

Creating a Web Site Using Nvu – September 2007

This handout will assist you to design and create a web site (multiple web pages) using Nvu.

Nvu (pronounced new view) is a WYSIWYG (What You See Is What You Get) web-authoring tool that is available for Windows, Linux, and Mac.

Nvu is an example of Open Source Software (OSS), sometimes referred to as Free or Libre Software. You are free to download OSS, install and use on as many computers as you would like for individual and commercial use. Information about other OSS is described at the end of this handout.

By the end of this practical session you should be able to set up a web site, including:

- creating a home page (index.html)
- creating additional web pages (e.g. about.html)
- adding images to a web page
- links to other web pages and web sites, and other files (e.g. podcasts)
- formatting web pages for a consistent look and feel

The handout is separated into three main sections to allow you to jump to where you would like to begin.

1. **Quickstart** allows you to become familiar with using Nvu to create a rudimentary web page. Start here if you have never created a web page prior to this tutorial session.
2. **Working With Text** and Images guides you through using Nvu to format text, include images and links. It will also introduce you to HTML (Hypertext Markup Language).
3. **Managing Your Project** introduces you to Nvu's site manager and the use of stylesheets for a consistent look and feel.



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Quickstart

In this section you will create a simple web page and display it in your web browser.

1. Open the Firefox web browser.



Click the Firefox icon displayed in the Dock.

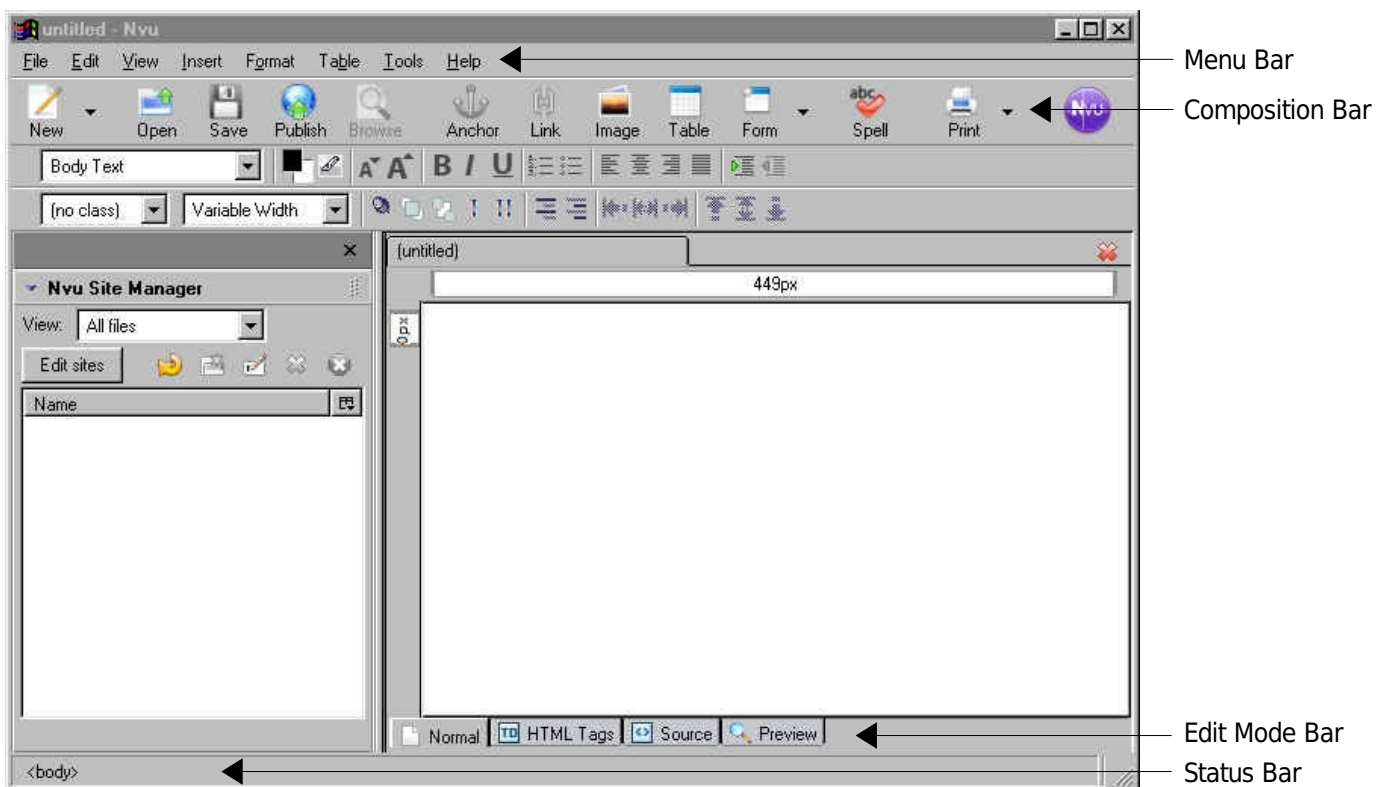
Note The Firefox browser has been tested on Windows, Mac, and Linux and works well with Nvu. For the purposes of this tutorial, the Safari browser does not work with Nvu and Internet Explorer has not been tested with Nvu.

2. Open Nvu.



Note On Mac, if Nvu is not displayed in your Dock, navigate to the Applications folder and double-click.

The main window opens. At the top are a number of toolbars. The topmost is the Menu Bar. This includes a number of items (File, Edit, View etc) used to make selections. The next is the 'Composition Toolbar' which includes a number of 'Buttons' labelled 'New', 'Open', 'Save', etc.



2. Create a new page.

On the Composition toolbar Click the 'New' button.

Note When Nvu is first started a new blank page is displayed.

3. Open an existing page.

Assuming that the page is stored on your local disk in HTML format:

On the Menu Bar click 'File' then 'Open File'. Browse to the file and click 'Open'.



Practise Open the example web page. Refer to your worksheet to check the location and name of the file.

4. Editing a web page.

Your web page – blank or otherwise – is in the large pane in the centre right of the Nvu application window. Many editing functions are very similar to those in a word processor. The top four toolbars on the Nvu application window provide a number of editing functions – to see what any do hover the cursor over an item and a hint will appear.

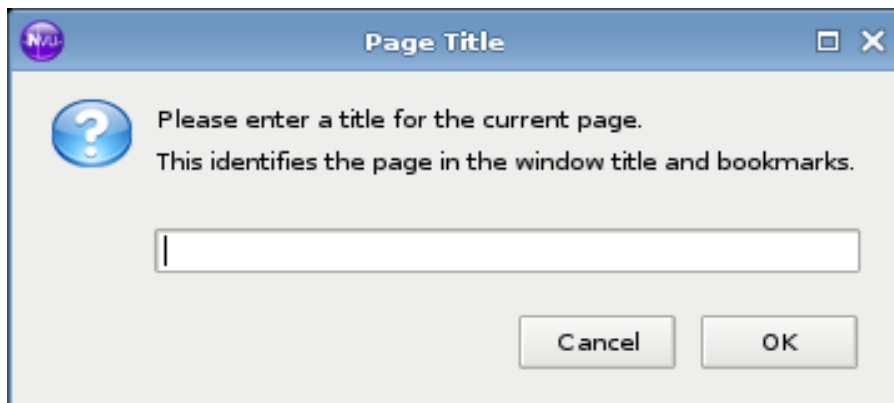
Note To close a web page, ensure that the web page is displayed (click on its tab), then click the Close icon (X) located to the right side of the Nvu application window.

5. Saving a Page.

To save a page:

On the Composition toolbar click 'Save'.

If it was a new document a dialog window will ask you to enter a title for the page. This will appear in the tab at the top of the page display area.



Note This is NOT the file name. Click 'OK'; you will then be offered a normal save window which allows you to browse to a suitable location and name the file. The file extension offered will be HTML.

If you are creating a home page, save this file as index.html.

Hint Save often and frequently check how your web page appears in your web browser. It will look different in your web authoring software than in the web browser and you need to continually check that it's appearance is what you expect.



6. Browsing a page

To see how your page will look in your default browser on the Composition toolbar click 'Browse'.

Note A dialog box may be displayed to warn you that you are starting another programme, in this case your web browser. Check the box, if you do not wish this warning to be displayed again.

7. Help

The Nvu help system should be a first resort in case of need. On the Menu Bar click 'Help' followed by 'Help Contents'.

Other resources and references are listed at the end of this handout.

Working With Text and Images

In this section you will learn how to format text and include images and links in your web pages. HTML will also be introduced by exposing you to the HTML tags (formatting codes) in a simple web page.

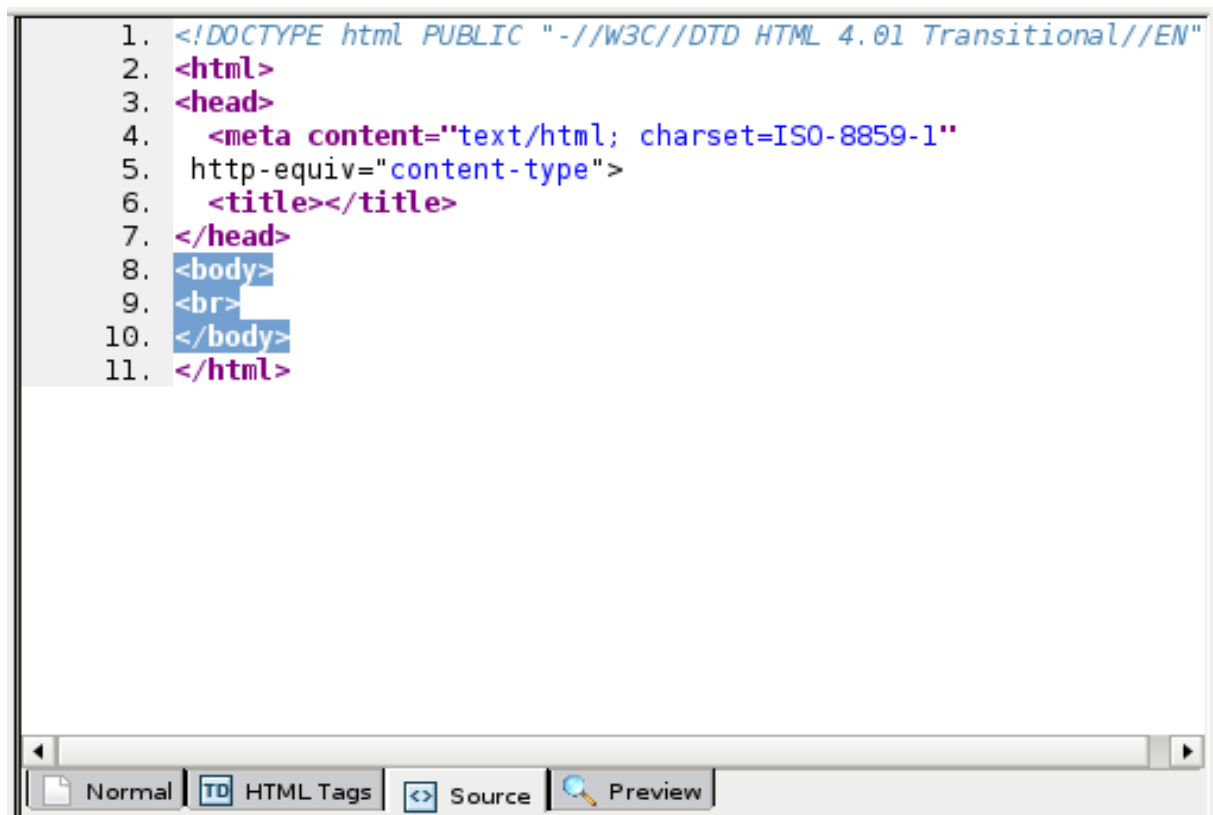
At the end of this handout there are references to annotated lists of HTML tags. These can appear overwhelming and you certainly don't need to know them all to create simple well designed web pages.

Hint If the HTML tags appear daunting, familiarise yourself only with those tags you are using so that you can recognise and work with them. Nvu is a WYSIWYG web-authoring tool, so you may not ever need to look at the HTML (the 'source').

Brief introduction to HTML

HTML stands for HyperText Markup Language. It is the publishing language of the World Wide Web on which Nvu is based. Ideally it should be possible to use Nvu without any knowledge of this language and certainly without a knowledge of the details. As a precaution however a limited understanding is desirable. This tutorial covers a minimum of detail while introducing some useful features of Nvu.

1. Start a new blank page as described in the *Quickstart* section.
2. On the Edit Mode Toolbar click on the '<> Source' tab.



```
1. <!DOCTYPE html PUBLIC "-//W3C//DTD HTML 4.01 Transitional//EN"
2. <html>
3. <head>
4.   <meta content="text/html; charset=ISO-8859-1"
5.     http-equiv="content-type">
6.   <title></title>
7. </head>
8. <body>
9. <br>
10. </body>
11. </html>
```

The screenshot shows the Nvu source code editor with the 'Source' tab selected. The code is as follows:

You will see a number of terms enclosed within angle <> brackets. These are HTML 'tags'. Everything starting from the <body> and finishing with </body> will appear on your web page.

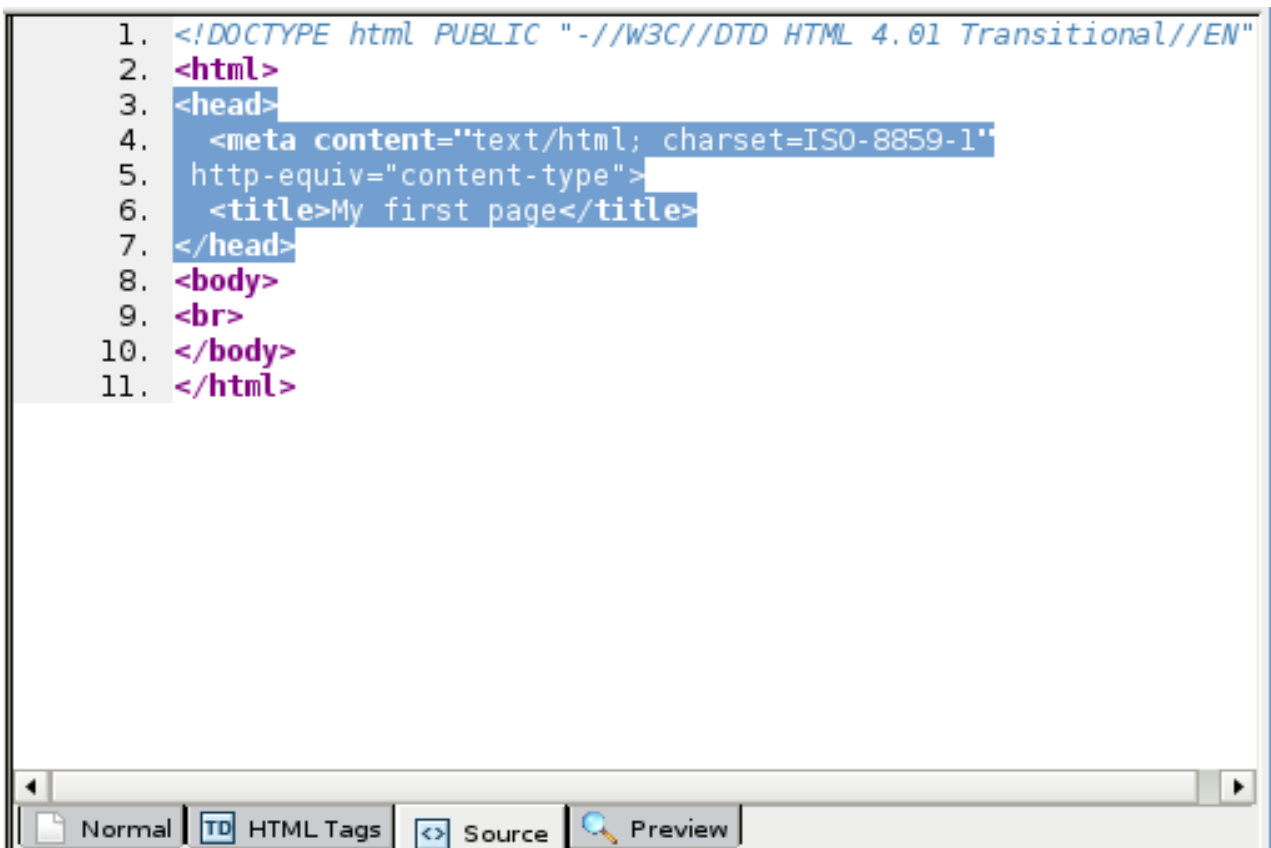
Note In most cases tags occur in pairs – opening tags and closing tags – Closing tags always start with a forward slash.

All the page consists of now is a
 tag which is a line break and which is, of course, invisible.

Later as a page builds up many more tags will be added. For the most part the pairs of tags enclose ‘contents’ from which the page is built up – items like Paragraphs, Headings, Tables, Images. The tags plus the contents are called ‘elements’. The tag names are usually either the same as element names or abbreviations of them. Some examples are ‘table’, ‘img’ for image, ‘p’ for paragraph, ‘br’ for line break (which is unusual in having no closing tag).

Nothing between the <head> and </head> tags will appear on the screen but may have quite useful functions nonetheless. For instance, between the <title> and </title> tags there isn’t anything. Go for it, between them type “My first page” or something like that.

```
1. <!DOCTYPE html PUBLIC "-//W3C//DTD HTML 4.01 Transitional//EN"
2. <html>
3. <head>
4. <meta content="text/html; charset=ISO-8859-1"
5. http-equiv="content-type">
6. <title>My first page</title>
7. </head>
8. <body>
9. <br>
10. </body>
11. </html>
```

A screenshot of the Nvu web editor's source view. The code is displayed in a monospaced font with syntax highlighting. The code defines an HTML document with a DOCTYPE declaration, an opening <html> tag, a <head> section containing a <meta> tag for charset and content-type, and a <title> tag with the text 'My first page'. The <body> section contains a single
 tag. The code ends with </body> and </html> tags. The editor's interface at the bottom shows tabs for 'Normal', 'HTML Tags', 'Source', and 'Preview', with 'Source' currently selected.

Click the tab for ‘Normal’ view, now the tab at the top carries your page title and you’ve edited raw HTML. Well done!



If you were too timid to do this all is not lost. There is no need to use source view at all. Go to Format > Page Title and Properties.

Here you can enter various parameters including the title and the language you are writing in. These will be entered in the HEAD area for you. In some circumstances they can be important; the Title and Description, for instance, can be used by search engines to index the page.

Page Properties

General information

Location: [New page, not saved yet]
Last Modified: Unknown

Title: My first page
Author: Jacqueline McNally
Description: Example web page showing title.

Templates

This page is a template

Internationalization

Language: en-au Choose a language
Writing direction: No direction specified
Character set: ISO-8859-1 Choose a charset

Advanced users:
To edit other contents of the <head> region, use "HTML Source" in the View Menu or Edit Mode Toolbar.

Cancel OK

Back to '<> Source'.

```
1. <!DOCTYPE html PUBLIC "-//W3C//DTD HTML 4.01 Transitional//EN"
2. <html lang="en-au">
3. <head>
4. <meta content="text/html; charset=ISO-8859-1"
5. http-equiv="content-type">
6. <title>My first page</title>
7. <meta content="Jacqueline McNally" name="author">
8. <meta content="Example web page showing title."
9. name="description">
10. </head>
11. <body>
12. <br>
13. </body>
14. </html>
```

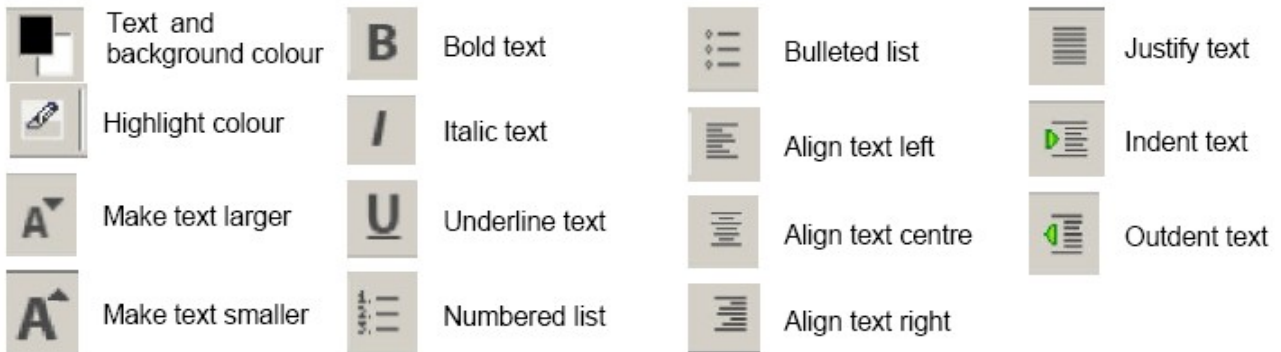
Normal **TD HTML Tags** **<> Source** Preview

Notice the first tag is `<html>` and the last `</html>`. All web pages must carry these in these positions. Actually the case doesn't matter for any tag though it's good practice to use lower case.

Text

Text can be formatted in a number of ways using items from the Format Menu and Format Toolbar. The changes listed in the table can be applied (hover over a tool in the Format Toolbar to discover what it does).

Buttons on Format toolbar



To format your text, remember “select, then, do”. Select the text you want to format, then, click the formatting tool that you wish to use. That is, select text, then, click a formatting tool from the Format Menu or Format Toolbar.

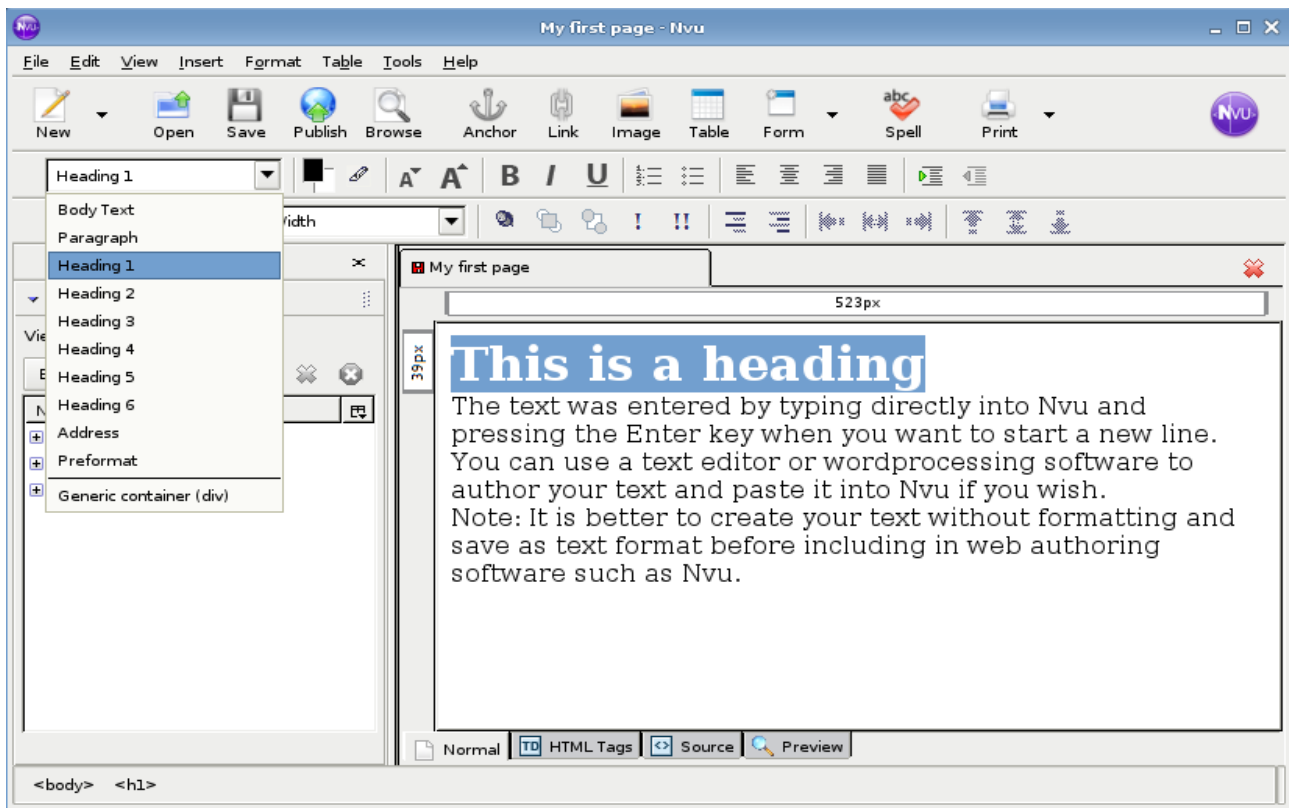
Hint This is a very ad hoc way of formatting text and should only be used if you are creating few and very simple web pages. Stylesheets allow you to manage your web site project and maintain a consistent look and feel. Styles are covered in the *Managing Your Project* section of this handout.

```
1. <!DOCTYPE html PUBLIC "-//W3C//DTD HTML 4.01 Transitional//EN">
2. <html lang="en-au">
3. <head>
4.   <meta content="text/html; charset=ISO-8859-1"
5.   http-equiv="content-type">
6.   <title>My first page</title>
7.   <meta content="Jacqueline McNally" name="author">
8.   <meta content="Example web page showing title."
9.   name="description">
10. </head>
11. <body>
12. This is a heading<br>
13. The text was entered by typing directly into Nvu and pressing the Enter
14. key when you want to start a new line.<br>
15. You can use a text editor or wordprocessing software to author your
16. text and paste it into Nvu if you wish. <br>
17. Note: It is better to create your text without formatting and save as
18. text format before including in web authoring software such as Nvu.
19. </body>
20. </html>
```

Normal | HTML Tags | Source | Preview

Text typed directly onto the Nvu page defaults to appearing in the format for the 'body' element.

HTML defines a small number of elements specifically for text and it is usually preferable to use these.



Images

To insert an image

1. Click the 'Image' button on the Composition toolbar.



The Image properties window opens. Click 'Choose File' and browse and select a file .

2. Click 'Open'.

Leave checked the box 'URL is relative to page location'. This will allow you to move the page and image to another location, as you will have to when you submit your assignment. (If you de-select this and move the page, it will try to find the image at the original location.)

Note If the box is 'greyed out' this is probably because the page has not been saved.

3. In the box labelled 'Alternate text' add a description of the image. (This forms the 'alt' attribute for the image and provides text which will appear

in place of the image with browsers that cannot display images (screen readers and voice synthesisers). It will also be used by those with visual impairment. The content of this box must be carefully considered so as to be of maximum assistance in such cases.)

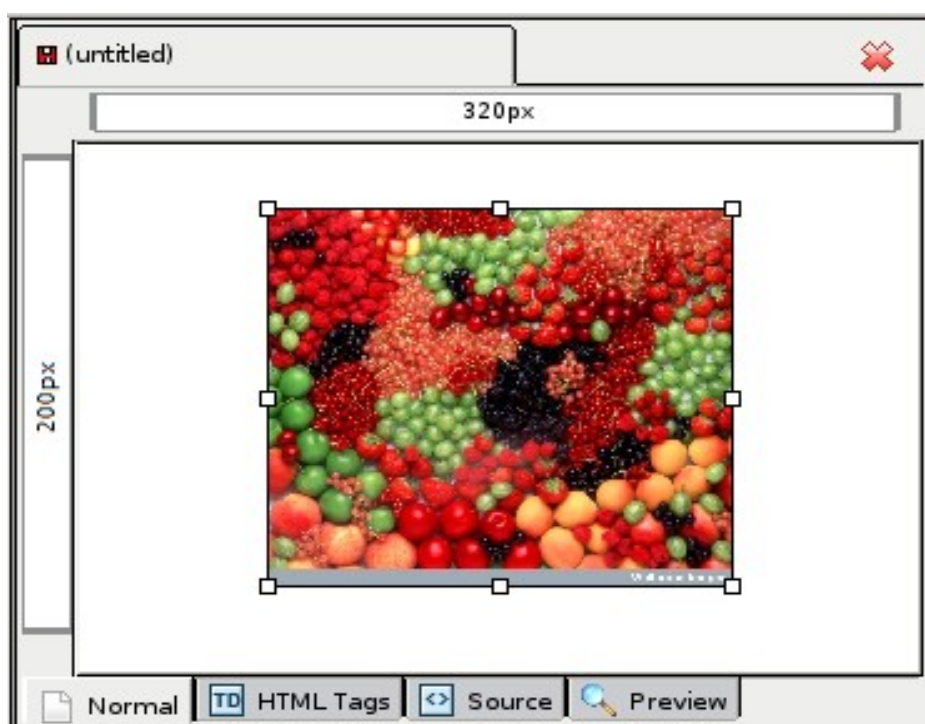
Note Where the image is purely decorative, and not necessary to understanding the page, alternative text is not required and should be omitted.

4. In the box labelled 'Tooltip' you may optionally insert a 'Title' attribute for the image. Some browsers will show the text provided when the cursor hovers over the image.
5. Click OK.

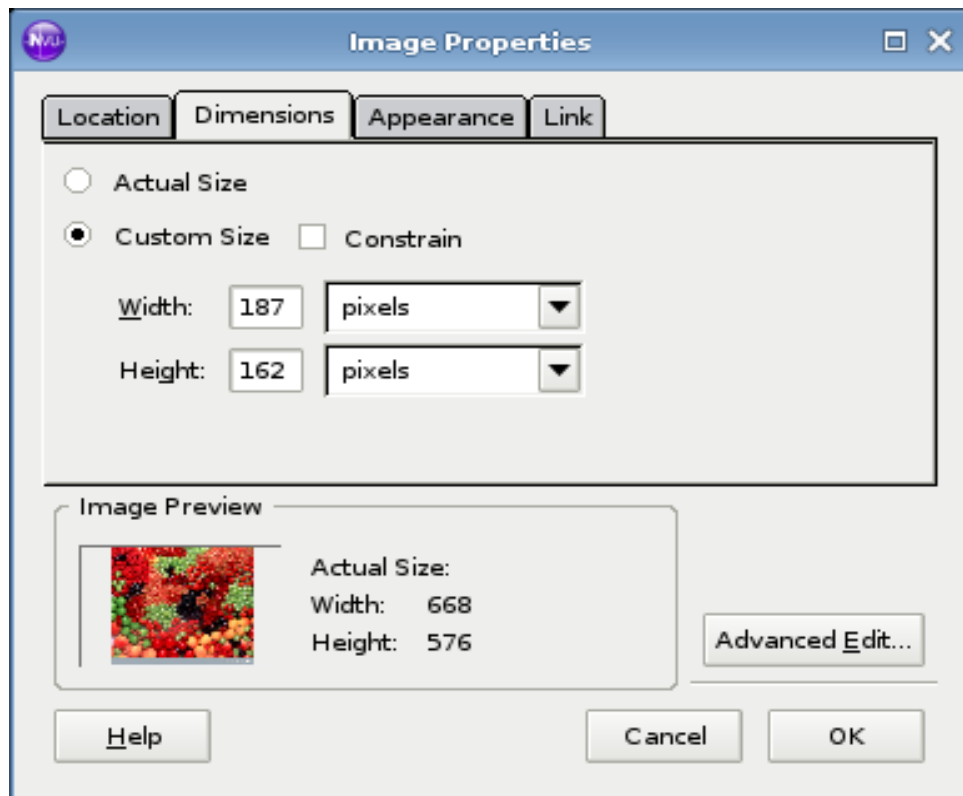
To change the size of an image

1. Click the image.

A sizing box appears around the image. The box has 8 graphical handles (small white squares) one at each corner of the image and one in the middle of each side).



2. Drag on a handle to alter the size of the image. Make it some sensible size. Dragging a handle in the centre of a side will alter the shape of the image which is usually undesirable. More precise control may be achieved via the Image properties window. Double-click the image or select the image and choose Format > Image Properties. Select the 'dimensions' tab display and edit the image dimensions.



Note Ideally images should be produced at the size required rather than resizing them. Importing large images and reducing the size wastes bandwidth and slows presentation. Resizing by small amounts can introduce undesirable artefacts. You should size your images in Photoshop or other appropriate software (e.g. GIMP) before inserting them in your web site.

Images in the middle of paragraphs are not usually what is needed. You can place them at either the right or left side and have the text wrap round.

To align an image

1. Click on the image.
2. Click the Image button on the Composition toolbar: this will open the Image properties box.
3. Select the 'Appearance' tab
4. In the drop down box 'Align text to image' select the required alignment.
5. Click OK

Links

To create a link to another web page

1. Select (highlight) a few words of text.
2. On the Composition toolbar click on the 'Link' button, alternatively Right click and select 'Create Link'. The 'Link Properties' window opens.
3. Click on 'Choose File' and browse to the file that you want to link to.
4. Click OPEN.
5. Click OK



In Normal or Preview mode you will now find your text underlined and in a different colour (probably blue) You can now try double-clicking on the text, you will see the 'Link Properties' pop up again. This can be very useful if you want to change the file to which the link refers. (In a browser you would expect the file viewed to be replaced by the one to which the link refers.)

If you now switch to 'HTML Tags' view you will see your text preceded by a yellow marker with an 'A' in it. Your text has been defined as an 'A' (Anchor) element.

To create a link to another web site

Follow the steps above, but instead of browsing for a file, enter the web address of the site that you want to link to. It needs to be the complete URL (Uniform Resource Locator), i.e. including the http:// part. For example, the link that you would enter to link to the Burning Well image gallery is:
<http://www.burningwell.org/gallery/>

Practise Create a new web page, insert an image, and link this image to a web site.

To create a link to a file

You can create links to many different types of files, for example, wordprocessing files, PDFs, podcasts, etc.

Follow the steps above, and browse to the file just as you did for the web page. If the file is not part of your web site, enter the URL including the full name of the file.

Practise Create a link to the example podcast.

Hint Different web browsers display other web pages in replace of the displayed page or in an additional window or tab. The most appropriate action is to allow the user, i.e. the visitor to your web page to use the functionality they have set up in their web browser. For example, think carefully as to why you would want a new window to allow your visitor to listen to a podcast. This is just one of the reasons why it is good practise to test and display your web site in different web browsers.

Managing Your Project

If your web site includes more than two or three pages or you wish to use a template design, “think first, click later”.

This section shows you how to use Nvu's Site Manager to better manage your web site as a project and introduces you to the use of stylesheets.

Hint Even if you consider your web site to be simple, the “think first, click later” approach is a good habit to form. Using pen and paper, collating your content which you then pour into your web pages for subsequent formatting (and a little tweaking) is a more productive and easier way to create web sites.

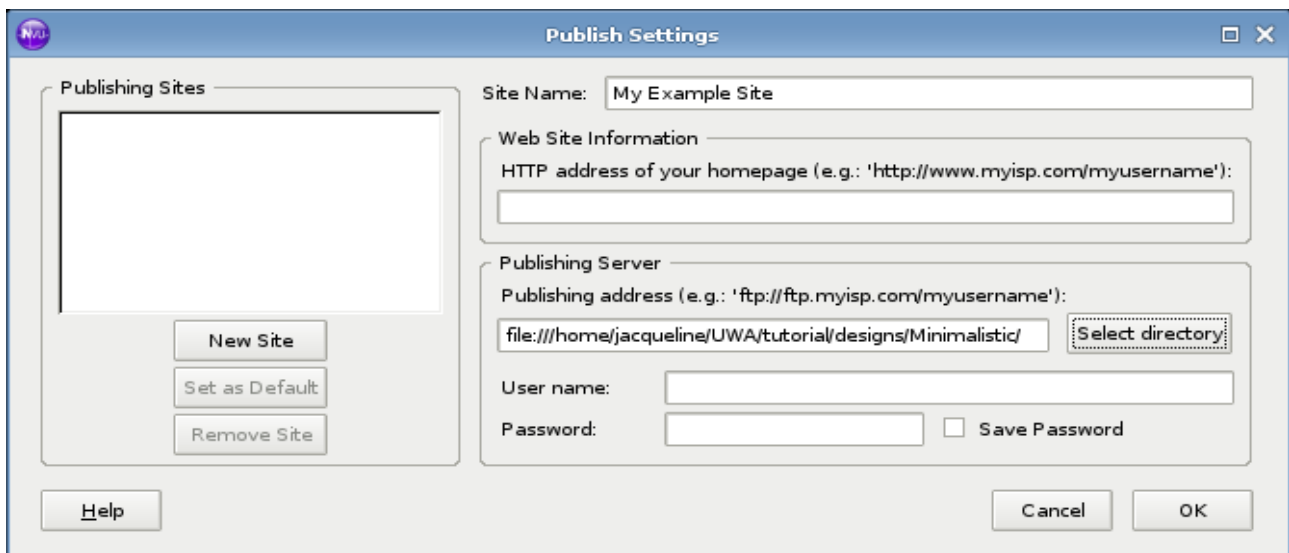
Site Manager

To set up a new site (assuming that pages for the site have already been created) open Site Manager and click ‘Edit Sites’. This opens the ‘Publish Settings’ window.

Choose a convenient name for the site (You may like to call it something like “My Example Site” or “Tutorial Exercise” to differentiate it from a later “My Assignment Site”) and enter it in the box ‘Site Name’.

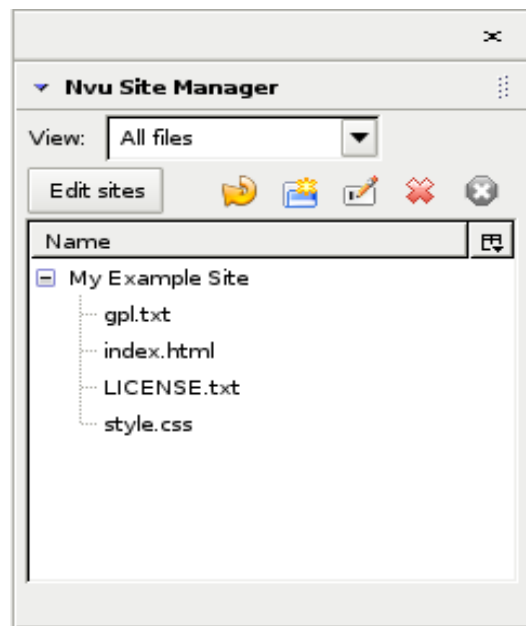
In the ‘Publishing server’ area click ‘Select directory’ and browse to the folder where the site is located, select the folder and OK. The box should read something like “file:///C:/Documents ” (Ignore the hint line above the Publishing address which applies to remote sites only.)

Practise Use Nvu's Site Manager to setup a project using the 'Minimalistic' sample design.



Leave the other boxes (Web site information, User name etc.) blank.

Back in Site Manager in the column headed 'Name' the new site should be listed and can be expanded to show its contents.



Hint To add pages to your web site, save them in the directory known to the Site Manager. You may need to click the Refresh button to list the newly added page.

Styles

Styles specify how particular elements on a page appear on the screen. By 'elements' we mean parts of the page structure, typically headings and paragraphs, but also stretching to many others including tables, bulleted and numbered lists etc. In fact most HTML 'Tags' may be specified though the same style may be applied to several.

Style may typically define such aspects of presentation as the font face, size and variant, the font colour, the background colour, whether an element is to be aligned right, centre or left, whether spaced away from other elements, surrounded by a box and, if so, what type or colour. Elements may be given an absolute position relative to the page (which allows elements to overlap). Elements such as paragraphs, tables and images are considered to exist within boxes or blocks and the sizes of these boxes may be specified.

Practise Use Nvu's Site Manager to setup a project using the 'Textual' sample design. Open 'tags.html' and compare the html tags in Normal mode and Source mode.

Stylesheets

The creation of stylesheets is beyond the scope of this tutorial, but we will use sample designs to demonstrate how they can assist you to maintain a consistent look and feel.

The sample web sites were obtained from Open Source Web Design and Open Designs. In the following section we will work with the Textual template.

Modifying existing stylesheets

1. Open the index.html file belonging to the 'Textual' sample design.

Hint Click on the '+' (Windows and Linux) or '>' (Mac) to the left of the name of the site within the Site Manager to expand its contents. Double-click index.html to open the web page.

2. Click Tools in the Menu Bar and select CSS Editor.

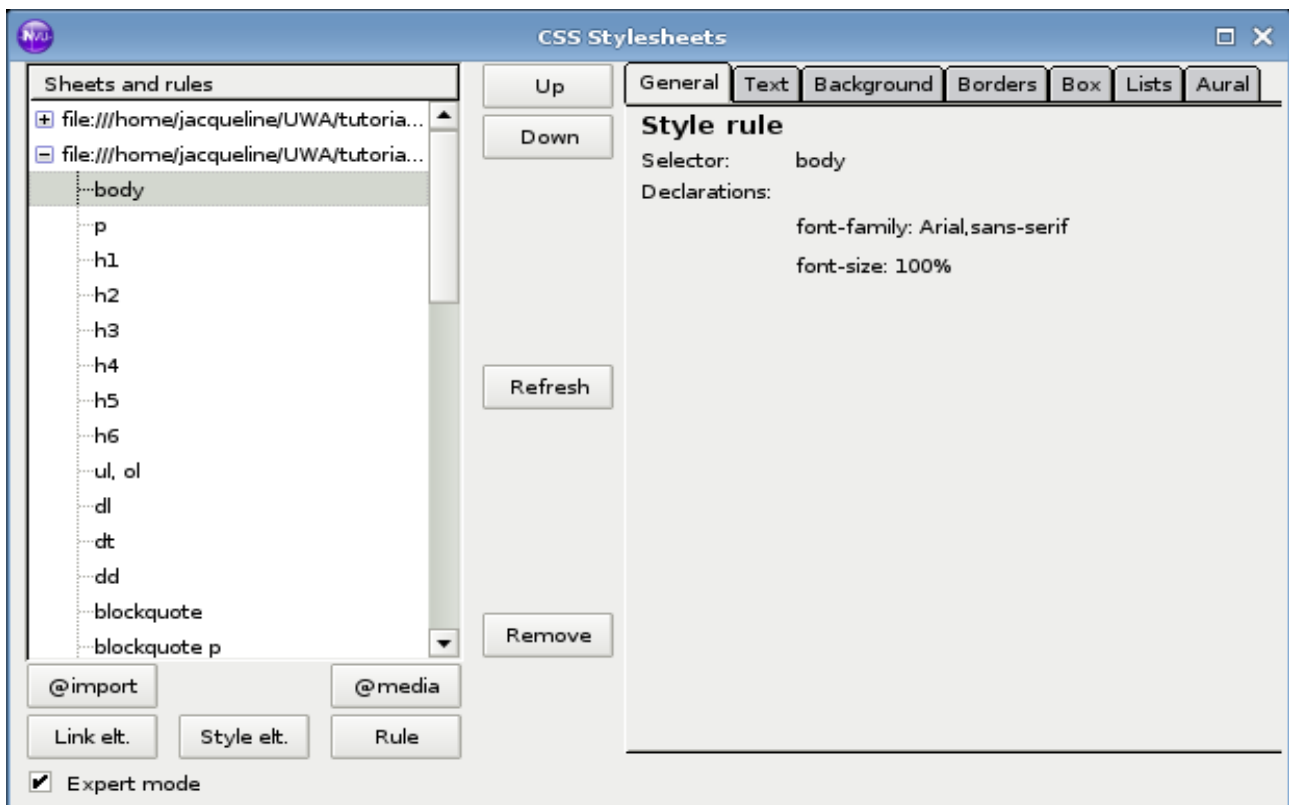
The CSS Editor dialog window is displayed.

3. Click '+' (or '>') next to one of the stylesheets in the left window pane.

The elements included in that stylesheet are displayed in the right window pane.

4. Click on one of the elements, for example, 'body' and click on the tabs at the top of the CSS Stylesheets dialog window to display the different attributes associated with that element.

Hint Names of the elements are usually abbreviated forms of HTML tags. For example, 'p' is generally associated with paragraphs.



5. Recognise one of the elements and change the attributes. For example, in text.css change the font of the body element and see how it changes the appearance of your web page.
6. Click close (bottom right corner) to close the CSS Editor dialog window.

Note Stylesheets are tricky when you first start to use them as you need to be familiar with a lot of new terminology, for example, HTML tags. But if you plan your web site (away from the keyboard) with the sample design in mind, you can

modify it with specific goals in mind.

Hint Use Save As once you have opened a sample webpage that you wish to modify. Edit this to suit your needs, then use this (and the associate stylesheets) as your template for other pages.

RESOURCES

- Assignment handout
- This handout
- Sample html and css files
- Nvu User Guide
- Internet resources (see below)

REFERENCES

Nvu

Nvu website
<http://nvu.com/>

KompoZer
<http://www.kompozer.net/>
Nvu's unofficial bug-fix release.

User Guide (HTML and PDF)
<http://www.charlescooke.me.uk/nvu/> (Author's local copy)
Online and printed versions of the Nvu 1.0 User Guide are available and covers the use of Nvu in detail. The PDF version has been made available for your use.

Nvu (and KompoZer) support forum (What You See Is Free Authoring Forum)
<http://wysifauthoring.informe.com/>
The forum is a place for sharing experiences and obtaining and giving help. Many of the contributors are Nvu users who range from beginners to those with lots of experience.

<http://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Nvu>
History and background to the development of Nvu.
Templates and sample designs

Design Examples

Open Source Web Design (<http://www.oswd.org/>)
Minimalistic by lazar (simple3color.zip)
<http://www.oswd.org/design/preview/id/3533>

Open Designs (<http://www.opendesigns.org/>)
Textual by Gnome (template-981.zip)
<http://www.opendesigns.org/preview/?template=981>

Open Web Design (<http://www.openwebdesign.org/>)

Web design and HTML

<http://21stict.pbwiki.com/WebDesign>
Links to articles about web design.

<http://www.annabella.net/html.html>

The essence of HTML, but written before styles and CSS became common usage.

<http://www.oneil.com.au/pc/html.html>

HTML Exercises including HTML tag reference.

<http://www.htmldog.com/reference/htmltags/>
Annotated list of HTML tags.

<http://www.htmlgoodies.com/primers/html/>
Guides to using HTML and beyond.

<http://www.gtalbot.org/NvuSection/NvuWebDesignTips/WebDesignResources.html>
Links to other tutorials and references.

Other Tutorials

Nvu

<http://en.flossmanuals.net/NvU>

Descriptive and includes screenshots. Some links do not work

<http://nvu.kellertechnologies.com/>

Tutorials Includes examples, but no screen shots.

Other Open Source Software (OSS)

The following OSS are available for Windows, Mac OS X, and Linux (download and on The Open CD).

Audacity

<http://audacity.sourceforge.net/>

Audio editor and recorder.

GNU Image Manipulation Program

<http://www.gimp.org/>

Used for photo retouching, image composition and image authoring.

Inkscape

<http://www.inkscape.org/>

Vector graphics editor with capabilities similar to Illustrator, Freehand, and CorelDraw.

OpenOffice.org

<http://www.openoffice.org/>

Office productivity suite including word processor, spreadsheet, presentation, drawing, databases and mathematical equation editor.

Scribus

<http://www.scribus.net/>

Page layout software.

See also:

The Free Software Foundation

<http://www.fsf.org/>

Open Source Initiative

<http://www.opensource.org/>

Photographs and Clipart

Burning Well

<http://www.burningwell.org/>

Public Domain topical photographic galleries. Includes search engine to locate other free photographic material, although not necessarily Public Domain.

<http://www.openclipart.org/>

Public Domain Illustrations and clipart.

Wellcome Images

<http://images.wellcome.ac.uk/>

For non-commercial use. Images include the history of medicine, modern biomedical science and clinical medicine.