Setting Column and Row Sizes

Frames, just like tables, are divided into columns and rows. You could think of the individual frames as cells, each of which occupies a certain number of columns and rows. (See Chapter 12 for more on cells, columns, and rows).

When you split a frame or drag a frame border, Dreamweaver translates the information about the position of the frame border into a height or width amount for each frame, in pixels or percent of the window. To adjust the height or width of a frame, you can adjust the row height or column width.

The page in **Figure 13.36** is comprised of two framesets (you can tell because the vertical border doesn't span the entire window). The first frameset is made up of two rows. The top frame, or row, is 112 pixels high. The bottom row is set relative to that height; it will take up the rest of the browser window, however small or large (**Figure 13.37**).

The embedded frameset is made up of two columns. The left column occupies 25 percent of the available space—in this case, it's both 25 percent of the parent frame and 25 percent of the window. The right column, then, can be set to either 75 percent or to *relative* (to the parent frameset's width).

✔ Tips

■ Because the dimensions of any column or row affect the dimensions of the entire frameset, row height and column width are frameset properties, rather than frame properties.

■ It makes sense to set the height and width for one column or row in particular, and to set all other heights and widths as relative to that area of the page.

Figure 13.36 The frameset is made up of two rows (across the window), and a nested frameset that has two columns (vertical divisions of the lower frame). In this figure, the Property inspector is displaying Frameset properties for the child (nested) frameset.

Figure 13.37 Here, you see the same frameset, in a resized (larger) window. Notice how the top frame retains the same, exact size (112 pixels) whereas the bottom frames retain their proportional settings. The left frame still occupies 25 percent of the window.

■ You must set a height or width for each frame in a document in order to guarantee that pixel or percentage widths will be followed when the window is resized.
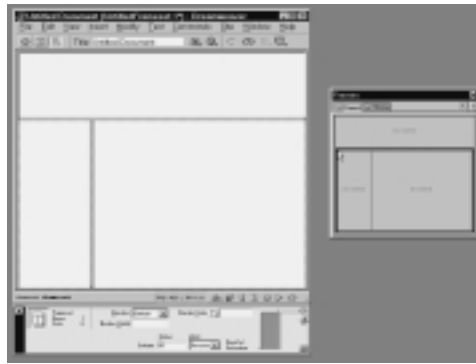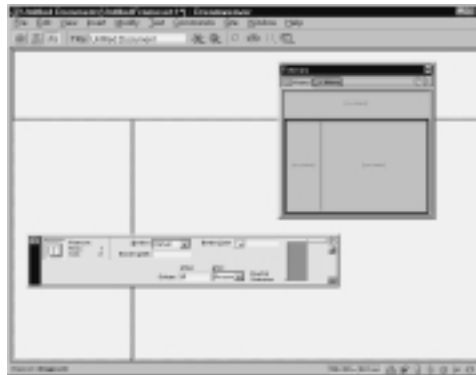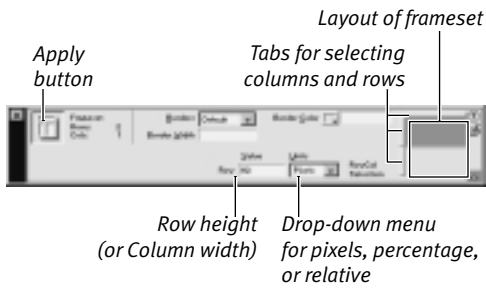
Apply button

Tabs for selecting columns and rows

Layout of frameset

Row height (or Column width)

Drop-down menu for pixels, percentage, or relative

Figure 13.38 The Property inspector displays frameset options when you click on a frame border in the Document window.

Figure 13.39 Click on a tab in the frameset preview of the Property inspector to adjust settings for that column or row.

Figure 13.40 Select either Pixels, Percent, or Relative as the units for the height or width measurement.

Figure 13.41 On this page, I first selected the parent, or whole-page, frameset and set the top row to 114 pixels and the bottom row to relative. Next, I selected the nested frameset and set the left-hand column to 25 percent and the right-hand column to relative. Always set the most-exact measurements you need first.

To adjust row height and column width:

1. Select the frameset by clicking on a frame border. The frameset properties will appear in the Property inspector (**Figure 13.38**).

2. Click on the Expander arrow in the bottom-right corner of the inspector to display column or row values.

3. Select the column or row whose area you wish to define by clicking on the associated tab, above the column or to the left of the row, in the Property inspector (**Figure 13.39**).

4. Type a value for the column or row in the associated text box and select one of the following units from the drop-down menu (**Figure 13.40**):
   - *Pixels* sets an exact height or width. When the frameset is loaded in the browser, pixel measurements are followed exactly.
   - *Percent* refers to a percentage of window (or frameset) size.
   - *Relative* means that the height or width will be flexible in the frameset, compared to other elements that were given specific pixel or percent measurements.

5. Click on the Apply button to apply the height or width changes to the frameset.

6. Repeat these steps for the remainder of the elements in the frameset, or for additional framesets (**Figure 13.41**).

✔ Tip

- When a browser is loading a frameset page, it draws the layout in the following order:
   - Pixel measurements are given their space allotment first.
   - Columns or rows with Percentage measurements are drawn next.
   - Frames with Relative settings are drawn to fill the rest of the available space.

SETTING COLUMN AND ROW SIZES

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Setting Content Pages

There are two ways you can go about putting content into those pretty, blank frames. One way is to open an existing page in one of the frames of the frameset; the other way is to create your new page right now in one of the frames in the Dreamweaver Document window.

In either case, to determine what your frames page will display when it's loaded into a Web browser, you'll attach a URL to each of the frames in the set.

To attach a page to a frame:

1. Select the frame you want to put some content in. The Property inspector will display the properties of that frame (**Figure 13.42**).

2. The SRC text box currently displays the pathname of the blank, untitled, unsaved page that's in it now. You can:

   ◆ Type (or paste) a location of an existing page—on the Web or on your computer—into the text box.

   ◆ Click on the Property inspector's Browse button ▢ to open up the Select HTML File dialog box (**Figure 13.43**).

   ◆ From the Document window menu bar, select File > Open in Frame to display the Select HTML File dialog box.

If you use one of the two latter options, locate the file on your computer, and then click on Open (Choose) to attach the file to the frame you selected.

If the file you selected is on your local machine, it will appear in the frame within the Document window.

If you type a full Internet URL in the Frame Properties SRC text box, the Document window will display the "Remote File" message (**Figure 13.44**).
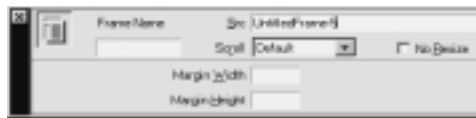

Figure 13.42 When the Property inspector displays frame properties, you can set the location for the default frame document in the SRC text box.
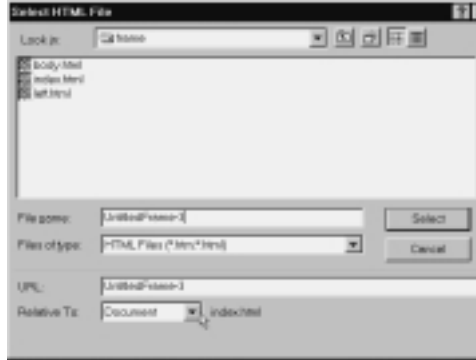

Figure 13.43 Use the Select HTML File dialog box to choose a file to load in the frame. Be sure to select Document from the Relative To drop-down menu.
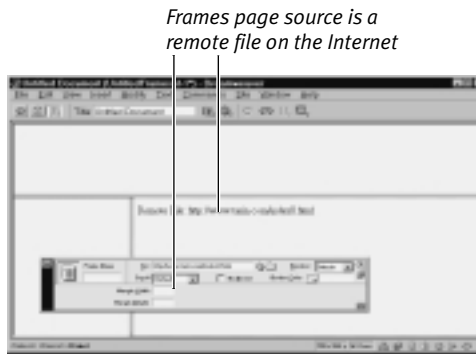
Frames page source is a remote file on the Internet

Figure 13.44 If you're connected to the Internet when you preview this page in your browser, the browser should load the remote file in the frame.
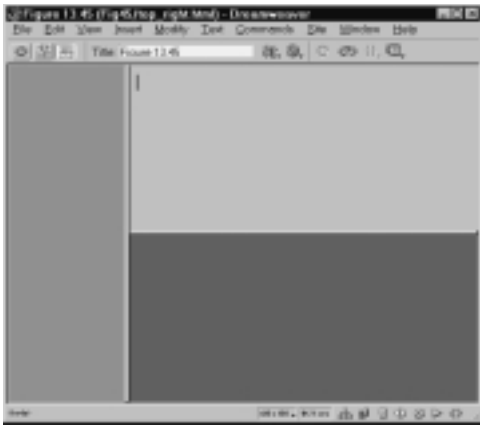
Figure 13.45 This page has three frames, each of which uses a different background color. Back in **Figure 13.4,** eight of the 12 frames used different background images.

Relativity Theory

In my experience most browsers prefer that frames documents be linked to one another using *document-relative links* rather than *site-root relative links*. The frameset document contains the links, and the initial frames pages within the frameset should be given paths relative to that page.

As you can see in **Figure 13.43**, when you select a file to use in a frame, you can use the drop-down menu at the bottom of the Select HTML File dialog box to choose that the files be Relative To the Document or to the Site Root. Choose Document, and Dreamweaver will automatically choose the Frameset page as the relative one.

After you save a page, you can check to see if it has a Document Relative relationship by attaching it to a frame, as described in *Setting Content Pages,* earlier in this chapter, and then making sure that the Relative To drop-down menu says Document instead of Site Root.

Creating Content within a Frame

Creating and editing content within one of the frames in a frameset is the same as doing so in a blank Dreamweaver window, only with less screen real estate.

On frames pages you can put text, images, multimedia objects, and tables—anything that you can use on a non-frames page.

Setting the background color for a frame is just like setting the background color for a stand-alone page. Each frame, remember, is a single HTML document, or page, and each page in the frameset has its own page properties. **Figure 13.45** shows a frames page in which every frame has a different background.

To set a frame background:

1. Display the page properties for the frame in one of two ways:

Right-click (Control+click) on the frame and select Page Properties from the pop-up menu.

or

From the Document window menu bar, select Modify > Page Properties.

Either way, the Page Properties dialog box will appear.

2. From here, you can adjust page properties for that frame, including background color, background image, page margins, text colors, and link colors.

For more on working with Page Properties, see Chapter 3.

✔ Tip

■ Of course, you can create a page in Dreamweaver, save it, and then attach it to a frameset (as described in the preceding section), but if you're creating simple content, you can work easily in the frameset.

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