

# PART II



## Style Your Site with Cascading Style Sheets

Visual configuration of page elements like text, images, positioning, and so on became popular earlier in the development of the Internet. As time passed and browsers became more sophisticated, web pages bloated with descriptions for displaying the content on a page. A fairly simple tag, such as a `<tr>` identifying a table row, could contain multiple attributes defining the appearance of the table row, which detracted from the primary purpose of the table: to show tabular information.

Flash forward to today: Present day web pages separate content from display by using the web page for code and information and style sheets for visually presenting the web page.

In this part, you'll see how content is styled using Expression Web 2. First, you'll see how to use Code view to view and edit HTML code. Then you'll see how to work with Cascading Style Sheets (CSS). You'll be introduced to the concept of styles and learn how to use the different CSS tools Expression Web 2 offers.

# 5

## Take Care of Code and Tags Manually

### HOW TO...

- Work in Code view
- Use tag writing tools
- Define tag attributes
- Generate tag styles

You don't have to read this chapter to use Expression Web 2, or to create and build a great web site. On the other hand, if you are the sort of person who likes to look “under the hood,” then read on.

Expression Web 2 is a terrific learning tool as you can split the view to show Code and Design views at the same time. Select an image or text on your page, and you see the corresponding code selected. Select a block of code in the Code view and see what's selected in the Design view.

In this chapter, see how the code and script tools work together, and how they can help make your web page design and development more streamlined.

### Note

Throughout the chapter, commands are applied using toolbar tools or shortcut keystrokes. In all cases, the commands are available from the program menu.

## Work in Code View

The Code view is an alternate view displayed in the Editing window. Expression Web 2 offers a number of tools and features that work in conjunction with the Code view, as you'll discover throughout the chapter. Some tools are tailored to view code, others for writing, and still others for reviewing and editing.

## Check Out Code View Features

Some of the tools are visible in the program interface, while others appear in response to your code writing activities. Open a web page in Expression Web 2, and click Split at the bottom of the Editing window to show Design/Code view (Figure 5-1).

A number of features coordinate to show you information, provide assistance, and list tools to add code. In the program window, look for these code-oriented features:

- **Status Bar** If there are errors in the code on a page, you'll see an icon on the Status Bar. Move your mouse over the icon to read a description of the issues.

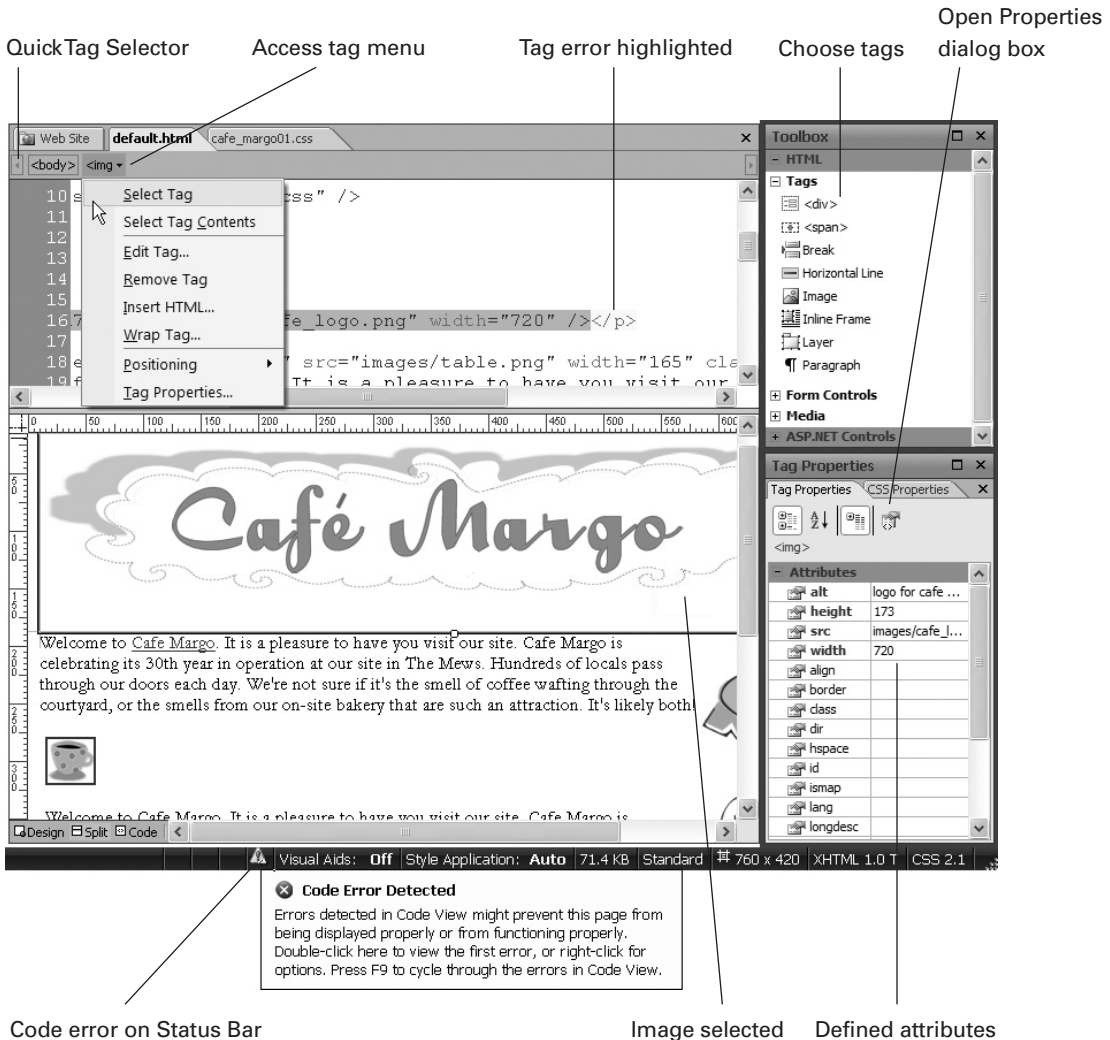


FIGURE 5-1 Use coding features in the program window.

- **Code view** The Code view of a web page displays the directly-editable code that makes up a page. With the Split view, you can see the Design and Code views of your web page simultaneously.
- **Tag Properties task pane** The properties for a selected tag are shown in the Tag Properties task pane, where you can modify or change the values.
- **Quick Tag Selector** The Quick Tag Selector bar helps you to view, select, remove, or edit tags while working in either Design view or Code view. The bar also enables you to open the Quick Tag Editor dialog box and various Properties dialog boxes and to quickly set the positioning style of a tag.

Expression Web 2 offers numerous other features that aren't shown in Figure 5-1. You'll see how the features work as you read through the chapter.

## Insert Comments and Code

You have several choices for writing HTML elements in Expression Web 2. Of course, you can type everything manually, or you can use the Code View toolbar to insert code elements to get your structure organized.

The Code View toolbar combines commonly used features from the Code Formatting options and commands from the Code View and IntelliSense submenus, which appear on the Edit menu.

When your code is written, check it for compatibility with your chosen standards.

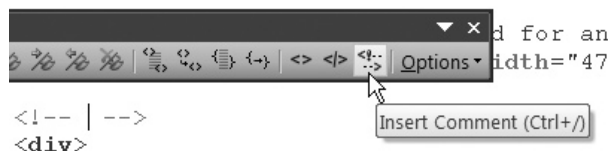
## Add Tags and Comments

Use commands from the Code View toolbar to add HTML comments, empty tags, and common HTML tags. Click the page in Code view to place the insertion point where you want to insert the code. Choose View | Toolbars | Code View to open the toolbar.



Click Options on the toolbar to open a list of display features you can choose for the code display, such as lines, a wider margin at the left of the page, wrapping lines, and so on.

Click one of the self-named insertion options according to your coding requirements. For example, click Insert Start Tag to add an opening tag for an HTML element, click Insert End Tag to add the closing tag, or click Insert Comment to include the structure for an HTML comment, as shown here.



## Quick Tag Selections

There are two great tools on the Code View toolbar for selecting items in Code view. Click in the area where you want to make selections. Then, click Select Tag to highlight the tag pair and its contents.

If you need to select just the tag, click Find Matching Tag to highlight one tag of the pair as you see next; click again to highlight the other tag.



While that may not seem like a big deal when you can see both tags on the page, it certainly helps when you're looking for a closing tag that's hundreds of lines of code later.

## Check for Compatibility Issues

Suppose you are rebuilding your site and want to modify the pages to comply with a different XHTML or CSS standard. Instead of making changes manually, you can turn to the Compatibility task pane. Use the results to view a list of all code errors and incompatible code in one or more web pages or an entire web site. Follow these steps to run a check:

1. Choose Task Panes | Compatibility to display the pane horizontally below the Editing window.
2. Click the right arrow (it's green on the program) at the upper left of the pane to open the Compatibility Checker dialog box.
3. Choose what pages to check, such as all open pages, your entire site, or the current page. Also, choose options for HTML and CSS, or leave the default check box selected to run the check based on the DTD (document type declaration) in the page.
4. Click Check to close the dialog box and test the pages.
5. The results are shown on the Compatibility pane (Figure 5-2). Click the left and right arrows to move through the list and evaluate the page.

### Note

Click Generate HTML Report—the bottom tool on the Compatibility pane's toolbar—to open a web page listing the features in your page. The list includes `<meta>` content, any styles, headings used, how many pages were checked, and so on. If you like, you can save the file for future reference.

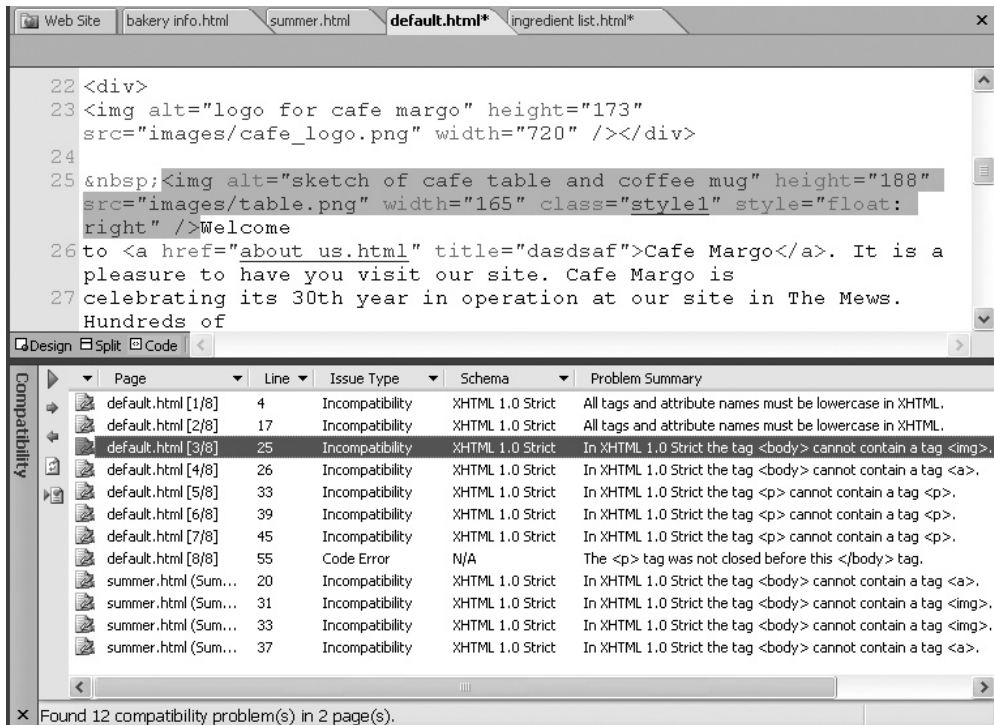


FIGURE 5-2 Check for potential problems using different standards.

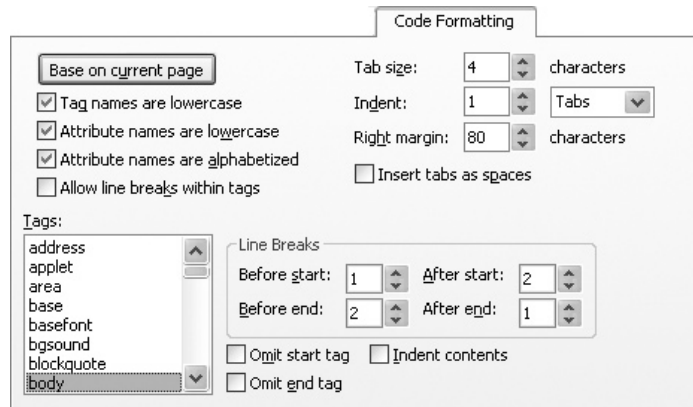
## Customize Code Display Options

Many people accustomed to hand coding develop a layout pattern to keep track of their development and make the code simpler to troubleshoot. For example, you may prefer to use a particular amount of indenting, or place a closing brace on a blank line. Whether you code by hand or not, it's useful to use a consistent layout. Fortunately, you can use options in Expression Web 2 to specify how code is formatted and color-coded.

To set Code view preferences to suit your work habits, choose Tools | Page Editor Options to open the Page Editor dialog box.

### Set Formatting Preferences

Click the Code Formatting tab to specify how tags are written and displayed on the page. Many of the options are self-explanatory, such as specifying the depth of a tab (Figure 5-3).



**FIGURE 5-3** Specify options for formatting code in the Code view.

There are a few items you may find useful in the Code Formatting preferences, including:

- If you have written code by hand and spaced it according to your preferences, instead of setting individual options, click Base on Current Page to transfer your settings to the program options.
- Leave the default options to use lowercase for tags and attributes to comply with XHTML standards. One option, Attribute Names Are Alphabetized, may or may not be useful for you. Some like to consider attributes alphabetically, while others have their own methods for writing and remembering to include attributes.
- Be careful using the Allow Line Breaks within Tags option. If you intend to use a lot of JavaScript, for example, line breaks interfere with parsing the code.



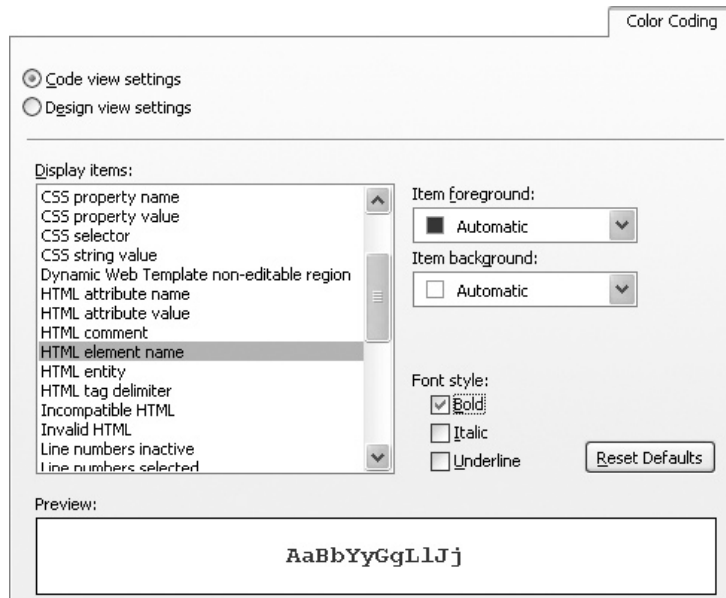
If you want lines to wrap to make reading the Code view easier, click Options on the Code View toolbar, and click Word Wrap.

- Click through the Tags list and check the Line Breaks options for tags you regularly use. Some tags, such as `<body>`, activate additional options to omit start or end tags, which is contrary to XHTML standards.
- Most tags let you indent contents, which can help you keep track of your code as you develop it.
- The lower part of the dialog box (not shown in Figure 5-3) deals with CSS formatting, indenting, and shorthand properties—read how to choose these options in Chapter 6.

## Track Content Using Color

Click the Color Coding tab to specify colors for code elements. You can select color schemes for text written in Code view and display items shown in Design view.

Click Code View Settings to see the list of Display Items. The list is categorized according to the type of content, such as CSS, HTML, PHP, Script items, and so on. Click an item to activate the Item Foreground and Item Background color fields and to show a colored example in the Preview area. Additionally, if you choose a text item, such as HTML Element Name, you can choose font styles.



Unless you need a particular color scheme to stimulate your thought processes, you probably won't need to change the settings.

### Note

You can set the color for code bookmarks either in the dialog box or from the Code View toolbar. Read how in the sidebar, “You Can Change the Color of Code Bookmarks,” later in the chapter.

Click Design View Settings to show a list of Display Items that overlay your page. Sometimes you need to change colors based on the items you use and your page's color scheme. For example, the Dynamic Web Template items show in pale yellow, which disappear if your page uses a pale yellow background.

The Display Items are listed in groups, including Dynamic Web Template Features, Layout Tables, Other Layout Positioning Items, Master Pages, and so on.

### Note

Other preferences apply to writing and working with the Code view, as described throughout the chapter.

## Use IntelliSense to Prompt Your Code Writing

Expression Web 2 includes the IntelliSense feature that gives you context-sensitive assistance as you write code. Use IntelliSense to insert code automatically as you type, look up code elements, or follow code hyperlinks.

### Configure IntelliSense Shortcuts

If you're starting on your hand coding adventures, the default settings are probably enough. However, if you are an adept hand coder but like using IntelliSense to make coding quicker, you can customize the way IntelliSense displays the shortcut menus and how tags and punctuation are inserted.

In Code view, the DTD (document type declaration) defines the options available in the IntelliSense shortcut menu. Likewise, the CSS Schema specified for the page determines the CSS level displayed in the shortcut menu.



Read more about DTDs and schemas in the section, “Create a New Page,” in Chapter 2.

To customize IntelliSense, choose Tools | Page Editor Options to display the Page Editor Options dialog box and click the IntelliSense tab. Make your selections, and click OK to close the dialog box and change the preferences.

In the dialog box, all auto features are selected by default as you see here.



Although you'll probably leave the default options, you can make changes in three categories, including:

- **Auto Popup** Shows content for completing HTML, CSS, and ASP.NET statements, as well as script statements and parameters
- **Auto Insert** Automatically closes tags, braces, and quotes
- **Code Hyperlinks** Let you follow a link by using the CTRL-click shortcut

### Note

The options include settings for PHP. Read about PHP in Chapter 13.

## Write Code Using IntelliSense Prompts

IntelliSense is an interactive partner in your code writing efforts. Along with HTML, you can use IntelliSense for CSS and script functions. Read about using CSS in Chapters 6 and 7 and script functions in Chapter 10.

You can access the features from the Edit menu, but it's far simpler to work from the Code View toolbar. To write code for your page using IntelliSense assistance, follow these steps in Code view:

1. Choose View | Toolbars | Code View to display the toolbar.
2. Click on the page in Code view where you want to insert a tag or tag property. The choices available depend on what you type or where you click; if clicking doesn't reveal any assistance, check your cursor location:
  - To show a list of tags, type an opening angle bracket < or click within an empty pair of brackets < > and click List Members on the Code View toolbar (Figure 5-4).

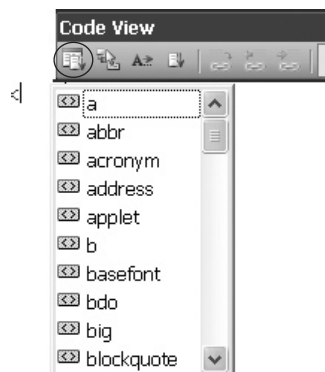


FIGURE 5-4 Use IntelliSense to offer code completion options.

## How to... Get Used to Having Help

As you start writing code yourself, it's surprising how you come to rely on IntelliSense prompts. Keep in mind that items are automatically closed, including tags, braces, and quotes. So, if you have been writing code manually before you started working with Expression Web 2, it takes some time to adjust.

- To show a list of tag properties, click in an opening tag after the HTML element and press **SPACEBAR** or click List Members on the Code View toolbar.
3. Scroll through the list to find the item you want to use, and double-click (or press **TAB** or **ENTER**) to insert it in the Code view. If you decide you don't want to use any assistance, press **ESC** to close the list.

The Quick Tag Editor uses some IntelliSense features. As you type in the editor, you'll see a pop-up list of tags, properties, or values display. Read more on the Quick Tag Editor later in the chapter.

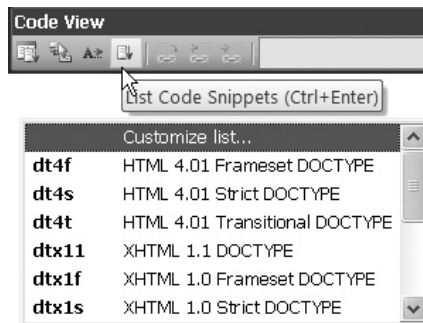
## Use Code Snippets for Speedier Coding

A code snippet is a string of code or text you can reuse as you like. Use one of the code snippets preloaded in Expression Web 2, or create your own. Access the code snippets using keywords for even faster coding.

The point of using code snippets is to save time and prevent errors when hand coding. For example, if you use the same `<meta>` tags in the `<head>` tag for your web pages, type them once, and then save them as a snippet until you write the next page. If you work with any pay-per-click or other site advertising, paste the advertising code on a page, then copy it and create a snippet.

## Insert a Code Snippet on a Page

Insert a code snippet in Code view, in another file such as a text file, or on a web page. Click the cursor where you want to insert the code snippet. To activate the Code Snippet menu shown here, press **CTRL+ENTER** or click List Code Snippets on the Code View toolbar.



Scroll through the list to locate the snippet you want to use, or type its keyword. Press ENTER or TAB or double-click the listing to insert the code.

## Customize Code Snippets

Modify, add, and delete snippets according to what you need and how you work. Choose Tools | Page Editor Options, and click the Code Snippets tab.



If you have the Code View toolbar and the Code Snippets list open, double-click Customize List at the top of the Code Snippet menu to open the Page Editor Options dialog box.

Make any or all of these customizations:

- Click a snippet in the list and click Remove to delete it.
- Click Add to open the Add Code Snippet dialog box, identical to the Modify Code Snippet dialog box.
- Click a snippet in the list and click Modify to open the Modify Code Snippet dialog box (Figure 5-5). Change the keyword if you like, type or modify the description listed with the snippet, or type or change the code for insertion.

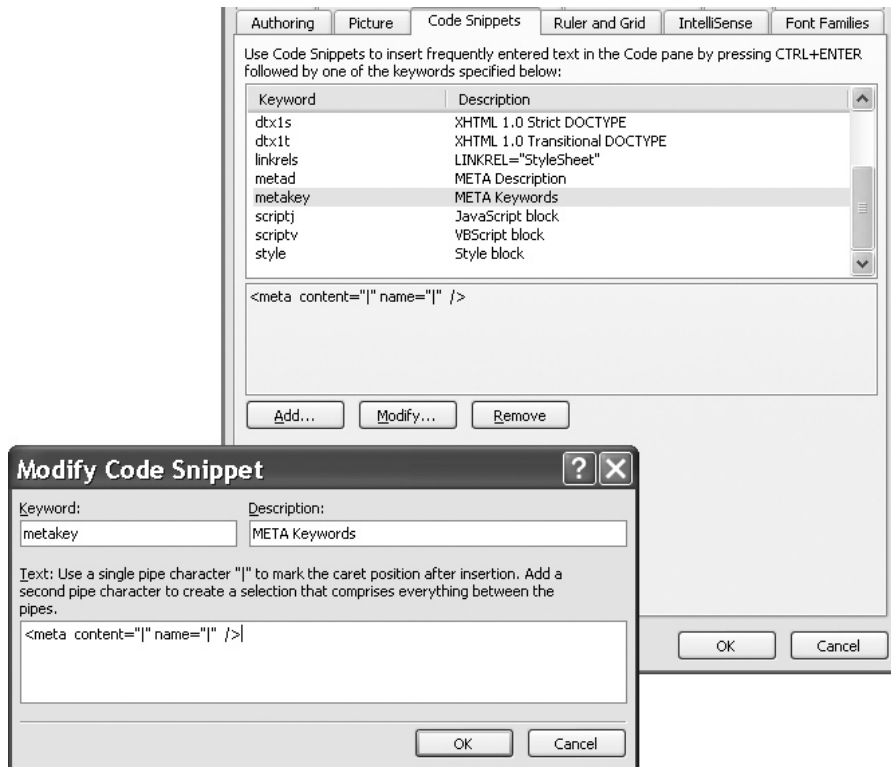


FIGURE 5-5 Modify an existing snippet or write your own.

## How to... Use Pipes in a Snippet

Use a pipe character (|) in the snippet's text to identify a location to place the insertion point when the code is added to the page. If you add two pipe characters (| |), the code content between the characters is selected. In the example shown in Figure 5-5, the code is modified from the default `metakey` snippet and reads:

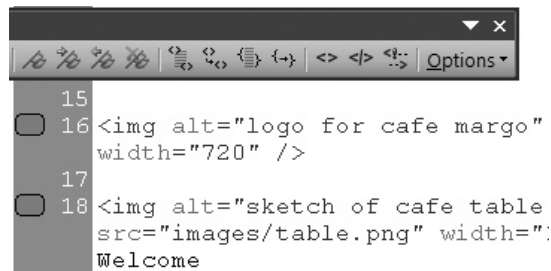
```
<meta content= "| " name="| " />
```

When the snippet is pasted into a page, the cursor sits at the location of the first pipe character, and the content from the first to second pipe characters is selected. It doesn't need selection; its purpose is to give you two attributes to customize. Adding the pipe character inserts a space in the code and serves as a reminder to add values for both attributes.

## Keep Track with Bookmarks

During a work session, you can add temporary bookmarks to the code in your web page. The code bookmarks are temporary—when you close the page, the code bookmarks are removed.

In Code view, click the location on the line where you want to add a bookmark and click **Toggle Bookmark** on the Code View toolbar. A colored rectangle displays to the left of the line of code where you've inserted a bookmark, as you see here.



### Tip

If you can't see the bookmark, it's likely that you're not showing line numbers. To remedy the situation, choose **Tools | Page Editor Options** to open the dialog box. Click **General** to display the basic settings. Select the **Line Numbers** check box in the **Code View Options** and click **OK** to close the dialog box.

When you're editing your page, and using a bookmark system to keep track of changes, jump from bookmark to bookmark by clicking **Next Bookmark** or **Previous Bookmark** on the Code View toolbar.

If you want to remove all the bookmarks, either save and close the file, or click **Clear Bookmarks** on the Code View toolbar.

**Did You Know?****You Can Change the Color of Code Bookmarks**

You don't need to use the default colors for bookmarks, just as you don't need to keep default fonts and colors for your code. If you want to customize the look of bookmarks, choose Tools | Page Editor Options and click the Color Coding tab.

Choose the Code View Settings radio button, and click Bookmarks in the Display Items list. You'll see the default Bookmarks color is aqua. Click the color drop-down arrow and choose another color from the Color Panel options. Your only choice for custom color is the foreground, as the bookmarks are a solid color.

## Access More Code Assistants

Whether you're working in Code or Design view, Expression Web 2 offers more assistants—or is that assistance? The Tag Properties task pane lets you instantly add a tag. The Quick Tag Selector and its editor help you locate and check out your content.

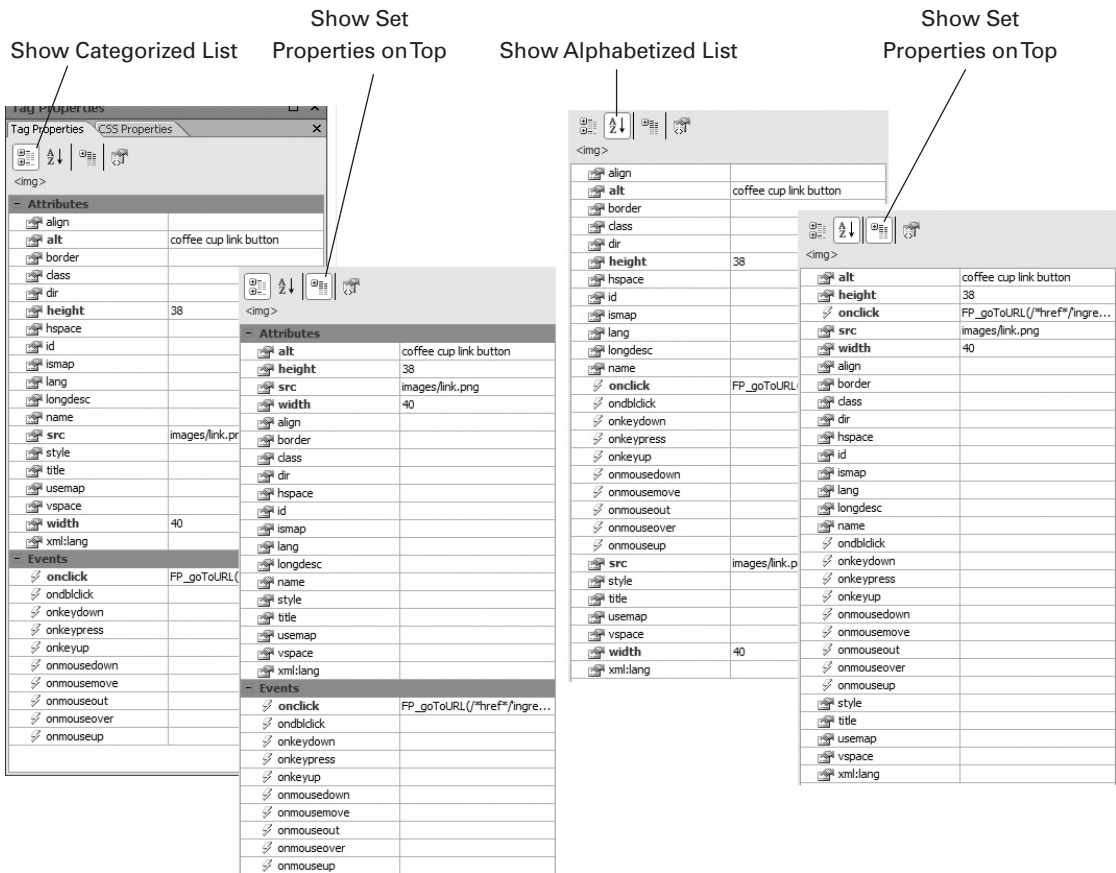
## Use the Tag Properties Task Pane

The Tag Properties task pane is a quick way to view attributes and specify values for a selected tag. Typing the attribute/value pair in the code displays the setting in the Tag Properties task pane; specifying a value for an attribute in the Tag Properties task pane is reflected in the page code. Where you choose to work depends solely on your personal preference.

### Choose a Display Option

Customize the layout of the Tag Properties task pane based on how you like to work. Examples of the same tags using different configurations are shown in Figure 5-6:

- **Show Categorized List** Displays the properties in alphabetical order divided into Attributes and Events categories. Use this option when you want to concentrate on one aspect of your coding.
- **Show Alphabetized List** Displays all properties in a list. Use this option when you want to apply or check both events and attributes for an object.
- **Show Set Properties on Top** Moves the defined attributes to the top of the list, followed by the remainder. You can show properties at the top of the list, regardless of which list option you choose.
- **Show Tag Properties** Displays the Properties dialog box for the selected tag.



**FIGURE 5-6** Display properties for tags in different configurations.

## View and Edit Tag Properties

In other chapters you've seen different properties dialog boxes for objects such as pages and images. You can access the properties dialog box pertaining to a selected tag through the Tag Properties task pane or through the main program menu. If your coding is simple, the common attributes available in the dialog boxes are all you need.

However, it's a good idea to get accustomed to working in the Tag Properties task pane instead. You'll save time since the values are shown next to the Editing window, and all the attributes for a tag are available.

Follow these steps to edit tag properties:

1. Activate the tag by clicking in the code in Code view or the object in Design view. In the Tag Properties task pane, you'll see the tag shown below the Show Categorized List button and the list of available attributes for the selected tag listed in a table on the task pane.

2. Click a box to the right of the attribute you want to change to display selection options that vary according to the attribute (Figure 5-7).
3. Type or select a value for the attribute, including:
  - A drop-down list offering the possible values, such as the align attribute shown in an expanded view in Figure 5-7.
  - A text field to type a value, such as the id value `intro` shown in the figure.
  - An ellipsis to open the Modify Style dialog box where you can customize the tag further.

## Speed Things Up with Quick Tags

Use the Quick Tag Selector bar, located at the top of the Editing window, to work with tags in Code or Design view. Click on the page in Design view or within a line of code in Code view to activate the tags. As you see here, the tag is highlighted on the Quick Tag Selector bar, the tag's content is highlighted in the Code view, and its object is selected on the Design view.

Some of the tag's menu items open the Quick Tag Editor dialog box, where you can type or edit code.

## Manage Content Using the Quick Tag Selector

The Quick Tag Selector displays the hierarchy of tags from `<body>` (or `<head>` depending on your page location) through subsequent nested levels with the selected tag at the right of the bar. Tags that nest or wrap around the current tag appear to the left of the current tag, such as the `<div>` tag in Figure 5-8.



To see a list of tags wider than the Editing window, scroll horizontally using the arrows at either end of the bar.

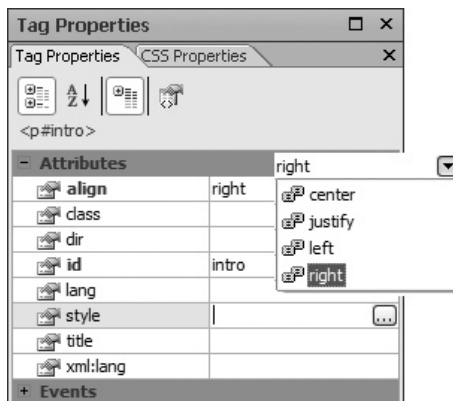
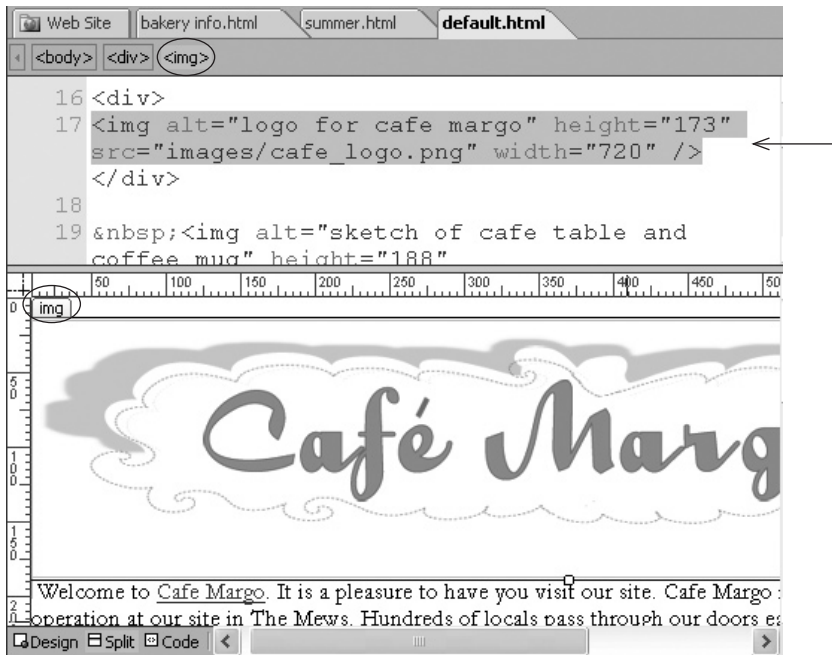


FIGURE 5-7 Choose values for the tag's attributes.



**FIGURE 5-8** Tags are identified in multiple locations.

Click the tag's drop-down arrow to open a list of commands. To modify tag structures, choose one of these options:

- **Select Tag** Selects a tag's contents and its surrounding tags. Of course, clicking the tag on the Quick Tag Selector selects the content and tags, so you won't use the command often.
- **Select Tag Contents** Selects the text inside the pair of tags. Use this command when you want to move content to another location on the page or to copy and paste content to use within a different tag.
- **Remove Tag** Deletes the tag pair, leaving the content on the page. Use this command when you want to change a tag.
- **Tag Properties** Opens the dialog box containing properties applicable to the tag. For example, if you select a <p> tag, the Paragraph Properties dialog box opens; an <img> tag opens the Picture Properties dialog box, and so on.

Other choices on the menu open the Quick Tag Editor.

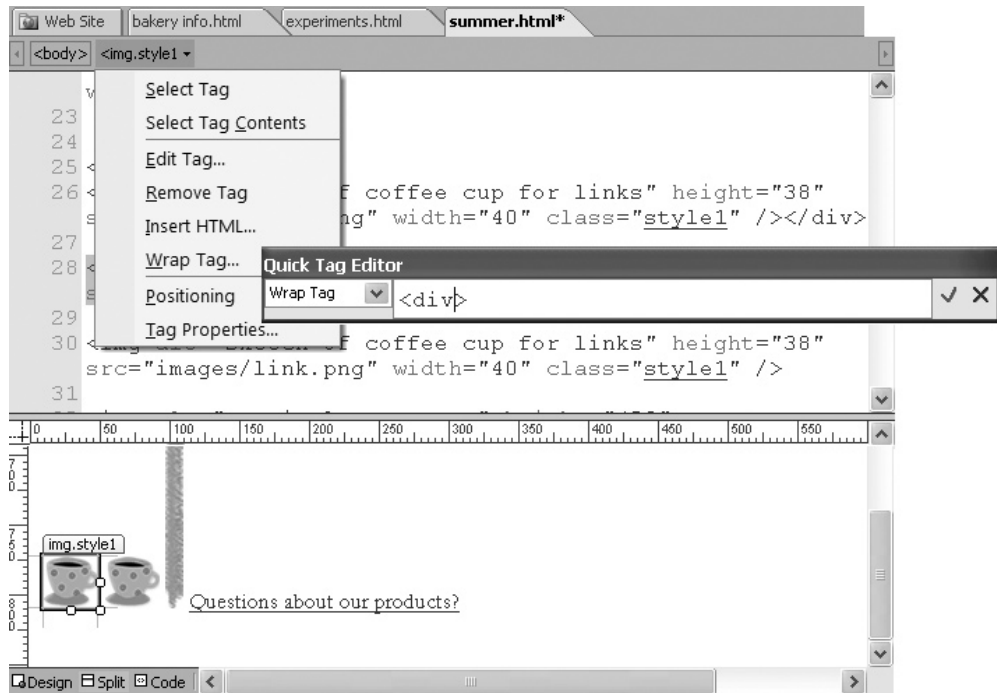
## Edit Content with the Quick Tag Editor

The Quick Tag Editor opens in response to selecting one of three options from a tag's drop-down menu on the Quick Tag Selector. The choices include:

- **Edit Tag** Edits the selected tag and its attributes or adds additional tags.
- **Insert HTML** Adds additional code to the page.
- **Wrap Tag** Wraps the selected tag within another tag, such as a <div> tag.

Follow these steps to use the Quick Tag Editor:

1. Click the location where you want to modify the tag.
2. Click the drop-down arrow next to the tag associated with your selected location and choose Edit Tag, Insert HTML, or Wrap Tag to open the Quick Tag Editor dialog box.
3. Type the code to insert and click Enter. The dialog box closes, and your edits are made.



### Note

The illustration is a composite image, showing both the tag's menu and the Quick Tag Editor. In the program, the menu closes as the Quick Tag Editor opens.

## Summary

In this chapter, you discovered a variety of Expression Web 2 features for writing and customizing code in Code view. If you are strictly the WYSIWYG type, you won't likely venture too far into the code side of things. However, it's important to have an understanding of how what you see relates to the page's code.

You saw how to customize preferences for writing and formatting code and learned some tips on when to use the settings. Expression Web 2 offers several interrelated tools and features accessible from the Code View toolbar. One of the biggest tools is IntelliSense, a context-sensitive tool that offers code prompts based on your cursor location.

You can save code that you use repeatedly, like the `<meta>` tags in the `<head>` of a page, or your copyright information, and then insert it automatically using code snippets. Not only does inserting prewritten code save time, it also prevents error.

Expression Web 2 includes several tools accessible from the program window to help in your code writing efforts. The Tag Properties task pane lets you click an option to add a tag instantly. Quick Tags—both the Quick Tag Selector and Quick Tag Editor, help you zero in on your content.

In the next chapter, we'll look at code of another sort as we look at CSS. Cascading Style Sheets are the basis for formatting the visual appearance of your web site, and offer a lot of great timesaving features.