

Meteor Galleries – Template Creation Guide v3.0

Template Structure:

The Meteor Galleries default template can and should be used as your guide for creating another template. There are a few options and other things you can change to make your site a bit more unique, but they will be covered later in this guide.

The MG template consists of a few parts: the style sheet, the header, the footer, and any images required. Each template begins with some lines noting who created the template, version number, and other important information. Anytime you update a template, you should change this information to reflect the new items. This does NOT mean that you should change the author! Changing the author may very well constitute copyright infringement! If you update someone else's template to suit your needs, you should add yourself as such, but leave the original author's name intact!

For example, the Meteor Galleries default template begins with the following:

```
/*
Template Name: Meteor
Template URI: http://www.meteor Galleries.com
Version: 1.0
Author: zerospace
Author URI: http://www.zero-space.net/
*/
```

The MG style sheet is the “style.css” file located inside the template's main folder (/templates/default, for example). This file sets the fonts, colors, and other styles including the size and attributes for each of the tables that create the site's layout. It also sets the link styles as well as the background color(s) or images. If you are unfamiliar with CSS, it is advisable that you do a little research *on* it before editing this file. Or, find something in another style sheet that you like, and attempt to copy it into your MG style sheet.

Keep in mind that you cannot change the names of the CSS ids or classes in your MG style sheet, unless they are the ones used in the header and footer pages. This document will list all of the unchangeable class and id names and what they are.

The other important files are the “header.inc” file and the “footer.inc” file. These are what they seem – they are appended to the top and bottom of every page on your Meteor Galleries site. There are potential plans in the works to make the headers for each page potentially customizable, but that will be in a later version. The primary content of these files is CSS and HTML as you will see if you open them in notepad or wordpad.

You will also notice that all images used by the template are stored in the template's “images” folder. Images for the file browser are also stored here so you may change them if you like.

The Unchangeable Template Classes:

These are the classes and ids that are a part of the software, that you cannot change the names.

Link Classes:

a.breadcrumb – This class is the link style for the “breadcrumb” links. (The “current location →” links on each page).

a.menulink – These are the menu link styles for the main menu.

a.thumb – These are the image portion of the thumbnail link styles for the categories, series, and individual items. Any link with a thumbnail image uses this style.

a.thumb2 – These are the text portion of the thumbnail links for categories, series, and items. Any link with a thumbnail image uses this style for the text link underneath.

a.admin – These set the style for the links on the admin pages and in a few other places as well.

Table Classes:

.newsbox – This sets the properties for the ‘box’ that displays your news on the index page.

.cat_table – This class sets the table properties for the table that displays the categories on the index page.

.menu – This class sets the style for the menu items (NOT a table).

.stats – Sets the style for the statistics info at the bottom of the index page.

.series_table – This class sets the style for the table that displays the series list.

.thumbs_table – This class sets the style for the table that displays the item thumbnails in each section.

.item_table – This class sets the style for the individual item display table.

.about_table – This class sets the style for the table that displays the site “about” information.

.sketch_table – This sets the style for the table that displays an item's sketches.

.manage_table – Sets the style for some of the tables used in the admin section to manage series, categories, etc.

.manage800_table – Similar to the manage_table class, this is a narrower management table.

.additem_table – Sets the table style for the add item form.

.browse_table – Sets the style for the file browsing tables.
.manage_news – Sets the style for the news manager table.
.bottom_border – Sets the style for certain table cells where a border on the bottom of each cell is used (search results, news manager).
.sort_table – Sets the style for the tables used to display items for sorting.
.altbg – Sets the alternate background color for pages which require it.
.text_table – Sets the table width for text-only category and series lists.
.numbers – Sets table size/style for page numbers.
.info_table – A highlight table style for informational boxes inside the admin panel area.
.recent_news – A highlight table style for the most recent news item on the updated news archive page.
.newsitem – Sets style for each row in the news archives tables.
.news_tbar – Styles the title bar for the news archives table
.pastup – Sets style for the main table of the past updates page.
.pastup_nav – Styles the nav bar table for the past updates page.
.pastup_dates – Sets styles for the past updates date list table.
.wishlist – Sets style for the main wishlist table.
.wishname – Sets style for the table cell containing the name & description of each wishlist item.
.wishimage – Sets style for the table cell containing the wishlist item image.
.wishadmin – Sets style for the table cell containing the wish item admin links.
.i_news_title – Sets style for the news title -- date and title -- for the index page.
.add_edit_table – Sets style and alignment for all add/edit form tables.
.search_results – Sets style for search results page table.
.main_img – Sets the style for the border around full-size item images.

Setting the Basic Elements of the Style Sheet:

Each style sheet should set attributes for the entire page—things like background, overall font face, size, etc, and a few other commonly used HTML components. To see how this works, let's take a look at the first section of the new_default style sheet:

```

body {
background: #e8e7e8;
color: #000000;
font: 62.5%/125% 'Trebuchet MS', Tahoma, Arial, Helvetica, sans-serif;
margin: 0;
padding: 0;
}

hr {
background: #787096;
color: #9d8ebd; /* for coloring the background in IE7 */
height: 2px;
margin: 10px 0;
width: 600px;
}

a:link {
color: #000000;
text-decoration: none;
}

a:visited {
color: #000000;
text-decoration: none;
}

a:active {
color: #000000;
text-decoration: none;
}

a:hover {
color: #000000;
text-decoration: underline;
}

a img { border: 1px solid #000000; }
  
```

Here, as you can see, we're setting styles for the body of the page, the <hr> tags, and any links not covered by another style class or id. I've also set the border style for images used as links (e.g. thumbnail links). This will make your image links display the same in all browsers. Some browsers do not automatically draw colored borders around image links. The "a img" line above is what will do this for the default template. You may, of course, alter this line as you see fit. Removing it altogether will cause your image links to have borders in some browsers and not in others, though.

As you can also see, colors in style sheets are noted using hexadecimal values (given in the Photoshop color picker if you're looking to use a specific color). You may also use an image as the background. If you wish to use a tiled image for the background, you would change the background code to look like this:

```
background: url('pathtoimage/image.jpg');
```

You can also specify if a background image should NOT be tiled:

```
background: url('pathtoimage/image.jpg');  
background-repeat: no-repeat;
```

If you wish your background to only tile horizontally, you would say "background-repeat: repeat-x;" or vertically only: "background-repeat: repeat-y;"

If you look closely at the default template you will see that there is still a section of the style sheet we have not discussed. That is the "Page Structure" section. This is what sets up the overall layout of the pages. In the page structure section, I have defined several CSS ids:

```
#page {  
  margin-top: 5px;  
  padding: 0;  
  width: 850px;  
}  
  
#wrapper {  
  background: #b8b2d1;  
  width: 850px;  
  padding: 0px;  
  border-left: 1px solid;  
  border-right: 1px solid;  
  color: #000000;  
}  
  
#content {  
  width: 850px;  
}  
  
#header {  
  padding-bottom: 5px;  
  padding-right: 10px;  
  padding-top: 58px;  
  background: url('images/header.jpg');  
  background-repeat: no-repeat;  
  text-align: right;  
  color: #ffffff;  
  font-size: 175%;  
}
```

What these do is set margins, font colors, backgrounds, alignments, and the maximum allowed page width. If you look at the header.inc file, you will see how these have been implemented. These are the ids you may change the names of, or add more of, or whatever you wish to do with them. Doing that will be left up to you – you may wish to consult some CSS web tutorials in order to better understand how page layout with CSS works. It is possible to lay an entire page out using nothing but CSS and no tables, but that is another topic beyond the scope of this document.

Ganbatte!