Naming Conventions for Web Files and Folders

Recommendations for trouble-free file and folder names

- **Do not use spaces** in file or folder names.

- Use only **alphanumeric characters**, dashes, and underscores.
  Characters you must avoid include:
  > / ! @ # $ } { % ^ & * ( ) + | . , : "

- Use **all lowercase** characters to prevent naming errors.
  Unix is case sensitive. If you mis-type the case in an HTML reference, the Web server will not find the file.

- Use the **proper file type extension** (the three characters that come after the document name) for the file type. (If you save an image in the JPG file format, but the file name is *image.gif*, visitors will see a broken image icon)

- **Keep file names as short as possible**, but they must make sense.
  Files names that are excessively long may cause problems, 8 characters (plus three for the extension) is ideal but not required.

- **Sensible file names** make URL's easy to communicate.
  Avoid arcane acronyms or abbreviations. Sensible is more important than short! Can you read the URL over the phone?

Recommended	Not recommended (may cause errors)	Invalid (will cause errors)
page_one.html	page_one (no file extension)	page one.html (includes space)
page-one.html	this_is_page-one.html (too complex)	page"1".html (quotes)
pageone.html	PAGE_ONE.HTML (all caps*)	page(1).html (parenthesis)
page_1.html	PageOne.html (mixed case*)	page/one.html (slash)

Why do my pages look fine from my own computer, but not from the Web server?

If you put spaces or other "illegal" characters in file or folder names, your pages may seem fine if you preview the pages in a browser from files stored on your local computer, but then, when you upload them to the server and look at them over the internet things go wrong!