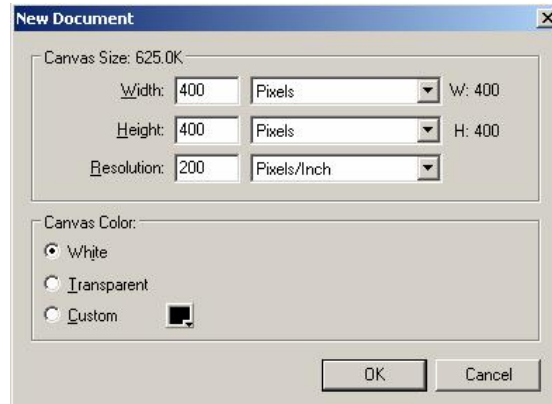


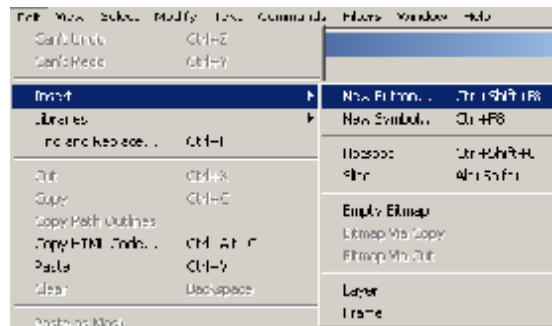
Making Cool Buttons in Fireworks -Brian Hogan

Fireworks MX allows us to make very nice attractive buttons quickly using an object-oriented approach.

Open Fireworks and create a new document. It really doesn't matter the size. For this example, we are going to concentrate on one rollover button. Therefore, create a canvas that is 400 x 400 pixels.

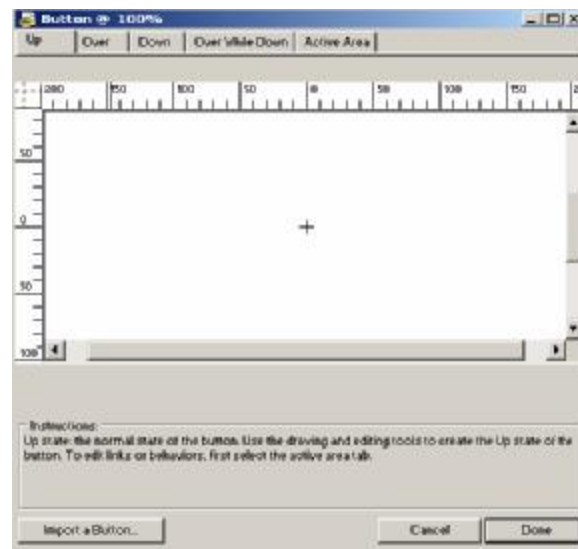


Go to the **Edit** menu, choose **Insert** and select **New Button**.



Go to the **View** menu and make sure **Rulers** is checked. This allows you to make sure your button can be sized properly. If it's not checked, select it, and your rulers will be activated.

Your canvas should look like this example to the right. You will see that there are five tabs.




Up: This is what the button looks like initially

Over: This state is how the button should appear when the user places the mouse over the button


Down: This state is used to show how the button should look when pressed or activated. (This is useful for navigation bars when you want to show the user where they currently are).

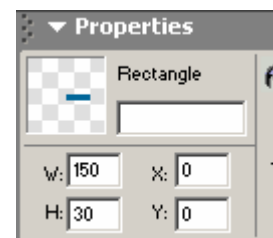
Over While Down: Use this to change the button's appearance when the mouse is placed over a button that is in the **"Down"** position. (Most developers skip this entirely)



Active Area: Used to define the clickable area of the button. Leave this alone 99% of the time!.

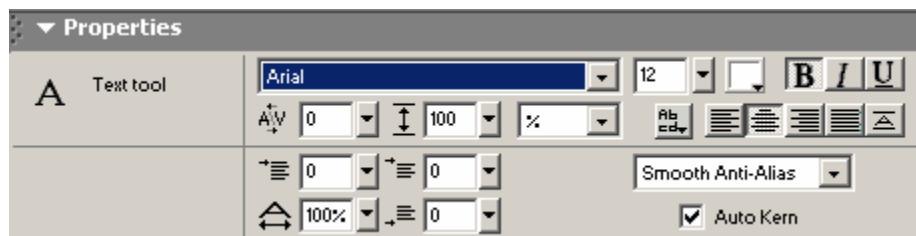
For our example, let's use the square drawing tool  to create a new rectangle on the screen. Make it 150 pixels by 30 pixels (Use the rulers!)




If you missed a little, don't worry... you can select the Properties palette and change the dimensions after you finish drawing. Select the rectangle with the solid arrow tool  and look at the Properties palette. Set the dimensions properly here by filling in the Width and Height properties.





Select the text tool  and look at the properties for the tool. Make sure that the color is white (so it's readable!) and CENTER  the text. I would recommend 12 point Bold Arial for the font.

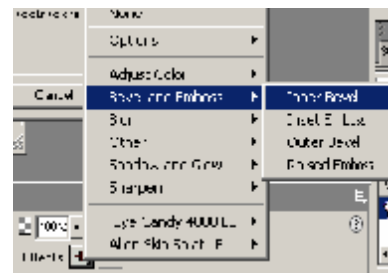


Now, with the text tool  selected, click in the middle of the rectangle button and type in a simple word like **Text Here**. When you type the text, it should center across the button automatically.



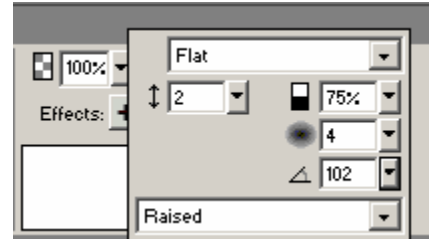
Now, let's add a slight bevel to our button to make it have that "button" look. Fireworks MX has built in "live effects" plug-ins that let you add non-destructive filters to your pictures. Unlike Photoshop, where a filter is applied to the artwork, a "live effect" is applied to the layer. This means you can change the layer and have the effect applied immediately.

Select the rectangle with the solid arrow tool  and look at the Properties palette. Select the Plus  button next to the Effects area on the palette. A menu will pop up and you should select **Bevel and Emboss** and then choose **Inner Bevel**.



A new window will appear on the **Effects** area of the Properties palette. You can choose the button type, the width of the bevel, the brightness, the softness of the edges, and the angle of the light that makes the shadow on the button.




I used these settings to create this button:



It's just a subtle raised edge, but will look very nice when stacked end to end.

After all that, we have finally created the **Up** state of the button. But don't worry... creating the other states is only going to take thirty seconds.

Ready? GO!

1. Select the **Over** tab on the button instance window.
2. Click the **Copy from over** button.
3. Your button will appear in the window, copied from the original **Up** frame.
4. Select the button with the solid arrow tool .
5. Click the  button on the Properties Palette and choose a new color.
6. Select the text area of the button with the solid arrow tool .
7. Click the text color box on the Properties palette and choose a new color.




You've just created the **Over** state. Repeat the steps above for the **Down** and **Over While Down** states.

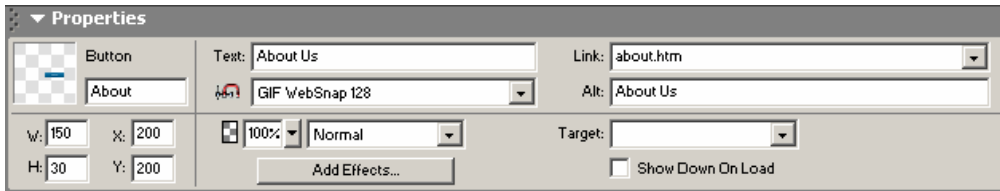
When all of your states have been created, click the **DONE** button and save your document.

You should see a new button placed on your form. It will have a strange green tint to it. This means it's a Web slice, or an area that Fireworks can attach JavaScript events to or optimize for quick downloading.



This green-tinted button is your instance of your button object. Therefore, you can change some of it's inherited properties.

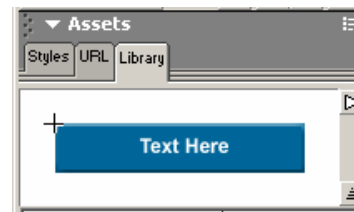
Select this new instance with the solid arrow tool  and look at the Properties palette.



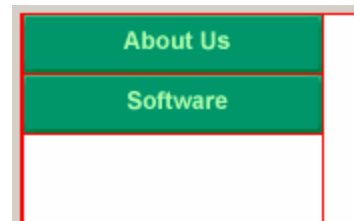
Give the instance a name, and change it's text. You should see the text on the button change! You can also set a URL and an ALT tag (which you should ALWAYS do!)



To add a new button, look under the **Assets** panel and select the **Library** tab. Drag the button object onto the main canvas to create a new instance, where you can again set properties.



You can drag your instances around on the main canvas to position them. This allows you to create your page.



Export your HTML and images by going to the **File** menu and choosing **Export**. Set these options and you're ready to go!

