



# Using Dreamweaver

## 4 – Creating a Template

Now that the main page of our website is complete, we need to create the rest of the pages. Each of them will have a layout that follows the plan shown below.

<i>Logo</i>	<i>Page Heading</i>
<i>Home</i>	<i>Page content in this area</i>
<i>About Us</i>	
<i>Gallery</i>	
<i>Ordering</i>	
<i>Contact Us</i>	
<i>Links</i>	

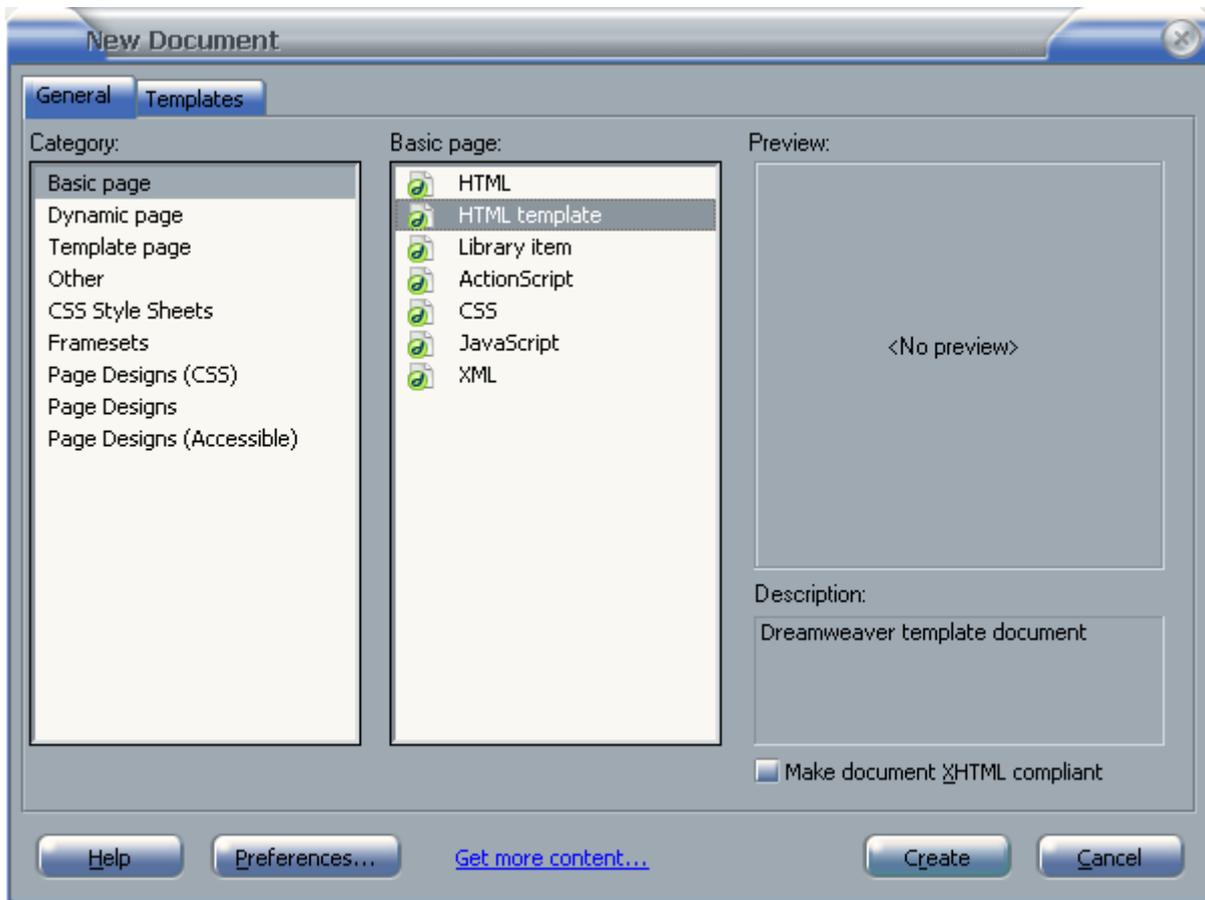
When we are creating several pages that will all be similar, we can use a template to create the basic structure and then use that template as a starting point as we create each individual page. While we create the template, we'll be using a few new techniques. Mainly, we will use a table to create the layout for the page. The table will be used to position the heading and the navigation links on the side. Tables are a common tool for page layout in website, though later we will learn how styles can be an even better tool for page layout with newer browsers that correctly support styles.

**Tip** Sometimes the templates in Dreamweaver might not work properly if there have been problems installing the program. An alternative to creating a template is to create one page with the right layout, then use save as to make copies of the page under different filenames and modify the content of each one.

**Exercise 1 – Starting the Template**

In these exercises we will be continuing the *Francie's Flowerpot website* created in the last exercises.

- 1) From the **File** menu select **New** ([Ctrl] [N]).



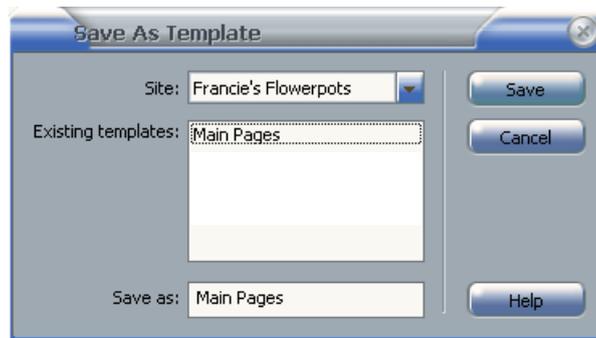
- 2) From the list of options, make sure **Basic Page** is selected in the left. Select **HTML template** and then click **Create**.

A new page will be created. We will use this page as the basis for our template. The first thing we will do is save the template.

- 3) From the **File** menu select **Save** or press [Ctrl] [S].



- 4) A message may appear telling us we don't have any editable regions yet. That's fine since we'll be doing that later. If you like, you can click the **Don't warn me again** option before clicking **OK**.



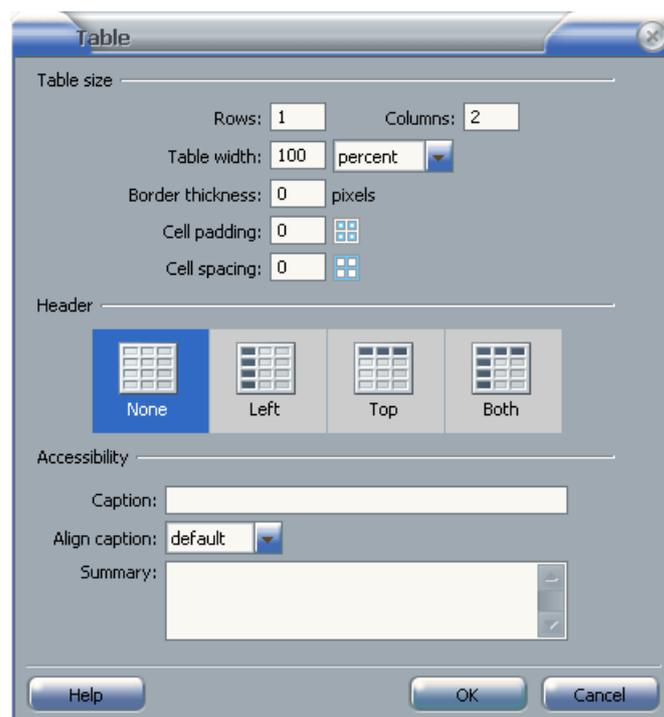
5) In the **Save as** area, enter *Main Pages* and click **Save**.

**Note** The template will be saved in a sub folder under the folder your site is in, so you can easily open the template for later modifications.

## Exercise 2 – Setting up the Navigation Table

To create the navigation structure we are going to use nested tables. The plan shown earlier could be done using one table with merged cells but that has the potential to get a little messy. While nested tables can get complex, it is often a good solution for getting the page layout you want. One table with two cells a single row will be used to divide the page in to a navigation area on the left, with the rest of the page being used for the main heading and page content. The navigation cell will contain another table inside of it that will arrange the navigation links.

1) From the **Insert** menu select **Table**. You could also press **[Ctrl] [Alt] [T]** or click the icon  on the common toolbar.



2) Set the options as shown above and click **OK**. The options are explained below.

For our main table we only want one row divided in to two cells. The **Table width** should be set to 100% (not 100 pixels) so that it takes up the whole page width. **Border thickness** of 0 will remove any visible border from around the cells in the table. **Cell padding** of 0 will mean that there will be no blank space around the inside edges of the cells. **Cell spacing** of 0 will mean that there will be no blank space between the cells.

Next we will set the dimensions for the cells in the table.

Move your mouse to the edge of the left cell until it's border is surrounded by a red line. When your mouse is in that position, you can click to select the cell.



- 3) The properties panel will show some options relating to the selected cell(s). The left cell will contain the page navigation, which we want to be exactly 150 pixels wide. Enter *150* in to the **Width** option as shown below.



Since we haven't entered a width for the other cell, it will take up the remaining width of the table so we don't need to change anything there. That is where we want the main page content to go.

- 4) Select both cells. This can be easily done by clicking to the left of the table as shown.



- 5) In the Properties panel, set the **vertical alignment** to top. HTML defaults to Middle cell alignment which means that things will sit halfway down. In this case and in most other cases, we'll want the content of both cells to be at the top.



- 6) Click inside the first cell.

- 7) In the properties panel, enter *#a2d39c* for the **background colour**.



The table should currently look like the following example.



- 8) Select the **Insert table** option again (making sure you are still in the first cell).
- 9) Keep the options the same as before, only this time the table will have 7 rows and 1 column and will be **150 pixels** in width.
- 10) Click in the first cell. Insert the picture called *nav\_logo.gif*.

**Tip** If your files panel is showing on the right of the screen, an easy way to add the image file is to drag it from the file list to the cell where you want it to go.



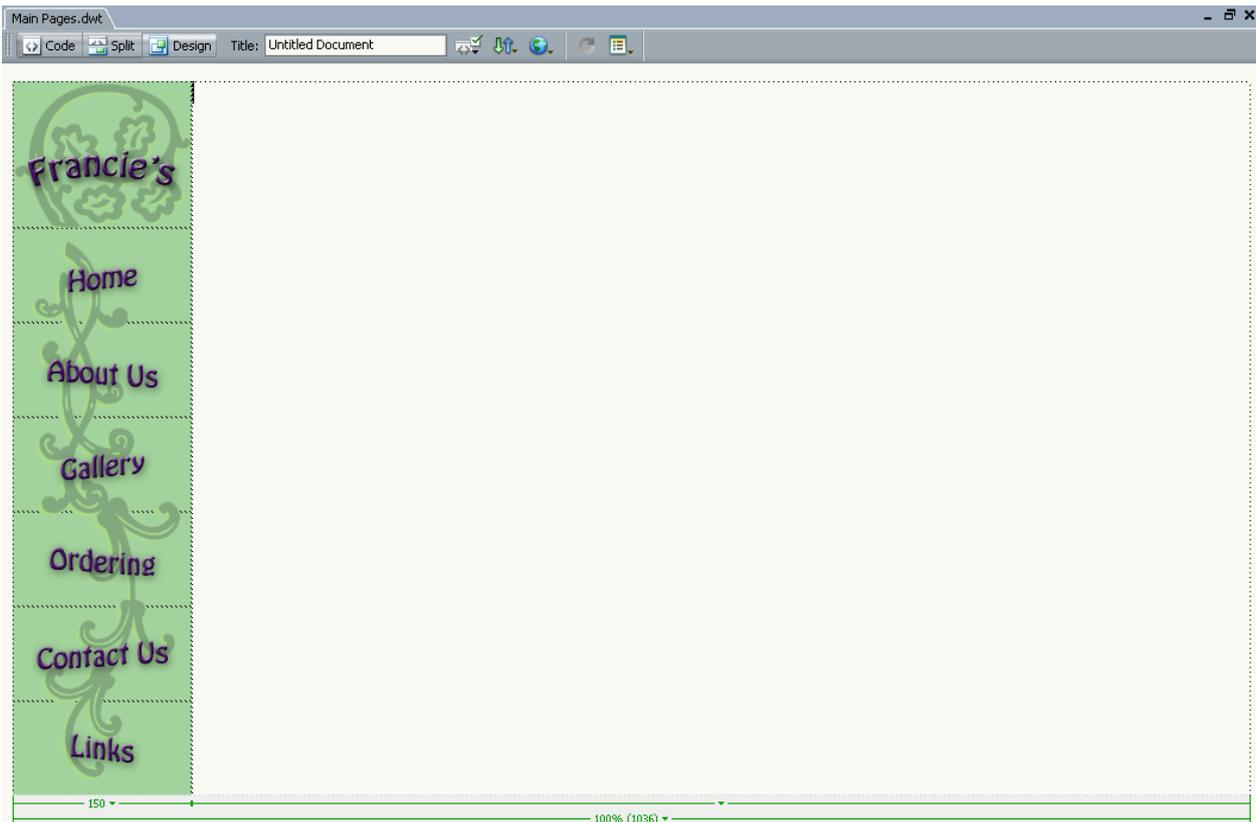
- 11) With the newly inserted image selected, add *Francie's Pots* as the **Alt** text in the **Properties Panel**.

- 12) In the next cells, add the following images in the order listed. The Alt text for each is shown after the filename.

- nav\_home.gif Home
- nav\_about.gif About Us
- nav\_gallery.gif Gallery
- nav\_ordering.gif Ordering
- nav\_contact.gif Contact Us
- nav\_links.gif Links

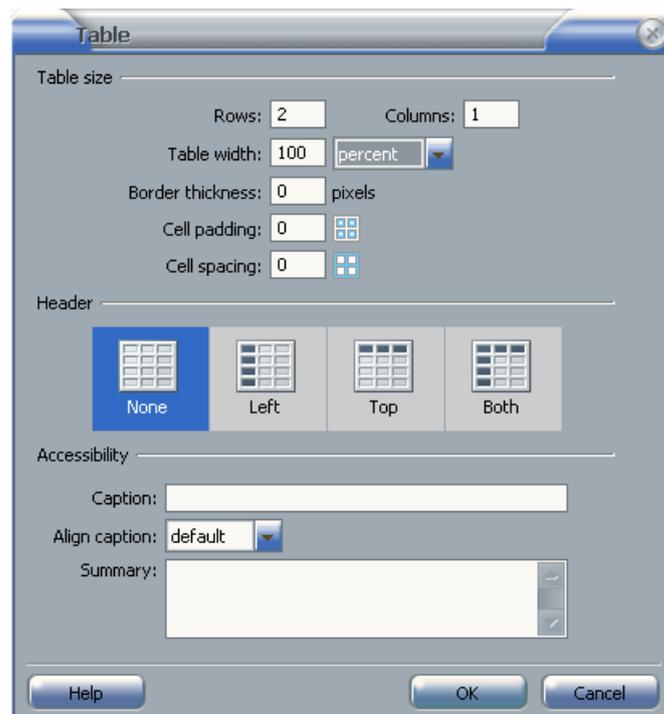
**Note** The navigation bar on this website is probably a bit bigger than it should be. On some screens, people will have to scroll down to see the bottom links. In these exercises, however, the images are all a bit on the large site to make it all easier to work with.

The page should currently look similar to the following example.



In the main section (the right cell) we would like a bar across the top that will contain the page heading so we'll use another nested table to divide the cell in to a top section for the heading and a bottom section for the page content.

- 13) Make sure you are in the right cell and insert a new table with 2 rows and 1 column as shown below. It needs to have 100% for the width to ensure that it fills all of the available space. Set the **Cell padding** to 2 pixels.



- 14) In the top cell, set the **background colour** to `#a2d39c` and set the **height** property to 60 (pixels).

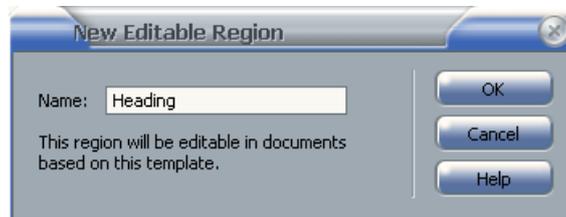
### Exercise 3 – Editable Areas

One of the most useful things about creating pages based on a template is that you can specify which parts of the page can be edited. This is done by inserting **editable areas**. Anything outside these areas won't be able to be modified without changing the template itself. If you do go back later and change the template, pages based on that template will also be changed in all but the editable areas. The only areas of this page layout that we want to change on each page will be the heading at the top of the page and the section where the page content will be. For both of these places, we'll insert an editable area.

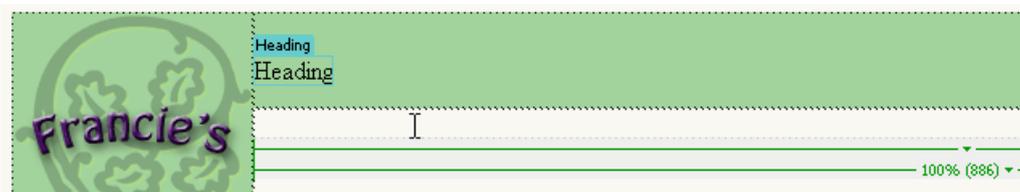
- 1) Click in the top section in the main page area.



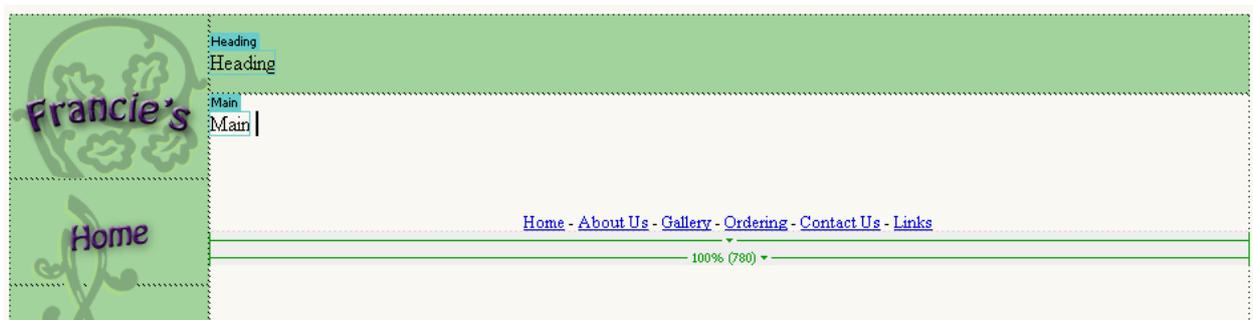
- 2) From the **Insert** menu, select **Template Objects** and then **Editable Region**. [Ctrl] [Alt] [V]



- 3) You will be prompted for a name for the region. Enter *Heading* and click **OK**.
- 4) Click in the bottom cell.



- 5) Press **[Enter]** twice to create two new lines.
- 6) On the last of the new lines, put a text navigation bar like the one on the index.html page (you can copy and paste it from there to save a little effort). The only thing that will be changed is the addition of a link to home (index.html). It should look like the one shown below.
- 7) In the first line, insert another editable region called *Main*. The page should look similar to the following example.



- 8) Save the changes to the template.

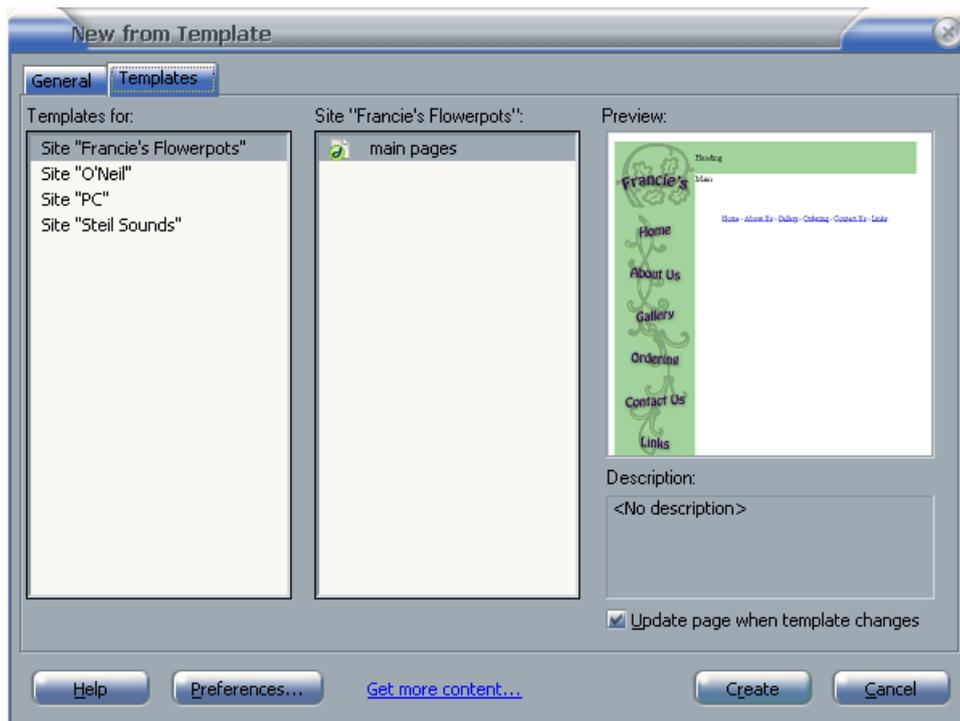
## Exercise 4 – Using the Template

We have already created blank documents for the other pages to test our links, but we won't keep those ones. Instead, we'll create new pages using the template and then save the new pages over the top of the old ones.

- 1) From the **File** menu select **New**. **[Ctrl] [N]**
- 2) When the new file dialog appears, select the **Templates** tab.



- 3) A list of your current sites will appear in the left. *Francie's Flowerpots* should be selected. The middle section will show a list of the templates in the selected site with a preview area on the right. Make sure the *Main Pages* template is selected and click **Create**.



- 4) Move your mouse outside the editable areas and a cross will appear on your mouse.

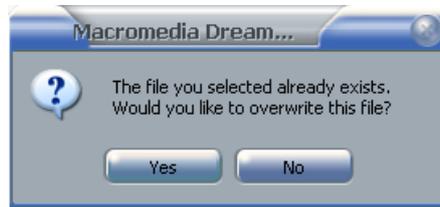


- 5) Click in the editable area for the heading. Delete the text that is there and type *About Us*. Format it as a level 1 heading.
- 6) Click in the *Main* editable area. Replace that text with the following.  
*Francie's Flowerpots is a business located in Western Australia. All of our pots are handmade using quality materials and techniques. We deliver to anywhere in the world. A sample of our range of pots can be viewed from the Gallery page. Other types of pots or custom made pots are available on request. Visit our Contact page to request a complete catalogue or more information about what's in the gallery.*  
*Francie began making her own pots in the early 90s and began selling them to interested friends as a hobby. Since then the business has grown and we now have a team of skilled potters working to please our customers. We're certain that we have just the right pot for you.*

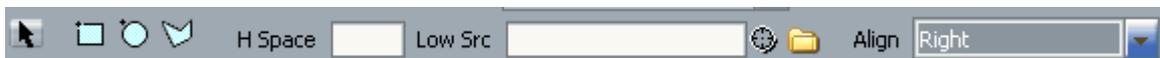
- 7) Change the **Title** of the page to *About Us*.



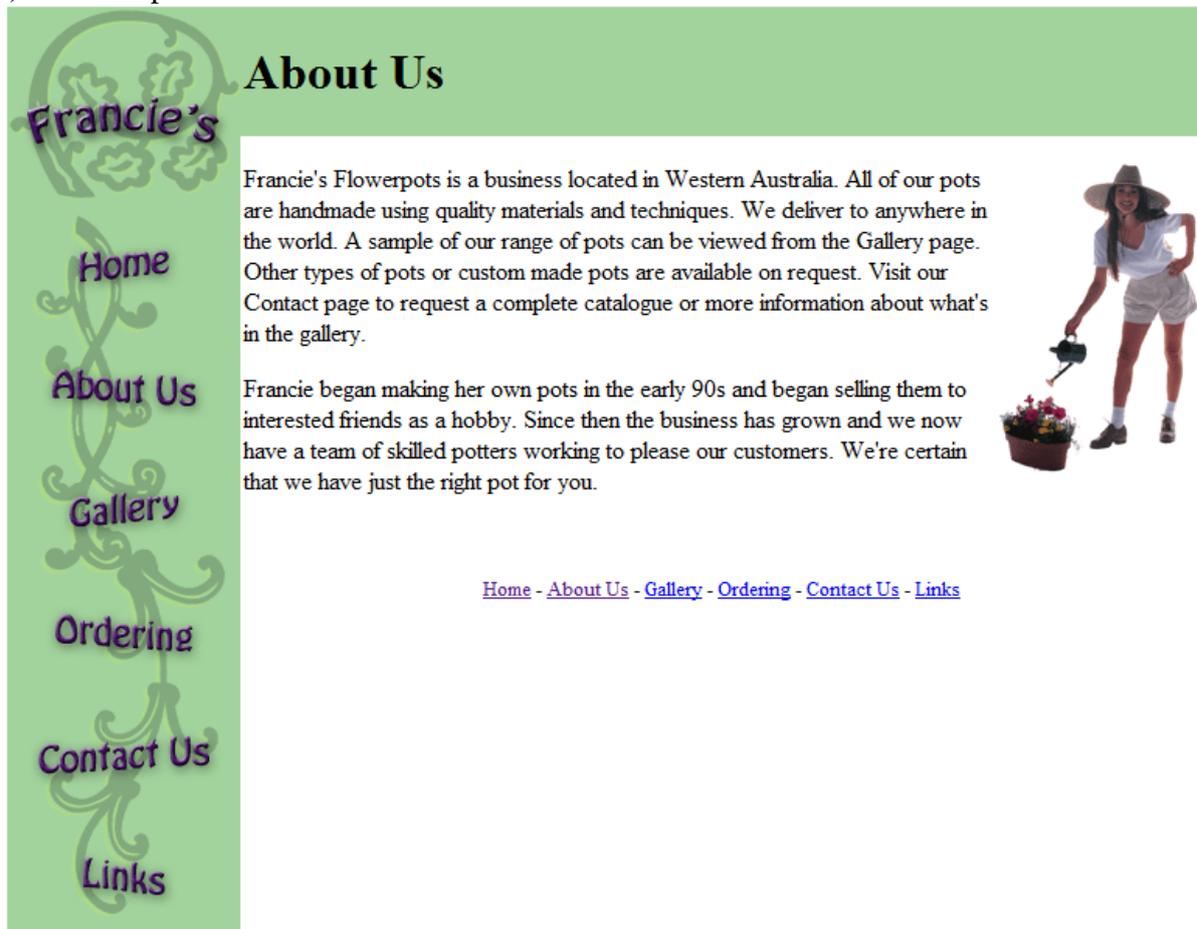
- 8) Save the page as *about.html*. When you are prompted to replace the existing file, click **Yes**.



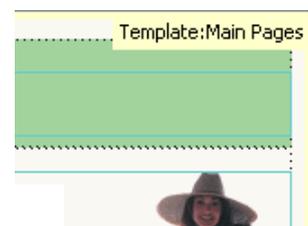
- 9) Click at the beginning of the first line (before the text *Francie's Flowerpots is a business*) and insert the image *about\_francie.gif*.
- 10) Make sure the picture is selected. In the **Properties** panel, set the image **Align** property to *right*. This places the image at the right of the page with the text wrapping around it (Left alignment also causes text to wrap around an image).



- 11) Save and preview the document.



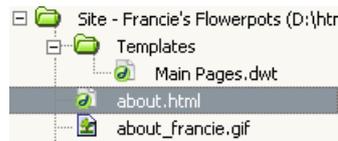
**Note** in the top right corner of the editing window, you might see a small tip indicating that this page is based on a template.



## Exercise 5 – Updating the Template

Currently, our template has a navigation bar with no hyperlinks. We'll return to editing our template and then save the changes, updating the `about.html` page in the process before using the template to create the remaining pages.

- 1) Close the `about.html` file by clicking on the close button in the top right corner of the editing window or by pressing **[Ctrl] [W]**.
- 2) On the start-up screen, you should see the template listed in the recent documents. You can click to reopen the template for editing. If you have opened a lot of files since you last edited the template it may not be in the list so you'll have to open it the normal way. Remember that the template will normally be saved in a subfolder of your site called *Templates* so it should be easy to find.



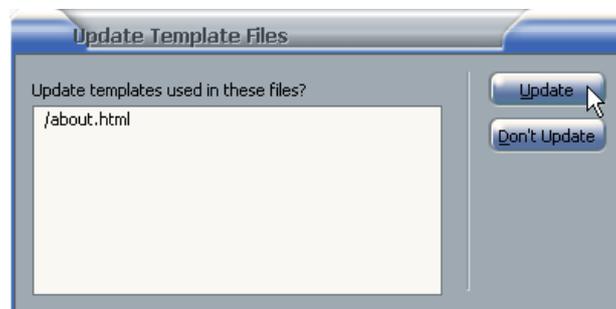
### Open a Recent Item



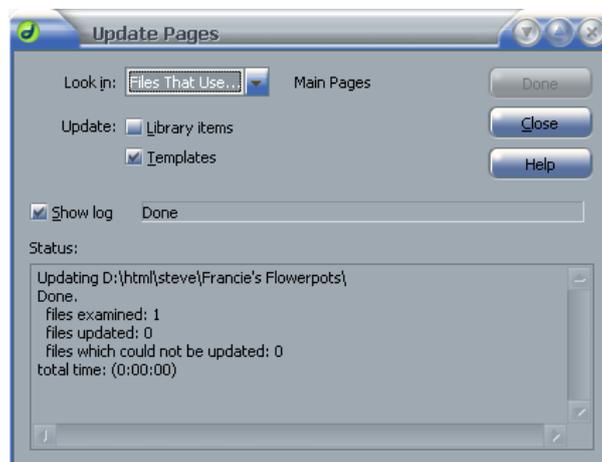
- 3) Click on the *Home* graphic in the navigation bar.
- 4) Remembering what you have learned in previous exercises, create a hyperlink to `index.html`. Don't forget that the **Point to File** icon provides a quick way of creating links. You might need to change the **Border** property of the image to 0 if a blue link border gets placed around the image.
- 5) For each of the other navigation graphics, create a link to the appropriate HTML document.
- 6) Save the changes to the document **[Ctrl] [S]**.



You will be reminded that a document has been created based on this template that you are saving changes to.



- 7) Click **Update** so that the `about.html` document gets updated with the changes.
- 8) Another window may appear summarising the changes. You can close this window.



- 9) Open *about.html* in your web browser (or open it in Dreamweaver and preview the page). You will be able to see the links that are now active in the navigation bar.

## Shortcuts Learned

[Ctrl] [Alt] [T] 	Insert a table
[Ctrl] [Alt] [V]	Insert an editable region in to a template
[Ctrl] [W] or [Ctrl] [F4]	Close the current document
[Ctrl] [Q] or [Alt] [F4]	Exit Dreamweaver