders</i> <small>(CSS, with ColdFusion or PHP, and Javascript-based client-side interactivity)</small>
<p>↓</p>	<p>New drop-down menu to instantly change the workspace layout depending on the kinds of things you're working on:</p>  <p>In my opinion, the most exciting thing here is support for dual screens.</p>	✓		✓	✓
FUNCTIONALITY	When any HTML source page is opened, Dreamweaver also opens related files used by the HTML files, like associated javascript or CSS files, navigable via tabs	✓			
	Photoshop Smart Object integration, with easy round-trip editing	✓			
	New CSS addition panel (if you use the Dreamwaver CSS panel to write CSS instead of hand-coding)			✓	
	Live View – adds functionality to the Design View so that CSS and Javascript effects are visible within the regular Dreamweaver interface			✓	✓
	Live Code in conjunction with Live View– when viewing page in split view, the code view will update based on the user's interactions on the LiveView part of the page. Also can be used to delve into the CSS affecting a particular page element.			✓	✓
	Code navigator shows which CSS is applicable to selected HTML code			✓	✓
	Better version control, with support for Subversion.			✓	✓
	If using the Spry javascript framework, possible to create data sets from HTML tables			✓	✓
	Code hinting for all javascript frameworks, not just Spry				✓