

How to Print Websites with Frames

Some websites display one way on your computer screen and print out very differently when you put them onto paper. Websites that contain frames are usually the ones that cause this to happen. Read below to learn about 1) the reason that framed sites don't print well and 2) how to easily get them to print out like they look on your computer screen.

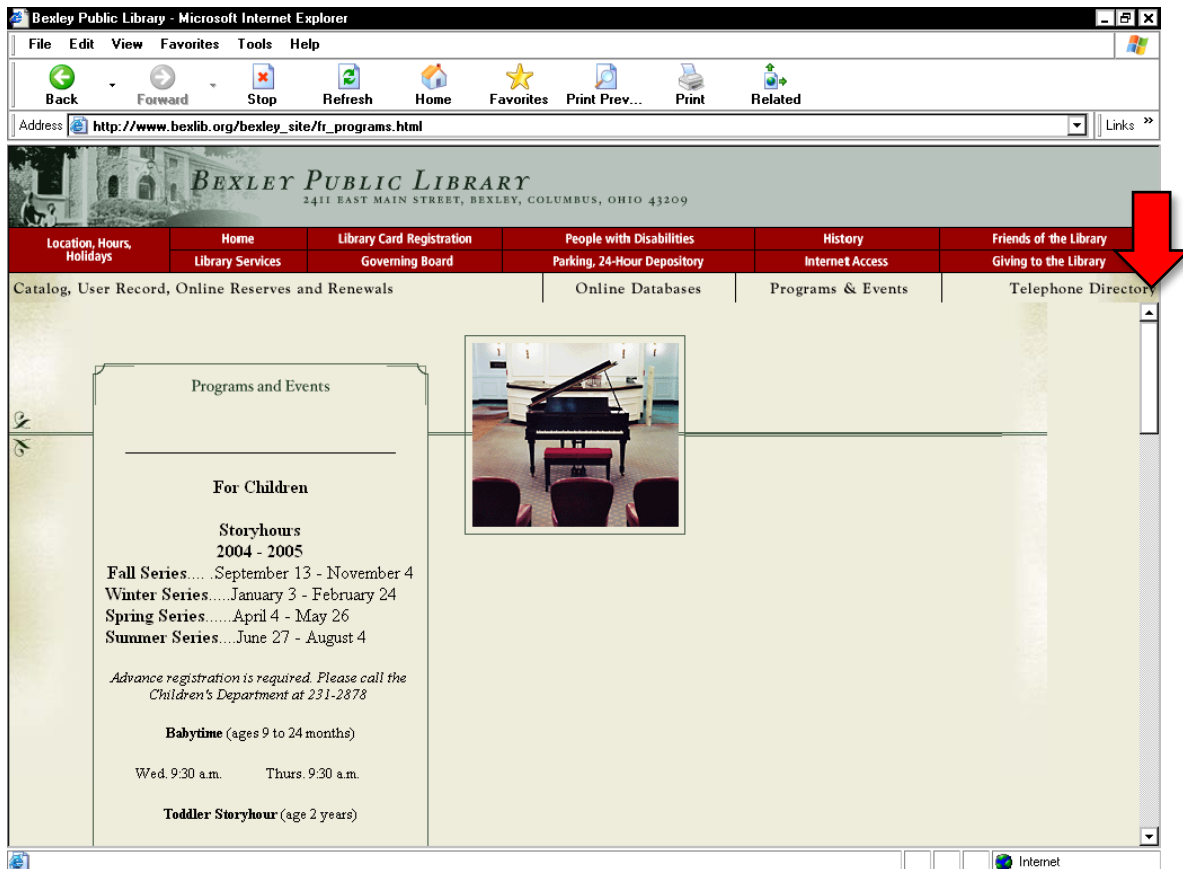
Identifying websites with frames

Hardly any websites use frames anymore. Below is a screenshot of a parody website that gives tips on how NOT to design a website (usage of frames is one of the things it advises you avoid). Notice that there are two scroll bars on this page...one to the far right and one just to the right of the navigation bar on the left side. Having more than one scroll bar is a good indication that the site contains frames.



So what's a frame and what's a framed website? A frame is a web page that displays information. A framed website is one that contains two or more separate web pages put together on your computer screen to appear like a single web page.

Here is another example of a framed website (an old screenshot). It looks slightly different than the one above. In this case, notice that the scroll bar to the far right does not extend from top to bottom, but starts 1/3 of the way down the page. This is another clue that you are looking at a framed site.



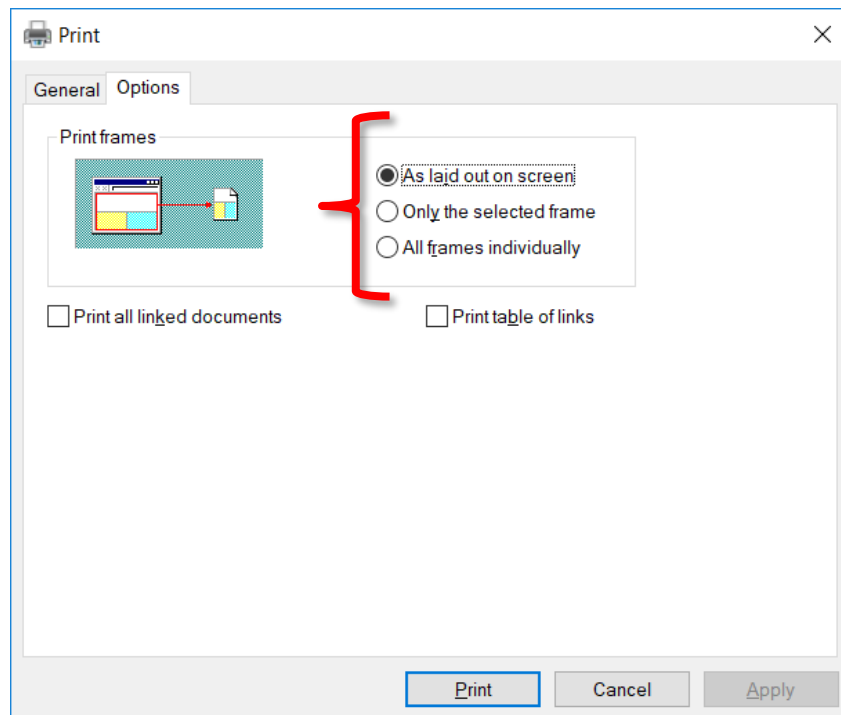
Why don't framed sites print well?

Because framed sites are separate web pages that display together on your computer screen, sometimes Web browsers don't know whether to print one frame or all of them. Often when you try to print a framed site, you'll get only a portion of what's on the computer screen to print. (Or each frame will print on a separate page...probably not what you want to have printed.)

Printing generally works the same for both IE and Firefox browsers. The problem comes into play depending on if you go directly to the print dialog box by clicking on the printer icon or you go through print preview first. Each path has a different default print option.

Printing Frames in Internet Explorer

1. In the Print dialog, there will be an “Options” tab. This tab only appears when the webpage you are printing has frames on it.
2. There are three print options available on the Options tab. If the print options are inactive, i.e. not selectable, then you must go through print preview to see what will be printed.
 - a. **As laid out on screen:** Will print the page the same way it looks on your computer screen. This is probably the option you’ll want to use the most. This is the default by going through print preview first. It is not the default when you go directly to the print dialog box. (Note: If the print options are inactive, i.e. not selectable, then you must go through print preview to see what will be printed.)
 - b. **Only the selected frame:** Will print only one selected frame. To “select” a frame, single click your mouse somewhere inside the frame to be printed before navigating to the print dialog box.
 - c. **All frames individually:** Causes each frame to print on a separate page. This is not an option that most patrons will want to use.
3. Below these three options are two checkboxes. Should these boxes get checked, many, many unwanted copies would be printed. Please use extreme caution when educating patrons about the Options tab.



Printing Frames in Firefox

If the website you are printing has frames on it, then the Print dialog box will have an additional “Print Frames” section with some options in it. If the print options are inactive, i.e. not selectable, then you must go through print preview to see what will be printed.)

- **As laid out on the screen:** Will print the page the same way it looks on your computer screen. This is probably the option you’ll want to use the most. Unfortunately it’s never the default.
- **The selected frame:** Will print only one selected frame. To “select” a frame, single click your mouse somewhere in the frame and then print it.
- **Each frame separately:** Will print each frame on a separate page. This is not an option that most patrons will want to select.

