

CUSTOMIZING VROMA MOO ROOMS AND OBJECTS:

USING THE OBJECT BROWSER AND EDITOR

After you have built a room or created an object, you will want to give it a description, as well as add a link to a web page or an image, or perhaps add some custom HTML that you wrote yourself. You do this with the “Customize Rooms and Objects” button on the Tool Bar, which takes you into the Object Editor. The Object Editor can also be used at any time to **change** a room’s or object’s characteristics, if you want to add something later (or find a typo!).

1. Click on the button “Customize Rooms and Objects” on the Tool Bar
2. The first screen wants you to select whether you wish to edit or just browse, **and** select the object you want to browse or edit.
 - a. Under “Select an action” click on “Edit an object’s basic characteristics”
 - b. Under “Select an object” click on the name of the room or object you wish to edit. The Object Editor gives you two lists to choose from (which can come in handy when you have a lot of rooms and objects!) You need select the object in **ONLY ONE** of these 2 lists. Or, if you prefer, you can type in its object number in the corresponding box.
 - c. Click the “Do Browse or Edit” button.

TIP: If you are editing a room and were in that room when you clicked on the “Customize” button, that room will be the first item in the list of “objects near you.”

So it’s a good idea to be in a room before you edit it, though this is not required!

3. Now you are in the Object Editor for the item you selected. You will see a list of characteristics that you can edit. To edit one or more of these characteristics:
 - a. Place a check in the box to the left of the characteristic (e.g. Name or Description). This is very important! If the box isn’t checked, the MOO won’t know that you made a change!!
 - b. Make the changes (or add information) -- see below for details on the kind of information to put in each box.
 - c. Click on the “Update Characteristics” button in the red box at the bottom of the page.

TIP: If you get confused while editing and want to reset everything to the original settings, click on the “Clear changes” button in the red box.

DETAILS ABOUT OBJECT CHARACTERISTICS

Here is some more information about each of the characteristics of an object or room that you can edit using the Object Editor.

NAME This is the name of the object, which you can change at any time.

ALIASES These are really only important for exits, since an alias can allow people to type a shorter name to move through the exit when using the command line. For other objects, leave it blank.

DESCRIPTION This is the text description of the room or object that appear in both the Web Window and the Output Window. Note that you can include line breaks **and** blank lines, or just leave it as one long line for it to wrap automatically. You may have to use the scroll bars to see the whole description!

OBJECT IS UNLOCKED/LOCKED Disregard this if your object is a room. For other kinds of objects, this allows you to keep an object “tied down” in its current location. Do not lock an object if you **want** your students to be able to move something. Otherwise it is probably a good idea. **MAKE SURE YOU HAVE DROPPED AN OBJECT IN A ROOM** before you lock it. If you are holding it, you will be locking it so that you will always be holding it!

OBJECT’S ASSOCIATED ICON (IMAGE) URL This must be a URL (beginning with http://) of an image, located in your own web directory or anywhere else on the web. We recommend you that you try to stick with images on the VRoma server or another stable location (like Perseus), since many images on the web have a tendency to move or disappear!

Important: If the object you are editing is a ROOM, the Icon will show up full size on the page. If it is some other kind of object, the icon will be squished into a small square (32 pixels on a side) and appear next to the object’s name in the room (so square-ish images work best!).

OBJECT’S ASSOCIATED URL or HTML document Here you can **EITHER** enter a URL to a web page **OR**, if you know some HTML, you can include your own HTML in order to customize the way a page appears in the MOO.

TIP: If you do not know HTML but want to include multiple links in a room, the easiest way to do this is to create an object for each link you want. Drop the object in the room, then edit it with the Object Editor, being sure to lock it into the room. Add the link you want to this object's ASSOCIATED URL. Then your students can click on the object name to get to the web link. No HTML required!

URL: Again this can be either your own page or any other page on the Web (caveat about avoiding remote pages above applies here too!) It will appear on the page as “link to <whatever the URL is>”, linked so that clicking on it will take the user to that page, in a new browser window. If you enter the URL of an image, instead of a link, the image will be displayed on the page.

HTML: (for advanced users only!): Again, this is an optional **ALTERNATIVE** to entering a URL, for those who know some HTML. This can include links to web pages, as well as images and formatted text, just like any web page. If you include links here, you are responsible for making sure they launch a new page, rather than replace the current page (which will kill your connection to the MOO). To ensure this, instead of the usual

```
<a href="http://www.mypage.com">here's my page</a>
```

use this code:

```
<a href="javascript:CreateWindow('http://www.mypage.com')">here's my page</a>.
```

This is case-sensitive, and punctuation (e.g. the single quotes) is important! Use of this form ensures that the link will be launched in a separate, smaller window that will not completely obscure the main window.

NOTE 1: You do not need <html>, <head> or <body> tags: these are put into the page automatically.

NOTE 2: You can put returns into the HTML Document box, to make it easier to see everything. These returns will not affect the appearance of the actual page.

As an example of a complex room that can be built by someone who knows HTML, here is what the HTML looks like for the Circus Maximus, built by Barbara McManus. Note that she also includes an html TABLE in order better to control page appearance. Also included are links to ancillary materials.

```
<p><table align="left">
<tr><td>

</td></tr>
<tr><td align=center>
<b>totam hodie Romam circus capit.</b>
</td> </tr>
<tr><td align=center>
<font size=-1>"Today all of Rome is at the Circus" (Juvenal 11.197)</font>
</td></tr>
</table>
<p><b>Click on the following for more details; close each extra window after you
have viewed it.</b></p>
<ul>
<li><A HREF =
"javascript:CreateWindow('http://vroma.rhodes.edu/~bmcmanus/arch.html')">Arch</A>
<li><A HREF =
"javascript:CreateWindow('http://vroma.rhodes.edu/~bmcmanus/track.html')">Track</A>
</ul>
```