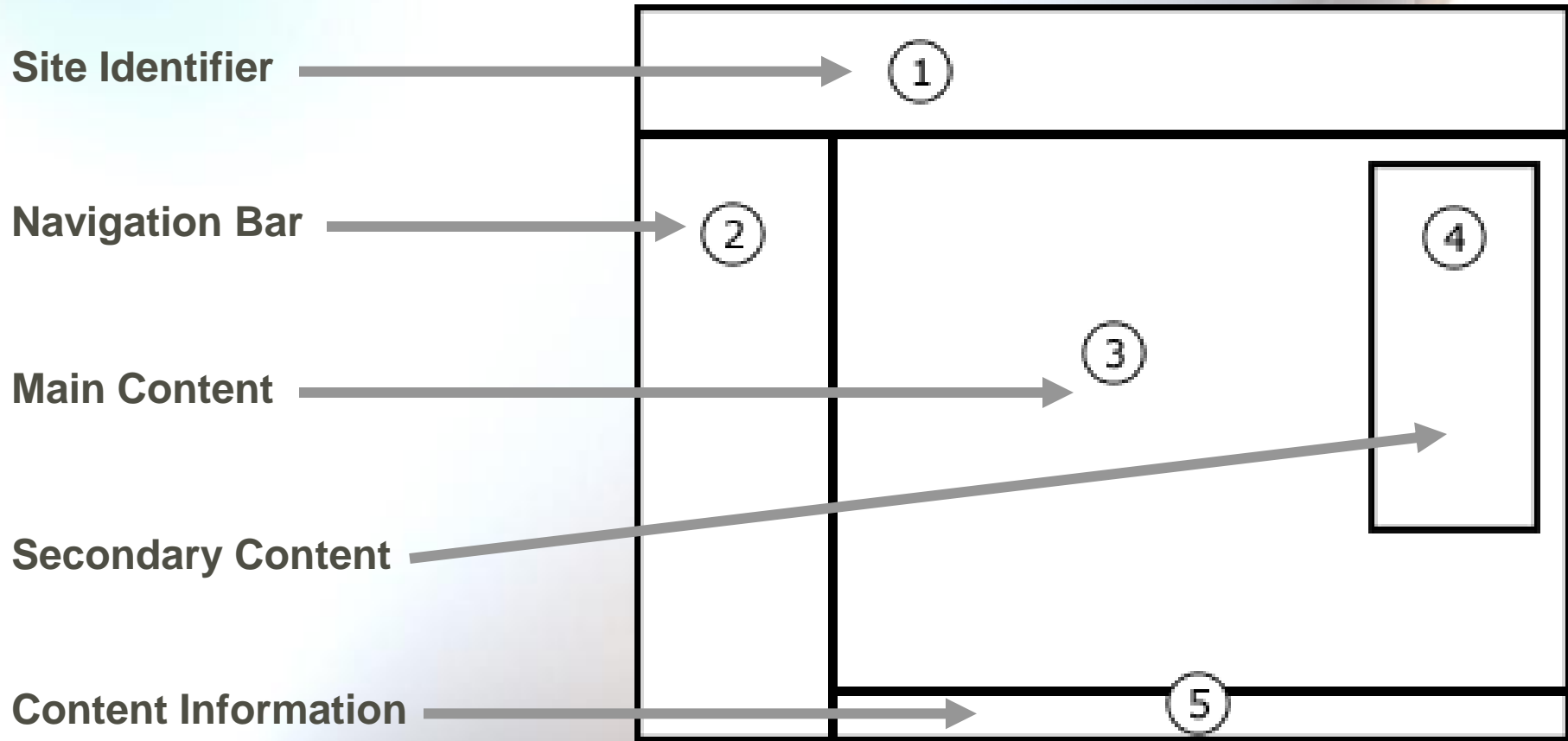


Burleson Continuing Education

Create Your Own Website
Day 1

Parts of a Web Page



Site Identifier

- Every page must let visitors know that they are at your site. The home page is particularly important in this capacity, so you may decide to feature your school logo, name, or other graphic more prominently there. Often, the site identifier fits well as a banner at the top. Pay attention to the height of this area; if it is too tall, your content will be too low on the screen.

Navigation Bar

- The navigation bar exists to help visitors find content. So your navigation structure should be determined roughly by the information hierarchy of the site. Hopefully, you have organized your information logically *before* trying to lay it out visually.
- Once you know what your navigation structure is, you can find the best place for it. The choice is basically between top and side navigation bars— or possibly both.

Navigation Bar

- **Advantages of a top navigation bar:**
 - Can be easily seen
 - Leaves the full screen width for content
 - Can tie in with the site identifier

Navigation Bar

- **Advantages of a side navigation bar:**
 - Supports as many navigation items as needed
 - Allows for longer item descriptions
 - Can integrate several layers of navigation as visitors delve deeper into the site
 - Larger sites may need to use both the top and side for navigation. For example, your school district site may have each school's site linked in a top navigation bar, with district-wide information located on the side.

Main Content

- **The main content area— the page title, headings, text, and images— is what your visitors actually come to see. Be sure to give this area the thought that it deserves, rather than assembling the other areas and giving the leftover space to your content.**

Main Content

- **Two content concerns are readability and flexibility. Readability is best when any given content column is between 100 and 600 pixels wide. Basically, visitors are uncomfortable reading extremely short or extremely long line lengths. So, a main content area of 350 to 600 pixels total allows for flexible template options such as one-, two-, or even three-column layouts.**

Secondary Content

- **On commercial sites, a secondary content area is often used for advertising. School sites often use an area like this for announcements, news, or related links. If your site is information rich, it makes sense to designate some layout space to make more content available. If your site doesn't need it, however, leave the space for your main content.**

Content Information

- **Information about the page content includes copyright, last updated date, security/privacy links, and person responsible for the content. This information, while necessary, will not be important to most of your visitors. A small footer is usually the best place for it. Use a smaller font size to set it apart.**

Food for Thought

- You may be tempted to be more creative and unique, but remember that your site is usually only part of a visitor's session. Unless you have an overriding reason to create a very unusual layout, your visitors will thank you for conforming. (Hint: Make your graphics creative and unique rather than your layout!)

Examples

Good or Bad?

Lets take a number of websites and see if we can critique them and see how we rate their performance

Score 1 point for each of the following:

- **Downloading time okay**
- **Appropriate number of image files**
- **Clarity of colors/backgrounds**
- **Acceptable font size**
- **Readability**
- **Explanation of what a site is about**
- **Relevant links available**
- **<2 clicks to valuable information**
- **Evidence of quality control**
- **Recently updated**

Websites

- [Amazon](#)
- [eBay](#)
- [Disney](#)
- [Flaming Text](#)
- [How Stuff Works](#)
- [Gulf Coast University](#)
- [Microsoft](#)
- [Tarrant County College](#)
- [Texas Education Agency](#)
- [Cynics](#)

Let's Build a Web Page

Burleson Continuing Education

Create Your Own Website
Day 2

Tying it together with tables

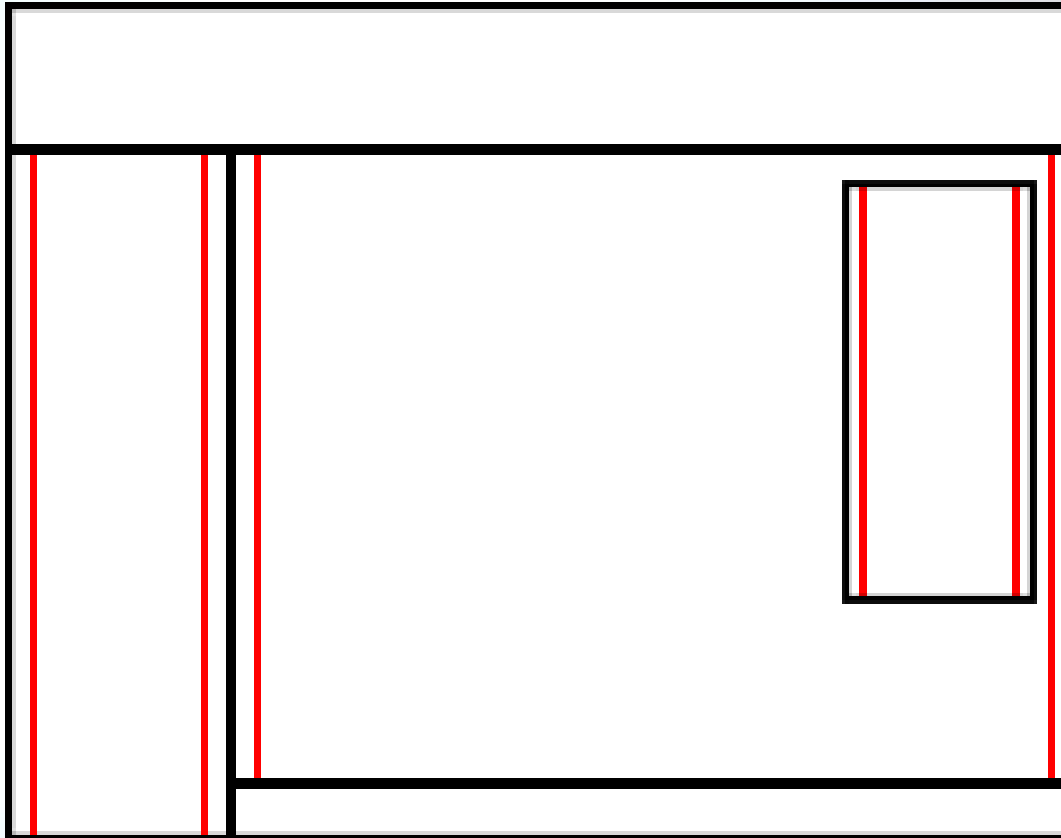
- So you have decided on the perfect layout for your site. Now it is time to make it a reality. The most common way to implement a Web page layout is by using tables.
- Web page tables consist of rows, columns, and individual cells—exactly like a spreadsheet. However, Web page tables often stray from a strictly tabular layout by having cells span multiple rows or multiple columns.

Tips for using tables

- **Stack tables.** When a Web page loads, the tables load in the order that they appear in the code. One long, complex table may take a long time to show its contents. It is often better to break up a whole-page table into top, middle, and bottom tables. Then your visitor will see your school name and logo while the content is loading (rather than just a blank page).
- **Nest tables.** Tables can be "nested" inside one another, although you don't want to do this too many times or it will slow down the loading of your page.
- **Leave white space around columns of text.** Often, it is best to set cell spacing and padding properties of the main layout table to 0 so that there are not gaps between puzzle pieces. However, you usually want some space around your text so it doesn't flow directly against other elements.

Tips for using tables

- White space (indicated in red) around text improves readability.



Framing your puzzle

- **Frames are another way to accomplish Web page layout. They have a rather bad reputation. Frames are not easily bookmarked or indexed by search engines, and they can be confusing for site visitors.**
- **However, frames can make navigation easier for some intranet sites and Web-based tools. For example, say you are creating a Web-based tool to administer a family contact information database. You might want one frame of database actions— Add, Edit, and Delete a family member— and another frame where the family member's information is displayed. The database actions frame would only have to load once, while the information frame would update with every action. A table, on the other hand, would have to reload both sections with every click.**