Table Notes:

Remember: the row where the upper left-hand corner of a cell resides is the row into which you would code that particular cell. Always look to the upper left hand corner of a cell, and you'll never have trouble deciding into which row you need to place a particular cell.

Alignment:

Notice how both cells in the top row automatically display their content as valign="middle" by default, since I didn't explicitly specify the VALIGN attribute in either of the cells in the top row. In the bottom row, both cells are align="center" by default because they're both created using TH tags (which automatically align center).

Here's the same example, modified with additional ALIGN and VALIGN attributes; I just wanted you to understand that you can use as many of these attributes together in a tag as you wish or desire.

Fixed Table Width:

Individual table cells, sadly, can NOT be set to precise sizes using the WIDTH attribute of the TH or TD tags. Individual table cells may only be reliably sized using GIFs, not the WIDTH attribute. The WIDTH attribute of the TH and TD tags produces results which may or MAY NOT be approximately the size requested; they are not accurate.

To achieve accurate and consistent table cell widths, tables must have most of their built-in spacing taken out. BORDER, CELLPADDING, and CELLSPACING must all be set to "0", i.e. **<table width="500" border="0"cellpadding="0" cellspacing="0">**. Spacing between columns of cells, then, must be created with table cells between the main columns; these "spacer" columns of cells must be filled with some sort of "spacer" GIFs.

A spacer GIF is a 3 pixel by 3 pixel GIF which is the same color as the background color of your web page. Realistically, only three colors of spacer GIFs are used: white, black, and transparent (the transparent spacer is used with all background colors and designs except white and black).

Do NOT use 1 pixel by 1 pixel spacer GIFs

An alternative to using spacer gifs is to use &nbsp; as the content of a table cell. For example:

Table Nesting:

You may nest as many sibling tables as you like inside of a parent table cell. It is important to note, however, that you must NEVER nest tables more than one level deep (i.e. no grandchild or great-grandchild nested tables). In other words, don't try to nest a table inside of one of your nested table's cells; that is forbidden. Nesting tables more than one level deep creates printing and display difficulties that you will want to avoid.

**Printable Pages**

Never use tables to hold printable content, especially if they have been modified with CSS; you'll get very irregular printed results. Create printable pages with vanilla HTML, no TABLES! Better yet, if you have the time and inclination, create printable and downloadable Adobe Acrobat (PDF) files, which are the standard for web-based documentation, as well as being very consistent in appearance cross-platform (much more so than HTML pages).

**Miscellaneous**

Never put content in a cell which would make that cell BIGGER than your defined column width; you'll get very irregular results if you do.

Variable Table Width:

 At 100%, obviously, the table would fill the entire width of the browser window. At lesser percentages, you might want to set the ALIGN attribute of the TABLE tag equal to "center".

If you want your variable width table to extend right up to the edge of the browser window, of course, you will need to set the WIDTH attribute of the TABLE tag to 100%, as well as to set the MARGINHEIGHT, MARGINWIDTH, LEFTMARGIN, and TOPMARGIN attributes of the BODY tag equal to 0.

As the browser window widens, the columns will expand proportionally to one another based on the size of the graphics in the first row of the table.

Remember: graphics can NOT be resized on the fly as the table expands!

NOTES: If you want consistent appearance cross-platform and cross-browser, the BGCOLOR attribute should ONLY be added to TH and TD tags. Secondly, if you desire to create an empty colored cell, you should place an &ampnbsp inside of the cell. Lastly, you may also add the BACKGROUND attribute to the table, tr, th, and td tags.