



Lesson #4

Converting An HTML Template Into PHP

By

Lynette Chandler
Tech Based Training

<http://TechBasedTraining.com/>

**NOTICE: You Do NOT Have the Right
to Reprint or Resell this Report!**

You Also MAY NOT Give Away,
Sell or Share the Content Herein

If you obtained this report from anywhere other than **Tech Based Training.com** , you have a pirated copy.

Help stop internet piracy by letting me know. Send email to
customerservice@techbasedsupport.com

© 2010 Copyright Lynette Chandler

Legal Disclaimer: Keeping things simple here, I have to say that I cannot promise you success. I can give you direction and advice based on my experiences and good internet marketing practices. What you do with this information is up to you. As a Tech Based Training member you agree to not hold me responsible for your results.

Uniform Server – Help!

It has come to my attention that some are still experiencing problems getting Uniform Server to run on their computers. I'm *really* sorry for all the frustration. Unfortunately, it is not possible for me to provide you with personalized troubleshooting help for software. Thankfully, Uniform Server does have an active [forum](#) where you'll find help easily and I highly encourage you to seek assistance there.

But before I let this issue go, I'd also like to pass along information how other students managed to solve their problems. Many have reported an issue regarding Uniform Server not playing nicely with Skype. They have reported that the instructions on changing ports [outlined here](#) have helped. If that doesn't work either, you may have to shut down Skype while you have the server running.

Also, if you have a firewall, that could interfere with Uniform Server starting up. You may need to shut down the firewall temporarily, start the server and then re-start your firewall after the server has started up successfully.

Anatomy of A PHP Generated Page

Welcome back! This lesson is the beginning of something really exciting. This week, we'll start the first step of building our WordPress theme. First, it's important that you understand how a PHP generated page works.

Most dynamically generated web pages, including WordPress, are an assembly of several files. Like creating a jig saw puzzle. When you crack open any WordPress theme, you'll see every one of them have at the very least,

- A header.php file
- sidebar.php file

- index.php file and
- footer.php

It is all these files that make up one page. But why? Why bother to break a good page into multiple pieces? Isn't it much easier to keep all the components of a web page together in one file? Well... yes and no. Let me explain.

When you put all the elements of a web page in one single file – like we used to do on a normal .html page, you're going to run into a big problem when the web site grows into thousands of pages. What happens when you decide to update your logo or your web site design? Surely you do not want to edit every single page.

This is the whole reasoning behind breaking up a template and using Cascading Style Sheets (CSS) to build web sites. When you have one file for the header, footer and sidebars, and one for the styles and colors, you only have to edit once and your whole site changes.

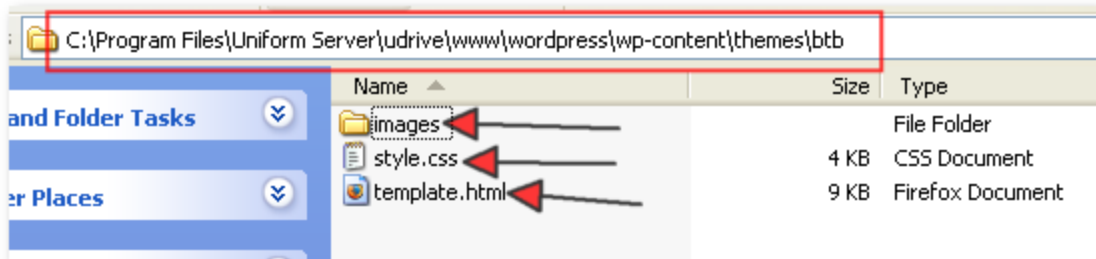
Now you know why, we'll put it into action. I've built a simple HTML template exclusively for Blog Theme Bootcamp. Here's what it looks like.



Just a little housekeeping about this theme, you may edit it, modify it, use it for your clients and charge a fee to modify it for them. The only things you cannot do are, claim authorship for it, submit the theme to any theme directory and you cannot sell the theme.

With that out of the way, go ahead and [download the template now](#).

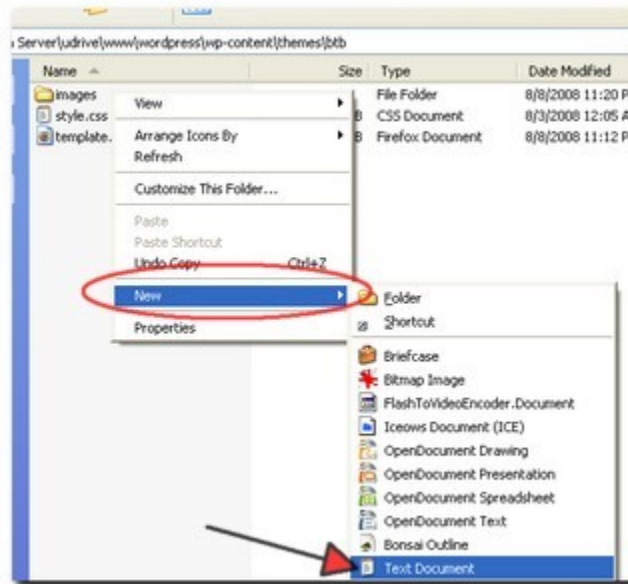
Unzip the template onto your computer. After unzipping, you should see a folder named 'btb' containing an images folder, a template.html and a style.css file. Copy the whole 'btb' folder to the wp-content/themes folder of your Sandbox blog. Where this is, depends on where you installed your Sandbox blog. Here's where I have mine.



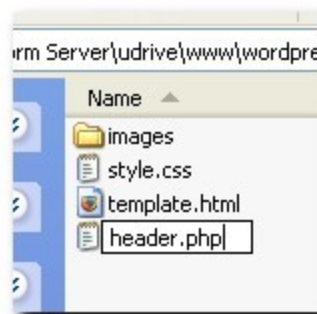
Quick note: All references to files in this lesson are files located in this 'btb' folder. So when I say "Open style.css", or create a new file that means the style.css file inside this 'btb' folder or create a file inside this 'btb' folder.

Create Foundation Files

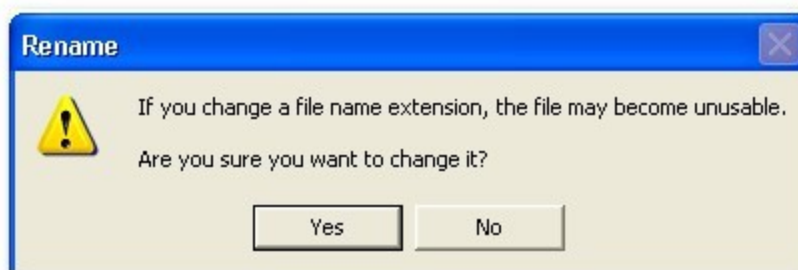
Inside the 'btb' folder >> right click anywhere inside the folder >> hover over New >> click Text Document.



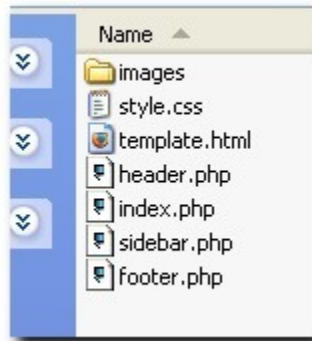
A new file will appear inside your folder. Name it header.php (all lower cases).



Hit Enter on your keyboard. A warning message will appear on your screen asking if you are sure you want to change it. Click Yes.



Repeat the steps above to create three more files, name them index.php, sidebar.php, and footer.php (once again, all in lower cases). You should end up with four additional files in your folder like this.



Slice Up The Template

We are ready to copy the header, sidebar, footer and content codes from the template into their respective .php files.

From the PsPad menu, use File >> Open >> locate template.html >> OK.

You will see that I have made comments in the file where to slice the template. Go to the menu once again, click File >> Open >> locate the header.php file you just created. Using the comments in the html template as cues, copy the code segments from template.html into header.php >> Make sure you save after copying.

Copy and repeat for each segment as follows.

Copy to header.php the codes between these lines:

```
<!-- Start copying below this line to  
header.php -->  
  
<!-- End copying above this line to  
header.php -->
```

Copy to index.php the codes between these lines:

```
<!-- Start copying below this line to  
index.php -->  
  
<!-- End copying above this line to  
index.php -->
```

Copy to sidebar.php the codes between these lines:

```
<!-- Start copying below this line
sidebar.php -->

<!-- End copying above this line to
sidebar.php -->
```

Copy to footer.php the codes between these lines:

```
<!-- Start copying below this line to
footer.php -->

<!-- End copying above this line to
footer.php -->
```

Putting It Back Together

Slicing the template is half of the work. We have to tell WordPress how to piece them back together. On PsPad, open up index.php. On the very top of the file, before <!DOCTYPE create a new line by pressing Enter on your keyboard.

Paste this piece of code there.

```
<?php get_header(); ?>
```

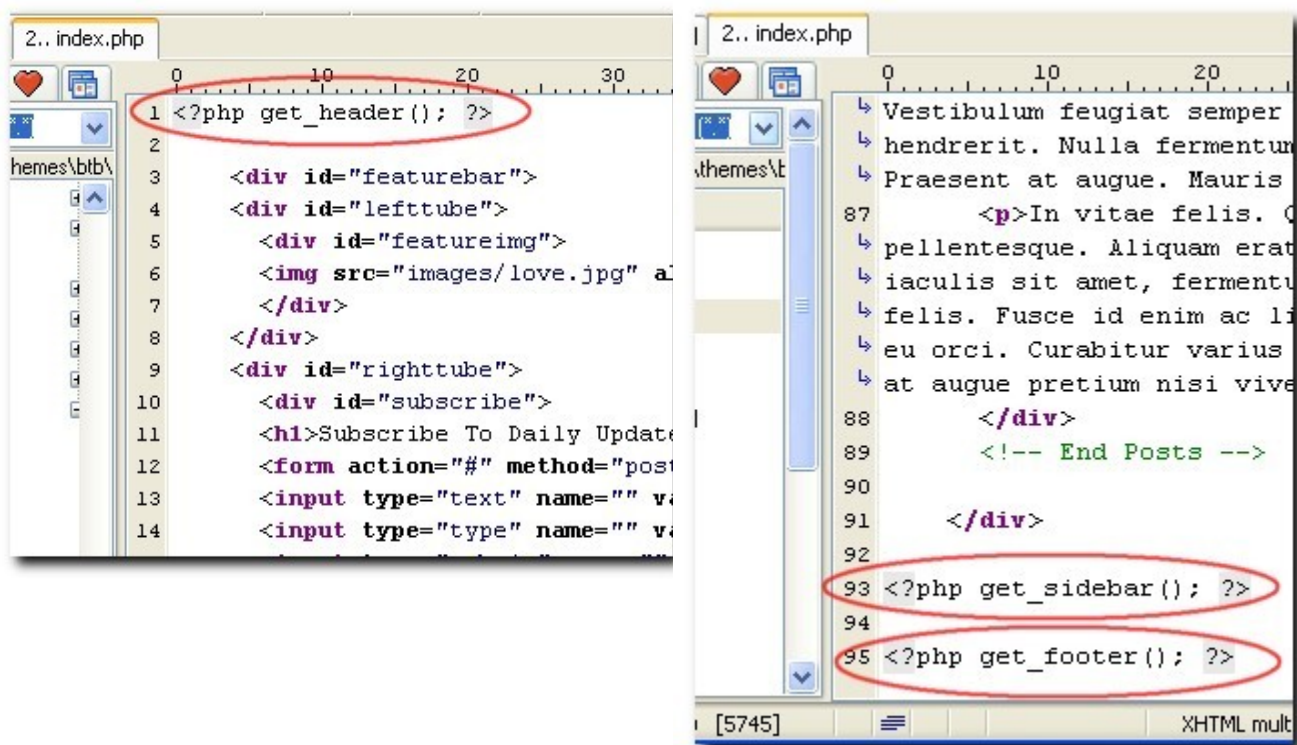
In the same file (index.php), scroll to the bottom. After </div>, enter the following code.

```
<?php get_sidebar(); ?>

<?php get_footer(); ?>
```

In that order. Do not change the order or your template won't be re-assembled properly. How do you know which comes first? Simply by looking at the original HTML template. You will see the sidebar section comes before the footer section.

Your index.php should look like this.



What Just Happened There

Remember the previous lesson where we learned about including files? The code we used in index.php is a special include code that WordPress uses but only for template files. You can actually include any file in your WordPress theme using the standard PHP include method we talked about last week. We can explore that later.

Correcting The Stylesheet Reference

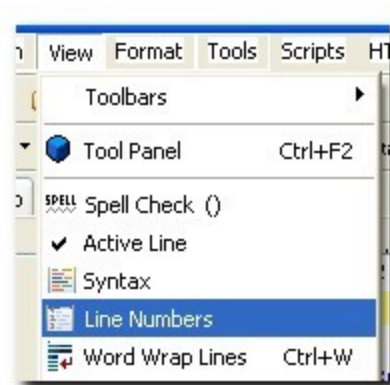
Since the theme will be loaded into WordPress, there are some links from the original HTML that will break. One very important one is the stylesheet. In the plain HTML template, the stylesheet reference is this:

```
<link rel="stylesheet" type="text/css"
href="style.css" />
```

That tells the browser that the stylesheet is located in the same folder as your template folder. But in WordPress, that will not work. Why? Because the theme folder and the URL of the blog are two different things. For example. Your blog may be located at <http://blog.com> but your theme stylesheet is really located in <http://blog.com/wp-content/themes/btb/style.css>

The problem with the code above is, it tells the browser that your stylesheet is here: <http://blog.com/style.css> which of course is totally wrong. So... we need to fix this.

In PsPad, open header.php. Look for the style.css reference – should be around Line 6. If you don't see line numbers, go to View >> Click Line Numbers.



Once again, look for this code

```
<link rel="stylesheet" type="text/css"
href="style.css" />
```

On my file, it is on line 6. This is just a reference. It may vary slightly for you. Using line numbers is one of the fastest, easier methods to find your way around code. Especially when you are midway to completely building the theme out. This the simple HTML code here starts to grow in volume. I'll be using Line references regularly throughout our lessons from now on so do keep the Line Numbers feature in PsPad turned on.

Line number references are not absolute. They may vary between your files and mine but usually not that much.

Now back to the stylesheet reference. Replace style.css – important! Do not remove the “ ” that surrounds style.css – with the following code.

```
<?php bloginfo('stylesheet_url'); ?>
```

Your stylesheet reference should look like this now.

```
<link rel="stylesheet" type="text/css"
href="<?php bloginfo('stylesheet_url'); ?
>" />
```

This piece of code tells WordPress that the stylesheet is in the theme folder and WordPress will automatically adjust the output so the browser knows where to find your stylesheet.

We're one small step away from loading our theme into WordPress. That step is to make WordPress recognize these files as a theme. Here's how.

Using PsPad, open style.css. On the very top of this file, before any code, press Enter on your keyboard to create a new line. Then paste the following code there.

```
/*
Theme Name: Blog Theme Bootcamp
Theme URI: http://blogthemebootcamp.com
Description: Practice theme for <a
href="http://blogthemebootcamp.com">Blog
Theme Bootcamp</a> students.
Version: 0.1
Author: Lynette Chandler
Author URI: http://blogthemebootcamp.com/

    This theme was designed by Lynette
    Chandler

    You may use this theme for your own
    sites or modify to use on your client
    sites. You do not have the right to re-
    sell the theme.
```

* /

The information here is used on the Design >> Themes page in WordPress.

When you are creating a new theme on your own, you can use this as a template, then change out the name, the theme URI, description, author, author URL and other information as you see fit. For this theme, I'd appreciate it if you use the code as is.

A note about naming your themes. As WordPress grows in popularity – it is already highly popular now. More and more themes will come out and at one point you'll probably find some of your themes conflicting with other themes either due to the same names or same folder names.

In WordPress, the theme folder name is of utmost importance. So when thinking up a name, try to make it really unique by prefixing or postfixing the name with your business initials or your own initials. For example “btb-chocolaterose” or “chocolaterose-btb”. You can use anything in your prefixes and postfixes, not just initials. That's only a suggestion. But do *something* to reduce possible and future conflicts.

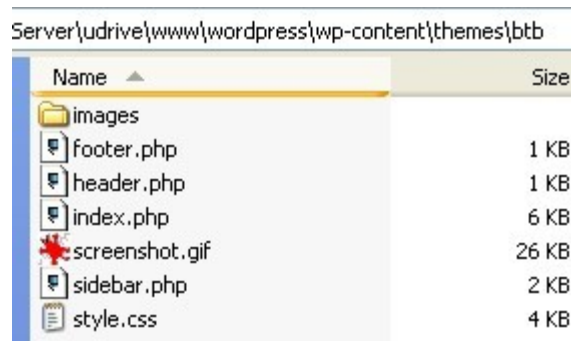
Your style.css would look like this in PsPad



```
1 /*
2 Theme Name: Blog Theme Bootcamp
3 Theme URI: http://blogthemebootcamp.com
4 Description: Practice theme for <a href="http://blogthemebootcamp.com/">http://blogthemebootcamp.com/</a>
5 Version: 0.1
6 Author: Lynette Chandler
7 Author URI: http://blogthemebootcamp.com/
8
9 This theme was designed by Lynette Chandler.
10 You may use this theme for your own sites
11 to re-sell the theme.
12 */
13 /* Body & General Stuff */
14 body {
15     font: 62.5% Verdana, Arial, sans-serif;
16     margin: 0;
17     padding: 0;
18     text-align: center;
19     background-image: url('images/ribbon.gif');
20     background-repeat: repeat-x;
```

This is the most exciting part. You're ready to activate the theme in WordPress.

Wait! Before you do, one last check to make sure all the required files are in the theme folder. Your theme folder should look like this.

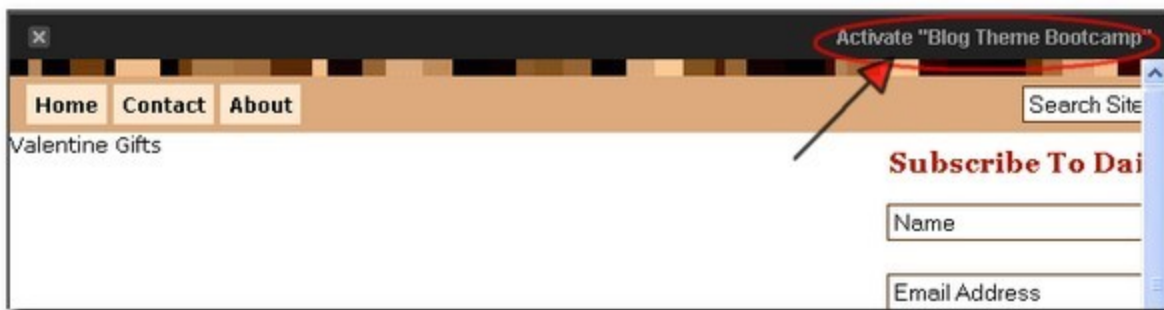


Server\udrive\www\wordpress\wp-content\themes\btb	
Name	Size
images	
footer.php	1 KB
header.php	1 KB
index.php	6 KB
screenshot.gif	26 KB
sidebar.php	2 KB
style.css	4 KB

Notice all the files are inside the "btb" folder. Also the theme folder is inside the wp-content folder. If your Sandbox is on your web host, the "btb" folder should probably be inside /public_html/wordpress/wp-content/themes/. This is just an example. Recall where you installed WordPress previously. If you installed it inside the public_html folder, your themes would go inside /public_html/wp-content/themes/

If all looks good, you're ready to activate the theme. Start your server, log into your Sandbox blog. Navigate to the Design tab. You should see our theme in your list. Click the name or the title.

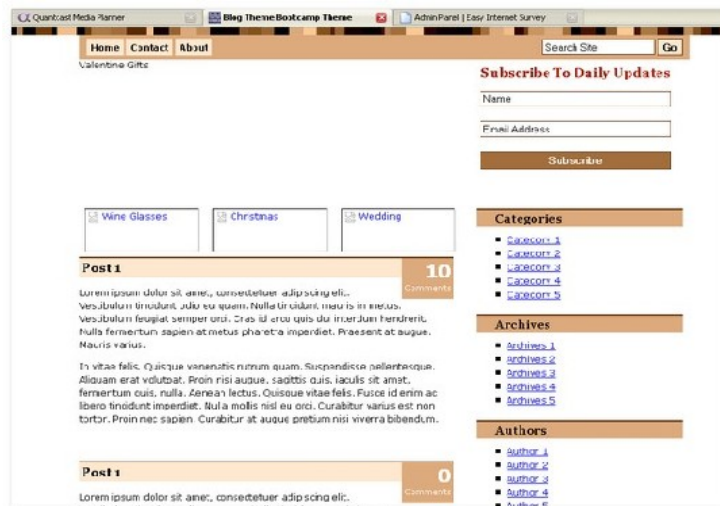
If using WordPress 2.5 and under, the theme will activate immediately. If you're using Wordpress 2.6 and above, the theme will not be activated yet. It shows you a preview of what your site will look like using that theme. To activate the theme, you must click on the "Activate Blog Theme Bootcamp" on the top right corner.



Click on View Site so you can go see what we've done so far.



Yay! We've successfully loaded our theme into WordPress. You should see a page like this one when you view your Sandbox blog home page.



You'll also notice that the theme is not quite 'whole'. There are missing images and if you have any content in your Sandbox blog, none of the content, blogroll links, categories etc is showing up. The links are not clickable, it just doesn't work yet.

That's alright. We've only scraped the surface and what we've done so far is to make sure:

1. The theme is -reassembled properly in Wordpress
2. The theme can be recognized and activated by WordPress

Before I close off the lesson, I'd like to address possible errors and problems you may encounter. Since every student's level of experience and skill set is different, it is pretty difficult for me to anticipate the problems and errors you may encounter.

If you're a member of [MomMasterminds](#), do post your questions and concerns in the Blog Evangelists private area. Usually, other members are quick to help out.

If you aren't a member of MomMasterminds, your suggestions and questions are always welcomed at customerservice@techbasedsupport.com. While I'm not able

to answer every email *personally*, I'll address them in the next lesson or another more appropriate lesson down the road.

Should you need priority help and access to me directly, you can always book some one-on-one time with me. [Click here](#) to get the details and reserve your time with me.

Homework!

1. Do the exercises.
 - (a) [Download the HTML template.](#)
 - (b) Slice the template up and put them into their respective PHP files.
 - (c) Edit style.css, header.php and index.php as shown and activate your theme into WordPress

Coming Up Next ...

We'll leave the template be for a while. In order to start pulling information from WordPress into your theme, we need to get acquainted with WordPress Template Tags and that's where we're heading. Also, be on the look out for a special report about common challenges and where we're heading.

Good Luck!

Lynette Chandler



Tech Based Training