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Introduction to Balsamiq Mockups 3

[Balsamiq Mockups 3 Application Overview →](#)

Balsamiq Mockups 3 is the result of nearly a year of heads-down coding to create the product that our customers have been asking for and the product we wanted for ourselves.

The most noticeable changes are the two "biggies" that people have asked for since the very beginning: Support for projects (bundled files, multiple windows) and getting rid of that "floating property thingy" (the property inspector).

But just as important was the work that was done under the hood to make it faster and smarter and the little tweaks across every part of the experience that we hope will make using it even better.

In this article you'll find information about [how to update](#), [what's new](#) and, of course, [how to import your Mockups 2 BMML files](#). If you are new to Balsamiq Mockups or want to dive deeper after reading this article you can head over to the [documentation table of contents](#) or [application overview](#) next.

How to Update

Balsamiq Mockups 3 is the most current version of our powerful editor. If you are using any of our web apps, it will update automatically. If you want to use it on the Desktop, you can grab the latest version from our [download page](#). It's a free update for existing customers, you won't even need to re-register.

Balsamiq Mockups 3 for Desktop will run side-by-side with Balsamiq Mockups 2 for Desktop (as a separate application) so no need to uninstall your current version to use it. See below for [how to import Mockups 2 BMML files](#).

While it has been rigorously tested, if you find any bugs or issues, [tell us about it!](#)

What's New in Balsamiq Mockups 3

In a word, **lots!** Here are the "highlights" you should know about:

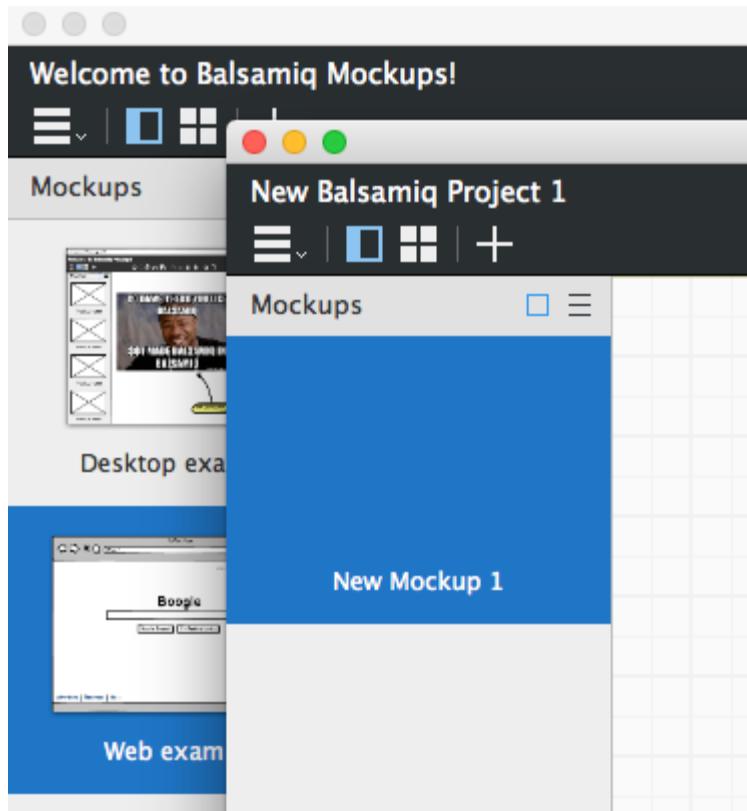
- Projects!
- A new user interface
- Easier look and feel customization
- Better Symbols

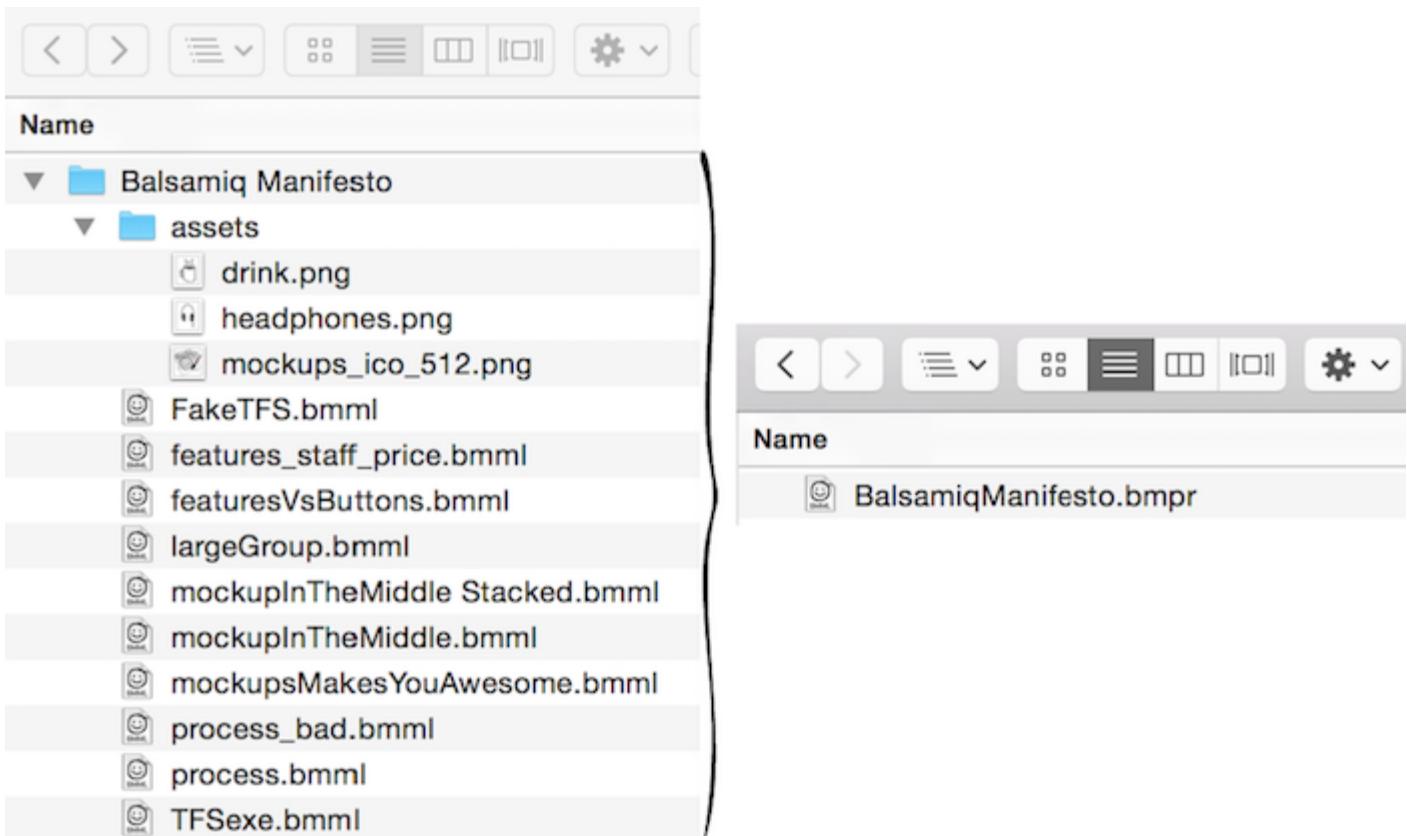
Better icons

- Better images and assets
- Full screen mode
- Notes
- Trash
- Alternates
- Music???

Projects!

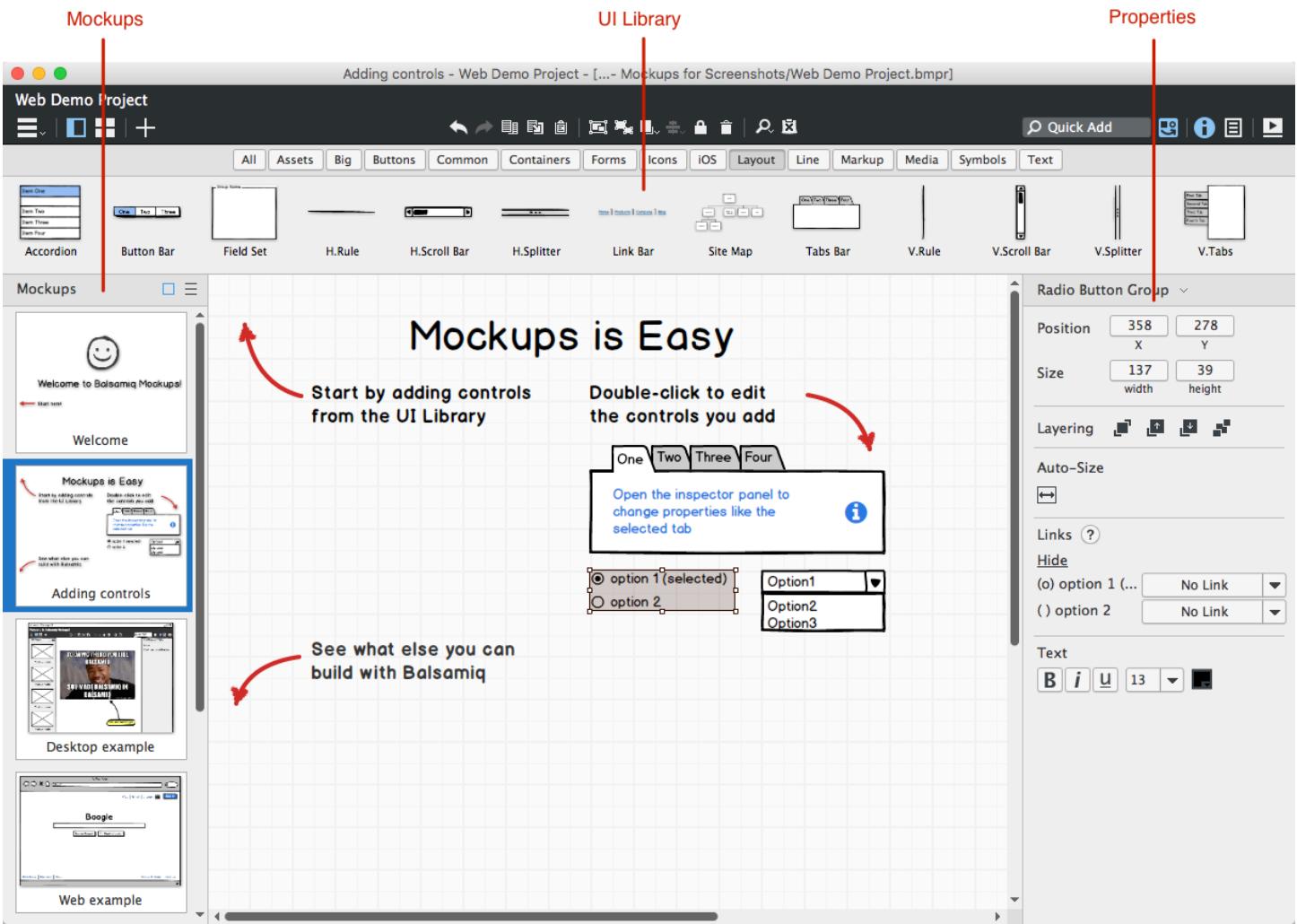
Finally. Not only can you have separate windows for different groups of mockups, but all the "stuff" that belongs to a project (mockups, symbols, images, icons) is in ONE file. This makes it much easier to send and move files and keep everything together.





A New User Interface

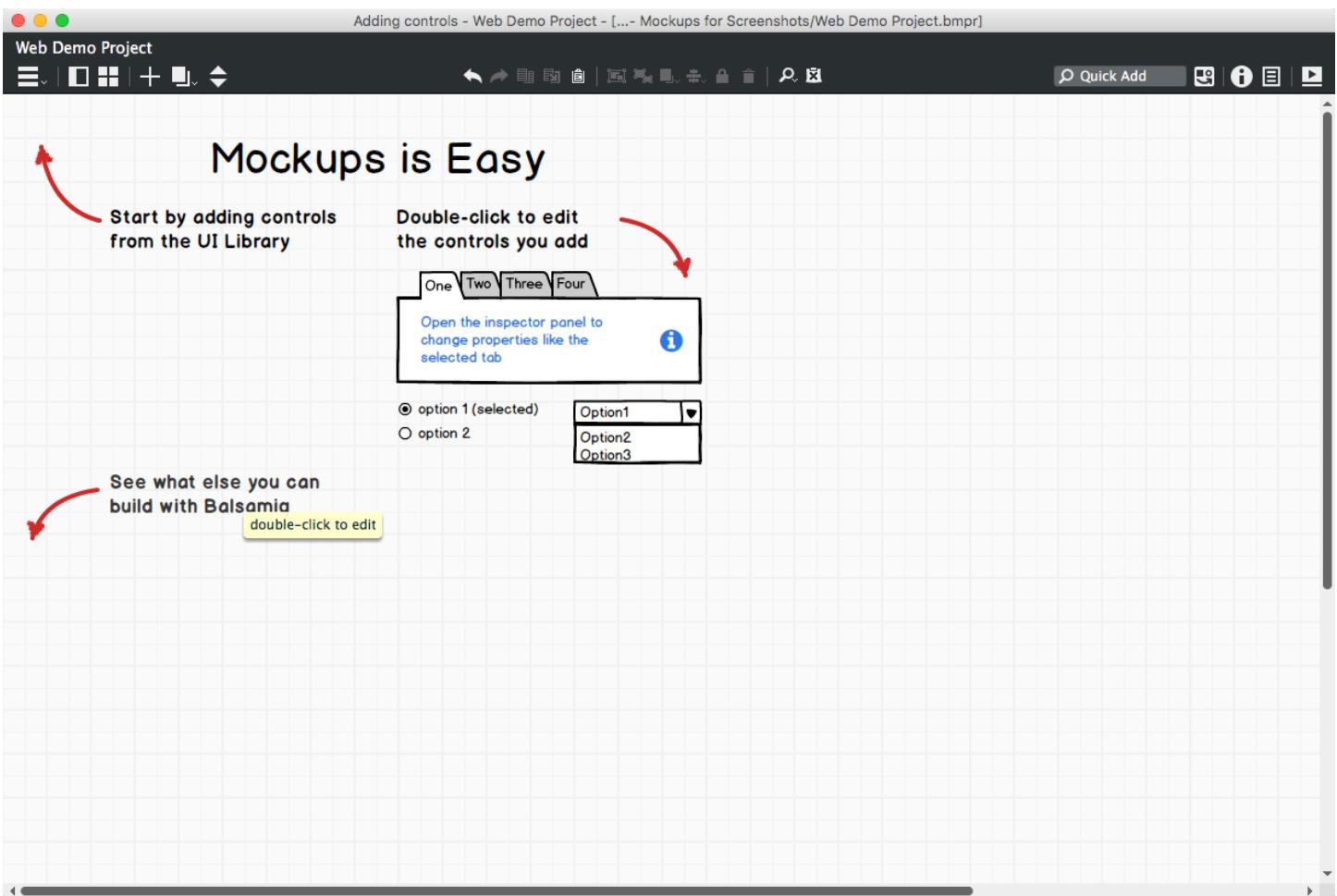
Gone is the annoying flying property inspector! Now you have mockups on the left and properties on the right. Simple, predictable and quick. The UI Library is at the top where it's always been but now it's a bit more compact.



You can toggle the properties panels and UI Library independently by clicking the icons next to the Quick Add box or via [keyboard shortcuts](#).



And, of course, you can hide all panels using the icons for each panel, getting you into Zen-like wireframing nirvana.



Getting around and performing common actions is easy with the icons in the toolbar.



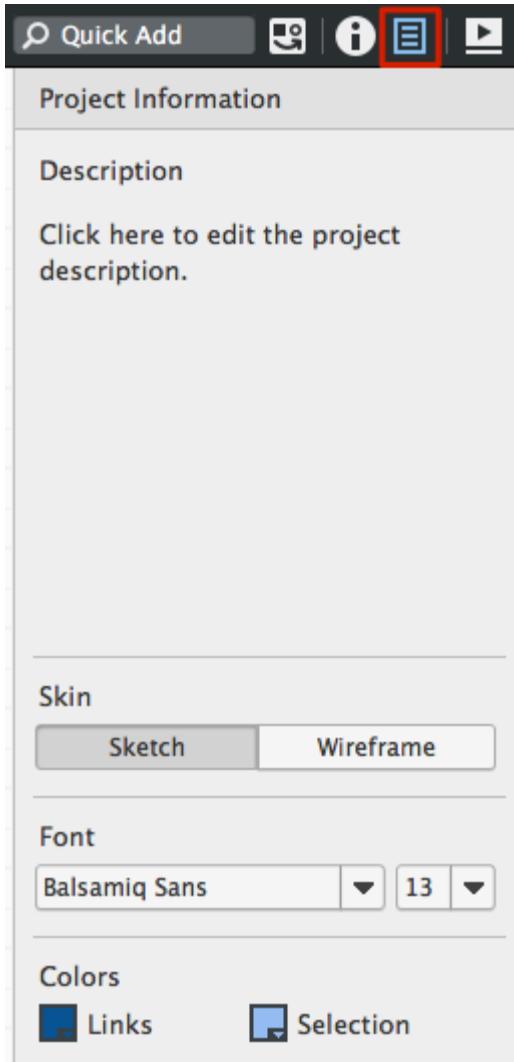
1 2 3 4 5 6

1. Navigate between Mockups, Assets, Symbols and Trash views
2. Show/Hide the left panel
3. View your mockups as a thumbnail grid
4. Create a new mockup
5. Mockup actions (rename, etc.) and navigate between mockups (*shown when left panel is hidden*)
6. Go to next or previous mockup (*shown when left panel is hidden*)

Easier Look and Feel Customization

Control over the font used in Mockups has been one of the most-requested features since

the very beginning. Custom fonts were previously available using a complicated configuration file, but we now allow you to set a project font in the new [Project Info panel](#). Yes, you can now easily use *any font you have installed* in your mockups. Rejoice! You can also set a default size for it.

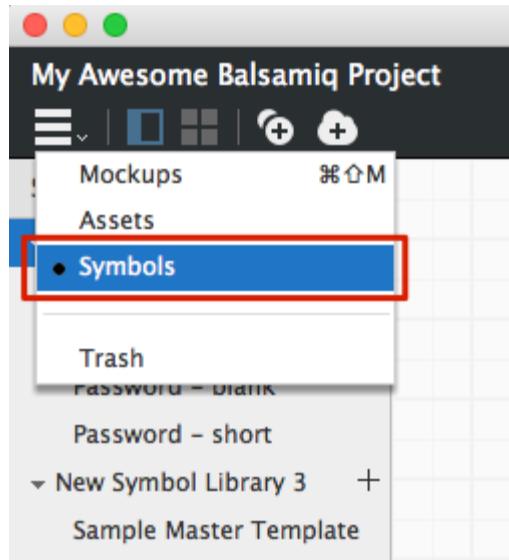


We also moved the skin switching options into the new Project Info panel to make them more obvious (many people never knew about our [wireframe skin](#)). Finally, the default selection color is also configurable from this new panel.

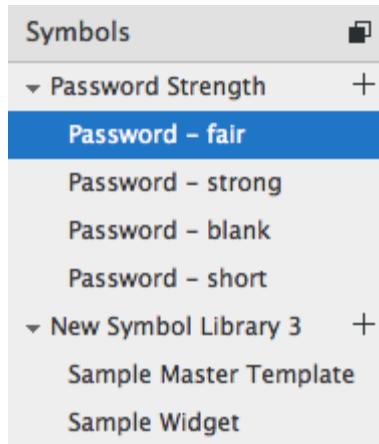
Better Symbols

In the previous version, we called Symbols an "advanced feature." Well, no longer. Symbols are now for everyone. Symbols allow you to create templates, masters, and other reusable components to save time and ensure consistency. They are especially useful for big projects and custom controls and are central to our [Wireframes To Go](#) site.

You can now just jump over to the Symbols panel and create a new one from scratch and it will appear in the "Symbols" tab in the UI Library. You can still create them the old-fashioned way (creating a named group and clicking the "Convert To Symbol" button).



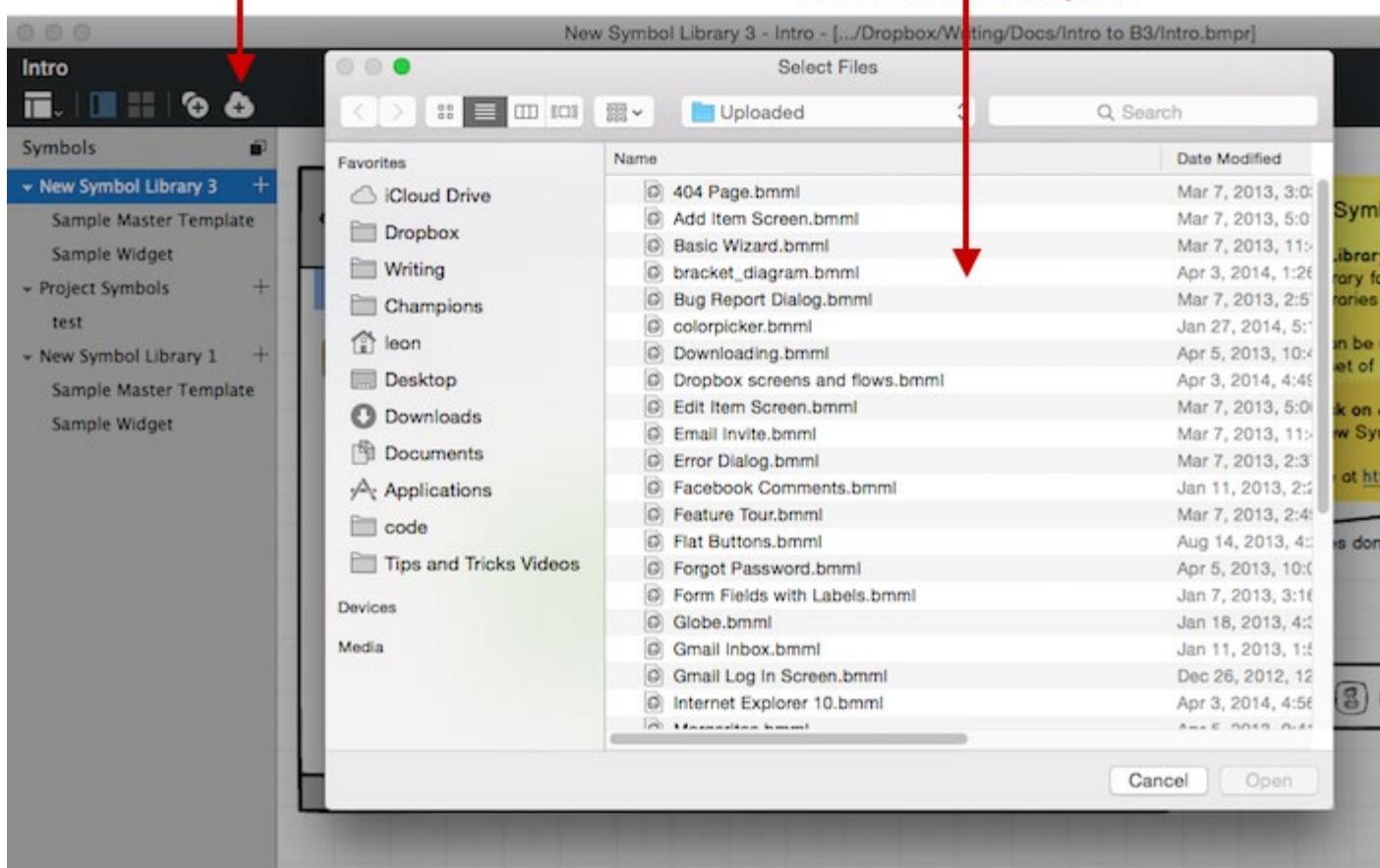
We also now show Symbols as a list inside their Symbol Library, so you can more easily navigate between them and know which Symbol you're editing.



Finally, we make it much easier to import Symbols. Just click the "Import Symbol Library" icon and select the file to import.

Import Symbol Library

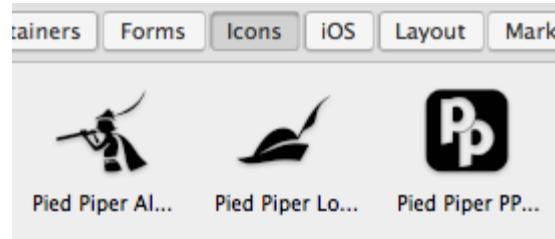
Select file to import



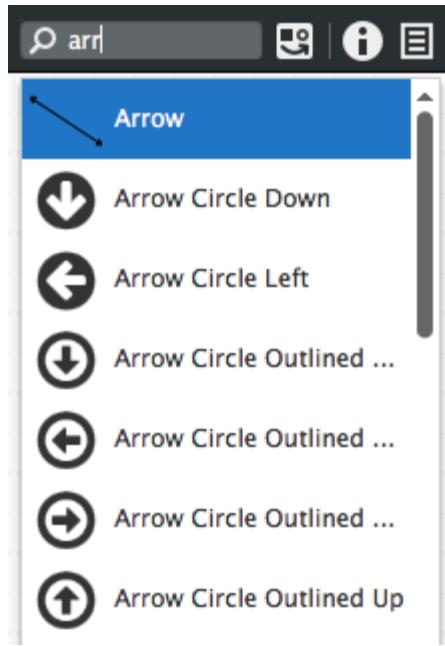
Better Icons

Big changes here.

First of all, icons now have their own category in the UI Library so you can drag and drop them just like any other control.



Not only that, they show up in the Quick Add results, saving you time when searching by name or keyword.

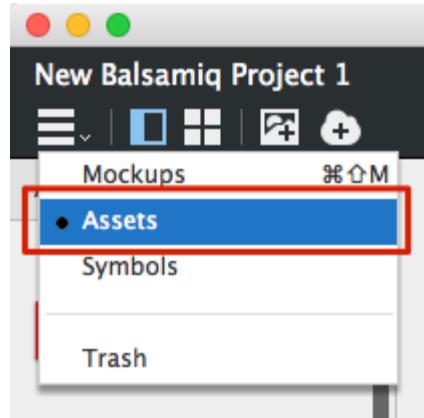


Icon search results are shown *below* any UI controls that match the text you enter.

And you'll quickly notice that we have a completely different set of icons than the previous version. We switched our icons over to the incredibly popular [Font Awesome](#) icon set. This means that there are now over 500 icons pre-installed.

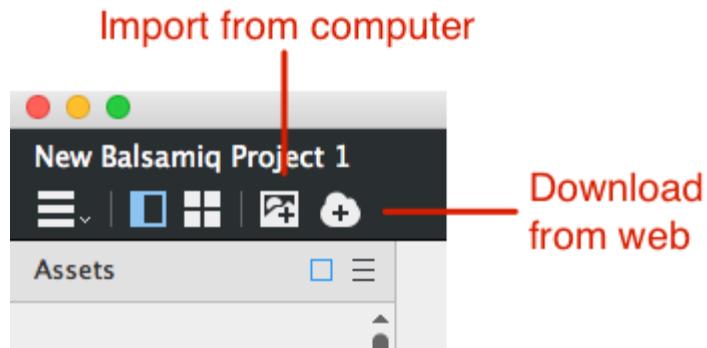
Better Images and Assets

There is now a dedicated area for images and other imported assets, accessible from the navigator menu.



You can add images to your project without placing them in your mockups first. Click the "Import Asset..." icon to add a file from your computer or the "Download Asset..." icon to add an image from Flickr or the web. Or just drag an image onto the canvas from your

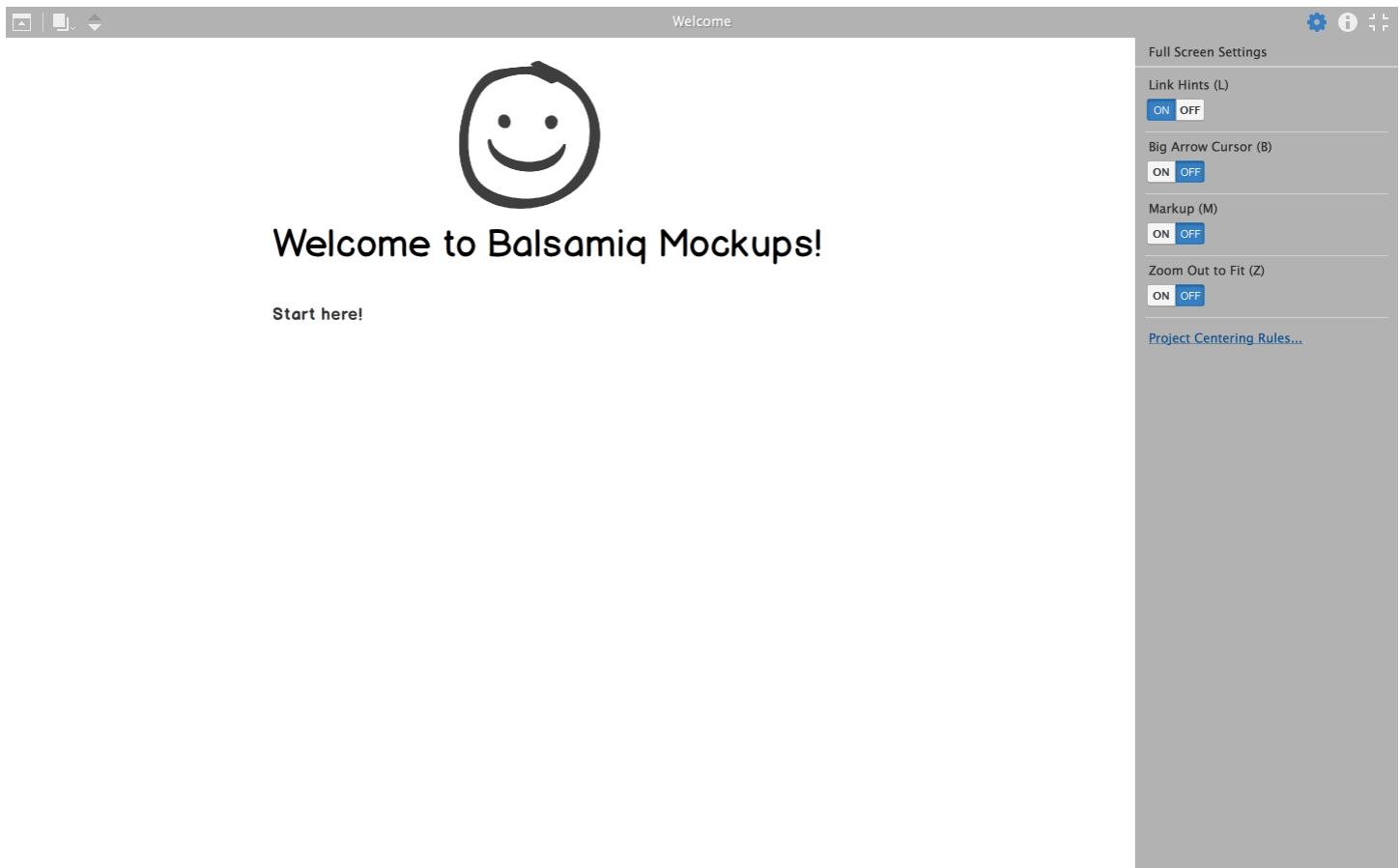
computer.



You can also delete, rename, replace and download images from the context menu in the panel.

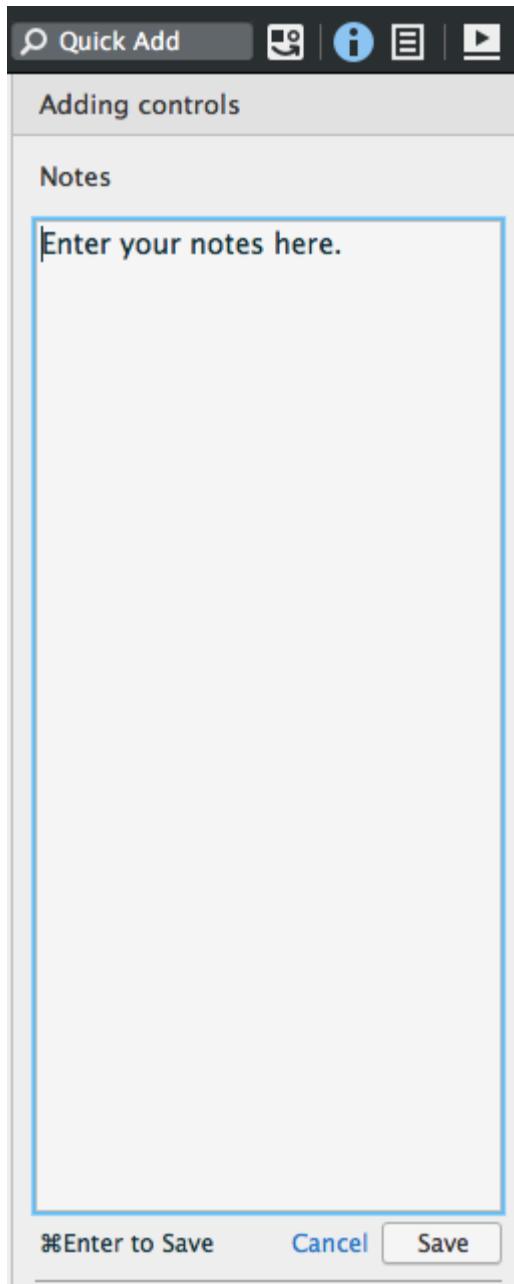
New Full Screen Mode

The same options are still there but we've overhauled the experience to make it better for usability testing and presentations. We also got rid of the problem where mockups would "jump around" in full screen mode.



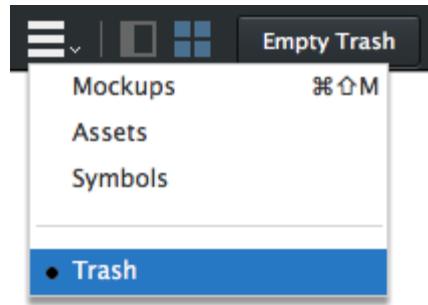
Notes

When no controls are selected you'll see a place to add notes in the Properties panel. You can add notes for your Project, Mockups, Assets, Symbol Libraries and individual Symbols and they will be saved as part of the project.

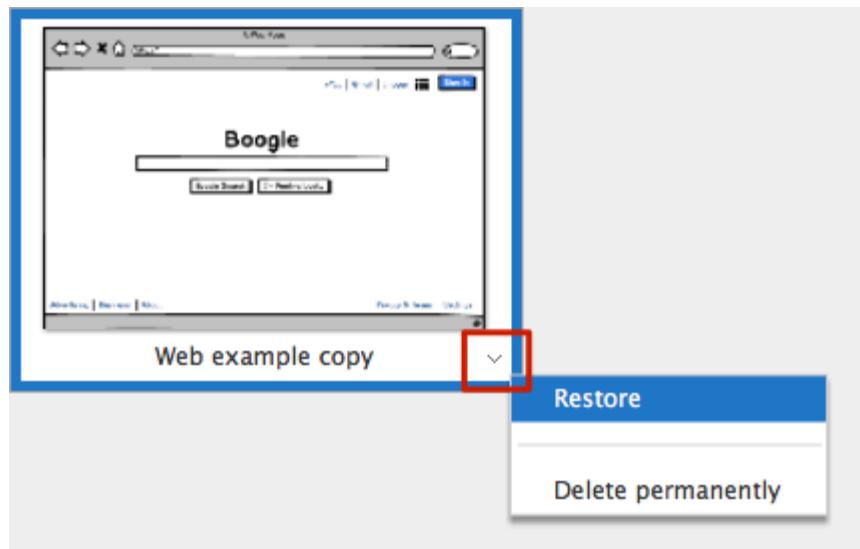


Trash

Balsamiq Mockups 3 now has a trash for mockups, assets, and Symbols you have deleted. This makes it easy to keep your project tidy as you make progress but still allows you to browse or recover earlier concepts.

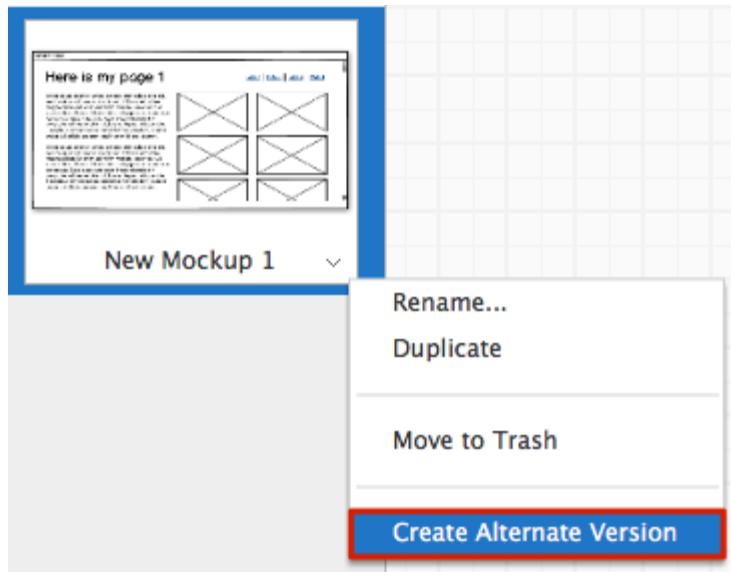


To recover a trashed object from the Trash panel click the context menu arrow and select "Restore." You also have the option to delete permanently.



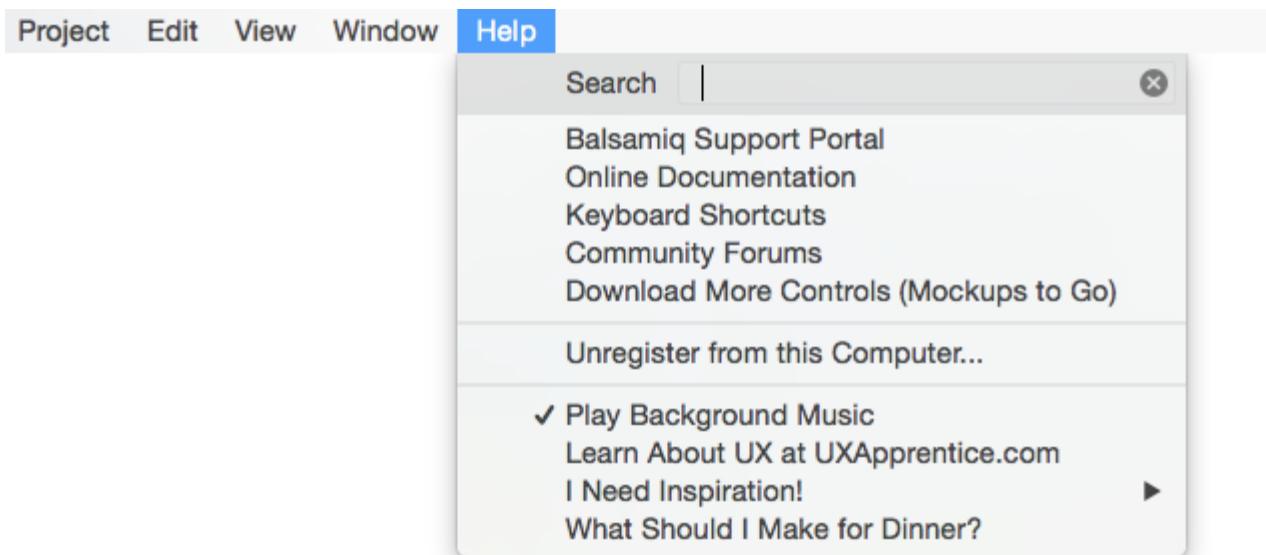
Alternates

Alternates (also sometimes referred to as versions or branches) allow you to create variations on a single mockup design without adding more mockups to your project. [Read the full documentation here.](#)



Music???

Yes, built-in background music to help you get into your creative zone! [Check out the blog post for more details.](#)



What's not New

For the most part, we left experience of adding, arranging and editing controls the same, so it should be familiar if you are coming from the previous version.

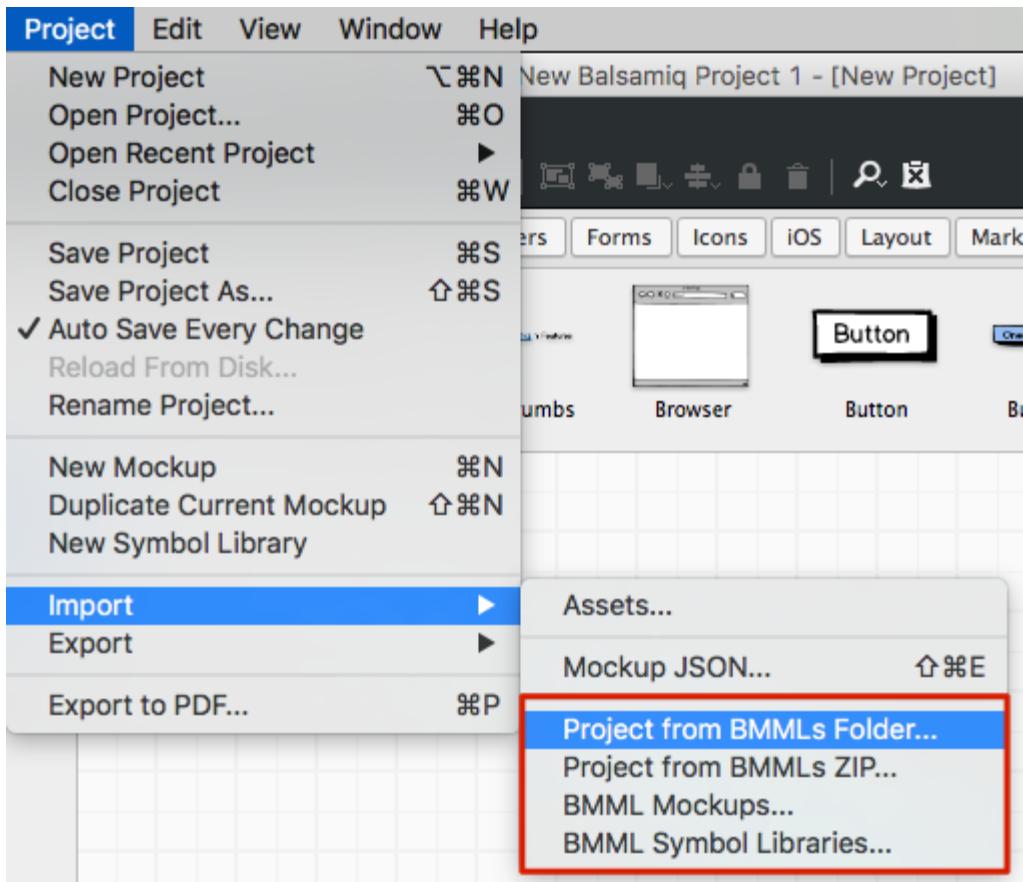
We hope all these changes are welcome and that Balsamiq Mockups 3 still feels like the application you've come to know and love, but better! If you have any thoughts or feedback,

please let us know!

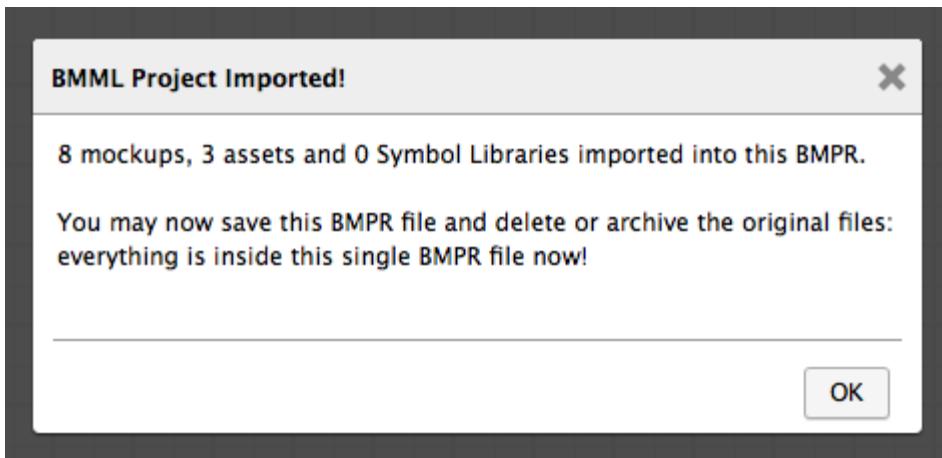
Importing Mockups 2 BMML Files

Balsamiq Mockups 3 has a new file format to accommodate support for projects but you can easily import your old files.

To convert your existing project folders or ZIP files into BMPR files, just head to the Project > Import menu.



Select what you'd like to import and your old files will be imported and a new BMPR file will be created.



Feedback Welcome

We'd love to know what you think of it. If you find any issues or have any comments, please don't hesitate to [shoot us an email](#) or post [Balsamiq Forums](#). We'll see you there!

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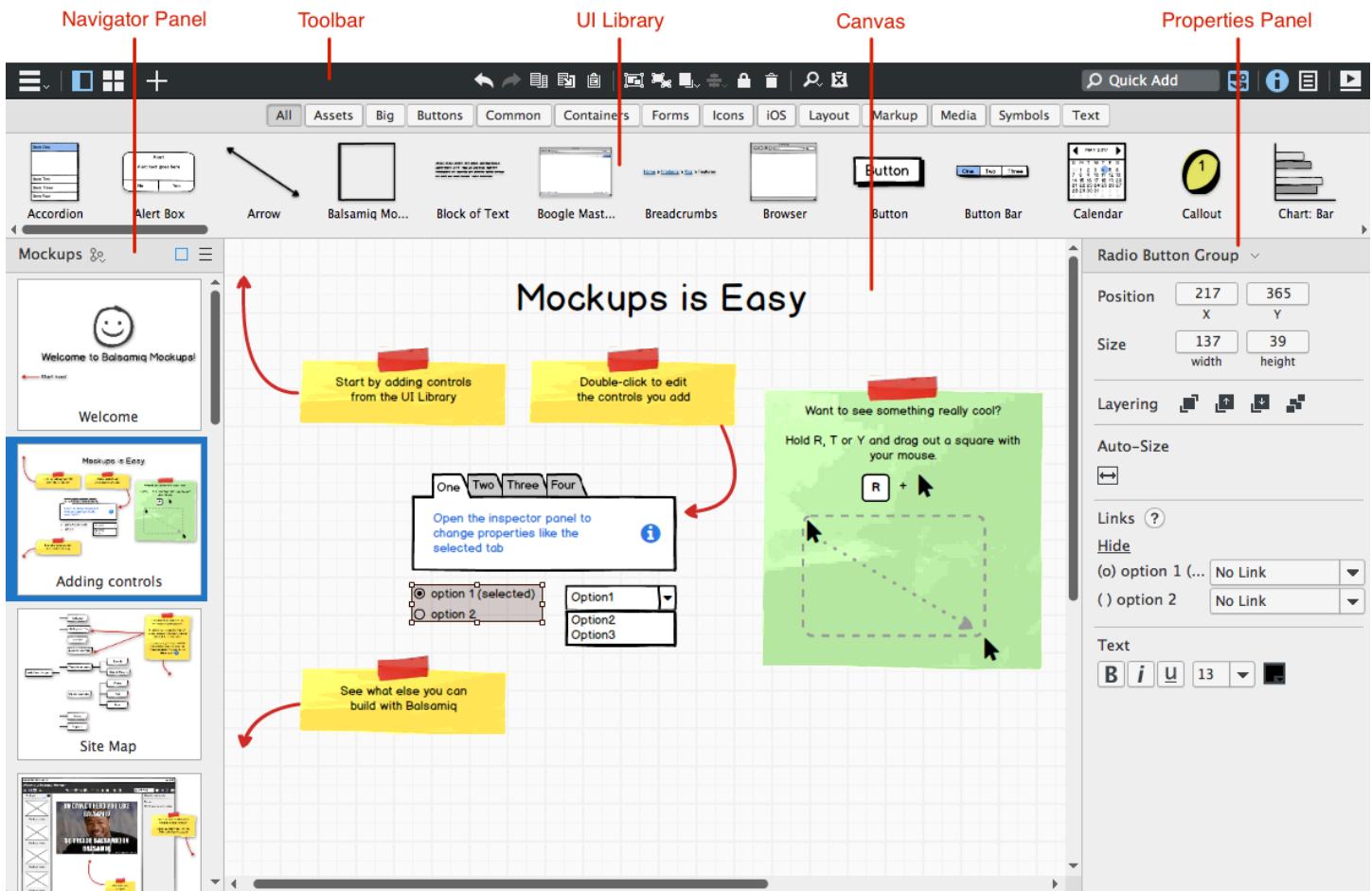
[Sharing in Balsamiq Mockups 3 for Desktop →](#)

Balsamiq Mockups is a user interface design tool for creating [wireframes](#) (also called mockups or low-fidelity prototypes). You can use it to generate digital sketches of your product ideas to facilitate discussion and understanding before any code is written.

Each Balsamiq Mockups file (with a .bmpr file extension) represents one project and can contain many mockups and images, which are stored together in a single .bmpr file. Mockups for different projects should be created in separate Balsamiq Mockups files. To create a new project select Project > New Project from the menu.

Note: Single project files are new in Balsamiq Mockups 3.

The Balsamiq Mockups user interface is made up of five primary areas: the [toolbar](#), the [UI Library](#), the [canvas](#), the [navigator panel](#) and the [properties panel](#). Each is described below.



Note: You can watch a video covering basic usage of the application in our [Mockups Intro Video tutorial](#).

The Toolbar

The toolbar contains a series of icons for performing actions on other areas of the user interface.

The first set of icons is described below.



1 2 3 4 5 6

1. Navigate between Mockups, [Assets](#), [Symbols](#) and [Trash](#)
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The group of icons in the center of the toolbar is for commonly-performed [canvas](#) functions. These are actions that you are probably used to from text editors or other drawing tools, such as copy, paste, [group](#), align and zoom. The last icon is for toggling markup ([read about markup here](#)).



The final section of the toolbar on the far right contains the [Quick Add tool](#), toggle icons for the [UI Library](#), [Property Inspector](#) and [Project Info Panel](#), and an icon to enter [Full Screen Presentation Mode](#).



The top of the toolbar shows the name of the project, which you can double-click to rename (or go to Project > Rename Project... in the menu).

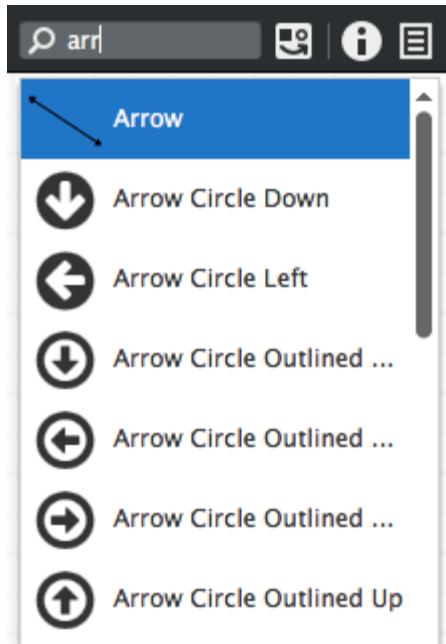


The Quick Add Tool

The Quick Add tool is the fastest way to add UI controls to your mockup. To use quick add,

click inside the quick add input box (or use the / or + keyboard shortcut to enter it). Type a few letters from the name of a UI control or icon and Quick Add will show you a list of suggestions. Use your mouse or arrow keys to scroll down the list and click or press Enter to add the control or icon on the mockup canvas. You can also use Shift + Enter to place the control where your mouse cursor is on the canvas.

For example, typing "bu" shows a list containing "Button", "Button Bar", "Help Button", "Radio Button" and "Round Button". Typing "hel", on the other hand, only returns "Help Button". Pressing the ESCape key makes the list disappear, as one would expect.



Try out Quick Add now! As you become familiar with it, you could even hide the UI Library and simply use Quick Add to add UI elements to your mockup. This maximizes both your mockup canvas area and your speed!

The UI Library

The UI Library, or UI controls Library, is the long strip of UI controls just below the toolbar. It lists all of the UI control types that come with Mockups as well as [Assets](#), [Icons](#), and [Symbols](#). The main goal of the UI Library is to let you add UI controls to the mockup canvas, but you can also use it to see what's possible and to get inspiration for your UI mockup.



To add a new UI control to the canvas, select the control type you wish to add then either drag it to the mockup canvas below or simply double-click and Balsamiq Mockups will place it on the mockup canvas for you.

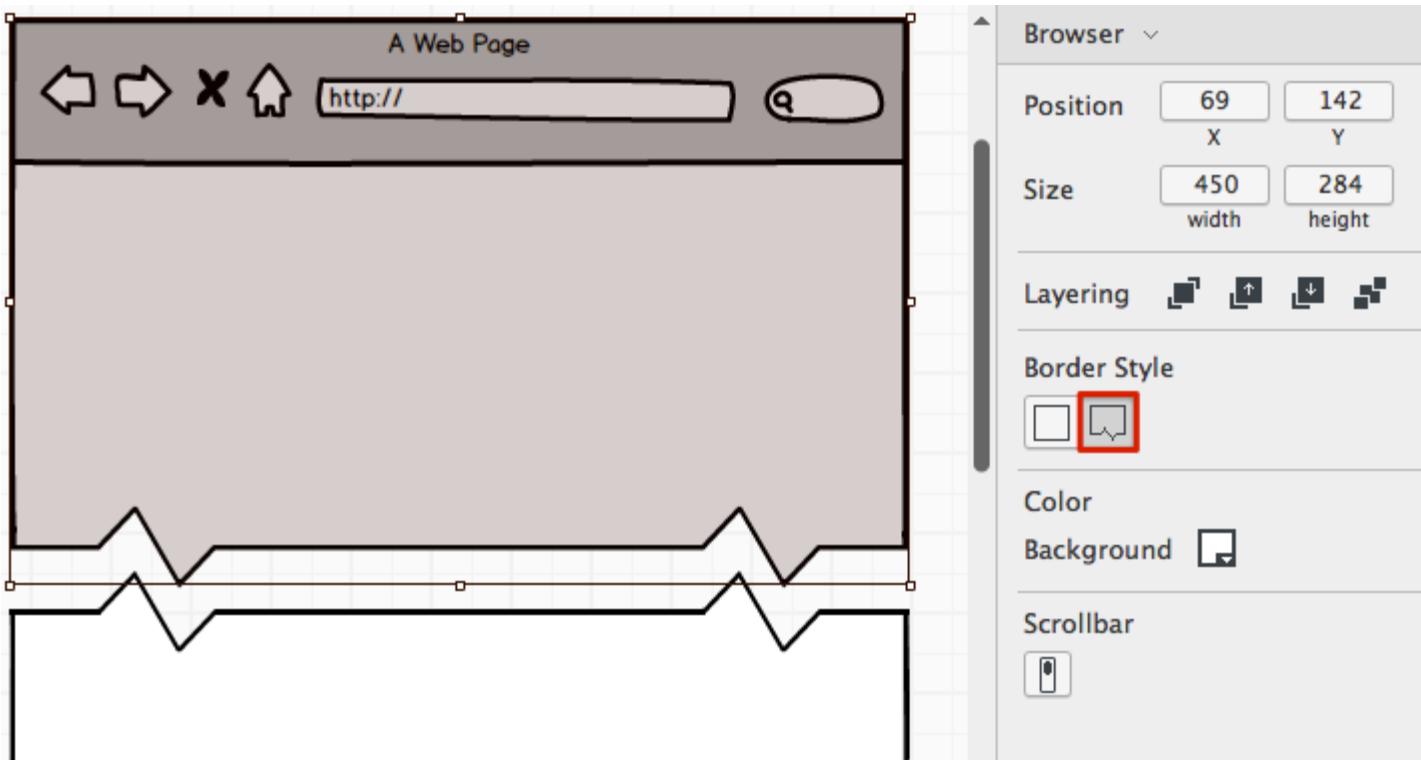
The UI Library can be toggled on and off in several ways: clicking the icon to the right of the Quick Add box, using the keyboard shortcut CTRL/CMD+L, or by selecting View > UI Library from the application menu.

The Mockup Canvas

This is the main working area of Balsamiq Mockups, where your UI mockup comes to life. Once you add UI controls to it, you can move them, resize them and tweak them to your heart's content until your UI mockup is ready. See [Working with UI Controls](#) to learn more.

The mockup canvas grows and shrinks with your application window, so you can make room for bigger mockups if you need to.

The maximum size for each wireframe canvas in Balsamiq Mockups 3 is 4056x4056 pixels. If your wireframe bumps against the maximum canvas size, you could try using a breakline to indicate continuation. This is something that designers often do in wireframe specs. Mockups supports breaklines in the Browser, Rectangle, Geometric Shape and Horizontal Rule controls.



Note: If you are working on a small screen or have very large mockups you might want to read [this article on hiding the panels to make more room for the canvas](#).

The Navigator Panel

The navigator panel on the left shows the list of mockups, assets or Symbols in your project. The currently selected object is highlighted. You can select multiple objects in the navigator panel by holding down the Control or Shift key and clicking on them. Mockups and assets can be viewed as a text-only list or as thumbnail previews.



You can hide the navigator panel by clicking the navigator toggle icon above the panel (keyboard shortcut: CTRL/CMD + J). Hiding it will show additional icons in the toolbar ([shown above](#)) for navigating between mockups or assets (depending on which one is selected). The panel can be resized by placing your mouse cursor over the line separating the navigator panel from the canvas and dragging left or right. You can double-click on the separator line to reset it to the default width.

You can move between mockups or assets using your keyboard via CTRL+Tab or by clicking on one in the navigator and using the up and down arrow keys.

Mockups can be reordered by dragging them up and down in the navigator panel. This can be useful when [exporting to PDF](#), for example. The order of your mockups will be remembered when you close and reopen your project, even if opened on a different computer.

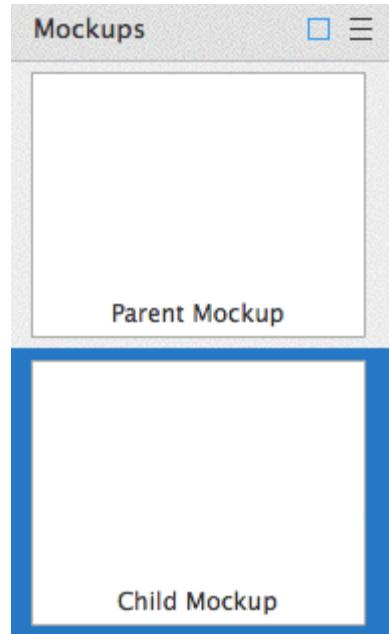
Using Mockup Hierarchy

Mockups 3 for editor/b3 also offers a hierarchical structure to better organize your mockups.

To use it, select the mockup you wish to be the child and press the Tab key. The child mockup will be placed in a tree hierarchy below the mockup above it.

You can then use the arrows to the left of the parent mockup to show and hide the mockups

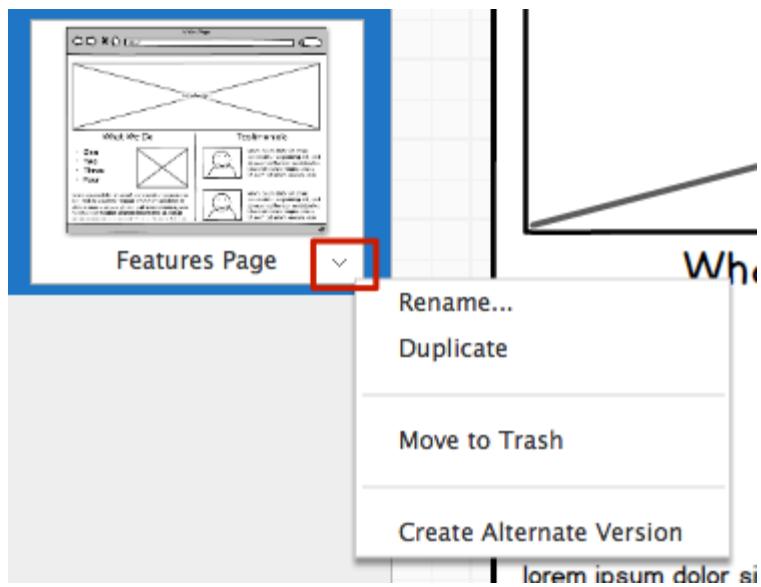
under it.



To restore it to the top level, use Shift+Tab.

Context Menu Actions

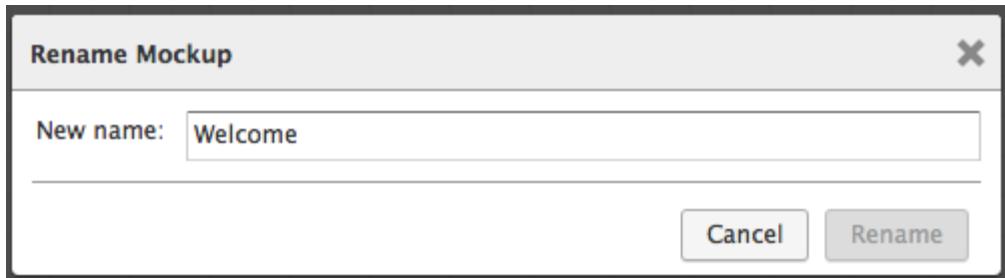
A context menu is also available for the objects that are open in the navigator panel. You can either right-click on the selected object or click the small arrow that appears when you hover over it to open the menu.



The contents of this menu vary depending on which type of object is selected (mockup, asset, symbol, or trash) but it generally contains options such as rename, move to trash, and duplicate. In the Mockups view it also contains actions for working with [alternates](#).

Renaming Mockups

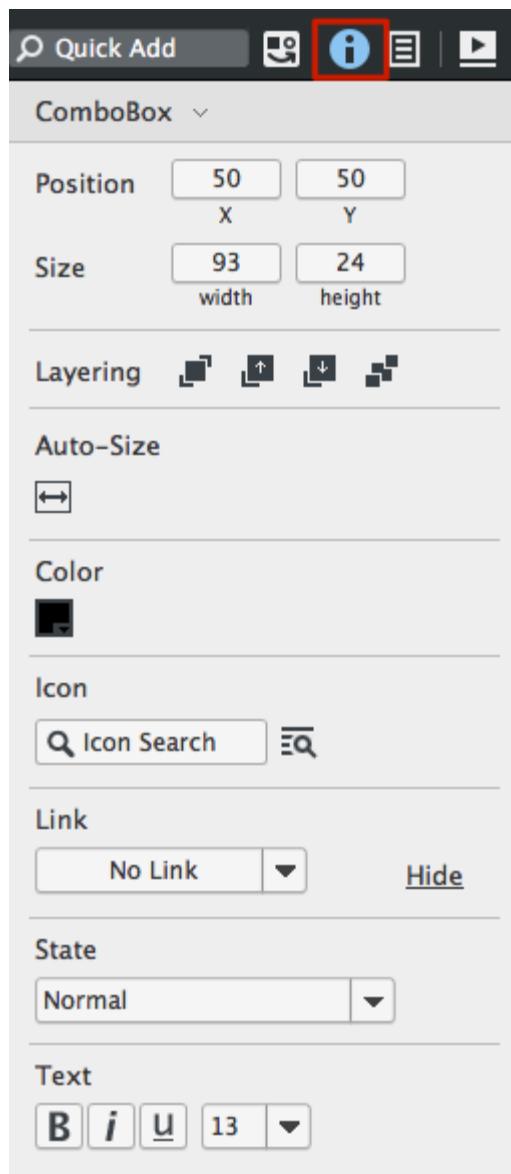
Renaming mockups can be done via the context menu or by double-clicking on the name of the mockup in the navigator panel. Mockups with [links](#) will automatically be updated when a linked mockup name changes.



The Properties Panel

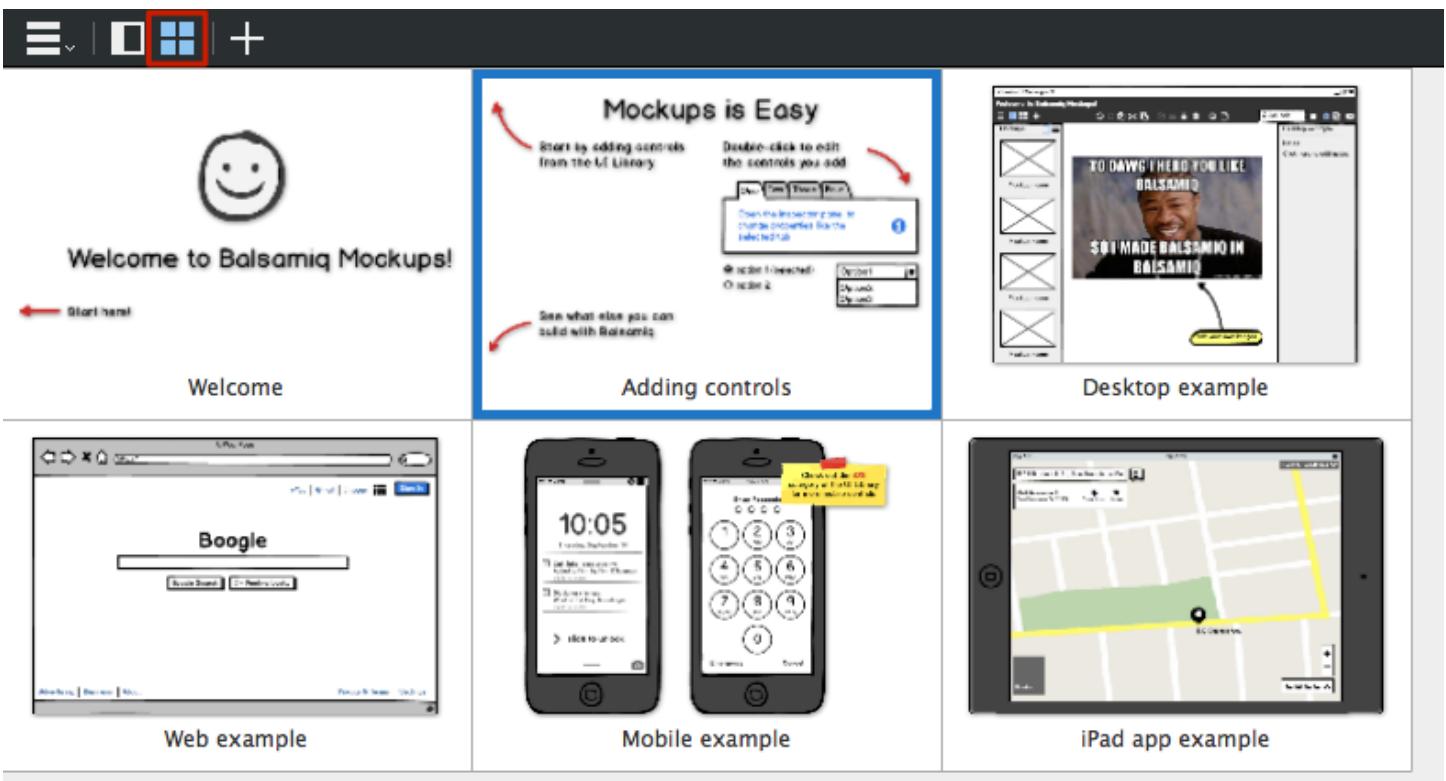
The panel on the right side of the application (when shown) displays properties for the

selected control or object. Depending on which icon is selected it shows either the [Property Inspector](#) or [Project Info Panel](#). It can be hidden by de-selecting both panel icons in the toolbar or unchecking Inspector and Project Information in the View menu.

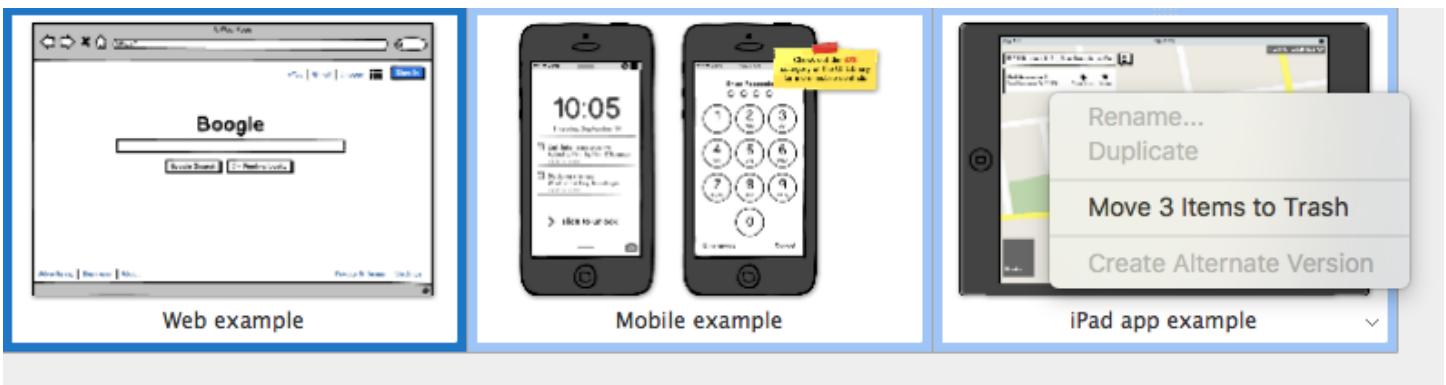


Thumbnail Grid View

Clicking the icon to the right of the [navigator panel](#) toggle will switch to thumbnail grid view, shown here.



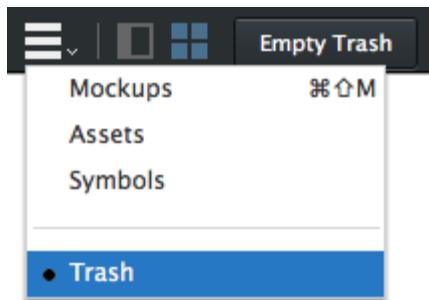
This view shows thumbnails of all of your mockups and is useful for getting an overview of your project. It allows you to see more of your mockups at once and is a good view to use for reordering and tidying up (e.g., renaming and moving to the trash). You can trash multiple mockups at once by selecting them (using CTRL/Shift + click) and bringing up the **context menu**.



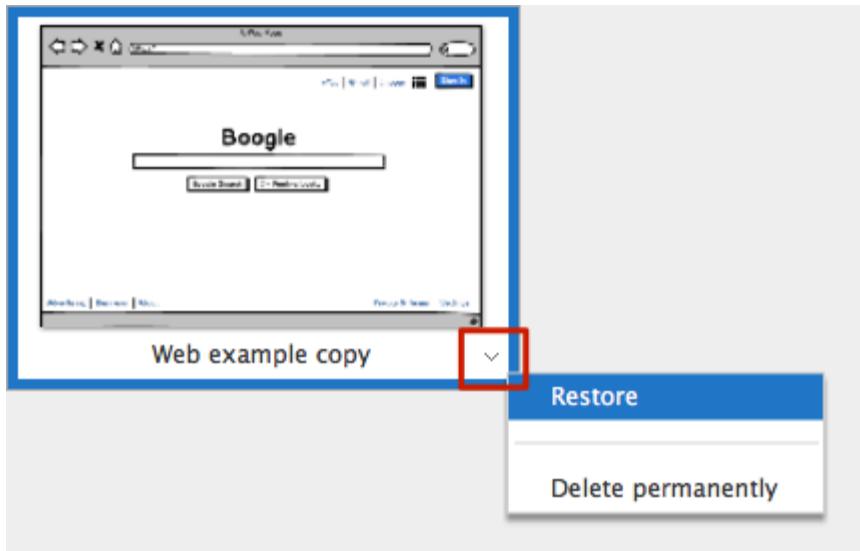
Thumbnail grid view is available when viewing mockups and assets, and is the only view available for trash.

Trash

Balsamiq Mockups 3 has a trash for mockups, assets, and Symbols you have deleted. This makes it easy to keep your project tidy as you make progress but still allows you to browse or recover earlier concepts.



To recover a trashed object from the Trash panel click the context menu arrow and select "Restore." You also have the option to delete permanently.



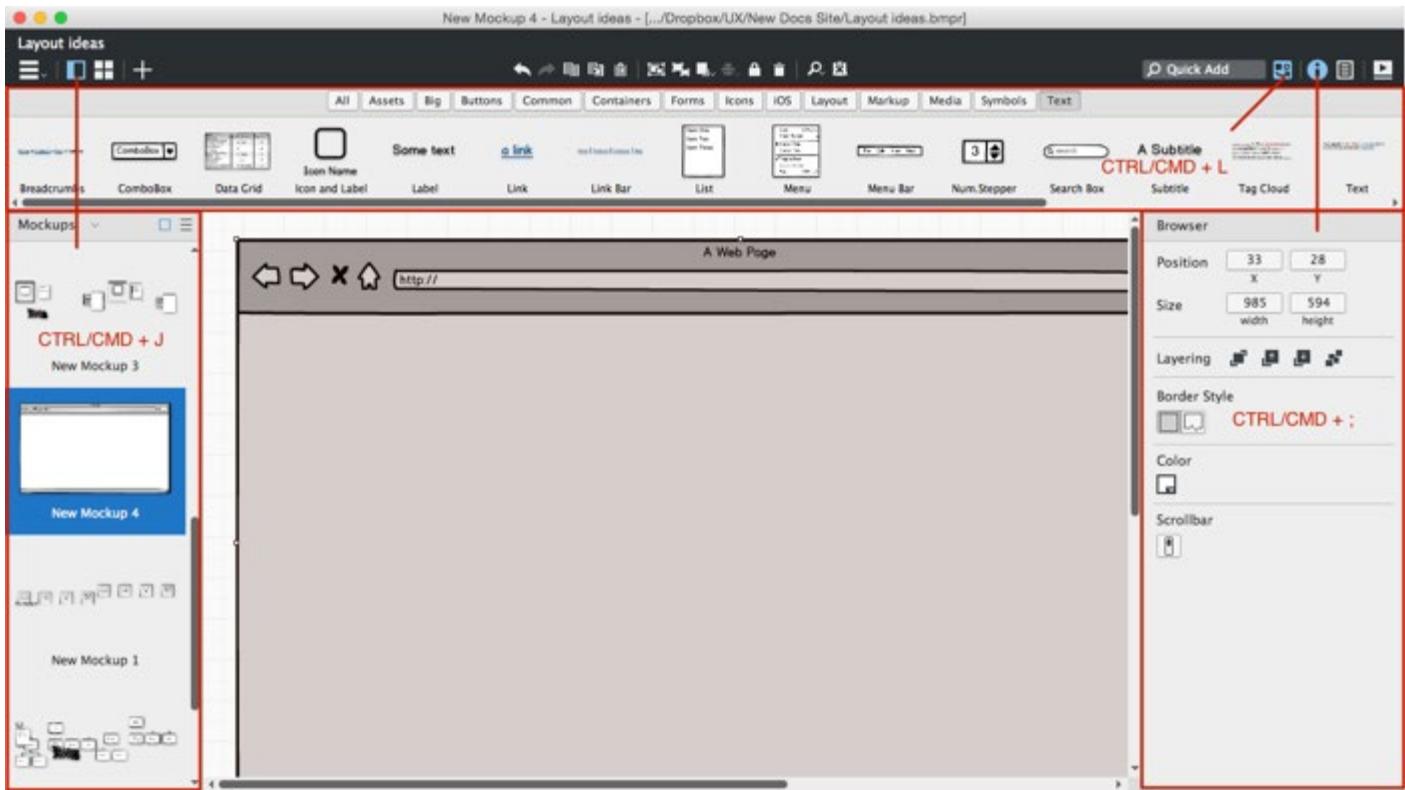
Working on Small Screens

When working on a small laptop screen, you might want to maximize the amount of Canvas you see.

For this reason the [UI Library](#), [Navigator](#), and [Properties panels](#) can all be **toggled on and off** using the mouse or keyboard.

These panels are highlighted below along with the icons that can be used to toggle them on

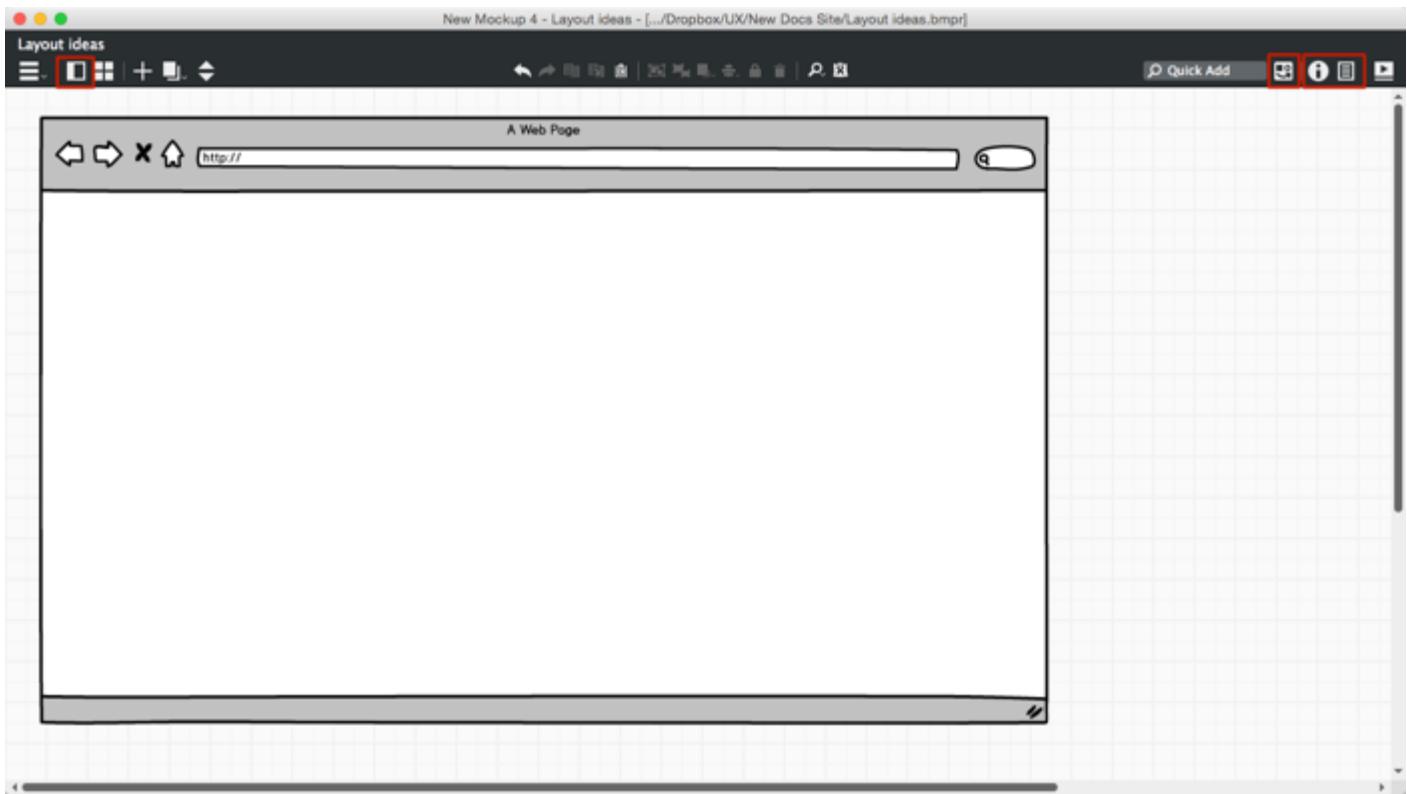
or off.



The keyboard shortcuts for toggling them are listed here:

- UI Library: ⌘ + L
- Navigator: ⌘ + J
- Properties Panel: ⌘ + ;
- Project Info Panel: ⌘ + ,

Hiding all of the panels results in a user interface that looks like this:



The associated toolbar icons turn from blue to white when the panels are not shown.

Note that you can still add controls to the canvas when the UI Library is hidden using **Quick Add**. And you can navigate between your mockups using the **additional toolbar icons** that appear when the Navigator Panel is hidden.

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[Working with UI Controls →](#)

Collaboration is the foundation of Mockups. From working with your clients and customers, to collaborating with your designers and programmers, Mockups was built with collaboration at its core. Here are the ways you can share your projects.

Share Mockups Project Files

A great way to share your work is to send your Mockups project files (files with a .bmpr extension) directly to your clients and collaborators. Just be sure to include a [link to download Balsamiq Mockups](#) – if they don't already have it.

Tell your clients to install Balsamiq Mockups and open the file(s) you sent. They will be able to go full screen and click around or view the mockups in the editor. During the 30 day trial period they'll be able to make changes and save them.

When the trial expires, they won't be able to edit but they'll still be able to view them, click the links, and even copy the text strings if needed.

Share an Interactive PDF Document

PDFs generated by Mockups are completely interactive. That means that they not only display your project as you have designed it, they will also respect [any links](#) you have added to the project as well. This is one of the best ways to share your project with collaborators and clients who don't need to make changes.

Note: PDFs with links also work great on mobile phones and tablets!

Share PNG Images

You can export all of your mockups to static PNG images, and send those to your clients. [More info about that feature here.](#)

Use Balsamiq Cloud

[Balsamiq Cloud](#) is our web-based wireframing solution designed for large teams. With Balsamiq Cloud, you can invite your collaborators to view, interact with, and even edit your project. Your existing projects are completely compatible with Balsamiq Cloud, all you need to do is [upload them](#). Check it out today and see [how to share your work with outside clients in Balsamiq Cloud..](#)

Real-Time Collaboration

Real-time collaboration is available *now* in six of our apps:

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- [Balsamiq Wireframes for Google Drive](#)
- [Balsamiq Wireframes for Confluence Cloud and Confluence Server](#)
- [Balsamiq Wireframes for Jira Cloud and Jira Server](#)

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Balsamiq for Desktop Documentation

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Working with UI Controls

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Adding UI Controls



To add UI controls to your mockup, double-click or drag a control in [the UI Library](#) or type a keyword into [the Quick Add tool](#).

You can also duplicate controls already on the canvas using copy and paste or the duplicate command (CTRL/CMD + D). ALT/Option + drag will also duplicate controls and allow you to place them using your mouse.

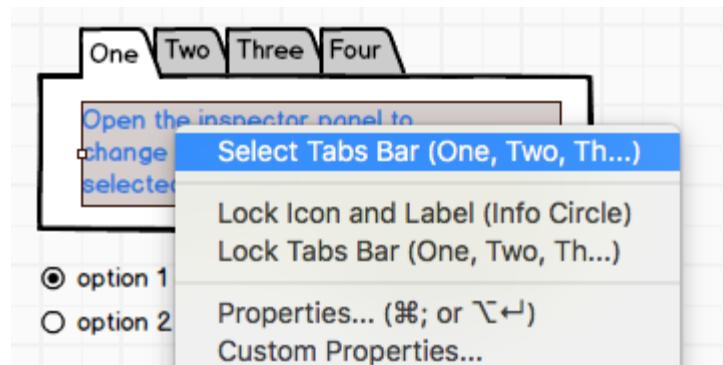
Note: Full list of [keyboard shortcuts here](#).

Selecting UI Controls

There are a few different ways to select UI controls. If you are familiar with graphics software, these should be of no surprise.

- Clicking on a UI control selects it
- Dragging a rectangle which encloses many UI controls selects them
- SHIFT + CLICK on a control adds it to the selection
- CTRL/CMD + CLICK on a selected control removes it from the selection
- Hold ALT to ignore items behind the mouse and drag-select

To select a control that is behind another control, right-click on the top control to bring up a menu that allows you to select controls behind it.



Note: To see this and the other techniques in this article demonstrated in a video, see [this tutorial on Tips for Working with Controls](#).

Moving UI Controls

Once you have selected one or more UI controls, there are a few different ways to move it on the canvas.

- You can drag it with your mouse (hold down the SHIFT key to maintain the original horizontal or vertical position)
- You can "nudge it" one pixel at a time with your keyboard's UP/DOWN/LEFT/RIGHT keys
- You can move it with bigger steps (10 pixels) by holding down SHIFT and using your keyboard's UP/DOWN/LEFT/RIGHT keys
- You can move controls to be aligned in one direction by using the [align tools shown below](#)

Snapping and Smart Guides

When you move objects on the canvas, Mockups tries to suggest alignment relative to other objects on the canvas using smart guides. This makes alignment a little easier and makes your Mockups generally look neater.

If you ever want to temporarily disable this feature, you can hold down the CTRL/CMD key while moving or resizing, and snapping will be turned off.

Resizing UI Controls

Resizing the selected controls is easy. You can just grab any edge or corner of the selection rectangle and drag it.

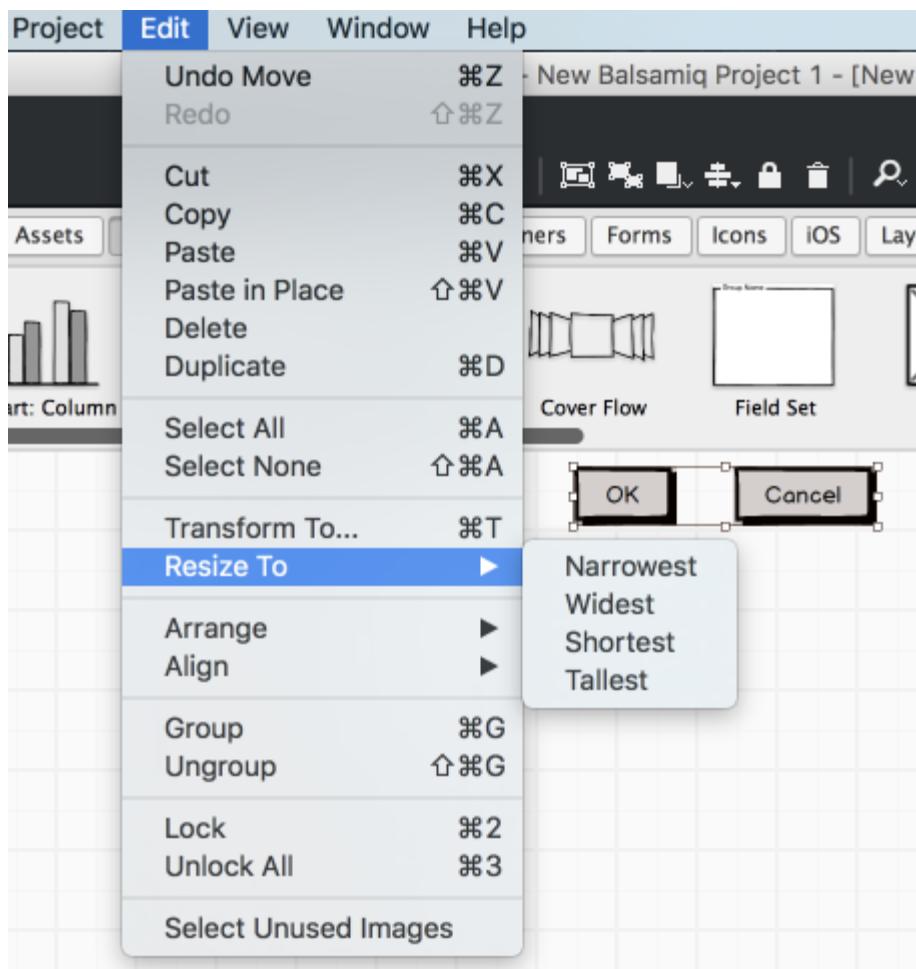
If you want to constrain proportions while dragging from a corner, hold the SHIFT key while dragging.

You can also use the keyboard to resize selected controls. CTRL/CMD+ALT+arrow keys to

resize in 1px increments, CTRL/CMD+ALT+SHIFT+arrow keys for 10px increments.

Another way to resize some controls to their "natural size" is to use the Auto-Size function found in the [Property Inspector](#).

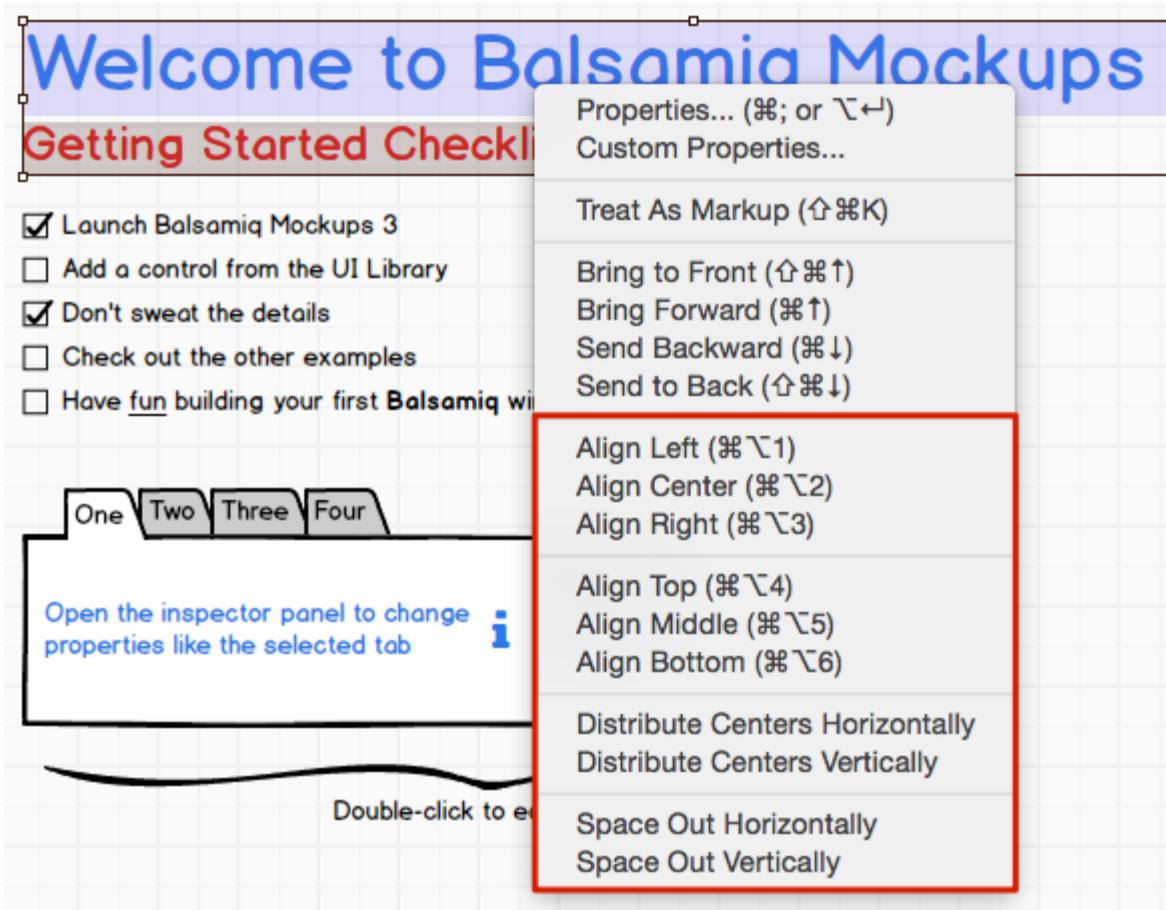
To resize one or more controls to match the size of another (to be the same width or height), you can use the "Resize To..." function in the Edit menu.



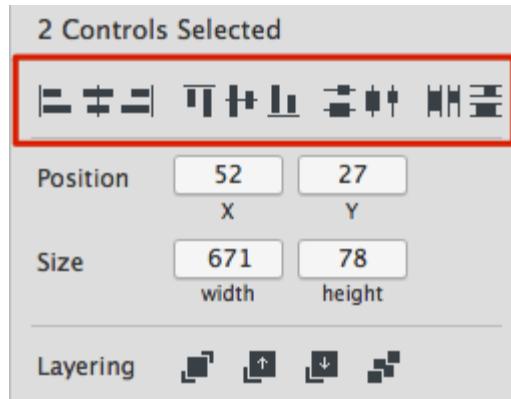
Select multiple controls and use this option to size all the selected controls to match the narrowest, widest, shortest, or tallest control in the selection.

Aligning UI Controls

You can align and distribute (space out) controls by selecting multiple controls and right-clicking to bring up the menu shown below.

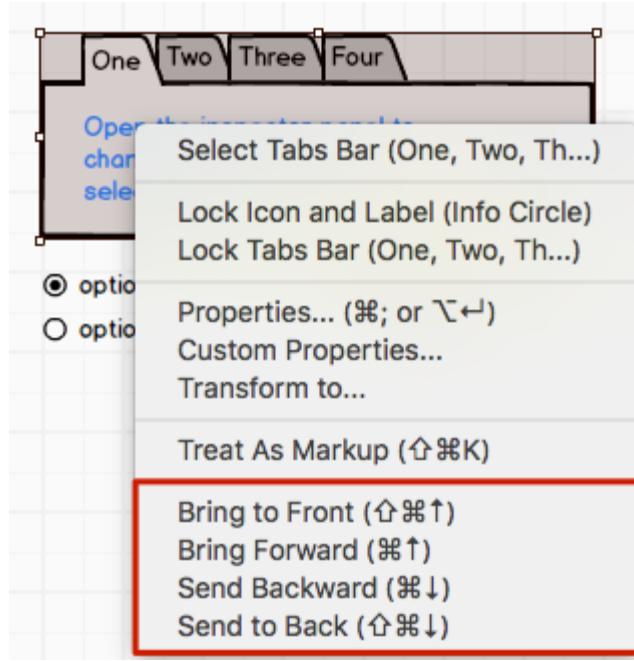


The same options are shown in the property inspector when multiple controls are selected.



Layering UI Controls

You can layer controls as if they were pieces of paper on the mockup canvas. To do so, you select the controls you want to layer and select one of four layering commands available via the right-click menu or [Property Inspector](#): Bring to Front, Bring Forward, Send Backward, and Send to Back. [Keyboard shortcuts](#) are also available.



Locking UI Controls

Locking a control will prevent it from being selectable. This can be useful for background controls that you want to stay in place or don't want to accidentally select (a browser or iPhone control, for example). You can lock a control by selecting it and choosing "Lock (control name)" from the context menu, or by clicking the lock icon in the [toolbar](#).



To unlock a control, right-click on it when your mouse cursor is over it.

Deleting UI Controls

To remove some UI controls from the mockup canvas, select them and hit the **DELETE** key. Alternatively you can click on the trashcan icon in the toolbar or select "Delete" from the Edit menu.

Rotating UI Controls

Some of our UI controls can be rotated via the [Property Inspector](#) (the label, [image](#), and icon controls, for example), but most can't. If you are used to generic drawing tools this might be surprising. This limitation is intentional, and not due to programming complexity (it's not hard to add technically).

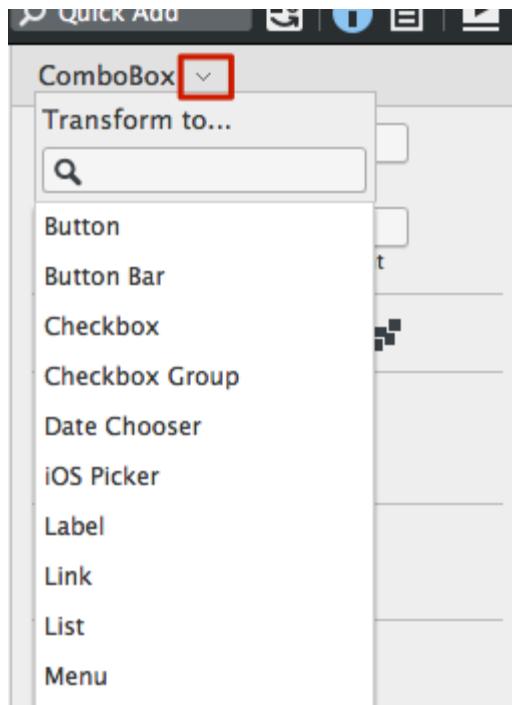
The reason we don't support rotating all controls because we believe that in 90% of cases, it is not needed in wireframes. In fact, adding the ability to rotate any control will likely result in wireframes that are very hard if not impossible to implement by the development team.

If you feel that you need to rotate any other control, let us know on [this forum thread](#) and we'll discuss whether to add it together. A workaround would be to rotate a control in a drawing application and then [import it as an image](#).

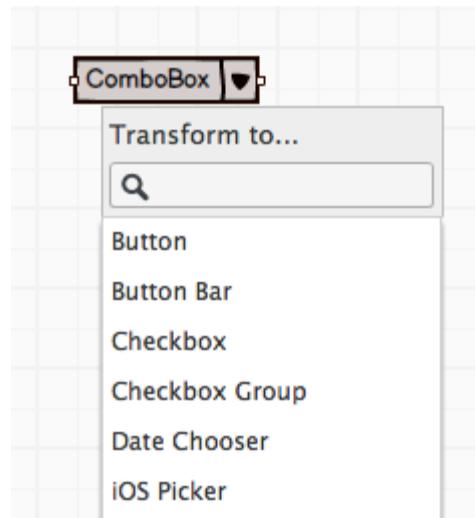
Transforming UI Controls

Many controls can be converted into other controls. This can be useful when you already have content in your mockups but want to use a different control type without re-typing the content (changing a text input to a combo box, for example).

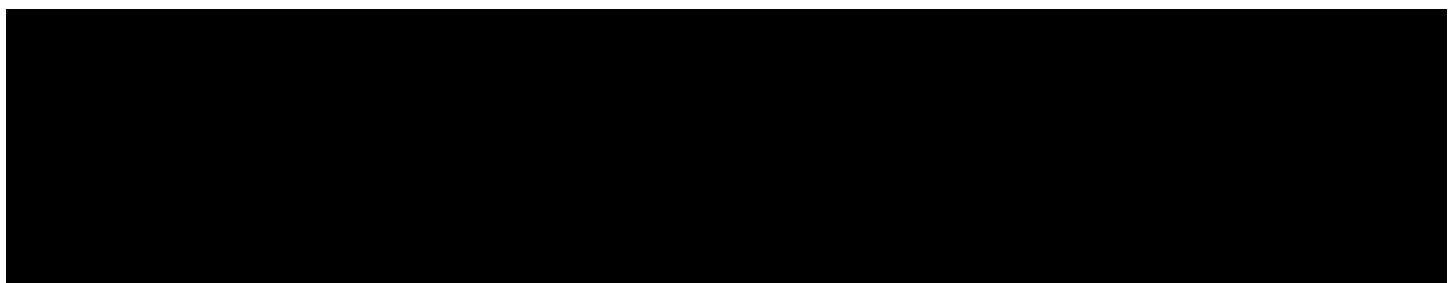
Just click on a control and open the context menu next to the control name in the Property Inspector to see which control types the selected control can be transformed to. Select the control you want to convert it to or use the search to look for it.



You can transform controls quickly using the shortcut **CTRL+T** to bring up the transform menu in the center of the canvas.

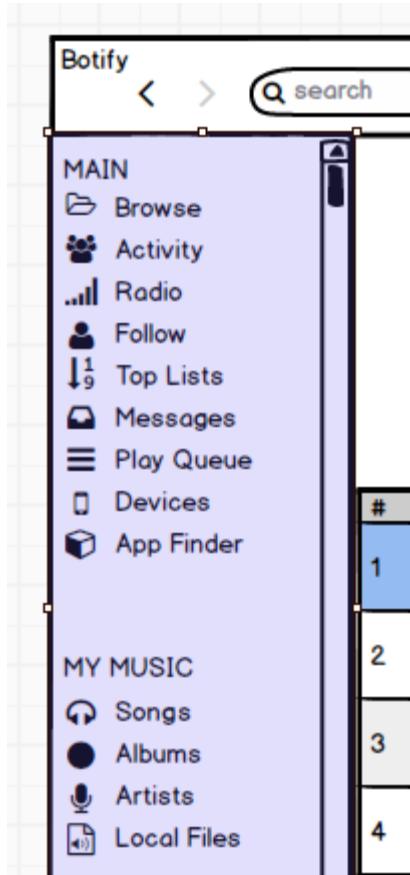


See the video below for a demonstration.

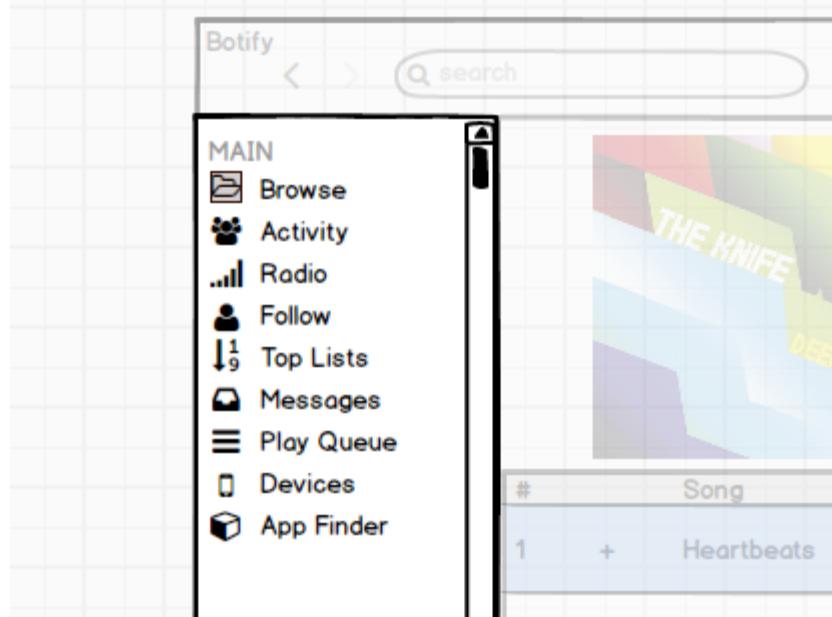


Grouping UI Controls

Sometimes you might want to group some controls to better align them or move them all at once. To group a set of controls, select them and hit CTRL+G on your keyboard or use the Group command in the Edit menu or [toolbar](#). The controls will change color to purple to indicate that they are grouped. Once grouped, the controls will behave as one when moving or aligning. To ungroup controls, press CTRL+SHIFT+G on your keyboard or use the Ungroup command in the menu or toolbar.



You can double-click on a group to "enter it" and edit its contents. A small floating breadcrumb bar will indicate that you are editing a group and allow you to navigate back out of the group (you can also use the Escape key). Groups can be nested, as shown below.



You can give a group a name via the Property Inspector. This can be helpful when you have a lot of groups and need to "know where you are" when you edit their contents. Naming

groups is also useful when creating [Symbols](#).

Cropping Groups

It is possible to crop (mask) a group of controls to only show a selected portion of it. When a [group](#) is selected, a crop icon will show in the [Property Inspector](#). Click on it to edit the visible area of the group.

Note: To crop a single control, select it and [group](#) it (yes, a group with only one element). You will then be able to crop it.

"Drawing" Basic Controls

There are three controls that you can add to the canvas by "drawing" them with your mouse while holding down a letter key. To quickly draw a rectangle on the canvas, hold down the **R** key and drag your mouse. Holding down **T** instead will draw a block of text, and **Y** will produce a line of text.

After you've added these controls, you can easily convert them to other controls by using the [transform menu described above](#).

[← Sharing in Balsamiq Mockups 3 for Desktop](#)

[The Property Inspector →](#)

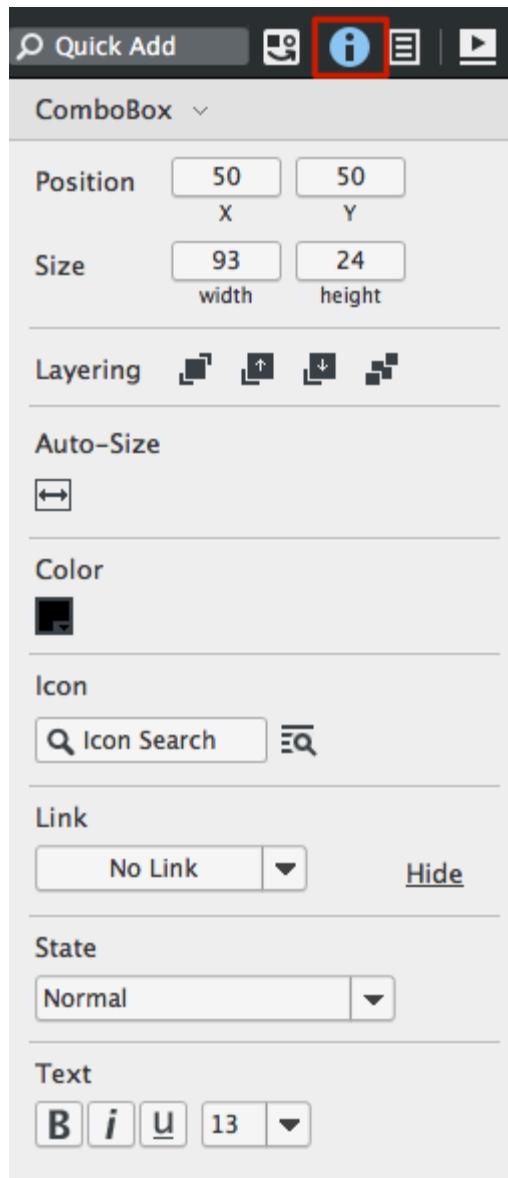
[Balsamiq for Desktop Docs](#) > The Property Inspector

The Property Inspector

[← Working with UI Controls](#)

[Working with Alternates →](#)

The Property Inspector is a panel on the right side of the application that allows you to set some common properties such as alignment, position and size as well as settings specific to certain controls (selection state, text properties, color, etc.). It is available when viewing mockups, assets, and Symbols.

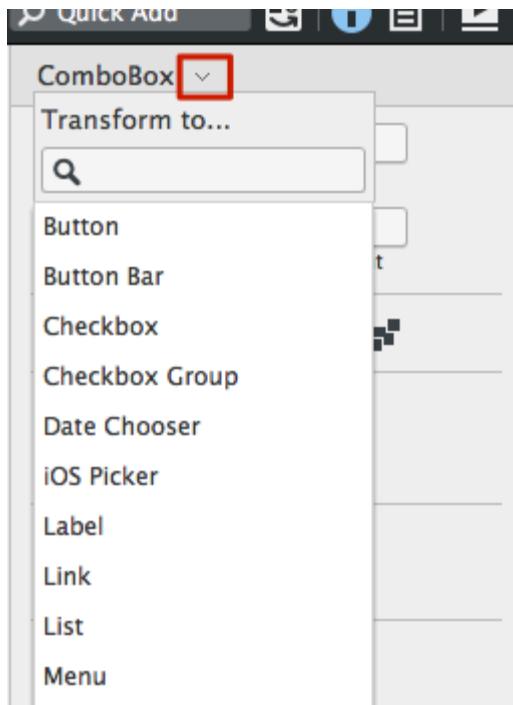


You can show and hide the Property Inspector by clicking the toggle icon above it (keyboard shortcut CTRL/CMD + ; or ALT/Option + Enter). When hidden you can also show it by right-clicking a control and selecting "Properties...".

If you have multiple controls selected it will show properties that are common to all selected controls as well as options for aligning and distributing.

Transforming Control Types

Many of the controls in Balsamiq Mockups can be changed into other controls via the context menu next to the control name in the Property Inspector.



This can be useful when you already have content in your mockups but want to use a different control type without re-typing the content (changing a text input to a combo box, for example). Just click on a control and open the menu to see which control types the selected control can be transformed to.

Adding Notes to Your Mockups, Symbols and Assets

When no controls are selected the Property Inspector shows notes for the selected mockup, asset, or Symbol. In the Mockups view the panel also shows [mockup alternates](#).

Note: You can format notes text using the [syntax described here](#) to make text bold, underlined, etc.

Sample Master Template

Notes

This is a sample symbol for a master template.

It is a set of controls that have been grouped and given a name.

Used in 1 mockup

Welcome

For assets and Symbols it also shows the count and name of mockups where the selected object is used.

[← Working with UI Controls](#)

[Working with Alternates →](#)

[Balsamiq for Desktop Docs](#) > Working with Alternates

Working with Alternates

[← The Property Inspector](#)

[Working with Text →](#)

Alternates (also sometimes referred to as *versions* or *branches*) allow you to create **variations on a single mockup design** without adding more mockups to your project.

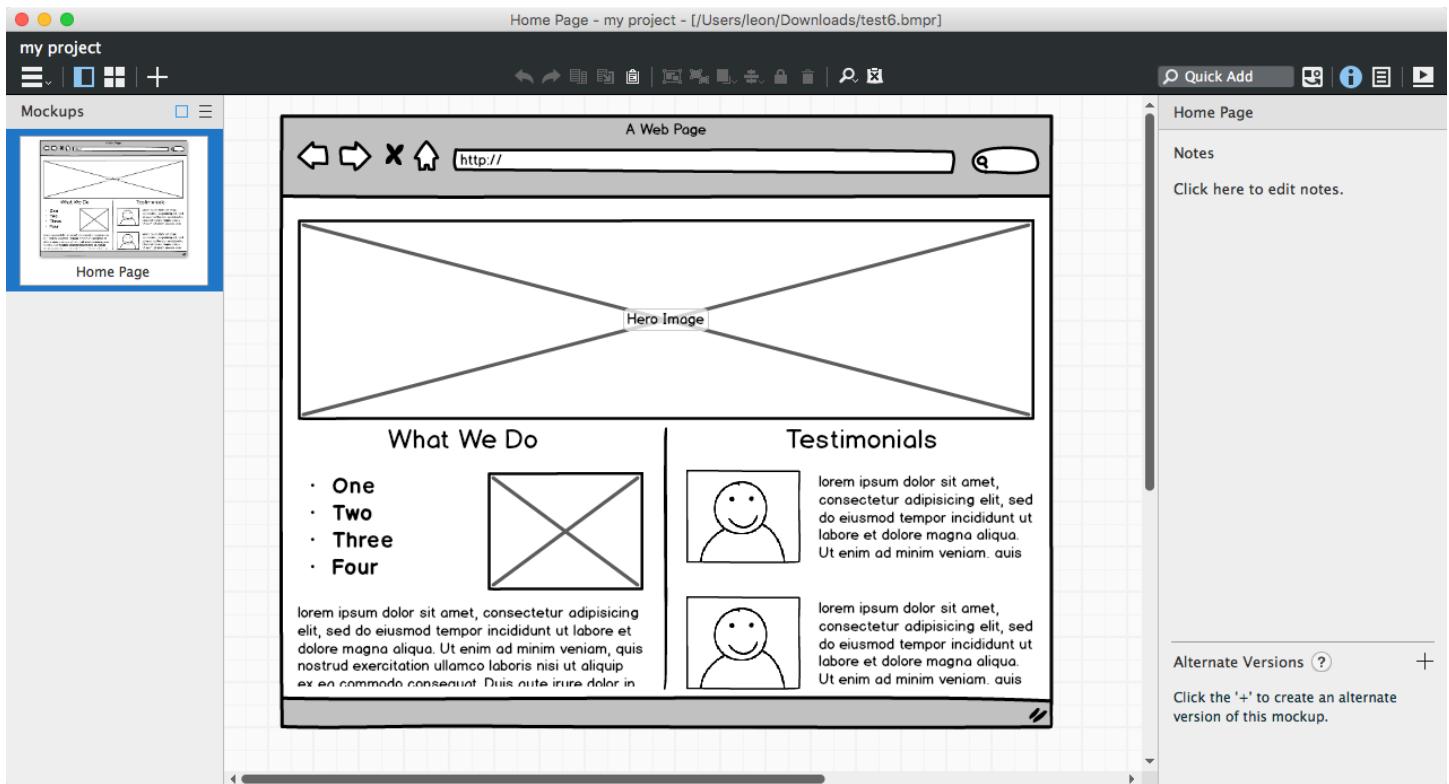
Creating alternates can be useful during the early design phase when exploring concepts and in later stages for reviewers to add their feedback and propose changes.

Some possible reasons for using alternates:

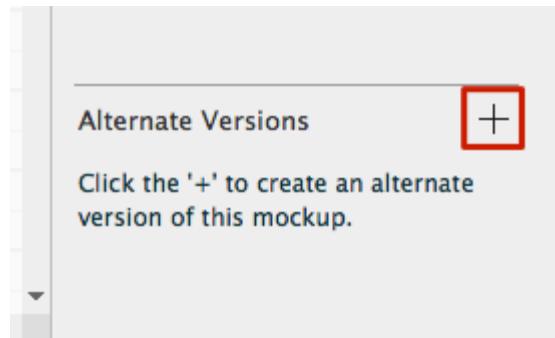
- You want to create only one mockup per screen but have several ideas about each one.
- You want suggestions for design improvements but don't want other people changing your mockups.
- You want to send your project around for feedback and track each person's feedback individually.
- You want to try out new design ideas without including them in the mockups for the current release.

Creating Alternates

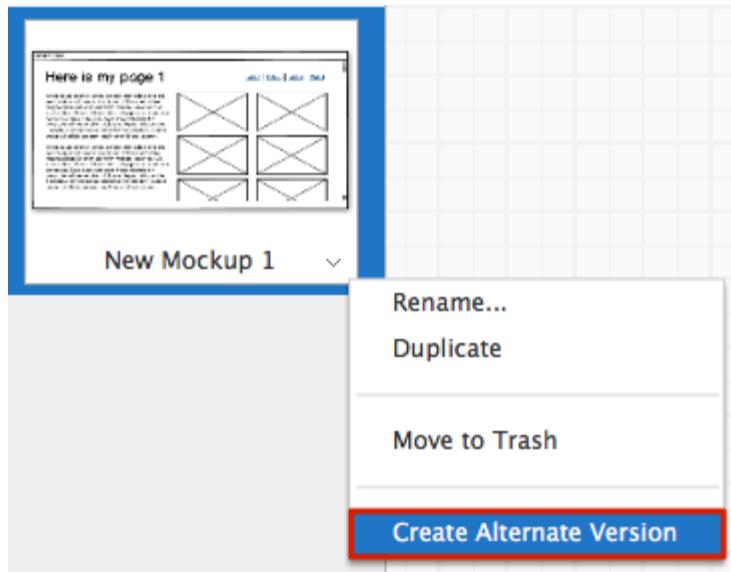
When viewing a mockup without any controls selected you will see a section of the [Property Inspector panel](#) called "**Alternate Versions**" below the notes for that mockup.



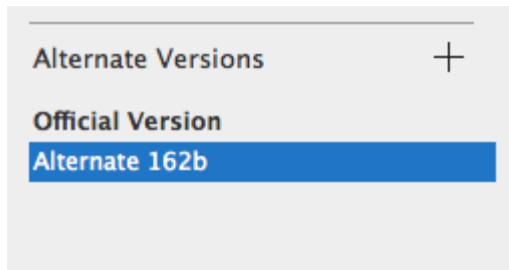
To create a new alternate **click the "+" (plus) icon** next to "Alternate Versions"



or use the context menu in the [Navigator panel](#).



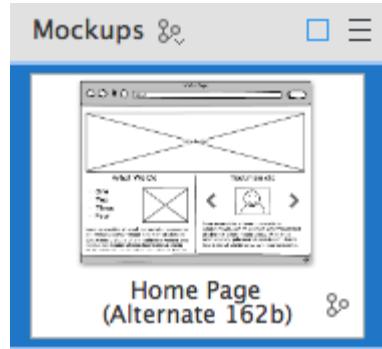
This will create a **copy of the current mockup as an alternate version** for you to modify. By default it will automatically be named with the word "Alternate" followed by some random numbers and letters to ensure that the name is unique.



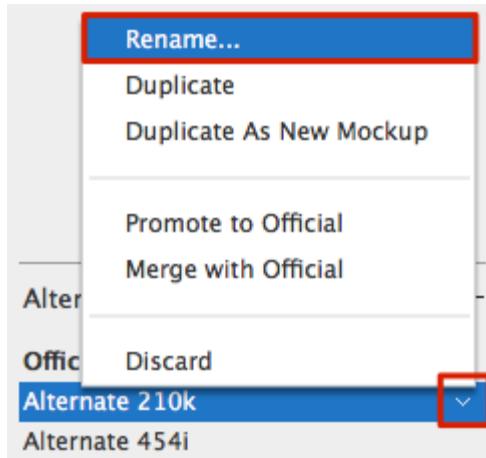
The selection in the alternate versions list tells you which version of the mockup you are working on. You can create as many alternates as you'd like.

Note: You can create an alternate of an alternate. Clicking the "+" (plus) icon when an alternate is selected creates an alternate of the selected version rather than the official version.

When an alternate exists an icon will appear next to the name in the **Navigator panel** indicating that there are alternates. When you are working on an alternate version the Navigator panel will show the alternate name in parentheses.



To **rename** the alternate double-click on the name in the alternates versions list or use the context or right-click menu and select "Rename..."



Editing Alternates

Once you have created an alternate version you can edit it just like any other mockup, including adding assets and symbols. Changes that you make **will not affect the original mockup** (shown as the Official Version). You can also add notes in the notes panel for the alternate to describe your thoughts on it or communicate to others about it.

Home Page (Testimonials Idea) - my project - [/Users/leon/Downloads/test6.bmp]

my project

Mockups

Home Page (Testimonials Idea)

Hero Image

What We Do

- One
- Two
- Three
- Four

Testimonials

lore ipsum dolor sit amet, consectetur adipisicing elit, sed do eiusmod tempor incididunt ut labore et dolore magna aliqua. Ut enim ad minim veniam, quis nostrud exercitation ullamco laboris nisi ut aliquip ex ea commodo consequat. Duis aute irure dolor in

Home Page

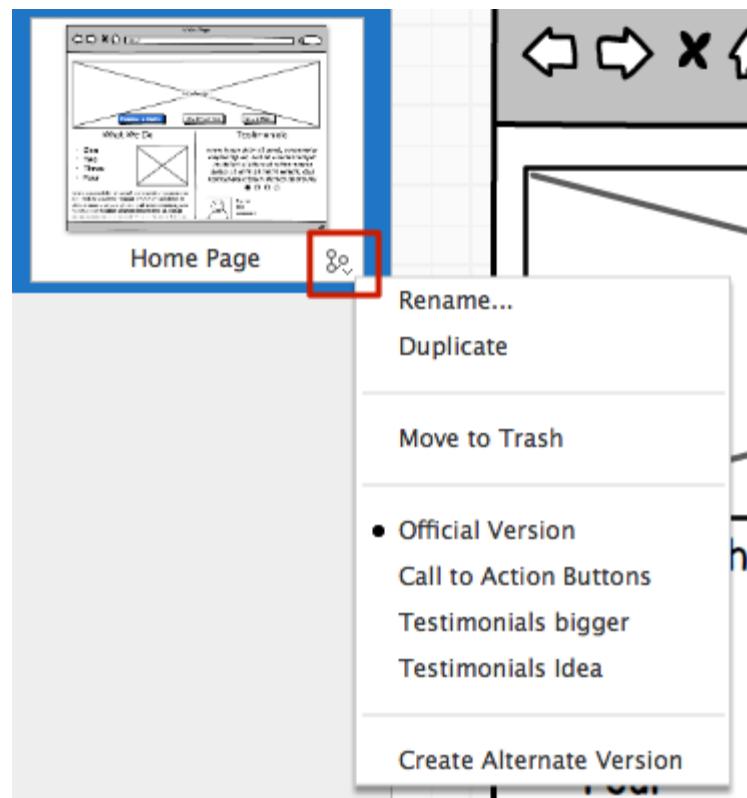
Notes

What if we rotated the testimonials instead?

Alternate Versions

- Official Version
- Testimonials Idea**

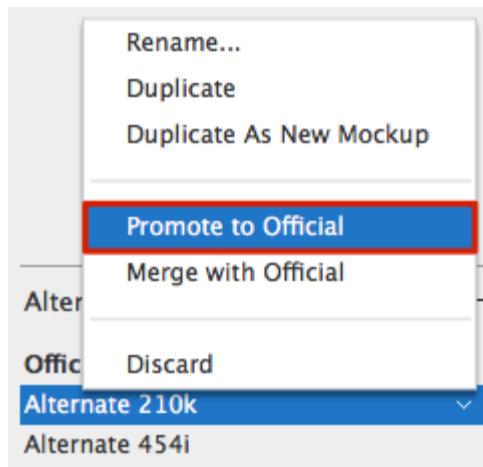
To switch between alternate versions of a mockup select the name of a version from the list in the properties panel or from the context menu in the Navigator panel. You may also switch back to the Official Version by selecting it in the list.



Note: If you link to a mockup that contains an alternate the link will go to the version of the mockup that is selected in the alternates list. The same rule applies to exporting. The selected versions of your mockups will be exported.

Promoting Alternates

If you decide that you like one alternate better than the original mockup you can "promote" it to the official version, which replaces and overwrites the original.

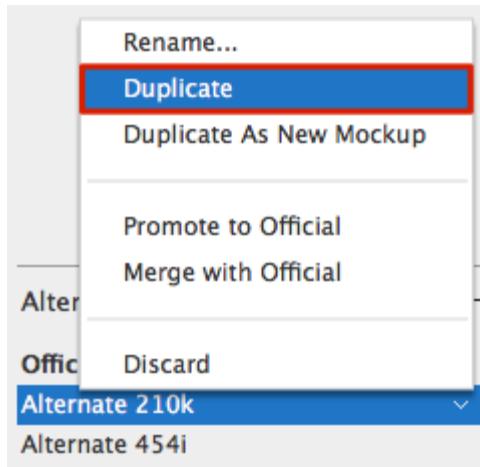


Note: You can undo this action by using the undo command (CTRL/CMD+Z) **three times**.

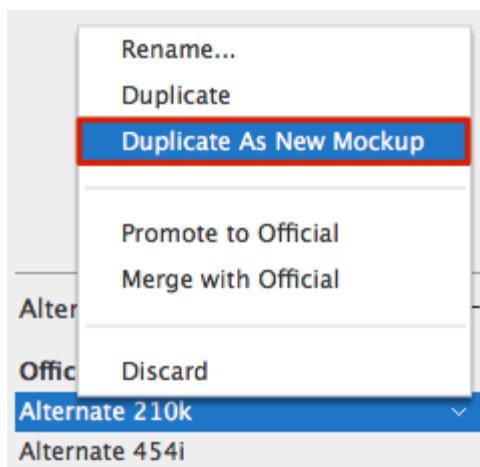
The alternate that was promoted is retained in case you want to preserve it as part of the change history. Otherwise you can discard it.

Duplicating Alternates

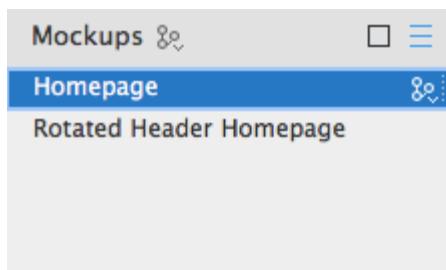
You can duplicate mockups from the contextual menu. Doing this will create a new, randomly named alternate that is an exact copy of the alternate you chose to duplicate.



Sometimes, however, an alternate grows into a mockup all its own. If you would like to create a whole new mockup based on an alternate, you can choose the "Duplicate As New Mockup" option from the contextual menu.

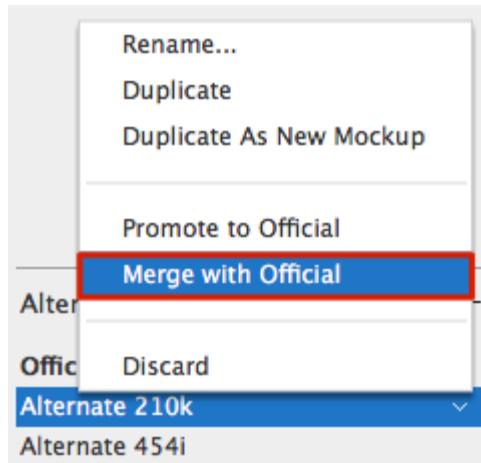


The new mockup will be named using the **Name of the Alternate** and then the **Name of the Original Mockup**. So if you had an alternate named "Rotated Header", in your "Homepage" mockup, the mockup created from the alternate would be named "Rotated Header Homepage".

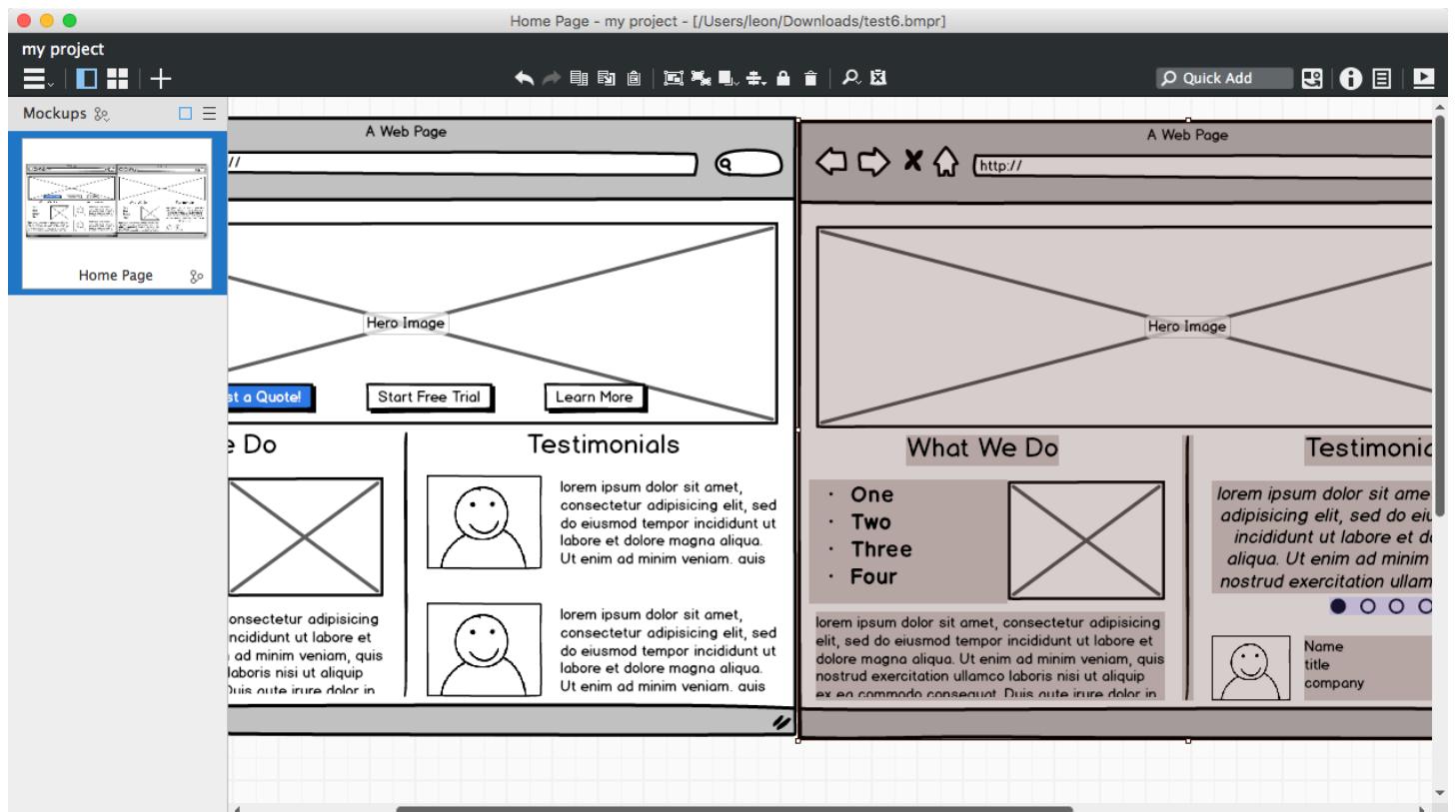


Merging Alternates

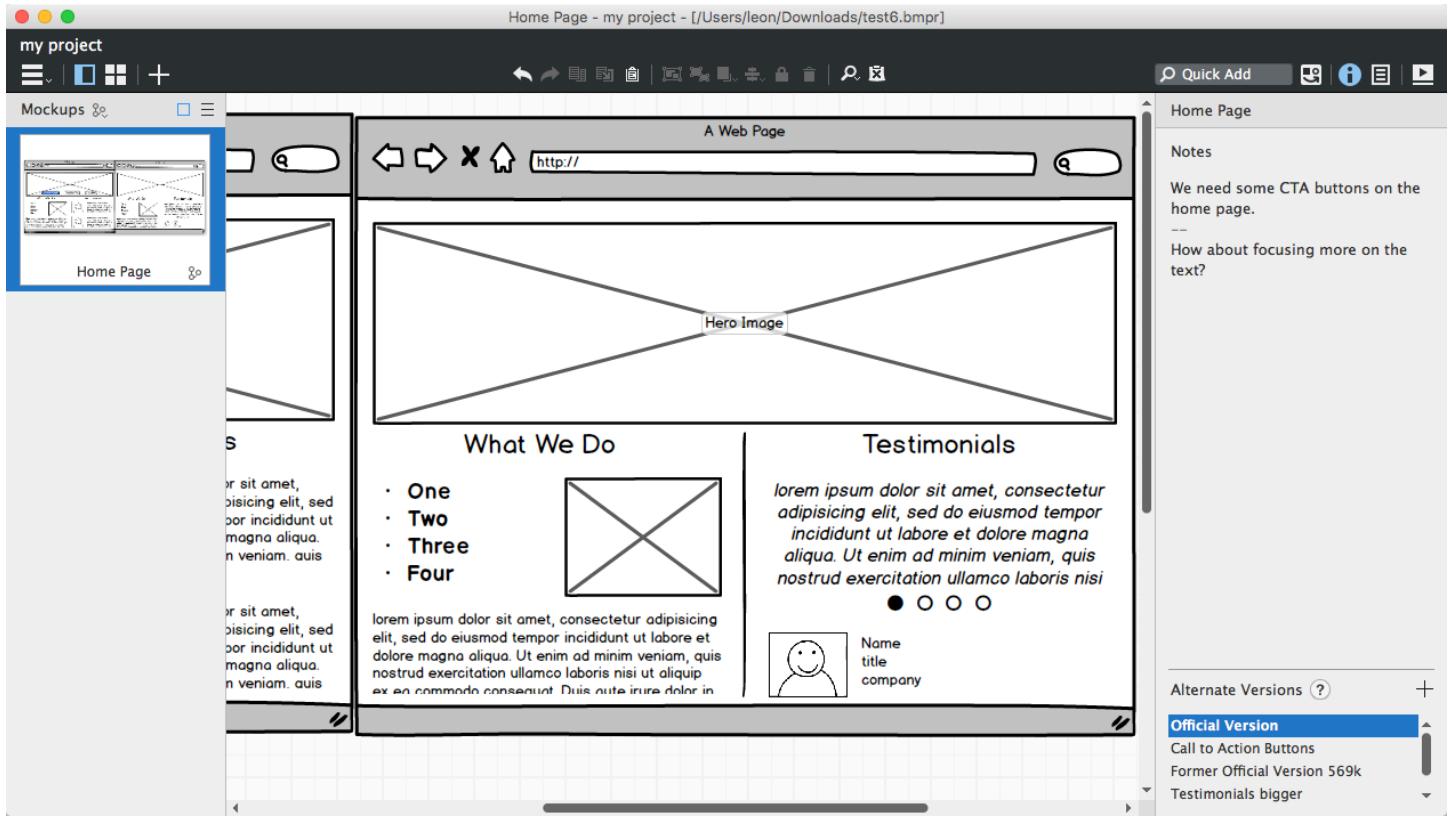
If you want to combine parts of an alternate with the official version, you can use the merge option.



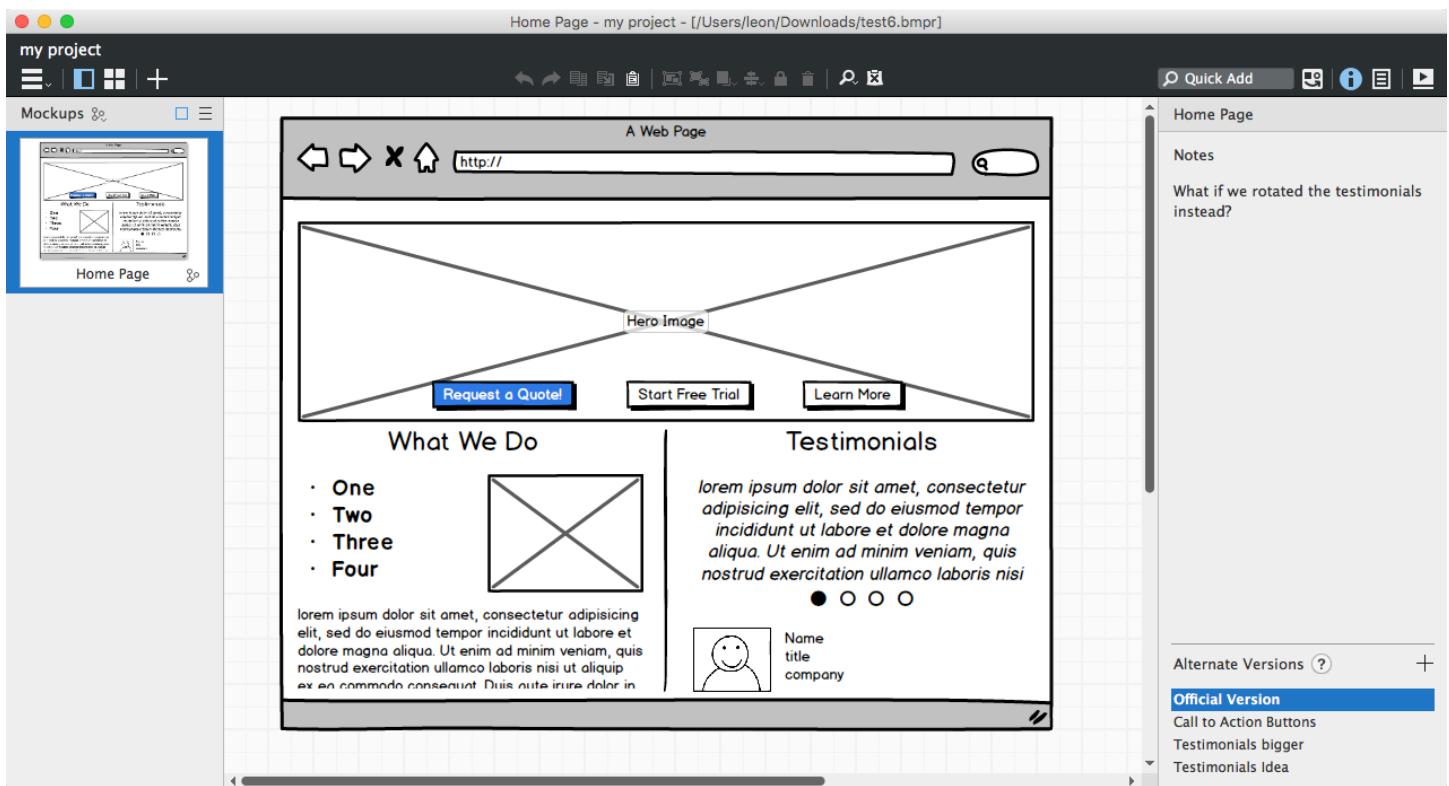
Selecting "Merge with Official" will add the contents of the selected version to the official version, to the right of the mockup contents, as shown below.



If the notes in the alternate are different than the notes in the original, they will also be merged, separated by a dashed horizontal line.



You can then manually edit the contents to create a new official version that is a combination of the preferred elements of each version.



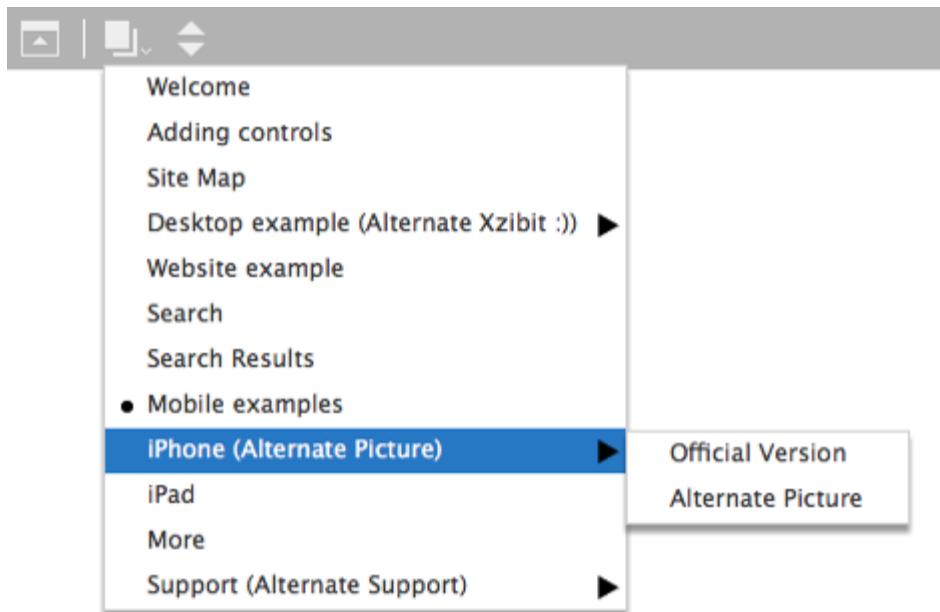
Discarding Alternates

When you have finished reviewing or integrating alternate versions into an official version you can delete alternates you no longer want using the "Discard" option.

Note: Alternates cannot be recovered after they have been discarded.

Alternates in Full Screen Presentation Mode

You can view your alternates in **Full Screen Presentation Mode** by using the navigator dropdown.

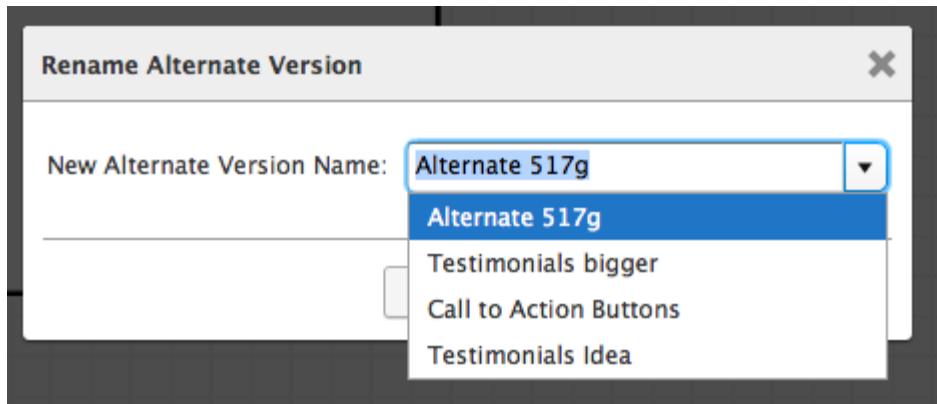


When you select a mockup alternate in this view, its name will show up in parentheses next to the official mockup name.

Project Alternates

In some cases you might want to **propose a set of alternate designs across several mockups**. This might happen if you are reviewing someone else's mockups and want them to see your proposed design changes throughout the project.

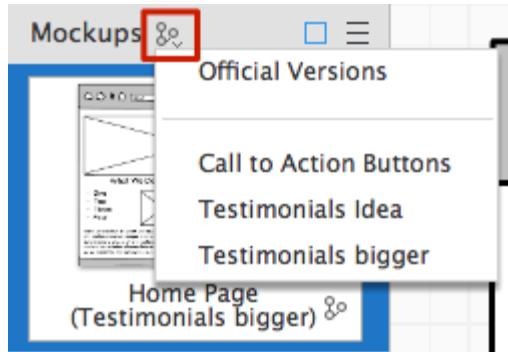
When you rename an alternate you can choose from a list of existing alternate names in the rename dialog. This makes it easy to use the same alternate name in several mockups.



In the Navigator panel next to the word Mockups a menu shows the **names of all**

alternates that appear in your project.

Selecting an alternate from this list will **select that alternate in all the mockups that have an alternate with that name**.



Note: This is conceptually similar to creating a branch in a codebase, except that it only applies to mockups that have specific alternate version names.

So, for example, if you create a series of alternates called "Leon's Proposal" and use the context menu shown above to select that name, any mockup with an alternate called "Leon's Proposal" would switch views to that alternate version.

Mockups without an alternate with that name would not be updated. Promoting, merging, and discarding actions are not available across multiple mockups at once.

[← The Property Inspector](#)

[Working with Text →](#)

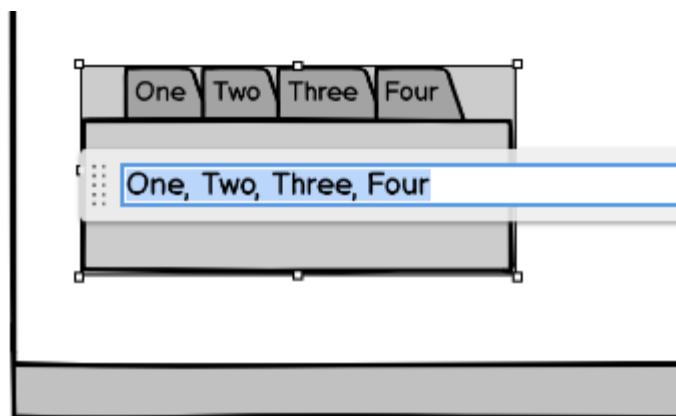
Working with Text

[← Working with Alternates](#)

[Working with Data Grids / Tables →](#)

Many Mockups UI controls, such as Button, Label or DataGridView, have text in them. To edit the text, double-click on the control and start typing. Or, if you have the control selected, simply hit Enter or F2 to start editing. To commit the text you typed, simply click anywhere other than the text field you typed in or hit Enter or CTRL+Enter. If you want to discard the text changes you just made, hit the ESC key.

Some controls use certain characters as separators. For instance, to create multiple tabs in a tabs bar, you separate them with a comma.



Or, a space character separates tags in a Tag Cloud control. Some other controls, like the Tree, use other characters altogether. In such cases the default text for the Control includes explanations on how to use it.

When editing text in a Label or Paragraph control you will see a small number in the lower-right corner of the editing box. This is the number of characters, which can be useful for copywriting or other purposes.

Basic Formatting

Text Style

You can use the following notation to format only certain parts of your control's text.

- for italic, use _this notation_
- for a link, use [this notation]
- for bold, use *this notation*
- for disabled, use –this notation–
- for underlined, use &this notation&
- for strikethrough, use ~this notation~
- for color, use {color:#FF0000}this notation{color}.
- for font size, use {size:16}this notation{size}

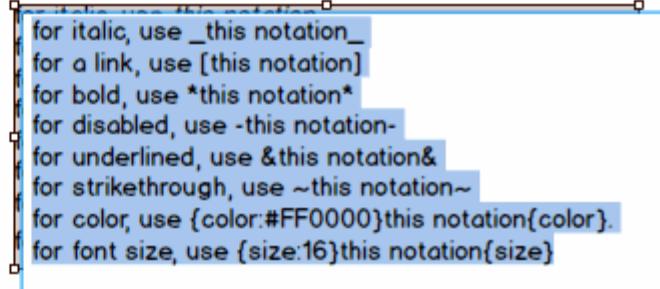
All of the above syntax works around words separated by white spaces, and underline will work within words.

Notes:

1. The #FF0000 above is the color in HEX form, just like HTML. The macro will work with or without the pound sign. You can also use certain color names (green, yellow, etc.) which you can find by moving your mouse over the colors in the color palette in the Property Inspector.
2. See the [next section](#making-links-in-text-actually-work) for how to turn [linked text] into functioning links to websites or other mockups.
3. This formatting syntax also works for text entered into the [Notes panel](/wireframes/desktop/docs/inspector/#adding-notes-to-your-mockups-symbols-and-assets) _except_ italic and strikethrough.

Here's a screenshot of what the above text looks like in a Paragraph control, for instance:

```
for italic, use this notation
for a link, use this notation
for bold, use this notation
for disabled, use this notation
for underlined, use this notation
for strikethrough, use this notation
for color, use this notation.
for font size, use this notation
```



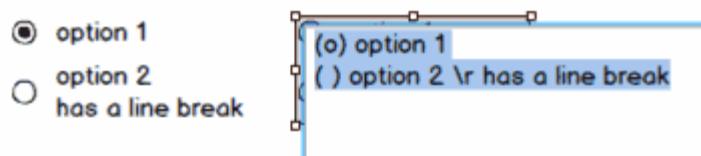
The shortcuts will work almost everywhere where it makes sense, and you can combine them, so to make an italic link use `_this_` or `_this_`.

Some controls like Paragraph or Label allow you to "unbold" the text via the Property Inspector panel. If you do so, the words you **bolded** will stay bold. A few controls use bold text by default, so bolding text within those controls won't make a difference.

If you want to show these special formatting characters as actual text, you can escape the *, _, -, [and] characters with *, _, \-, \[and \], so if you want to write "this [is] some text" and don't want the "is" to become a link, just type "this \[is\] some text".

Line Breaks

Most controls allow you to insert a line break to wrap text from one line to the next. You can do this by writing \r in front of the text you want to start on a new line. See the example below where a line break is used in the second item in a Radio Button control.



Bulleted Lists

In a paragraph control, you can create a bulleted list by preceding text with either a hyphen or an asterisk followed by a space.

```
* item 1  
* item 2  
- item 3  
- item 4
```

Making Links in Text Actually Work

If you are using the link notation above (e.g., [this is a link]), you can turn link-formatted text into actual links using [markdown syntax](#).

To do this, **add the link destination in parentheses immediately after the link text**. The link destination can be a URL or the name of another mockup in the same folder. All the following formats are valid.

Web addresses:

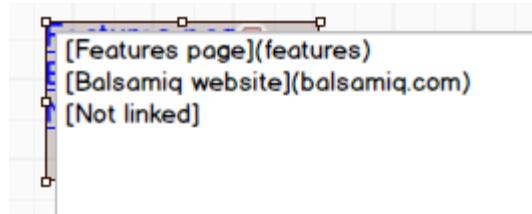
```
[Google Home Page](google.com)  
[Google Home Page](www.google.com)  
[Google Home Page](http://www.google.com)  
[Google Home Page](https://google.com)
```

Mockups in the same project:

```
[Features Page](features)
```

Adding links in this way will cause them to show up in the Property Inspector as well, as shown below.

This text



results in

Link Type	Value
Hide	Hidden
Features page	features
Balsamiq website	http://balsamiq...
Not linked	No Link
Whole Control	No Link

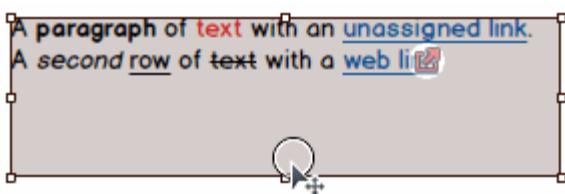
You can link specific strings of text as well as the whole control.

Note: If the whole control is linked, text links will be disabled. If the whole control is subsequently unlinked, the previous text links will return.

More Macros

 Lorem

Type lorem in a Paragraph or Text Area to use our [Lorem Ipsum](#) generator.



{Mockup-Name}

Type {mockup-name} (all lower-case) in a Label, Text, Title or Subtitle control to show the current mockup name.

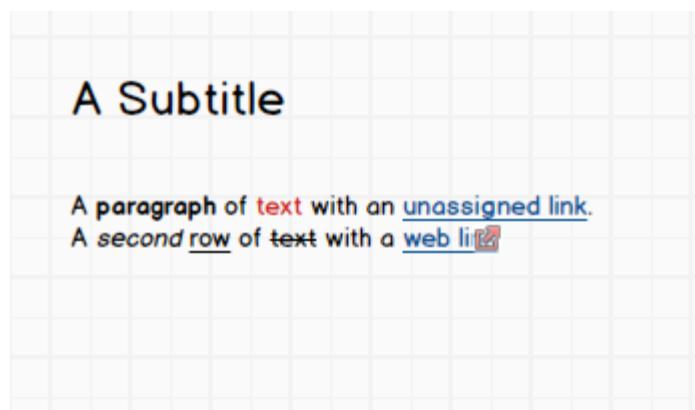
Placeholder Text

Another option for creating placeholder text, besides the [Lorem Ipsum text generator](#), is to use the **Line of Text** and **Block of Text** controls.



Note: Read about [drawing these controls directly on the canvas](#) to learn how to add them really quickly.

You can convert them to real text at any time by editing them and entering some text.



← Working with Alternates

Working with Data Grids / Tables →

Working with Data Grids / Tables

[← Working with Text](#)

[Working with Icons →](#)

The Data Grid control functions like many other [text-based controls](#). It uses commas as column separators and new lines as rows. A basic table with three columns and two rows would look like this:

```
First Name, Last Name, Email Address  
firstname, lastname, email@email.com
```

You can choose whether to show the first row as a header row in the [Property Inspector](#), as well as specifying the row height, row colors, and grid lines.

Text in the Data Grid can be formatted as bold, italic, etc. using the [same syntax as other text controls](#).

Column Width Options

Mockups lets you specify individual width and alignment options for each Data Grid column.

Here are the details for creating column widths:

- You have to add a special line of text as the last line of text in your table, and it has to be wrapped by {} curly brackets
- For each column, use 0 if you want the column to be as small as possible to fit the text in that column, or a number
- Numbers specify the relative size of columns, so {2,1} means "make the first column twice as big as the second one in this two-column grid. Or {70,20,10} means "in this 3-column grid, make the 1st column 70%, the 2nd 20% and the 3rd 10% of the width of the whole table."
- You can combine numbers and zeros, e.g., {1,0,4}
- If you want to align column individually, add either L, C or R right after a number, like so: {0R,2L,1}, which means "in this 3 column grid, make the 1st column as small as possible and always align it to the right, the second twice as big as the third and always align it left, and use the Data Grid's alignment (from the property inspector) to decide how to align the 3rd column".

Using Icons and Selection Controls in a Data Grid

Data Grid supports sort icons in headers using the following text:

- Ascending: ^
- Descending: v

Data Grids support a single checkbox or radio button in a table cell using the following text:

- Checkbox: [] or []
- Selected checkbox: [x] or [v] or [o] or [*] or [X] or [V] or [O]
- Indeterminate checkbox: [-]
- Radio button: () or ()
- Selected radio button: (x) or (v) or (o) or (*) or (X) or (V) or (O)
- Indeterminate radio button: (-)

Creating Line Returns in a Data Grid

Sometimes you want to create line returns in a table cell. To do this, you can use "\r" to create a line return.

The code example below would print on two lines.

```
Name\r(job title)
```

Pasting Data from Excel

Some people like to prepare tables in a spreadsheet application like Excel. You can copy and paste a range of cells directly from Excel into the Data Grid/Table component. Just copy/paste and it will just work. It also works in the opposite direction from Mockups to Excel.

Note: If you have commas in your cells, you will have to escape them with a backslash like this:

1\,000\,000

The component recognizes both commas and tabs as delimiters. Anything else should be populated into cells.

[← Working with Text](#)

[Working with Icons →](#)

[Balsamiq for Desktop Docs](#) > Working with Icons

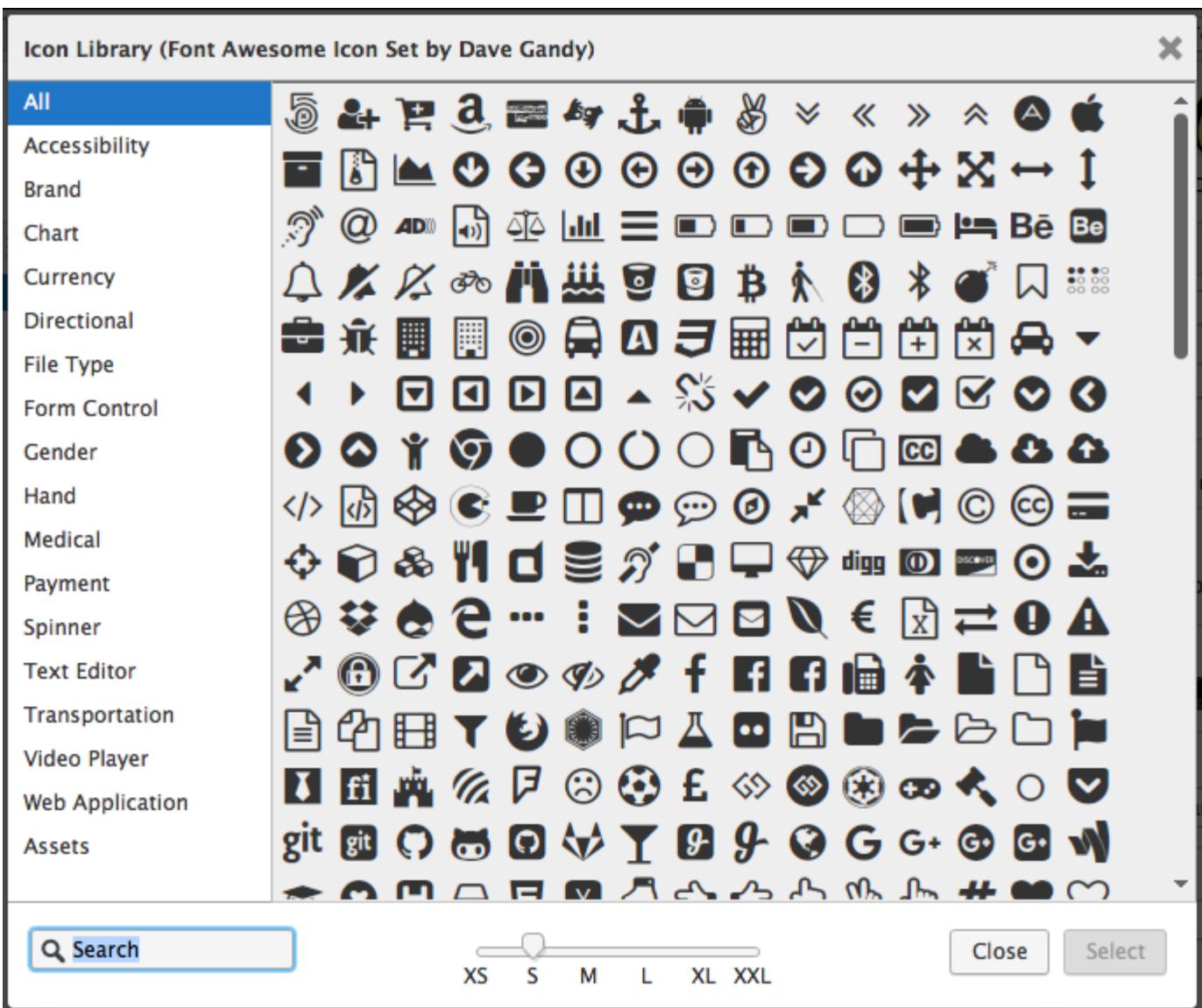
Working with Icons

[← Working with Data Grids / Tables](#)

[Working with Images and Assets →](#)

Balsamiq Mockups 3 includes the amazing [Font Awesome](#) icon set. It contains over 500 icons in a wide range of categories that can be sized from very small to very large. It is also updated frequently and we plan to keep up with the updates whenever we release a new version of our product ([more about why we switched here](#)).

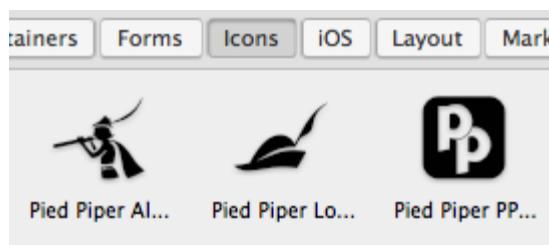
It should meet all your icon needs, but if not, you can [add your own icons](#) or [request new ones from Font Awesome](#).



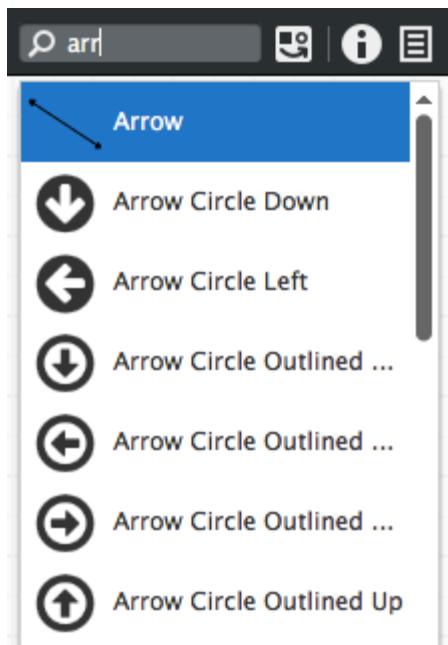
Icons from previous versions of Balsamiq Mockups have been remapped to the new icons.

Adding Icons via the UI Library and Quick Add

Also new in Balsamiq 3, icons now have their own category in the UI Library so you can drag and drop them just like any other control.



Not only that, they show up in the Quick Add results, saving you time when searching by name or keyword.



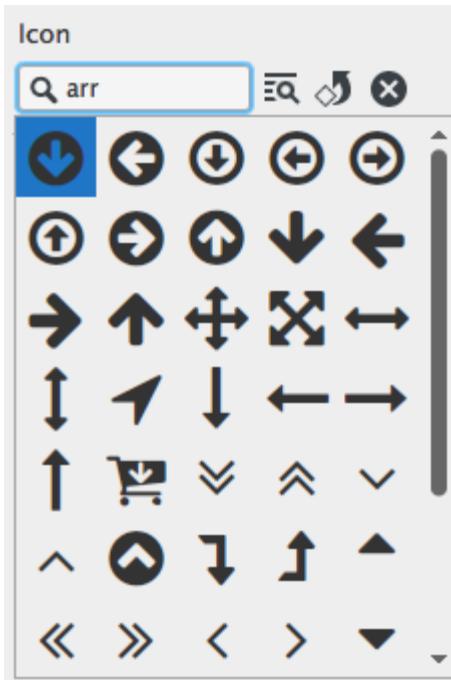
Icon search results are shown *below* any UI controls that match the text you enter.

Adding and Swapping Icons via the Property Inspector

Some controls allow you to add icons to them (buttons, for example). You can do this from the [Property Inspector](#) in one of two ways: the icon search and the icon library dialog.

Icon Search

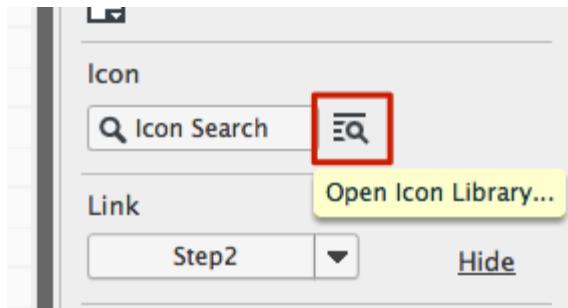
If the control you selected support icons, you will see the icon search box in the property inspector. This works much like [the Quick Add tool](#), just type a few letters from the name of the icon you are looking for and a list of suggestions will pop up as a grid of icons to choose from. Just click on the one you want to select it.



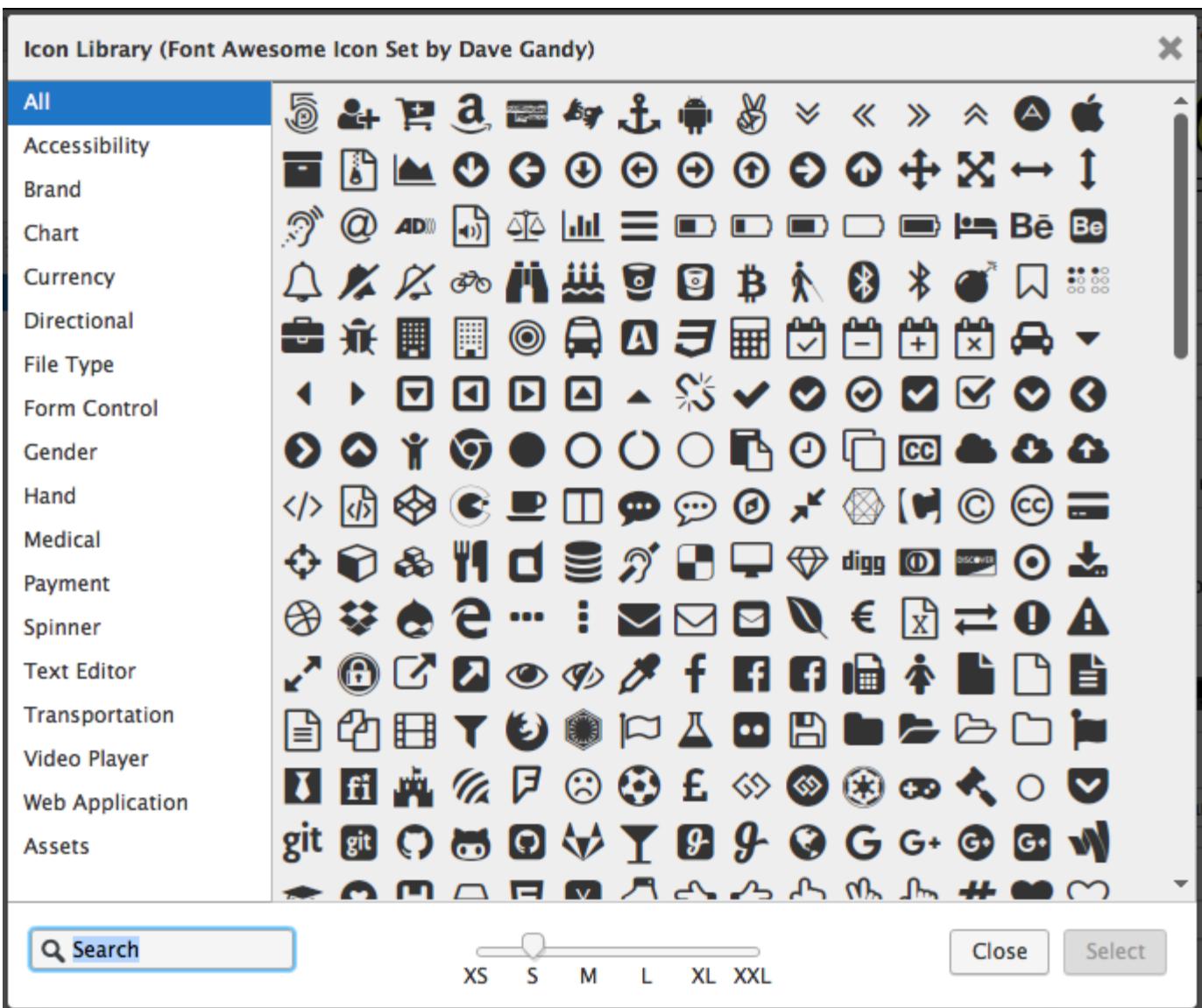
You can then size the icon from "XS" (16px) to "XXL" (128px). You can also rotate icons in 90 degree increments using the button next to the search box.

The Icon Library Dialog

If you'd like to explore all the icons that are available, click on the icon to the right of the icon search box.



This will bring up the icon library dialog, where you can browse the icons by category and preview them at different sizes. You can double-click an icon to select it immediately or click once to select and then click the "Select" button to add it.



Once you have selected an icon, you can resize it, rotate it or remove it via the Property Inspector.

Adding Your Own Icons

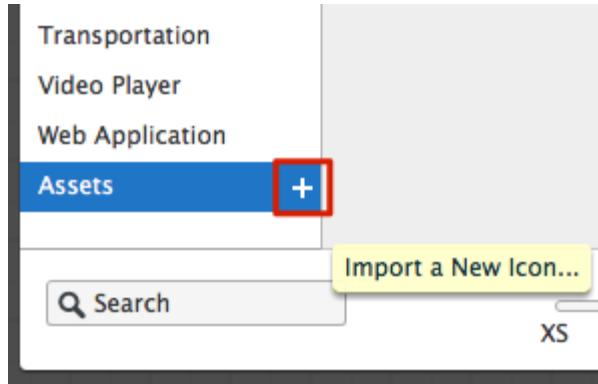
You can also easily add your own icons for use in your wireframes.

Using Your Image Assets

You can pick any of your imported image [assets](#) and use it as an icon. They will automatically show up in the icon library, under the Assets category at the bottom.

Adding via the Icon Library Dialog

You can also add your own icons from the icon library dialog.



Select the Assets category, then click the little plus button, select an image file and your image will be resized down to fit an existing icon size and copied to your assets.

Best Practices for Creating or Preparing Custom Icons

Mockups works with color and transparency, but icons you add may not turn out looking as you want them to if they're not prepared to work the way Mockups expects them to. Below are some tips to get the most out of your custom icons.

Color

- Mockups uses black as a color for replacement at 100% opacity.
- Icons that aren't created with black can have undesirable effects when colorized.
- We recommend using black as the color for your icons.

Transparent Areas

- Mockups colorizes the entire opaque area of the icon.
- For best results, we recommend knocking out "white" areas of your icon using transparency. Transparent PNG works best.

The example below shows regular icons in the left column, a custom icon properly prepared with black fills in the middle column, and a custom icon that doesn't work as well in the right column. To fix the icon in the right column, the exclamation point should be made transparent, and the icon color should be black.

Regular Icon

Custom Icon

Custom Icon

Gray fill, middle not transparent

Black fill icon with transparency



Icon or button color set to red



[← Working with Data Grids / Tables](#)

[Working with Images and Assets →](#)

[Balsamiq for Desktop Docs](#) > Working with Images and Assets

Working with Images and Assets

[← Working with Icons](#)

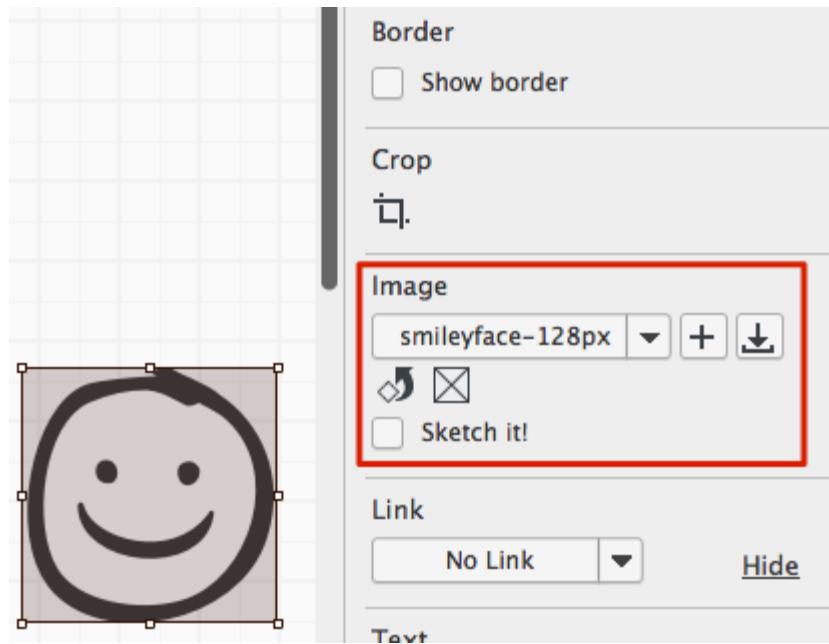
[Working with Markup →](#)

There are multiple ways to add images to your mockups. The easiest way is to simply drag and drop an image file from your computer on to the Mockups canvas. Read on to learn more about adding and using images and other assets in your projects.

Adding Images in Mockups View

As mentioned above, dragging an image from your computer to Balsamiq Mockups will add it to the canvas. Doing this will place the image into the selected mockup and copy the image file to your [Assets](#) so that you can easily reuse it in other mockups.

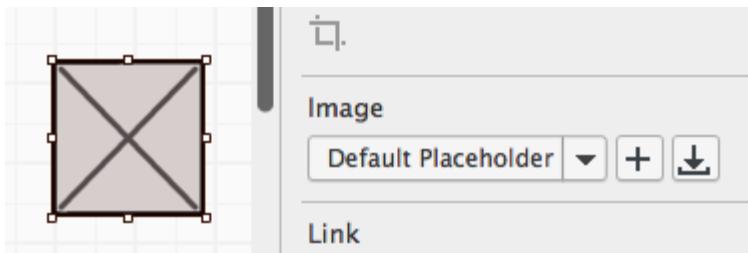
You can modify the image properties in the Property Inspector, similar to other UI controls.



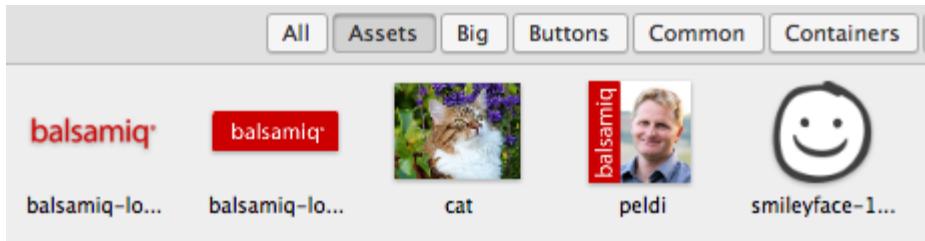
The properties specific to images are as follows:

- The **drop-down box** shows you the name of the current image. Opening it allows you to select a different image from the images you've already imported to your [Assets](#).
- The "**+**" **icon** next to the drop-down box allows you to add an image from your computer. This is the same as dragging and dropping an image file.
- Clicking the **download icon** opens a dialog to add image from the web by entering a URL directly or by searching Flickr. Mockups supports GIF, JPG/JPEG, and PNG image file formats. Files downloaded from the web will be copied to your project.
- Click the **rotate icon** below the image drop-down to rotate your image in 90-degree increments.
- Clicking the **square with an 'x' inside it** will revert the image to the default placeholder image.
- The "**"Sketch it!" checkbox** will convert your image to a black and white line drawing version.

If you don't yet have an image ready or want to use a placeholder image to keep your mockup low-fidelity, you can add an Image control from the [UI Library](#) and it will show up as a box with an 'X' through it. You can later replace it with an image using the image properties described above.



Once an image has been added to your project it will show up in the UI Library so that you can easily add it to any mockup in your project. The "Assets" category will show all of the images that you've added to your project.



This also means that you can add your images to your mockups from the [Quick Add](#) box. Just type the first few letters of the image name and it will appear in the list.

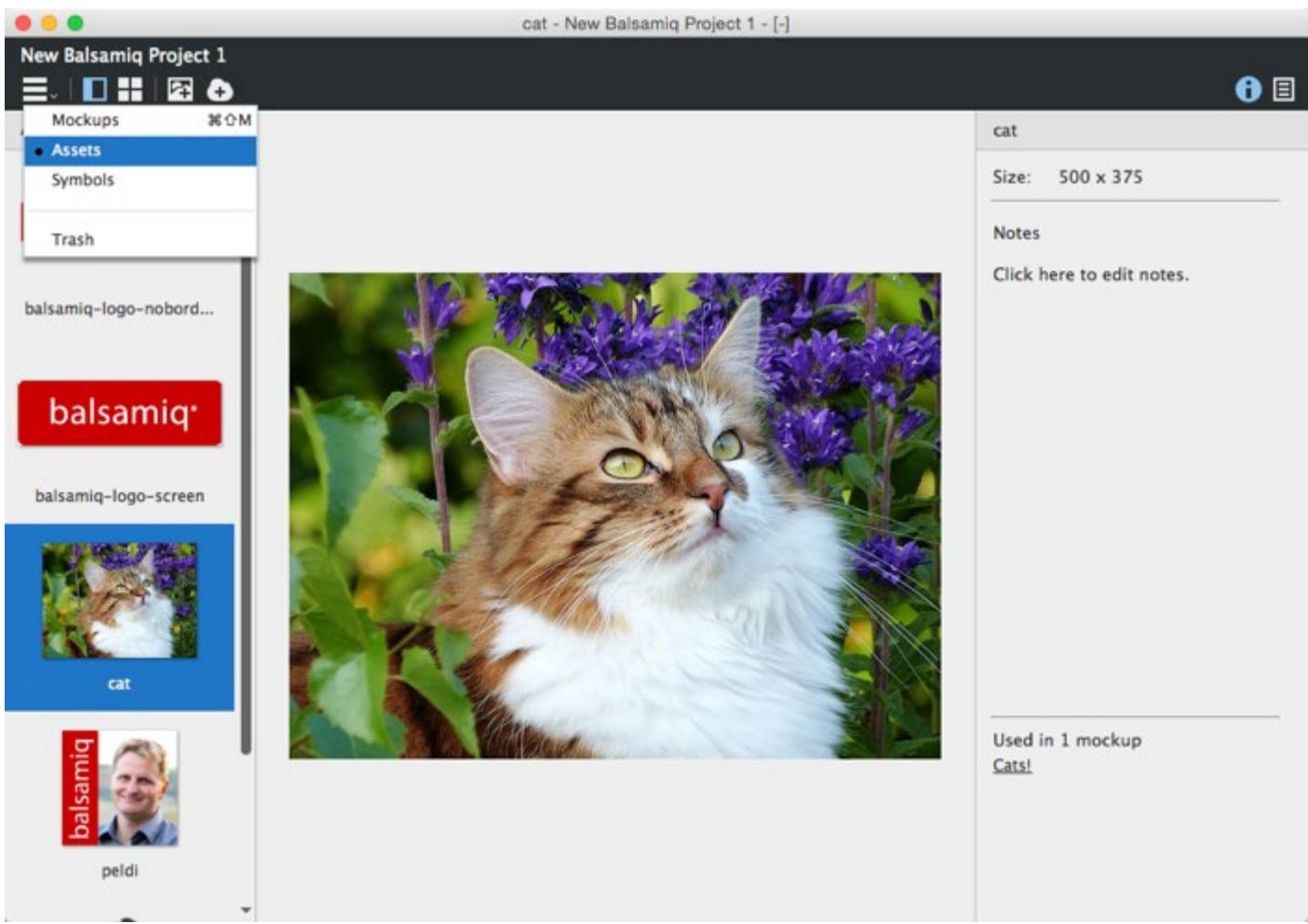
Note: You can delete an image by right-clicking on it in the UI Library and selecting "Move Image to Trash" or from the [context menu in the Assets view](#).

The image properties panel also allows you to crop or mask images to only show a selected portion of them. You can [watch a tutorial on cropping images here](#). Images that have been cropped will show an icon to remove the cropping in the properties panel.

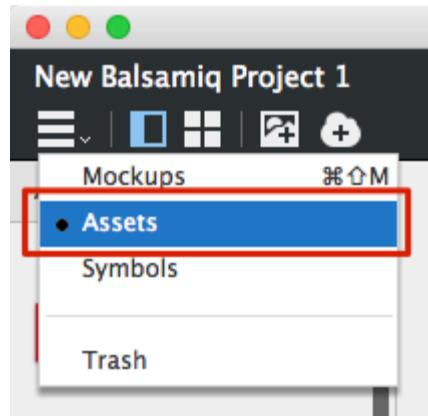
Aside from the Image control, you can also embed images in the Cover Flow control.

Adding Images in Assets View

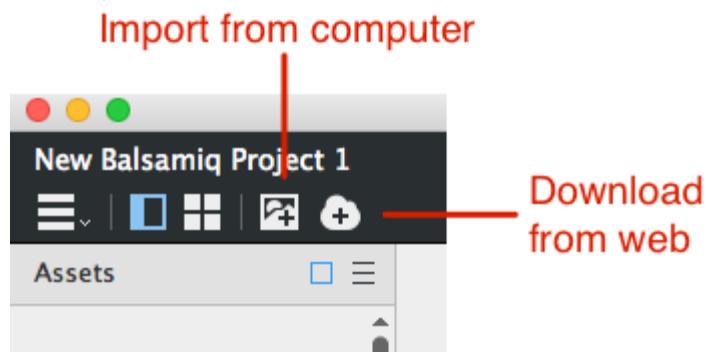
Balsamiq Mockups 3 has a dedicated area of the user interface for managing images, icons and other assets called the Assets view.



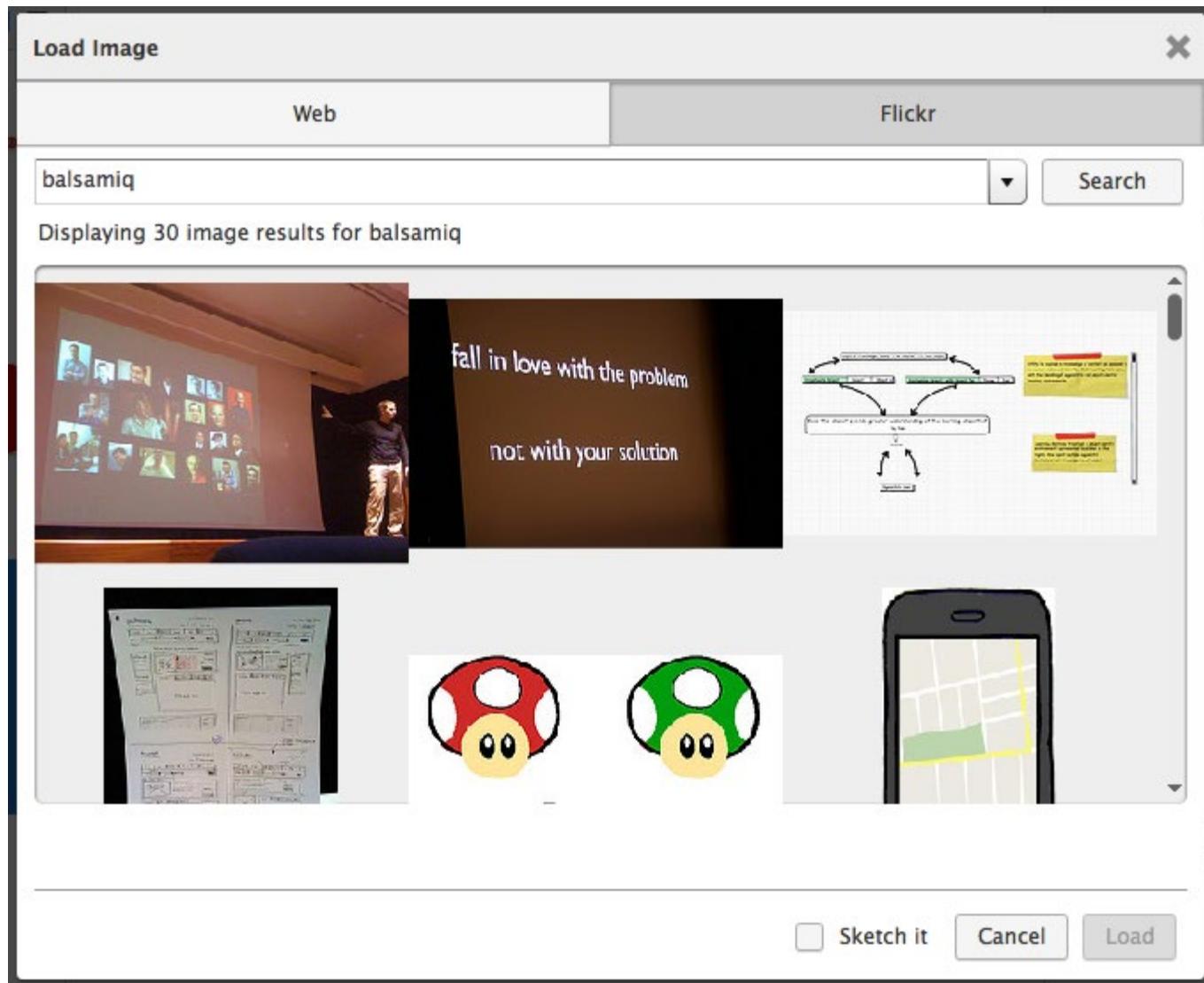
The Assets view shows all images and [custom icons](#) that have been added to your project. You can get to it by switching the navigator view to Assets.



You can add images in the Assets view by dragging and dropping from your computer or by using the icons in the toolbar.



The "Import Asset..." icon allows you to select one or more images from your computer while the "Download Asset..." icon brings up the same dialog as in the Mockups view to enter an image URL or search for an image from Flickr.



Once you've added images, you can view them as thumbnails or a list, as well as in

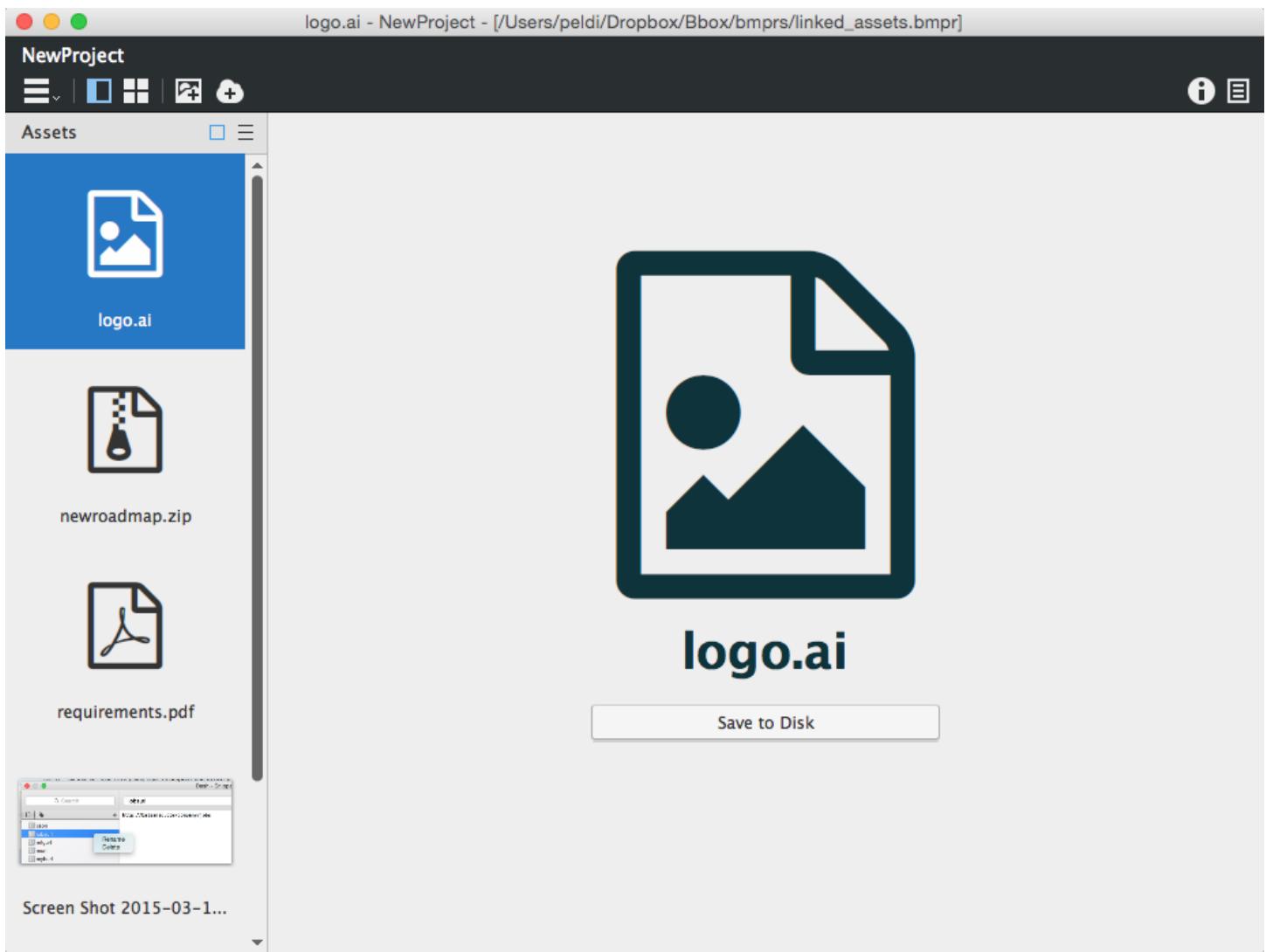
[Thumbnail Grid view.](#)

The [Properties panel](#) on the right shows you the pixel dimensions of the selected image and allows you to enter notes about it. The lower portion of the panel shows which mockups (if any) the image is used in. This can be used for managing images to see if you can delete any that aren't being used, for example. Clicking on a mockup name will take you to that mockup in the Mockups view.

Adding Non-Image Assets

You can also store other types of files in your project that won't be used in your mockups, such as requirements documents, Photoshop or Illustrator files, PDFs, or any other file that's associated with the project. We call these "non-image assets" and they can be added to your project by dragging them into the Assets view, just like images. Common file types (zip, pdf, doc, etc.) will be shown with an appropriate logo, as shown below. Other files will be have a generic document icon.

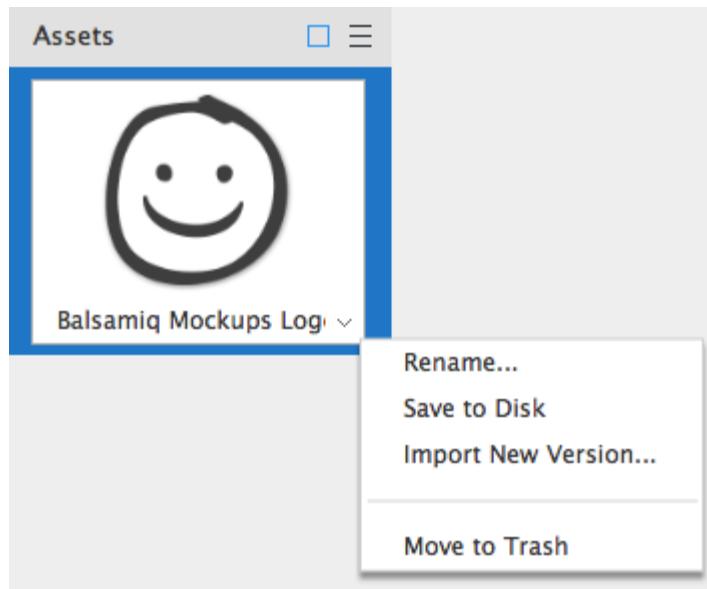
Note: Assets are limited to 20 Megabytes per file for performance reasons.



These files can't be viewed inside the application, but they are "packaged" with your project, so if you give the project file to someone else they will be able to save the files from the Balsamiq project to their computer using the "Save to disk" button or [context menu item](#).

Managing Images and Other Assets

As with the Mockups view, the Assets view has a [context menu](#) that you can open by right-clicking in the navigator or using the drop-down arrow. This allows you to rename, delete, update, or download your images and other assets.



Renaming Assets

Renaming assets using the context menu will change the name of the asset in your project. It will not affect the original file, as the asset is a copy that has been added to your project. Renamed images will get updated in your mockups, so you don't need to update them manually.

Saving Assets from Your Project to Your Computer

You can get assets from your project on to your computer by using the "Save to Disk" option in the context menu, allowing you to extract assets from your project for other uses.

Replacing or Updating Assets

The "Import New Version..." menu option allows you to select a new assets to replace the selected assets with. This is useful if you want to update an image that is already in use in your mockups, for example. The new version will then be used anywhere the selected image was used.

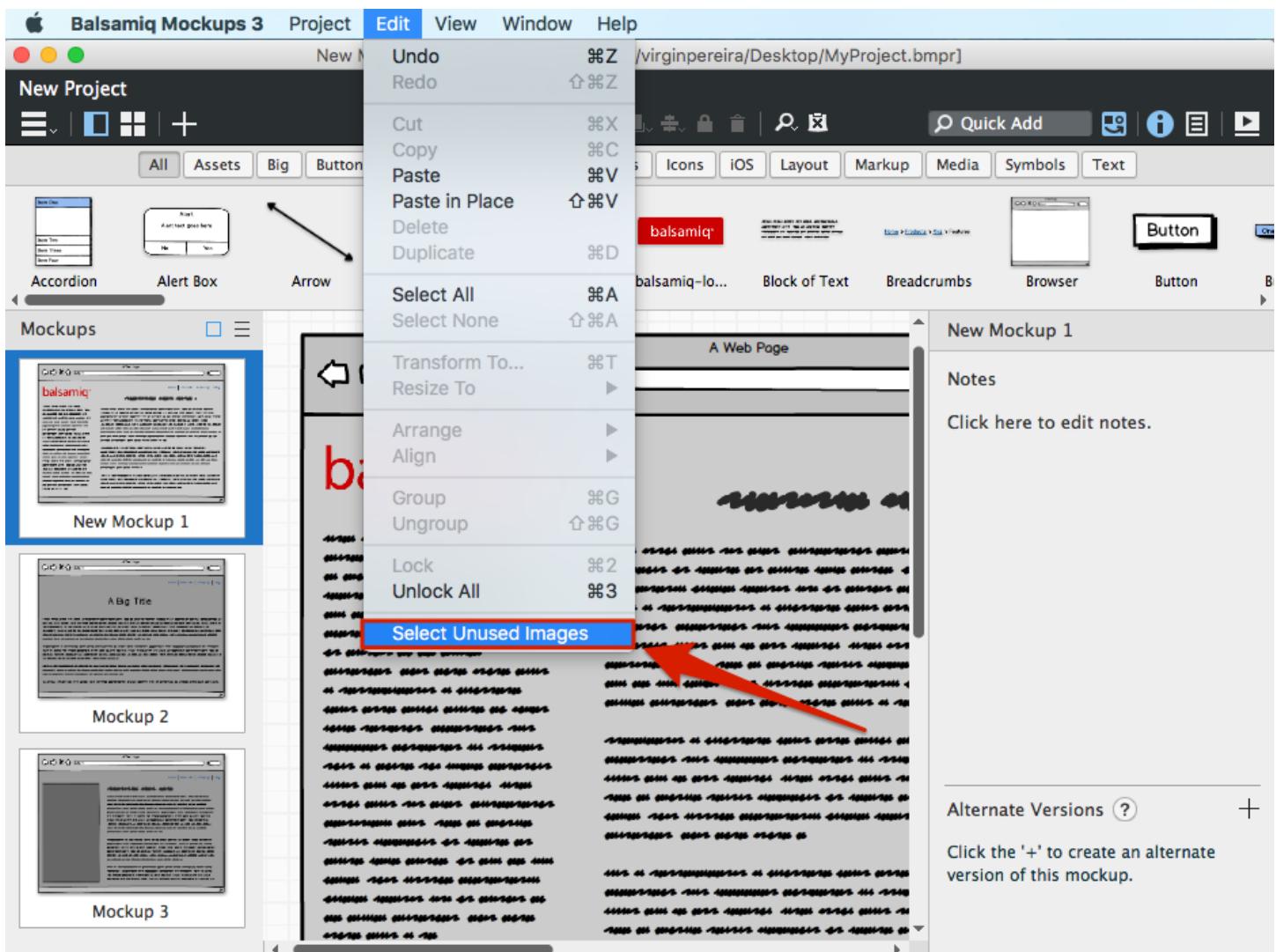
Deleting Assets

You can also use the context menu to delete assets from your project. Just like your mockups, deleting will move assets to the [trash](#), where you can delete them permanently or restore them. Note that deleting an image from the mockups canvas doesn't remove it from your project.

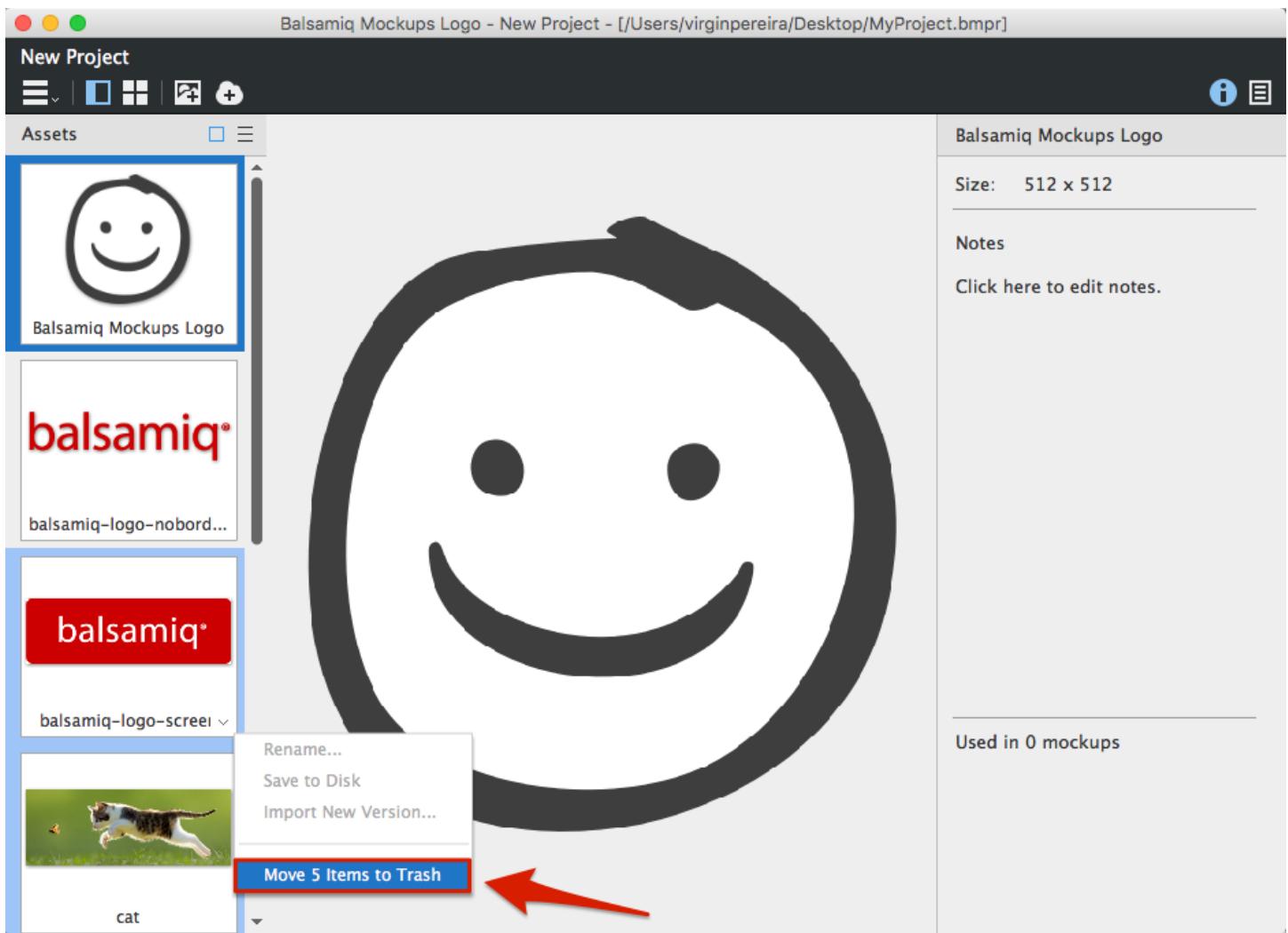
Select Unused Images

Another option allows you to select all images that are not used in your mockups. The

option is available in the **Edit** menu, as shown below:



Selecting it will open the [Assets view](#) where all the unused images will be selected for you. You can then delete them as explained [above](#). This is a great way to reduce your project's file size.



Using Images as Icons

You can use any of your imported image assets as an **icon**. They will automatically show up in the icon library, under the Assets category at the bottom.

Icon Library (Font Awesome Icon Set by Dave Gandy)



- All
- Accessibility
- Brand
- Chart
- Currency
- Directional
- File Type
- Form Control
- Gender
- Hand
- Medical
- Payment
- Spinner
- Text Editor
- Transportation
- Video Player
- Web Application

Assets



XS S M L XL XXL

[Close](#)

[Select](#)

[← Working with Icons](#)

[Working with Markup →](#)

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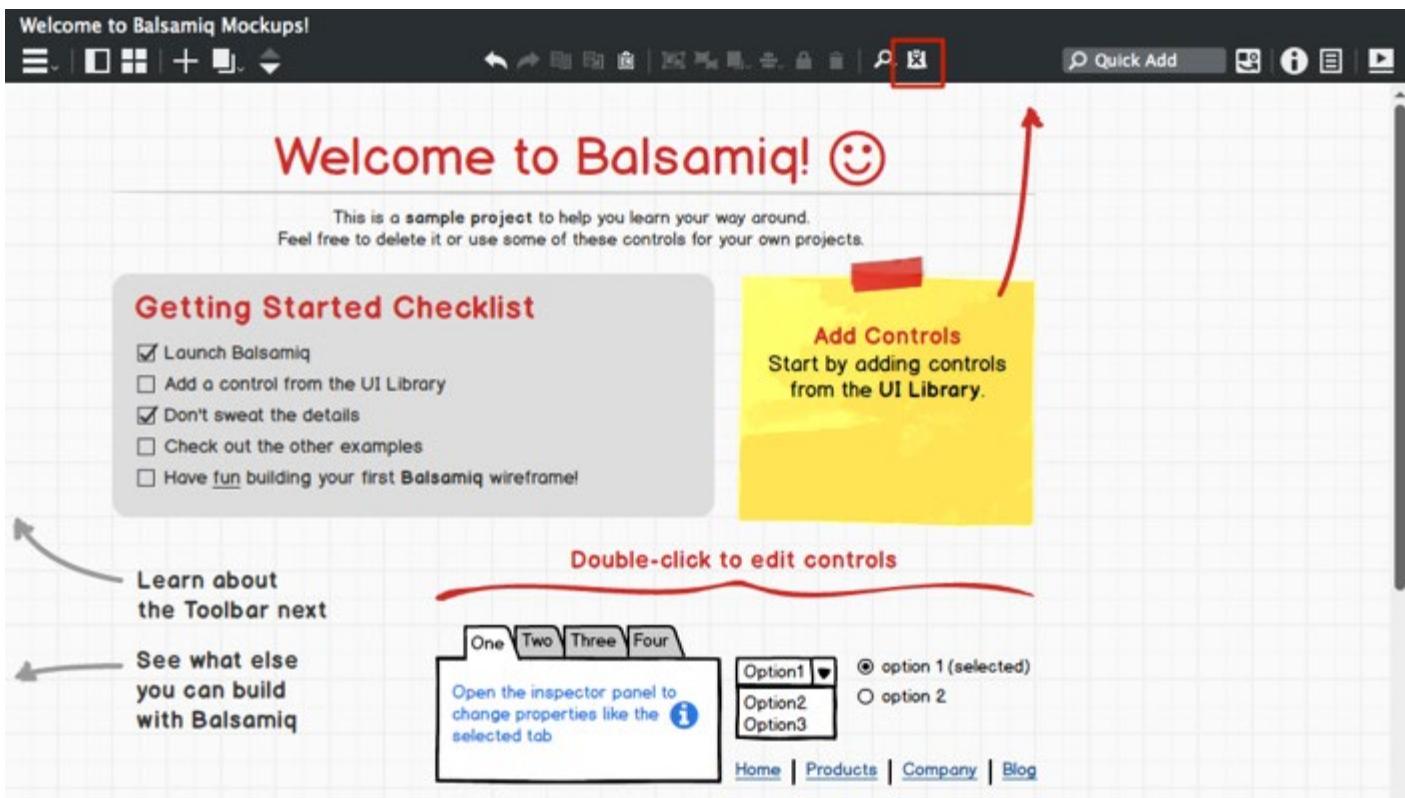
Working with Markup

[← Working with Images and Assets](#)

[Working with Symbols →](#)

Markup is a special kind of component in the UI Library that is used for adding annotations, comments, and explanatory notes.

Commonly used Markup items include: Arrow / Line, Callout, Sticky Note, Red X, and Curly Braces. The screenshot below shows the Markup button panel selected in the UI Library, and markup items on the page.



Toggling Markup on and Off

When you're editing your mockups, you will sometimes want to see what the mockup looks like with Markup off. You can do this by using the Show/Hide Markup toggle button at the right end of the toolbar.

The screenshot below shows the previous page with Markup off.

Welcome to Balsamiq Mockups!

Show Markup

Welcome to Balsamiq! ☺

This is a sample project to help you learn your way around.
Feel free to delete it or use some of these controls for your own projects.

Getting Started Checklist

- Launch Balsamiq
- Add a control from the UI Library
- Don't sweat the details
- Check out the other examples
- Have fun building your first Balsamiq wireframe!

One Two Three Four

Open the inspector panel to change properties like the selected tab

Option1 Option2 Option3

option 1 (selected)
option 2

Home | Products | Company | Blog

Markup Toggling with Keyboard Shortcuts

There are keyboard shortcuts for toggling visibility on and off.

Press CTRL+K on Windows (CMD+K on Mac) to toggle markup on and off.

In Full Screen presentation mode you can just press the "M" (or "K") key.

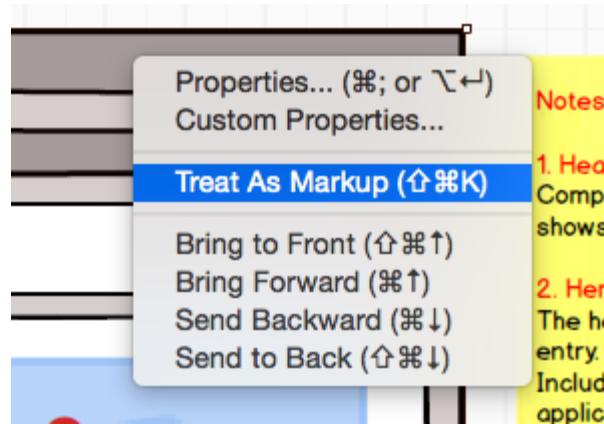
Making Items Markup and Non-Markup

Sometimes you will want Markup items to be treated as non-markup or vice-versa. For example, you could use the iPhone control as a guide for designing a mobile screen, but you might want to hide the iPhone itself when you export it and view it on a mobile device.

If you want to make a Markup item Non-Markup, right click on the component and select the "Do Not Treat as Markup" option in the context menu. This will allow the component to be visible when the Markup visibility toggle is set to on or off.

You can use this "Treat As Markup / Do Not Treat As Markup" feature on any component. If you right-click on a regular component, you can make it behave like Markup by selecting

"Treat as Markup." It will be hidden when you toggle Markup visibility off.



Exporting Markup to PNG and PDF

If you want your Markup components to appear or be hidden in your exported PNG images or your Exported PDF, simply toggle the Markup visibility as shown above, and Export.

[Balsamiq for Desktop Docs](#) > Working with Symbols

Working with Symbols

[← Working with Markup](#)

[Working with Site Maps →](#)

Balsamiq Mockups supports the concept of Symbols. A Symbol is a group of controls that represents a single piece of functionality. It is often used for parts of the user interface that show up on several screens. Other software sometimes refers to this feature as templates, master pages, custom components, or widgets.

In essence, Symbols let you create reusable common elements that you can use across different mockups.

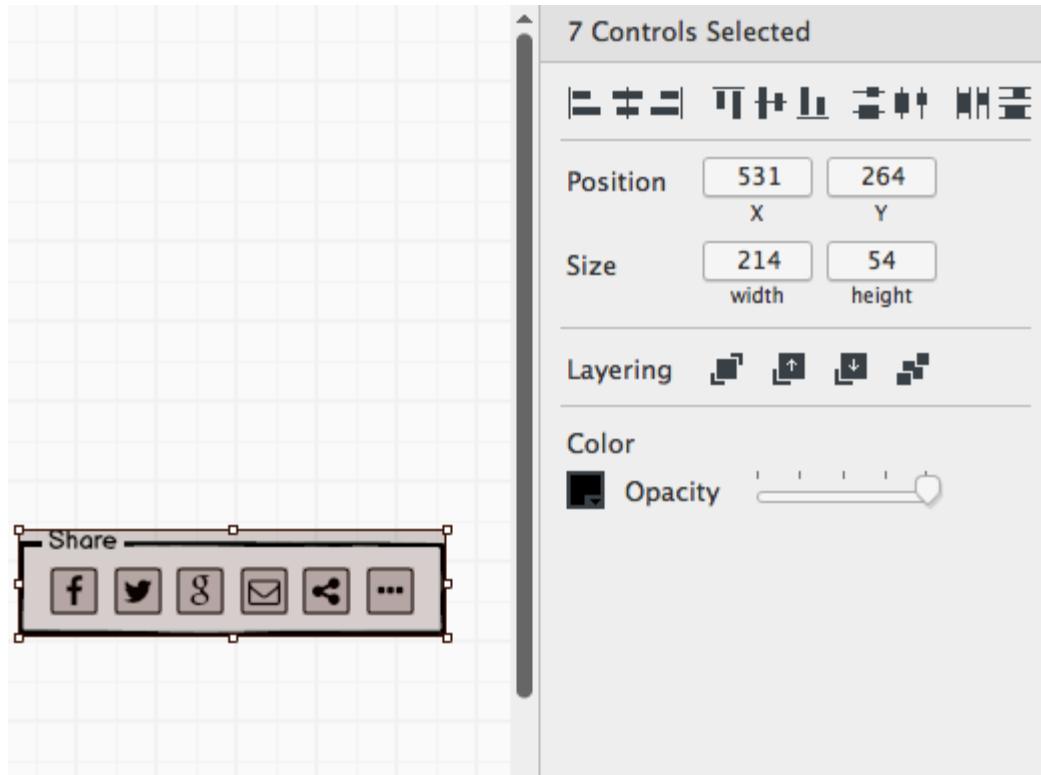
Creating Symbols

There are two ways to create a Symbol, described below.

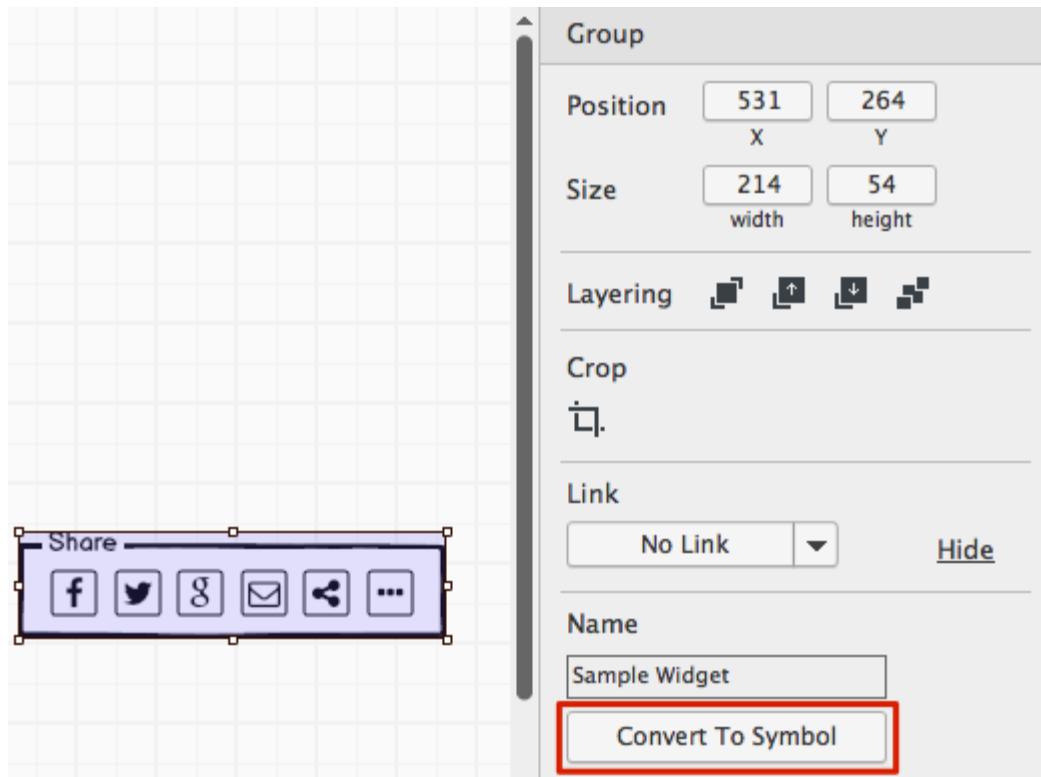
1. Creating Symbols in the Mockups View

Creating a Symbol in the Mockups view starts with grouping the set of controls that you want to become your Symbol. You can create a new group or use a group you already have. The following steps assume you are creating a new group.

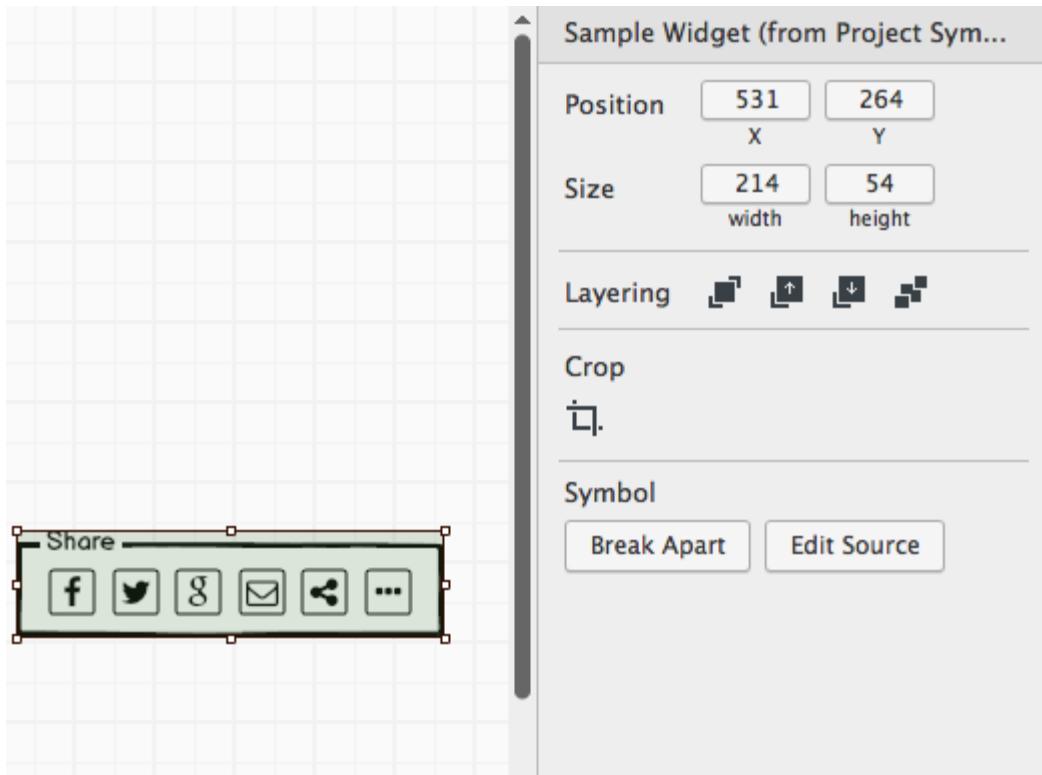
1. Select the controls you want to group.



2. Group your selection (select Edit >Group, click the Group icon in the toolbar, or use CTRL/CMD+G). Note that the controls will turn a bluish color to indicate they are a group.
3. Name the group.
4. Click on the "Convert To Symbol" button in the Property Inspector

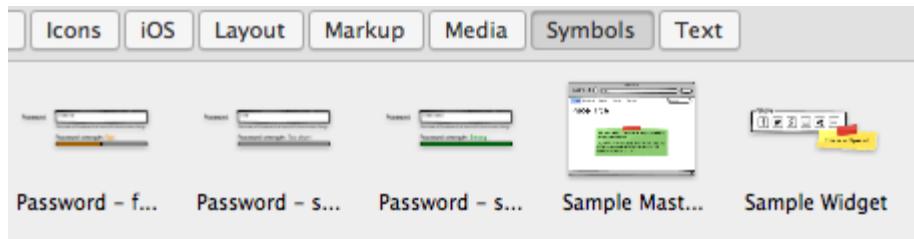


You will notice that the group selection becomes a light green. This means that the selection is now an instance of a Symbol and you can reuse it in your project.



This new Symbol will be displayed in the Symbols category of the UI Library for all mockups

in your project so that you can easily add it to any mockup.



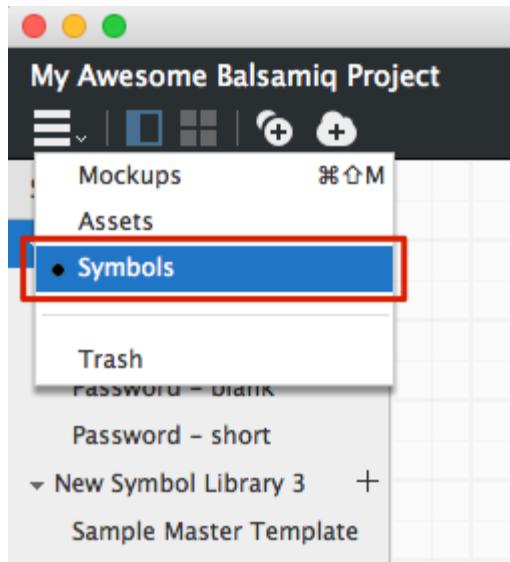
Tip: Once a Symbol has been created you can also add it via [Quick Add](#) using the first few letters of its name, just like other controls.

2. Using the Symbols View

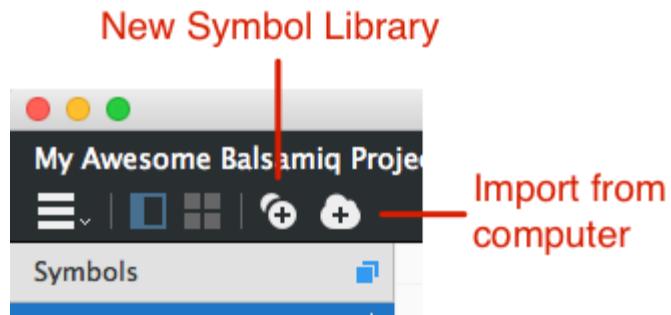
New in Balsamiq Mockups 3 is a dedicated view for creating and managing Symbols. Symbols created using the Mockups view will be shown here, and you can also create Symbols in this view.

To get to the Symbols view, use the navigator icon and select Symbols. You will see any

existing Symbols in a list in the left panel.



The toolbar contains two icons for creating Symbols: one for creating one from a blank canvas and another for [importing](#).



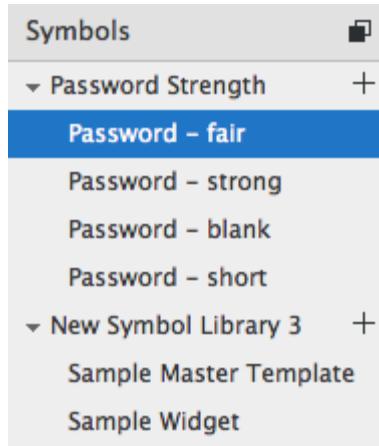
Click the New Symbol Library icon to create a new Symbol Library. The Symbols view shows Symbols as well as their Symbol Library containers. In Symbols view it is helpful to know the difference before creating them. Read on for an explanation.

Symbols vs. Symbol Libraries

A Symbol Library is a collection of individual Symbols. It can be used as a way of grouping Symbols with similar purposes. Symbol Libraries are useful for managing and organizing Symbols if you have a lot of them. If you aren't a heavy user of Symbols you can keep them all in one Symbol Library (you can always add more Symbol Libraries later).

In Symbols view Symbols are shown as a nested list inside their Symbol Library, as shown

below.



You can select the Symbol Library name to see all the Symbols it contains, or you can select the name of an individual Symbol to see only that Symbol.

When viewing a Symbol you will see a small floating bar showing a breadcrumb path to the Symbol Library. If you have groups within your Symbol the breadcrumb bar will help you navigate back out of the groups.

The icon at the top of the list of Symbols allows you to choose whether you want to see other Symbols in the Symbol Library along with the selected Symbol or not.

A screenshot showing the "Symbols" panel on the left and a floating UI component on the right. The "Symbols" panel shows a tree structure with "Password Strength" expanded, containing "Password - fair", "Password - strong", "Password - blank", and "Password - short" (selected and highlighted in blue). Other collapsed categories include "New Symbol Library 3" and "colorpicker". A red box highlights the icon at the top of the "Symbols" panel. The floating UI component displays a breadcrumb path: Home > Password - short. It shows two password input fields. The top field is labeled "Password" and has the placeholder "Choose a Password at least 6 characters long." Below it is a progress bar labeled "Password strength: Too short". The bottom field is also labeled "Password" and contains the value "***". It has the same placeholder and progress bar below it.

Note: The Symbol Library that a Symbol belongs to is ignored in the UI Library and Quick Add. You will see a list of all your Symbols, regardless of which Symbol Library

they belong to.

Creating Symbols in the Symbols View

Creating Symbols in Symbols view is similar to creating Symbols in Mockups view, except that you don't need to group them. Any controls you add to the Symbol become part of it immediately.

As described above you can add a new Symbol to an existing Symbol Library or inside a new one. **To create a new Symbol, click the '+' icon to the right of a Symbol Library.** This will create a new Symbol inside that Symbol Library (called "New Symbol", for example).

When you create a new Symbol Library two sample Symbols are created automatically to help you learn about how Symbols work. Feel free to modify or delete them.

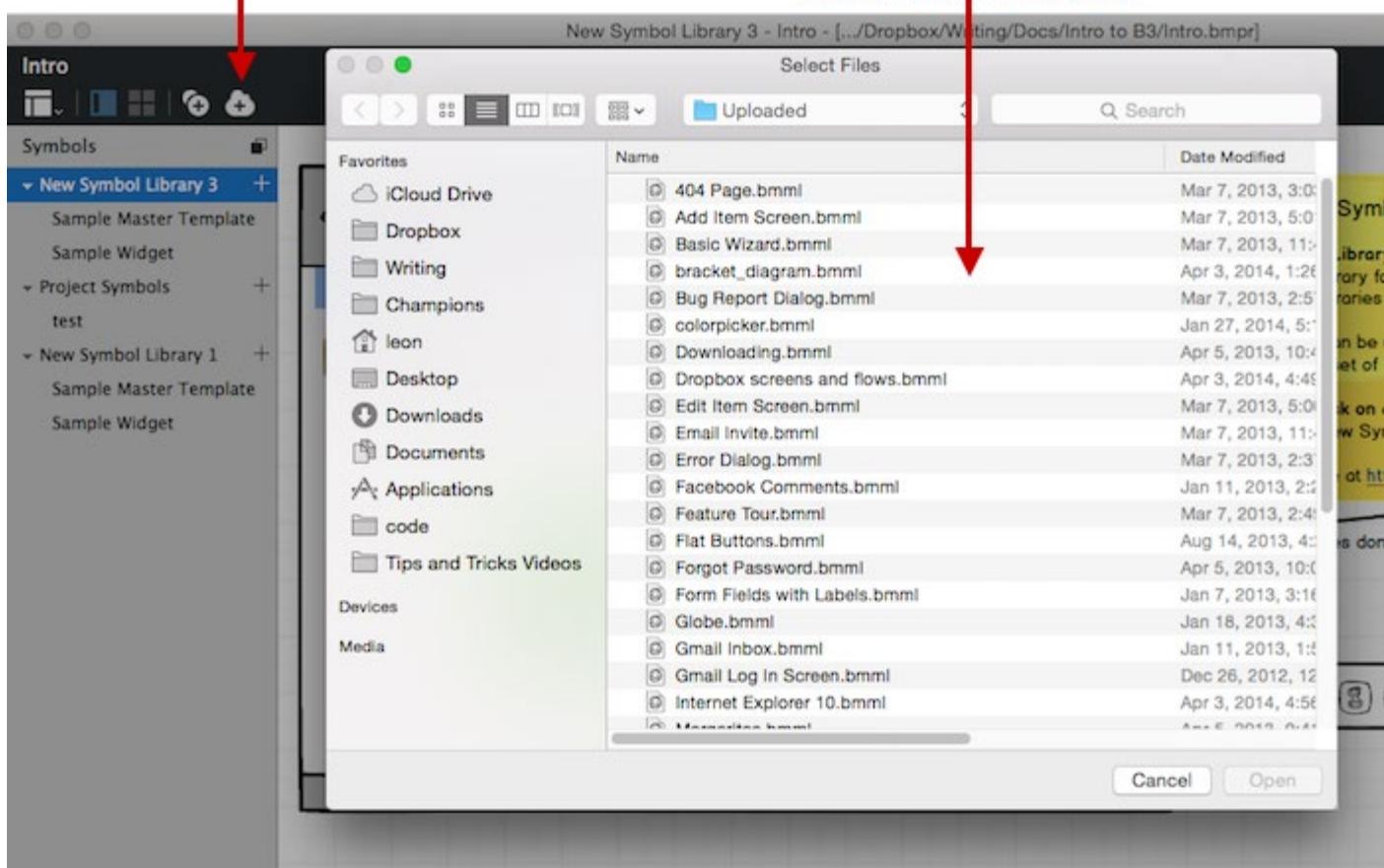
Note: You can add controls to the Symbol Library itself, but these controls will not be shown when the Symbols are used in your mockups. Adding controls such as sticky notes to your Symbol Libraries can be useful for making notes about them that don't need to be shown in the UI.

Importing Symbols

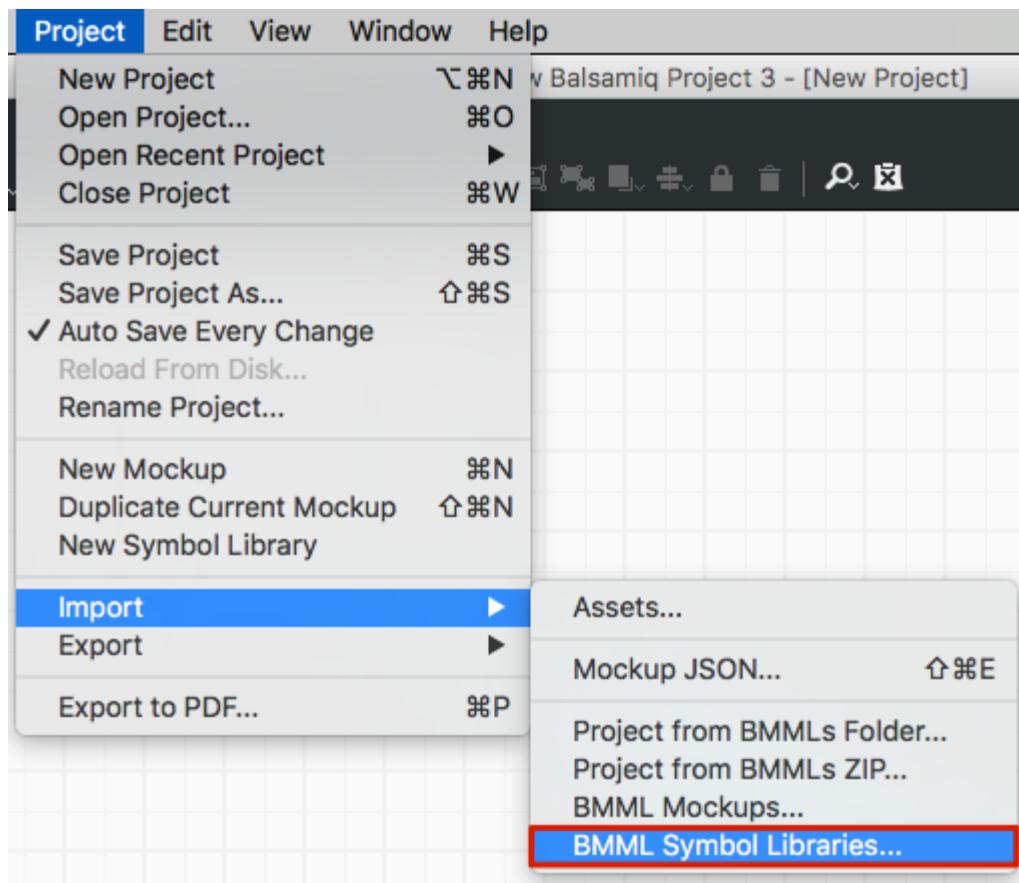
In addition to creating Symbols from scratch, you can import Symbols created in a previous version of Balsamiq Mockups. Click the Import Symbol Library button to open a dialog for importing Mockups files in BMML format.

Import Symbol Library

Select file to import



You can also import Symbols from the Project > Import menu.



The imported Symbol will be created in a new Symbol Library.

Using Symbols in Your Mockups

You can use Symbols just like any other control in Mockups. You can add them from the UI Library or Quick Add and move and arrange them with other controls in your mockups.

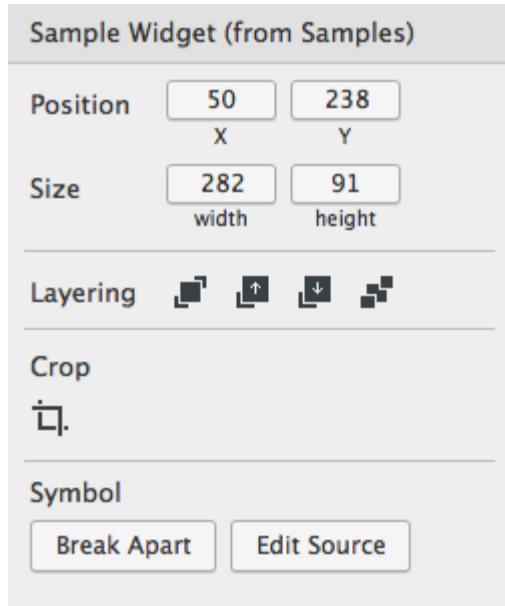
The primary difference is that the properties for the Symbol itself are limited, similar to other grouped controls.



The big advantage is, of course, that any **changes you make to your Symbols will update everywhere you use them**. Read on to learn about editing Symbols.

Editing Symbols

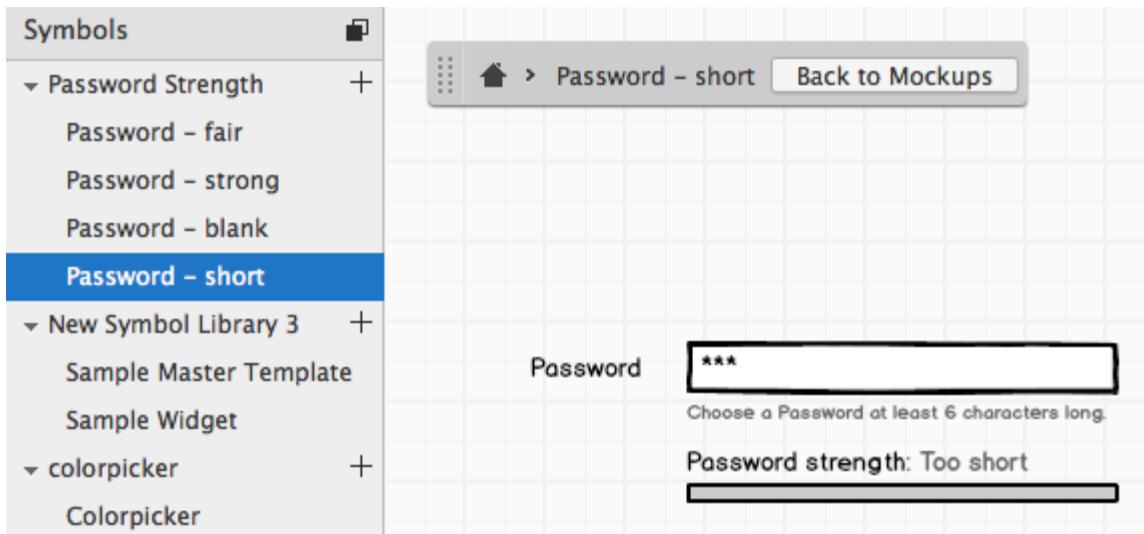
When you select a Symbol on the Mockups canvas you'll see two Symbol properties in the **Property Inspector**: Break Apart and Edit Source.



"Break Apart" breaks the connection between the individual controls inside the Symbol and the Symbol itself for the selected instance, meaning that it is no longer a Symbol (although the original Symbol remains intact). Any changes you make to a broken apart Symbol will

not get updated elsewhere and any changes made to the Symbol will not update where it has been broken apart.

"Edit Source" does what you'd expect it to do, it takes you to the Symbols view where you can edit the Symbol. The main benefit of reusable Symbols is that if you need to make a change, you can just do it in one place and it will be propagated to all the instances (uses) of that Symbol. When you are done editing a Symbol you can click the "Back to Mockups" button on the canvas. Edits made to the Symbol will be immediately reflected in any mockups that it is used in.



Tip: You can also edit a Symbol by right-clicking on it in the UI Library and selecting "Edit Symbol Source."

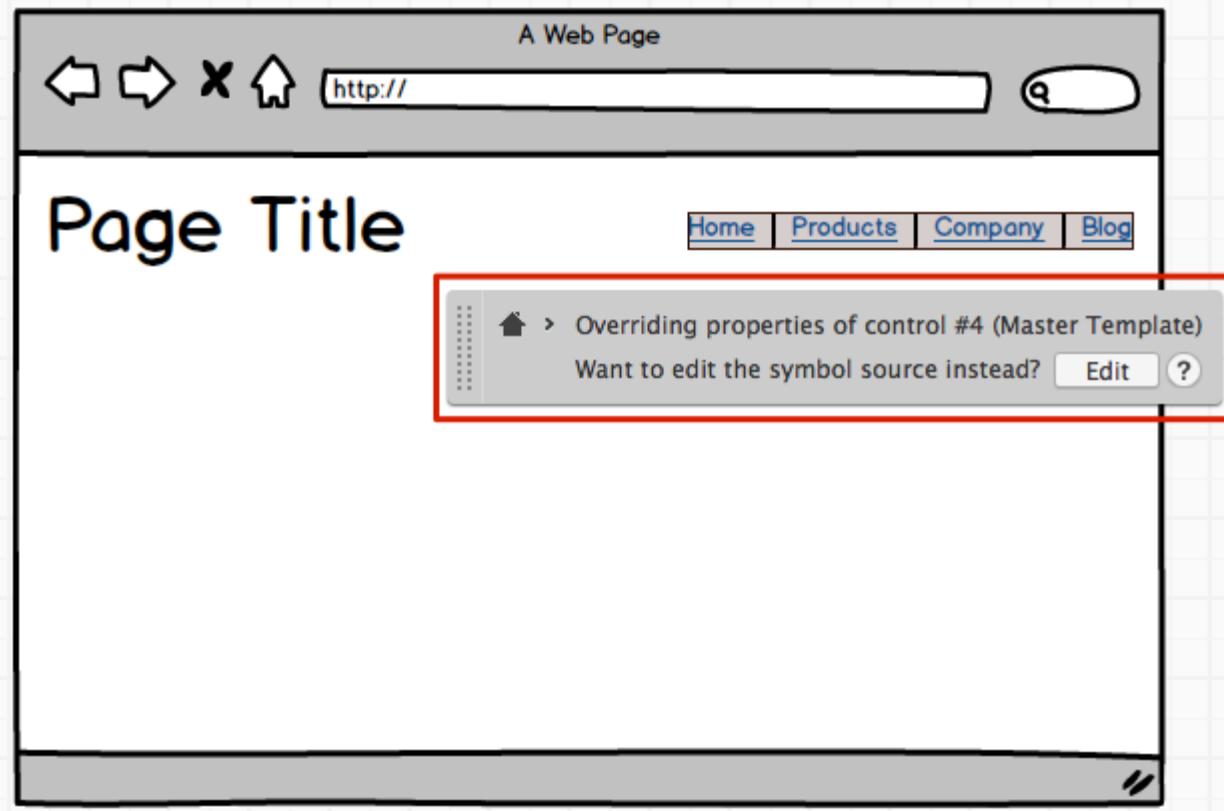
Overriding Symbol Properties

Once you have created a Symbol, you might want to change it a little each time you use it. Imagine for instance a Symbol you created as a master page or template, containing a web page's title and navigation.



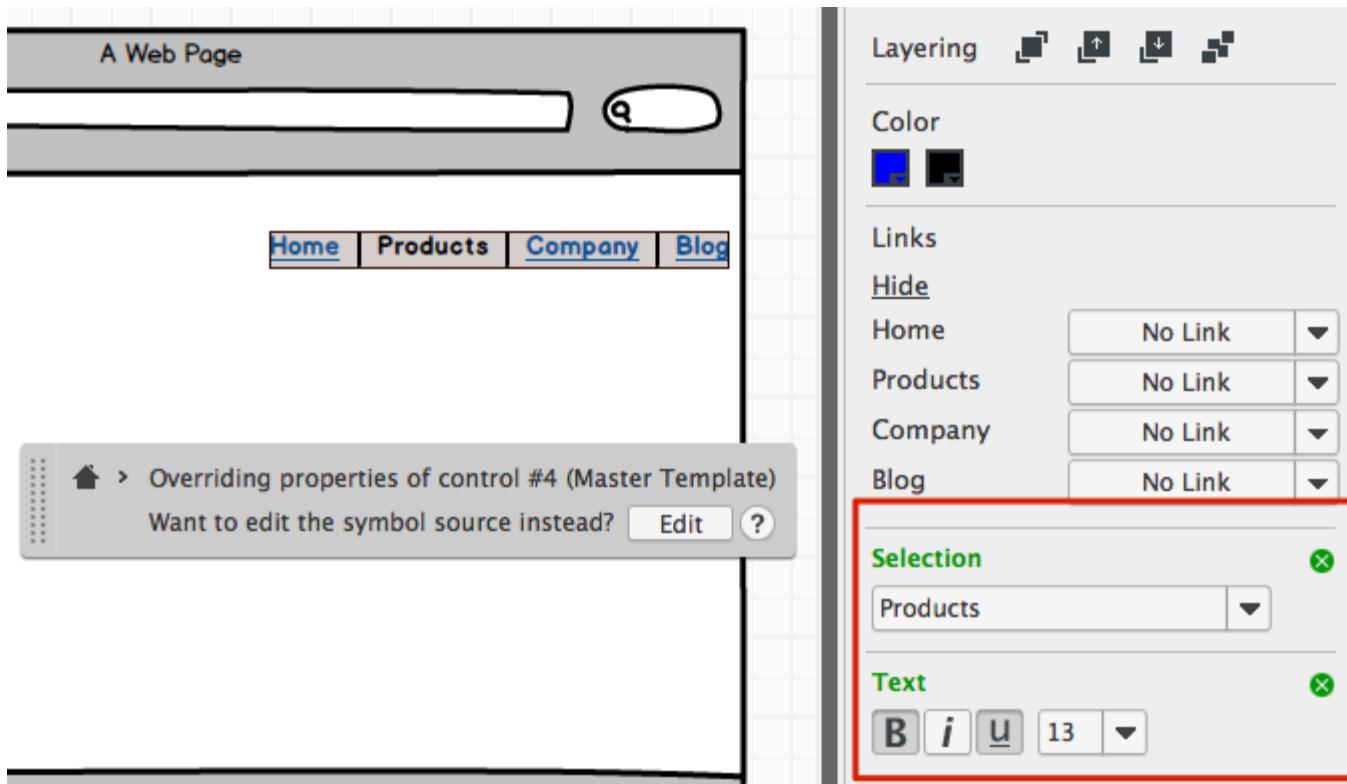
All your website pages will have the same font size and position for the title, but the title's text should be different on each page. The same goes for which page should be shown as selected in your navigation bar.

Symbols allow you to achieve this result by letting you override certain Symbol properties each time you use a Symbol. To do so, start by double-clicking on a symbol to "enter it". Although this experience is very similar to editing a group's contents, you will notice that Mockups 3 informs you that what you're doing is really overriding some properties of a Symbol.

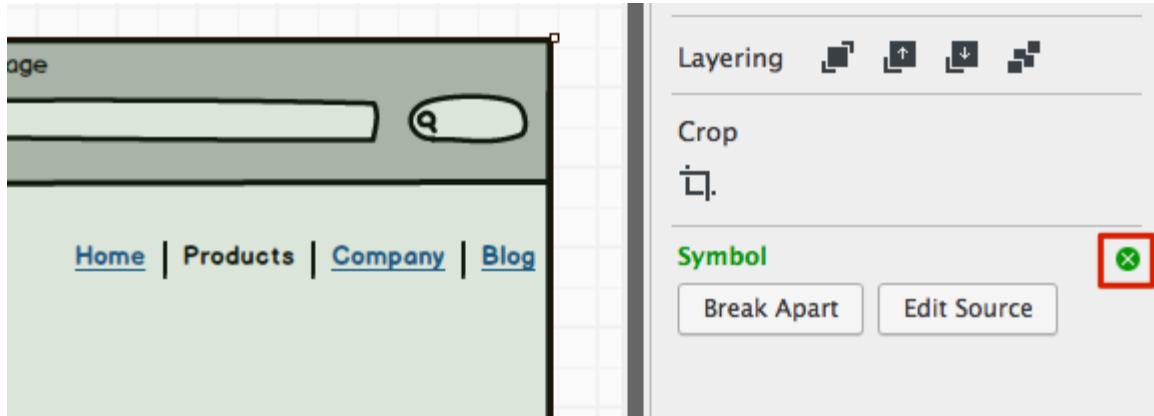


At this point, you can manipulate each control inside the symbols at will, as if you were editing a group. Some operations are not permitted while overriding symbol properties, such as adding, deleting or grouping controls. If, instead, you want to [edit all instances of the Symbol](#) click the "Edit" button.

If you make a mistake, you can always undo to get back. If you want to remove a single property change and go back to a Symbol's default property, you can click on the little green "x" icon in the Property Inspector.



You can also revert all changes you made to a Symbol's instance at once, via the "x" icon in the Property Inspector you see when selecting the whole symbol.



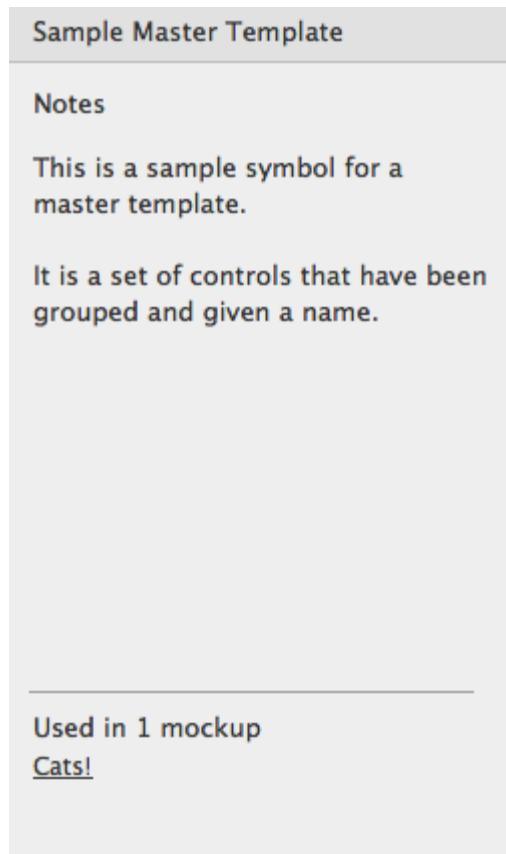
Using Symbols across Projects

If you want to use the same Symbol in multiple projects, you can copy it to another project by dragging it from one project to another. You can also create a template project, described in [Using Symbols and Assets across Projects](#).

Managing Symbols

In addition to creating Symbols and Symbol Libraries in Symbols view, it is also a good place to manage and organize your Symbols.

You can add notes to both your Symbols and Symbol Libraries in the [Properties panel](#) on the right. When an individual Symbol is selected the lower portion of the panel shows which mockups (if any) the Symbol is used in. This can be used to see if you can delete any Symbols that aren't being used, for example. Clicking on a mockup name will take you to that mockup in the Mockups view.



Renaming Symbols

To rename either a Symbol or Symbol Library you can double-click its name in the navigator panel on the left or use the [context menu](#).

Deleting Symbols

You can also use the [context menu](#) to delete Symbols and Symbol Libraries from your project. In the case of Symbol Libraries, like with mockups and images, deleting will move them to the trash, where you can delete them permanently or restore them. Deleting an

individual Symbol from a Symbol Library, however, deletes it permanently.

Tip: You can hold down Shift or Control/CMD to select multiple Symbols and delete or move multiple Symbols at once.

Just like with images, deleting a Symbol from a mockup does not delete the Symbol, only that instance of the Symbol.

Cloning Symbols

Cloning Symbols (also available via the [context menu](#)) can save you time when creating Symbols or Symbol Libraries that are similar.

Moving Symbols

You can move individual Symbols from one [Symbol Library](#) to another by dragging them around in the Symbols view. You can also copy Symbols from one project to another as described above.

Sharing Symbols Between Projects

If you want to share assets between projects, like a logo image or Symbol Library of custom controls, **we suggest creating a Balsamiq project that serves as a template for new projects.**

Start by creating a new project. Add to it any images, icons, or Symbols that you think you'll want available to all your projects in the future. If you are designing for a specific platform (e.g., mobile or web) you could also add a control such as Browser, Window or iPhone to the first wireframe. This is your template project. You may want to save it with a name that includes the word "template."

Then, **whenever you want to create a new project using this template**, duplicate the project, rename it, and start editing!

You can do this for all new projects to easily start with a built-in library of commonly used assets.

[Balsamiq for Desktop Docs](#) > Working with Site Maps

Working with Site Maps

[← Working with Symbols](#)

[Exporting Your Mockups →](#)

You can create simple site maps from a text outline using the Site Map control.

Create a Site Map

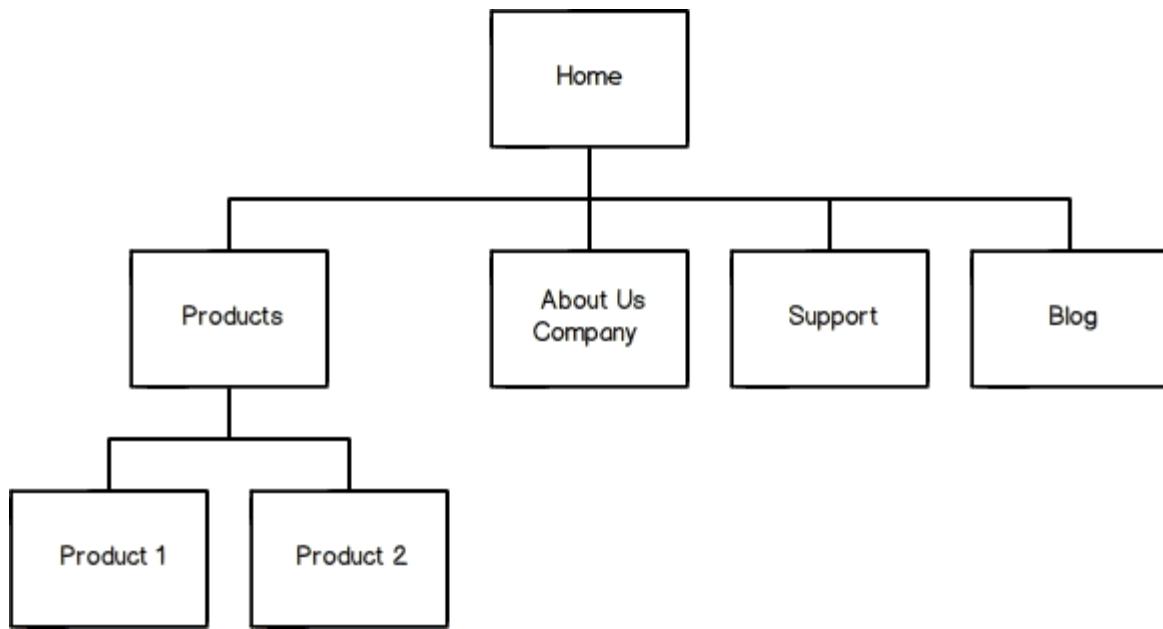
Add a "Site Map" control from the UI Library to the canvas.

Edit the control by double-clicking or selecting it and pressing the Enter key. Edit the outline to create parent-child relationships. Each line represents a box (or page/node) in your sitemap. Use hyphens to indent child boxes beneath a parent. Here's an example:

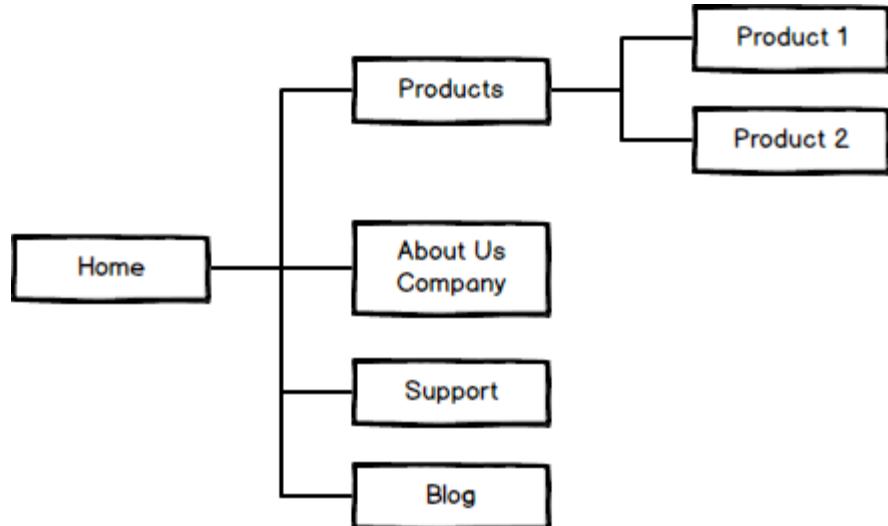
```
Home
- Products
-- Product 1
-- Product 2
- About Us\rCompany
- Support
- Blog
```

Using the **Property Inspector** you can add **links** to the nodes in the map and change the text properties and orientation of the map (vertical or horizontal).

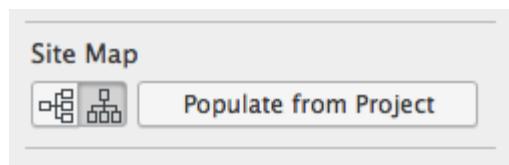
This is what the outline above looks like in vertical orientation (default):



...and in horizontal orientation:

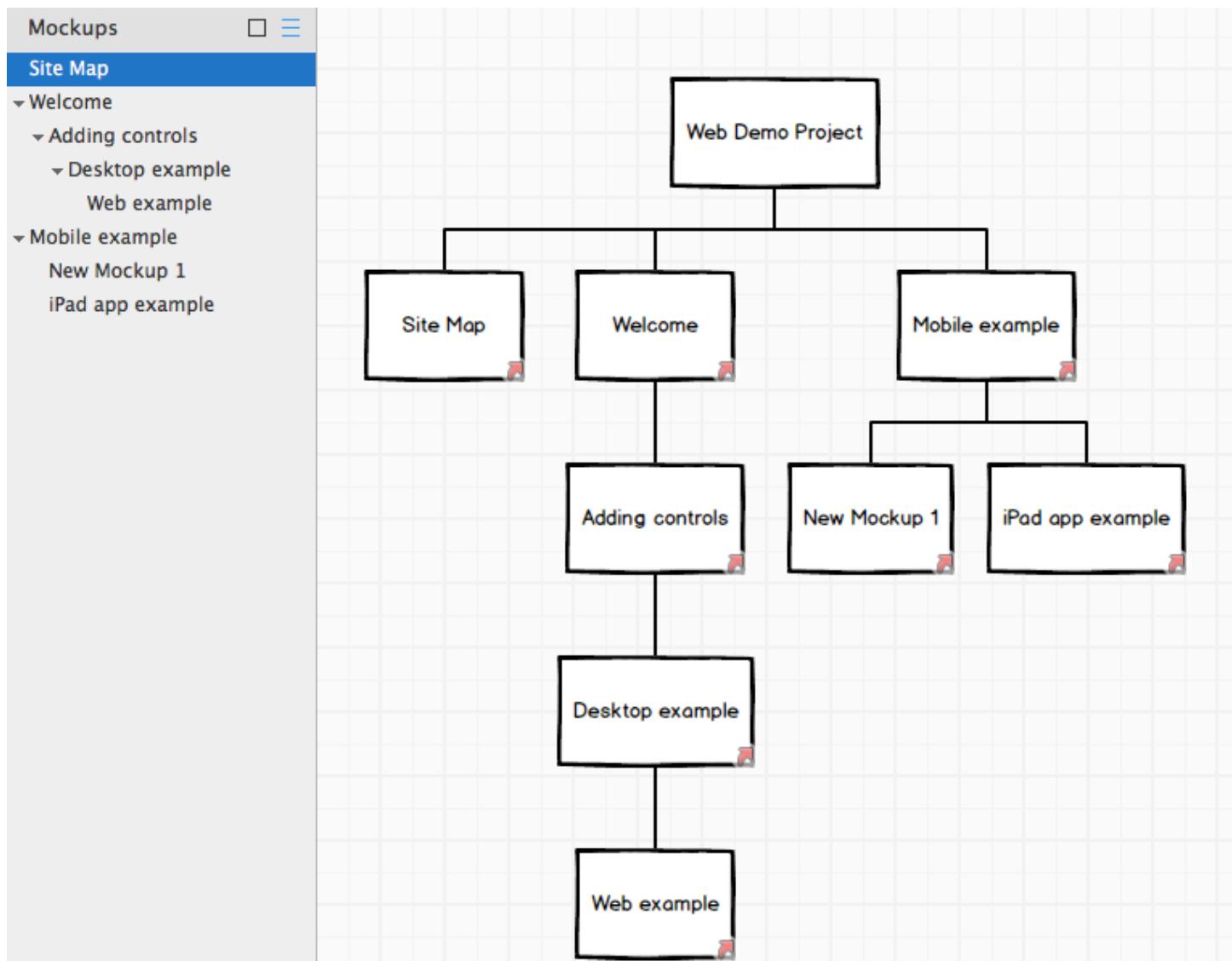


Next to the options for changing the orientation in the [Property Inspector](#) is a button that allows you to automatically populate a site map based on the order and structure of your mockups in the [Navigator Panel](#).



Each time you click the "Populate from Project" project the site map will be updated to reflect the current project structure.

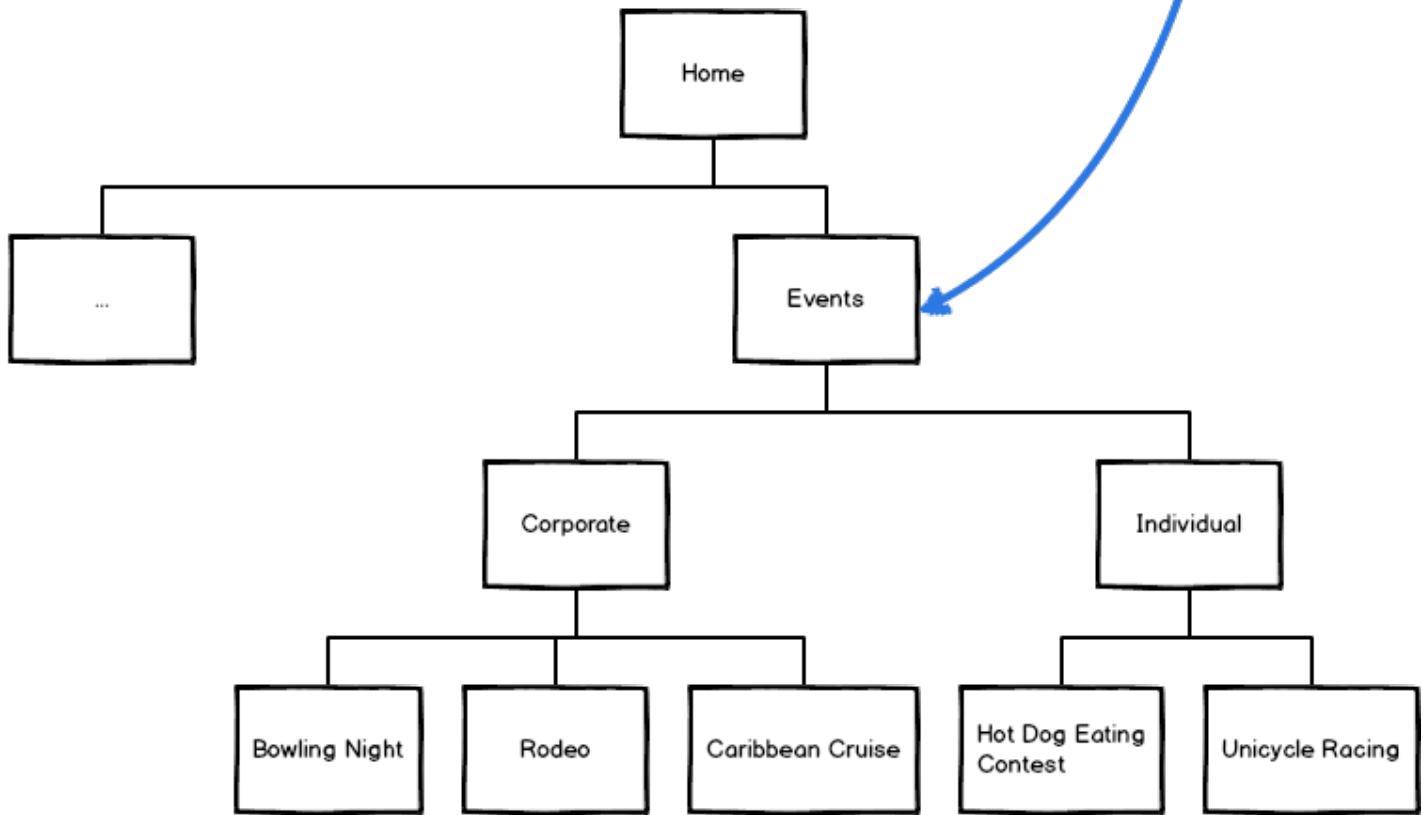
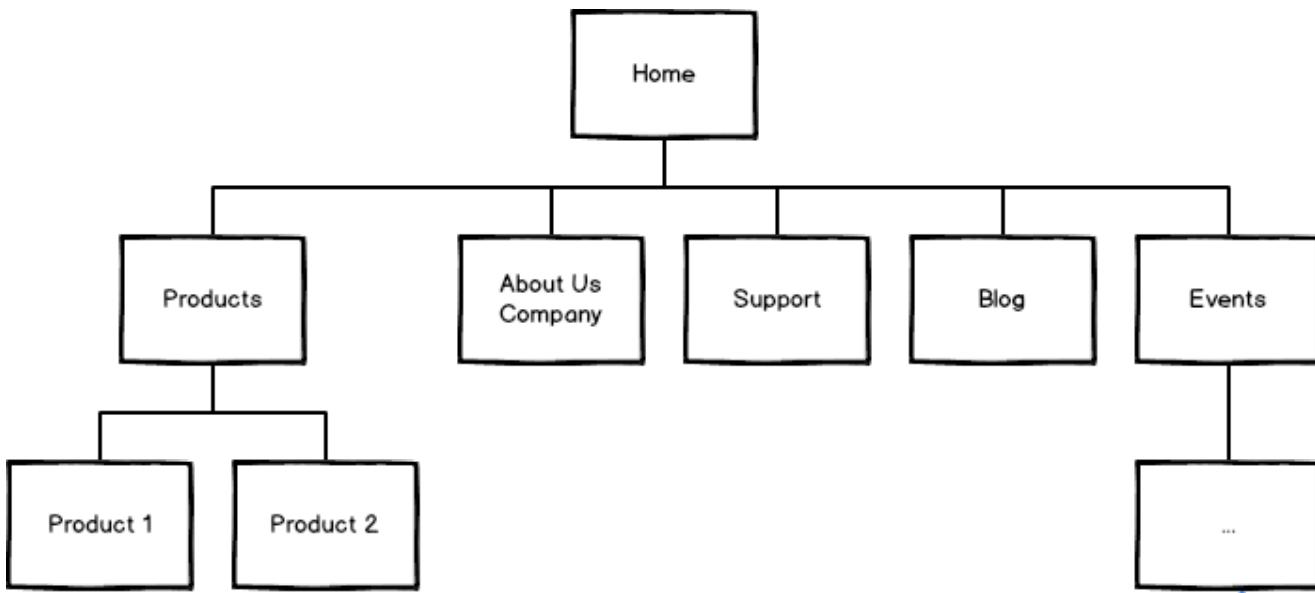
If you are using [mockup hierarchy](#), child mockups will be shown as child nodes in the site map, as shown below.



Links will be added to each node in the site map to the corresponding mockup in your project.

Notes and Options

- Single Tree Support: Site Map expects the first line to be the top-most parent, and only one of these can exist because it only makes a single tree. If you want to make multiple trees, just add more Site Map controls.
- Multi-Line Text: You can use \r to create line returns on text in a box like this:
About\rUs
- You can't resize Site Maps, but if you are unable to view the entire map on your canvas you can try changing the orientation or showing one of the nodes expanded in a separate Site Map, as shown below.



← Working with Symbols

Exporting Your Mockups →

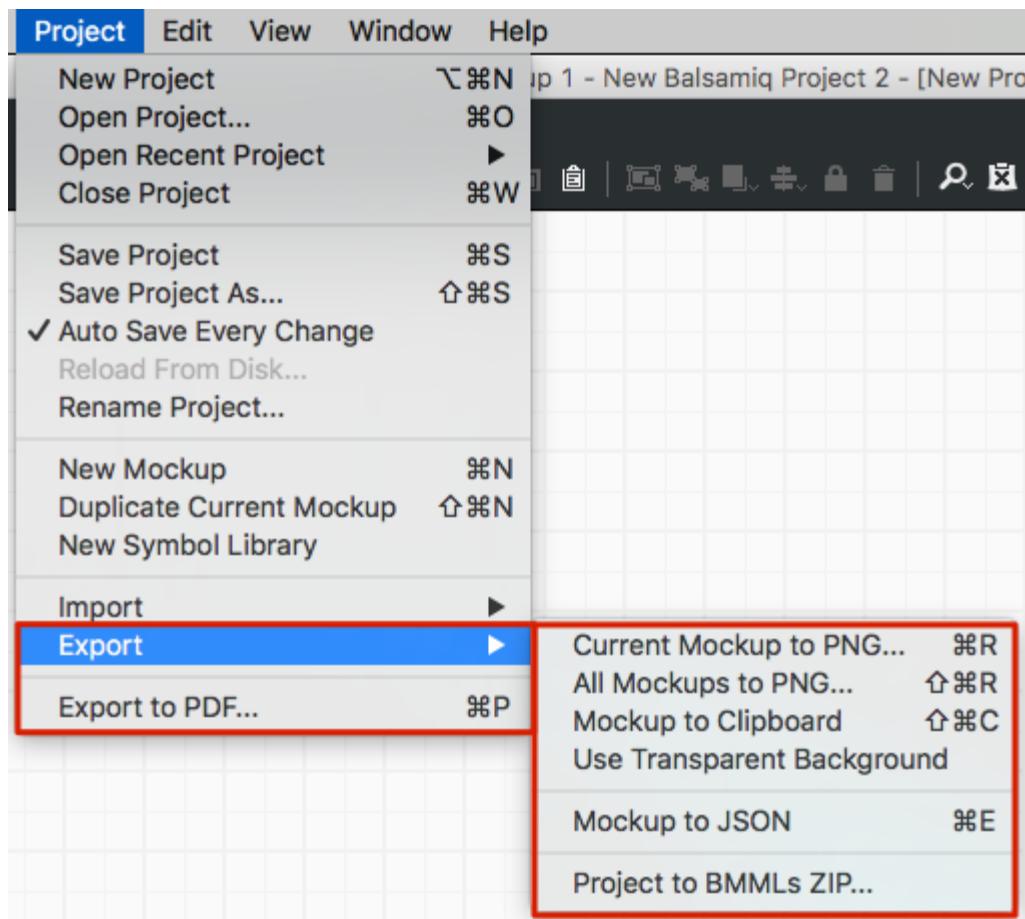
[Balsamiq for Desktop Docs](#) > Exporting Your Mockups

Exporting Your Mockups

[← Working with Site Maps](#)

[Working with Skins \(Sketch vs. Wireframe\) →](#)

The Export menu contains the following export options:



Read on for descriptions of all of the options or skip ahead using the links below.

- [Export to PDF...](#)
- [Current or All Mockups to PNG](#)
- [Mockup to Clipboard](#)
- [Mockup to JSON](#)
- [Project to BMMLs ZIP...](#)

Exporting to PDF

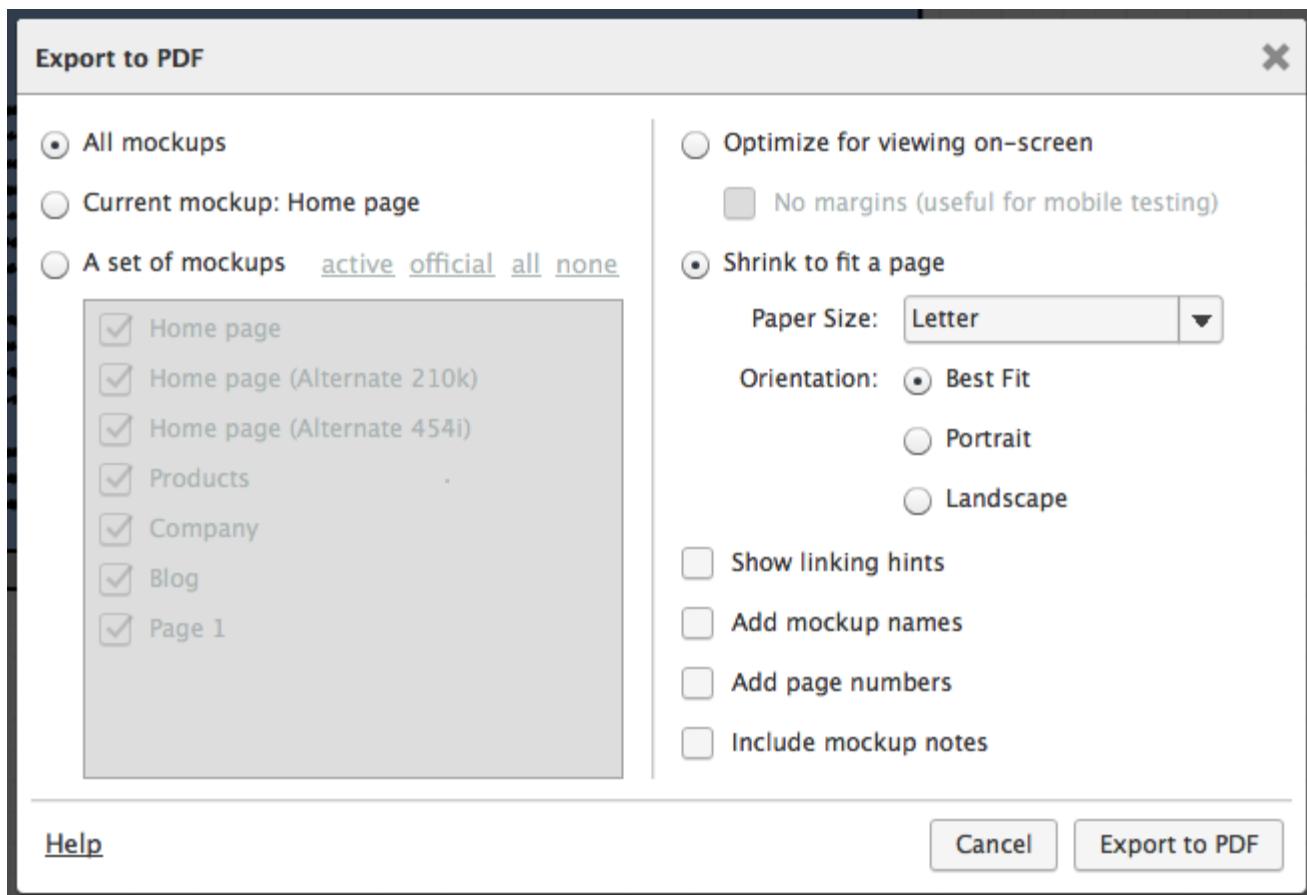
You can export the mockups in your project as a PDF, which can be useful for printing, sending by email, presenting to clients, or posting online. If your mockups contain **links**, these will work in your exported PDF as well, which will allow you to create click-through prototypes of your designs. (To learn more about linking, see [Linking Mockups Together](#).)

Note: Links may not work in the default Windows 8 or 10 PDF viewer. If this happens, you can download [Adobe Acrobat](#) or one of the many other free PDF viewers.

To export to PDF select the Project > Export to PDF... menu command (shortcut: CTRL/CMD+P). Each mockup will be displayed on a separate page of a PDF document. The mockups will be in the same order as in the project, so arrange them in the order you'd like before exporting.

You can choose to export all mockups or a subset, including any [alternates](#) you have created.

The PDF export options are shown here.



After exporting, a notification window will appear to show you where your PDF was saved. Click the notification to open the containing folder.

Exporting Mockup Notes

When exporting your mockups to PDF, you can choose to also export the notes that you've written in the [notes panel](#) by checking the box labeled "Include mockup notes."

Exported *images* do not include mockup notes.

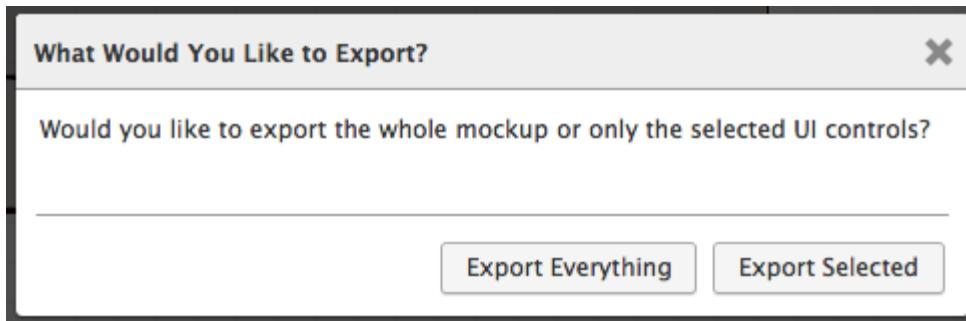
Another way to share mockup notes is to [share the project file](#).

Exporting to an Image

To save one or all of your mockups as image files choose one of the export to PNG commands from the Export menu. Export > Current Mockup to PNG... will save the selected mockup in PNG image format, while Export > All Mockups to PNG... will save all of the mockups in your project as separate image files. If you check the "**Use Transparent Background**" option the exported images will be transparent anywhere the canvas shows through in the mockup.

The shortcuts for exporting a mockup and project to image files are CTRL/CMD+R and CTRL/CMD+Shift+R, respectively. Exporting all mockups will also generate images for any [alternates](#) you have created.

You can also export a subset of the controls in your mockup by selecting them on the canvas and using the Export Current Mockup to PNG command. The export dialog will ask you if you want to export only the selected controls or the entire mockup.



Copying to the Clipboard

To copy a mockup as an image to paste into another application, select Export > Mockup to Clipboard.

Printing

Balsamiq Mockups no longer supports printing directly to a printer. Instead you can [export](#)

[to PDF](#) and print from a PDF viewer.

Exporting Mockups to Another Project

You can copy mockups or Symbols across projects by dragging them from one project to another. Note that dragging mockups will only copy them, not remove them from the originating project.

Another method is to use the Import/Export Mockup JSON commands in the Project menu. Exporting to Mockups JSON (Project > Export > Mockup to JSON) will copy the Balsamiq Mockups code for the selected mockup to the clipboard. To create this mockup in a new project switch to it and choose “Import Mockup JSON...” from the Project > Import menu and paste the copied code.

Exporting for Use in a Previous Version

You can also export your project for use in a previous version of Balsamiq Mockups or version that doesn't yet support the Balsamiq Mockups 3 BMPR file format.

Selecting Export > Project to BMMLs ZIP... will save your mockups as a ZIP file containing individual BMML files (compatible with Balsamiq Mockups version 2) and images and Symbols stored in an assets sub-folder. You can then unzip it and open the mockups with an older version of Balsamiq Mockups.

[← Working with Site Maps](#)

[Working with Skins \(Sketch vs. Wireframe\) →](#)

[Balsamiq for Desktop Docs](#) > Working with Skins (Sketch vs. Wireframe)

Working with Skins (Sketch vs. Wireframe)

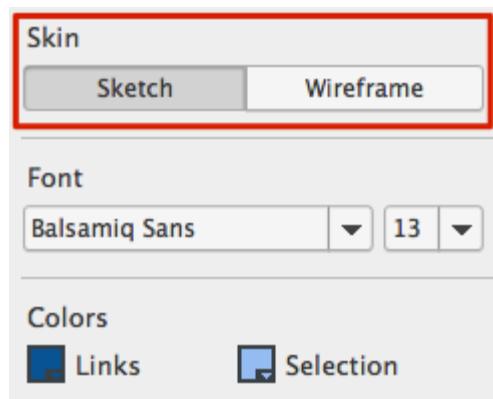
[← Exporting Your Mockups](#)

[Importing Mockups and Symbols →](#)

We know that some people need to shift from idea generation with internal teams to presentation with clients or stakeholders, and in those situations the default "sketch" skin may present challenges with certain audiences. To address this need, we created a "wireframe" skin that allows you to switch from a sketchy, hand-drawn style to a crisper, cleaner wireframe elements.

Switching from Sketch to Wireframe Skin

To switch skins go to the [Project Info panel](#) and set the Skin setting to "Wireframe".



The feature allows you to work on early ideas in the sketchy skin, and then later select a menu to swap out all of your controls in the clean skin. All of your elements, including icons will be switched.

The screenshots below show a comparison of a sample design in the default "sketch" and "wireframe" skins, respectively. Click to view larger images.

KAYAK Flights | Hotels | Cars | Deals | More

From: New York, NY - John F Kennedy Intl (JFK) To: San Francisco, CA - San Francisco (SFO)

Depart: 03/06/2012 Return: 03/13/2012

1 traveler, Economy, nonstops only

Best fares found in the past 48 hours
JFK - SFO

Sun	Mon	Tue	Wed	Thu	Fri	Sat
\$220	\$220	\$220	\$220	\$220	\$220	\$220
11	12	13	14	15	16	17
\$220	\$220	\$220	\$220	\$220	\$220	\$220
19	20	21	22	23	24	25
\$220	\$220	\$220	\$220	\$220	\$220	\$220
29	26	27	28	29	30	31
\$220	\$220	\$220	\$220	\$220	\$220	\$220

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KAYAK Flights | Hotels | Cars | Deals | More

From: New York, NY - John F Kennedy Intl (JFK) To: San Francisco, CA - San Francisco (SFO)

Depart: 03/06/2012 Return: 03/13/2012

1 traveler, Economy, nonstops only

Best fares found in the past 48 hours
JFK - SFO

Sun	Mon	Tue	Wed	Thu	Fri	Sat
\$220	\$220	\$220	\$220	\$220	\$220	\$220
11	12	13	14	15	16	17
\$220	\$220	\$220	\$220	\$220	\$220	\$220
19	20	21	22	23	24	25
\$220	\$220	\$220	\$220	\$220	\$220	\$220
29	26	27	28	29	30	31
\$220	\$220	\$220	\$220	\$220	\$220	\$220

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Free Mobile App iPhone Android iPad Windows More [Download now](#)

My Trips Manage, sync & share your itinerary [Try it now](#)

Explore Where you can go for how much [Try it now](#)

Which Skin Should I Use?

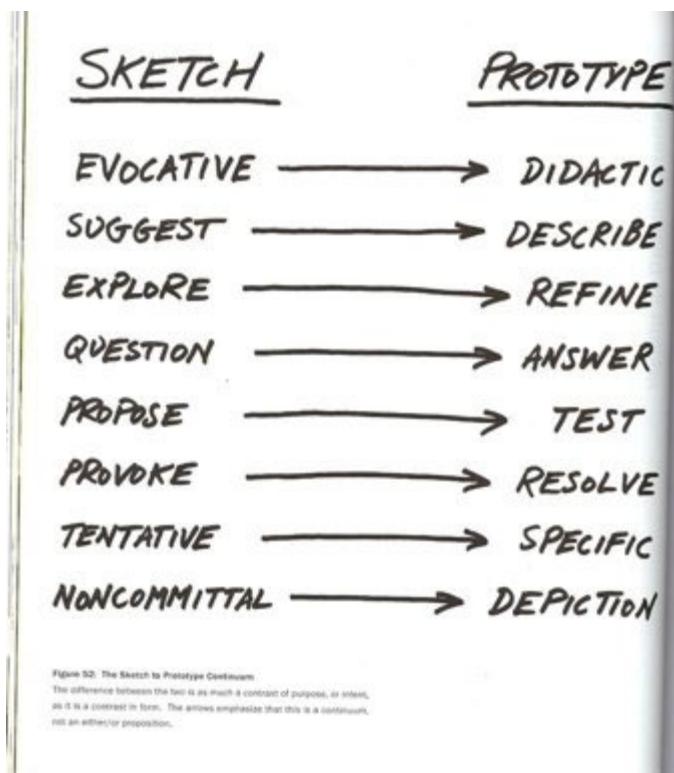
We're glad you asked ;-) The short answer is that we still feel that the sketch skin is more

appropriate most of the time while using Mockups.

Our intention with adding the wireframe skin was to help add legitimacy to your Mockups when presenting them to clients or stakeholders, people who may consciously or unconsciously discount the thought and effort of your design work simply because it looks like it was sketched on the back of a napkin. We'd hate for all your hard work to go unappreciated just because it doesn't look "professional" enough!

However, while designing, the original sketch skin still offers all the advantages it always has. It deliberately looks rough and tentative, which encourages you, the designer, to try out lots of different ideas, to experiment and revise in order to come up with the best design. Designing in the wireframe skin could cause you to get attached to a specific design idea too soon because it looks "done", or it may prompt you to fine-tune the alignment, colors, or fonts when you should be thinking about the workflow.

Just as the wireframe skin makes the design feel finished, the sketch skin makes the design feel *un*-finished, which guides you to continue to ask questions and explore. The following description of the differences between sketches and prototypes can also be applied to the sketch and wireframe skins, respectively.



Credit: Bill Buxton, [Sketching User Experiences](#)

So, while you *can* use the wireframe skin at any phase of the design process, we don't really recommend it as an alternative to the sketch skin. But, rather, more as a follow-up to it. It extends the functionality of Mockups by making it more amenable to the presentation or pitching phase of product development, beyond just the ideation and design phase.

Since the beginning, Balsamiq Mockups has been optimized for that *sweet spot* of the ideation phase of a project and will continue to be for the foreseeable future. We *still* don't have any plans to add fancy interaction behavior to our family of products, for example, and we're just fine with that.

[← Exporting Your Mockups](#)

[Importing Mockups and Symbols →](#)

[Balsamiq for Desktop Docs](#) > Importing Mockups and Symbols

Importing Mockups and Symbols

[← Working with Skins \(Sketch vs. Wireframe\)](#)

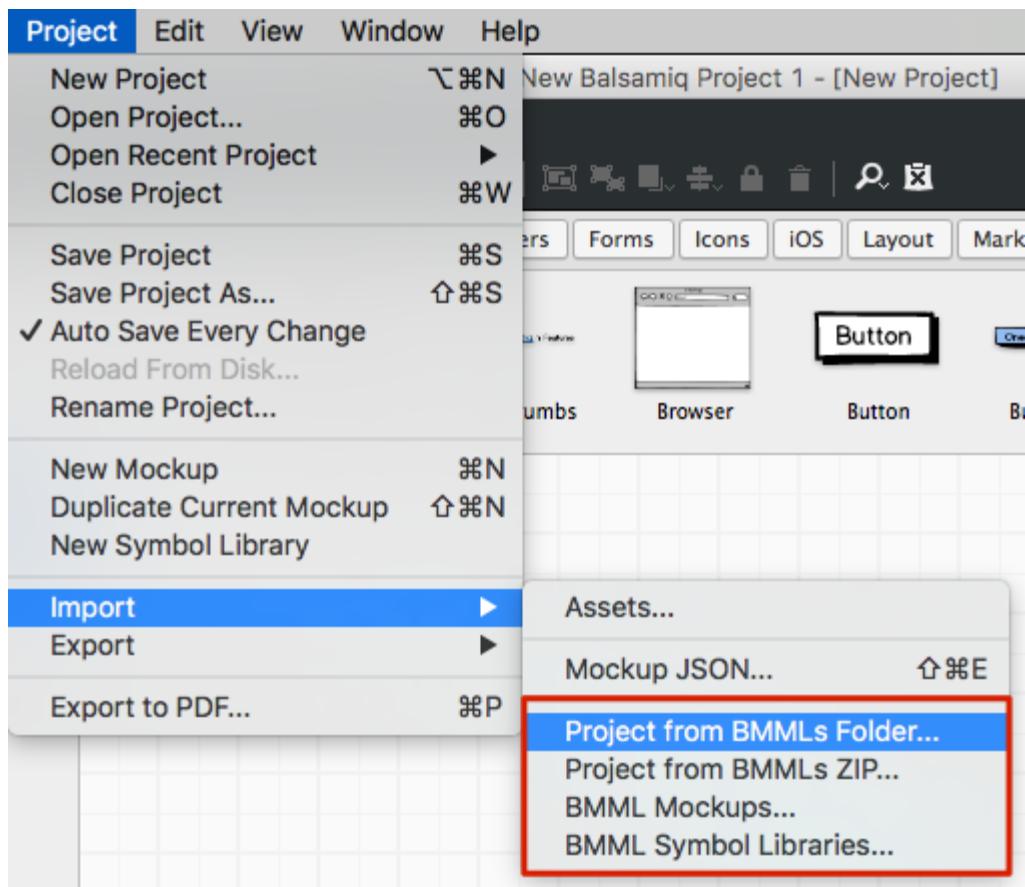
[The Project Info Panel →](#)

Importing Mockups from a Previous Version (BMML Files)

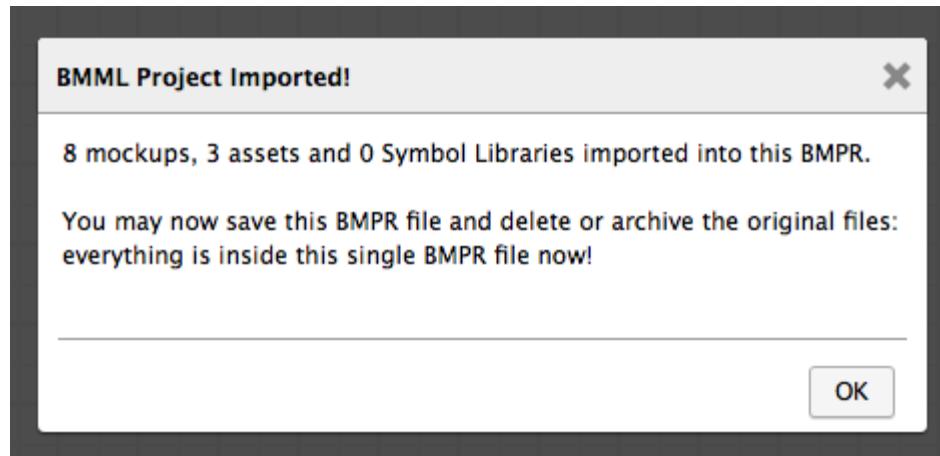
Balsamiq Mockups 3 uses a different file format from previous versions. You can import your old mockups in one of three formats:

1. Individual BMML files
2. A folder containing BMML files (with images and Symbols in an assets sub-folder)
3. A ZIP file containing BMML files (with or without images and Symbols in an assets sub-folder)

To convert your existing project folders or ZIP files into BMPR files, open the Project > Import menu.



Select what you'd like to import and your old files will be imported and a new BMPR file will be created.



You can also just drag BMML files into Balsamiq Mockups 3 to import them to the current project.

Importing Symbols

If you have **Symbols** files created with a previous version of Balsamiq Mockups you can import them into Balsamiq Mockups 3 as **Symbols** using the Import > BMML Symbol Libraries command. This will convert groups into named **Symbols** that will appear in the **Symbols** category of the UI Library.

Importing Mockups from Another Project

The easiest way to move or copy mockups from one project to another is to simply drag a mockup (using the [navigator panel](#)) from one project to another project. You can also select and copy controls on the canvas in one project and paste them into the canvas in another project.

Alternatively you can copy mockups from one project to another using the Import/Export Mockup JSON commands in the Project menu. Exporting to Mockups JSON (Project > Export > Mockup to JSON) will copy the Balsamiq Mockups code for the selected mockup to the clipboard. To create this mockup in a new project switch to it and choose “Import Mockup JSON...” from the Project > Import menu and paste the copied code. Images and Symbols won't be copied, however.

Importing Images

To learn about importing images, see [Working with Images](#).

[← Working with Skins \(Sketch vs. Wireframe\)](#)

[The Project Info Panel →](#)

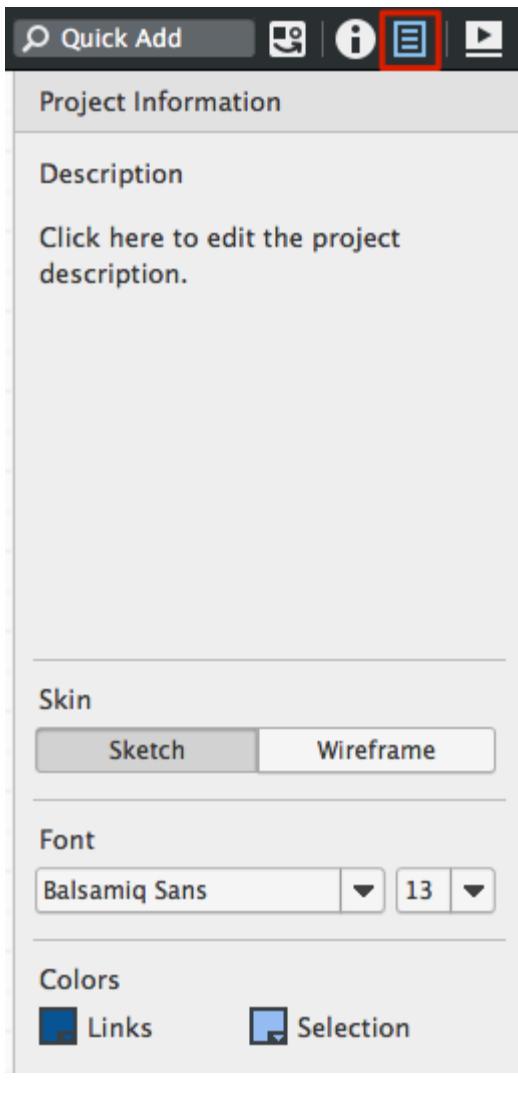
[Balsamiq for Desktop Docs](#) > The Project Info Panel

The Project Info Panel

[← Importing Mockups and Symbols](#)

[Linking Mockups Together →](#)

New in Balsamiq Mockups 3 is the ability to define project-wide settings for skin, font, and link and selection color. The Project Info panel contains these settings as well as an area to add notes about the project. Click the icon next to the Property Inspector icon to toggle the Project Info panel (keyboard shortcut: CTRL/CMD + ,).



These settings will be applied to all mockups in the project and will be saved with the project (i.e., they persist when the project is closed and reopened or shared with others).

To learn more about the difference between sketch and wireframe skin, see [Working with Skins](#).

The default font is [Balsamiq Sans](#), just as in previous versions (*not* Comic Sans as you might think; although now you can set it to that, all you Comic Sans lovers out there!).

Note: If you want to use a specific project font we recommend that you set it before you start creating your mockups. Changing the project font may adversely affect existing mockups in your project. Each font has different dimensions and proportions so switching fonts may cause controls to overlap or line up unevenly. Also, setting your project font to a variant such as "thin", "light", or "extrabold" may override font style settings on individual controls.

[Balsamiq for Desktop Docs](#) > Linking Mockups Together

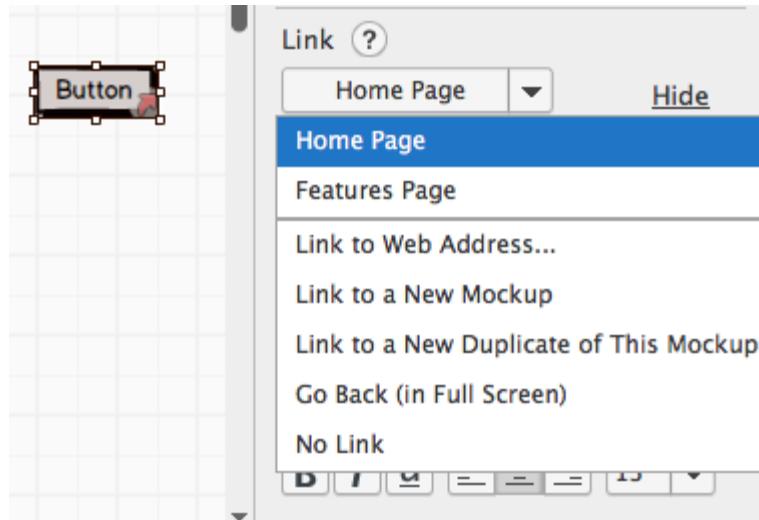
Linking Mockups Together

[← The Project Info Panel](#)

[Full Screen Presentation Mode →](#)

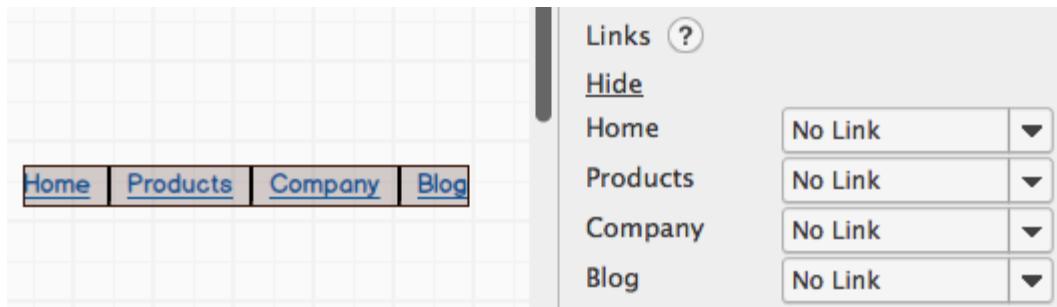
You can link mockups together to create a simple prototype for your site or software application. This can be useful for demonstrating click-through prototypes or for usability testing when you're displaying your project in [Full Screen Presentation](#) mode or as an [exported PDF](#).

Linking mockups together is as easy as choosing a mockup name from a drop-down menu. Simply click on a control that supports linking (most do, and [here's a workaround for those that don't](#)), and you'll see a "Link" drop-down in the [Property Inspector](#) (click the "Show Link Inspector" link if you don't see it).

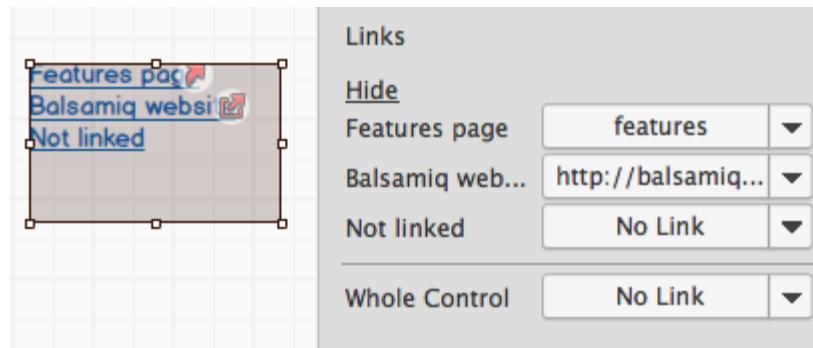


Note: To learn how to create links from text strings inside other controls, see our article on [making links in text actually work](#).

For controls that can have multiple targets, you'll see something like this:



Once you have selected a mockup or web page to link to from the drop-down menu, the control will show a little arrow icon in the bottom-right corner. Links to mockups will show as a plain arrow, while links to web pages will show as an arrow with a box around it, as shown below.



Linking to Existing Mockups

The list is pre-populated with the names of the other mockups in the project. Select one to link to it.

Note: You can even link to an alternate version by using [this workaround] ([/tutorials/tips/linktoalternates/](#)).

Linking to a New Mockup

To link to a blank mockup that you haven't created yet, click "Link to a New Mockup" and a new mockup will be created and linked from the selected control. Select "Link to a New Duplicate of This Mockup" to create a new mockup with the same content as the current mockup. A notification will be shown with the name of the new mockup. Clicking the notification will take you to that mockup.



Linking to a Web Page

You can also link to web URLs instead of other mockups, to show links to external sites or product pages. To do this, select the "Link to Web Address..." option from the drop-down

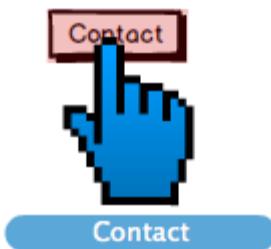
and enter a web URL in the dialog that pops up.



Using Links in Presentation Mode

When you're done linking your mockups up you can enter [Full Screen Presentation mode](#) and you'll be able to click on the links you set up to test your prototype.

In Full Screen Presentation mode controls with links will have a red overlay on them and mousing over them will show a big hand pointer with the name of the target file or web page for the link (these options can be turned off in the [Full Screen settings panel](#)).



Click on a link to go to the referenced mockup file or web page. Web links will open in a new browser window. Links with a target of "Go Back (in Full Screen)" will go to the previous mockup when clicked (as shown here).

[Balsamiq for Desktop Docs](#) > Full Screen Presentation Mode

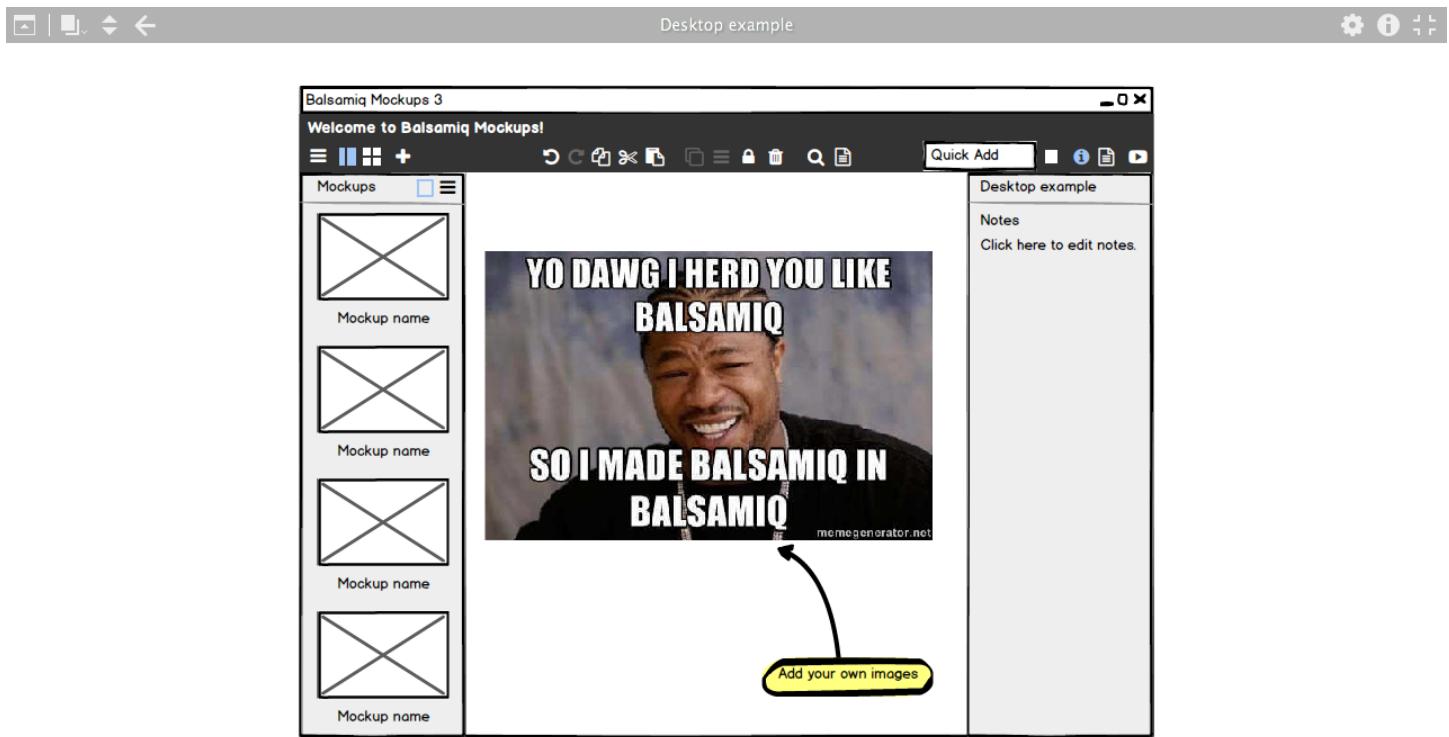
Full Screen Presentation Mode

[← Linking Mockups Together](#)

[Autosaving →](#)

Mockups includes a full screen presentation mode for presenting your wireframes to stakeholders or usability testing.

To enter Full Screen Presentation mode, just click on the full screen icon in the top-right corner of Mockups, or select "Full Screen Presentation" from the View menu, or simply hit CTRL/CMD+F.

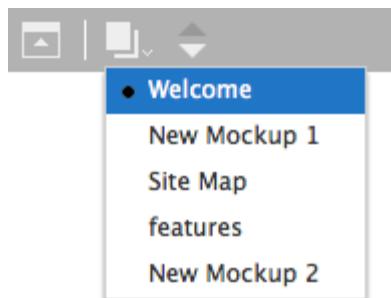


Balsamiq Mockups will expand to take up your whole screen, with your mockup centered on it.

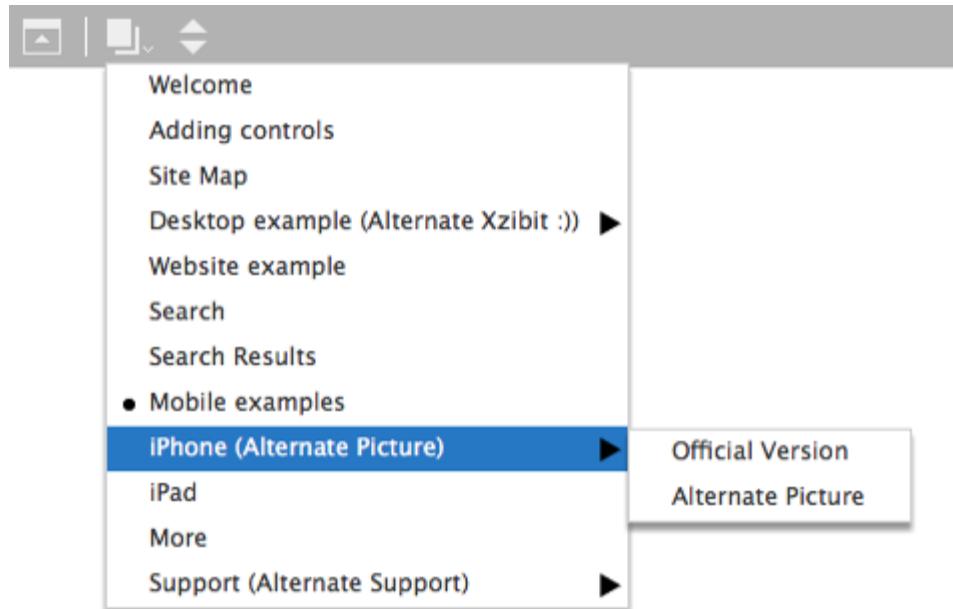
The far left icon toggles the top bar on and off. You can turn it off to remove everything but the mockup (even the icon will disappear until the cursor is placed over it), this is useful for usability testing when you want a more realistic experience.

Navigating between Mockups

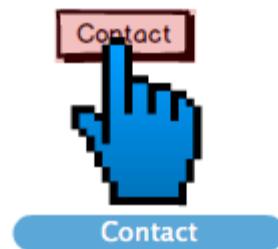
You can navigate between mockups using the icons in the upper left. They behave like the navigation icons in the editor [toolbar](#). The up and down arrows navigate between your mockups in order, while the icon activated below allows you to jump directly to a specific mockup.



If you have created mockup [alternates](#), a menu will appear when you mouse over the mockup, allowing you to select and display the alternates. If you are viewing an alternate, its name will appear in parentheses next to the official mockup name.



If you have created [links](#) between your mockups, the links will be clickable in full screen presentation mode.

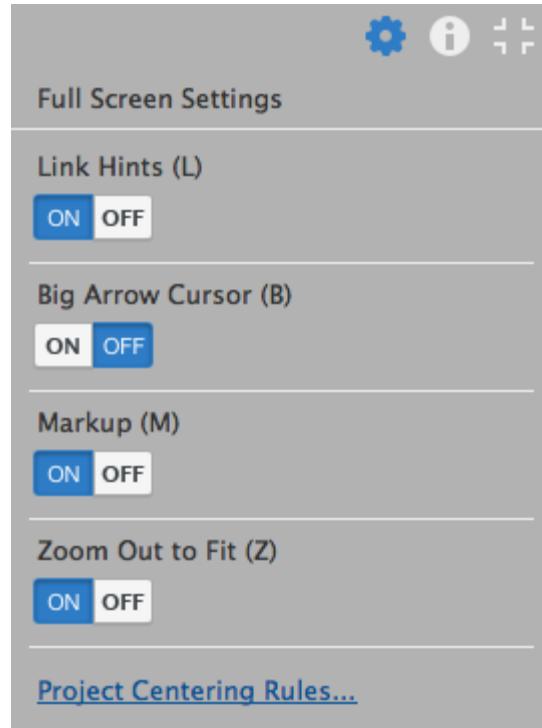


Settings

By default you will also see a big **blue arrow** pointer in place of the regular mouse cursor. This is useful for presenting your mockups. The pointer will point towards the center of the

screen in order to always stay out of the way of your mockup as much as possible.

You can turn off the big blue arrow in the full screen settings by clicking the gear icon in the top right to open the settings panel.



The settings panel also has an option to turn on and off **link hints**. When link hints are on areas that contain **links** will be shown with a pink overlay so they can be seen easily.

The **Markup** setting is for showing and hiding **markup** elements, such as Sticky Notes, Arrows and Callouts (any control under the "Markup" tab in the UI Library). This is useful if you want to just look at your UI without the annotations that surround it.

The last setting is to set the view to **zoom** out to fit the largest mockup. All other mockups will be zoomed relative to the largest mockup.

There are keyboard shortcuts for each setting, shown next to the setting name in the panel. No modifier key is required in full screen mode (e.g., just L for link hints, not CTRL/CMD+L)

The info icon next to the settings icon will open a panel to view and edit notes for the selected mockup, just like in normal edit mode.

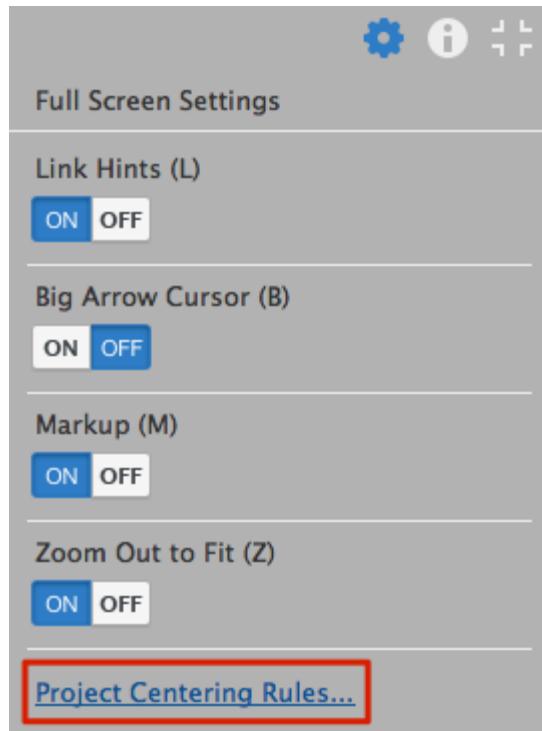
To exit Full Screen Presentation mode, hit the ESC key or click the icon in the upper right

corner.

Adjusting Your Project's Centering

Full Screen Presentation Mode centers your entire project based on the mockup that is the tallest, and the mockup that is the widest. While this normally results in a presentation that is centered (and whose focus doesn't jump around), if you have a mockup that is a great deal larger than your other mockups, it may result in your project being off center, or pushed to the top of the screen.

In the [Settings](#) panel, you will find a link called **Project Centering Rules**.



Clicking that link will open a window that gives you an overview of the size of all the mockups in your project. It will show you the longest and widest mockups in project, and the effective size they are making your project as a whole. The longest mockup will have its width in red, while the tallest mockup will have its height in blue. This should give you a hint as to what mockup is causing your project to center incorrectly.

Project Centering Rules

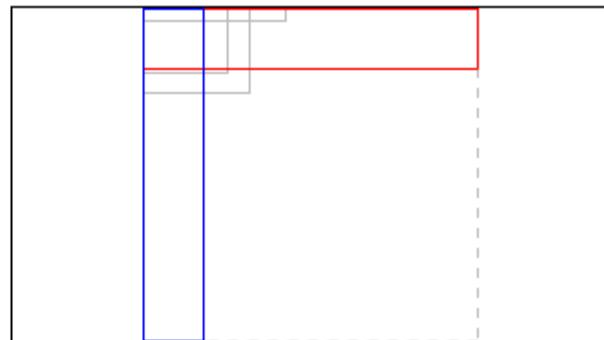


In order to avoid things "jumping around" as you click through your prototype, we center based on the widest and tallest mockups in the whole project.

Use the checkboxes below to exclude certain mockups from the centering calculation. This is typically done for site maps, diagrams and other mockups that are not part of the prototype "proper".

[Learn More...](#)

	Name	Width	Height ▾
<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>	Tall	324	1800
<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>	Browser	570	458
<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>	New Mockup 5	447	351
<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>	Wide	1800	324
<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>	Text	769	71



[Select All](#) [Select None](#)

[Cancel](#)

[Save](#)

Clicking the checkbox next to the trouble mockup (or mockups) will take them out of the centering calculation (and will recalculate the new longest/widest mockups, adjusting the overall project size).

Project Centering Rules

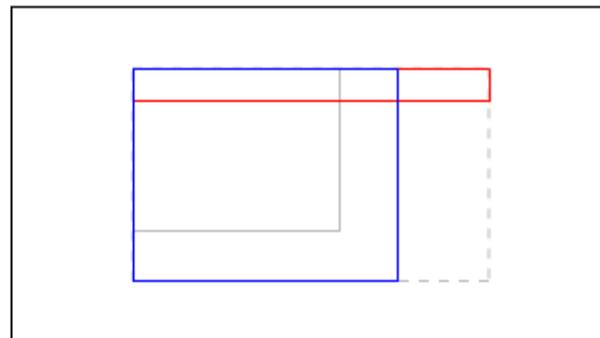


In order to avoid things "jumping around" as you click through your prototype, we center based on the widest and tallest mockups in the whole project.

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[Learn More...](#)

	Name	Width	Height ▾
<input type="checkbox"/>	Tall	324	1800
<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>	Browser	570	458
<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>	New Mockup 5	447	351
<input type="checkbox"/>	Wide	1800	324
<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>	Text	769	71



[Select All](#) [Select None](#)

[Cancel](#)

[Save](#)

This should solve any centering issues you have!



But I want to read that :(

And now I can :)

Autosaving

[← Full Screen Presentation Mode](#)

[Keeping Projects Clean and Organized →](#)

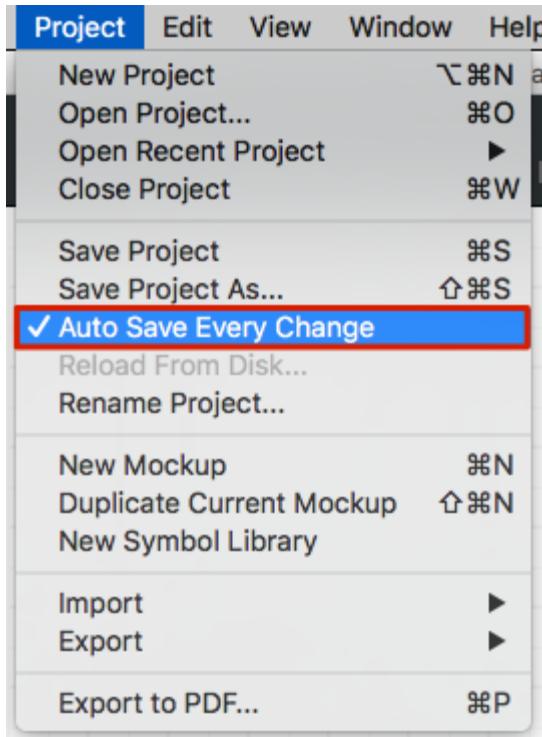
By default, Mockups 3 for Desktop will automatically save any changes you make. This ensures that you will never lose any work.

Mockups 3 for Desktop automatically saves in two places. First, it commits all changes in real time to the [internal backup file](#). Then after a short period of inactivity, Mockups 3 for Desktop will commit the changes to your original project file. This delay should help when you're saving to a networked drive or folder.

Disabling Autosave

If you find that the autosave feature is causing you problems or your workflow is better suited by manually saving, this is how you would disable it.

In the **Project** drop down menu, you will find an item named **Auto Save Every Change**. If that menu item has a check mark next to it, that means autosave is enabled. Clicking on it will disable autosave.

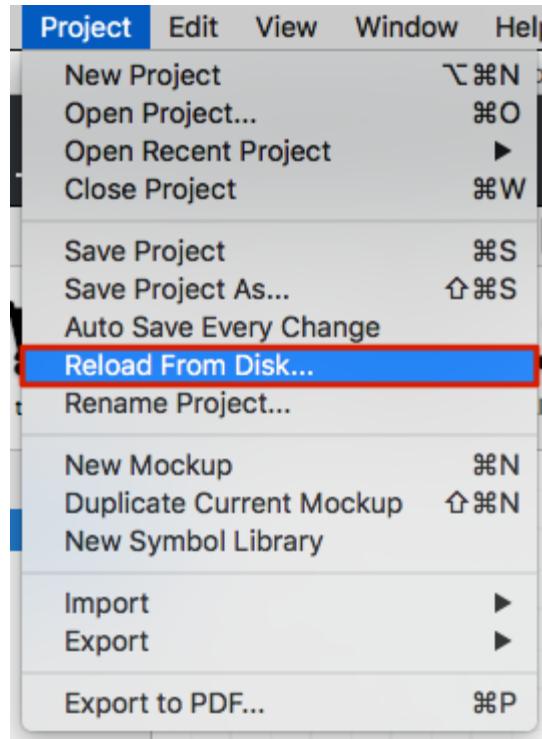


While autosave is disabled, your changes will only be committed to your original project file when you manually save them, either via the **Project > Save** menu option, or by using the [keyboard shortcut](#) (**CMD+S** on OS X and **CTRL+S** on Windows).

Auto-saving of every change is turned off. You can decide when to save your work manually. (Mockups is still saving everything in a local copy in case of a crash, of course)

Your changes are still being saved to the [internal backup file](#), and they will automatically recover if you close Mockups without remembering to save.

In the event you want to discard any changes you have made to the file, you can use the **Project > Reload from Disk...** menu item to revert to the last thing you saved to your original project file.



Re-Enabling Autosave

To re-enable Mockups 3 for Desktop's autosave feature, simply click the **Project > Auto Save Every Change** menu item. A checkmark will appear and you should see a confirmation dialog in the lower right corner of the canvas.

Auto-saving of every change is turned on.
Mockups will now save every change to the original file as you make it.

[Balsamiq for Desktop Docs](#) > Keeping Projects Clean and Organized

Keeping Projects Clean and Organized

← [Autosaving](#)

[The Local Storage Folder and Backups](#) →

Projects can become packed with many elements, and sometimes it's good to take a moment to do some house keeping. Cleaning up your project will make it easier to navigate, smaller in size, and thus **much faster!**

Let's look at few different ways to optimize a project.

Organize Wireframes and Use a Hierarchy

The [Navigator Panel](#) lists all the wireframes that belong to your project in a chronological order.

You can reorder them as you wish (by dragging them up and down) and it also offers a hierarchical structure to better organize your wireframes, allowing you to create a **parent/child relationship** between them.

To use it, select the wireframe you wish to be the child and press the `TAB` key. The child wireframe will be placed in a tree hierarchy below the wireframe above it.

You can then use the arrows to the left of the parent wireframe to show and hide the wireframes under it.

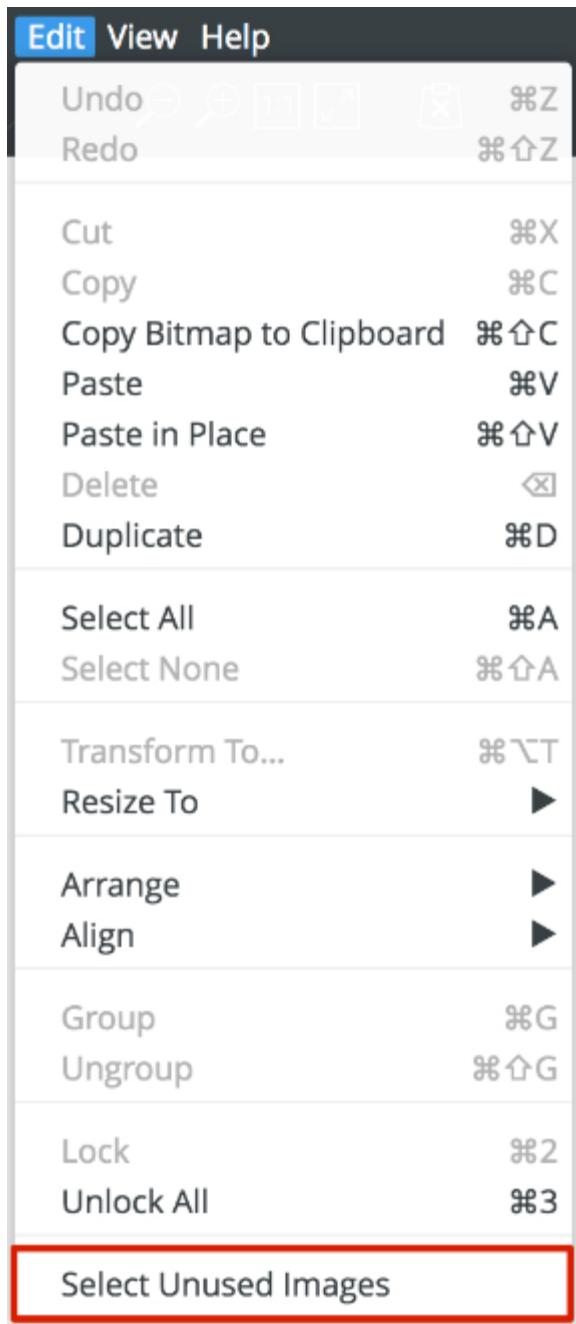


To restore it to the top level, press `SHIFT + TAB`.

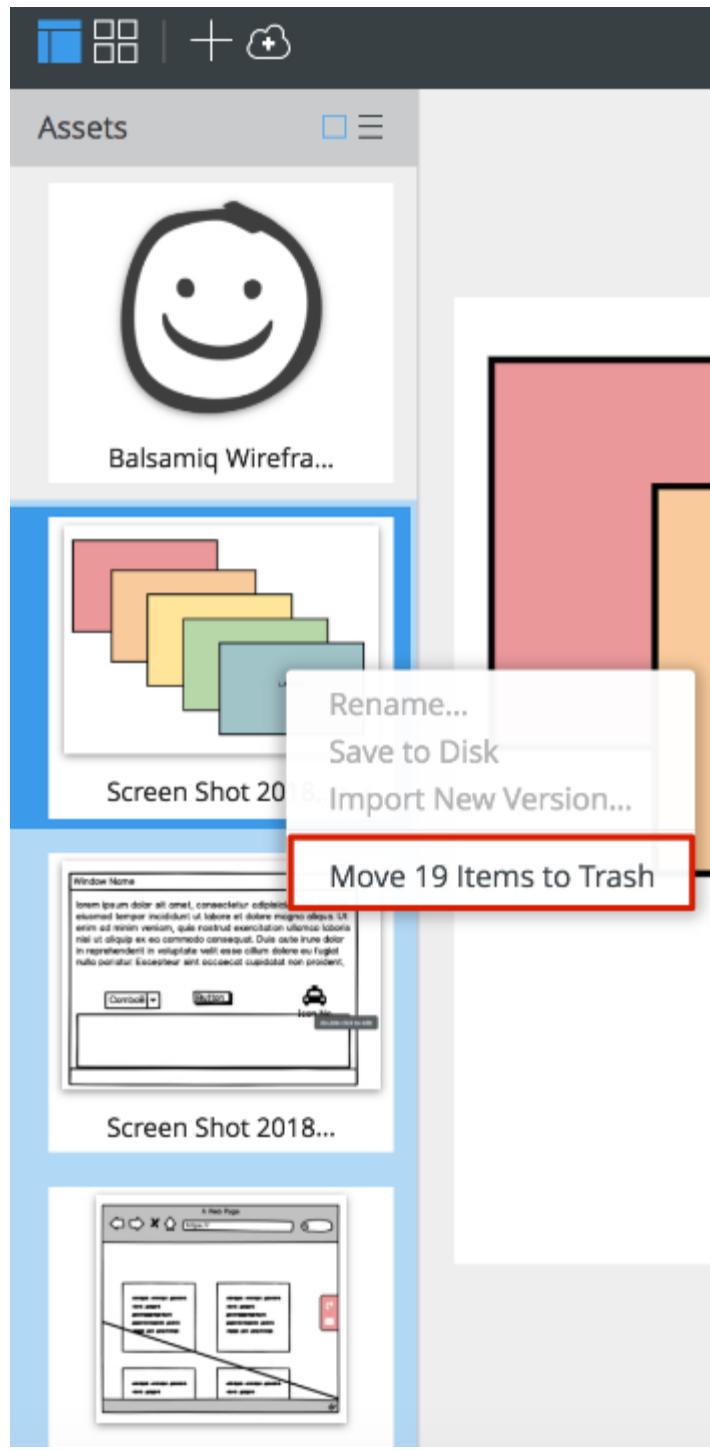
Select the Unused Images/Assets

Using [Assets](#) can be really useful when creating your wireframes but since we spend most of the time in the Wireframes view, Assets can easily become cluttered with unnecessary elements.

With that in mind, we created an option that allows you to select all images that are not used in your wireframes. The option is available in the Edit menu, as shown below:



Selecting it will open the Assets view where all the unused images will be selected for you. You can then move all the items to the trash from the context menu.



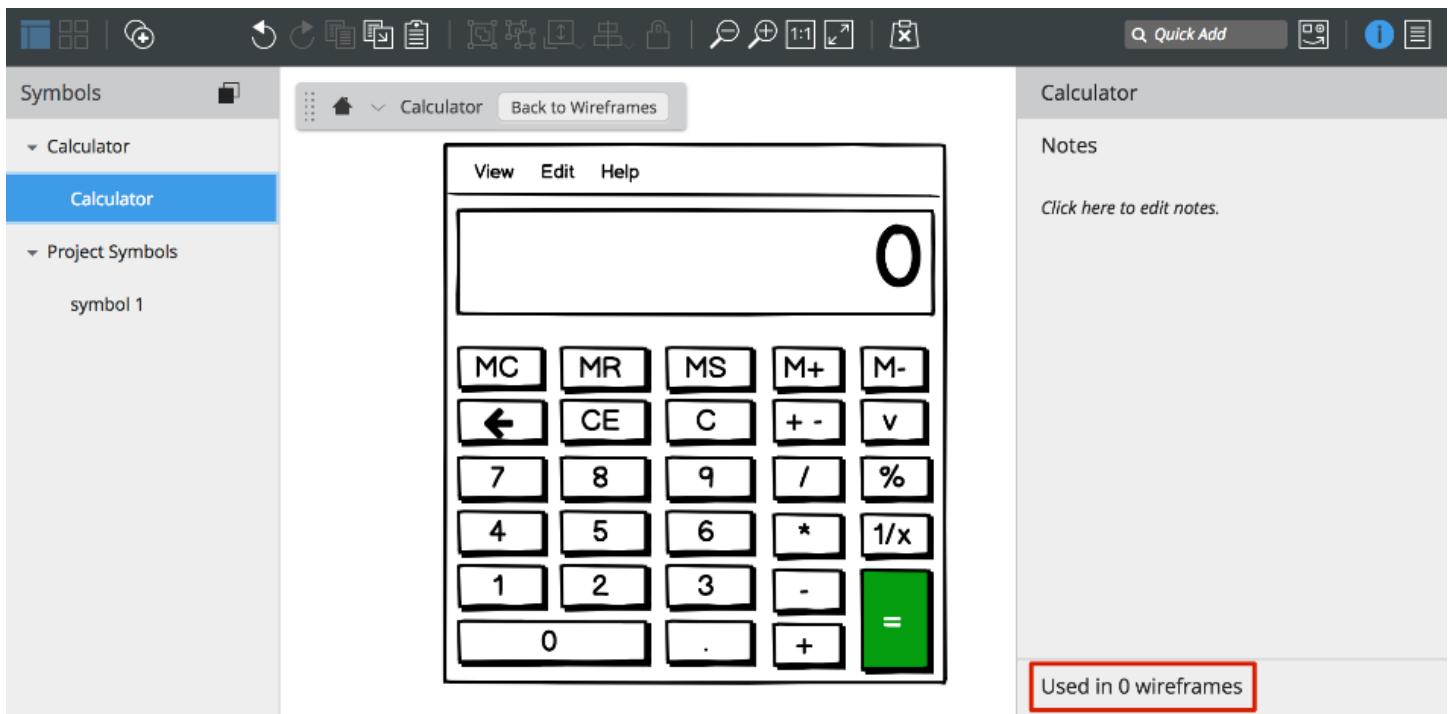
Note: Moving Assets to the trash does not remove them from the project. You'll need to use the ["Empty Trash" option](#) to delete those items **permanently**.

Clean Up the Symbols

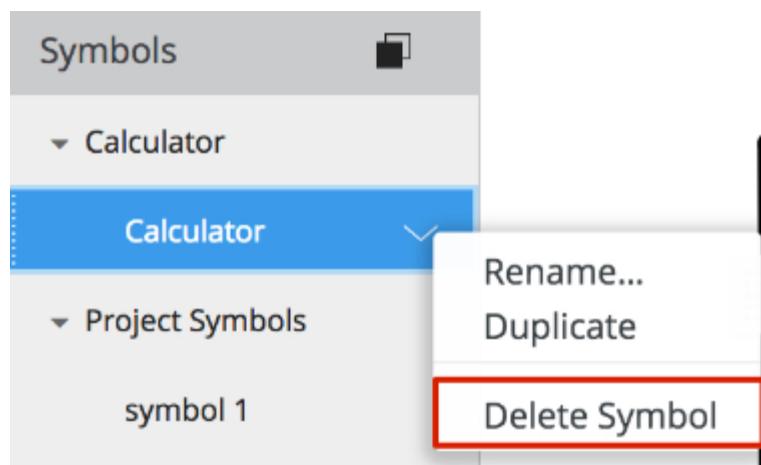
Symbols are another great feature that let you create reusable common elements that you

can use across different wireframes. Let's look at the best way to keep them "clean".

When an individual Symbol is selected, the lower portion of the right panel shows which wireframes (if any) the Symbol is used in. This is a good indication for deleting Symbols that aren't being used.



You can use the context menu to delete Symbols and Symbol Libraries from your project.



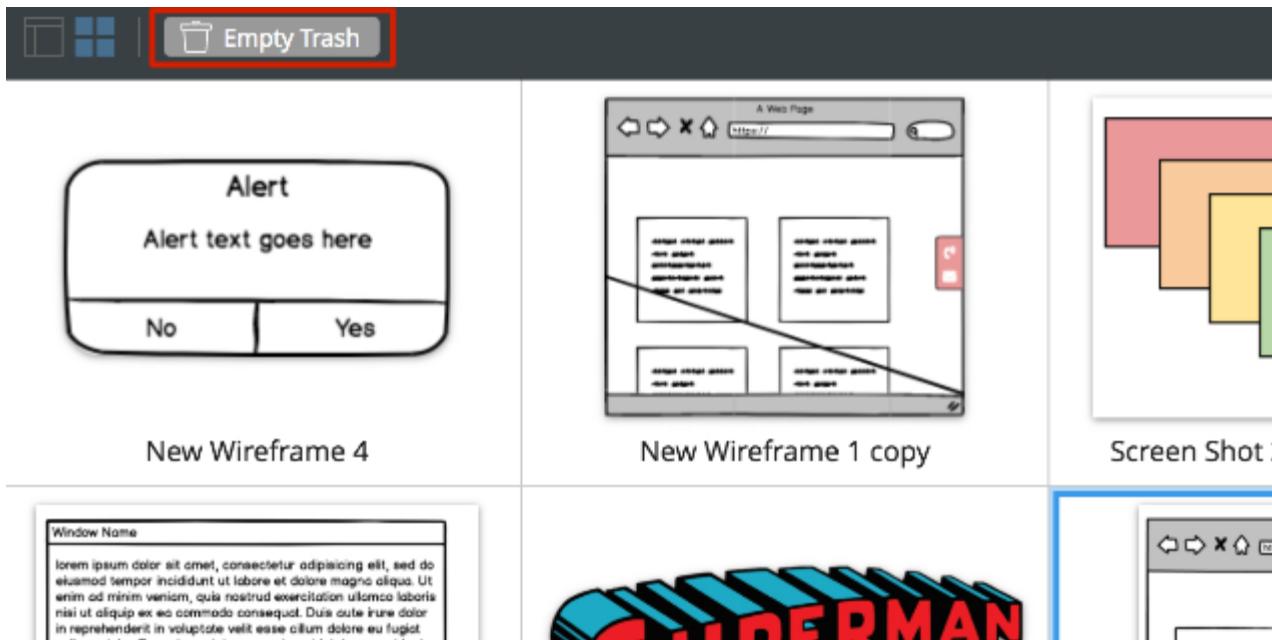
Note: Deleting Symbol Libraries will move them to the trash, where you can [delete them permanently](#) or restore them. Deleting an individual Symbol from a Symbol Library,

however, deletes it permanently.

Tip: You can hold down **SHIFT** or **CTRL / CMD** to select multiple Symbols and delete multiple Symbols at once.

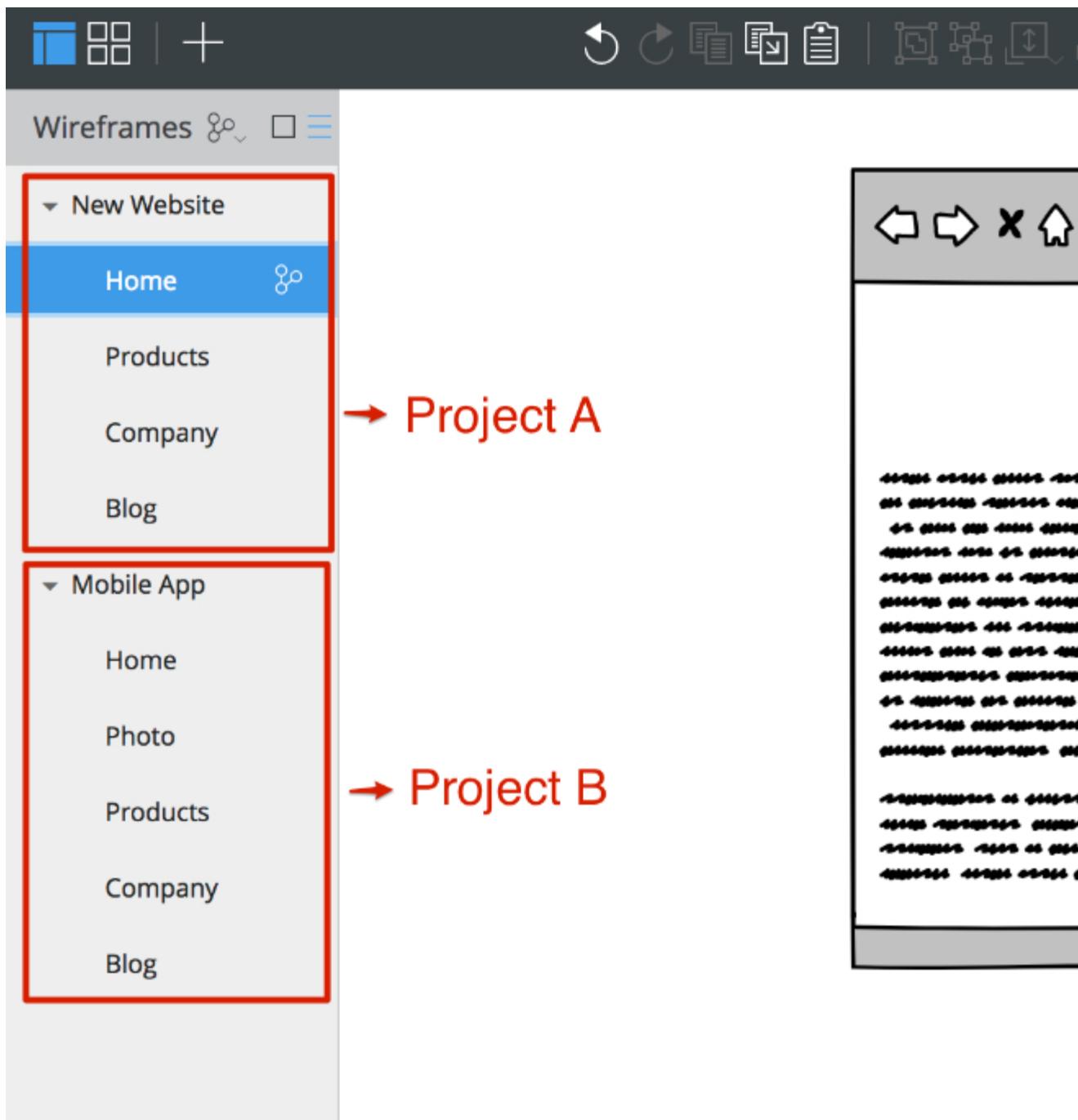
Empty the Trash

Moving items to the **Trash** does not remove them from the project. Using the "Empty Trash" option is the only way to delete those items **permanently**.



Extra Step: Split Your Project Into Smaller Ones

On a side note, we usually recommend keeping a project under 100 wireframes to avoid performance issues. Sometimes, splitting a project into smaller ones is a nice and easy way to help with slowness issues too.



We hope that these tips will be useful to improve your project's organization and help with any performance issues you may hit.

However, don't hesitate to reach out and share any related BMPR file with us via support@balsamiq.com if needed. We're here to help! :)

[Balsamiq for Desktop Docs](#) > The Local Storage Folder and Backups

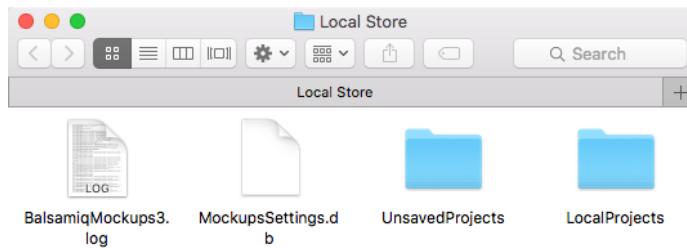
The Local Storage Folder and Backups

[← Keeping Projects Clean and Organized](#)

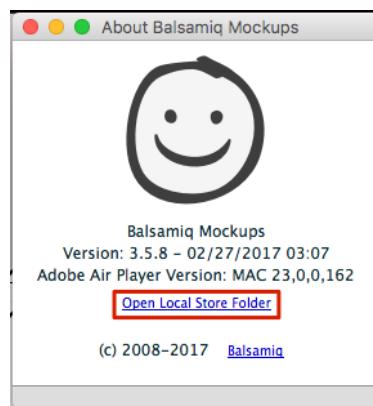
[Keyboard Shortcuts →](#)

The Local Store Folder

Balsamiq Mockups 3 for Desktop creates a folder on your hard drive for storing some local data and preferences. It looks something like this:



The easiest way to find it is by opening the "About" dialog and clicking on the "Open Local Store Folder" link.



For reference, here is the location of this folder on the various operating systems that Balsamiq Mockups for Desktop runs on:

- On Windows XP: C:\Documents and Settings\<username>\Application

Data\BalsamiqMockups3.EDE15CF69E11F7F7D45B5430C7D37CC6C3545E3C.1\Local Store

- **On Windows Vista and later:** C:\Users\<yourusername>\AppData\Roaming\BalsamiqMockups3.EDE15CF69E11F7F7D45B5430C7D37CC6C3545E3C.1\Local Store
- **On Mac OS X:**
/Library/Preferences/BalsamiqMockups3.EDE15CF69E11F7F7D45B5430C7D37CC6C3545E3C.1/Local Store

Note: On macOS 10.7 and Beyond: the ~/Library folder is hidden by default. You can access it by opening a Finder window, clicking on the "Go" menu option at the top of your screen, and then pressing the "alt/option" key on your keyboard. That will make the Library folder selectable in the dropdown menu.

Unhiding System Files in Windows

In Windows 7, if you don't see Documents and Settings, you may need to "unhide system files." Here are the steps to do that:

1. Open Windows Explorer (Start+E)
2. Select the menu item "Organize > Folder and search options."
3. Select the View tab, and uncheck "Hide protected operating system files."

Documents and Settings should show up under C:\ in your Windows Explorer now. If it doesn't, you may need to restart.

Mockups 3 for Desktop backs up any file you open to a local folder. These local versions are stored for (around) seven days and should automatically load in case of a corrupted project file.

Versions of [Mockups 3 for Desktop](#) prior to 3.4 do not have the automatic recovery feature. This FAQ will show you how to recover the file manually.

Backups

Backups are stored in the Local Storage folder in two folders.

- **The LocalProjects Folder:** The LocalProjects folder is for projects that you have saved at least once. We keep projects in this folder for about a week before deleting them.
- **The UnsavedProjects Folder:** The UnsavedProjects folder is for projects that you haven't had a chance to save yet, but have been working on. Check here if you re-opened Mockups 3 for Desktop, but your new project didn't open up with it.

Restoring Backups

Check both the **LocalProjects** and **UnsavedProjects** folders for your project. You may have to open a couple of different projects to find a working or up-to-date version. Once you have found and opened it, Select Project > Save As and save the file in a new location. Saving it allows both the backup and a new version of the file to exist, which keeps your data safe!

Note: We do not recommend moving files out of the Local Store folder. If you want to move a backed up file to another folder, we recommend copying the file (CTRL/CMD+C), and then pasting it to the destination (CTRL/CMD+V).

[Balsamiq for Desktop Docs](#) > Keyboard Shortcuts

Keyboard Shortcuts

[← The Local Storage Folder and Backups](#)

[The BMPR File Format →](#)

Below is a list of all the keyboard shortcuts and modifiers available in Balsamiq Mockups 3. While all of the shortcuts will work in the Desktop version, **some might not work in our web versions.**

The shortcuts below apply to Mockups 3 and higher.

Working with Controls

Selection

Edit the selected control's
text

ENTER or F2

Add to selection

SHIFT +CLICK

Toggle selection

□ +CLICK

Select All	+ A
Deselect All	+ SHIFT + A
Ignore control(s) under cursor	Hold
Treat/do not treat selection as markup	+ SHIFT + K
Size/Position	
Resize maintaining aspect ratio	Hold while resizing with mouse
Move selection along horizontal or vertical axis	Hold while dragging
Disable snapping during move or resize	Hold
Grow/Increase text or icon size	+]
Shrink/Decrease text or icon size	+ [
Nudge selection 1px	
Nudge selection 10px	+
Nudge-Resize selection 1px	+ ALT +
Nudge-Resize selection 10px	+ ALT + +
Auto-Size selection	+ ALT + 0
Pan the canvas (Hand tool)	SPACE BAR + Click and Drag

Bring to front	+ +
Send to back	+ +
Bring forward	+
Send backward	+
Duplicate selection	+ drag

Edit/History

Undo last command	+
Redo last command	+ or + +
Cut the selected controls	+ or +
Copy the selected controls	+ or +
Paste	+ or +
Paste In Place	+ +
Delete the selected controls	or
Duplicate the selected controls	+
Lock the selected controls	+
Unlock all locked controls	+
Transform the selected controls	+

Group

Group the selected controls

+ G

Ungroup the selected groups

+ SHIFT + G

Align

Align selected controls left

+ ALT + 1

Align selected controls center

+ ALT + 2

Align selected controls right

+ ALT + 3

Align selected controls top

+ ALT + 4

Align selected controls
middle

+ ALT + 5

Align selected controls
bottom

+ ALT + 6

Working with Icons

Navigating the Suggestion
List

↑ ↓ ← →

Using the selected icon

ENTER

Closing the Icons Library

ESC

Closing the Suggestion List

ESC

Grow/Increase icon size

+]

[]

Shrink/Decrease icon size

□ + [

Working with Text

Start Editing text of the selected control

ENTER or F2

Committing the current text

ENTER (single-line controls), □ + ENTER (multi-line controls) or click anywhere

Ignoring the current edit

ESC

Grow/Increase Text Size

□ +]

Shrink/Decrease Text Size

□ + [

Text Formatting

italic

text in underscores

[link](#)

[text in brackets]

[link with a target](#)

\[text in brackets\]\(mockup_name\) or
\[text in brackets\]\(website_url\)

bold

text in asterisks

disabled

-text in hyphens-

~~strikethrough~~

~text in tildes~

font point size

{size:12}text{size}

color (hex value or color name)

{color:#ff0000}text{color} or
{color:red}text{color}

To type a literal *, , – –, or [] in a control, escape it by prefixing it with a \ (backslash): *, \\, –\\–, \, [\\]

Special Text Macros

Lorem–Ipsum generator type *lorem* in a Text or Text Area control. Try *I0rem* for a variation with character count.

Show the current mockup name type {mockup–name} in a Label, Text, Title or Subtitle control.

Quick Add

Sending focus to Quick Add / (forward slash) or + (plus sign)

Navigating the Suggestion List ↑ ↓

Closing the Suggestion List ESC

Sending focus back to the Canvas ESC

Add control at cursor position SHIFT + ENTER

Drawing Controls

Learn more about drawing controls here

Draw a rectangle on the canvas R +drag

Draw a block of text on the
canvas

T +drag

Draw a line of text on the
canvas

Y +drag

Working with Mockup Files

New blank mockup

□ + N

Duplicate current mockup

□ + SHIFT + N

New project

□ + ALT + N

Open project

□ + O

Save as...

□ + SHIFT + S

Rename Mockup

□ + ALT + R

Close current project

□ + W or □ + F4

Export this mockup's JSON

□ + E

Import mockup JSON

□ + SHIFT + E

Export snapshot to clipboard

□ + SHIFT + C

Export Snapshot to PNG

□ + R

Export All Snapshots to PNG

□ + SHIFT + R

Export to PDF

□ + P

Quit Balsamiq Mockups

□ + Q

Next Mockup

CTRL + TAB (Windows)

PAGE DOWN or fn + ⌘ + ↓ (Mac)

Previous Mockup

CTRL + SHIFT + TAB (Windows)

PAGE UP or fn + ⌘ + ↑ (Mac)

Top of Mockup

HOME (Windows)

fn + SHIFT + ↑ (Mac)

Bottom of Mockup

END (Windows)

fn + SHIFT + ↓ (Mac)

Views

Hide/Show the UI Library

⌘ + L or ⌘ + F1

Hide/Show the Inspector

⌘ + ; or ALT + ENTER

Hide/Show the Project Info

⌘ + ,

Hide/Show the Navigator
Panel

⌘ + J

Show/Hide Markup

⌘ + K

Back to Mockups (From
Symbols/Assets/Trash)

⌘ + SHIFT + M

Zoom In

⌘ + + (plus sign) or ⌘ + scroll mouse

Zoom Out

⌘ + - (minus sign) or ⌘ + scroll mouse

Zoom to Actual Size

⌘ + 1

Zoom to Fit

⌘ + 0

Fullscreen

Enter Full Screen View  +  or 

Exit Full Screen View 

Edit Current Mockup 

Hide/Show Toolbar 

Hide/Show Settings Panel 

Hide/Show Link Hints 

Hide/Show Big Arrow Cursor 

Hide/Show Markup 

Zoom Out to Fit 

Hide/Show Inspector Panel 

Pan Canvas 

Next Mockup 

Previous Mockup 

Back 

Forward 

Zoom to Fit All on Windows

For users with Windows Vista and above, you may find that the Zoom to Fit All (CTRL+SHIFT+0) doesn't work. The reason for this is that Windows captures the input before it gets sent to Mockups 3 for Desktop, preventing the app from ever seeing it.

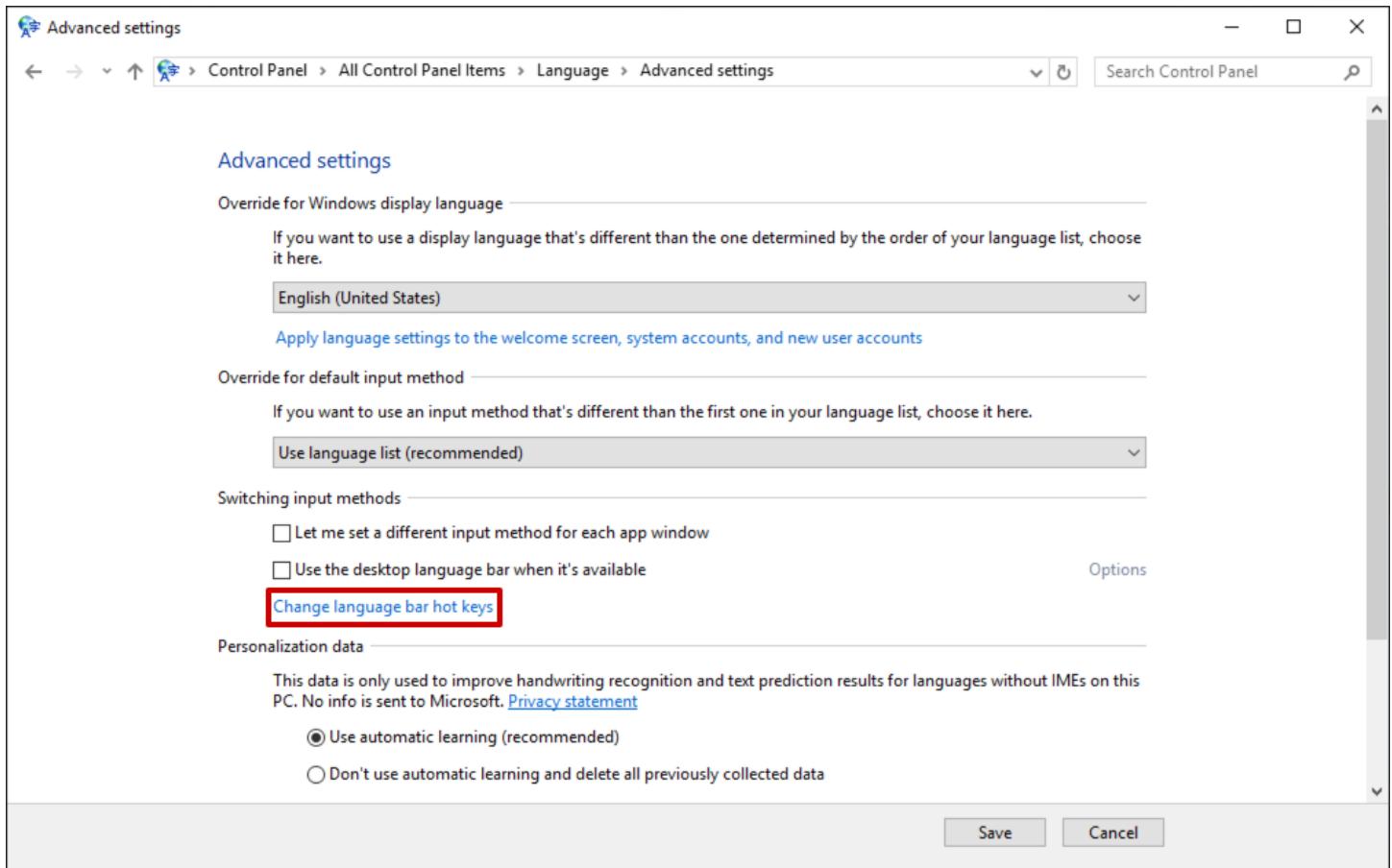
Luckily, the fix is super easy.

On Windows Vista and Windows 7

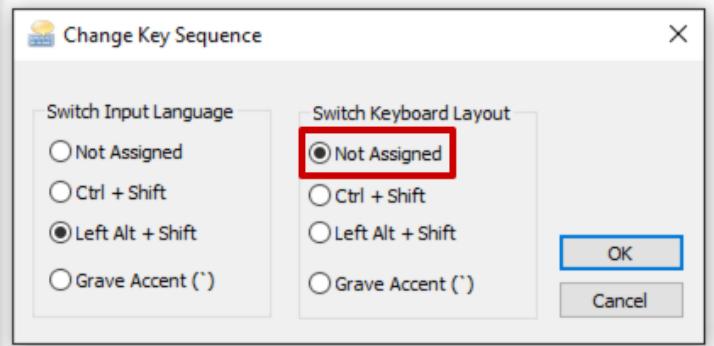
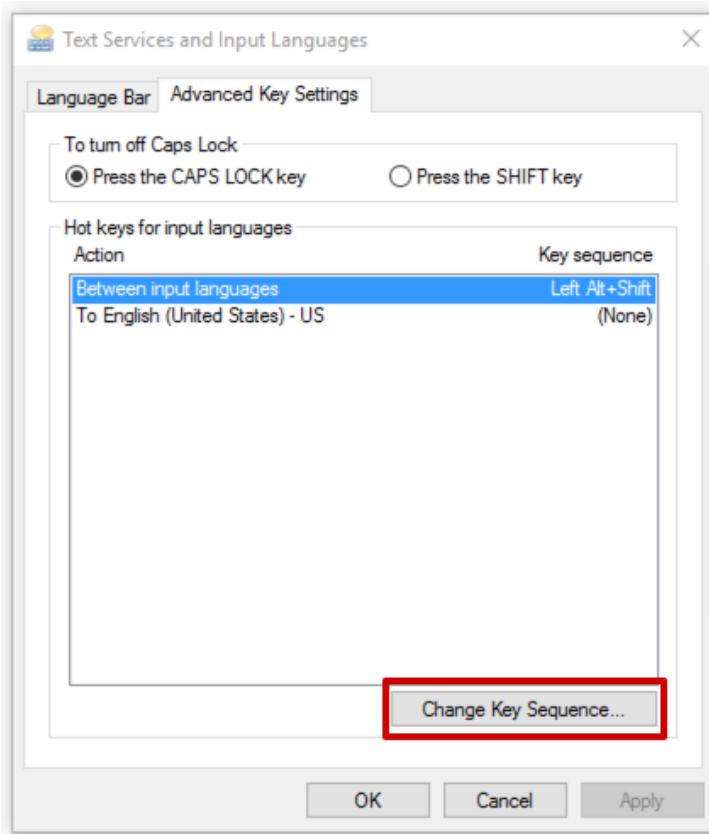
You can follow the steps on [Microsoft's Help Center](#) to disable the Windows shortcut, which will fix the issue in Mockups for Desktop.

On Windows 8 and Windows 10

The option for changing the shortcut is in a different place in Windows 8 and Windows 10. You will need to goto **Control Panel > Language > Advance Settings** and then find the **Change language bar hot keys** button.



From there click **Change Key Sequence...** and then set **Switch Keyboard Layout to Not Assigned**.



← The Local Storage Folder and Backups

The BMPR File Format →

[Balsamiq for Desktop Docs](#) > The BMPR File Format

The BMPR File Format

[← Keyboard Shortcuts](#)

[Balsamiq Mockups 3 for Desktop System Requirements and Updating →](#)

People often ask us if Balsamiq can export to HTML/CSS/JS or XAML or Ruby or other programming languages. In short, we don't, and don't plan to. We don't have the resources to do it, and want to keep our focus on our core product.

Instead, we chose to document our file format, so that developers can build their own tool to integrate with our products, if they wish.

Maybe you're curious about how your projects are stored. Maybe you want to make tools that can read the files or even generate BMPR files programmatically. Maybe you want to teach a [robot](#) how to draw your wireframes using chalk on sidewalks. We hope that happens!

Overview

At the heart of all Balsamiq projects are BMPR files. BMPR files (short for **B**alsamiq **M**ockups **P**rojects) are a type of BAR file. BAR files, or **B**alsamiq **A**rchive files, provide a way of storing different kinds of content while also providing a consistent set of tools for reading and writing that content.

BAR is a format for files that have resources of various types, branches, and thumbnails. For instance, one could build the next Keynote, Visio, or Photoshop using BAR as its file format. Our hope is that some day someone might want to adopt the format. If not, we'll probably adopt it ourselves for our next product.

In other words, BMPR files are a kind of BAR file. All BAR files share similar APIs describing what kind of content the archive contains.

In the case of BMPR files that content contains everything there is to know about a Balsamiq project.

Getting a BMPR File

If you want to get your hands on a BMPR file, create a new wireframe using Balsamiq app and save the file somewhere. That's a BMPR file. Or [download the example](#) used for creating some of the documentation that follows.

The BMPR format isn't the first format we've used for Balsamiq. For example, in the past we've used [BMML](#). A Mockups 2 project requires multiple BMML files making them a little more cumbersome to manage. A single BMPR file contains everything for a project. This single file approach makes sharing projects much easier.

Versions

The current version of the BMPR file format is 1.2.

We use [Semantic Versioning](#) (SemVar for short) for the BMPR file format. This means, among other things, that the API for version 1.2 of the file format won't change. New minor versions can change the API but will remain backwards compatible with previous versions. Major versions such as a 2.0 release will be incompatible with previous major versions.

Version 2.0 of the BMPR file format is already being worked on and will not be compatible with previous major versions. 2.0 might be the same in some ways, but it's best to assume it's not 100% compatible with 1.x versions. When version 2.0 of the format is released we'll update this reference to make the differences between versions clear.

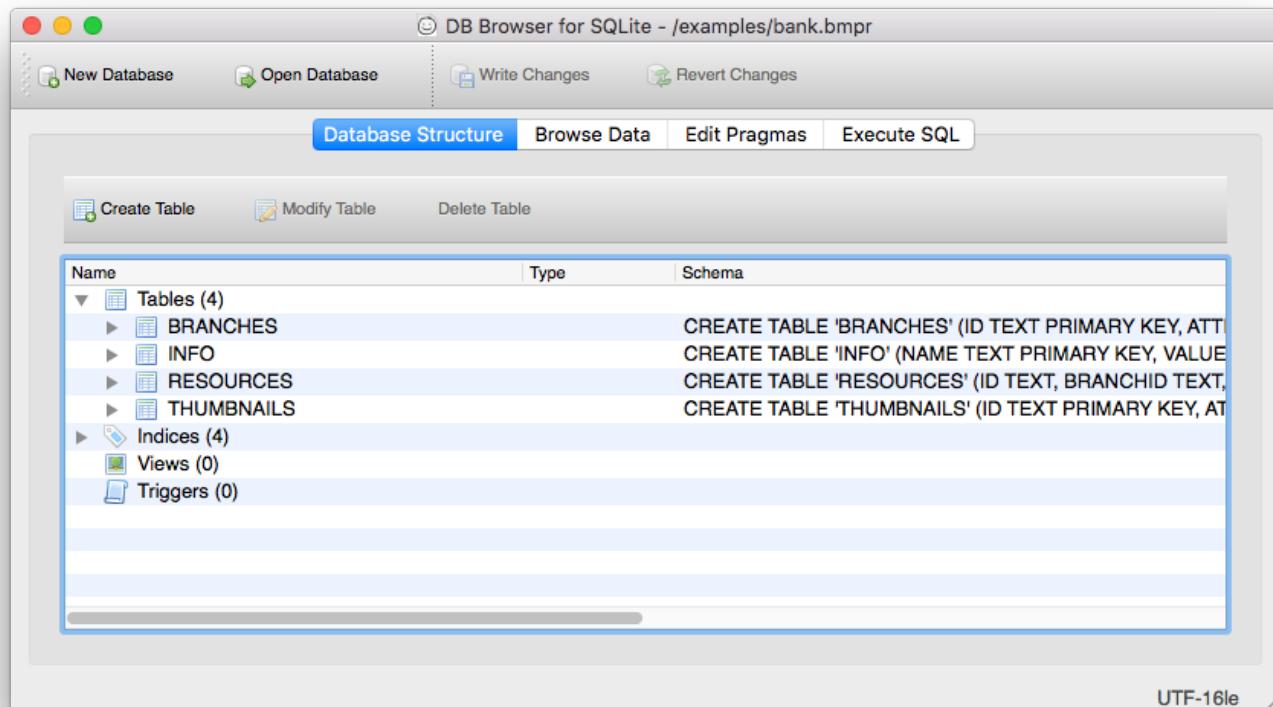
When writing tools for the BMPR file format it's a good idea to ensure that your tools are aware of version differences. BMPR files are a type of BAR file, and all BAR files contain both the file format type (such as bmpr) and the version (1.2) that file format uses. Examples of

how those details are stored can be found in the [INFO](#) section below.

Details

A BMPR file is a humble SQLite database file that stores both scalar values (single numbers, strings, etc) and JSON data that describes every detail of a Balsamiq project. Using SQLite enables BMPR files to take advantage of the huge amount of historical experience, tools, and libraries for reading and writing to relational databases while also being very portable and embeddable.

Here's what a BMPR file looks like when opened using the free [DB Browser for SQLite](#) app:



There are 4 tables in a BMPR file:

[INFO](#) contains details about what kind of resources an archive contains

[RESOURCES](#) is where most of the content found in a project lives

[BRANCHES](#) contains information about branches in a project

THUMBNAILS has entries for wireframe thumbnails

The INFO Table

The INFO table describes what kind of data, or resources, our file contains. BMPR files are a kind of BAR file, and BAR files use the INFO table to describe what kind of data they contain. It allows developers to inspect an archive file so they can make informed decisions about how to handle the content within.

Table Fields

Field	Datatype	Description
NAME	TEXT	The unique name of the kind of meta data for this row. Think of this as a you would a key in structure or hash.
VALUE	TEXT	The value for this meta data entry

Example Data

NAME	VALUE
SchemaVersion	1.2
ArchiveRevision	44
ArchiveRevisionUUID	007F035B-6147-D643-C5CC-2871D9DA1C43
ArchiveFormat	bmpr
ArchiveAttributes	{ "creationDate":1467124505618, // the date this archive file was created "name":"banking_interface" // the name of the resource }

SchemaVersion

This is the file format version number for the kind of resource this archive contains.

ArchiveRevision

This contains a count of how many times this archive file has been changed.

ArchiveRevisionUUID

This is a unique ID that identifies the latest revision of this archive.

ArchiveFormat

This indicates what kind of data this archive contains (for example, *bmp*).

ArchiveAttributes

This is a JSON hash containing the creation date of the file as well as a name for the contents of this archive.

The RESOURCES Table

Details about wireframes, assets, and symbols are stored here. Each row in this table contains details (coordinates, shape, and size, etc.) about every element in a project.

Table Fields

Field	Datatype	Description	Example
ID	TEXT	A unique id for a resource	ADC6E183- B52E-038A- 1BBC- DAEDBAE75554
BRANCHID	TEXT	The branch this resource belongs to	Master
ATTRIBUTES	TEXT	JSON data with keys for <i>creationDate</i> , <i>thumbnailID</i> , <i>kind</i> , <i>modifiedBy</i> , <i>notes</i> , <i> mimeType</i> , <i>order</i> , <i>name</i> , <i>importedFrom</i> , <i>parentID</i> , and <i>trashed</i>	

Example:

```
{
  "creationDate": 0,                                // the date this resource was created
  "importedFrom": "",                               // for imported resources this will be t
he original file name of that resource
  "parentID": "",                                 // a unique ID that, when present, assoc
iates this resource with another resource
  "kind": "mockup",                                // the kind of resource this row describ
es
  "mimeType": "text/vnd.balsamiq.bmml", // the mime type for this resource
  "modifiedBy": null,                             // who (or what) last modified this reso
urce
  "name": "Banking Website",                      // the name of this resource
  "notes": "",                                    // notes for this resource
  "order": 2445916,                               // an absolute integer representing this
resource's position
  "thumbnailID": "[UUID]",                         // the unique ID of the thumbnail for th
is wireframe
  "trashed": false,                               // a boolean flag indicating if this is
a trashed resource
}
```

The `order` key is only present when the resource is a **mockup**.

DATA **TEXT** JSON data with keys for wireframe data. See below for more details.

If the resource is a kind of **otherAsset** or **asset** the data stored for this resource will be the Base64 encoded representation of the asset.

Example:

```
{
  "mockup": {
    "controls": {          // an array containing each element (see more about thi
s below)
      "control": ["..."] // JSON data with properties unique to the control type
    }
  }
}
```

```

},
"measuredH": "600", // the pixel height of the wireframe
"measuredW": "800", // the pixel width of the wireframe
"version": "1.0" // the version for this particular resource
}
}

```

Stored resources share some common keys. The first 10 keys in the following example will be the same for any kind of **mockup** or **symbol** resource.

```

{
"typeID": "DataGrid", // the type of element this is (ie. DataGrid, or TabBar)
"ID": "2", // a unique integer for this resource
"h": "319", // the pixel height of this resource
"w": "739", // the pixel width of this resource
"x": "30", // the x position of this resource
"y": "257", // the y position of this resource
"zOrder": "17", // the position of this resource, front to back
"properties": { // resource type specific properties
  "hLines": "false",
  "selectedIndex": "0",
  "size": "14",
  "text": "[CSV formatted data for this DataGrid]",
  "vLines": "true",
  "verticalScrollbar": "true"
}
}

```

Each different kind of resource will have properties that are specific to that kind of resource. Note how some keys within *properties* differ between the example above and below:

```

{
"typeID": "TabBar",
"ID": "7",
"h": "535",
"w": "769",
"x": "15",

```

```

    "y": "52",
    "measuredH": "100",
    "measuredW": "241",
    "zOrder": "2",
    "properties": {
        "borderStyle": "square",
        "color": "15658734",
        "selectedIndex": "0",
        "tabHPosition": "center",
        "text": "[Comma separated list of tab names]"
    }
}

```

Each Symbol Library that's been added to a project has its own RESOURCE record with JSON data describing all of the controls that that library makes available. Each instance of a control used in a wireframe is described in the JSON within the DATA column for a wireframe's RESOURCE record.

Documenting each different kind of resources, each with their own set of properties, is well beyond the scope of this reference. Knowing the purpose of their common keys should at least provide a foundation for understanding each different kind.

The BRANCHES Table

The branches table contains records for each branch in a project. A typical project will contain a "Master" branch at the very least.

Table Fields		
Field	Datatype	Description
ID	TEXT	A unique id for a branch
ATTRIBUTES	TEXT	JSON data. Keys depend on whether the record is for a Master branch or alternate branch.

Master branch example:

```
{
}
```

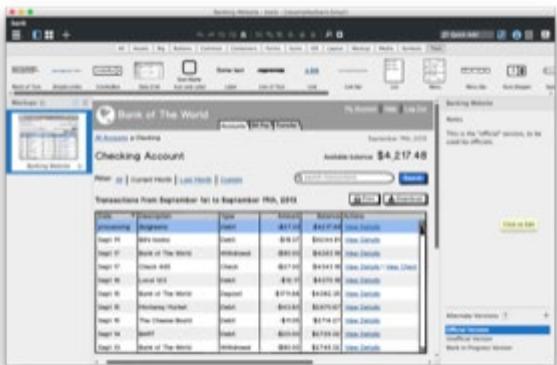
```
"branchDescription": "", // this is here for possible future use
"creationDate": 1467124505618, // the date this branch was created
"fontFace": "Chalkboard", // the name of the font that will be used throughout the project
"fontSize": 16, // the size of the font that will be used throughout the project
"linkColor": 545684, // the color used for links throughout the project
"modifiedBy": [], // what populates this?
"projectDescription": "", // the description for the project
"selectionColor": 9813234, // the color used for selections throughout the project
"skinName": "sketch", // the name of the skin to use throughout the project
"symbolLibraryID": "" // a unique id for the symbol library used throughout the project
}
```

An alternate branch example:

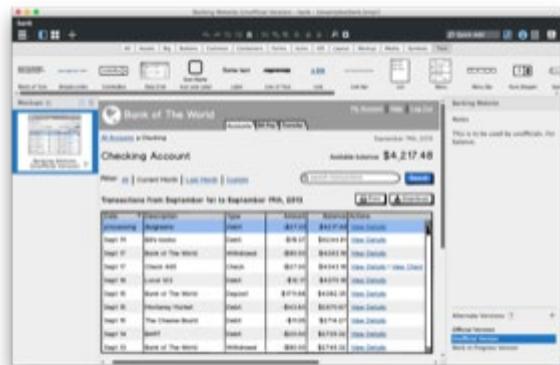
```
{
  "branchName": "alt" // the name of an alternate branch
}
```

Things to know about branches and alternates:

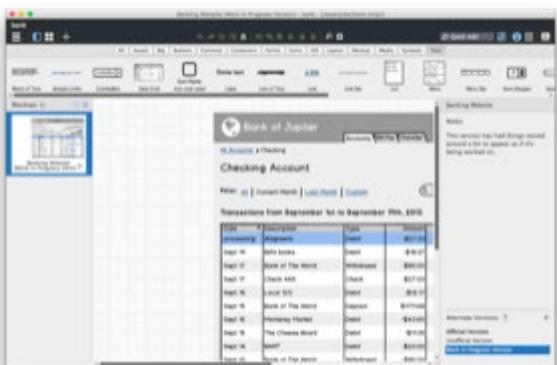
Balsamiq doesn't use terms like "branchName" – it uses alternate versions. You can read more about [alternate versions here](#).



This is the "master" alternate. Its ID in the *BRANCHES* table is "master", but it has no "branchName" key or value in the ATTRIBUTES column. That's because the master branch name can't be changed. Balsamiq will always refer to it as "Official Version".



This is an alternate of the official version. Its ID is an automatically generated UUID and its "branchName" in the ATTRIBUTES column is "Unofficial Version" – its name is editable since it's not the master branch.



This is another alternate. Its ID is an automatically generated UUID and its "branchName" in the ATTRIBUTES column is "Work in Progress Version".

Changes made to things like fonts, link colors, project descriptions on an alternative branch are actually made to the **Master** branch. Alternative branches inherit these properties from the **Master** branch, which is why alternative branches only contain a **branchName**.

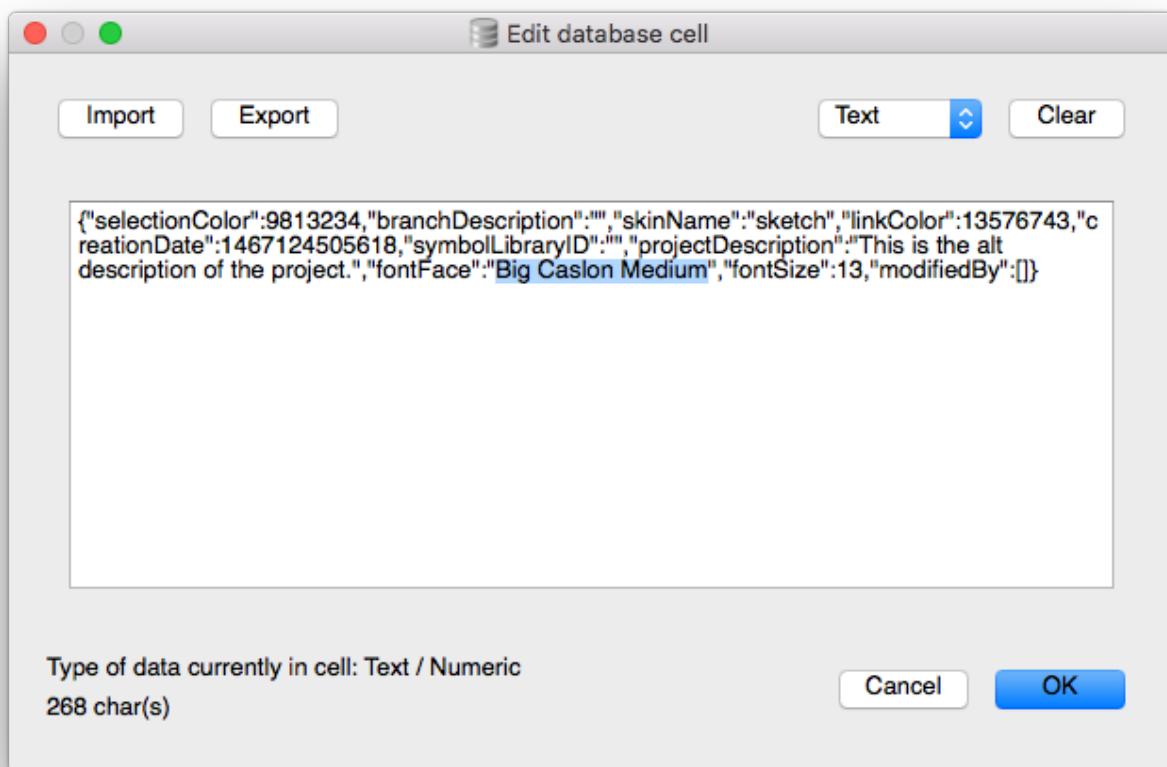


In this screenshot of Balsamiq we're picking a new font and changing the link colors to red on one alternate.

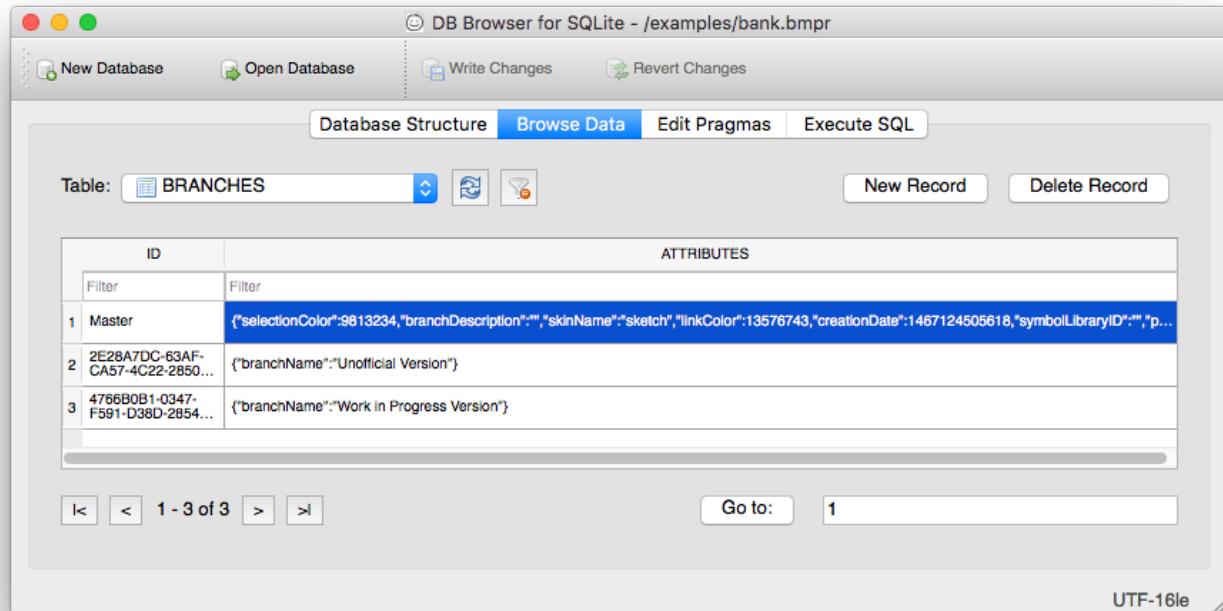


Those font changes apply to both the original alternate as well as all other alternates.

Here what the data looks like when the font is changed for an alternate:



That font setting is applied to the master branch, as seen here:



The THUMBNAILS Table

Every Balsamiq project has thumbnails of the wireframes within the project. The *THUMBNAILS* table keeps track of those thumbnails.

Table Fields			
Field	Datatype	Description	Example
ID	TEXT	A unique id for a thumbnail.	4B16F0EB-CAD0-5E34-0BD3-DAEDBAF4CAF6
ATTRIBUTES	TEXT	JSON data with keys for <i>image</i> , <i>resourceID</i> , and <i>branchID</i>	
Example:			
A JSON object representing a thumbnail's attributes, such as { "image": "path/to/thumb.png", "resourceID": "12345", "branchID": "B16F0EB-CAD0-5E34-0BD3-DAEDBAF4CAF6" }.			

```
{  
  "branchID": "Master", // this is the name of the branch this thumbnail is associated with  
  "image": "[Image Data]", // contains Base64 encoded data for the thumbnail image.  
  "resourceID": "[UUID]" // this is the UUID of the wireframe this thumbnail is a snapshot of  
}
```

Summary

We hope this reference is useful. If you can think of ways that would help us make it more useful for you [we want to hear about it](#) and make it better. If you build a tool that supports BMPR let us know so we can tell people about it!

[← Keyboard Shortcuts](#)

[Balsamiq Mockups 3 for Desktop System Requirements and Updating](#) →

[Balsamiq for Desktop Docs](#) > Balsamiq Mockups 3 for Desktop System Requirements and Updating

Balsamiq Mockups 3 for Desktop System Requirements and Updating

[← The BMPR File Format](#)

[Troubleshooting Balsamiq Mockups 3 for Desktop →](#)

Balsamiq Mockups 3 for Desktop requires Adobe Air 2.6 to run, which works fine on most computers and Operating Systems. You can find the most recent [system requirements for Adobe Air here](#).

The last time we checked, they were:

Windows

- 2.33GHz or faster x86-compatible processor, or Intel Atom™ 1.6GHz or faster processor for netbook class devices
- Microsoft® Windows Server 2008, Windows 7, Windows 8 Classic or Windows 10
- 512MB of RAM (1GB recommended)
- AIR SDK Development Supports Microsoft® Windows 7 and above, 64-bit only

Mac

- Intel® Core™ Duo 1.83GHz or faster processor
- Mac OS X v10.7, and above

- 512MB of RAM (1GB recommended)
- AIR SDK Development supports Mac OS 10.9 and above, 64bit only

Updating Balsamiq Mockups 3 For Desktop

Head over to the [Download page](#) and install Balsamiq Mockups 3 for Desktop on top of your existing installation.

You won't have to re-register.

To know what changed, take a look at the [Release Announcements](#) category on our blog.

If you're the adventurous type, you can test our latest build in the [Next Release Preview](#), but don't use it to work on mission critical work. You may encounter bugs.

[← The BMPR File Format](#)

[Troubleshooting Balsamiq Mockups 3 for Desktop →](#)

[Balsamiq for Desktop Docs](#) > Troubleshooting Balsamiq Mockups 3 for Desktop

Troubleshooting Balsamiq Mockups 3 for Desktop

[← Balsamiq Mockups 3 for Desktop System Requirements and Updating](#)

[Troubleshooting Mac Saving Issues →](#)

Something not working as expected? We're here to help! Here's a short list of steps we recommend.

1. Check Your Version

If you've hit a bug there's a decent chance we've fixed it in a recent update. Start by checking the [Balsamiq for Desktop home page](#) to make sure you're running the latest version.

2. Check the Docs

If your problem isn't a bug or the application crashing you may find the answer to your question in [our documentation](#), or you [search](#) all our docs.

3. Contact Us

Get a human! We love to compete on customer service. Get in touch! Email support@balsamiq.com or find more ways to [contact us here](#).

← [Balsamiq Mockups 3 for Desktop System Requirements and Updating](#)

[Troubleshooting Mac Saving Issues →](#)

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Troubleshooting Mac Saving Issues

[← Troubleshooting Balsamiq Mockups 3 for Desktop](#)

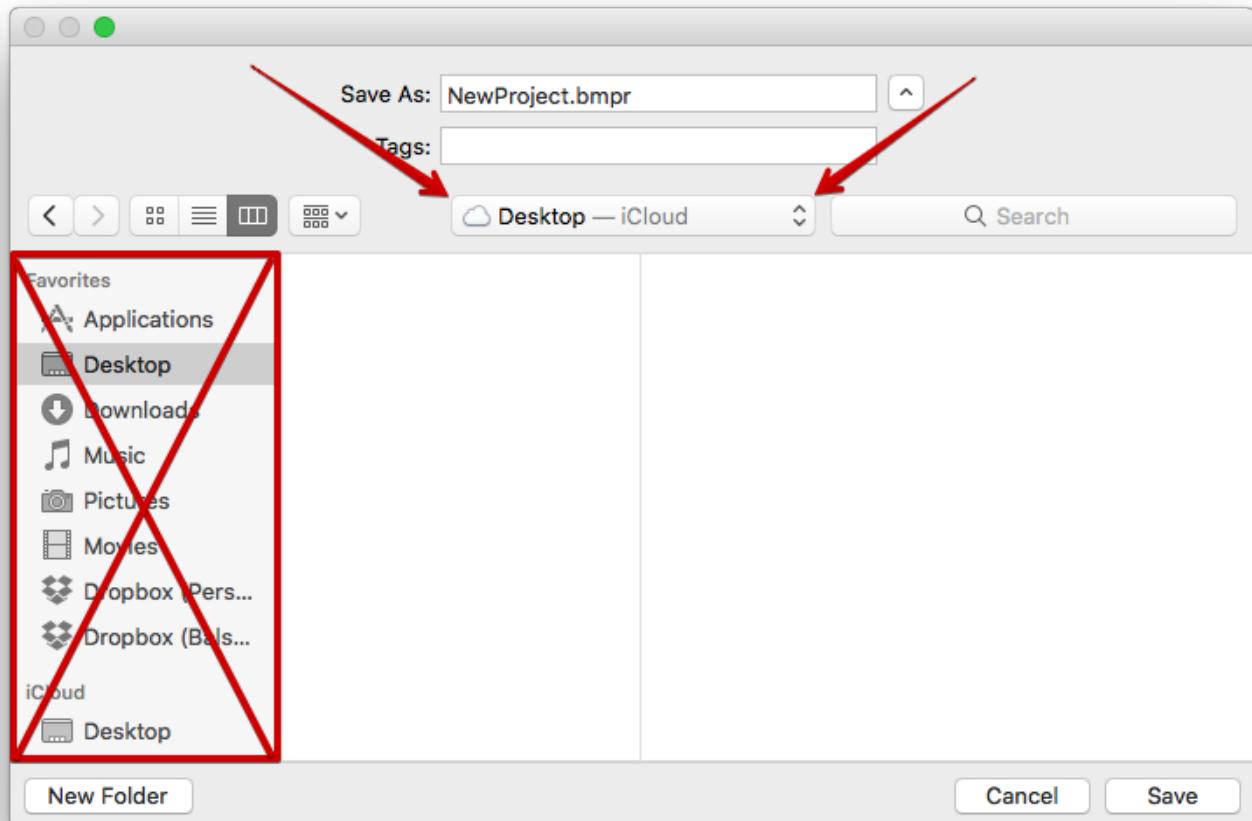
[Installing Mockups 3 for Desktop on Linux →](#)

Balsamiq Mockups 3 for Desktop's save window sometimes has a conflict with corporate IT permission software like [Digital Guardian](#). If your Mac has one of these software suites installed, it might be the cause of your problems saving your files.

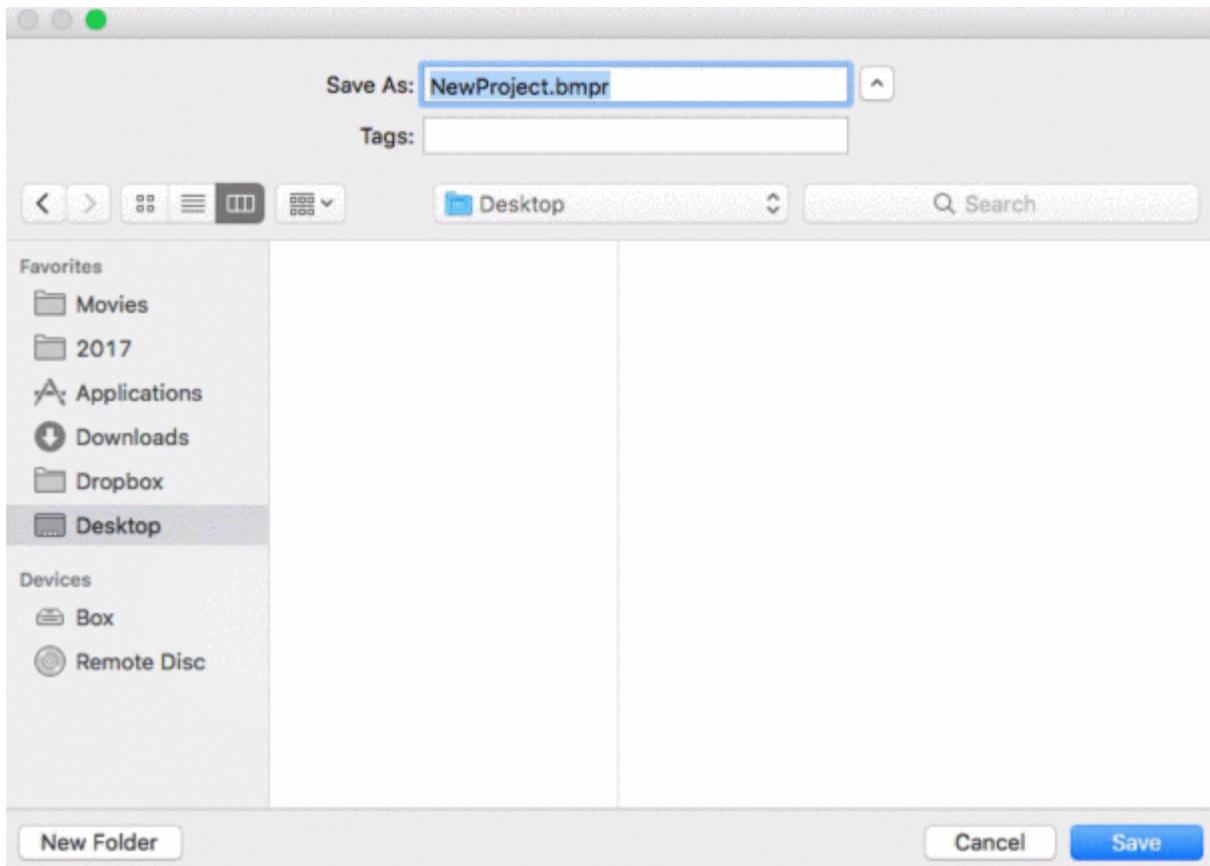
Fear not, your work is still being saved by [Balsamiq Mockups 3 for Desktop's internal backup system](#), but digging your files out of the backup folder is less than ideal.

Can We Fix This?

We aren't sure if your IT team can adjust the permissions due to the oddness of the error, but the workaround is easy!



The save dialog still works, but the Finder shortcuts on the left side of the screen don't (or, more specifically, the permissions they use to navigate to the save folder conflict with the permission software). However, if you use the dropdown menu – instead of the shortcuts – to navigate to the folder you want to save in, the save should complete successfully.



Of course, if you continue to have save trouble, please don't hesitate to [get in touch](#) so that we can troubleshoot.

[← Troubleshooting Balsamiq Mockups 3 for Desktop](#)

[Installing Mockups 3 for Desktop on Linux →](#)

[Balsamiq for Desktop Docs](#) > Installing Mockups 3 for Desktop on Linux

Installing Mockups 3 for Desktop on Linux

[← Troubleshooting Mac Saving Issues](#)

[Installing Mockups 3 for Desktop from the Command Line →](#)

Balsamiq Mockups 3 for Desktop is not supported on Linux. However users report that it runs well using [Wine](#).

Linux users might also be interested in trying [Balsamiq Cloud](#), our browser-based version, which only requires a modern browser.

Here are the instruction for [installation on Ubuntu 16.10](#):

1. Install wine:

```
sudo apt-get install wine
```

2. Download the offline bundle named like Balsamiq_Mockups_3.x.y_bundled.zip and install it in /opt:

```
sudo unzip Downloads/Balsamiq_Mockups_3.x.y_bundled.zip -d /opt
sudo mv /opt/Balsamiq_Mockups_3 /opt/balsamiq_3_x_y
sudo rm -f /opt/balsamiq && sudo ln -s /opt/balsamiq_3_x_y /opt/balsamiq
sudo mv /opt/balsamiq/Balsamiq\ Mockups\ 3.exe /opt/balsamiq/balsamiq.exe

# This Should Now Work
wine /opt/balsamiq/balsamiq.exe
```

3. Add a startup icon:

```
echo '[Desktop Entry]
Encoding=UTF-8
Name=Balsamiq Mockups
Icon=/opt/balsamiq/icons/mockups_ico_48.png
Exec=wine /opt/balsamiq/balsamiq.exe
Type=Application
Categories=Graphics;
MimeType=application/x-xdg-protocol-tg;x-scheme-handler/tg;
' |sudo tee /usr/share/applications/balsamiq.desktop
```

[← Troubleshooting Mac Saving Issues](#)

[Installing Mockups 3 for Desktop from the Command Line →](#)

[Balsamiq for Desktop Docs](#) > Installing Mockups 3 for Desktop from the Command Line

Installing Mockups 3 for Desktop from the Command Line

[← Installing Mockups 3 for Desktop on Linux](#)

[Installing Mockups 3 for Desktop on Multiple Machines →](#)

Mockups 3 for Desktop can be registered and unregistered via the command line with the following commands:

Installing and Uninstalling

To install Mockups 3 for Desktop to the Program Files directory, use the following command. You can change the target directory to the folder of your choosing by replacing "C:\Program Files (x86)" with your chosen directory.

Note: The installation filename changes based on the version of Mockups it is installing. Be sure to use the correct file name when running the following command.

```
[CurrentMockupsVersion] .exe /VERYSILENT /DIR="C:\Program files (x86)"
```

To uninstall Mockups 3 for Desktop, enter the following commands into an elevated Command Prompt.

```
wmic product where name="Balsamiq Mockups 3" call uninstall /nointeractive
```

Registering and Unregistering

Before registering Mockups 3 for Desktop, you will have to locate your registration email. The License Name and License Key can be found there.

To register Mockups 3 for Desktop, use the following command.

```
"C:\Program Files (x86)\Balsamiq Mockups 3\Balsamiq Mockups 3.exe" register  
LICENSENAME LICENSEKEY
```

If your license name has a space in it, you will need to wrap the name in quotes.

To unregister Mockups 3 for Desktop, use the following command.

```
"C:\Program Files (x86)\Balsamiq Mockups 3\Balsamiq Mockups 3.exe" unregister
```

Additional Resources

Looking for information on how to perform a silent installation of Mockups for Desktop on many end-user machines? [Here you go.](#)

[← Installing Mockups 3 for Desktop on Linux](#)

[Installing Mockups 3 for Desktop on Multiple Machines →](#)

[Balsamiq for Desktop Docs](#) > Installing Mockups 3 for Desktop on Multiple Machines

Installing Mockups 3 for Desktop on Multiple Machines

[← Installing Mockups 3 for Desktop from the Command Line](#)

[Installing Mockups without Administrator Rights →](#)

This page is for IT administrators who need to install Mockups for Desktop on multiple machines.

One of our customers, Sean of Shogantech, has also written [an excellent article detailing the process he used for successfully installing](#) and registering Mockups for a Terminal Server (Remote Desktop Server) environment.

Note: The file names have been updated for Balsamiq Mockups 3. The application file is now called "Balsamiq Mockups 3.exe." The installation file name can be found on our [downloads page](#).

A Note about Licensing

You are responsible for complying with our [End User License Agreement](#) and only install

Mockups for Desktop for the appropriate number of end-users allowed by the license you purchased.

Windows Machines

1. Make sure Mockups for Desktop is NOT installed on the target machines.
2. Download `MockupsForDesktop.zip` *With Adobe Air bundled* from [our downloads page](#). It contains a "ready to run" version, with Adobe Air "in its belly".
3. Copy the zip to the target machine and unpack it (preferably in the Program Files folder)
4. On the target machine, use this command to register Mockups for Desktop:

```
"C:\Program Files (x86)\Balsamiq Mockups 3\Balsamiq Mockups 3.exe" register  
LICENSENAME LICENSEKEY
```

replacing LICENSENAME and LICENSEKEY with the license information you received when you purchased. The register command needs to be run as the user that will use the application.

Note: You can also silently install Mockups via the traditional installer. You will find the command line instructions [here](#).

Mac Machines

1. Download and mount `MockupsForDesktop.dmg` from [our downloads page](#).
2. Copy the contained file "`MockupsForDesktop.app`" to your Applications folder.
3. to register Mockups for Desktop, run this command on Terminal:

```
/Applications/Balsamiq\ Mockups\ 3.app/Contents/MacOS/Balsamiq\ Mockups\ 3  
register LICENSENAME LICENSEKEY
```

replacing LICENSENAME and LICENSEKEY with the license information you received when you purchased. The register command needs to be run as the user that will use the application.

How to Uninstall a Previous Version before Updating

To silently update Mockups to a newer version you first have to uninstall the old version.

- In OS X, it is enough to drag the "/Applications/Balsamiq Mockups" folder to the trash. To automate that, use the command:

```
rm -r /Applications/Balsamiq\ Mockups\ 3.app/
```

- In Windows, delete the folder you copied the Mockups for Desktop folder into when you installed it.

[← Installing Mockups 3 for Desktop from the Command Line](#)

[Installing Mockups without Administrator Rights →](#)

[Balsamiq for Desktop Docs](#) > Installing Mockups without Administrator Rights

Installing Mockups without Administrator Rights

[← Installing Mockups 3 for Desktop on Multiple Machines](#)

[Installing Mockups 3 for Desktop on Citrix or Other Virtual Environments →](#)

See below for instructions on installing Balsamiq Mockups 3 for Desktop *without* Administrator rights.

Windows

1. Download the version of Mockups for Desktop *With Adobe Air bundled* from [our download page](#).
2. Unzip the file wherever you prefer (we suggest the "Program Files" directory but you might not have the rights to do so)
3. Double-click on *Balsamiq Mockups.exe* to launch it.

Mac OSX

1. Download the DMG version of Mockups for Desktop from [our download page](#).
2. Mount the DMG and copy the Balsamiq Mockups application to your preferred folder. We suggest the Applications folder but you might not have the rights to do so.

3. Double-click on Balsamiq Mockups to launch it.

[← Installing Mockups 3 for Desktop on Multiple Machines](#)

[Installing Mockups 3 for Desktop on Citrix or Other Virtual Environments →](#)

[Balsamiq for Desktop Docs](#) > Installing Mockups 3 for Desktop on Citrix or Other Virtual Environments

Installing Mockups 3 for Desktop on Citrix or Other Virtual Environments

[← Installing Mockups without Administrator Rights](#)

From what we know about Citrix, you won't have any trouble installing and registering Balsamiq Mockups 3 for Desktop on it or on any other virtual environment. You may even find [this FAQ on silent installation](#) helpful.

Please keep in mind that you will need to purchase a [Balsamiq Mockups 3 for Desktop volume license](#) for the total number of users who will be accessing our app within your Citrix environment. [Our licensing is by assigned users](#), rather than concurrent users. It will be your company's responsibility to make sure you are in compliance with our [EULA](#), and that only the users you have assigned have access to use our software.

[Here is a little more information](#) on our volume pricing and how to purchase it.

[← Installing Mockups without Administrator Rights](#)