



Getting Help

Hard as it may be to believe, even a book as voluminous and detailed as this one may not answer all your questions about Dreamweaver. Fortunately, a wide range of other resources awaits you when a particular feature doesn't work.

Getting Help from Dreamweaver

There's plenty of assistance built right into the program, from beginner tutorials to the Adobe Help system. You can also access Dreamweaver's electronic help system and online support center from the Help menu. You'll find details below.

Detailed Assistance

In Dreamweaver CS5, Adobe has changed their help system (again!). You can now tap into an Adobe Help program that contains *Using Dreamweaver CS5* documentation. But it also lets you access online help from Adobe.com (www.adobe.com), as well as from select resources on the Web. The Help program is basically just a modified web browser that searches online documentation. Choose Help→Dreamweaver Help (or press the F1 key) to launch the Help program and view the *Using Dreamweaver CS5* documents. It includes a list of categories such as “Creating Pages with CSS” and “Previewing pages” where you can get more detailed information on various aspects of the program.

Note: If you prefer your documentation printed, you can download a PDF of the entire Dreamweaver manual. Choose Help→Dreamweaver Help (or press the F1 key) to access the online help documents. There, you'll find a link labeled “View Help PDF” that downloads a hefty Adobe Acrobat file containing Dreamweaver CS5 documentation.

Adobe has a more interactive version of their online help system called Community Help. It's kind of like a Google for Dreamweaver. When you search for a Dreamweaver-related topic—templates, for example—you get a list of pages that have something to do with Dreamweaver templates. However, rather than search the entire Web, including Joe's “I just learned Dreamweaver two seconds ago and now I'm an expert” blog, Community Help searches only selected websites. Adobe has determined which sites actually have good and accurate information on Dreamweaver—this includes not only Adobe's website, but other useful sites, such as CreativePro (www.creative.com) and CommunityMX (www.communitymx.com).

You can even search the help system (including Community Help) from within Dreamweaver. The Application toolbar includes a simple search box (see Figure A-1). Type a term in the box and click the magnifying glass icon to launch a browser and retrieve a list of results that match your search term. Of course, as with all things free on the Internet, you may or may not find an exact answer to your question.



Figure A-1. Dreamweaver’s Application toolbar provides a quick way to search the Web for Dreamweaver tips, tricks, and information.

The Help menu provides other useful jumping-off points for exploring topics like the Spry Framework, ColdFusion, and a few other commercial Adobe services (“Hi, Dreamweaver engineers. This is marketing, do you mind if we add a couple of links to your Help menu?”). If you’re interested in refreshing your knowledge of HTML, Dreamweaver’s Reference window (select Help→Reference, or press Shift-F1) provides in-depth information on HTML. However, skip the CSS, JavaScript, JSP, and other guides in the Reference material—it’s outdated.

Getting Help from Adobe

You can also get more up-to-date and personalized support from Adobe, ranging from technical notes available on Adobe’s site to pay-as-you-ask support plans.

Adobe Website

The Dreamweaver support page (www.adobe.com/support/dreamweaver/; also available from Help→Dreamweaver Support Center, which launches the Adobe Help program as well) is command central for finding help from Adobe. Here you can search the vast database of technical notes (short articles on specific problems) that just may hold the answer you seek, and you can find basic tutorials on getting started with Dreamweaver, see a list of top issues (and their answers), as well as a list of the most recent technical notes.

You can click the Customer Service link (in the right-hand navigation bar) to go to a page listing common setup problems and their solutions, or click the Contact Customer Support link in the right-hand navigation bar to go to a page with various options for help: You can use Live Chat if you’re having problems activating your copy of Dreamweaver, or to call for help with installation or for Technical Support.

Paid Support

If you have deep pockets, you can also tap into three levels of personalized, fee-based support, ranging from \$29 for a single incident to the whole-hog luxury of the Gold Support program (for pricing on this option, Adobe tells you to “contact your Adobe reseller”—watch out!). For more information on these programs, go to www.adobe.com/support/programs/creativesuite the Web address above. Each program has its own phone number, so determine the type of support (from Bronze to Gold) you need. If you have just a single nagging question, the single-incident help program gets you an Adobe technician who will work with you to resolve the issue. But at \$29, make sure you’ve first tried to answer the question yourself by using one of the free resources listed in this appendix. Customers in the U.S. and Canada should call 1-866-MYADOBE for this service.

The Forums

Adobe provides online forums you check out with a browser. To get to either of these, choose Help→Adobe Online Forums. The forums are a terrific source of information, offering almost real-time answers on Dreamweaver and related web-design techniques. Adobe sponsors several forums and newsgroups. Of most interest to average Dreamweaver users are the FAQ forum (answers to the most frequently asked questions), the General Discussion forum (answers to basic questions), and the Application Development forum, where people discuss Dreamweaver's dynamic web page features. If you're struggling with Dreamweaver's Spry tools, the Spry forum is a good place to seek help. Odds are one of the many knowledgeable experts who always seem to be hanging around will come back with an answer, sometimes within minutes.

You can access Dreamweaver's forums from this page: <http://forums.adobe.com/community/dreamweaver>.