

Web Lesson 2

2: WEB DESIGN

- Common webpage design: mistakes and errors
- Webpage critiques
- Discussion board posting

INTRODUCTION

Proper web design is an important consideration when developing a website. One must be aware of problems that viewers may encounter when visiting your website. For example, someone viewing your website must have the means to return to your home page when he/she navigates throughout your site. Therefore, it is important to have a "Home" link that links back to your homepage on every additional page that you create. Having too many large graphics (large file sizes) may cause a visitor to leave your website if load time is too long. These and other points are addressed in this lesson. You will be responsible for applying these web design techniques to your own webpage.

The following is a list of common webpage design techniques:

1. Be consistent.

This means, keep the same "look and feel" across ALL the pages in your website. If a user goes from one page that is white with a flowery background to another page with the red brick wall for the background, they are likely to think that they have gone to another website. Lack of uniformity is both unattractive and confusing to the webpage user.

2. Use consistent navigation across your site.

Have links on every page of your website that (at the very least) link back to your homepage. You might also want links such as email address, school website etc. A good place for these links is in the line at the bottom of each page. You could also have them at the top of the page or on the side menu. You must ensure that these links are there and that they are consistently in the same place on every page.

3. Backgrounds.

There are a few techniques concerning background colors and text that will make your webpage look more professional. In general, light background colors work best with dark text. Conversely, dark backgrounds work best with white or light-colored text. Color combinations of text and background that make the text hard to read are a major web design problem. Background colors that are too bright (bright yellow, lime green, fluorescent colors etc.) are hard on the viewer's eyes and should not be used. I generally discourage "busy" background graphics as it makes the text difficult to read against the distracting background. If your background graphics (or color) are competing with the text, it should not be used.

4. Text.

There are a few text characteristics you should never have on your webpage:

- Text that is too large

- Text that is too small to read
- Text that stretches all the way across the page (where the reader must constantly scroll to the left or right)
- PARAGRAPHS OF TYPE IN ALL CAPS
- Don't use highly stylized fonts that may be difficult to read
- Entire paragraphs of text in bold, underlined etc.
- *Paragraphs of type in italics.*
- **PARAGRAPHS OF TYPE IN ALL CAPS, BOLDED AND ITALICIZED ALL AT ONCE**
- Underlined text that is not a link. (Especially text that is colored blue or purple which generally indicate active links)

5. Links

Links are very important on your webpage. If your links are not working properly or are not correctly indicated on your webpage, this is a problem. You must make sure that all of your links work properly at all times. Non-functioning links will give error messages to the user. Active links are very important for someone who might want to visit other web sites linked to your web page. Also be sure that any links to your website are from credible sources. Be sure to have a "Home" link on all pages of your website so that the user can always navigate back to your homepage.

6. Skip the huge graphics and animations.

The larger your page is in file size, the longer it will take to load on another viewer's computer. Additionally, Weebly limits images to 5 mb, so be sure to resize your images to make sure they are small enough to use. Additionally, use as few images as possible. Images should help tell the story of your website and should be used in conjunction with text (not in place of text). When uploading images, be sure that they are small in file size and that you do not use too many. If your webpage is overloaded with large graphics, many users will experience delays as your webpage loads - or it may not load at all! Use graphics that are attractive and that enhance your site without forcing the user to wait five minutes for your page to finish loading. A lot of animations and flashing text are annoying and should be avoided at all cost. Remember, we are looking for a professional website.

7. Give every page a relevant (but not overly long) page title.

If someone bookmarks your webpage, the title is what shows up in their bookmarked file. The title is also what people see in their history file. If you just call it "Home Page", this will be completely meaningless to people since they won't know WHOSE homepage it is.

ACTIVITY 1

1. You will critiqued three student webpages.

2. Print the Evaluation Form THREE times. This Evaluation Form will be posted in the first quarter homework folder under "Learning Modules".
3. Once you have printed your copies of the Evaluation Form, go to one of the following websites:

<http://www.stcloudstate.edu/search/websites.asp>

<http://ed.sc.edu/ite/dickey/student.html>

<http://www.student.carleton.edu/pages.html#A>

4. There are hundreds of personal webpages created by university students. Choose **three** to critique.
5. Complete the Evaluation Forms to critique the three webpages you have chosen.

ACTIVITY 2

1. Now that you have critiqued at least three student webpages, post a message on the Discussion Board under the section labeled "Web page Critiques".
2. In your posting, type the URL to each webpage you have critiqued. Below each URL, give a brief summary of your critique.
3. These summaries must be posted by **January 31 at 11 AM central time**. This activity will be worth five points on your final webpage exercise evaluation/grade.

This is the end of Lesson 2.