

Importing a Web Site into Blackboard

Introduction You may want to upload a website into Blackboard if:

- You have previously created a Web-based lesson or activity that you want to incorporate into your Blackboard course.
- You have converted a Microsoft PowerPoint presentation (or other proprietary formatted file) to HTML so you can deliver it to your students without worrying about whether they have the proprietary application on their computer
- You want to incorporate Java applets, JavaScript programs, Dynamic HTML, Cascading Style Sheets, or other more advanced Web technologies into your Blackboard course.

By compressing multiple web pages into a single file, then correctly instructing Blackboard to unpackage that file, you can retain the internal structure of your website.

This QuickSheet is designed for Instructors and Course Builders who will be building and teaching courses with the Blackboard Learning System.

Preparing the File

Tips and Tricks To most effectively import your website into Blackboard you should make sure your Web site meets a few criteria:

1. In your Web site, use relative URLs instead of fixed URLs for internal links. Fixed links include the server's domain name as part of the link. For example, the HTML code for a fixed link might look like this:

```
<A HREF="http://domain.name.com/docs/intro/special.html">Click here</A>
```

While a relative link might look like this:

```
<A HREF="docs/intro/special.html">Click here</A>
```

If you are using a web authoring tool like Microsoft FrontPage, Dreamweaver, or any of a number of other similar applications, these programs should prompt you to choose between fixed or relative links.

2. Put the entire website in a single directory (or folder). The main directory can have sub-directories with files inside them, of course, but all the files and sub-directories need to be under one directory to facilitate the compression process.

3. Move the directory (or folder) to your local computer. If the website is on a remote web server and you do not have a local copy of it; you will need to create a copy of it on your local computer.
4. Determine the website's entry point. The entry point (commonly known as the site's "home page") is usually named something like index.html or default.htm. Before uploading the website into Blackboard, you need to make sure you know the name of the HTML file that will be the sites entry point.

Working with a “Zipped” File

About File Compression

In order to maintain the integrity of your presentation, the Web Site that you just created needs to be compressed in one of these formats: zip, gzip, or tar. The tar and gzip formats are primarily used only on UNIX or Linux computers. The zip format is standard on all Microsoft Windows computers and can also be used on Apple Macintosh computers. We will only deal with the zip format here.

The procedure for creating the zip archive file will vary slightly depending upon the compression utility that you choose. WinZip (for Windows users) and StuffIt (for Macintosh users) are popular, but there are other freeware and shareware programs available as well. Refer to the documentation for your compression utility to learn how to operate that particular program. Whichever program you choose, make sure that:

- the compression tool retains the directory structure
- the compression tool saves to the .zip format

After you have selected the compression utility that suits your, compress the entire directory that contains the website you wish to incorporate into Blackboard. This should result in a single file with a name that ends in .zip.



Note: This process is very simple for WinZip users. When WinZip is installed, it adds commands to the context-sensitive menus (the menus that pop-up when you right-click on something). If you are using WinZip, follow these steps to create the zip archive that contains your Web site:

Step 1: Right-click on the folder containing your Web site

Step 2: Select "Add to filename.zip" where filename is the name of the folder.

Importing your “Zipped” File

Once you have created the compressed file, bringing it into Blackboard is simple.

1. In your Course Control Panel, open a content area and select “Add Item.”
2. Under “Item Attachments”, click on the Browse button and locate the compressed file on your local computer.
3. For Name of Link to File, enter the text your students will click on to launch the website.
4. Select “Unpackage” these files from the drop-down menu. This instructs Blackboard to unpackage the compressed file and rebuild the website on the Blackboard server.
5. Click Submit. You will be prompted with to select the entry point. Choose the file that will be the entry point for your website, and click Submit.



Note: Once you have imported the website into Blackboard you cannot edit it directly. You will need to make the changes to the copy on your local computer, then delete the Blackboard item and replace it, using the steps above.