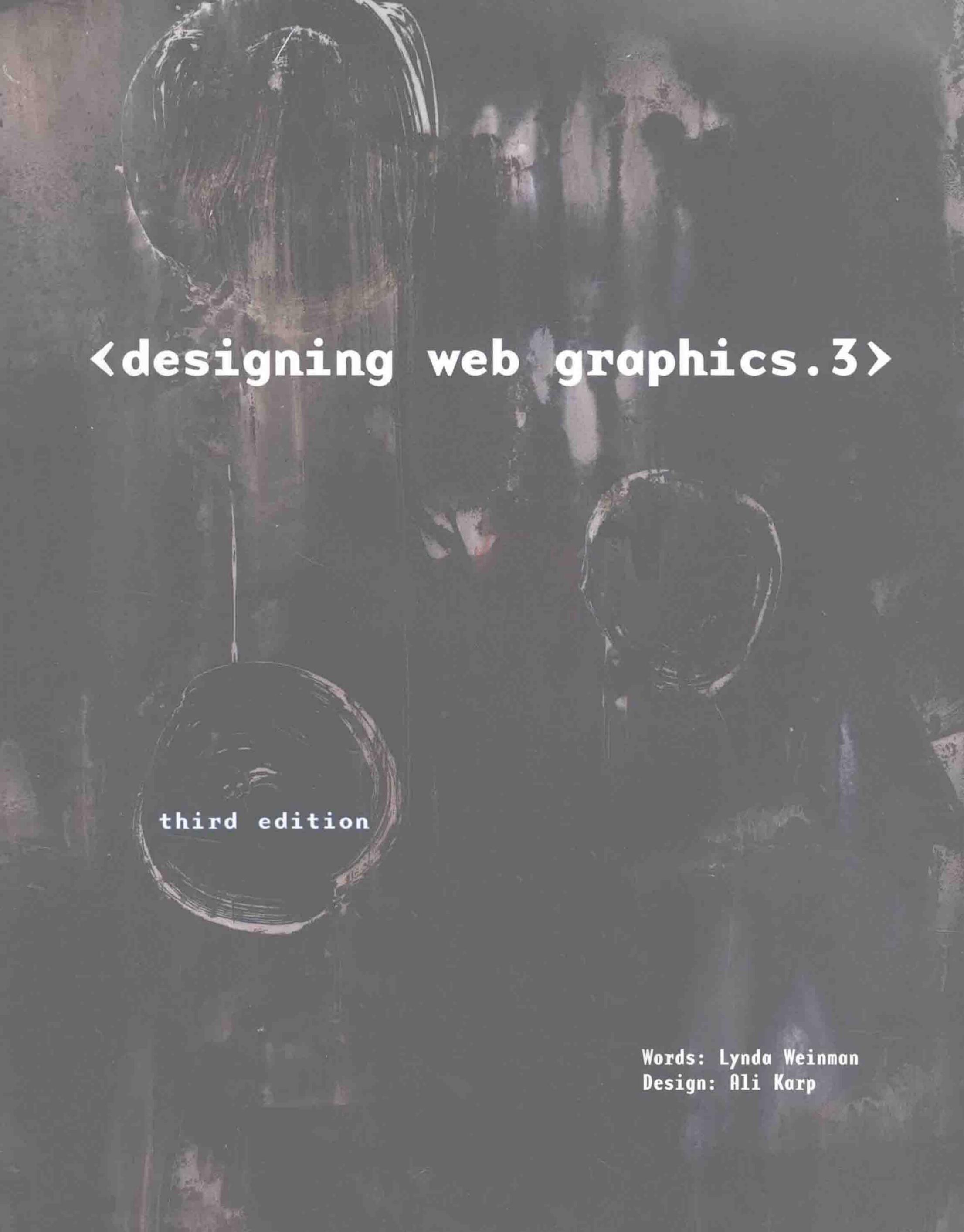


<designing web graphics.3>

How to Prepare Images and Media for the Web

third edition

Lynda Weinman



<designing web graphics.3>

third edition

**Words: Lynda Weinman
Design: Ali Karp**



Designing Web Graphics.3

Lynda Weinman

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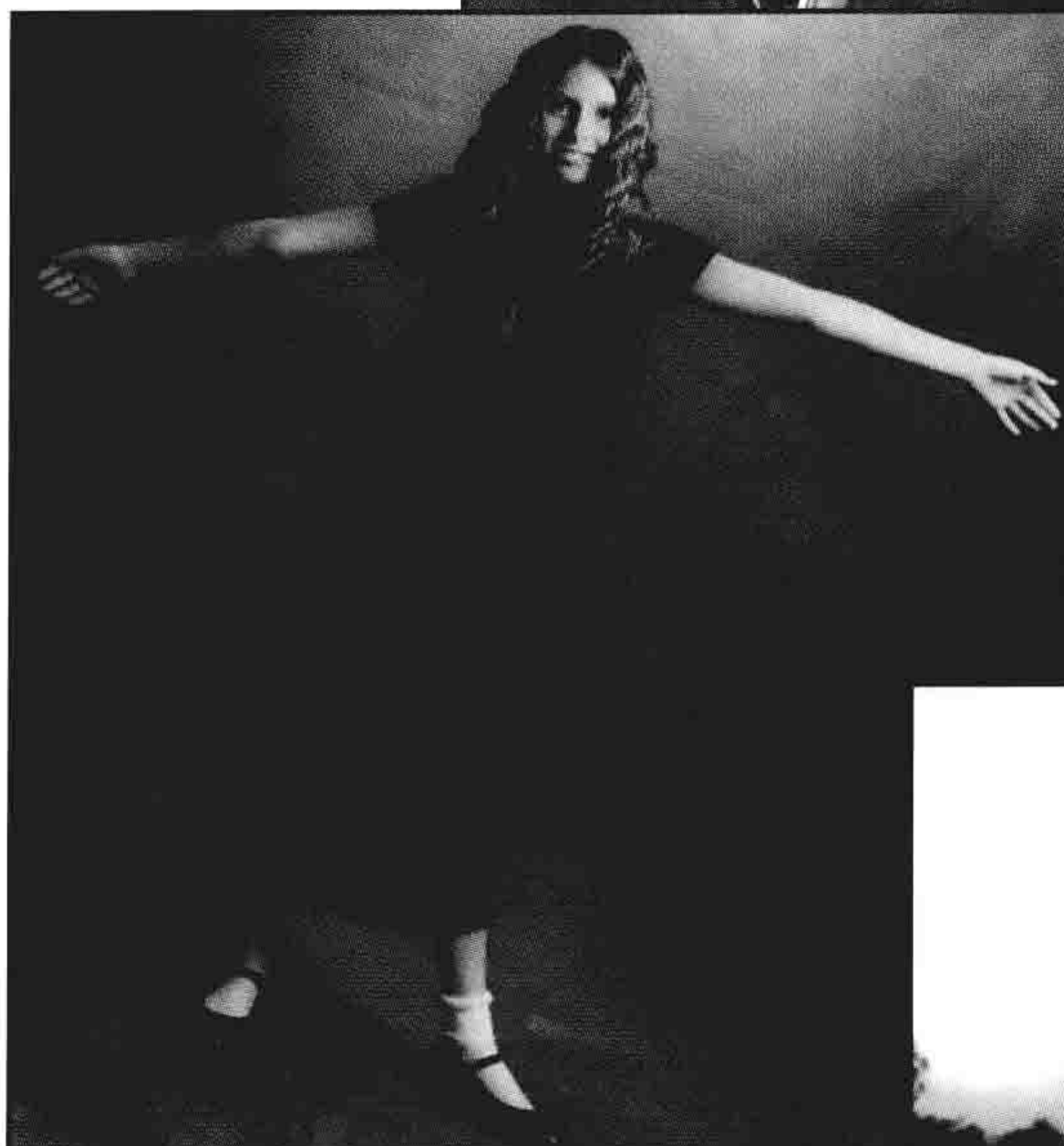


Lynda's Bio

Lynda Weinman has written six books on Web design, many in second editions. She has been teaching digital design and animation since the late 1980s, and recently opened her own training center in Ojai, California (<http://www.digitalartscenter.com>). She has a line of video training tapes, and regularly teaches at her center. Lynda has written for numerous magazines, including *Step-by-Step Graphics*, *MacWorld*, *MacUser*, *DV*, *How*, *Web Techniques* and *Adobe*. She has taught at Art Center College of Design, UCLA, American Film Institute, and San Francisco Multimedia Studies Program. Lynda lives in Ojai with her husband, daughter, 3 cats and her 74-year old dad (who has a Web site!).



Thanks to all the wonderful students who've attended our classes at the Ojai Digital Arts Center (<http://www.digitalartscenter.com>).



Thanks to the love of my life—my beautiful daughter Jamie.



Thanks to my favorite book designer, Ali: Always searching for artistic inspiration. Even while on vacation in Norway, she's caught in the act of stealing a well designed museum poster advertisement .



Thanks to my favorite man—my husband, partner, and true love Bruce!



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To **my readers**, without whom there would be no new books, videos, classes or conferences. You propel me forward, and I thank you for it!

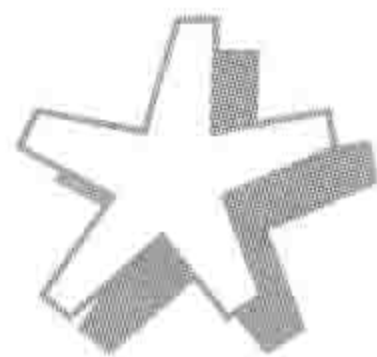


Introduction

Designing Web Graphics.3

Chapter Contents

- › The Ever-Changing Web
- › What's New in DWG.3
- › What the Chapters Cover
- › How DWG.3 Works



Welcome to the third edition of *Designing Web Graphics*. It's been more than three years since the first edition hit the bookstores, and since then I have been overwhelmed by the number of readers who have written to thank me for this book. *Designing Web Graphics* is currently used by teachers at high schools, universities, and trade colleges throughout the world. It has been translated into six languages and is found on most professional Web designers' desktops, as well as in the library of thousands of non-professional Web and design enthusiasts.



The Ever-Changing Web

What compels me to return day after day to the computer to write about the ever-changing Web? The Web is a phenomenon on so many levels that I still find myself awestruck by it. I am still amazed when someone from Europe or Asia enters my guestbook. I am still amazed that, as an individual using a little box that shines back at me, I can communicate with others on a global level. I am still amazed when I see a URL on a billboard, the side of a truck, or a T-shirt. I am still amazed that the Web grew up to be such a big thing to so many people. I imagine that at some point, I'll become jaded by the Web; but for the moment, I think it's an exhilarating time to be alive and witnessing the emergence of this medium.

I'm an educator, and nothing pleases me more than to teach others. Teaching people about the Web is not an easy task however, because there are so many unfamiliar constraints and rules. For me, designing for the Web is not about dogmatic ideas and rigid principles. It's about harnessing the power of design to enhance ideas and communication.

The term "Web site" is a bit of a misnomer because "Web site" can mean so many things. There are sites for educational, entertainment, commercial, informational, vanity, and experimental purposes, as well as sites for a hybrid of many purposes. How could you possibly apply the same rules to all these different types of sites? I wouldn't presume to know the one "right" way to make a site for all these different purposes.

Instead, I believe that knowledge is power. If I can share with you the knowledge about how to do things, the repercussions of certain decisions and strategies, or the penalties of using certain technologies, you can make decisions about what is right or wrong for your site.

I've been creating computer graphics for the past 13 years and have watched tools and computer hardware come a long way. Even so, it's truly amazing at times how frustrating computers can be and how much time can be eaten up by things that don't work right or by wrestling with inefficient tools.

My goal is to spare you some of the pain by sharing my favorite tips, tools, and techniques, as well as the ever-present "gotchas" that plague those of us doing this work. Don't forget that Web design is still in its infancy. Anyone who claims to be an expert has been doing this work for maybe three to five years—at the very most!

My attitude is that we are all new at this stuff, even those so-called "expert" folks. I consider myself both a student and a teacher of Web design. There's never been a reason to understand file compression, navigational techniques, color palettes, animation, and sound in one visual design discipline. And visual design should not be entirely separated from information design and/or programming design. Great sites work on all levels, not just visual design. The Web makes it possible and necessary to combine many different disciplines at once, and it's one rare superhuman who can do it all well.

I hope this book is helpful to you. If it is, I have done my job.

What's New in DWG3

If you own an older edition of this book, you might be wondering what is new in this edition and if you should buy anew. For that reason, I thought it would be valuable to share a list of what's new so you can make your decision easily and decide if these new additions are of value to you.

- Design strategies
- Working with clients
- ImageReady tips
- Fireworks tips
- Dreamweaver tips
- Flash tips
- Shockwave tips
- Photoshop 5.0 tips
- DHTML chapter
- QuickTime 3.0 chapter
- JavaScript chapter
- Frames
- CSS chapter
- Color aesthetics



How DWG.3 Works

It's always tricky to write about Web design, because there are so many overlapping principles and concepts. For example, tables can be used for layout and alignment, or for cutting apart images to save on file size and downloading time. Teaching about linked graphics and navigation involves both image creation techniques and HTML or CGI. Sometimes, making the decision about which chapter to put with which subject is difficult! For this reason, I have intentionally structured this book so that readers can approach it in a nonlinear manner. Whenever a subject is mentioned in more than one chapter, it is clearly noted.

Those who use the Web for information often wonder if they need to buy a book, when so much information is available for free right on the Web. Indeed, the Web is an invaluable resource, and this book is not meant to be a substitute for it. Few will dispute the advantages to having all the information you need in a compact, transportable, and easy-to-read format. Books have not lost their importance in the age of networked information, but must work in tandem with electronic resources to be as effective as possible. This book (of course!) has a sister Web site—check it out at <http://www.lynda.com/dwg3>.

Although it might be possible to read or skim this book in a single day, the information inside is far too overwhelming to absorb in a single sitting. It took me many months to write this third edition. Even with that many months, I could not have possibly understood the task at hand without many more years of experience under my belt as a computer graphics artist and teacher. The task of collecting all this information in one place is enormous and, frankly, never feels finished. The Web changes and evolves constantly, but once the ink is dry on this book's pages, it will forever be there.

That's why there are many references to outside information sources in this book. Everything from other URLs, other books, magazines, conferences, newsgroups, mailing lists, and CD-ROMs are offered as support resources whenever a new subject is touched upon. I wrote this book with the full understanding that information will change and evolve, and gave you outside channels to get to that new information. Updates and errata will be posted at my Web site as well. Just remember how to spell my name—with a “y”—and you'll be able to email me or check in on my Web site at any time. I can't promise to answer everyone, but I do whenever time permits.

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Enjoy the book, and I hope to see you on the Web!



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