

## MCIT Website File Structure Guide

The purpose of this guide is to understand website file structure and to set up the appropriate folder structure and file naming conventions for websites created by MCIT. You will be maintaining file structures locally (on you flash drive or computer) and remotely (webhost: INSWEB). It is critical that you keep all file locations organized properly and maintain that organization precisely.

### FOLLOW ACCEPTABLE FILE STRUCTURES

#### KEEP IT LOWER CASE

Windows-based webservers (like INSWEB) are insensitive to case (uppercase letters are the same as lowercase). However, other webservers (like most webhosts that work on a Linux platform) are case sensitive.

Why does case sensitive matter? If a web server is case sensitive, these two web addresses shown below will not both work. Only the web address that matches the case (capitalization) of the files on the server will be successful.

Web Address	Folder/Directory Structure and File Name on Server	Response
<a href="http://whatever.com/Something/SpecialPage.html">http://whatever.com/Something/SpecialPage.html</a>	\Something\SpecialPage.html	✓
<a href="http://whatever.com/something/specialpage.html">http://whatever.com/something/specialpage.html</a>	\Something\SpecialPage.html	⊘

#### MCIT FILE NAMING CONVENTIONS

File and folder naming conventions used for the team project must follow the best practices of web development. Use the file extension .html instead of .htm . Review the best practices as described at the Web Style Guide <http://webstyleguide.com/wsg3/5-site-structure/3-site-file-structure.html>


##### Use language that anyone can understand

Use plain-language names for all of your files and directories, **separating the words with "breaking" hyphen characters**. This system is easy to read and understand, and since conventional word spaces are not allowed, the hyphens "break" the file name into individual words or number strings that can be analyzed by search engines and will contribute to the search rankings and content relevance of your pages. We recommend this convention for directory names, too.


##### Mirror your visible site structure wherever possible

**Directory and file naming conventions that directly mirror the visible organization** of your site are infinitely easier for your team and users to understand and will contribute to search engine rankings and relevance, because the whole URL becomes a **useful semantic guide** to your content structure. Each component of your page URL can contribute to search page ranking, but only if the names make sense in the context of your page content and relate to key words or phrases on the page.

This poorly named URL contributes nothing to search engine relevance or site structure legibility:

[www.whatever.edu/depts1/progs2/org004/bio\\_424.html](http://www.whatever.edu/depts1/progs2/org004/bio_424.html) 

In contrast, anyone (and any search engine) can parse this plain-language content arrangement at a glance:

[www.whatever.edu/departments/biology/ornithology/field-ornithology-bio-224.html](http://www.whatever.edu/departments/biology/ornithology/field-ornithology-bio-224.html) 

Always try to mirror the visible structure of your site's content organization in the directory and file structure you set up on the web server (fig. 5.3).

At MCIT you are expected to keep all file and folder names:

- lowercase,
- keep names short
- names should have meaning
- use NO spaces
- avoid underscores
- separate words with hyphens
- avoid other special characters

Graphics files should have extensions such as .jpg, .gif or .png. Make sure to export or save as graphics properly avoid any issues with graphic file extensions.

SOURCE: [Web Style Guide](#)