

Several people have contacted me to ask just how I went about creating my Photogalleries so I've put together this tutorial for anyone who might be interested in trying my method. Please note that this tutorial isn't exactly how I've done it in the past. As I put it together I've realized a few simplifications*.

Building a Photogallery - Manually.

There are a lot of packages available from the Internet and various software companies that will create nicely performing photo galleries. Some include the option of having a slide show, others will size your images for you automatically and even create the thumbnails.

Personally I haven't found one yet that quite gives me the ability to lay things out exactly as I would like so I resorted to doing things the hard way. I create the whole thing manually using a bit of JavaScript to execute the popups and the slide show. It seems a lot of steps but once the templates have been created it's really pretty easy to change the images and links and set up new galleries.

The first step is to prepare the images. Create a large image sized for viewing on a monitor set at 800 x 600, I generally go with 640 x 480 but larger can be used. Avoid making the large image so large as to cause side-to-side scrolling for the viewer. Along with the large image create a thumbnail copy for the gallery page. I usually use a dimension of 125 x 94. Don't ask me why, it just worked out that way. You can go a little larger or a little smaller. It's during this process that I experiment with compression to achieve the best image at the smallest file size. I try to end up with a large image no bigger than 100 kb. It will be on it's own page so it should open fairly quickly. The thumbnails I try to keep under 4 kb as there will be a collection of them on a page and I want to keep the load time as quick as possible.

***Note:** Try to keep the image names as simple as possible and be sure to use the same name for the thumbnail as for the large image so you can easily relate the two. It will be helpful if the thumbnail has an added _sm extension to distinguish it. It also helps to store them in different folders ("large" – "small"). Keeping the name the same will help enormously when you're ready to link them for the popups.

Once all the images and thumbs are ready and saved to their respective folders I open my site in FrontPage and drag each folder into the "images" folder for the site. I do this so that FP doesn't have an opportunity to "play" with the compression of the images. There are other ways of getting the images to the site, this is just the way I do it.

OK, the images are ready and they're in the site. What's next?

It's time to create some pages. Create a page to use for the large images. I try to keep this very simple and use a table with a layout having two rows. I have the top row consisting of three cells to contain the slide show navigation and the second being a single cell to hold the image.

<u>Previous Image</u>	<u>Close This Window</u>	<u>Next Image</u>
Large Image		

To set up the navigation place your cursor in the left cell, click on "Code" view and insert the following js snippet,

Previous Image

To create the "Close This Window" link do the same but in the middle cell with the following js snippet,

Close This Window

The "Next Image" link is simply a link to open the next image **page** in the series,

Next Image

Obviously this is subject to what information you may want to include on the page. For example, you may want a third row to provide some information about the image but remember not to make the page too long or it will result in scrolling of the popup.

Create a folder for the specific gallery pages and save this page as "large_template".

Now that you've saved a blank copy of the template open the large image folder and drag the first image into the container cell. Right click on the image and add your "Alt Text", a brief description of the image. For the first page of the series remove the "Previous Image" link, it can't go "back" anywhere. Save this page using the image name (first_image.htm) and close it. Open the "large_template" page and insert the next image in the series, don't forget your "Alt Text", and save it. Now that you're into the series simply delete the image and drag the next one in, add "Alt Text" and save (as image name). Continue with this process until the series is complete. For the last page of the series delete the "Next Image" link, it doesn't have a place to go.

One last step needs to be done for the image pages. Open each in turn and create the link to the next page in the series. This had to be last since the pages weren't created yet.

Your images and thumbs are done, the large image pages have been created, saved and linked, now it's time to build the thumbnail gallery.

The thumbnail gallery page is just another page within your site only it needs a layout to allow placing your thumbnail images. Create a table within the page (or divide a cell) with sub cells enough to hold your thumbnail images.

Page Header			
Site Navigation	Descriptive paragraph for the gallery page.		
	Thumb 1	Thumb 2	Thumb 3
	Thumb 4	Thumb 5	Thumb 6
	Thumb 7	Thumb 8	Thumb 9
Page Footer			

First let's add the JavaScript needed for the popup.

In the `<head>` `</head>` section **of the gallery page** insert the following script:

```
<script type="text/javascript">  
function open_window(url) {mywin =  
window.open(url,"win",'toolbar=0,location=0,directories=0,status=0,menubar=0,scrollbars=0,resizable=0,width=660,height=540,left=5,top=5');}  
</script>
```

Set the value for each option as either 1 or 0 depending on your needs. This allows you to decide if you want a menu bar, scroll bars, status bar, etc. The width and height settings determine the size of the popup. I try to keep this as close to the size of the large image as possible so as to not cut off the image or to need scroll bars. The option for "left" and "top" determine the position of the popup relative to the left and top of the browser window (in pixels). In the script above the popup will have no decoration (scroll bars, menu, etc.). It will be 660 x 480 pixels in size and be positioned 5 pixels from both the left and top borders.

Next you might want to insert a text link in your gallery description paragraph. Insert the following script in code view where you want the link. Of course you'll need to set the correct path to the page to start the slide show.

```
<a HREF="javascript:open_window  
( 'image_page_folder/this_gallery/first_image_page.htm' )">slide show</a>
```

OK now we're getting somewhere, the last part of the chore is coming up. We need to create the links between the thumbnail and the large image page popups. Open the thumbnail image folder for the gallery. Drag each thumbnail into its container cell. Once you've got them all in there click on the first of the series so that it's highlighted with handles. Now switch to code view. The code for the image will be highlighted and will look like this:

```

```

This needs to be changed to this:

```
<a HREF="javascript:open_window  
( 'image_page_folder/this_gallery/first_image_page.htm' )">  
</a>
```

Note: Don't forget the "Alt Text" for your thumbnail.

Go back to design view and save the page. Open the page in your browser and click on the text link to make sure the popup opens and shows the image. OK? If the popup comes up but the "page can't be found" you need to check the path to the image page. Do the same for the first thumbnail. Is everything working OK? Great, let's get the rest of the links set up. Close out of the browser and go to code view. This is actually the easy part especially if the thumbnails and images have the same names.

Highlight and copy the code you created for the first thumbnail:

```
<a HREF="javascript:open_window  
( 'image_page_folder/this_gallery/first_image_page.htm' )">  
</a>
```

Toggle between design and code view highlighting each thumbnail in turn and replacing the original code with the new code. As you do each one change the image page path, thumbnail image name and "Alt Text".

Save your page and try it out. You've got yourself a gallery page with a slide show. When you get ready to create another gallery page you can use this one as a template.

Note: The slide show can be set to start from the first of the series from each thumbnail link or it can start from the relative image page for the thumbnail. If it starts from the relative image remember the "previous image" link can only go back as far as the starting image page.