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## Introduction



### Welcome to the new and exciting world of DHTML pull-down menus!

It has been proven that the easiest way to navigate the different options of any interface is through the use of menus. Operating systems and most software use menus to allow the user to navigate and find his way around.

So... why shouldn't your web site use menus, too?

DHTML Menu Builder not only creates menus, it creates beautiful menus composed of thousands of lines of code compatible with all the major browsers and platforms. But don't worry, you don't have to know anything about the code that DHTML Menu Builder produces. You can just concentrate on using it to spice up your navigation system. Let DHTML Menu Builder do the hard work!

From plain, text-based menus to complex graphical menus loaded with the latest DHTML and CSS standards, DHTML Menu Builder can deliver professional-looking menus that work and feel as if you were using some program on your computer.

DHTML Menu Builder's feature-rich options will let you build a navigation system just the way you want it. With support for any kind of web site configuration—including sites that use frames, sites that use pre-processor languages (such as ASP or PHP), and sites built with any HTML authoring application, DHTML Menu Builder is the ultimate site navigation solution.

Did we mention that the menus look cool? The menus created by DHTML Menu Builder can be highly customized so that the user will not even notice that the navigation system is made up of standard HTML elements!

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This documentation will guide you through all of the different parts of DHTML Menu Builder and will also help you master the basics needed to easily add menus to your existing web site. Please read it carefully... there's a lot of important information that will help you set up your navigation system in a couple of minutes.



### **Welcome to the new and exciting world of DHTML pull-down menus!**

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So... why shouldn't your web site use menus, too?

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## Getting Started

The following sections explain the basics of preparing your menu project. Here, you will also learn about all the components that make up a menu system and the styles that can be used to customize each and every one of these components.

Please select the section you would like to read about. We recommend that first time users read all of the topics in the order presented below.

- [Preparing Your Web Site](#)
- [Project Properties](#)
- [Creating Menus](#)

## Preparing your Web Site

Depending on the type of menus you're going to build, certain preparations need to be made to your web site.

DHTML Menu Builder can be used to [create a toolbar](#), or you can create menus which appear using elements that already exist on your web pages.

If you're going to use a toolbar created by DHTML Menu Builder, there's no need to do any additional preparations to the pages on your web site and you may continue to the next section: [Project Properties](#)

### Using your own text and graphics

One of the most unique features of DHTML Menu Builder is the ability to attach menus to text or graphics which you have already placed in your web pages.

This feature lets you build your own custom toolbar using your favorite image editing program, and then have the menus react when the user activates an element from your toolbar. It is important to understand that the toolbar is the only element of a menu that is always visible to the user and its design should be consistent with the general layout and design of your web site.

When using your own toolbar, you need to set up each hotspot in a special way so than DHTML Menu Builder can later attach the menu groups to them. This setup is known as *converting the hotspots into null hyperlinks*.

### Converting your hotspots into null hyperlinks

A hotspot can be an image or just some text. To convert your hotspot into a null hyperlink, simply create a hyperlink on that element and make it point to itself; this is done by using a hash (or pound sign) character "#" as the target of the link.

Let's say this is one of the images you're going to use to display a menu.



The HTML code of the image looks like this:

```

```

After converting the image into a null hyperlink the code looks like this:

```
<a href="#"></a>
```

## MENU

As you can see, by moving the mouse over the converted image, your mouse changes into a hand indicating that the image is a link. Highlighted in **dark red** you can see the code that converted the image into a null hyperlink. Also note that we have added a new setting, `name`, to the image's code. The `name` setting will allow DHTML Menu Builder identify the image and perform automatic alignment of the menus. You should give each image-based hotspot a unique name so DHTML Menu Builder can identify it.

This is all the preparation that needs to be done, so when you are ready to implement your menus into the page that contains the toolbar, everything will be ready to use the HotSpots Editor and automatically make your hotspots active and responsive to users' actions.

Once you have your web site prepared with all your hotspots converted into null hyperlinks, you can now move to the next section and start preparing your menus in DHTML Menu Builder: [Project Properties](#)

Related topics of interest:


- [Creating Toolbars](#)
- [The HotSpots Editor](#)

## Project Properties

Every menu system you create with DHTML Menu Builder is stored in a project file with a DMB extension.

Many settings affect your entire project; these are set through the pages of the Project Properties dialog.

To access the Project Properties dialog, follow any one of the following steps:

- From the `File` menu, choose `Project Properties`.
- Press the `CTRL+P` shortcut
- Click the Project Properties icon  on the toolbar

The Project Properties dialog is divided into 5 main sections. Along with their main purpose, they are listed below:

- **General:** specify your project's name and location of the project files.

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- **Configurations:** specify the location of your web and the JavaScript files DHTML Menu Builder needs to implement the menus . This section is also used to set up frames support.

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- **Global Settings:** change several settings that affect the whole project.

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- **Advanced:** change some of the advanced options of your project (e.g. type of optimization to be applied to the generated code files).

## Configurations

The final process of implementing a menu system with DHTML Menu Builder involves the ability to save the menus in a folder on your computer.

To do this, DHTML Menu Builder needs to know where to save the compiled JavaScript files and the images that your menus use.


To access the Configurations editor click `File->Project Properties->Configurations`

By default, when you create a new project DHTML Menu Builder will create a new configuration called "Default".

Bellow is a list of the settings that need to be made:


- **Local Path to the Root Web**

This is the route or path to the folder containing your main HTML page. Typically, this is index.htm, default.htm, index.html or default.asp.

Always avoid typing the path manually; use the browse button  to select the folder and avoid typographical errors.


- **Folder to Store Compiled Files**

This setting must point to a folder inside your root web where you will store the JavaScript files compiled by DHTML Menu Builder. These files are the scripts that build and handle the menus.

Again, always avoid typing the path manually and use the browse button  to select the folder and avoid typographical errors.

- **Folder to Store Images**

This path is where you want DHTML Menu Builder to store the images files used by your menus. This folder must also be inside your root web.

As always, avoid typing the path manually and use the browse button  to select the folder and avoid typographical errors.

---

DHTML Menu Builder needs some additional information about your web site and the files in it. For example, if your site uses frames you will have to set up frames support and specify the necessary settings related to frameset structure of your web site.

Another group of settings will let you use the HotSpots Editor to automate the process of inserting the code necessary to run the menus on your web site.

### Setting up the document that will trigger the menus

Besides the standard path settings described above, each configuration must have information about the document on your web site that will be used to trigger the menus. The menus can be triggered from the [toolbar](#) created by DHTML Menu Builder or through the use of [HotSpots](#).

NOTE: This file will be modified by DHTML Menu Builder to include all the code necessary to make the

menus work. It is a good practice to always keep a backup copy of this file.

As you can see, DHTML Menu Builder gives you the option to install the menus onto a single file. However, you may want to install the menus on all the files on your web site, and there are several ways to this:

Ideally you should install the menus onto a single file and then share this file across all the other documents on your web site.

- Some applications, such as Macromedia's Dreamweaver let you create a template from which all the documents on your web site inherit their style. This template is where you should install the menus so every time you create a new document it will automatically inherit the code that loads the menus. For more information about templates, consult your Dreamweaver documentation.

If your HTML editor does not support templates you could then use some sharing technique that is either supported by your web server or your HTML authoring application.

- For example, Microsoft's FrontPage supports something known as the Page Inclusion component. This component allows you to include a page inside another page. For more information about the Page Inclusion component, consult your FrontPage documentation.

Finally, many web servers support SSI or Server Side Includes. To know if your web server supports this feature and for information on how to use it, consult your web server's documentation or ask your server administrator.

## **Setting up your project to support frames**

DHTML Menu Builder has 100% support for implementing the menus on web sites that use frames. A common issue when using frames is that most of the time the menus will not fit on the frame where you have designed the toolbar. The only solution, since it's not possible to display anything above the division of two frames, is to have the menus appear on another, larger frame.

[More information about the setting up your menus to work with frames.](#)

Related topics of interest:

- [Implementing the Menu](#)



## Creating Menus

A DHTML Menu Builder menu is comprised of three items:

- **Groups**

The groups are containers and control the space used to hold commands and separators.

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- **Commands**

These are the basic items of your menu. The commands are the options that user selects to navigate through your web site using the menu.

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- **Separators**

The separators are a special kind of command whose only purpose is to create a separation, with a thin line, between two commands.

In other words, a Project is made of menus. Each menu is made of groups that contain commands and separators.

The illustration below diagrams this relationship:



Since it is the most general item, the project controls the way the menu will work on your web site. The group is a container; it controls the background color, images and borders of the menu. The commands control the actions of the menu; the color and font used by the menu is also controlled at this level.

Of course, these are just the most basic settings of each item. Later on in this Help, you will find that DHTML Menu Builder provides unprecedented formatting options to let you make your menus look exactly the way you want them to appear.


---

### Adding, Renaming and Deleting Groups

After a project is created, you must next create a group. Once you have created a group, you will then be able to add commands and separators to it and this will complete the creation of a menu.

A project can have as many menus as you need.

To add a group, do any one of the following steps:

- On the `Menu` menu, click `Add Group`.
- Press the `F6` shortcut key.
- Click the Add Group icon  from the toolbar.

When you create a group, DHTML Menu Builder will add an entry in the left side of the main window and will wait for you to type a name. This name is an internal reference for DHTML Menu Builder and is independent of the actual caption of the added item. Both the name and the caption can be the same if you wish.

After entering the name of the group, DHTML Menu Builder will auto fill the `Caption` property for you. Change it if you need to. The `Caption` is the actual text that will be displayed when your menu is viewed with a browser.

To rename the group, just select it and then choose `Rename` from the `Edit` menu. Alternatively, after selecting the group name, you can also press `F2` or just click it again (after a short pause so it is not interpreted as a double-click) and you can edit in place. Note that if you have already set the caption for a group, DHTML Menu Builder will not update its caption when you rename the group.

To delete a group, select it and then choose `Delete` from the `Edit` menu.

It is important to note that when you delete a group, you will always delete any command(s) created under it. This is because groups are containers that hold commands; if you delete the container, all the commands under it are deleted as well.

[To learn more about groups, click here.](#)



## **Adding, Renaming and Deleting Commands**

In order to create commands, you need to have at least one group in your project.

Each command represents an option in your menu. Commands can have actions associated with them to perform functions when a user activates them with the mouse.

A command can instruct the browser to open a page (and optionally to display it in a new browser window), to send an email, or to display another group and create what is known as a submenu.

To add a command, do any one of the following steps:

- On `Menu` menu, click `Add Command` (or click `Add Separator` to add a separator).
- Press the `F7` shortcut key (or press the `SHIFT+F7` shortcut key to add a separator).
- Click the Add Command icon  from the toolbar (or click the Add Separator icon  to add a separator).

Right after the command entry has been added, DHTML Menu Builder will let you name the command. Again, this name is just an internal name used by DHTML Menu Builder and is not the actual text that will be displayed on the menus when these are viewed on your web site with a browser. To change the text to be displayed for this item, just change the caption.

To rename a command, just click over it to select it and then select `Edit` from the menu and then `Rename`.

Note that if you have already set the caption of this item, DHTML Menu Builder will not update its caption.

To rename a command, just select it and then choose `Rename` from the `Edit` menu. Alternatively, after selecting the command name, you can also press F2 or just click it again (after a short pause so it is not interpreted as a double-click) and you can edit in place. Note that if you have already set the caption for a command, DHTML Menu Builder will not update its caption when you rename the command.

To delete a command, select it and then choose `Delete` from the `Edit` menu.

[To learn more about commands click here.](#)

Groups are containers for the commands (items) on a menu. They are responsible for specifying attributes such as background color, frame thickness and color, margins, etc.

Listed below are the attributes of groups and specific information about each one:

- **Back Color**

To change the background color of a group, select the group. Then, on the `Menu` menu click `Color`.

You can also change the background color of a group by accessing the `Image` dialog. With the image dialog you will have many more options to customize the look of your group and select more properties from the dialog. (See [Image](#) below).

---

- **Font**

A group can define the default font used by its commands. When you change the font on a group, newly created commands will inherit this setting.

Also, when using toolbars, this will be the font used to represent this group.

To change the font of a group, first select the group. Then, on the `Menu` menu click `Font`.

---

- **Cursor**

You can make the mouse pointer change when a user moves the mouse over a hotspot, whether it is a hotspot created by you or a hotspot from the toolbar created by DHTML Menu Builder.

To change the cursor of a group, first select the group. Then, on the `Menu` menu click `Cursor`.

---

- **Image**

Groups support several types of images:

- **Back Image**

This is the image used in the background of the container.

When using images in the background of the groups, the commands will not display the normal background color. If they did, this color would cover the image producing an undesirable effect.

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- **Border Size and Colors**

Groups are containers. You can customize the borders.

The border size setting will let you adjust, in pixels, the width of this container. The color settings let you customize the color of each one of the four borders.

---

When using the toolbar created by DHTML Menu Builder, you have the option to specify images for your groups to be placed at either or both sides of the group's caption.

For more information, check the [Creating Toolbars](#) section.

To change any of the above settings for a group, select the group. Then, on the `Menu` menu click `Image`.

---

- **Leading**

This setting controls the vertical spacing between the commands in the group.

---

- **Margins**

This setting controls the distance from the group's borders to its contents.

---

- **Selection Effects**

The settings in this section affect the commands under the selected group and control the style and color of the bounding rectangle of the menu items.

Also, if the selected group is going to be displayed on a toolbar, these setting will also affect the toolbar item.

- **Normal and Over**

These settings change the border of the commands when the mouse is over (Over state) and not over (Normal state).

You can choose from three different types of border effects:

- **(none):** No border will be drawn.
- **Raised:** A border will be drawn which has the effect of raising the command towards you.
- **Sunken:** A border will be drawn which has the effect of insetting the border into the group's background.
- **Double:** Two two solid borders will be drawn around the command.
- **Bevel:** Two borders – one raised and one sunken, each half the size of the total border width – will be drawn around the command.

You can also define the base color that will be used to draw these borders by using the color selection boxes next to the border style controls.

---

- **Border Size**

This setting creates a border of the specified width around the commands.

---

- **Horizontal and Vertical Margins**

These settings control the distance from the border of the commands to their contents.

---

- **Special Effects**

The special effects dialog is divided into two sections:

- **Group Size**

By default, DHTML Menu Builder measures the contents of the group and determines the optimal width and height of the group so that the contents fit into it.

However you can manually adjust these values using the controls on this dialog:

- **Auto:** The program will calculate the width and height automatically based on the item's contents. This is the default setting.
  - **Background Image:** The width or height of the item will be set to the size of the background image.
  - **Manual:** DHTML Menu Builder will accept the numbers (in pixels) that you enter here These numbers will define a specific width or height for the group. Note that defining a value that is too small will cause unpredictable results and will incorrectly render the contents of the group. Click the Calculate button to let DHTML Menu Builder calculate the recommended size of the selected item.
- 

- **Group Effects**

This dialog will let you define some special effects for the selected group:

- **Drop Shadow Color:** Move the slider towards the right to increase the darkness

of the shadow displayed behind the selected group.

- **Transparency:** Move the slider towards the right to increase the transparency of the group and its contents. This will reveal whatever contents are underneath the group.
- **Context Menu:** Check this option to make the selected group the context menu for the browser. This means that when a user right clicks a page, the selected group will be displayed instead of the browser's default context menu.

Note that the Drop Shadow and Transparency effect will only work for those using Internet Explorer 5.5 (or above) for Windows.

---

- **Commands Layout**

This setting controls the way the commands are aligned inside a group :

- **Vertically (default):** Commands will be placed one below the other creating a standard dropdown menu.
- **Horizontally:** Commands will be placed one next to the other creating a wide menu. These kind of menus are ideal when there's not enough vertical space to display a menu.

To change any of the Special Effects settings of a group, select the group. Then on the Menu menu click `Special Effects`.

When the project uses a toolbar, groups are also treated as commands since they will be rendered inside a toolbar and will have properties and behaviors very similar to those that only apply to a command. Continue to read the information about commands as it will become handy when using the toolbar feature of DHTML Menu Builder.

Related topics of interest:

- [Commands](#)
- [Anatomy of a Menu](#)
- [Copying and Pasting Styles](#)
- [Creating Toolbars](#)
- [Incompatibilities and limitations](#)
- [Style Dialogs](#)

## Commands

The commands are the basic components of your menus. They represent the options to display on the menus so the users can navigate to them.

Commands usually perform some action when activated by a user. They may be activated by moving the mouse over them, clicking the left mouse button on them, by double-clicking them, or by using combinations of the three available actions.

The type of actions a command can produce are countless, but DHTML Menu Builder provides an easy-to-use interface to let you implement the most common:

- Opening a page (following a link).
- Opening another group (this is used to create submenus).
- Opening a page in a new browser window.
- Sending email.
- Running a small piece of code written in JavaScript or VBScript.

There are two types of command components:

- **Commands**

These are items that receive and perform actions

---

- **Separators**

These are simple lines used to separate commands inside a group. Separators do not receive or perform any kind of actions.

Commands are dual-state items and therefore have (for the most part) two settings:

- **Normal**

The settings in this mode apply when the command is *not* selected.

---

- **Over**

The settings in this mode apply or become active when the mouse is *over* the command.

Below are all the possible attributes supported by a command.

- **Color**

You can assign a background color and the color of the command's caption text. This setting supports two sets of two color definitions: background over and background normal; and text over and text normal.

---

- **Font**

This setting controls the font type, size, and style used to display the command's caption text. You can apply different font settings for the two modes, Normal and Over.

---

- **Cursor**

One of five predefined cursors can be set to display when a user moves his mouse pointer over a command.

To change a command's cursor, select the command. Then click `Menu` on the menu and click `Cursor`.

---

- **Image**

Commands support three types of images, one image to the left of the caption, one image to the right of the caption, and one image as the background.

The two images that can be placed at the right and/or left of the commands support rollover effects. This means that you can change either image when the command is selected.

Note: When using a background image, the color on the Normal state is not used and the command is rendered as transparent.

---

- **Selection Effects**

The settings in this section control the style and color of the bounding rectangle of the menu items.

- **Normal and Over**

These settings change the border of the commands when the mouse is over (Over state) and not over (Normal state).

You can choose from three different types of border effects:

- **(none):** No border will be drawn.
- **Raised:** A border will be drawn which has the effect of raising the command towards you.
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- **Double:** Two two solid borders will be drawn around the command.
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You can also define the base color that will be used to draw these borders by using the color selection boxes next to the border style controls.

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- **Border Size**

This setting creates a border of the specified width around the commands.

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- **Horizontal and Vertical Margins**

These settings control the distance from the border of the commands to their contents.

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