

# Microsoft FrontPage

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## A Personal website

It is nice to have your own personal website to show your friends photos and let them know what interests you. It also allows you to ask questions, create discussions, get comments, or raise awareness for what you are doing. It can also be a convenient link to other things you might have on the internet, like your personal blog with [www.blogger.com](http://www.blogger.com), your work place, your favourite websites, or your online photo album with Harvey Norman for instance.

You do not necessarily have to create the entire html (HyperText Markup Language) yourself either, you will generally use templates which you can personalize using WYSIWYG (pronounced wiz-ee-wig; What You See Is What You Get) interfaces such as Dreamweaver and MS FrontPage. Much of the code required to embed say your photo album is provided to you, and you copy and paste it into your website without fully understanding what the code does. The code may be java-code or php-code and sometimes it involves cutting and pasting bits in different parts of your website, for example some code for the 'header', and some code for the 'body'. As long as you follow the instructions and have a rough understanding of what it is meant to look like you cannot go wrong.

Inserting special effects, or moving images, slide shows, a functional clock or count down timer to your birthday, feedback forms or calendars generally require code which you might find difficult to write, but on the internet you will find the 'snippets' of code to insert into your website to get what you want.

The code often requires compatibility with your site host, so not all code will work. It is a matter of trying something else or reading the FAQs (Frequently Asked Questions) of your website host. Typically the free hosting services support very little code.

## **Domain Names**

When you have your own website it is nice if people can access it using your own domain name. Instead of using [www.dodo.com.au/waltervp01](http://www.dodo.com.au/waltervp01) to access my Dodo (my ISP) provided web space is not as nice as using [www.vanpraag.info](http://www.vanpraag.info). Again a free website host is not going to let you host your own domain name...

It is relatively easy to get your own domain name. Just go to [www.planetdomain.com.au](http://www.planetdomain.com.au) or to [www.domainpeople.com](http://www.domainpeople.com) and see how to register a domain. If you choose right you can get a good domain registrar to register your .com.au domain for \$70 per two years, or an American .com or .biz domain name for as little as US\$10 per year. For this you should get email and domain forwarding or DNS (Domain Name Server) options.

**Email Forwarding** means you can set up emails on your own domain which forward to your normal email address. For instance [walter@vanpraag.info](mailto:walter@vanpraag.info) might be forwarded to [waltervp01@dodo.com.au](mailto:waltervp01@dodo.com.au) – which is where I receive my email! This is handy because my brother can then have [frank@vanpraag.info](mailto:frank@vanpraag.info) which might forward to his work email

address. Not bad having nice and easy to remember email addresses! And when I change ISP I can change the forwarding and no one needs to get the usual 'I changed my email address email' from me!

**Domain Forwarding** means that when people type in [www.vanpraag.info](http://www.vanpraag.info) it will instantly forward it to [www.dodo.com.au/waltervp01](http://www.dodo.com.au/waltervp01). This means to access my free website from Dodo all people need to do is type in [www.vanpraag.info](http://www.vanpraag.info) which goes nicely with my email address: walter@vanpraag.info

DNS service means that you can put in your website host IP address. This means that if I have a host who will properly host my domain they will add my domain name to their DNS and the domain registrar will put their IP address in their DNS. Sounds complicated? It is. It takes 48 hours to propagate DNS changes through the internet as any change in DNS details actually gets changed in thousands, if not millions, of DNS hosts around the internet! Fortunately it is an easy and one-off setting you need to change when you get a domain host. To make it easy a lot of services such as SiteGround and the Hostingshop offer you a free domain name registration with their hosting package and do it all for you as part of their basic service. This is an advantage of having your website host arrange your domain name registration as well! The reason you might not do this is because you might not want to pay for a domain hosting service to begin with, but I recommend you spent the extra \$100!

## **Web Hosts**

A proper web host gives you a place to put your website, and will also put your own domain name in their DNS. They will also provide nice things such as MS FrontPage extensions (compatibility!) to ensure your FrontPage website is going to work as expected. They will also give you extra services such as domain statistics, who looks at your website and where they go, and sometimes a range of additional services that are very nice to have (website templates and installation of photo albums and shopping carts for instance).

## **ISP versus WEBSITE HOSTING SERVICE**

Most ISP (Internet Service Providers) provide a small space for their customers to host a website. This is often very limited in size and facilities. The restrictions on it are not obvious to the novice, but will soon become apparent. It is something you can start to use, but you will very quickly grow out of it. Like Roller-skates from the Dollar Shop, you will realise very quickly that you need more!

Typically with a freebie ISP website you cannot run php code. Php is code you often find on the internet. As it actually requires the website host computer to execute this code it is potentially something that can interfere with the service. An ISP free service has hundreds of websites hosted on anyone server and if all people ran php code the service would become terribly slow and unreliable (possibly crashing under the strain of bad code or just overload). A paid host will only put a small number of sites on each server

and monitor CPU and memory loads and use load balancing servers to ensure a reliable service. They will also offer you MySQL or similar database features. These databases you might want to use for even simple things such as bulletin boards or photo-albums! You do not need to know the code, but you 'implement' them sometimes without even knowing it!

## **Website Structure**

Before we get into the nitty gritty of starting a website it is good to understand the basic layout of your website and to know what your website is going to do for you. Is it to serve a special purpose perhaps? Have you got an idea of how you like it to be? Perhaps a home-page (*index.html*) that has a simple menu that goes to say 5 different pages (contact.htm, aboutme.htm, interests.htm,...) or whether you want a more complicated structure. Fortunately many website design software like MS FrontPage has templates to help you get off on a good start. Choose your template carefully as it is hard to change to another template after you started!

When starting a new site you also need to tell the software where you like the website to be stored on your computer. Remember it lives on your computer for you to make changes and additions, and when you are happy you can 'upload' it to a host. So where do you want your website files to be saved on your computer? Not in c:\windows\system32 generally! It is important, especially for backup purposes, where you are going to locate your website. If you do not choose a specific location then the software will guess a suitable location. Make sure you take note of where that is!

When looking at the average website structure the first thing you will notice is how the structure corresponds to how you access it on the internet. If your website lives on your computer here: c:\data\websites\dodo\index.htm then it is most likely the website would be at [www.dodo.com.au/waltervp01/index.htm](http://www.dodo.com.au/waltervp01/index.htm) which is also where all internet browsers go to when you leave out the index.htm bit. If you have a page dedicated to your photos, you may have that stored here: c:\data\websites\dodo\photos.htm which can be seen on the internet at [www.dodo.com.au/waltervp01/photos.htm](http://www.dodo.com.au/waltervp01/photos.htm) , see how it corresponds? And the images you use on the photo.htm page might live in c:\data\websites\dodo\images\me.jpg, and on the internet that is [www.dodo.com.au/waltervp01/images/me.jpg](http://www.dodo.com.au/waltervp01/images/me.jpg) .

From the above you can see that it does matter that your files are all logically stored. You might just have a folder for basic images that you use on your website in a folder called images, but you might have 3 photo albums as well. Instead of adding all photos to the images folder it might be handy to create a new folder called album1 and album 2 and album3. If ever you need to delete an album you can delete the corresponding folder and know you are not affecting the rest of your website accidentally. It is important to clear off images and data that is no longer needed because if it is on the server people can access it! So if it is old and outdated you need to remove it. Besides that, many servers give you space restrictions, although these days that is not often relevant. Remember never to use huge images or files on the internet, as they are slow and difficult to

download for people on slower internet and you might also exceed 'traffic' volume. Traffic volume is measured on megabytes per month normally. If you are given 100MB per month that means that 100 people can download a 1MB photo from your site and then your website will stop and the company hosting it will demand more money! Typically you are given much greater volume than 100MB, usually measured in Gigabytes, although many free websites like the ones you get from your ISP do have laughable restrictions like that! Watch out!

In any case, keep your pictures in jpg format, use 50% or less in quality (can rarely tell from greater quality settings when shown on the internet!), and try not to exceed 800 pixels widths. In some cases you might have a link to a file, a photo for printing, or a document for download that is as big as 1-3MB, but do keep size in mind when using the internet! Unlike public opinion; Size does Matter!

## **HTML Code**

The software will do most the basic coding itself. Not 100% perfect, but good enough for me. Coding is something that is put together efficiently and elegantly by people who learned to program. They are artists compared to software like FrontPage. FrontPage, like many of its competitors do awful jobs of coding. But it works! With today's internet speed it is not as important to do it all perfect, but we do need to understand the basics of html and other code structures used on the internet.

First of all we need to see what code FrontPage creates for us. We can use the split screen for that. Note you can shift the split with your mouse!

What are the things we are looking at?

Well, some are 'obvious'. Like modifying a website link for instance. The easiest is to highlight the link you want to change on the bottom screen, and then observing the code that is highlighted in the code. There you see the website reference. Easiest is for you to change that directly in the code. As for the actual text that people see, you can change that in either screen. Remember they are both the same, except one is a view of the code which is made to look pretty for you!

Do remember that when people look at your website their website browser also needs to understand the code, and that affects the way they see it. So do check your work on other computers as well. Html is a code in progress, and some later features of html code may not be known to some older web browsers! Idem ditto for the web host you are using. Their server may not necessarily be compliant with the code you are using, especially when it comes to FrontPage specific code!

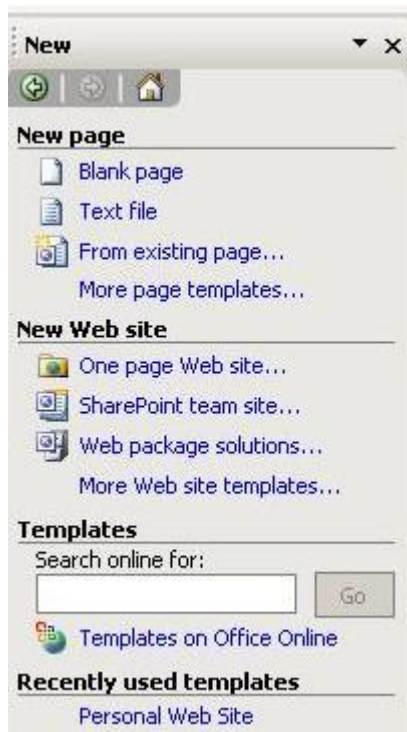
The way html code is structured is using the <tags> brackets, where tags indicate html code. Look at this code for instance: **<h3>Welcome to my Web site!</h3>**.

This simply tells the browser that the text is formatted as h3, short for Heading level 3. And where it says </h3> the code is indicating this is the end of what you wanted formatted as Heading level 3. Try using h2 or h1 or h4 etc. Headings just make sure everything looks consistent. Another example of code is <b> or <i> where <b> indicates bold text and <i> as italic text. Again the </b> and </i> indicate the end of the format change.

Using the above examples we can see how the code is structured using the brackets. Keep that in mind when looking at the code.

There are also <tags> that cover larger chunks of code, for instance <head> .... </head> And <body> .... </body>, or <table> ... </table>.

Tags can also have extra features such as <table border="0" cellpadding="0" cellspacing="0" width="100%">. When you see these code snippets try changing the numbers and see what happens, or deleting bits altogether. You can see what happens on the Design part of your screen, and press Ctrl Z (or Edit/Undo) to undo your last change. Of course you are familiar with Ctrl Z! Also make sure you only save the file when you are happy with the last change, and know it works for you. This way you can always resort to the last saved version.



## ***Starting with a template***

Starting a website is generally done with a template. A template provides you with the basic look and feel of a website, and templates are available when you click File/New in MS FrontPage. On the right hand side you can choose more specific options complete with finding templates on Office Online, a free service provided by Microsoft.

If you do an Internet Search (using Google for instance) you can find lots of free templates, some specifically designed for MS FrontPage. Most will be very much vanilla flavored templates, with the fancier options only available if you pay.

Once you have a template going, even if you paid for one, it doesn't mean it is easy from there on, it would still require a fair amount of fiddling, and a certain degree of expertise to get it right and working for you.

Many still require you to master some kind of graphics program to get your own artwork right, and that involves a lot more then just resizing pictures.

## ***Adding code!***

Adding code to your website from other websites is something you will come in very handy. It will allow you to add features and shine to your website. Many examples can be found at sites like [www.bravenet.com](http://www.bravenet.com) where they supply you with notice boards and counters, as well as free templates. Remember it is an advertising powered service, and you can pay to reduce or eliminate the advertising. They do offer irresistible services.

Here is a typical one, a counter:

```
<!-- Start Bravenet.com Service Code -->  
<script language="JavaScript" type="text/javascript"  
src="http://pub2.bravenet.com/counter/code.php?id=358276&usernum=86773413&cpv=2">  
</script>  
<!-- END DO NOT MODIFY -->
```

All you need to do is copy/paste it into the code view of your website. Where in the code is best determined with your cursor in the design window. Then look at the code view above it and make some space to paste it in.

Once you have done that a counter like this may not even show in the design view, but once you view it in the preview window you will see it.

Note how the code says it is JavaScript. Javascript is a simple programming language that almost all browsers understand and all website hosts allow. Then you may notice it has a reference to a code.php in there as well. That is right, it is executing php code on the bravenet server to display your counter. Php code is something that your free ISP website space does generally not allow, so Bravenet does that on its own service.

Some code you find might require you to run php code, which assumes that your host allows you to run php code, and this may or may not be the case. This is why services like Bravenet are handy to use. For a small fee you can eliminate the advertising, or branding, of your code.

Other interesting features you can look for are content for your website, such as horoscopes or headline news or functional services such as search engines that people can use to search your site. These can all be sourced from Bravenet. Often when you find javascript for your website it will tell you to put one part in the HEAD of your website page and another part in the body. Remember that all websites have this structure with HEAD and BODY, where the HEAD is enclosed by <head> and </head> tags and the BODY by <body> and </body> tags.

For example: <http://javascript.internet.com/miscellaneous/stars.html3>

## ***Forms and other more complicated code***

There are a lot of functions that may seem simple that are more difficult to implement than you would imagine. These specifically include forms and search facilities.

Search facilities on your own website is tricky because the ‘search engine’ will need to index your site every time you change it. This is something you would have to start manually each time if you were to do it with your own code on your web host’s server. Alternatively you can re-index on a regular basis, say once every 24 hours. The free web spaces you are likely to get from your ISP will most often not allow running any code like this. A much better option is to outsource this to people like Bravenet, or even better, to people like Google: <http://www.google.com/searchcode.html>

```

<!-- SiteSearch Google -->
<FORM method=GET action="http://www.google.com/search">
<input type=hidden name=ie value=UTF-8>
<input type=hidden name=oe value=UTF-8>
<TABLE bgcolor="#FFFFFF"><tr><td>
<A HREF="http://www.google.com/">
<IMG SRC="http://www.google.com/logos/Logo_40wht.gif"
border="0" ALT="Google"></A>
</td>
<td>
<INPUT TYPE=text name=q size=31 maxlength=255 value="">
<INPUT type=submit name=btnG VALUE="Google Search">
<font size=-1>
<input type=hidden name=domains value="YOUR DOMAIN NAME"><br><input
type=radio name=sitesearch value=""> WWW <input type=radio name=sitesearch
value="YOUR DOMAIN NAME" checked> YOUR DOMAIN NAME <br>
</font>
</td></tr></TABLE>
</FORM>
<!-- SiteSearch Google -->

```

You need to replace the words "YOUR DOMAIN NAME," which appears three times in the code, with your own website's actual domain name (e.g., <http://dodo.com.au/~wvp12>).



You will have the ‘branding’ on such search facilities, and little control over it, but they tend to work well.

Also note how the above code is enclosed in <FORM> and </FORM> tags. This shows it is in fact a form. The visitor puts data in, and the form is submitted to Google and a result is subsequently returned.

A feedback form is handled in a similar manner, except instead of processing the form through a third party it is customary to use code that is executable on the server. For that you can most likely not use the ISP supplied free space, but most web hosts have cgi code to handle forms:

```
<form name="enquiry" method="post" action="/cgi-sys/FormMail.cgi">
```

Every host tends to have their own peculiarities, and using the supplied cgi code can generally be found in an FAQ section. Typically they offer a range of cgi codes, and you can always upload more cgi code if you find some specific code on the internet.

However, this is not easy for the novice.

Again the internet has a lot of form services available, ranging from branded forms (like the free Bravenet ones), forms that have advertising on it, forms you pay for,....

To add such code is generally a block of code that you copy/paste into the code-view area. If this all sounds too daunting don't worry, you can't erase your disk accidentally by fiddling with it, and you can always resort back to a previous version!

Needless to say FrontPage has lovely form codes as well, but you need to have a host that is specifically designed to run it:

```
<form method="POST" action="--WEBBOT-SELF--"
onSubmit="location.href='_derived/nortbots.htm';return false;" webbot-onSubmit>
  <!--webbot bot="SaveResults" u-file="_private/feedback.txt" s-
format="TEXT/TSV" s-label-fields="TRUE" s-builtin-fields="Date Time REMOTE_NAME
REMOTE_USER HTTP_USER_AGENT" s-form-fields startspan --><input TYPE="hidden"
NAME="VTI-GROUP" VALUE="0"><!--webbot bot="SaveResults" endspan i-
checksum="43374" -->
```

The above is the Feedback code supplied by default for one of FrontPage's website templates, and it writes the feedback into a file on the host. This means you need to download the file and look at the feedback. To me this is not terribly useful, for most of us we would like an email to come to us for each feedback we get! You can see why not everyone likes the code generated by MS FrontPage.

## **Backups!**

Yes, backups are always important. If you made changes to your website that you thought worked perfectly and for some reason it all goes belly up it is nice to have a spare copy. My practice is to make a copy of the file I am changing a lot. For instance index1.htm might be the working version while I work frantically with index.htm. If after a while I wished I could just go back to what I had I can delete index.htm altogether and rename *index1.htm* to *index.htm* to resurrect the old version again.

Another good thing to do is to copy the entire website directory to a backup folder. Naturally you need to do this after every major change. Do not forget that essentially your webhost has a copy of your website too! If your computer is stolen you can start

frontpage on another computer and just get all your files back from your web host (Import Entire Website).