

## Internet Module - Web Site Creation

### Introduction

This set of notes has been prepared to support the web creation part of the Internet Module of the ACO Communicator Badge course. The module is usually conducted by Sqn Ldr Howard Toon of Lancing College Combined Cadet Force as part of the joint initiative for communications with the Sussex Wing of the Air Training Corps.

The module is designed to provide an introduction to how web pages and web sites work and introduce some of the features of a typical web design package; Microsoft FrontPage in this case.

It is aimed at beginners and by the end of the course the participants will:

- Know how web pages are constructed
- Understand how hyperlinks work
- Be able to create web pages
- Be able to create a simple web site

Aspects of design are touched on but this is not a course to train designers.

The cadet forces take their responsibilities for the safety and well-being of the cadets very seriously and a session on the course will cover the specific concerns and requirements concerning the publication of material on the Internet.

### Windows Basics

#### *NotePad*

NotePad is the standard Windows text editor. In newer versions of Windows it has been replaced by WordPad which has more facilities but the basic principle is the same. They manipulate and save files in plain, simple, text format without the control codes and special formats used by word processors such as Word. Word processors can be used for this job but they are more awkward and cumbersome.

#### *Internet Explorer*

This is the most commonly used of all the web browsers. It takes the HTML code that you write and carries out the tasks you give it. All browsers carry out the same task but in slightly different ways. There is a world-wide agreement on the basic HTML structure and content but each browser manufacturer adds their own extra facilities – otherwise how would they sell them to you? The result is that you either write your website for one specific browser or you use only the common core of the language

#### *Paint*

This is the free drawing package that comes with Windows. It handles bit-maps and is very useful for touching up pictures or drawing simple ones from scratch. The latest version is very flexible and handles a wide range of different formats.

#### *Cut & Paste*

This is the basic technique of cutting or copying from one application and pasting the result into another.

#### *Website Creation*

Creating a website is the process of designing the pages & their interaction with one another, gathering and preparing the content, creating the pages and publishing them on the Internet.

#### *Switching*

You can switch between applications by holding down the Alt key and pressing the Tab repeatedly to select the application you want.

## Introduction to HTML

The Hypertext Mark-up Language is a system which uses codes embedded in a piece of text to pass information on to the browser which will display the page. It is essential to remember that every page of a web site is simply a piece of text; how it is displayed is controlled by the browser; try View/Source next time you're on a web page.

The thing that converts a text file into a web page is simply making the name end with ".htm" or ".html" instead of any other extension!

At their simplest the codes, or 'tags' as they are called, are just instructions included in angled brackets. For example

<b> means turn on boldface  
</b> means turn boldface off (the / is the 'off' switch)

Not all tags work in pairs. A new paragraph is created with <p>, there is no end of paragraph tag since the next <p> does the job for us.

The basic principles of HTML go back a long way. In the 'Good Old Days' this is how word-processors used to work! No such niceties as Windows software or 'wysiwyg'; the codes to control the printer had to be added by hand and woe betide the operator who switched on underlining then forgot to turn it off again.

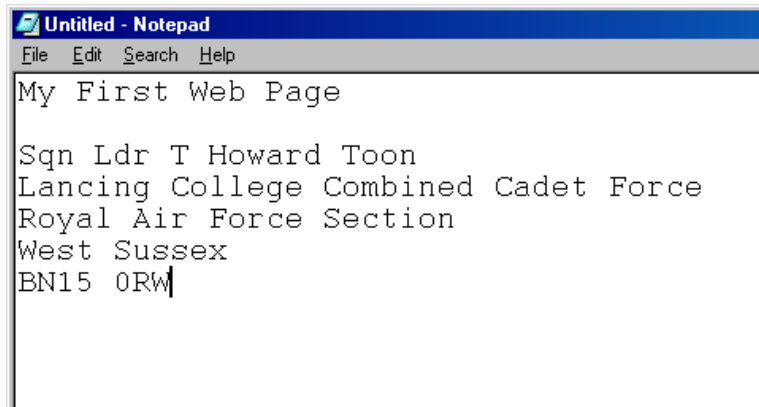
In practice, you will rarely, if ever, have to know how HTML works but once in a while things go wrong and it can be a very useful skill to get you out of trouble. Just remember: if you make a total mess of this section it will have no effect whatsoever on the subsequent parts of the course so – Enjoy!

## Creating Pages with a Text Editor

We're going to use NotePad to create a simple web page that can be viewed using IE.

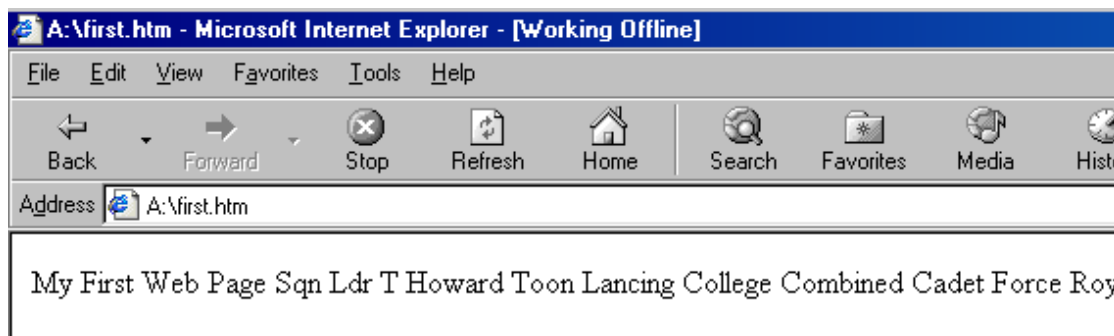
Start by loading NotePad. The first page will have our name and address on it. It will also have a title of some sort.

Now save the page with the name **First.htm** by using the sequence FILE / SAVE AS. Make sure it goes into your MyWork folder.



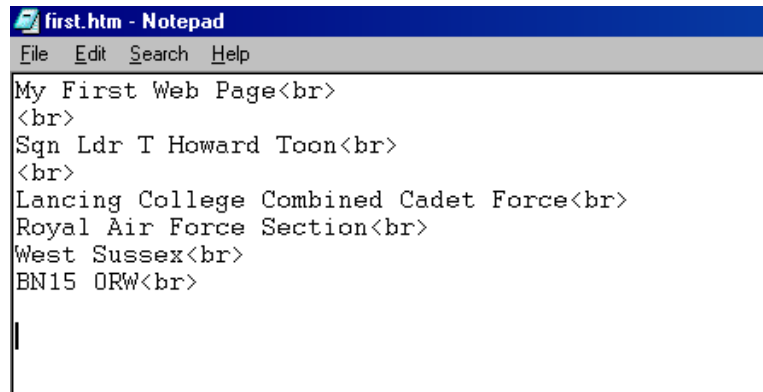
You can now read the page in your IE window. Find the file in the folder where you saved it and double-click it. Internet Explorer will load with your page in the display pane.

There you are! Your first web page.



However, that isn't quite what we wanted. The text all came out on one line because the browser doesn't understand about new lines and other formatting – we have to tell it what to do by putting tags in.

The line break tags are single codes. Switch back to NotePad and put <br> wherever you want to start a new line. Here's my new effort. Notice that multiple <br> tags can be used to generate blank lines.



```
first.htm - Notepad
File Edit Search Help
My First Web Page<br>
<br>
Sqn Ldr T Howard Toon<br>
<br>
Lancing College Combined Cadet Force<br>
Royal Air Force Section<br>
West Sussex<br>
BN15 ORW<br>
```

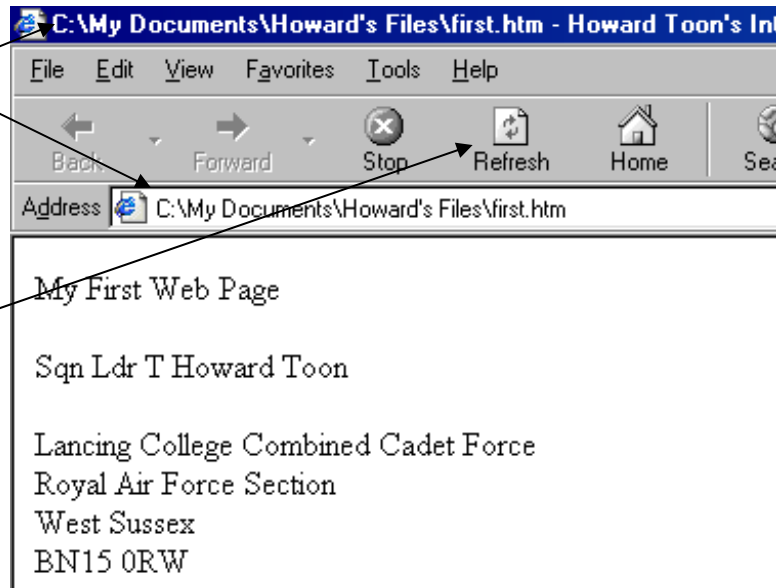
Ignore my title bars - I keep changing computers!

The lines will now break correctly. Save the notepad file again and switch back to IE.

Click on the REFRESH button and the updated version will be displayed.

Now that's more like it.

We now need to tackle the headings etc.

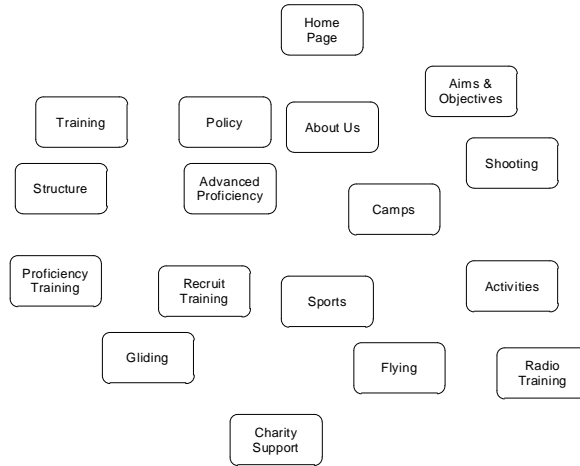


## Creating the structure

Before starting work on the computer you need to have some idea of what your web site will contain.

Try to make a simple chart of the structure because the time you spend on this will be saved over and over again later on.

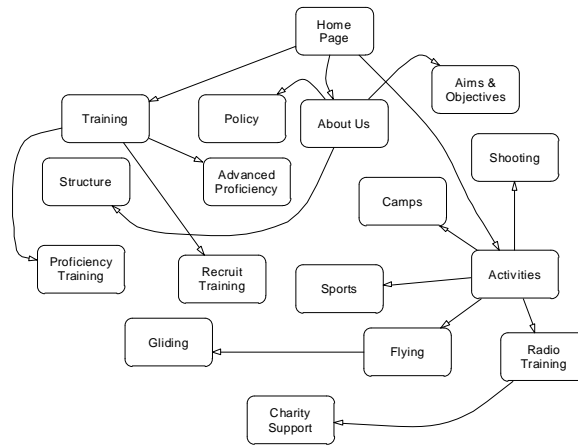
To begin with, just jot down all the topics you would like to include. For this exercise keep it simple.



Your real web site will probably have dozens of topics. Don't try to get them in any particular order yet, just get the ideas down.

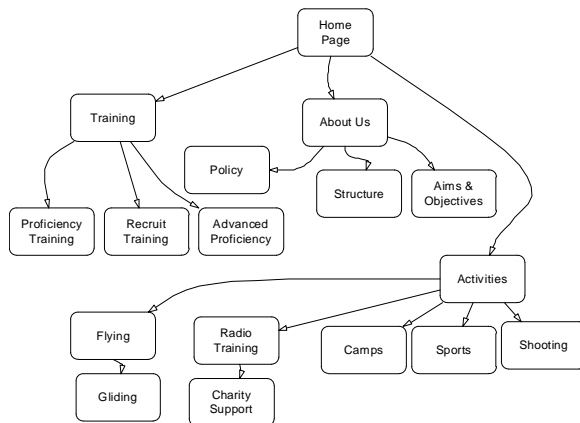
Now look at your ideas and see how they can be arranged. Draw lines from box to box showing how some depend upon or expand upon others.

The final effect will probably look like a plate of spaghetti but you can then tidy it all up to make a more readable structure. Remember you can always add to the design or take things away later.



If you want, you can redraw the chart to give the more common 'tree' diagram but don't waste a lot of time making a work of art of it – it is just a working drawing after all.

I've used Cosmi Flowcharter software to do mine. It's an excellent piece of software for about £5 down the local shops or Post Office.

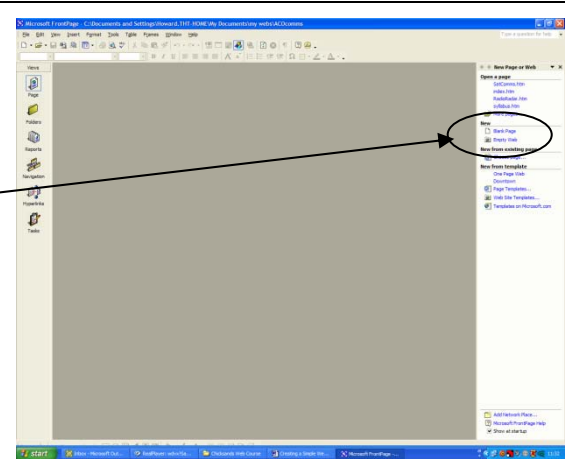


## Creating a web site in FrontPage

Start FrontPage running. It will open with a blank page and look something like the picture here.

You will need to select "New Empty Web" from the panel on the right-hand side.

This will cause the dialogue box to pop up.



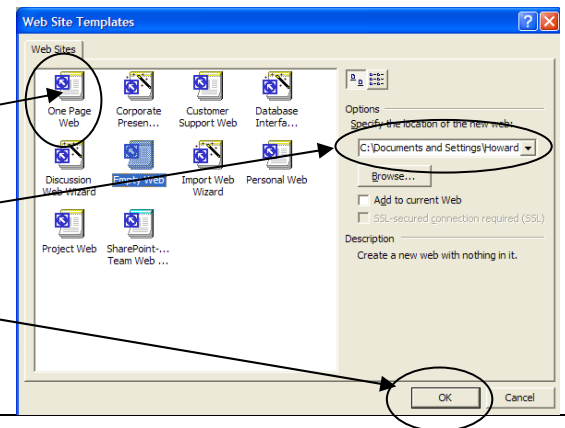
Two changes must be made to this box.

The option for "One Page Web" needs to be highlighted – just click on it with the mouse.

Next the address needs to be changed. It must read

N:\MY WEB\ATC

Once both changes have been made you'll need to click on the OK button to complete this section.



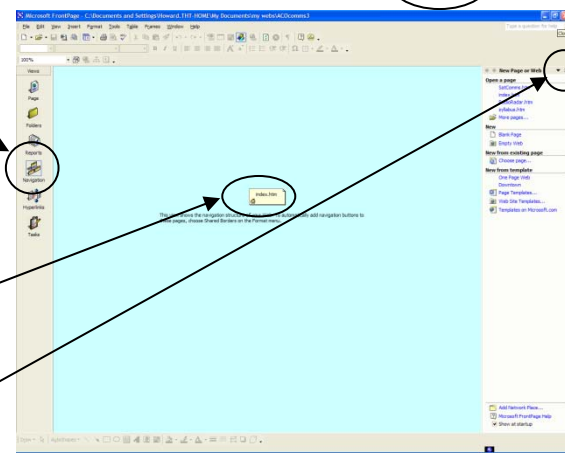
After a short pause the screen will look like this.

You may need to click on the Navigation icon if the central panel is different.

This is the main management screen and you'll be seeing a lot of it as the work progresses.

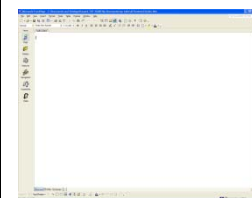
Two things can be done to start making the project look better at this stage. First, the 'Home Page' can be renamed to your unit name. Just right-click on it.

The panel on the right is no longer needed so close it down. Just click on the cross in the top right-hand corner.



At this stage it might be worth a quick look at the web site we've created.

Double-click the "Home Page" and the FrontPage editor will run and open your page. As instructed, FrontPage has created a one-page, empty web.

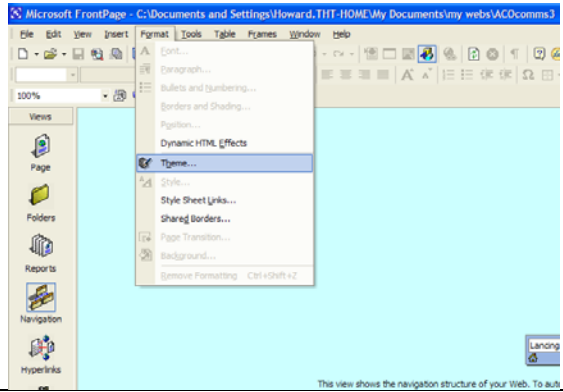


There are three major tasks outstanding now. You need to brighten up the page layout, add navigation buttons etc and add the page content. Additional pages are also going to be needed but FrontPage does that for you without any problems.

Before proceeding, close the editor down. Do this every time you have finished with a page or you're likely to have problems with open pages becoming confused with those that are saved.

The layout of the page can be modified in many ways but, at this stage, we're going to get FrontPage to do it for us.

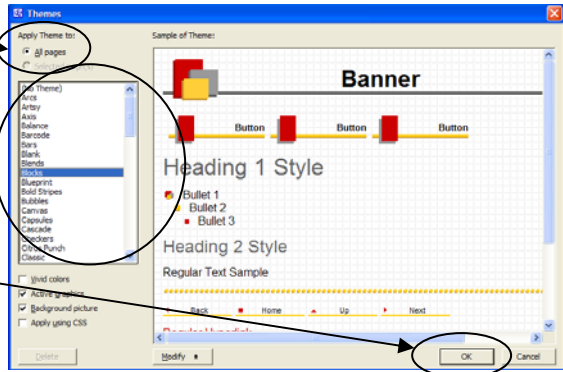
Click on Format and select Theme from the drop-down box.



Make sure that the All Pages option is selected

then play with the available themes until you find one you like the look of.

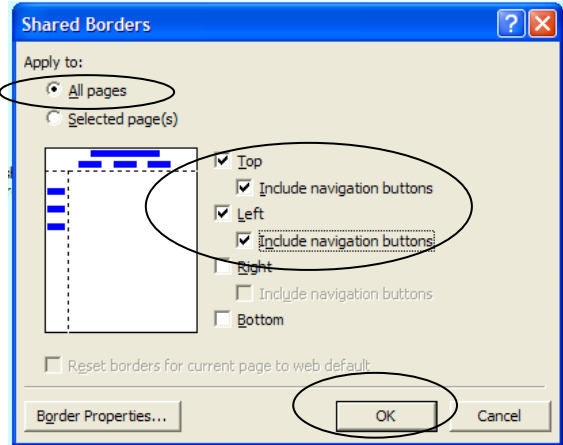
Finally, click the OK button.



Your display will now return to the management screen. The next step is to add the navigation buttons. These will be placed in the top and left-hand borders of your web pages. Click on Format and select Shared Borders from the drop-down list.

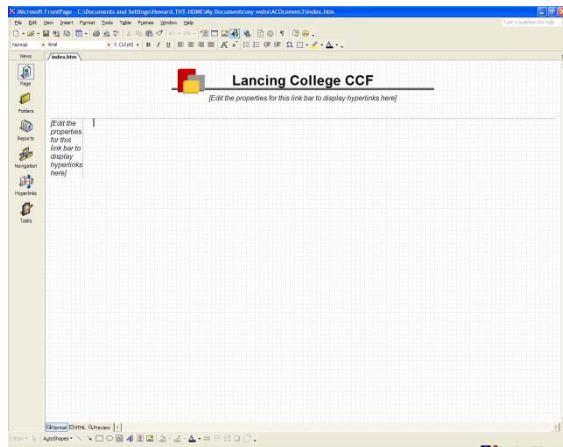
In the dialogue box choose the options as shown here and the new layout for your page will be shown.

Click OK when that's been done.



Now would be a good time to see what the page looks like. Double click on it to open the editor again and it will now have the title, borders and background that you selected.

The borders have messages showing where the buttons will be placed. Since we only have one page at the moment there are no buttons to show; they will appear when we create the additional pages.



The choice of which buttons go where is entirely up to you. For this exercise we're going to have the buttons at the top of the page navigate up and down our web site. The buttons at the side are going to navigate left and right across the site.

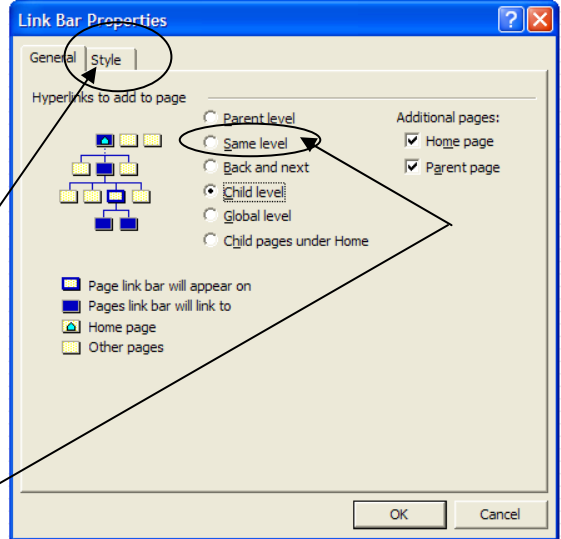
Select the top border location then double-click to open its dialogue box.

To navigate up and down the options needed will be Home Page, Parent Page and Child Level. As they are selected, the display changes to show the vertical pattern you see here.

The way the buttons will look is selected from the style tab. Click on it to see the variations available. Make sure you select the very top one, "Use Page's Theme", for this site.

Finish by clicking OK.

Now do the same for the side buttons but, this time, only the "Same Level" buttons will be needed.

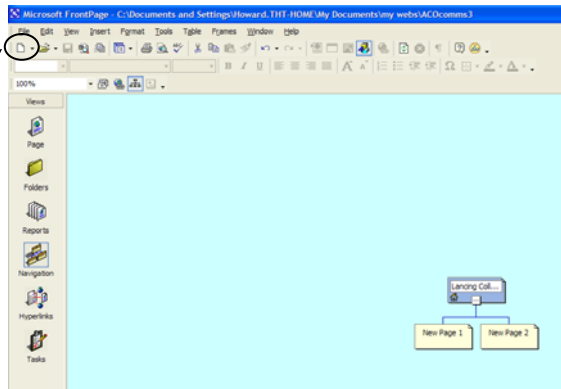


After all that, the home page won't look much different but as we add new pages it will begin to change.

Close the home page and the editor down and return to the management screen.

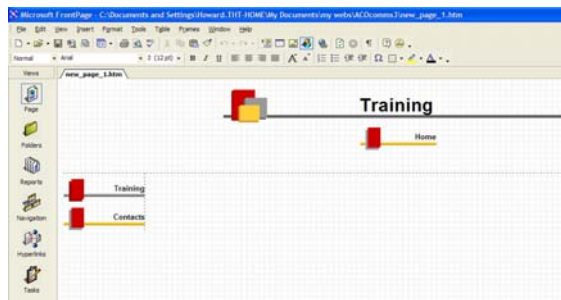
We're now going to add some new pages for 'Training' and 'Contacts'. To do this, make sure the home page is selected then click on the "Create a new normal page" icon twice.

The new pages are created and can now be renamed as required.



Now when the pages are opened in the editor they will have the buttons appropriate to their position on the diagram.

That leaves you to finish the job off. You can now add the content and create the new pages you need.



Enjoy!