

Fireworks Basics

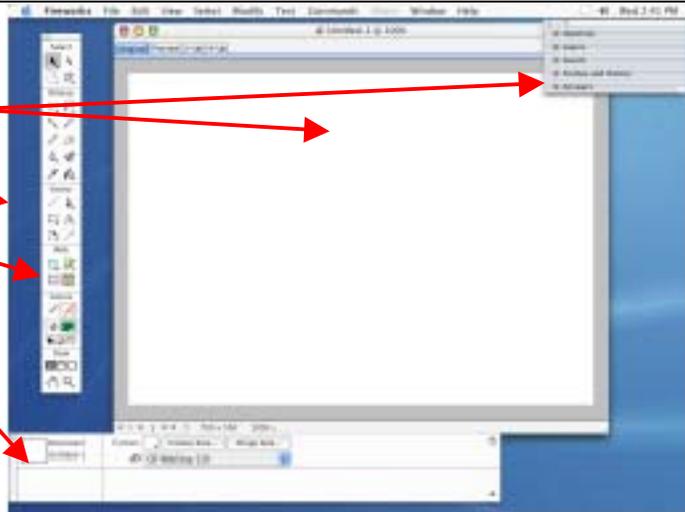
Scenario

Firework is a graphics application that allows you to create and manipulate Web (and other) graphics. It combines both bitmap and vector editing tools, and integrates well with other web development tools. Common uses for Fireworks are creating “buttons” for web navigation, text, graphics, and web templates to show ideas for the “look and feel” of your site.

The Fireworks Interface

Open Fireworks - there are 5 important areas to note

1. Canvas
2. Tool windows
3. Tool palette
4. Color palette
5. Properties window



The Canvas is your work area.

- You open a new canvas to work on by selecting File> New Window.
- This opens a New Document window where you will set your canvas size (width and height), resolution, and canvas color for the new graphic you are about to work on.
- Open a new canvas to work on in this workshop: File> New. Set your canvas size to 700 x 500, resolution 72 pixels/inch, white canvas color.



Toolbox

Here are some of the tools we'll be using today.

- Black arrow | White arrow
- Bucket
- Line
- Text
- Rectangle
- Colors
 - Line
 - Fill



Tools

This group of tools allow you to:

- optimize your graphic
- select your work layers
- select assets
- show frames and history
- get help with Fireworks

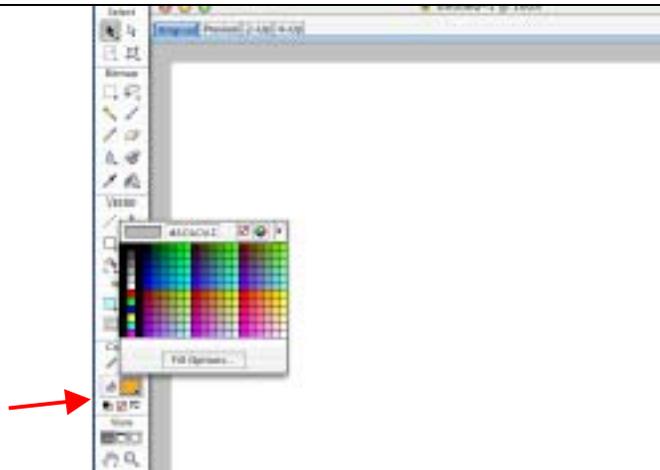


Color palette

While working on a graphic you will want to select line and fill colors. You can also choose to have no line or fill color.

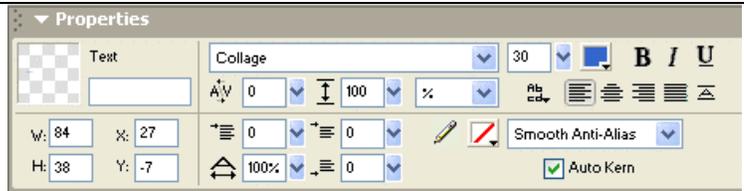
Click on the line or fill color box. The color palette window will open.

You can select or match a color (using the eye dropper that appears).



Properties window

Remember the properties window in Dreamweaver? This is similar and also context sensitive. Depending on what you have selected, it lets you modify the selection. (You are seeing the properties that can be changed for the selected text.)

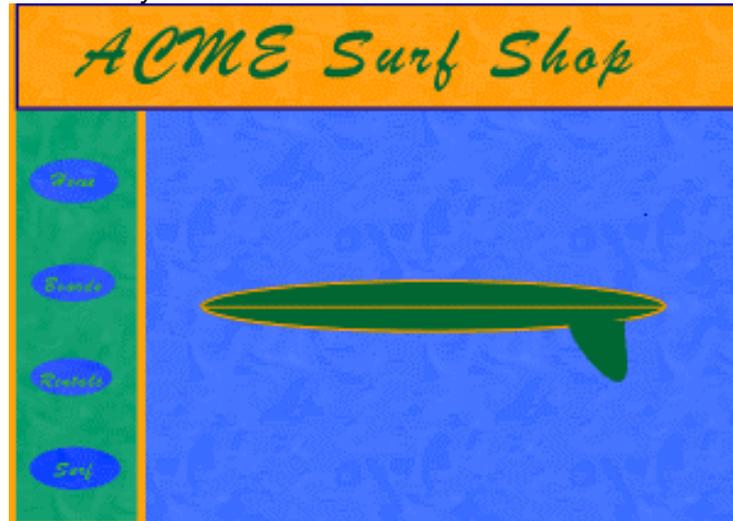


Create a look and feel template

It would be helpful to be able to sketch out how a site will look without actually having to create it. That way you can show others what you are thinking and get feedback. In this part of the lesson, we'll use Fireworks to do just that. In the process, we'll get familiar with the Fireworks drawing tools.

Pretend you've moved to the beach in San Diego to open a surfboard shop. You decide to create a site to market your boards. Before you go to your graphic artist/web developer friends, you decide to play around to show them the desired "look and feel" for your site.

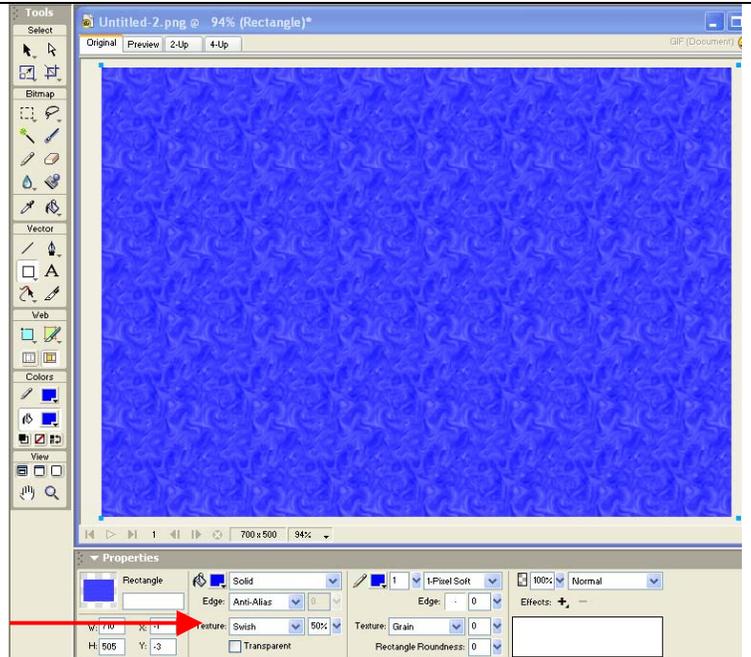
You want your site to look like this.



1. Create the background

First we'll draw the background rectangle.

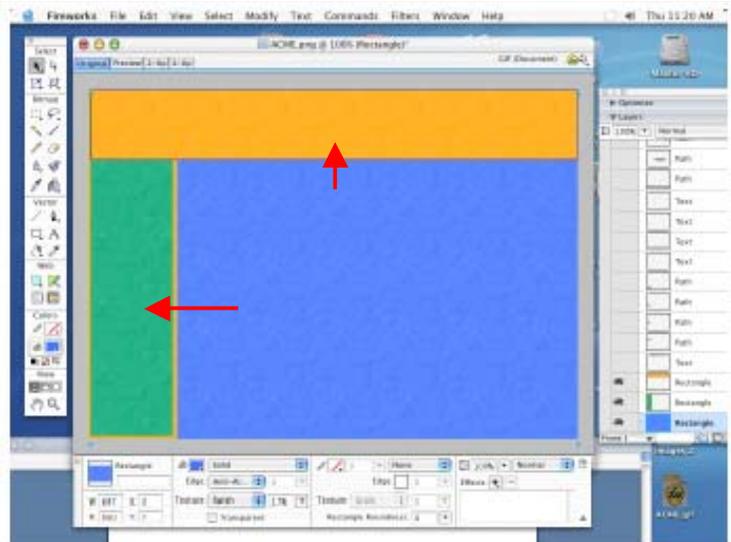
- Select a line and fill color for the background rectangle:
Pick the same blue color from both line and fill color palettes.
- Select rectangle tool. Click and drag a rectangle over the entire canvas. →
- In the Properties window, in the Texture drop-down box, select "swish" for a watery feel. →
- **REMEMBER: Edit>Undo can be used at any time to undo the last action.**
- Make a folder on your desktop called Fireworks_Project1. Now save this file inside that folder: File>Save>surf.png



2. Add title and navigation rectangles

Now we'll draw two rectangles for the top title and side navigation areas.

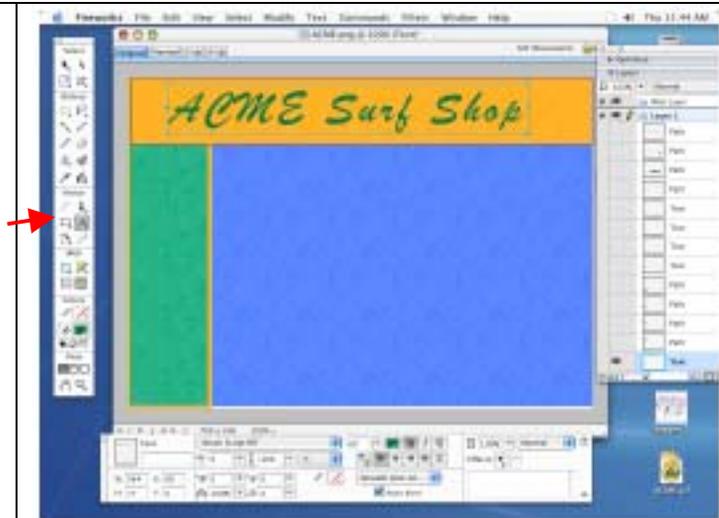
- Click outside of the blue rectangle to deselect it.
- Select an orange line and fill. Then draw the top title area using the rectangle tool. Deselect it.
- Now draw another rectangle underneath the title area on the left side for the navigation area.
- After drawing your navigation area rectangle, select a green color fill. If the fill was selected, it will automatically change color. If it wasn't, you can click on the black arrow and then the fill to select it. Click on the bucket tool to fill the selected area with the new color.



3. Add title text

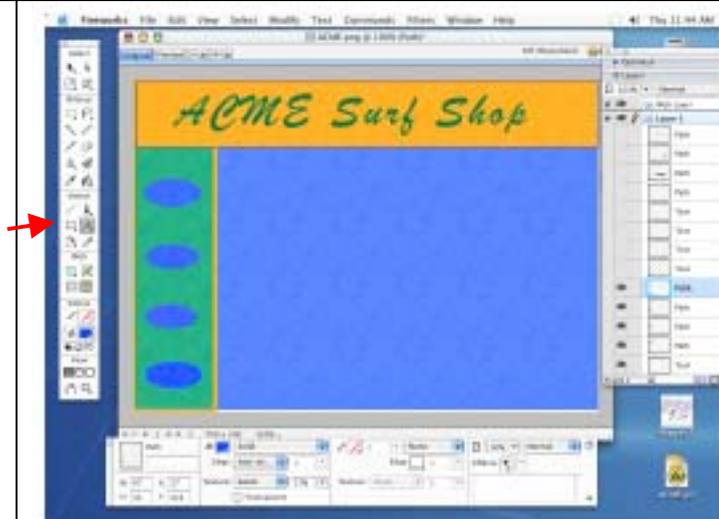
Let's add the ACME Surf Shop title text in the title area rectangle.

- Click on the text tool.
- Now click in the title area rectangle where you want the title text to start. Type the title of the site: ACME Surf Shop.
- With the text selected, in the Properties window, choose a font size, color, and style. I used a size 69 green Brush Stroke MT style font, bold. (Pick your own!)
- To select and move the title text, if desired, click on the black arrow and then on the text, and then drag the text.
- Save the file: File>Save.



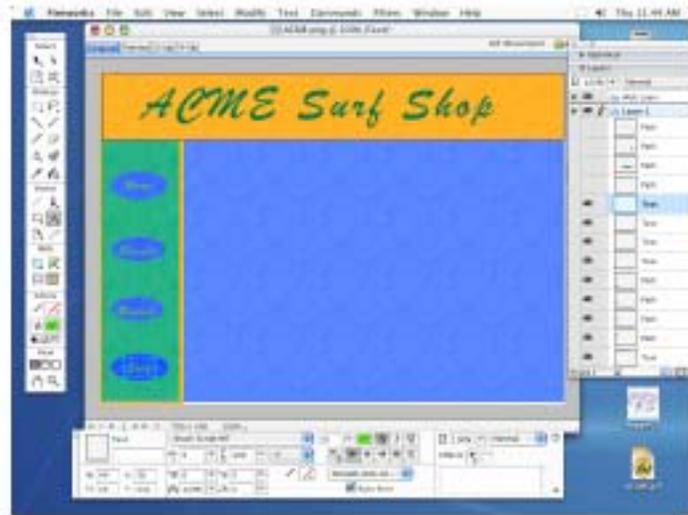
4. Add navigation buttons

- Select the rectangle tool. Click and hold on the rectangle tool to see the choices of shapes in a drop down box. I chose the ellipse shape but you can select a rectangle or rounded rectangle if you prefer.
- Now select a dark blue line and fill color to match the background.
- Inside the navigation area rectangle, click and drag to draw the button. Use the black arrow to select and then move the button towards the top of the navigation rectangle, if needed.
- With the button selected, from the Edit menu, select copy. From the Edit menu, select paste.
- Drag the button copy (which may be on top of the original) below the top one. Repeat until there are four buttons.
- Select and reposition your buttons using the black arrow if needed.



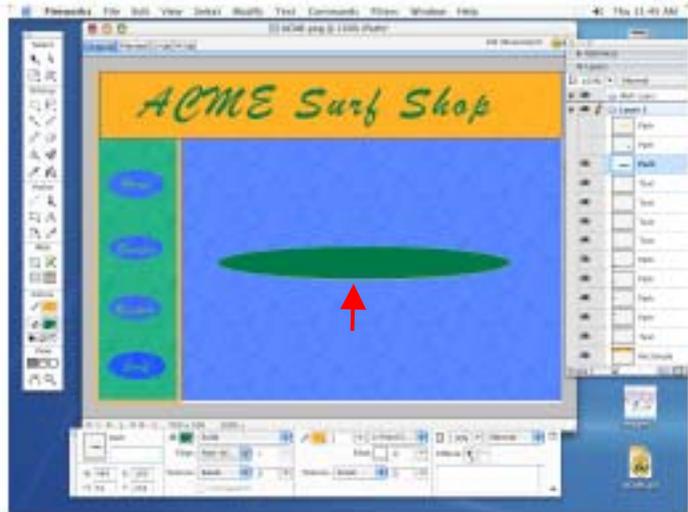
5. Add text to your buttons

- Select the text tool.
- In the Properties window, select a font, size and color for the text in the buttons. I used the same font as the title, size 17, color orange.
- Type Home inside the top button.
- Add Boards, Rentals and Surf to other three buttons.
- Select and reposition your text with the black arrow if needed.
- Save the file.



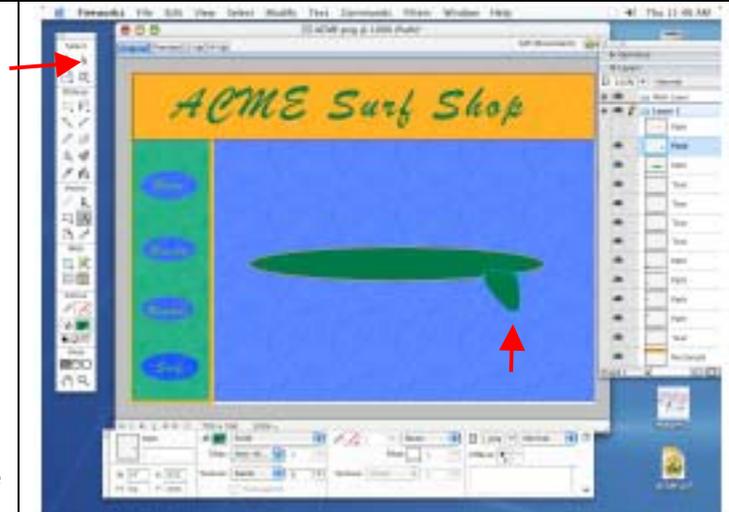
6. Draw a surfboard

- First choose a color for your surfboard. I chose a green fill and a yellow line.
- Select the rectangle tool. Select an ellipse shape (hold and click to see drop-down list). Draw an ellipse.



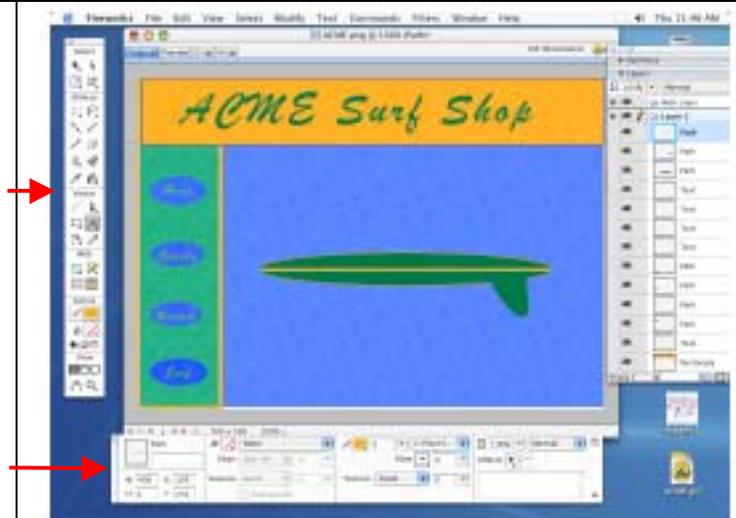
7. Manipulate the shape

- The white arrow selects the points on lines or curves so you can manipulate them.
- Select the white arrow and then select the outside of the ellipse (the line). Drag the dots to manipulate the shape so it looks more like a surfboard. (Remember Edit>Undo, if needed...)
- Draw another ellipse for the fin.
- Use the black arrow to select and move the fin and the white arrow to manipulate its shape as desired.
- Save the file.



8. Draw a line on the board

- Select the line tool.
- Select a color for the line. I selected yellow.
- Draw a line from one end of the board to the other.
- With the line selected, in the Properties window, you can change the line width. To make the line thicker or thinner, use the H measurement. I used a 5 pixel line.
- Save the file.



9. Close the template canvas (not the program!)

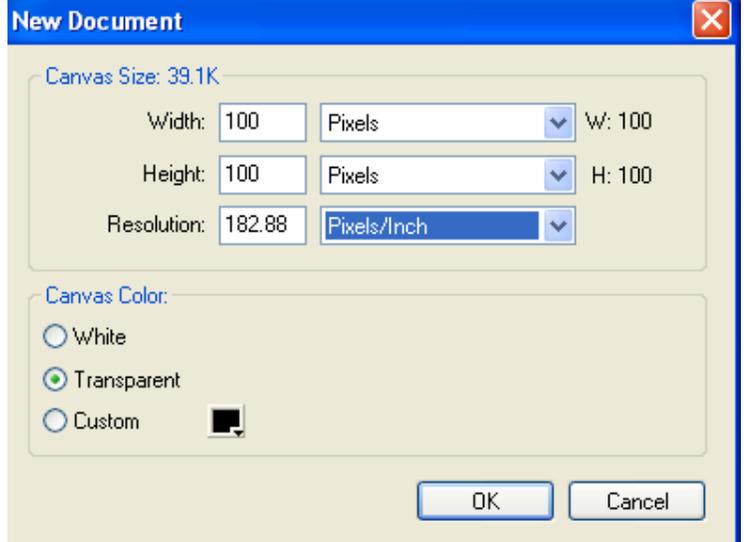
- Close the canvas window.
- When the dialog box asks you if you want to save the graphic, click on Yes.

Navigation buttons

Navigation buttons are common in websites. We are going to create 2 button graphics.

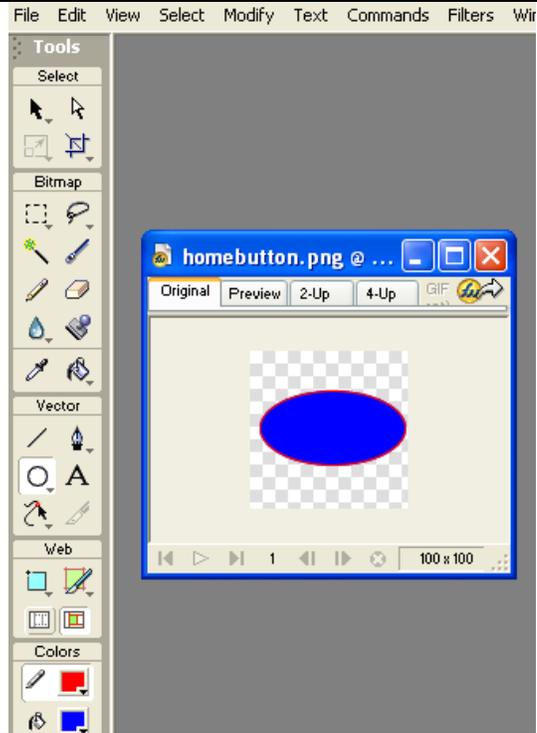
1. Create a canvas for your button graphic

- Make a folder on your desktop called Fireworks_Project2.
- Start a new canvas: File>New It should be 100x100 with 72 pixels/inch resolution and a transparent background. Click on OK.
- Now save this file inside the folder: File>Save> homebutton.png



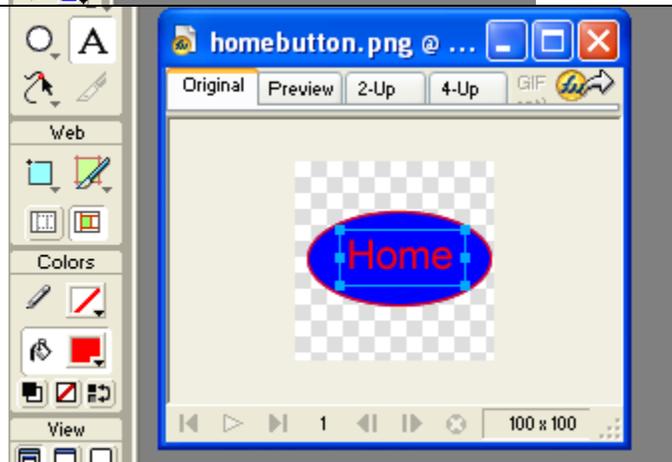
2. Create a button

- Select the rectangle tool and select the shape you want for your button. I selected the ellipse shape.
- Select a color for line and fill. I selected a blue line and a red fill.
- Draw the button on the canvas.



3. Add text to your button

- Select the text tool.
- Select the font style and size in the Properties window.
- Click on your button and type the name of the button. I typed Home in red using a size 15 Arial font
- Use the black arrow to select and then position the text.
- Save the file: File>Save



4. Make copies

You usually have more than one button, right? We'll copy this button in order to make duplicates.

- To make a copy of the homebutton.png, from the File menu, chose Save As and then give it another name: aboutbutton.png
- Click on the text in the aboutbutton.png and change it to About.
- Save the second button.
- To open the first button: File>Open recent> homebutton.png. Now the home and the about buttons should be open on the canvas.

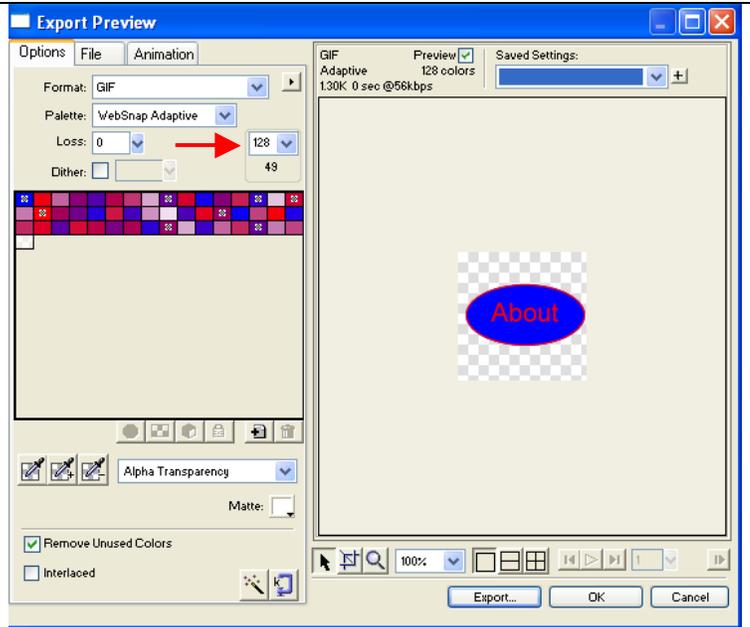
This process can be used to create multiple buttons and one button in different "states" (up, over, down). The same home button, for instance, might be saved as homebuttonup.png, home buttonover.png, and homebuttondown.png. The over and down states might have different color text from the original.



5. Export

These two files are in a PNG format but you want them in GIF format so you can put them in your Dreamweaver images folder and use them in your site.

- File>Export Preview
- Notice that Fireworks has chosen the GIF format. Notice the size of the file and how long Fireworks thinks this will take to download on a 56K modem. The file size and download time can usually be lowered by reducing the maximum number of colors.
- Click on Export and save in the Fireworks_Project2 folder (filename should be automatically be homebutton.gif).
- Repeat this export process for the aboutbutton.png graphic.
- Now close and save both of the original PNG button graphics.



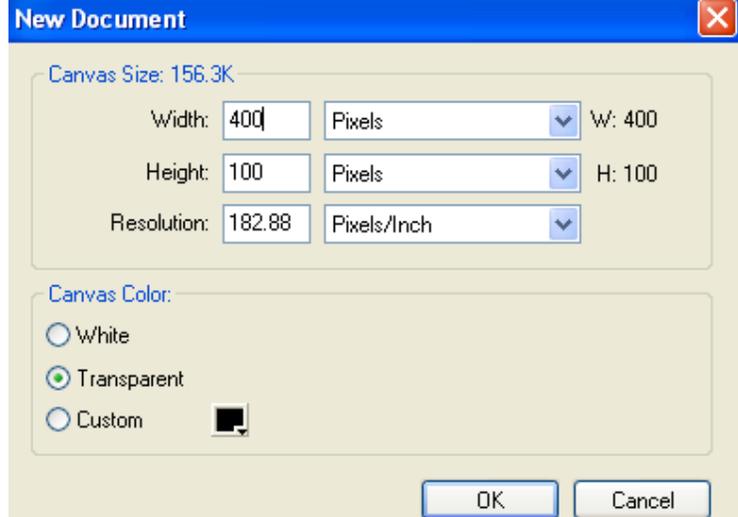
Congratulations! You have just created two buttons to use in your website. To use these buttons, move or copy the images into the images folder of your Dreamweaver MX website. You can then use the GIF images on the selected web page (Remember how to add images to a web page? If not look at the Dreamweaver lessons from the preconference workshop.)

Graphic text

Now we are going to turn text into graphics that can be used in web page titles. Web developers make text into graphics when they want to assure how the text will look in a web browser.

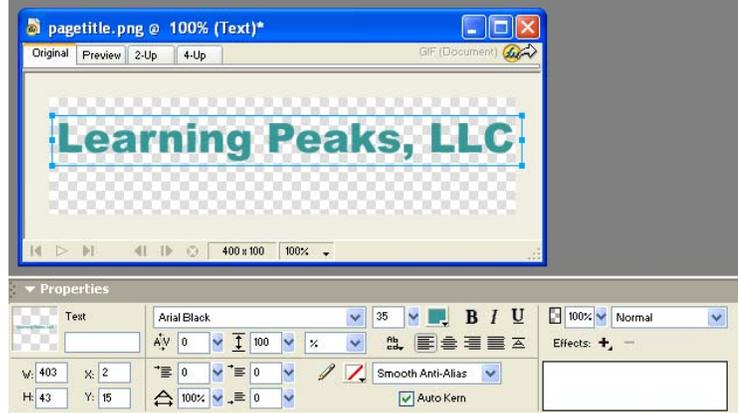
1. Create a canvas for your graphic text

- File>New
- Create a canvas that is 400x100 with 72 pixels/inch resolution and a transparent background. Click on OK.
- Save this file as homepageitle.png inside the Fireworks_Project2 folder.



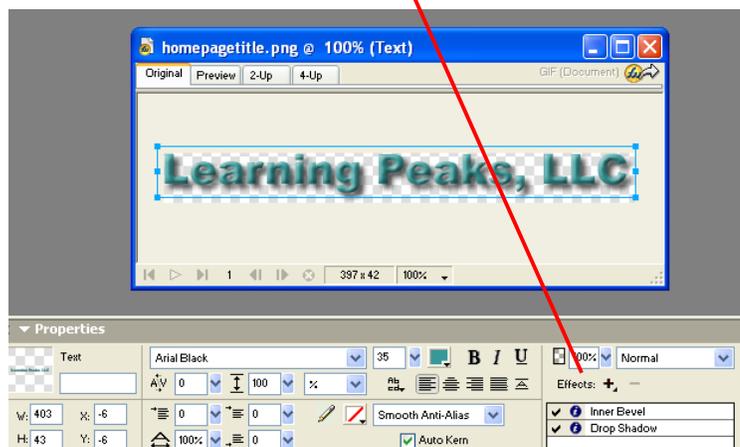
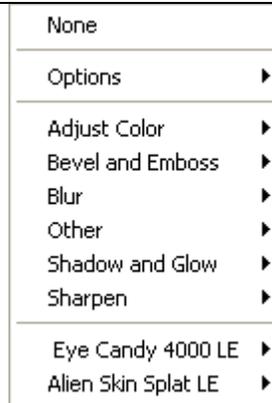
2. Type text on the canvas

- Select text tool.
- Select font style and size in the Properties window.
- Type your page title on the canvas. I typed my business name using a teal size 25 Arial Black font. For page titles, it's a good idea to use heavy and easily readable fonts like Arial Black.
- Use the black arrow to select and then position the text on the canvas.
- Save the file: File>Save



3. Create effects

- Select the text on the canvas if it is not already selected (use the black arrow to select the text, if needed).
- From the Effects drop-down box in the Properties window, select Bevel and Emboss>Inner bevel>Smooth. Then click somewhere else and you'll see that this effect has been added to your text.
- With the text selected, from the Effects drop-down box, select Shadow and Glow>Drop Shadow. Then click somewhere else and you'll see that this effect has been added to your text.
- Play around with other effects if you want. Remember how to undo: Edit>Undo.
- Save the file.



4. Trim canvas

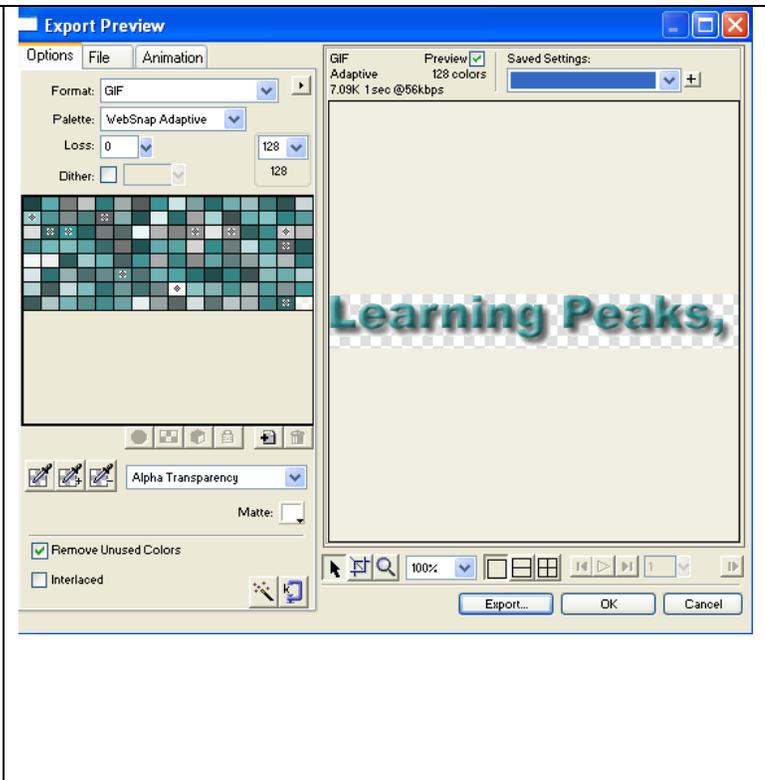
Let's make the canvas exactly the right size for this text.

- From the Modify menu, select Canvas>Fit Canvas.

5. Export

These files are in a PNG format but you want them in GIF format so you can put them in your Dreamweaver images folder and use them in your site.

- File>Export Preview
- Notice that Fireworks has chosen the GIF format. Notice the size of the file and how long Fireworks thinks this will take to download on a 56K modem. The file size and download time can be adjusted.
- Click on Export and save in the Fireworks_Project2 folder (filename should be automatically be homepagetitle.gif).
- Close and save the original PNG graphic text graphic.



Time permitting; you can create additional templates, buttons, and graphic text.