

M9 - Putting it all together

Now that we have the basics, it's time to put it all together on a web site. By definition, a web site consists of a number of connected pages, but it's important to have a consistent "look and feel" across the whole site. This means that the general positioning of features, colors and text fonts and sizes need to be considered up front. This is where the use of css style sheets can save time as the bulk of the styling is in one place. It may also help to sketch out a simple diagram of where the various pieces go on each page.

In creating each page, it is a good idea to code the page piece by piece and test the page frequently as each section is created. Note also that all the browsers out there may render a page in a slightly different manner, so a check with some of the more popular browsers is a good idea.

A web site will have a number of internal links. It is important that all links are tested both to and from each page. External links also need to be checked out and also re-checked over time as the external site may be modified or pages may be taken down.

One problem that may occur as more pages are added to a web site is where to put all the links. A horizontal menu array is limited by the viewable screen width and the length of the wording of each link, so brevity is important. A vertical menu provides more width for the wording of the links, but as more pages are added, it may become necessary to scroll down the page to see the menu items at the bottom of the list. Most people don't like scrolling, particularly horizontally, so forward planning is essential.

It is desirable that the file name for each page is short and simple and reflects the content of the page. An exception to this is the home page for the site which is known as the **index** page and should have the name **index.html**. The reason for this is to shorten what the page visitor has to type to get to the web site – the browser will automatically look for a page named **index** and open it. So, entering www.CalendarHouse.org will automatically take you to the **index** home page. If there is no index page the browser will give an error. An alternative is to enter the fully qualified page address like www.CalendarHouse.org/welcome.html which is much more typing.

Check out the mini web site in Module 9. Which file will you open to start the site?

This site has a few minor issues, but it works. How many issues can you find?