

# CREATING A FORM FROM SCRATCH – EXERCISE 1

The first step to creating an effective form is to plan it--to know what data you want to collect, how you want the form to look, how the user will enter the data, how the data will be submitted, who gets the data in what format, and how the collected data will ultimately be used/presented.

Although the form can be modified at any time, it's better to identify your fields and arrange the form components **on paper (!)** before you get started. In this exercise, we know ahead of time these essential items:

1. The labels for the fields, their field names, and the type of control used for each field
2. The arrangement (layout) of the form elements: The form components and the field names in our example will be arranged in two left-aligned columns within a table.
3. Who receives the data: The data in our example will be sent by the user via email to the webmaster, who will compile a database of alumni.

On paper, make a chart something like this to keep up with your field names:

FIELD LABEL	CONTROL	FIELD NAME	FIELD VALUE
First Name	textbox	first	
Last Name	textbox	last	
Email Address	textbox	email	
Year of Graduation	textbox	year	
Mailing Address	textbox	mail	
City	textbox	city	
State	textbox	state	
Zip	textbox	zip	
Committee Interest(s)	drop-down box	committee	
Yes No	radio buttons	share	yes OR no
Email Phone Mail	checkboxes	email phone mail	yes yes yes
Comments	text area	comments	

On a new html page, type your form name (Alumni Mailing List) and any introductory text. Format the text.

INSERT | FORM | FORM. The form box will appear. Enlarging the form area will make it easier to see the form. Remember to set your insertion point in the area to the left of the Submit button and press ENTER several times.

## Alumni Mailing List

For better control over the “shape” of your form, display your labels and controls in a table: Table | Insert | Table: eight (for now) rows, two columns, center aligned, 300 pixels, no border.

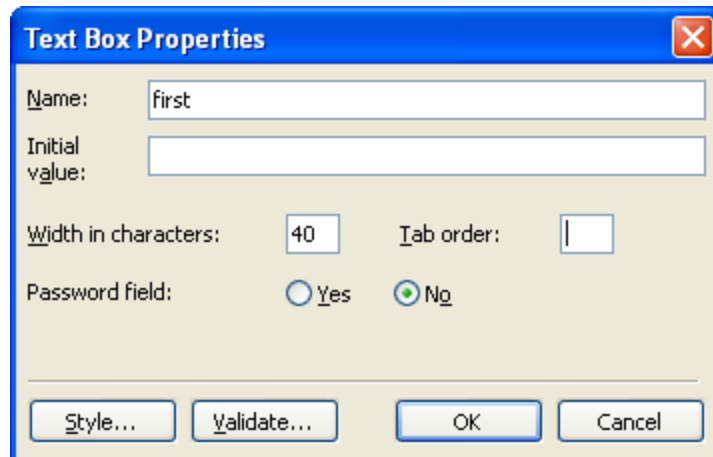
## Alumni Mailing List

Last Name	
First Name	
Email Address	
Year of Graduation	
Mailing Address	
City	
State	
Zip	

Form area

Type in the category of information (labels) you want in each cell in the left column. Click in the top cell in the right column. Insert | Form | Textbox. Resize as necessary. Repeat this process in each cell, OR copy the first textbox and paste it into each cell.

Doubleclick each textbox and give it a descriptive name: no caps or spaces. This is the field name for the data you are collecting and must correspond to the name you use in the .dat file. (More on that later!)



Insert two more rows below the last row of your table. TABLE | INSERT | ROWS.

Type text in the in the new cells in the left column as illustrated in the handout of the sample form.

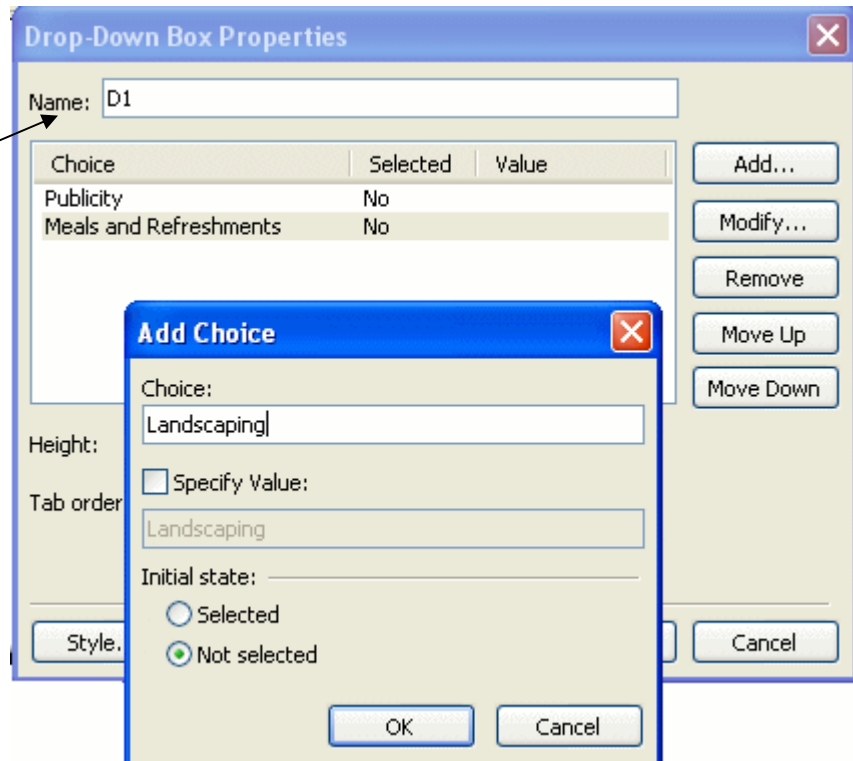
Opposite **Committee Interest(s)**, click in the cell. INSERT | FORM | DROP-DOWN BOX. Don't worry about the size of the box now.

Doubleclick the box.

Click ADD and enter the items that will appear on the drop-down list. (These are NOT field names; the field name is *committee*.)

Use the following:

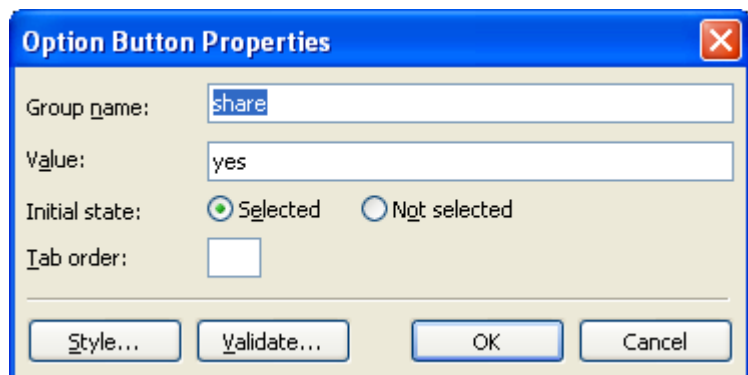
Reunions  
Refreshments and Meals  
Gifts to School  
Scholarships  
Publicity  
Landscaping  
Website  
Publicity  
Construction  
Office Volunteer  
Media Center Volunteer



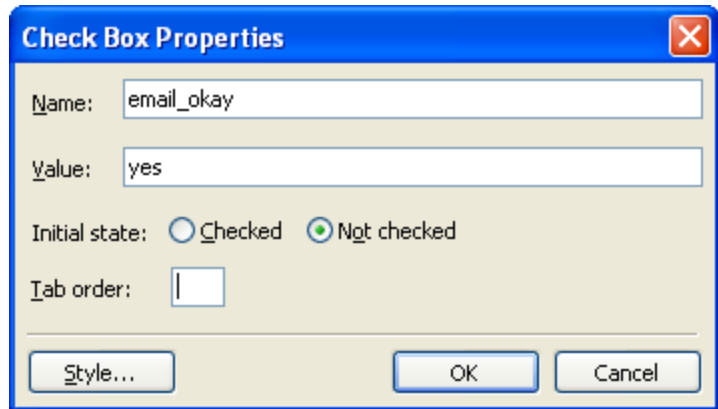
Insert two more rows and enter the text as illustrated in the sample form handout.

For the radio buttons, INSERT | FORM | OPTION BUTTON. Add a label for each button. Two two buttons have the same name. Change the values and make the Yes button pre-selected.

To modify a button's properties, doubleclick it **or** rightclick it and select FORM FIELD PROPERTIES.

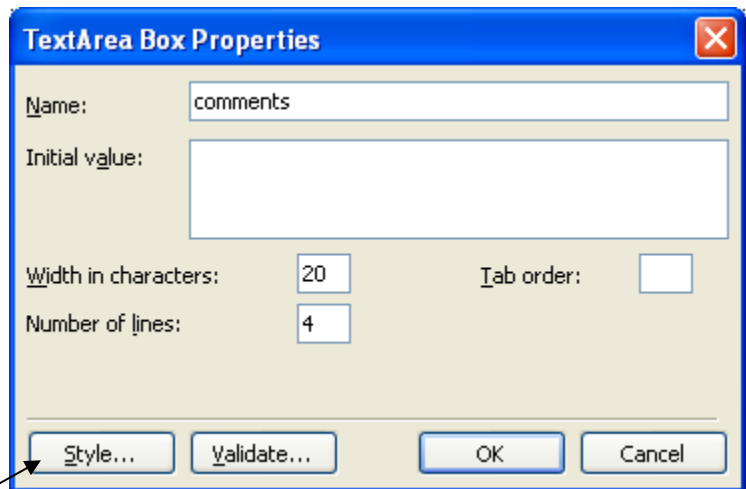


For the checkboxes, INSERT | FORM | CHECKBOX. Each checkbox will have its own name. Note that FrontPage will not allow you to use the field name email because you already have a field by that name. Change the value to "yes." If you copy and paste the button two more times, remember to change the names.



Click INSERT | FORM | TEXT AREA.

Type in the name. You can change the height and width in this dialog box or you can re-size the box with the mouse.



Note that each control has a Style option. Use the Style button to change the attributes of the **font** or the **border** of the control.

