

**Quick Note:** Throughout these guides there are multiple references to menu paths you should take in order to accomplish a particular task. In the interests of clarity, whenever a menu path is outlined, in addition to writing a long description i.e. “Go to the ‘file’ menu and then choose the ‘new page’ option and then choose the ‘open’ option”, these guides will also use a summary bold form like this: **File > New Page > Open**.

## Accessibility

With the implementation of the **Special Educational Needs and Disability Act (SENDA)**, from September 2002, it is now a legal requirement to take steps to ensure your Website is accessible to disabled people.

Dreamweaver MX 2004 has a whole host of features which promote the construction of accessible websites. These include:

### Accessibility checker (File > Check Page > Accessibility)

Dreamweaver has a built in Accessibility checker, which you can activate by going to the file menu, choosing check page and then choosing the accessibility option. What you’ll get back is a list of all the places in your web page where attention or alteration is needed to make the page conform to accessibility legislation (see figure 1) – so that you can take steps to correct them.

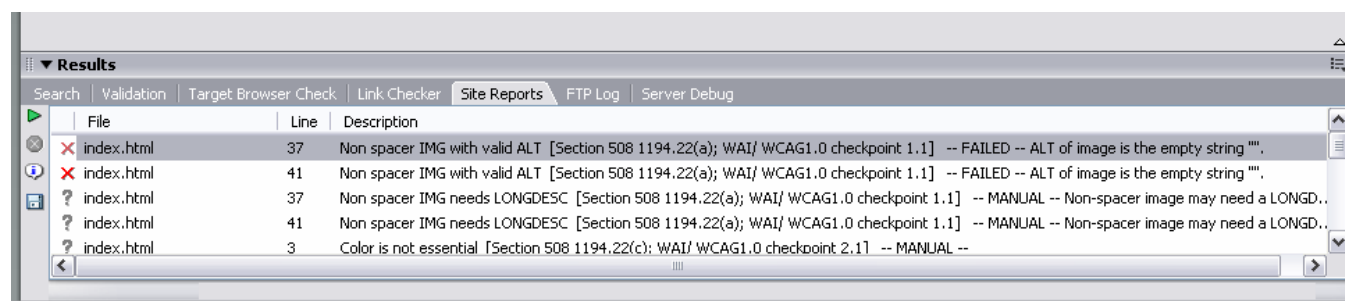


Figure 1

### Auto CSS generation

Dreamweaver has a new feature whereby if you try to assign a style using the old manual non-CSS method – it will automatically take what you’ve specified and turn it into a CSS style. It will give these styles the default names style 1, style 2, style 3, etc.

### High emphasis on CSS in design window (CSS interface)

The CSS interface in Dreamweaver has been given high prominence in the main editing window (top right corner) and attention has been paid to its design so that its relatively easy to use and edit CSS styles.

### Easy ALT tag interface (Edit > Preferences > Accessibility)

If you have checked the Images option in Accessibility preferences dialog box, then every time you insert an image you’ll get an ALT tag prompt box (see figure 2). You can add both alternative text (ALT text) and long descriptions (LONGDESC) for your images.

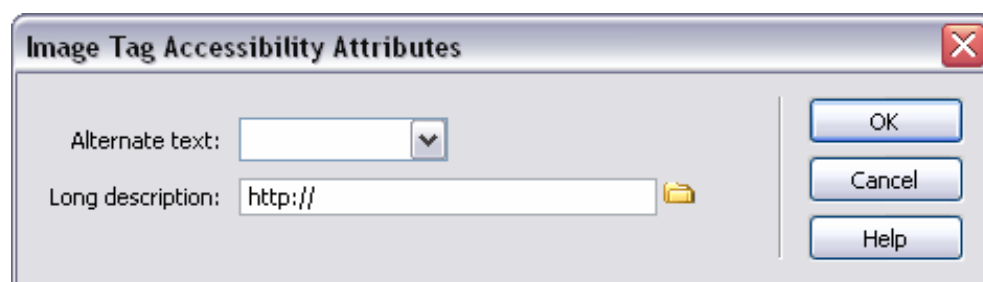


Figure 2

### Easy option for scalable fonts AND Font families rather than individual fonts

Dreamweaver has provided two really useful font-related features. Firstly, the font interface in the properties bar (see figure 3) allows for % font values, which are the best kind of values to specify for fonts (as opposed to 10 pt, 12 pt, etc) as the resulting fonts are **scalable** (meaning that if you need to alter the size of the text because you have a visual impairment then the text will scale up and down to meet your needs).

The second really useful feature is that instead of being only able to specify individual fonts, when creating a style for a section, you can specify a whole **font-family** (see figure 3) which means if a person viewing your site doesn’t have your particular font installed on his machine the site won’t look weird as it will use a similar font instead i.e. if you don’t have Verdana then it will substitute Arial.

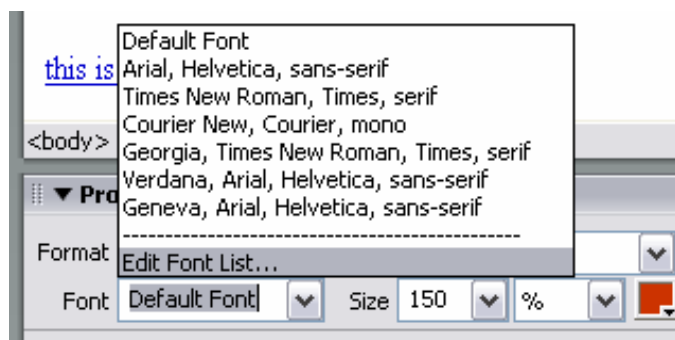


Figure 3

**Broken link checker (File > Check Page > Check links)**

Dreamweaver will check your links for you and tell you if any of them are not working. This is discussed in greater detail in **Dreamweaver MX 2004 guide #12**.

**Browser compatibility checker (File > Check Page > Check target browsers)**

Dreamweaver will check your browser compatibility for you and tell where/if there are any elements of your page that might cause problems for particular browsers. This is discussed in greater detail in **Dreamweaver MX 2004 guide #12**.

**Validator (File > Check Page > Validate Markup)**

Dreamweaver will validate your html for you and tell you if there are any mistakes which need correcting. This is discussed in greater detail in **Dreamweaver MX 2004 guide #12**.

**Table summary (Edit > Preferences > Accessibility)**

Every time you insert a table you'll get a Table summary prompt box (see figure 4). You can use this dialog to specify a caption, align that caption and more importantly write a table summary. Often table summaries are used to describe the function or contents of a table. If you're using a table for layout then the summary should say "table used for page layout" or something similar. If the table contains information then you should describe it "table shows undergraduate student fees for 2004". If your tables don't have summaries then they will fail accessibility tests. Tables without summaries are also no use to someone unable to read the contents - someone relying on a screen reader to work out whether the information in the table is pertinent to them or not.

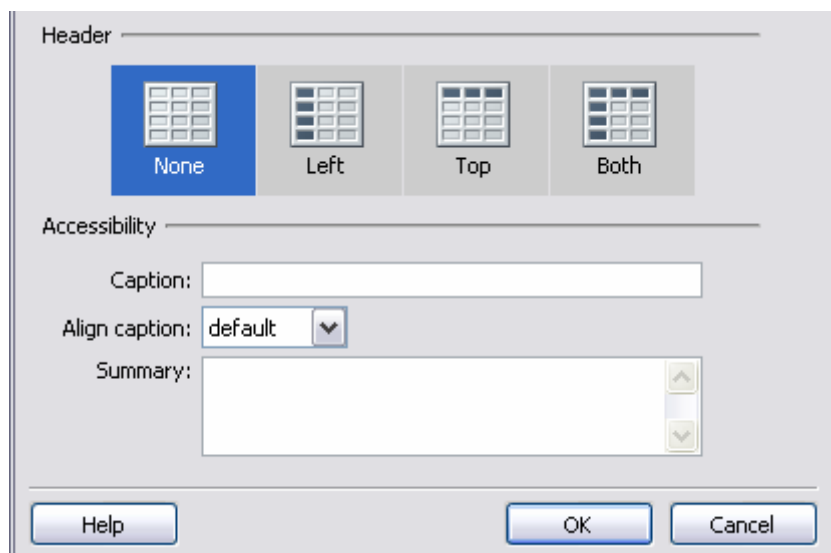


Figure 4

**Tip:** You can get full details of the SENDA legislation plus a range of services to check your site and point out where it does or doesn't comply (and what you can do about it) at: <http://www.le.ac.uk/cc/www/tools/accessibility/index.html>