Working with ASP.NET Themes

By

huda AlSuwailem

Reference:
Mastering Microsoft Visual Web Developer 2005 Express Edition by John Paul Mueller

Visual Web Developer themes appear in a special folder within the project which is called Themes. You create a special folder to hold each theme you want to use and place resources within those folders. A theme includes a number of elements such as graphics and formatting information.

The idea is to create a concept for your Web page that defines how the page should look. By applying the same theme to every Web page, you can create a consistent look that gives your Web page a professional appearance which users will like.

A theme modifies the appearance of a Web page. Any change you make to the theme will also appear in the Web page.

Like master pages, you must create a link between the theme and any Web pages relying on it. Unlike master pages, themes can be added at any time. For that matter, as long as your themes are compatible and provide similar resources, you can switch between themes at any point.

Designing Your Own Themes

You do need to perform four essential steps to create a theme as follows:

1. Create the Themes folder.

2. Define a CSS file for the theme.

3. Define the SKIN file for the theme.

4. Add any required resources.

Creating a Themes Folder

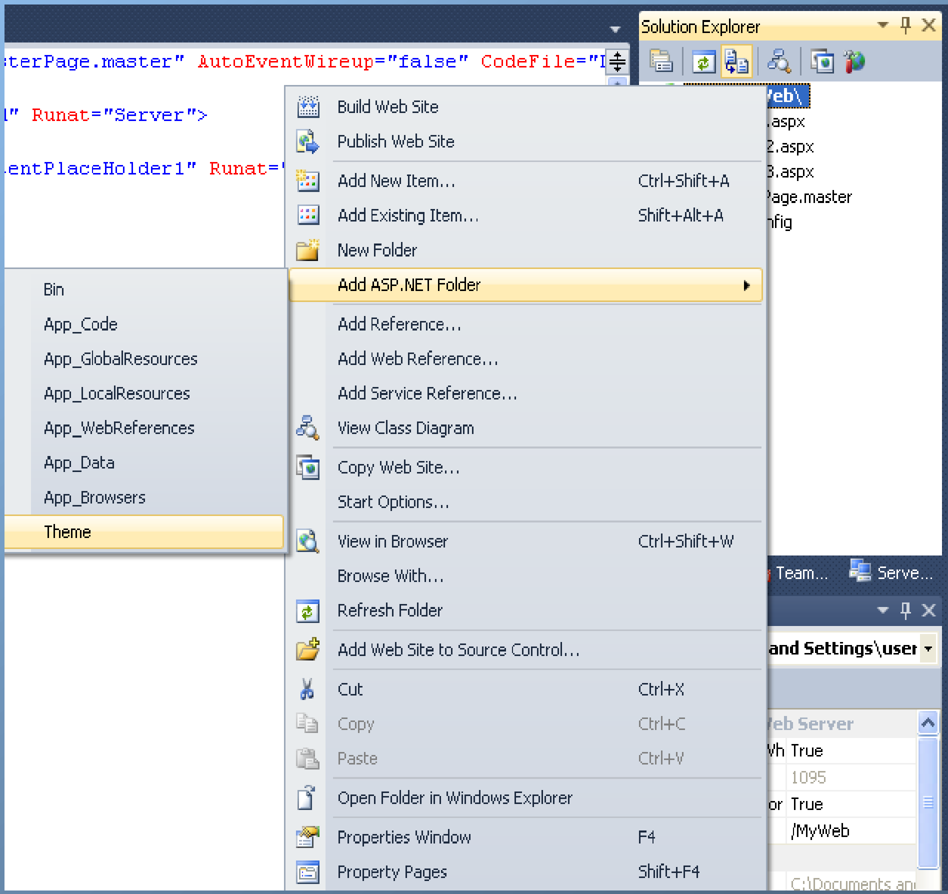
The Themes folder must appear as part of the root directory for your project and it can’t include any resources—only subfolders that will act as theme names.

To add the new folder to your project:

• right click the project entry in Solution Explorer.

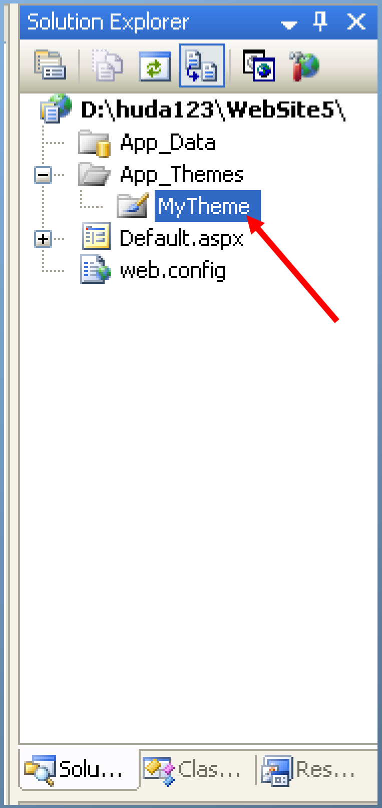
•choose Add ASP.NET Folder from the context menu.

• You’ll see a Theme folder added to the display.

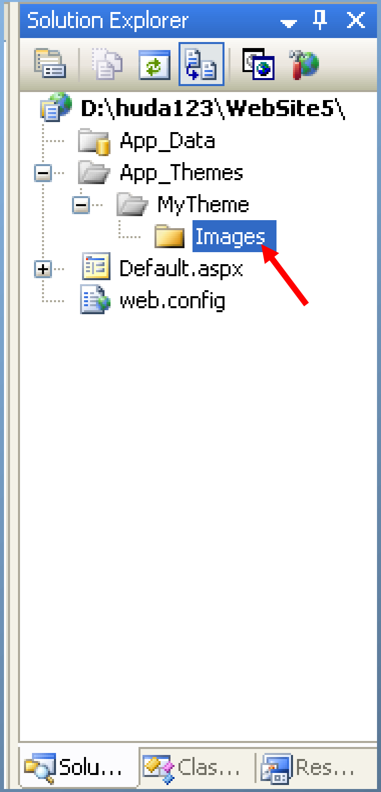


```
terPage.master" AutoEventWireup="false" CodeFile="I
l" Runat="Server">
entPlaceHolder1" Runat="
```

you'll see a new folder added to Solution Explorer, but this one will appear in the \App_Themes folder.
Type the name of the theme you want to create, such as **MyTheme**. The \App_Themes\MyTheme folder will hold all of the resources for the MyTheme theme.

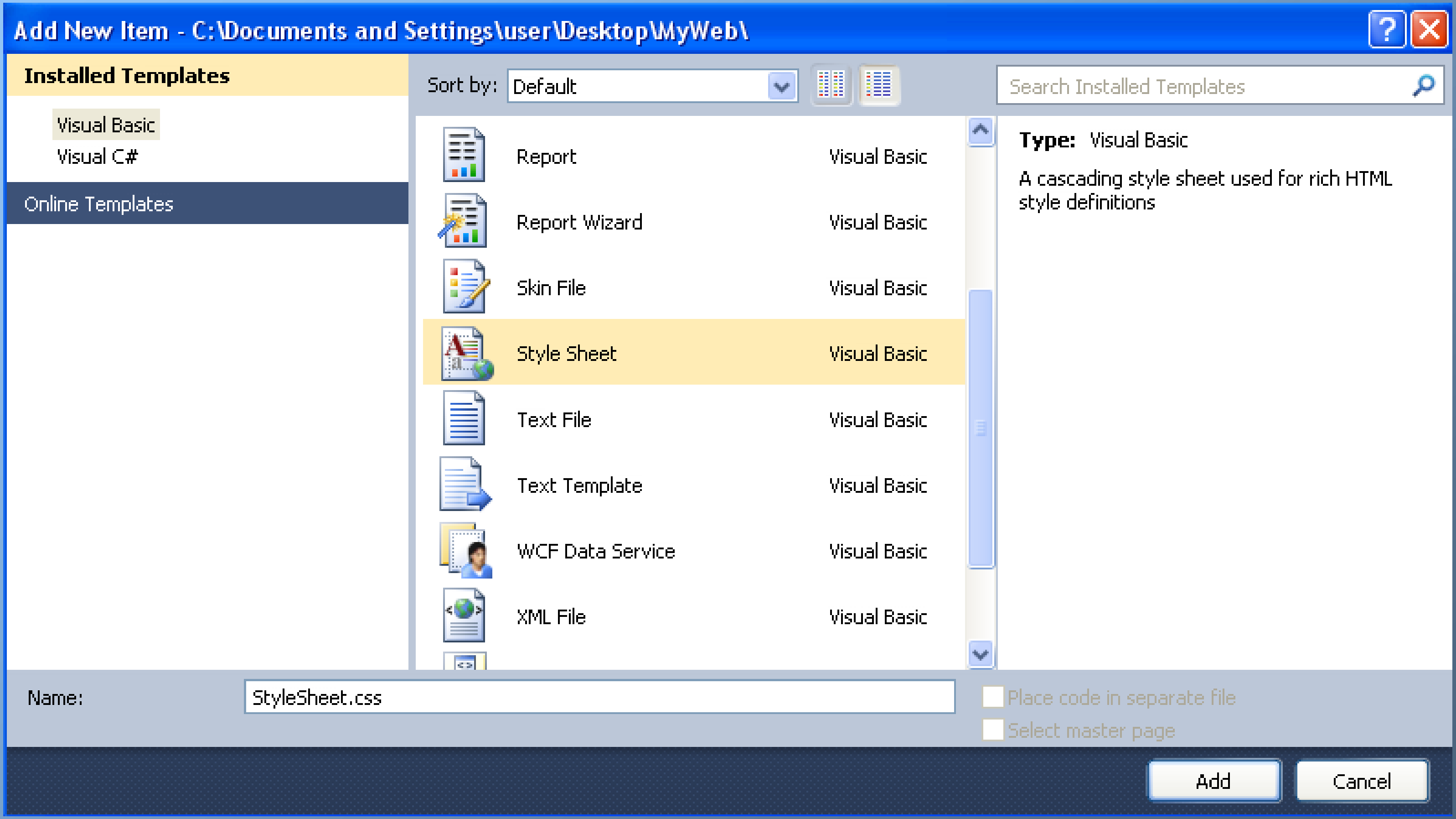


When your theme includes images, you'll want to create an additional subfolder to hold them. Right-click the theme folder (MyTheme for example) and choose New Folder from the context menu. Type **Images** as the new folder name and press Enter. Copy any resources that the theme will use into the Images folder for that theme.



Defining a CSS File for a Theme

Most themes include a CSS file that defines the formatting characteristics of any tags you want to use. You must add this file to the theme folder. Right-click the theme folder (\App_Themes\MyTheme in the example) and choose Add New Item from the context menu. You'll see an Add New Item dialog box. Select Style Sheet from the template list. Type a name for the CSS file.


Add New Item - C:\Documents and Settings\user\Desktop\MyWeb\

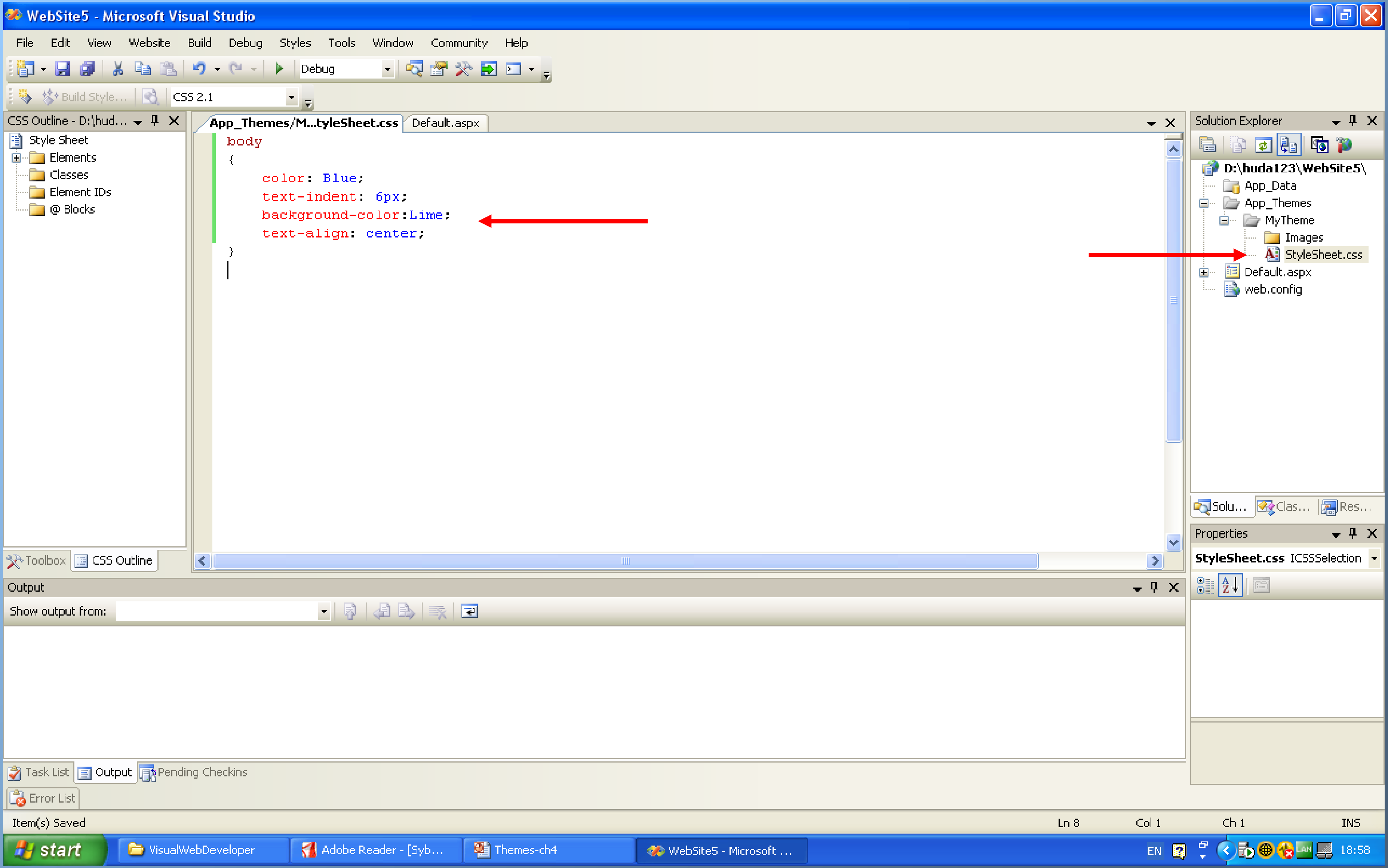
Report	Visual Basic
Report Wizard	Visual Basic
Skin File	Visual Basic
Style Sheet	Visual Basic
Text File	Visual Basic
Text Template	Visual Basic
WCF Data Service	Visual Basic
XML File	Visual Basic

Type: Visual Basic

A cascading style sheet used for rich HTML style definitions

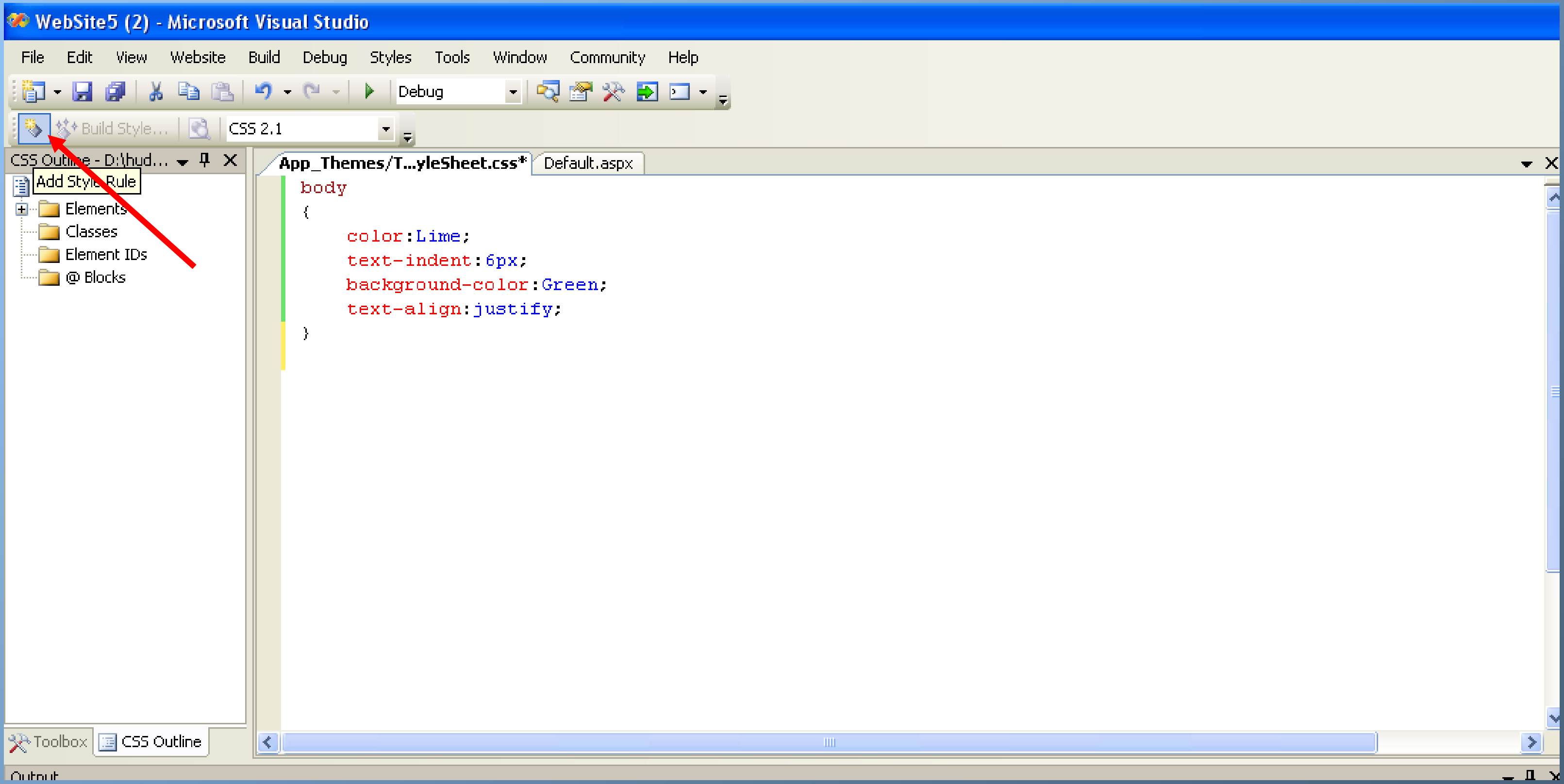
Name: StyleSheet.css

You don't have to fill out every property contained with the Style Sheet only fill out those properties that you actually want to change. For example, you might decide to change the font color to Blue.



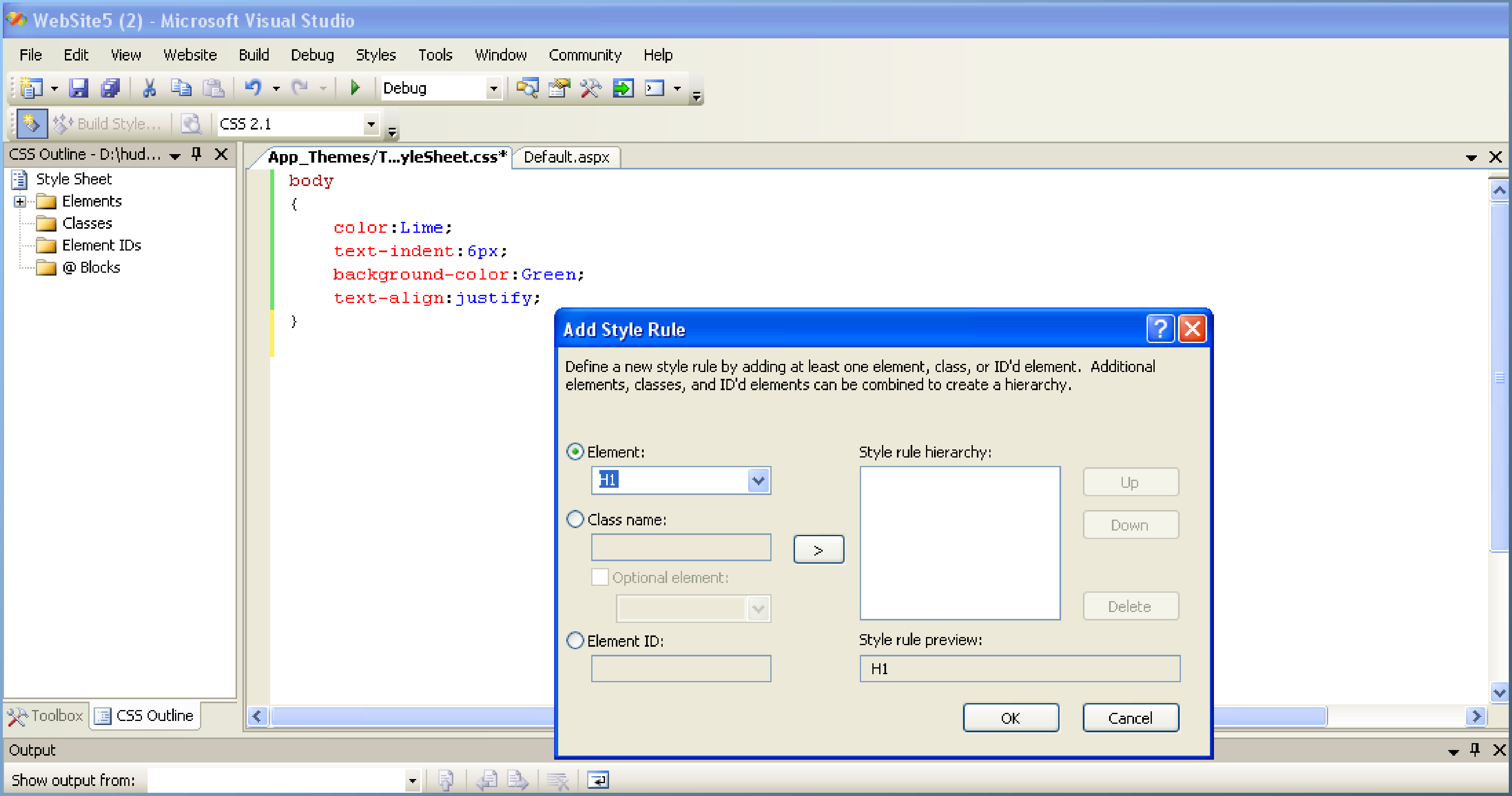
```
body
{
    color: Blue;
    text-indent: 6px;
    background-color:Lime;
    text-align: center;
}
```

You can't define everything by using a single selector, you'll want specific formatting for other items as well. Most developers begin by defining the formatting for all of the elements they intend to use on a page. To create a new selector, place the cursor on the last empty line and click Add Style Rule.


WebSite5 (2) - Microsoft Visual Studio
File Edit View Website Build Debug Styles Tools Window Community Help
Debug
Build Style...
CSS 2.1
CSS Outline - D:\hud...
Add Style Rule
Elements
Classes
Element IDs
@ Blocks
App_Themes/T...yleSheet.css*
Default.aspx
Toolbox
CSS Outline
Output

```
body
{
    color:Lime;
    text-indent:6px;
    background-color:Green;
    text-align:justify;
}
```

Notice that you can choose from three kinds of selectors: Element, Class Name, and Element ID.
When you choose the Element option, you choose the element you want to define from the dropdown list. This list box contains an amazing number of elements at least most of the comment elements and a few of the uncommon elements as well.



```
body
{
    color:Lime;
    text-indent:6px;
    background-color:Green;
    text-align:justify;
}
```

Add Style Rule

Define a new style rule by adding at least one element, class, or ID'd element. Additional elements, classes, and ID'd elements can be combined to create a hierarchy.

[✓ Element:] H1

Class name:

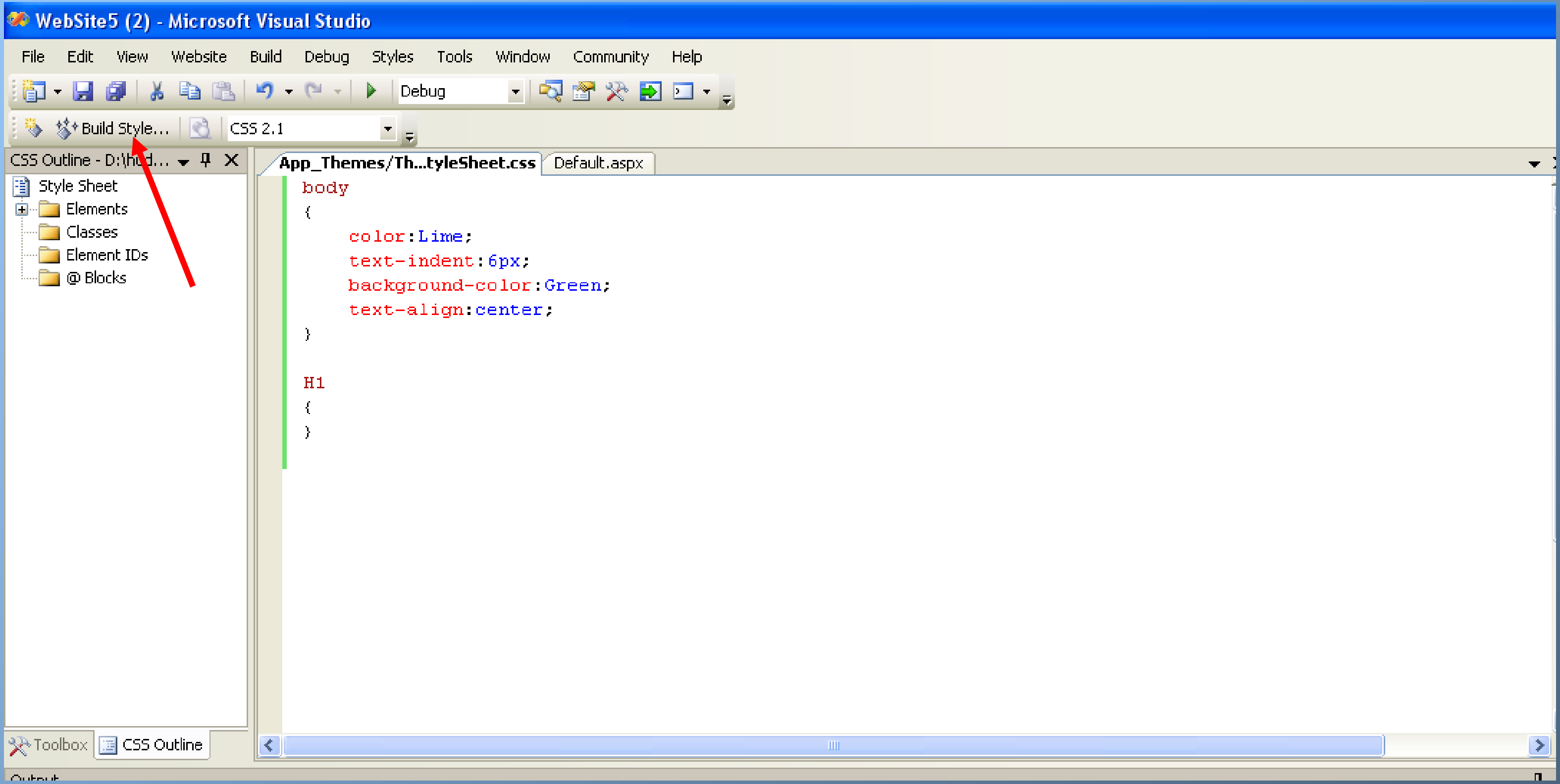
Optional element:

Element ID:

Style rule hierarchy:

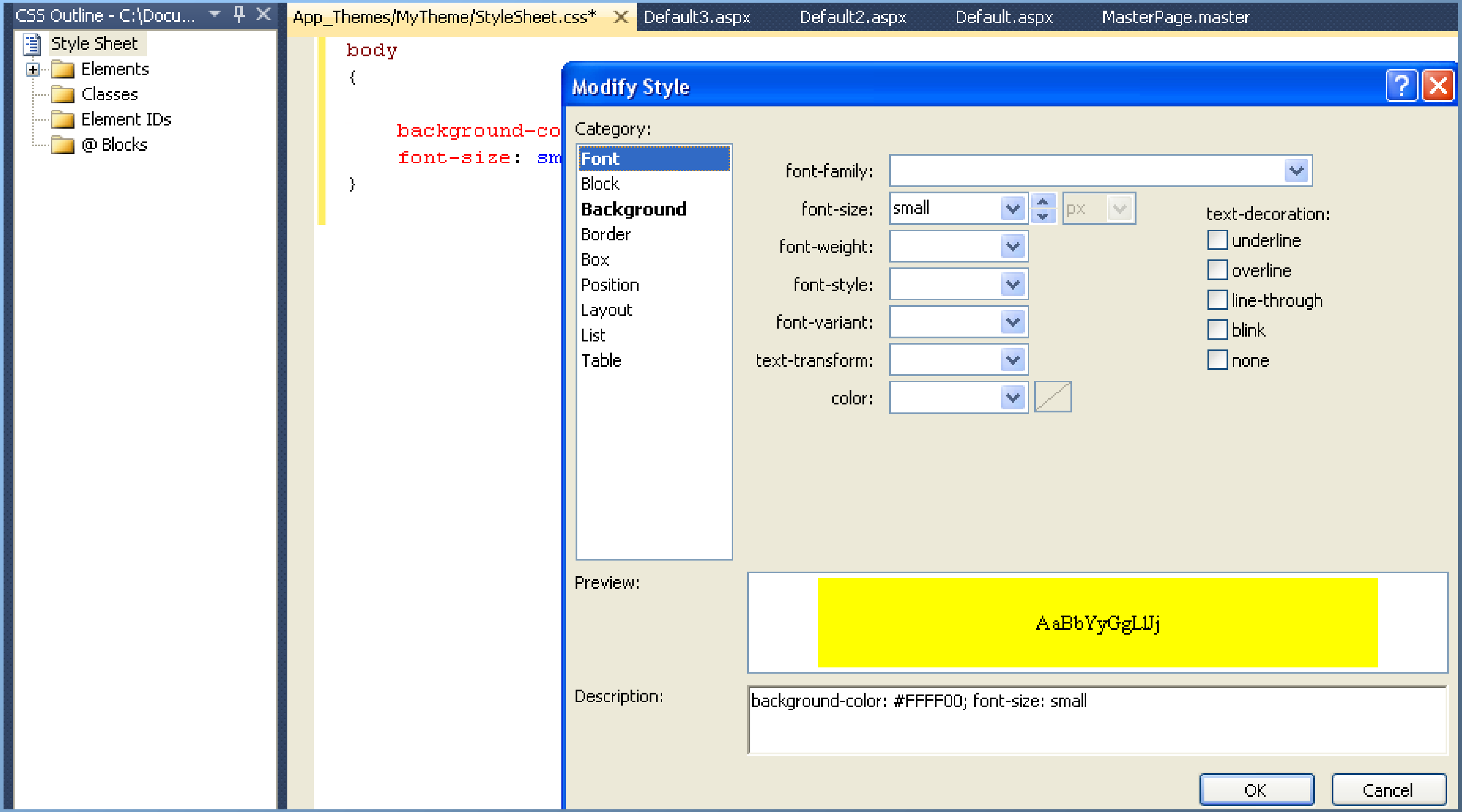
Style rule preview: H1

Use the Style Builder dialog box to add properties and values to a selector.


WebSite5 (2) - Microsoft Visual Studio
File Edit View Website Build Debug Styles Tools Window Community Help
Debug
Build Style...
CSS 2.1
CSS Outline - D:\h...
Style Sheet
Elements
Classes
Element IDs
@ Blocks
App_Themes/Th...tyleSheet.css
Default.aspx
Toolbox
CSS Outline

```
body
{
    color:Lime;
    text-indent:6px;
    background-color:Green;
    text-align:center;
}

H1
{
}
```

You don’t have to fill out every property contained within the Style Builder dialog box—only fill out those properties that you actually want to change.



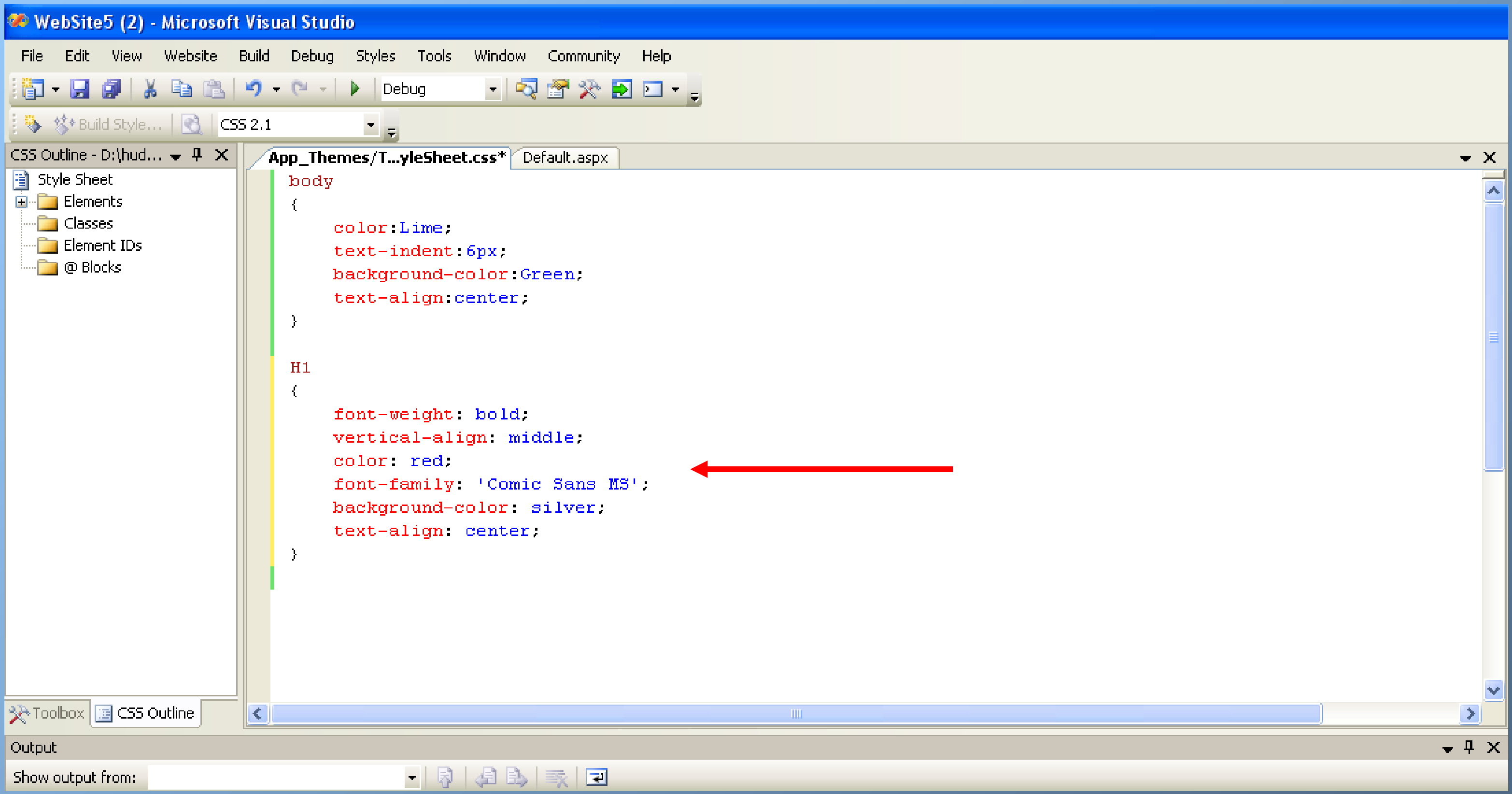
```
body
{

    background-co
    font-size: sm
}
```

font-family:
font-size: small px
font-weight:
font-style:
font-variant:
text-transform:
color:

text-decoration:
- [ ] underline
- [ ] overline
- [ ] line-through
- [ ] blink
- [ ] none

Description: background-color: #FFFF00; font-size: small

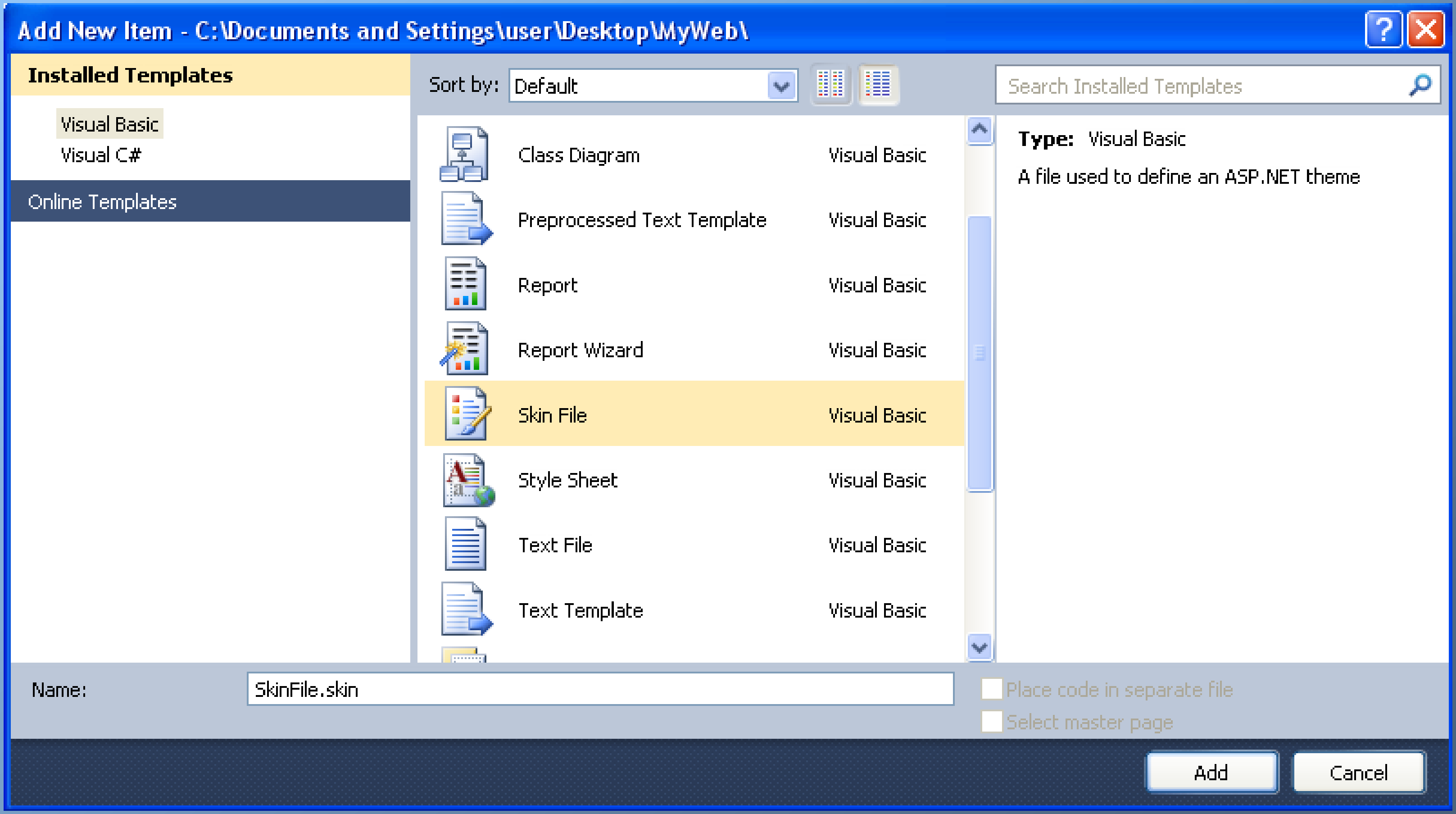
And the result will be:



```
body
{
    color:Lime;
    text-indent:6px;
    background-color:Green;
    text-align:center;
}

H1
{
    font-weight: bold;
    vertical-align: middle;
    color: red;
    font-family: 'Comic Sans MS';
    background-color: silver;
    text-align: center;
}
```

To add a SKIN file you must add this file to the theme folder:

- Right-click the theme folder (\App_Themes\MyTheme in the example),
- choose Add New Item from the context menu.
- You'll see an Add New Item dialog box.
- Select Skin file from the template list.
- Type a name for the Skin file.



Add New Item - C:\Documents and Settings\user\Desktop\MyWeb\

Installed Templates: Visual Basic, Visual C#

Online Templates

Sort by: Default

Search Installed Templates

Class Diagram	Visual Basic
Preprocessed Text Template	Visual Basic
Report	Visual Basic
Report Wizard	Visual Basic
Skin File	Visual Basic
Style Sheet	Visual Basic
Text File	Visual Basic
Text Template	Visual Basic

Type: Visual Basic

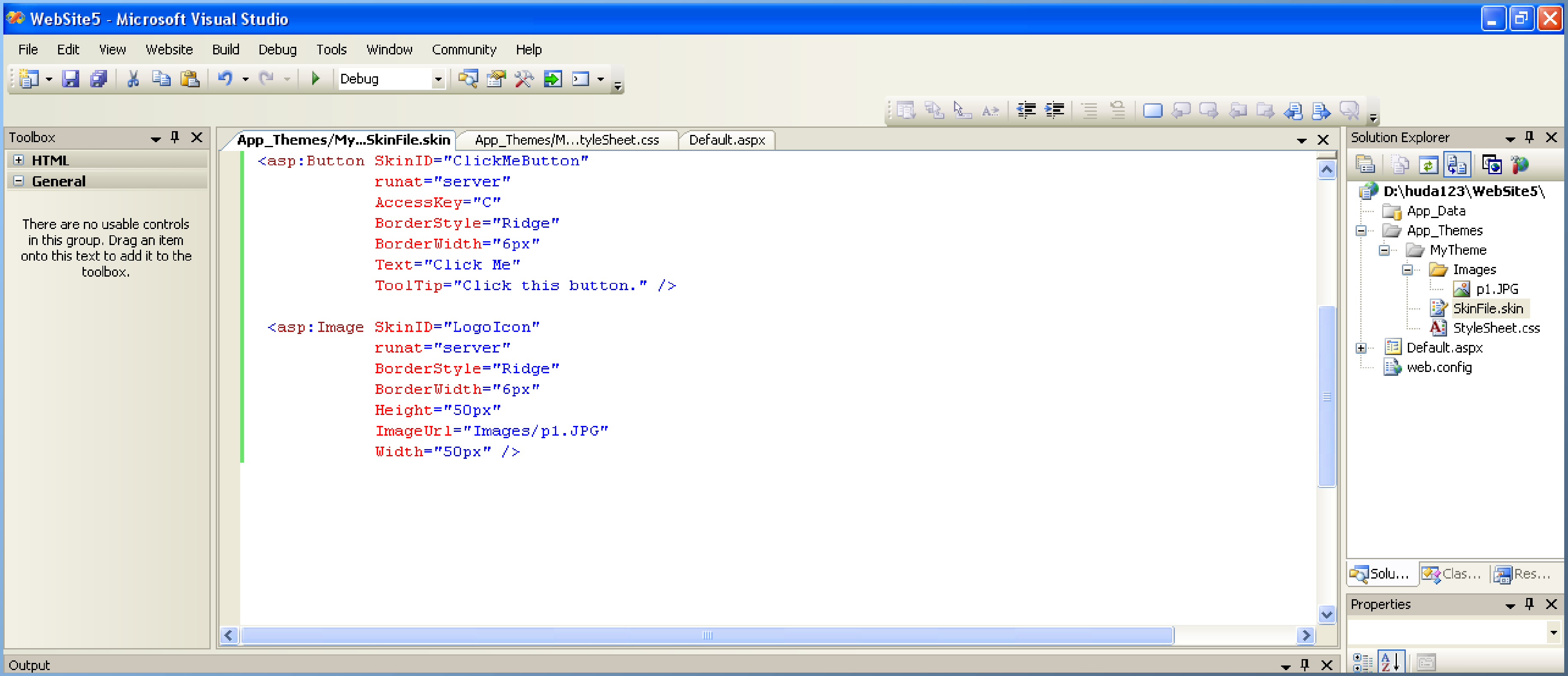
A file used to define an ASP.NET theme

Name: SkinFile.skin

Place code in separate file

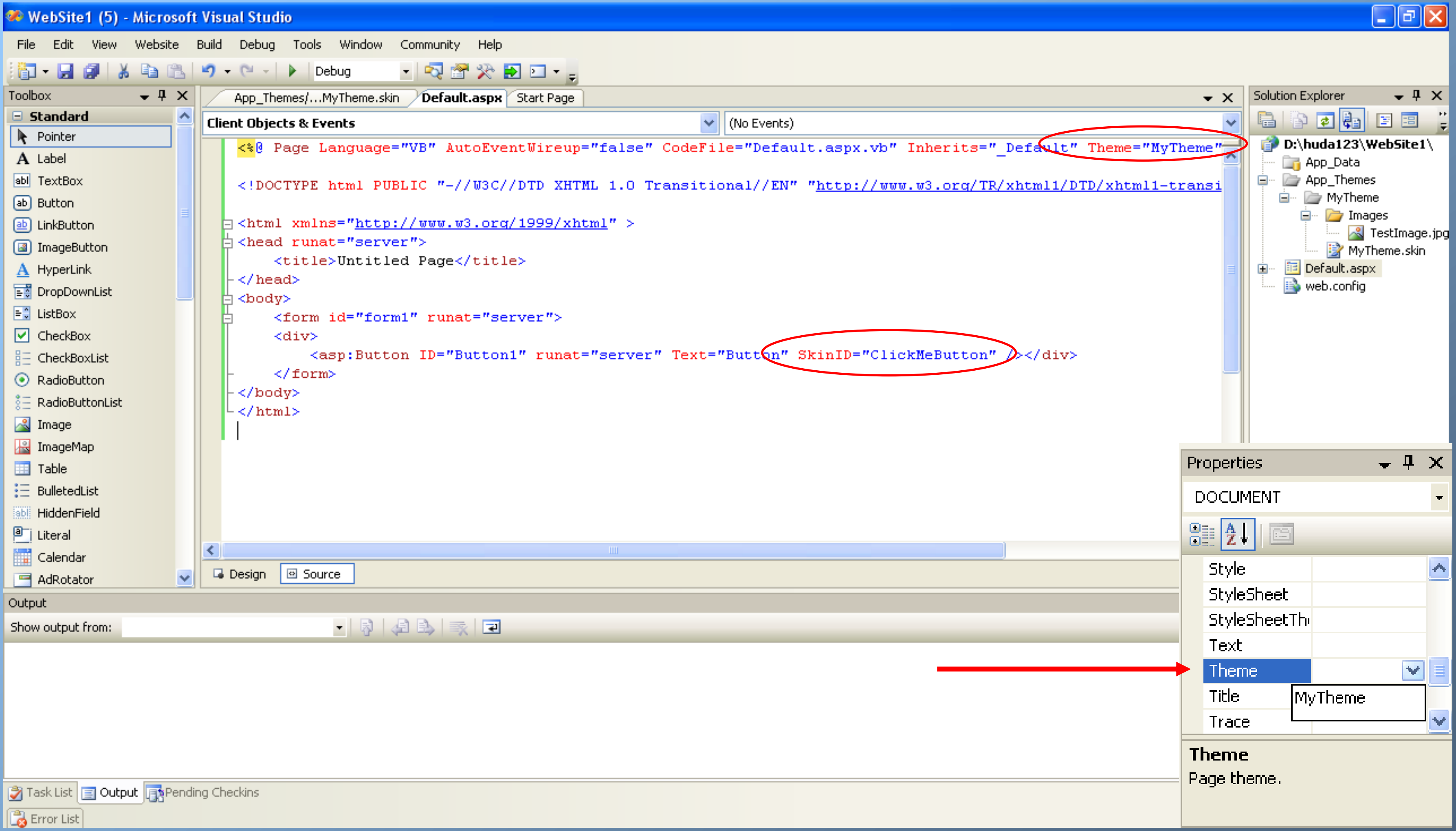
Select master page

(A SKIN file defines the appearance of the user interface, but not the inner workings of that interface, just as your skin defines your outward appearance.)


WebSite5 - Microsoft Visual Studio
File Edit View Website Build Debug Tools Window Community Help
Debug
Toolbox
HTML
General
There are no usable controls in this group. Drag an item onto this text to add it to the toolbox.
App_Themes/My...SkinFile.skin
App_Themes/M...tyleSheet.css
Default.aspx
Solution Explorer
D:\huda123\WebSite5\
App_Data
App_Themes
MyTheme
Images
p1.JPG
SkinFile.skin
StyleSheet.css
Default.aspx
web.config
Solu...
Clas...
Res...
Properties
Output

```
<asp:Button SkinID="ClickMeButton"
            runat="server"
            AccessKey="C"
            BorderStyle="Ridge"
            BorderWidth="6px"
            Text="Click Me"
            ToolTip="Click this button." />

 <asp:Image SkinID="LogoIcon"
            runat="server"
            BorderStyle="Ridge"
            BorderWidth="6px"
            Height="50px"
            ImageUrl="Images/p1.JPG"
            Width="50px" />
```

You can apply a theme to a page in the site.



```
<%@ Page Language="VB" AutoEventWireup="false" CodeFile="Default.aspx.vb" Inherits="_Default" Theme="MyTheme"

<!DOCTYPE html PUBLIC "-//W3C//DTD XHTML 1.0 Transitional//EN" "http://www.w3.org/TR/xhtml1/DTD/xhtml1-transi

<html xmlns="http://www.w3.org/1999/xhtml" >
<head runat="server">
    <title>Untitled Page</title>
</head>
<body>
    <form id="form1" runat="server">
    <div>
        <asp:Button ID="Button1" runat="server" Text="Button" SkinID="ClickMeButton" /></div>
    </form>
</body>
</html>
```

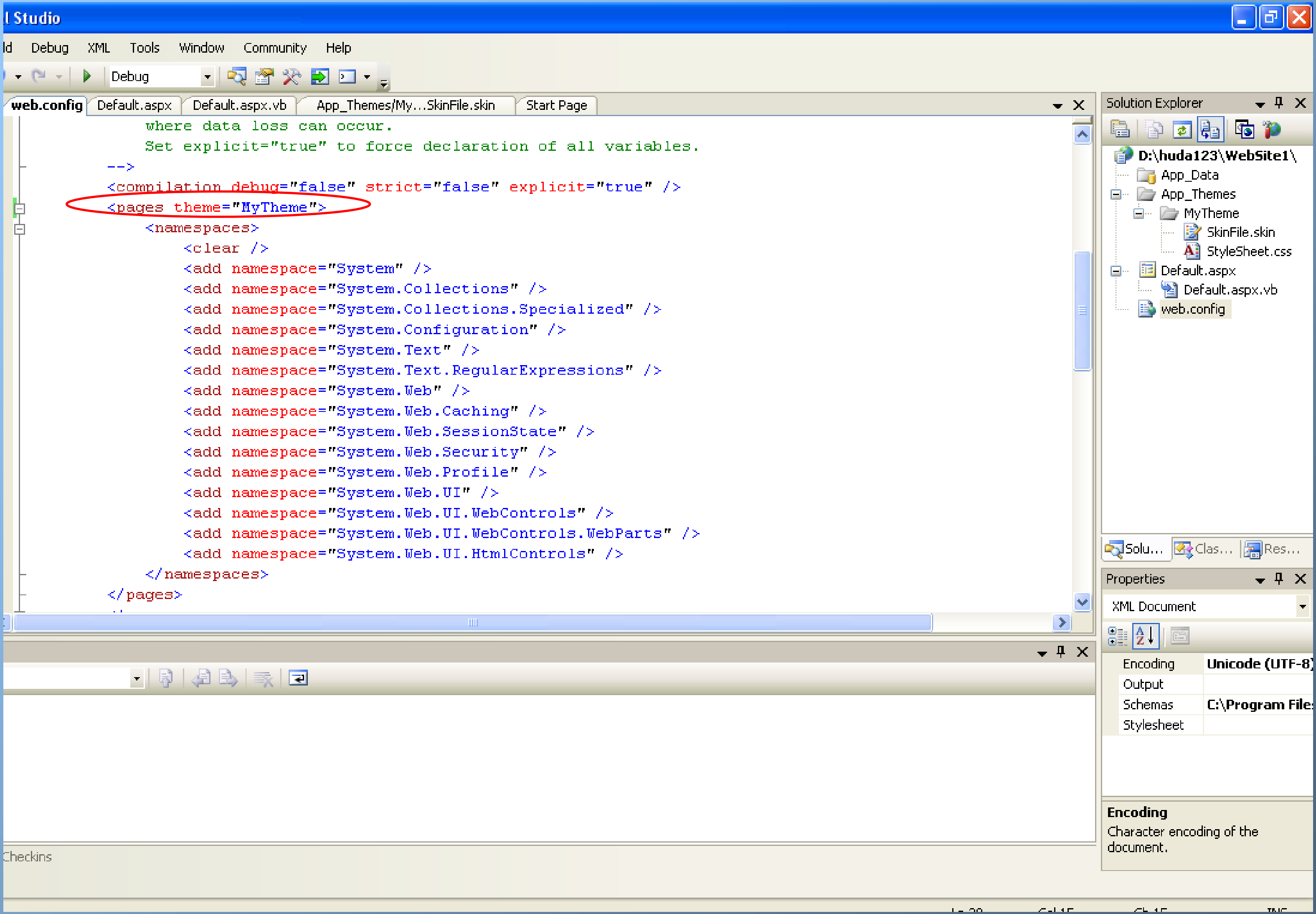
Properties

DOCUMENT

Style	
StyleSheet	
StyleSheetTh	
Text	
Theme	MyTheme
Title	
Trace	

Theme
Page theme.

You can define the theme for an entire website through the configuration file.

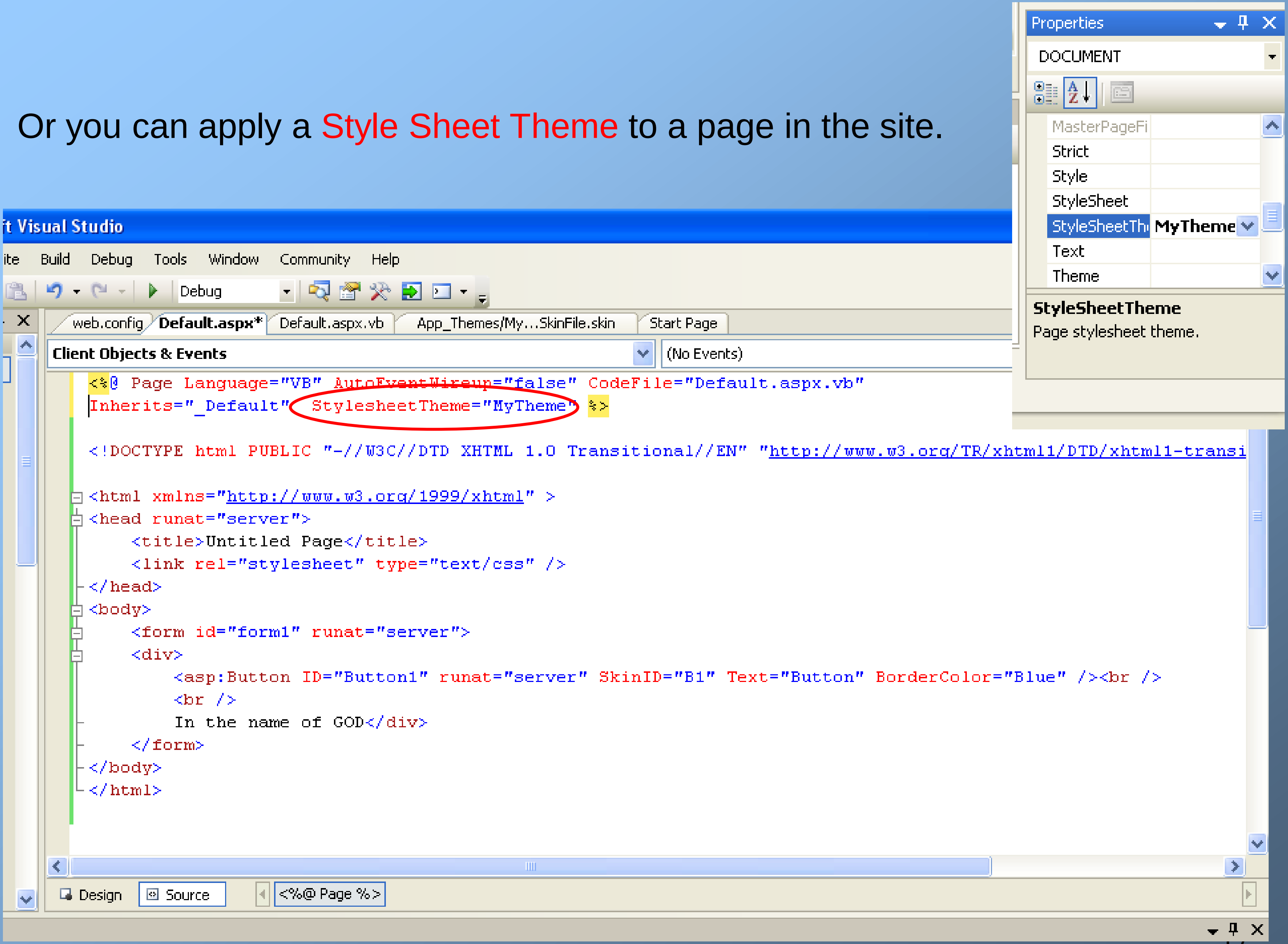


```
            where data loss can occur.
            Set explicit="true" to force declaration of all variables.
        -->
        <compilation debug="false" strict="false" explicit="true" />
        <pages theme="MyTheme">
            <namespaces>
                <clear />
                <add namespace="System" />
                <add namespace="System.Collections" />
                <add namespace="System.Collections.Specialized" />
                <add namespace="System.Configuration" />
                <add namespace="System.Text" />
                <add namespace="System.Text.RegularExpressions" />
                <add namespace="System.Web" />
                <add namespace="System.Web.Caching" />
                <add namespace="System.Web.SessionState" />
                <add namespace="System.Web.Security" />
                <add namespace="System.Web.Profile" />
                <add namespace="System.Web.UI" />
                <add namespace="System.Web.UI.WebControls" />
                <add namespace="System.Web.UI.WebControls.WebParts" />
                <add namespace="System.Web.UI.HtmlControls" />
            </namespaces>
        </pages>
```

Encoding	Unicode (UTF-8)
Output	
Schemas	C:\Program File
Stylesheet	

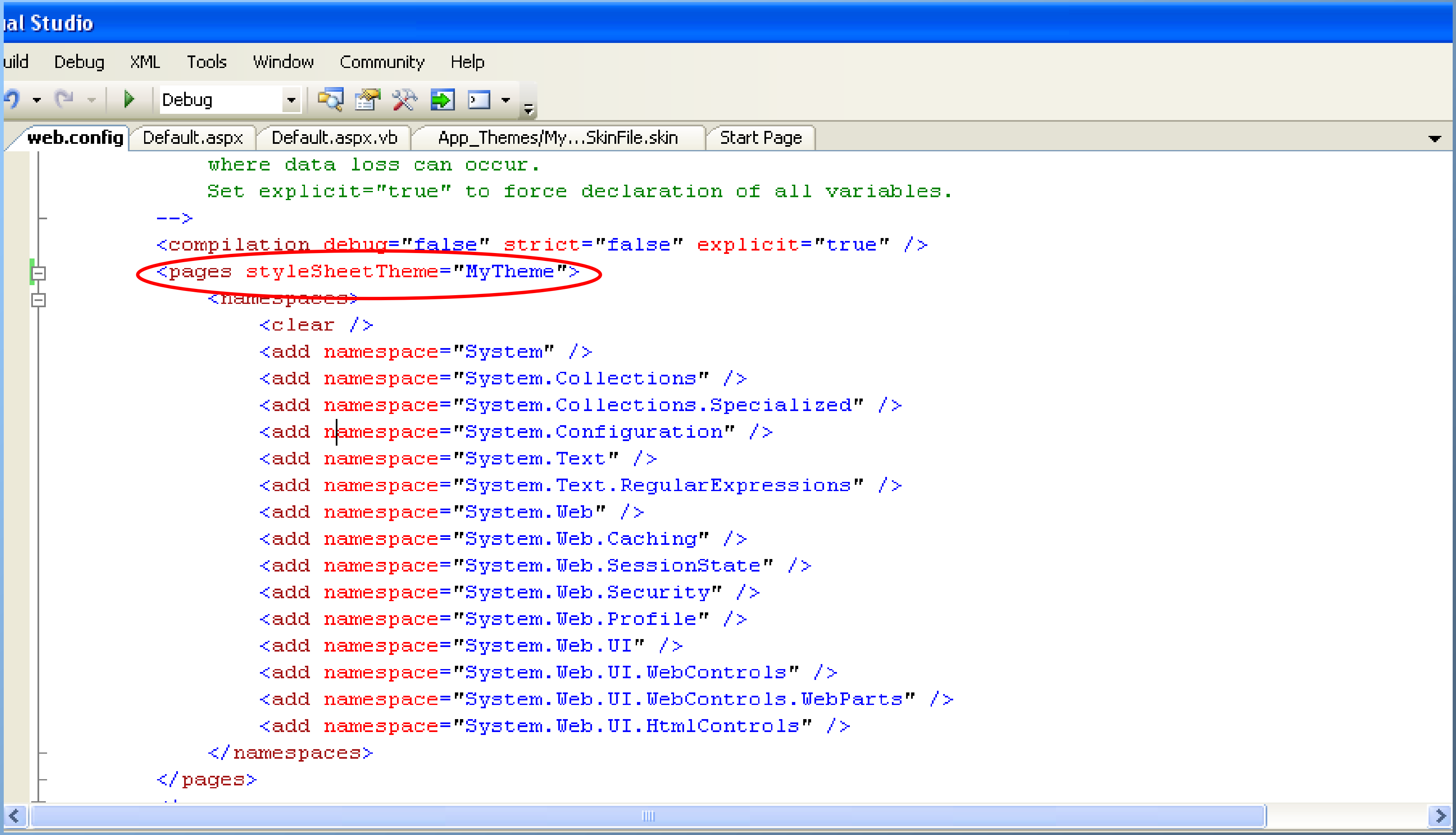
Encoding
Character encoding of the document.

Or you can apply a Style Sheet Theme to a page in the site.



```
<%@ Page Language="VB" AutoEventWireup="false" CodeFile="Default.aspx.vb"
Inherits="_Default" StylesheetTheme="MyTheme" %>

<!DOCTYPE html PUBLIC "-//W3C//DTD XHTML 1.0 Transitional//EN" "http://www.w3.org/TR/xhtml1/DTD/xhtml1-transi

<html xmlns="http://www.w3.org/1999/xhtml" >
<head runat="server">
    <title>Untitled Page</title>
    <link rel="stylesheet" type="text/css" />
</head>
<body>
    <form id="form1" runat="server">
    <div>
        <asp:Button ID="Button1" runat="server" SkinID="B1" Text="Button" BorderColor="Blue" /><br />
        <br />
        In the name of GOD</div>
    </form>
</body>
</html>
```

You can define the Style Sheet Theme for an entire website through the configuration file.


al Studio
uild Debug XML Tools Window Community Help
Debug
web.config
Default.aspx
Default.aspx.vb
App_Themes/My…SkinFile.skin
Start Page

```
          where data loss can occur.
          Set explicit="true" to force declaration of all variables.
      -->
      <compilation debug="false" strict="false" explicit="true" />
      <pages styleSheetTheme="MyTheme">
          <namespaces>
              <clear />
              <add namespace="System" />
              <add namespace="System.Collections" />
              <add namespace="System.Collections.Specialized" />
              <add namespace="System.Configuration" />
              <add namespace="System.Text" />
              <add namespace="System.Text.RegularExpressions" />
              <add namespace="System.Web" />
              <add namespace="System.Web.Caching" />
              <add namespace="System.Web.SessionState" />
              <add namespace="System.Web.Security" />
              <add namespace="System.Web.Profile" />
              <add namespace="System.Web.UI" />
              <add namespace="System.Web.UI.WebControls" />
              <add namespace="System.Web.UI.WebControls.WebParts" />
              <add namespace="System.Web.UI.HtmlControls" />
          </namespaces>
      </pages>
```