

Published based on [Using Dreamweaver's Interactive JavaScript Behaviors](#)

# Using Dreamweaver's Interactive JavaScript Behaviors

JavaScript is an easy-to-use programming language which runs client-side (on each web surfer's computer) and adds useful or decorative interactivity to web pages. No extra plug-ins need to be installed into the browser for JavaScript to run and, although it can be disabled by users to stop script running, it is safe to assume that any JavaScript code added to your pages will run on the vast majority of the computers of visitors to your site. Dreamweaver allows you to add JavaScript to your code automatically and easily by using "behaviors".

A behavior is simply a pre-written JavaScript function which can be triggered by a given event. To make the Behaviors window visible, choose Behaviors from the Window menu. Next select the element to which you want to attach the JavaScript. Finally, choose one of the available behaviors from the menu in Behaviors window. (The behaviors which are available will depend on the item you have highlighted.)

You will also need to ensure that the correct event (click, double-click etc.) is linked to the behavior. Dreamweaver will always assign an event automatically. However, if this event is not the one you actually want, just select a different event by clicking on the drop-down menu located to the right of the name of the event in the Behaviors panel.

Dreamweaver has a wide selection of behaviors. However, they fall into four main categories: images, windows and alerts, forms and form fields and CSS. To see how behaviors work, let us look at some examples of some behaviors in each of those categories.

There was a time when almost every website featured the rollover effect on its navigation buttons. With the development of CSS, this is no longer the case. However, the facility of having an image change appearance when the mouse passes over it is still useful. Dreamweaver achieves this effect with the "Swap Image" behavior which can either be added to an image or can be created automatically by inserting a rollover image (Insert - Image Objects - Rollover Image) rather than a static one.

As far as alerts and windows behaviors is concerned, as well as the simple "Pop-up Message", which just causes a system alert box to appear, Dreamweaver also offers the more sophisticated "Open Browser Window". This Dreamweaver behavior allows you to create a pop-up window of any specified dimension and allows you to choose the attributes of the window: the HTML file it displays, the presence or absence of the title bar, scroll bars, etc.

In the form manipulation behaviors category, we have "Set Text of Text Field" and "Validate Form". The "Validate Form" behavior only applies to text fields and enables you to ensure, first of all, that a field has not been left blank; secondly, that a field contains a valid email address; thirdly, that a field contains a numeric value; and, fourthly, that a field contains a number within a given range.

Dreamweaver has a number of behaviors which can be applied manipulate the CSS attributes associated with a given page element. One such behavior is Show/Hide Elements. This enables you to make the content of an HTML element visible or hidden based on an action performed by the user. You can apply this behavior to the content of an H1, DIV, P(agraph) basically, any element that can contain stuff.

Each behavior that you choose will create one or more JavaScript functions within the head area of your page. Part of the process of optimising your website (both in terms of accessibility and search engine compatibility) is to transfer this code to an external JavaScript file and then link the web page to the JavaScript file. To do this, you need to be in Code view and locate the function(s) generated by the behavior(s) you have used on your page. Cut all of the code between the opening and closing SCRIPT tags and place it in a text file which needs to be saved with a .js extension. Next, enter an src attribute inside the opening SCRIPT tag, for example 'SCRIPT src="scripts.js"'.

You can get up to date information on JavaScript training courses, visit [Macresource Computer Training](#), a UK IT training company offering [JavaScript Classes](#) in London and throughout the UK.

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