

Managing Local and Remote Files

One of the biggest obstacles a beginning web designer can face is the organization of Local and Remote files. Local files reside on your computer/external hard drive/ flash drive and remote files reside on the server that hosts your web site. Ideally, these files are identical in both content and organization. Good organization means that the folder/directory structures should be as similar as possible. The terms folder and directory are interchangeable for the purpose of discussing web sites.

Most web servers utilize a folder or directory called "public_html" (Quotations are mine). Items placed into this folder are visible to anyone that knows your site address or searches for it. Folders placed into the public_html directory are identified by a "/" An example is: <http://www2.msstate.edu/~netID/exercises>.

In the previous example <http://www2.msstate.edu/~netID/exercises>:

The host server is www2.msstate.edu

The user is netID

and exercises is a folder placed into the public_html directory (or folder)

Sometimes the host server and the user are identical, like in <http://www.cnn.com>

NOTE: Modern web browsers allow the user to take short cuts, such as you typing in "cnn" and the browser automatically filling in the blanks to take you to <http://www.cnn.com>. This only works in the location bar of the browser. When designing/coding a site you must use the full web address starting with the http://.

NOTE: It is best to avoid long file names, spaces, and special characters. File servers that host web sites are much more stringent than your personal computer when it comes to naming conventions. It is best to limit file names to 8 characters or less and to only use letters, numbers, and underscores. Dashes are ok, but underscores are preferred. Never use back or forward slashes in a file name. In general, one would capitalize the first letter of the next word in lieu of a space.

Organization

The best way to organize your files is to have a local version of your public_html folder stored on your Flash drive. You can name in anything you like. Good ideas are "webLocal" or "html_local". It is important that everything inside of this folder matches the structure inside of your public_html folder on your RA account.

Although we aren't ready to create all of the files and folders for our sites, we will go ahead and set up the proper directory structure.

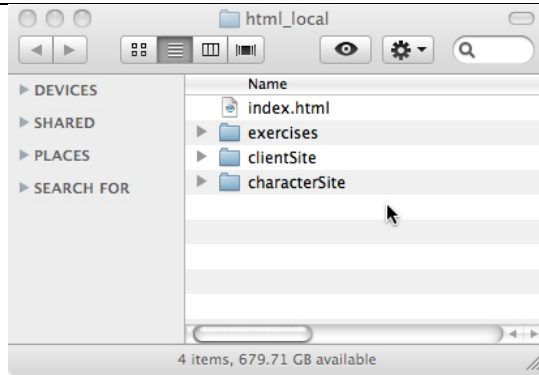
In your "public_html" and local folder – you should create the same folder structure. Your welcome page will be saved as "index.html" and placed in the main folder. You will need to create 3 additional folders:

- exercises
- clientSite
- characterSite

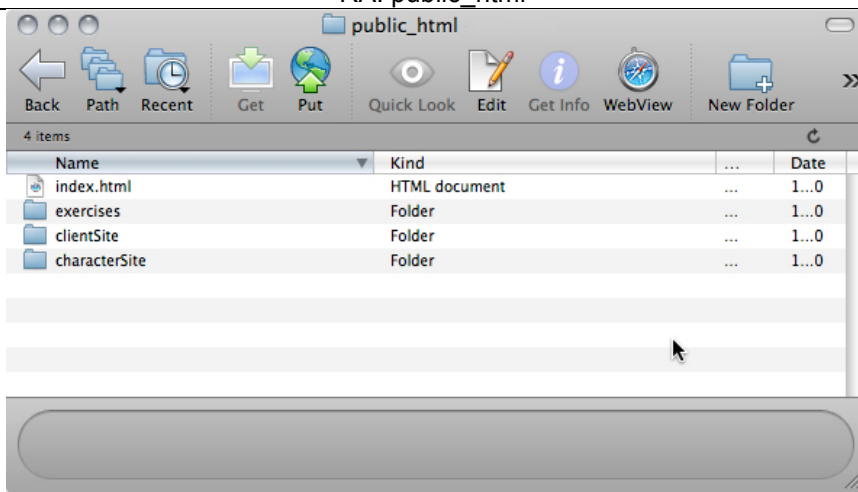
Spell and capitalize these folders exactly as they appear in the handout.

The images on the next page show the proper file structure(s) for your site.

Local

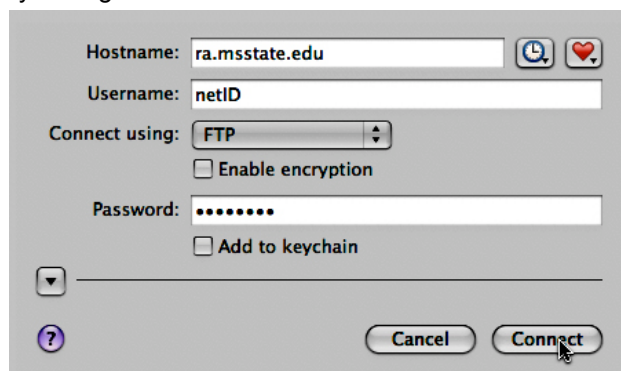


RA: public_html



Remote Files

You will need to login to your RA account using Fetch. You can either drag your files into the proper location or use the "Put" command to navigate through your local folders to select the right file(s). Here is what your login screen should look like:



If you keep your files organized both locally and remotely – editing should be much easier. Take it SLOW and things will run smoothly.