

Meteor Galleries v3.0 – Index Page Template Guide

As of Meteor Galleries version 3.0, the index page is totally customizable by uploading a template through the Template Editor. To make an index template, you'll need a little HTML knowledge and some basic information about how the template file works.

The Index Page Template File

A sample index page template has been included with your files (both in the upgrade and the full installer versions). It's a very simple file that should help you get the idea of how to create your own. That file looks like the following:

```
{HEAD}

{MENU}

<table align=center class=newsbox cellpadding=5>
<tr><td>Latest News: </td><td>

{NEWS}

</td></tr>
</table>

{CATEGORIES}

{HITS}

{FOOT}
```

You will notice that the file is primarily HTML interspersed with key words inside curly braces. These words are the key to the template—they tell Meteor Galleries to place code into those spaces on the page. What you will need to know mostly is what those words mean, and what those sections do for your index page. The index template is so simple that once you understand what each of these sections does, if you understand HTML, you will be able to create your own template very easily.

Template Sections

Let's go over what each of those sections means/displays:

{HEAD} – displays the full header of the page – you will NOT want to omit this as some very necessary components of the code are contained in this section.

{MENU} – displays the main image for your item.

{NEWS} – displays the item description and last updated/added date information.

{CATEGORIES} – displays the screenshot (or the link to add a screenshot for admins logged in if no screenshot exists for the item).

{HITS} – displays the item details (# sketches, episode, etc) for your item.

{FOOT} – displays the foot/bottom of the page, like the header, this part is necessary!

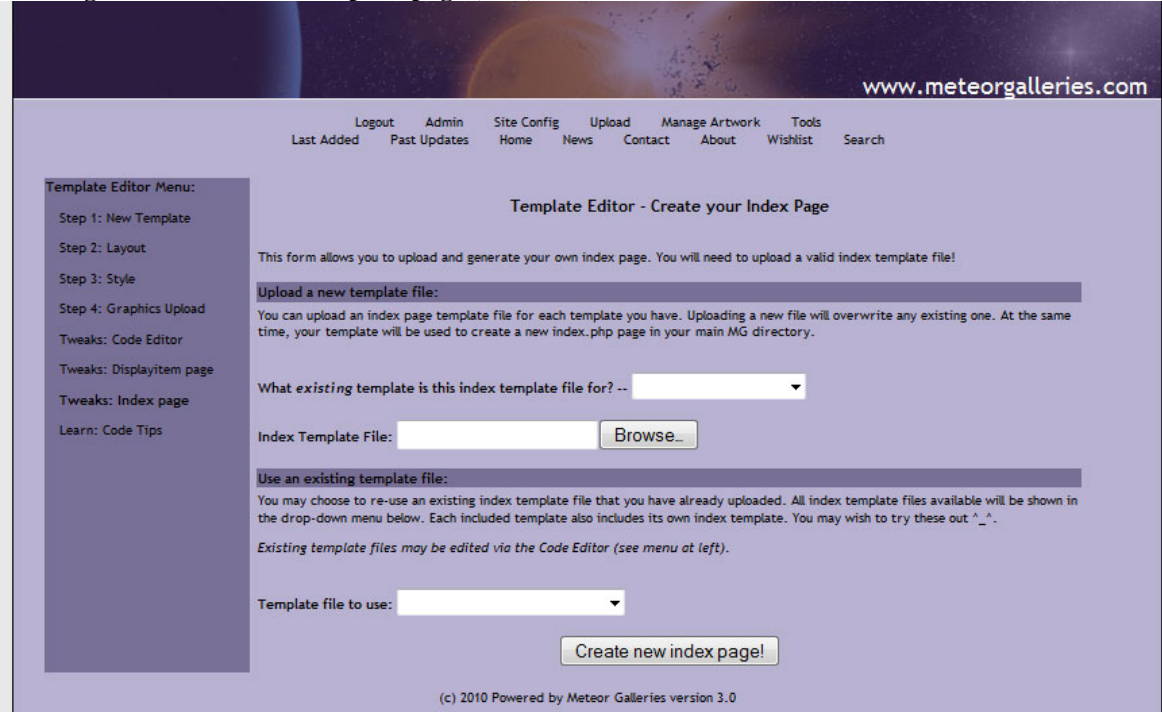
Your template MUST include at least: the head, the menu, categories, and the foot sections. Hits and news are optional.

Creating Your Own Template

Creating your own template file is easy – just open your favorite plain text editor on your computer (my preference is for either notepad or wordpad in Windows), and create a file similar to the one you see above. You may add HTML (do not include a doctype statement or any page-related tags—head, title, body—as these are included in the code inserted by the curly-braced words) to format the sections on the page. Please be sure to close all tags and try to make your HTML conform to the XHTML 1.0 Transitional standard (which includes using self-closing tags like “<p />” instead of “<p>”). Save your file as plain text (extra encoding placed in the file by word processing programs will end up showing on your page!), and then move on to uploading your file.

All you will need is to include each of the above-mentioned sections somewhere in your template file, and you’ll have your own template. Please be sure that you include those sections exactly as shown in the sample template (in all caps, inside curly braces) or your template may not be interpreted correctly.

Fig. 1 – Create Index template page (v3.0)



The screenshot shows the 'Template Editor - Create your Index Page' interface on the website www.meteoralleries.com. The page has a dark purple header with the site name and a navigation menu including Logout, Admin, Site Config, Upload, Manage Artwork, Tools, Last Added, Past Updates, Home, News, Contact, About, Wishlist, and Search. On the left, a 'Template Editor Menu' lists options like Step 1: New Template, Step 2: Layout, Step 3: Style, Step 4: Graphics Upload, Tweaks: Code Editor, Tweaks: Displayitem page, Tweaks: Index page, and Learn: Code Tips. The main content area is titled 'Template Editor - Create your Index Page' and contains instructions: 'This form allows you to upload and generate your own index page. You will need to upload a valid index template file!'. It offers two paths: 'Upload a new template file:' with a text input and a 'Browse...' button, and 'Use an existing template file:' with a drop-down menu. A 'Create new index page!' button is at the bottom. A footer note reads '(c) 2010 Powered by Meteor Galleries version 3.0'.

Uploading Your Template

Template files should be uploaded through the Template Editor. Just look for the menu link inside the Template Editor that reads “Tweaks: Index page”. You will be taken to the page shown in Figure 1. When you click that link, you will be asked either to upload a new template (you will be asked to choose a template to associate your new index template with) or use one already uploaded. Make your choices and click the button at the bottom of the page. Once the page has loaded and displays a success message, you should have a brand new index page right in your main MG directory – the changes are immediate. This means the new page is viewable for everyone visiting your site. Note that your previous index page is stored in your main MG directory as “index.old”.

Using An Existing Template

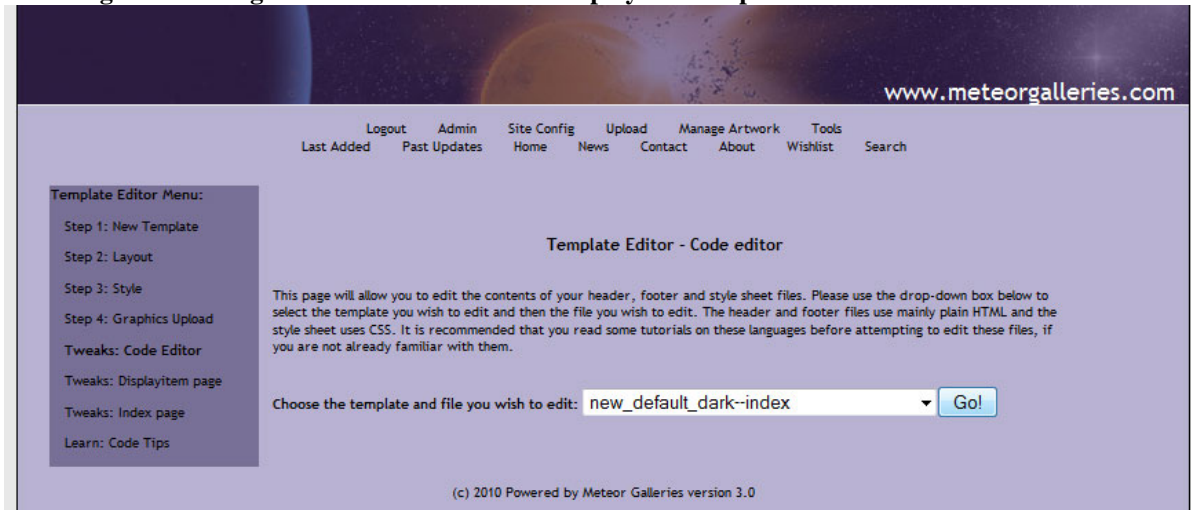
You may find that you want to use an existing index template to update the look of your index page. Perhaps you created a new template and have been using it for awhile, but now you want to return to a previous look. Or, perhaps you just want to use one of the index templates included with one of the default MG templates.

In Figure 1, you will notice that at the bottom of the page, you have the option to choose an existing index template—if you wish to use one of your former templates, this is how you will choose it. Just find the template you wish to use (you’ll need to remember which template you attached it to), and select it using the drop-down menu. Once you’ve done that, click the button at the bottom and the page will generate a new index page based on the template you’ve chosen. Simple!

Editing An Existing Template File

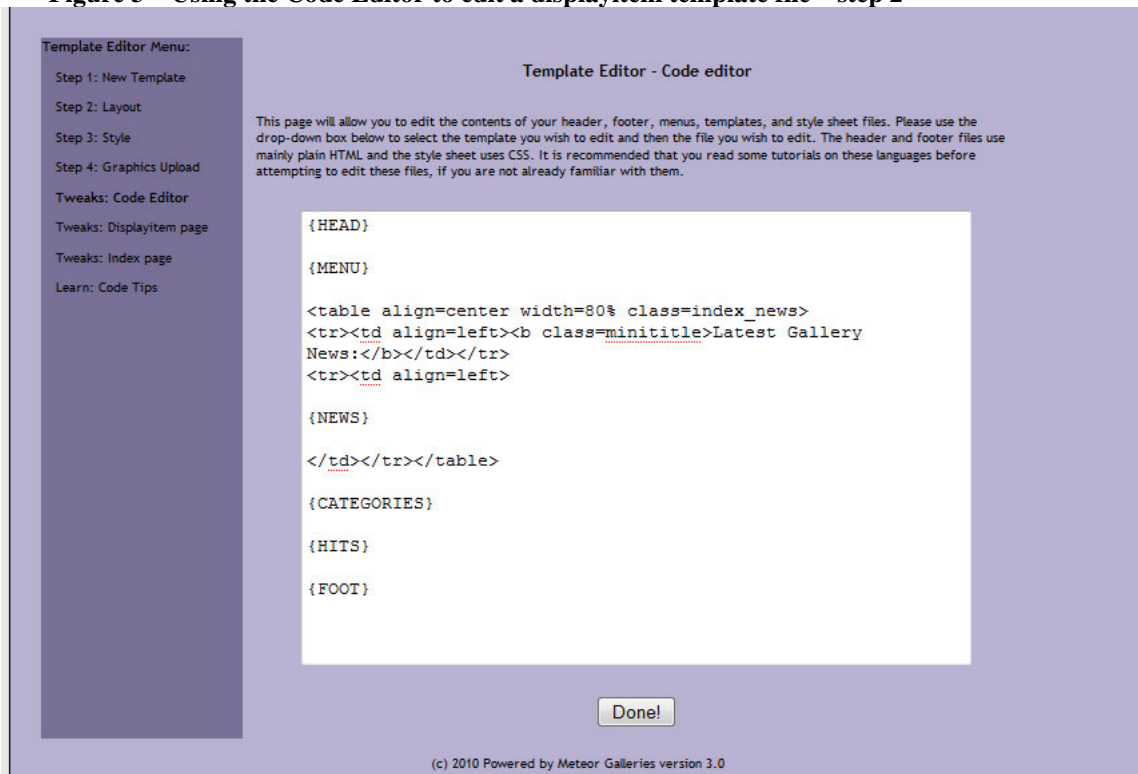
MG v3.0 now allows you to edit your index templates via the Code Editor. The Code Editor is a tool used to edit the HTML or CSS of your template files. You can edit your menus, style sheets, header files, and footer files. You can also edit your index templates.

Figure 2 – Using the Code Editor to edit a displayitem template file



To edit a displayitem template, simply go to the Code Editor and find the template file on the list that you wish to edit. Click the button and you'll be presented with the contents of your template file.

Figure 3 – Using the Code Editor to edit a displayitem template file – step 2



When you are done making your changes, click the button at the bottom and your changes will be saved.

Please note that your changes will not be immediately applied to the file displaying your actual index page. If you wish to update that file immediately, you will need to return to the page shown in Figure 1 and choose your recently updated template file for the changes to become visible.