How to use libraries

You can use a library in Adobe Dreamweaver CS5 to store page elements such as images, text, sounds, or tables you want to reuse throughout your website. When you insert a library item, Dreamweaver actually inserts a link to the library item. If you later need to make changes to a library item, such as changing some text or an image, updating the library item automatically updates each instance of the item on every page into which you've inserted it.

Creating a library item

You create library items out of existing page elements.

To create a library item:

1. Start Dreamweaver and open the document that contains an element you want to save as a library item.

2. Select the element (such as an image or text) to save as a library item.

3. Select Window > Assets, click the Library button, and then click the New Library Item button at the bottom of the Assets panel (**Figure 1**).

4. Enter a name for the new library item: Make sure Untitled is selected, type a name, and press Enter (Windows) or Return (Mac OS) (**Figure 2**).

   Each library item is saved as a separate file (with the file extension .lbi) in the Library folder of the site's local root folder.
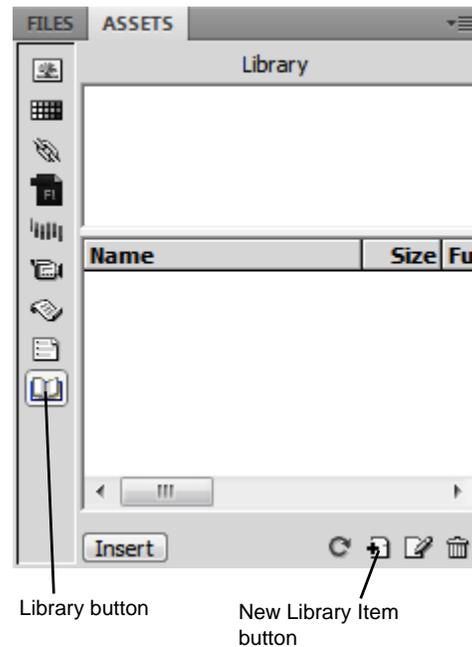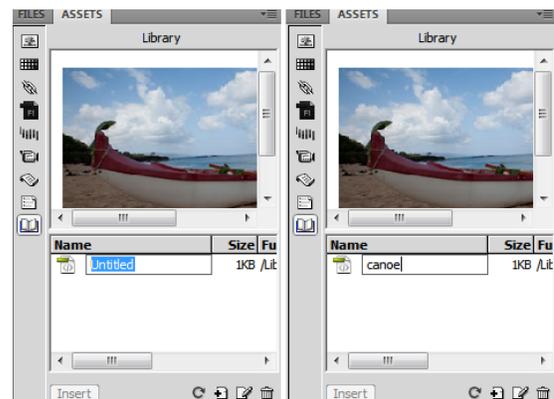

Figure 1 Library and New Library Item buttons

Figure 2 Naming a new library item

Inserting a library item

Once an item is added to the Library, you can insert it onto a page.

To insert a library item:

1. Position the insertion point in the Document window where you want to insert a library item.

2. Make sure the Library panel is open. If it is not, select Window > Assets and click the Library button on the left side of the Assets panel.

   The Assets panel opens and shows the Library category.

3. Drag a library item from the Assets panel to the Document window, or select an item and click the Insert button at the bottom of the panel (**Figure 3**).
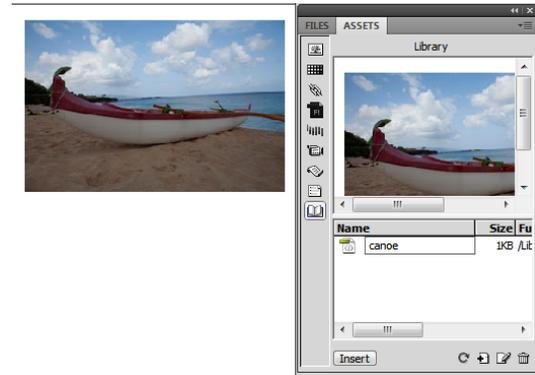

Figure 3 Inserting a library item on a page

Editing a library item

Library items can be edited in their own window. The changes you make then apply to the Library item everywhere you have previously inserted it.

To edit a library item:

1. Make sure the Library panel is open. If it is not, select Window > Assets and click the Library button on the left side of the Assets panel.

2. Select a library item.

3. Click the Edit button at the bottom of the Assets panel.

    Dreamweaver opens a new window for editing the library item (**Figure 4**). This window is much like a Document window. You can tell it is a Library item by the .lbi filename extension on the document's tab.

4. Edit the library item and then save your changes.

    The Update Library Items dialog box opens, with a list of the files that use the library item (**Figure 5**).

5. Click Update to replace the original library item with your edited version in the files that use the library item.

    The Update Pages dialog box opens.

6. To see a report on the updating process, make sure Show Log is selected (**Figure 6**).
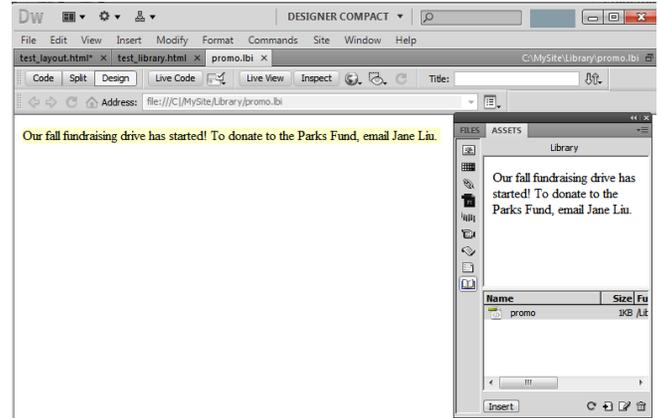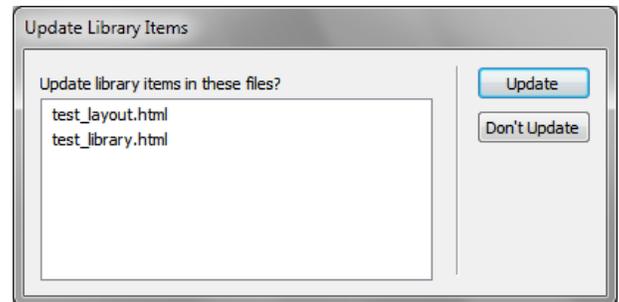
7. Click Close.

Figure 4 Library editing window

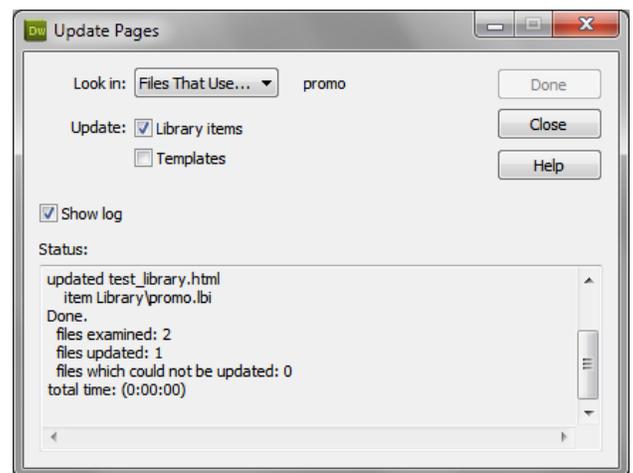**Figure 5** Update Library Items dialog box

Figure 6 Update Pages report

Updating all documents to use current library items

If you do not choose to update documents that use library items as you edit individual library items, you can later update all pages in the site with the current version of all library items.

To documents to use current library items:

1. Open either a library item or a page with a library item on it.

2. Select Modify > Library > Update Pages.

   The Update Pages dialog box opens (**Figure 7**).

3. From the Look In pop-up menu, select Entire Site, and then select the site name from the adjacent pop-up menu.

4. Make sure Library Items is selected in the Update section.

5. Click Start.

   Dreamweaver updates the documents and provides a report on the updating process (**Figure 8**). If you have updated documents at the time you edited library items, this report confirms that no additional updating was required.
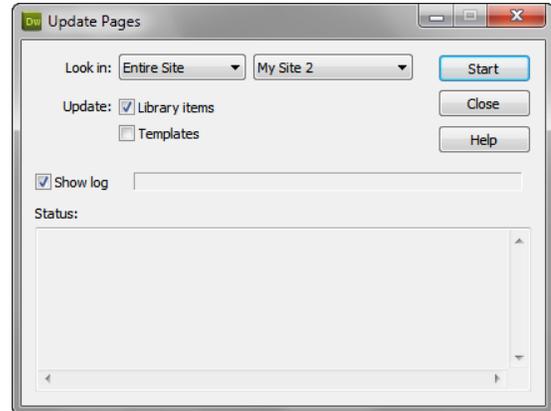
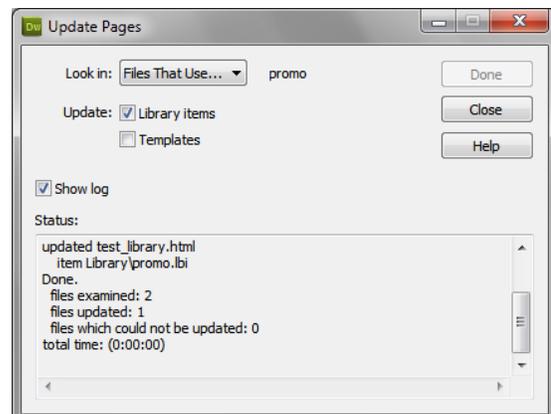6. Click Close.

Figure 7 Update Pages dialog box

Figure 8 Update Pages report