



Create Web page Photo backgrounds

Make pages so real it's like being there.

Continued ►

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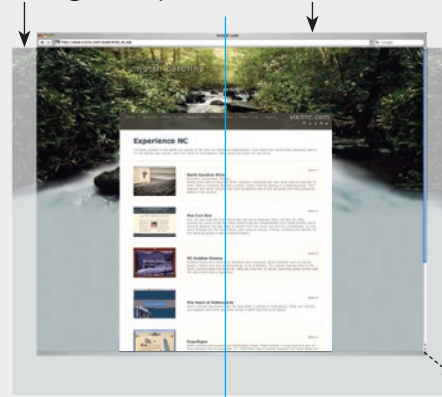
Make pages so real it's like being there.

The North Carolina Department of Commerce Web site doesn't settle for merely describing its state; it practically transports you there. By overlaying its Web pages atop expansive, photographic backgrounds, it creates an IMAX-style, wide-screen experience that conveys spaciousness, dimension and a real sense of *being there*. In such beautiful settings, handsome but otherwise flat pages become truly appealing. Best of all, it's an easy technique to do. Here's how.



www.visitnc.com

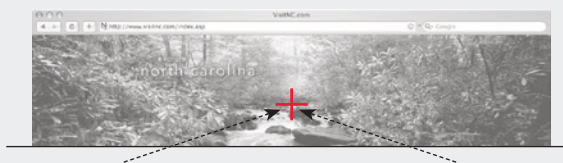
Background photo Browser window



Page and background remain centered as the window expands and contracts.

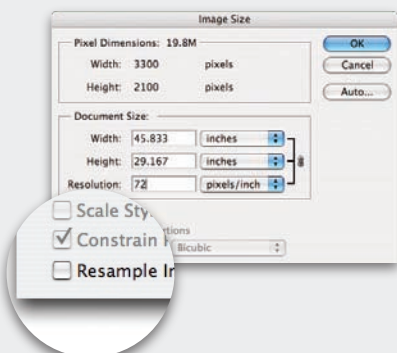
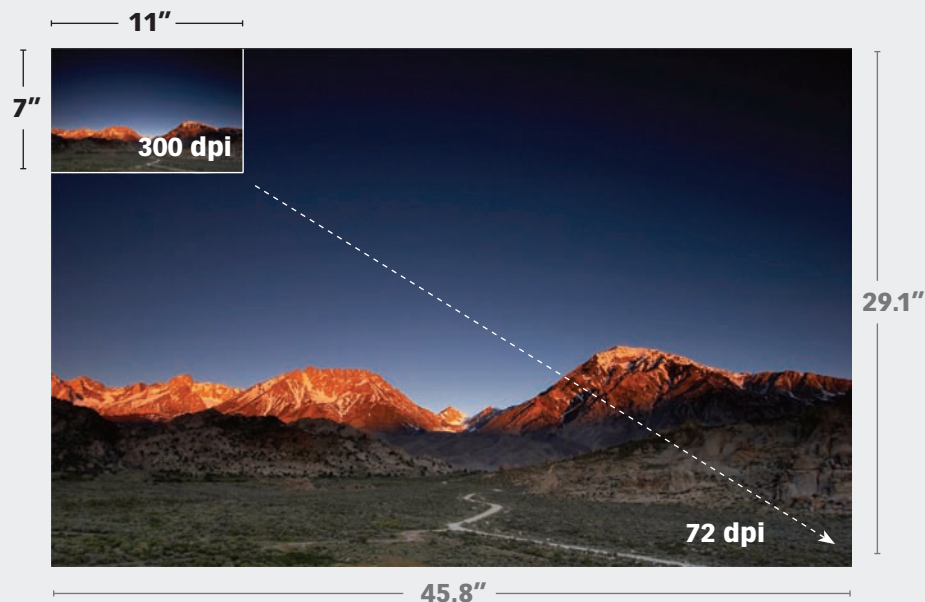
A beautiful site starts with beautiful images To create that IMAX-like sensation, the photographic background must be very wide—at least 22 inches—so that even on a big monitor it's always wider than the browser window no matter how far it opens. To make the illusion convincing, we will make both the background and Web page center themselves in the browser window no matter how far it expands (left) or contracts.

Use simple photos that have a strong, central focal point

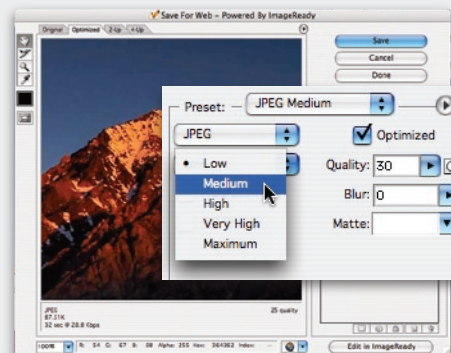
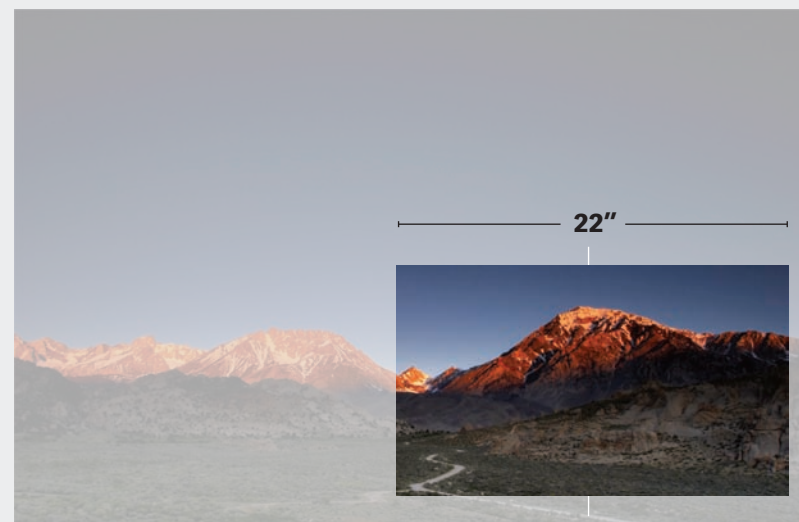


A focal point is key A clear top, central focal point gives the page a place to begin. Use photos that have a strong center of interest (above). Look for images with a lot of open space and little detail. Note here that in wide-screen images the focal point and the vanishing point are normally the same (or nearly the same) thing. Avoid fussy, detailed images or off-center focal points, which busy the page and distract the reader.

Adobe Photoshop Prepare your photo



Set size and resolution A good way to get a beautifully sharp, super-sized photo is simply to convert a page-size, 300 dpi image to screen resolution (72 dpi). To do this in Photoshop, select Image>Image Size, then in the dialog box that opens (left), uncheck Resample Image, then enter 72 for Resolution. Click OK.



Find your focal point Find a suitable focal point, mark off a 22" (or so) wide area around it, and crop. Next, make the smallest possible file size: Select File>Save for Web; in the dialog box that opens (left), select JPEG, check Optimized, and select the lowest Compression quality (here, Medium) that doesn't degrade the image unacceptably. Click Save.

Adobe Photoshop Add a transition



Fade your photo into solid color

You want your photo to appear only at the top, then transition smoothly to solid color that fills the rest of the background. This will keep file size to a minimum, the design beautiful, and the reader's attention on your material. To do this . . .

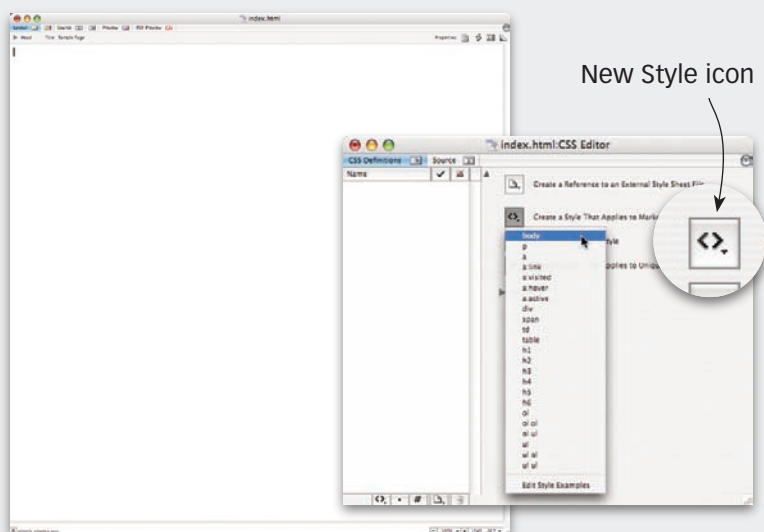


Sample and fill With the Eyedropper tool, sample the dominant color from the bottom of your photo. (Make a note of this RGB build; you'll use it again when you make your pages in GoLive.) Then with the Gradient tool or a soft brush, fill the bottom of the image as shown at right, transitioning fully to solid color so photo and background will blend perfectly.



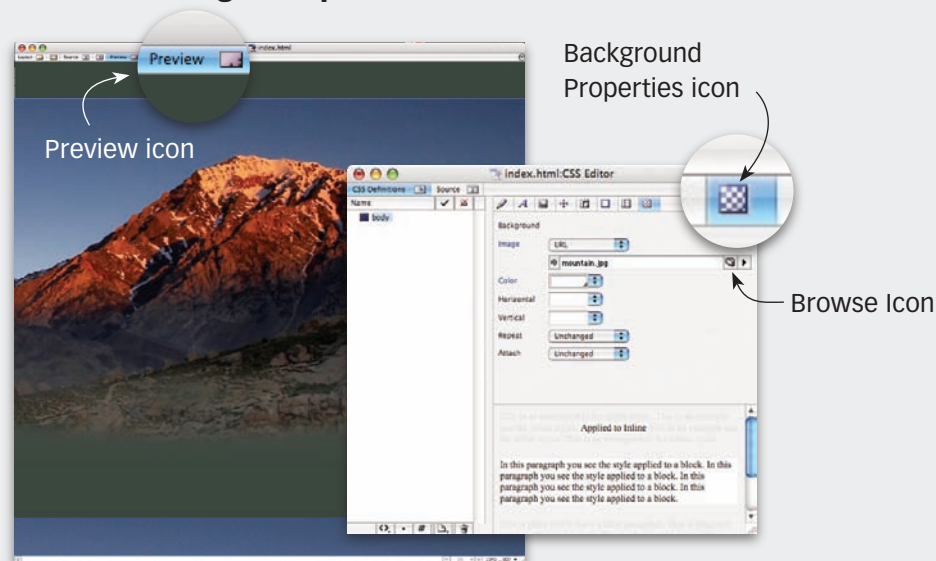
Adobe GoLive Build your pages

Create a new Web page



In GoLive, create a new Web page, and Save inside your Root folder. Next, select View>CSS Editor, and in the dialog box that opens, click and hold the Create a Style That Applies to Markup Elements icon (whew!), and select *body* from the submenu.

Insert the background photo



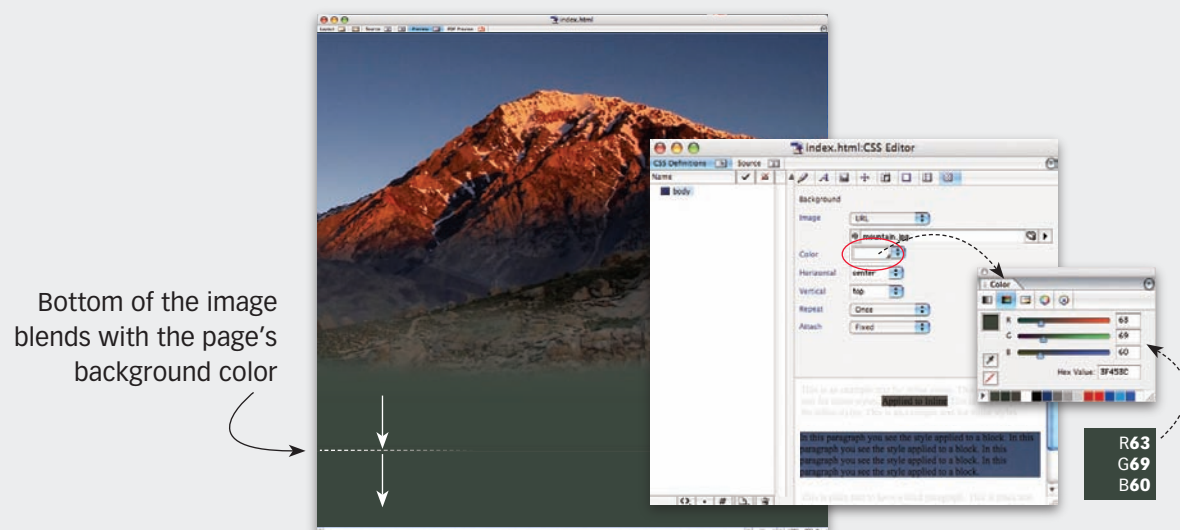
If it's not already highlighted, click on the Background Properties icon. In the fields that appear, apply the following settings:

Image: URL. Then in the field directly below it, click on the Browse icon, and select the background photo that you created earlier.

(To view your change, click on the Preview icon at the top of the page. By default, the image will repeat itself both horizontally and vertically. We'll fix this in the following step.)

continued . . .

Continue applying Background Properties . . .



Color: Click on the white box (circled in red, above) to bring up the Color palette. Here, specify the RGB build that you made in the previous steps.

Horizontal: Center. This will force the background photo to the center of any size browser page.

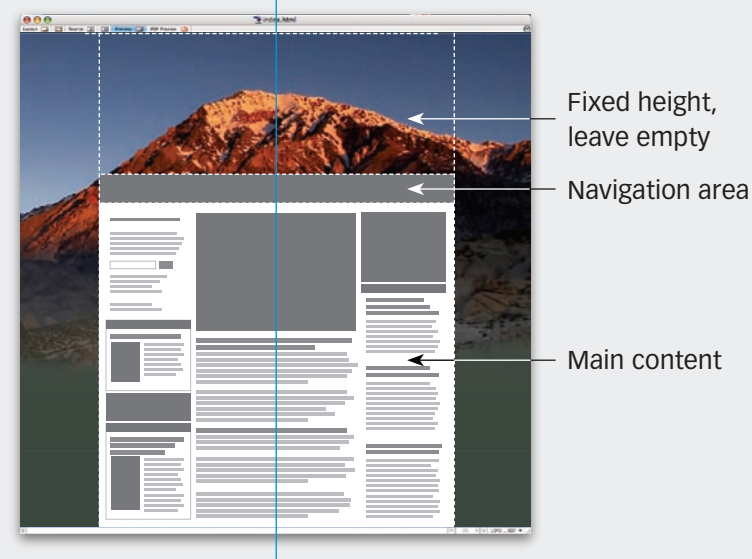
Vertical: Top. The photo will flush to the top of the browser page.

Repeat: Once. This tells GoLive to place the photo once. It doesn't actually repeat.

Attach: Fixed. This prevents the photo from scrolling.

You're done with the background.

Create the main page



With the background photo in place, build the remainder of the page as you normally would. If you're working with tables, specify the main content page to align Center. To reveal the top of the background photo, specify a fixed height for the top cell, but leave it empty. Finish by placing your navigation and other content in the usual way.

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For presentation format

[Print:](#) (Specify pages 1–8)



Print

Format: Landscape
Page Size: Fit to Page

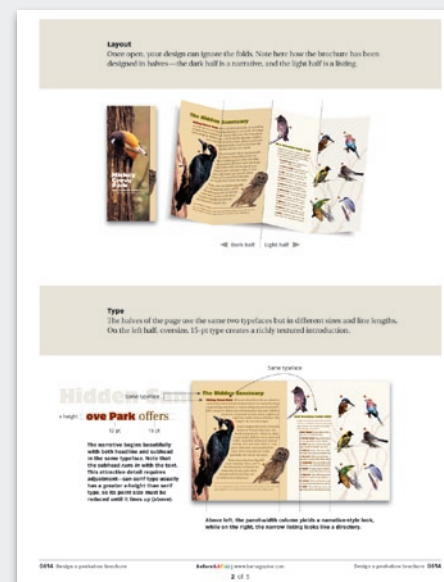


Save

Presentation format or
Paper-saver format

For paper-saver format

[Print:](#) (Specify pages 10–13)

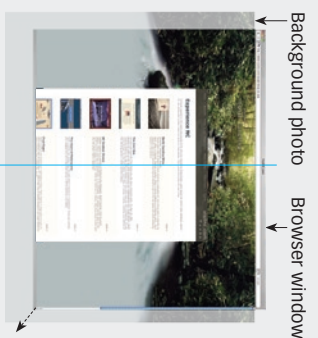


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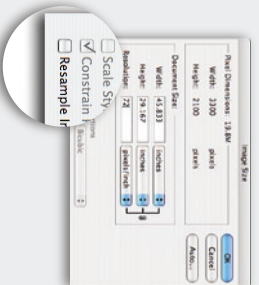
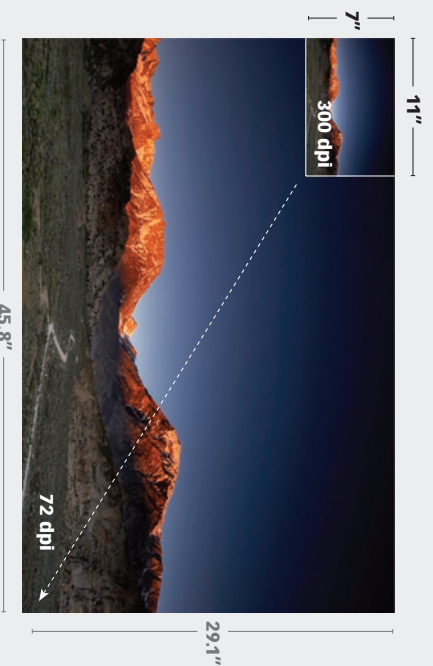
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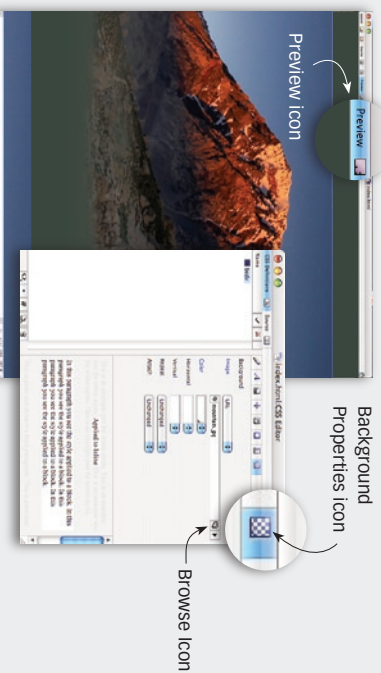
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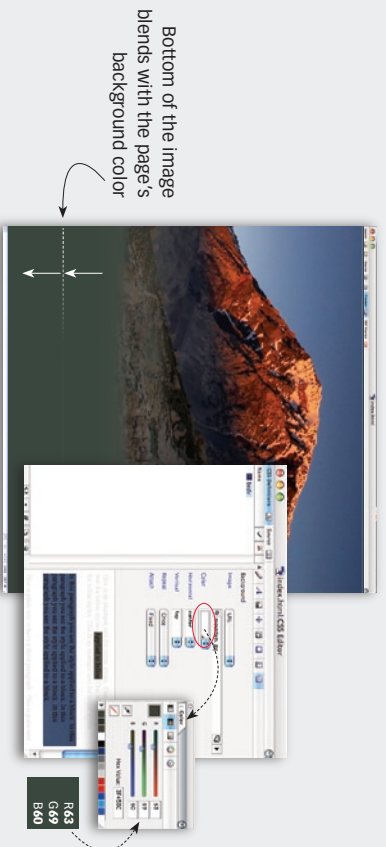
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To view your change, click on the Preview icon at the top of the page. By default, the image will repeat (itself both horizontally and vertically. We'll fix this in the following step).

continued ...

Continue applying Background Properties . . .



Bottom of the image
blends with the page's
background color

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Horizontal: Center. This will force the background photo to the center of any size browser page.

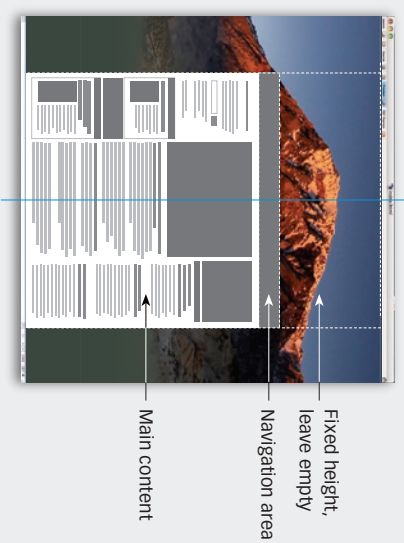
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