

# Web Page Guidelines

## Design Considerations

- **Follow a simple and consistent design.** Complex designs can confuse people, so keep it simple. A consistent design will let your readers concentrate on content, without having to waste time figuring out how to maneuver your layout. The time and workstation "power" required to load a Web page are still important considerations when using some of the latest Web authoring tools, especially for visitors who connect via dial-up modem.
  - **Don't create gratuitous graphics.** Graphics are one reason for the interest in the Web by both publishers and readers and should definitely be included on your Web page if possible. Still, it's important not to overuse them. Blinking text and other excessive decorations can be distracting; background colors and textures can affect download time. Think very carefully about the colors and textures you choose for backgrounds and the effects they'll have on the readability of text. Many experts strongly recommend White or lighter colors be used for backgrounds. Also, don't forget that many people still use monochrome monitors.
  - **Give people cross links.** Visitors should be able to move from one major page to another on your site without having to go back to your home page. Put cross links to all your major pages at the bottom of all major pages. For a good example, see the bottom of this page.
  - **Be careful about "over-linking."** While linking to the work of others in your organization and throughout the world can help your readers, it can also lead to information overload. It's important to balance linking within your page design. Too many links can be a visual eyesore on the page and a distraction from the original information you want your readers to concentrate on.
  - **Don't create dead end links.** Readers can get discouraged from returning to your pages when those pages are filled with empty links with grand labels.
  - **Sign all pages.** Place a standard signature at the bottom of all major pages. This signature should contain the name of the page owner, date of last update, organization name, and an e-mail address for comments and reporting broken links. See the example at the bottom of this page.
-

---

---

**Howells, Cyndi. *Planting Your Family Tree Online: How to Create Your Own Family History Web Site* (2003). 929.102 H**

**Other Resources**

Information about web design and style is in abundance on the web. Here are some excellent sources of information.

[Yale University's Web Style Guide](http://www.webstyleguide.com/index.html?/contents.html) < <http://www.webstyleguide.com/index.html?/contents.html> >

[Yahoo's Web Page Design & Layout page](#) <

[http://dir.yahoo.com/Arts/Design Arts/Graphic Design/Web Page Design and Layout/](http://dir.yahoo.com/Arts/Design_Arts/Graphic_Design/Web_Page_Design_and_Layout/) >

**SIGNITURE:**

Creator's Name

Last updated: January 5, 2001

Links updated: May 17, 2007

Adapted from: <http://www.cit.cornell.edu/computer/www/guidelines/design.html>

EXAMPLES OF POORLY DESIGNED PAGES

<http://www.angelfire.com/mi/jillsgenealogy/>

<http://freepages.genealogy.rootsweb.ancestry.com/~chatweb/d489.htm>

<http://freepages.genealogy.rootsweb.ancestry.com/~jacquest/dat45.htm>

(Blue on blue)

<http://www.geocities.com/billprugh/jay.htm>

(Confusing Background, Poor Color Selection, Date Deficient & Includes Living Individuals)

PLAIN VANILLA PAGE

<http://homepages.rootsweb.ancestry.com/~lheureux/ba1/d0093/g0000078.html>