

Illustrator CS for Dummies

by Ted Alspach

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This reference covers the latest updates to Adobe Illustrator, including Web graphic tools and new effects you can apply to your images.

Table of Contents

[Illustrator CS For Dummies](#)

[Introduction](#)

[Part I - Driving People Crazy](#) Illustrator s Bum Rap

[Ch](#)

[apt](#) - Introducing the World of Illustrator

[er](#)

[1](#)

[Ch](#)

[apt](#) - Following the Righteous Path

[er](#)

[2](#)

[Ch](#)

[apt](#) - Doing Everyday Things with Illustrator

[er](#)

[3](#)

[Part II - Drawing and Coloring Your Artwork](#)

[Ch](#)

[apt](#) - Shaping Up, Basically

[er](#)

[4](#)

[Ch](#)

[apt](#) - Getting Your Fill of Fills and Strokes

[er](#)

[5](#)

[Ch](#)

[apt](#) - Selecting and Editing Paths

[er](#)

[6](#)

[Ch](#)

[apt](#) - Wielding the Mighty Pen Tool

[er](#)

[7](#)

[Ch](#)

[apt](#) - Creating Straight and Curved Lines without the Pen Tool

[er](#)

[8](#)

[Ch
apt
er
9](#) - Creating Magnificent Brushstrokes

[Ch
apt
er
10](#) - Extreme Fills and Strokes

[Ch
apt
er
11](#) - Effectively Keeping Up Appearances, with Style(s)

[Part III](#) - Taking Your Paths to Obedience School

[Ch
apt
er
12](#) - Pushing, Pulling, Poking, and Prodding

[Ch
apt
er
13](#) - Organizing Efficiently

[Part IV](#) - Practically Speaking: Type, Print, and Files

[Ch
apt
er
14](#) - Introducing Letters and Such (Type 101)

[Ch
apt
er
15](#) - Printing Your Masterpiece

[Ch
apt
er
16](#) - Putting Your Art on the Web

[Ch
apt
er
17](#) - Moving Files Into and Out of Illustrator

[Part V](#) - The Part of Tens

[Ch
apt
er
18](#) - Ten Production-Enhancing Tips

[Ch
apt
er
19](#) - Ten (Or So) Ways to Customize Illustrator

[Bo](#)
[nus](#)
[Ch](#) - Taking Images Out of the Realm of Reality
[apt](#)
[er](#)
[1](#)

[Index](#)

[List of Figures](#)

[List of Tables](#)

[List of Sidebars](#)

Team LiB

NEXT ▶

Back Cover

So you thought Illustrator should really be called Intimidator? Not so! Let this book draw you a map through the jungle of pages, paths, pixels, and Pen tools, and before you know it, you'll have your creations in print, on the Web, or even on a PDA. Then, just smile mysteriously when folks say "Wow!"

About the Author

Ted Alspach is considered the leading authority on the history, use, and functionality of Adobe Illustrator. He has written more than 25 books on graphics and desktop publishing.

Illustrator CS For Dummies

by **Ted Alspach**

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About the Author

Ted Alspach is the author of more than 30 books on graphics, design, and Web publishing, including *Illustrator 11 Bible* (published by Wiley Publishing, Inc.), *PageMaker 7 for Windows and Macintosh: Visual QuickStart Guide*, and *PDF with Acrobat 5 Visual QuickStart Guide*. Ted is a Group Product Manager at Adobe Systems, Inc.

Dedication

To all the people who are experimenting with Illustrator for the first time may this book serve as a guide to the wonders of vector graphics.

Author s Acknowledgments

The people who deserve the most thanks are the dedicated, incredibly talented staff at Adobe Systems, Inc. that work on Adobe Illustrator. The engineers, quality engineers, product management, UI, program management, and all the other people worked for more than 11/2 years to produce such a superb product. Extra-special thanks to the Illustrator management team of Lydia Varmazis, Leon Brown, Mordy Golding, Susan Gile, Ning-Ju Nan, Rob Sargent, Teresa Crotty, Pamela Ruhl, John Farmer, Chris Scott, Heather Bowman, Mike Abbott, Brian Miyakusu, Yvonne Murray, Margot McClaughry, Shane Tracy, and Julie Meridian.

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NEXT ▶

Introduction

Overview

Welcome to *Illustrator CS For Dummies*. You're reading this book because you want to find out more about Adobe Illustrator. That's a very smart move because Adobe Illustrator is the industry-standard graphics software. Not only does it outsell all its competitors combined, it's also the most powerful graphics-creation tool ever created. With Illustrator, all you need to produce graphics like the best you've seen in print or on the Web is knowledge and artistic ability. Artistic ability is a challenge that you can handle on your own. The other half—knowledge—is what this book is all about.

Like a tragic hero, the great power of Illustrator is also its terrible curse. With its 30+ palettes, 70+ tools, and scores of menu items, its sheer depth is enough to make the most hardened graphics expert go shaky in the knees. Don't be fooled by Illustrator's vastness, however, because you will find a unique, consistent logic underlying it all. After you master a few basics, all the rest falls nicely into place.

In this book, our mission is to get you past Illustrator's intimidation factor and into its Wow! factor. I take you from being befuddled and mystified by Illustrator's nigh-infinite options to creating the kinds of graphics that others look at and say, "Wow, how did you do *that*?"

About This Book

This book is written to make your journey into Adobe Illustrator flexible and self-paced. Each chapter is as self-contained as possible. You can hop in anywhere you want, with a minimum of flipping to other parts of the book to find out what you missed. If your goal is to find out more about the Pencil tool, for example, you can skip everything else and go directly to [Chapter 8](#) without getting hopelessly lost. On the other hand, if you're determined to find out as much about the program as possible, you can read the book from cover to cover. I organized the book so that the chapters move from simple to more complex concepts. The early chapters make a good base for understanding the latter ones.

Use this book as both a reference book and an on-site trainer for Adobe Illustrator. To find out more about a specific feature, look for it in the Index or Table of Contents. To get a more in-depth feel for the feature, follow the step-by-step instructions that accompany the information on the major features.

By and large, people get more out of doing than out of reading about doing. Adobe Illustrator is a classic case-in-point. Don't bother to memorize anything in this book. Instead, pick up a concept, work with it in Illustrator for a while, and then come back to the book when you're ready for something new. Above all, have fun with it! Adobe Illustrator is one of the coolest programs on the planet. With a little practice, you can be creating illustrations that knock your socks off.

Note

Because I realize that some folks use PCs and some folks use Macs, I try to offer commands for both Windows and Macintosh platforms. Occasionally I offer information specific to one platform or the other, including keyboard shortcuts. While you journey through this book, you'll see that many figures (those that show you what you see on-screen) are a mixed bag of all things Mr. Gates and Mr. Jobs.

Why I Wrote This Book

I've been using Illustrator since it first came out, back in the infancy of desktop publishing. With each subsequent version, my involvement with the product has dramatically increased to the point where it's become an absolutely huge part of my life. The following is a brief rundown of the Illustrator versions and my involvement with them:

- **Illustrator 1.1/88:** Illustrator was the first PostScript drawing program, and the EPS file format became a desktop publishing standard. I had an internship with the first service bureau in Central PA; I printed hundreds of Illustrator files to a Linotronic 100.
- **Illustrator 3.2/4.1:** The Illustrator type capabilities and graphing functionality were dramatically enhanced. At this time I was working at a printing company, prepress shop, and a Macintosh VAR as well as training folks at ad agencies on how to use Illustrator (as well as QuarkXPress and Photoshop). I met my wife (an avid Illustrator artist and author herself) by training her on the 3.2 version of Illustrator.
- **Illustrator 5.0/5.5:** Illustrator came with palettes and Photoshop filter support. I wrote the first edition of the *Macworld Illustrator Bible*, the first fully comprehensive book on Illustrator. I also started beta-testing Illustrator software (a process that has continued in various capacities ever since).
- **Illustrator 6.0:** The Illustrator first-of-its-kind plug-in API allowed the Illustrator development team and third party plug-in developers to easily add palettes, tools, and menu items. During this time I worked as a writer for Adobe on various materials. I consulted with HSC Software (the makers of Kai's Power Tools) on KPT Vector Effects, an astonishing and powerful set of Illustrator plug-ins. I also wrote the 2nd edition of the *Macworld Illustrator Bible* and *Illustrator Filter Finesse*, a book all about Illustrator plug-ins.
- **Illustrator 7.0:** The first truly cross-platform version of the product was the beginning of the end for previous PC market-leader CorelDRAW. I alpha-tested Illustrator for the first time, and consulted with Extensis for Vector Tools, a fantastic set of productivity plug-ins for Illustrator. *The Illustrator 7 Bible* (now cross-platform, like the product) was written for this version.
- **Illustrator 8.0:** This version added a huge set of minor enhancements, answered long-time customer requests, and broke new ground with brushes and gradient mesh features. I wrote *Illustrator Studio Secrets*, as well as the fourth installment of the *Illustrator Bible*. During this time, I began working for Extensis as a product manager for Photoshop and Illustrator plug-ins, including Mask Pro and Intellihance Pro.
- **Illustrator 9.0:** I began working at Adobe as Illustrator Product Manager. Some of the features I worked

on included the Transparency effect, the new Layers palette, and the Styles/Appearance/Effects features. The other big news for Illustrator was a set of comprehensive tools for creating Web graphics. I wrote the first version of the *Illustrator For Dummies* book, as well as the *Illustrator 9 Bible*.

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Illustrator 10: Even more Web functionality was added as well as OS X native capabilities, along with several new production and creativity tools. I began overseeing the Illustrator business as Group Product Manager, working specifically on the new Envelopes/Distortion set of features. *Illustrator 10 For Dummies* and the *Illustrator 10 Bible* were written during this time.

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Illustrator CS: The new features of Illustrator CS include 3D effects, type enhancements, and the Scribble effect, which make this the best version of Illustrator ever. Yet another edition of both the *Illustrator Bible* and *Illustrator For Dummies* were written, and my internal involvement with Illustrator has increased further still.

What You Don t Need to Read

I love to think that you pore over each and every word I write. I also realize that you have a life. Feel free to skip any information that seems far afield from what you need to know. The stuff that no one should ever *really* have to know (but which is nonetheless utterly fascinating) is clearly labeled with a Technical Stuff icon. You ll also run across some bonus material placed in a sidebar a gray shaded box that I fill with cool-to-know-but-not-imperative stuff.

Foolish Assumptions

I m going to make just the following two basic Foolish Assumptions about you, Gentle Reader:

- **You have time, patience, and a strong desire to master Adobe Illustrator.** Illustrator has a steep learning curve at the start; but after you get the basics, you find the program pretty straightforward. Getting over that first hump is going to take a little endurance and can get pretty frustrating at times. Be patient with yourself and the program. All shall be revealed in the fullness of time. Until then, this book is intended to help you get over that initial learning hump.
- **You have access to a computer with Adobe Illustrator CS on it.** This hands-on book isn t meant to be read like a novel. If this is your very own copy of the book, attack it with highlighters and sticky notes, scribble in some marginalia, or even force it open until it lies flat on your desk. Then after you collect all the loose pages and glue em back in you can have both hands free to work at the computer while you follow along.

How This Book Is Organized

In this book, you find 19 chapters organized in five parts along with 1 [bonus chapter](#) online. Each part reflects a major Illustrator concept; each chapter chomps a concept into easily digestible morsels. The whole thing is arranged in a logical order, so you can read straight through if you're so inclined. Or you can jump in at any point to find the exact information you need. To help you do that, here's an overview of what you can find in each of those five parts.

[Part I: Driving People Crazy – Illustrator's Bum Rap](#)

Here's where you get the absolute basics of Illustrator. What it is, what it does, and why it's worth the effort. The wonders of blank pages, paths, and the beguiling Pen tool all make their debut here. By the time you finish this part, you have a good overview of the entire program.

[Part II: Drawing and Coloring Your Artwork](#)

This part is where the fun begins – you roll up your sleeves and start creating illustrations. Whether or not you can draw using old-fashioned paper and pencil (ewww – how twentieth century), wait'll you see what you can create with Illustrator!

[Part III: Taking Your Paths to Obedience School](#)

With Illustrator, you can really unleash your creativity. Unfortunately, unleashed creativity often results in an unruly mess. This part looks at how to tame the mess through changing parts of graphics, organizing graphics into separate layers, and using many other techniques that prove that organization and creativity are not mutually exclusive. You don't even need a smock.

[Part IV: Practically Speaking: Type, Print, and Files](#)

Illustrator is truly a wondrous modifier of written characters, so I devote this part to working with type, and then getting your creations to print. I cover everything from the most basic formatting to complex type treatments. Stick around here, too, for the skinny on posting your art to the Web and moving files in and out of Illustrator.

[Part V: The Part of Tens](#)

No *For Dummies* book is complete without its Top Ten lists, and this book is no exception. Here are lots of tips to

help you use Illustrator more effectively and ways to customize Illustrator (chrome hubcaps optional). Save this part for dessert.

But that s not all!: A bonus chapter

I tried and I tried but no matter how hard I squeezed, I just couldn t fit everything into this book. (Kind of like how some people pack a steamer trunk for a weekend getaway lark.) Rather than try to skimp on all I wanted to show you, I put an extra-cool chapter on the Web for you. This chapter covers ten techniques for creating some killer effects. Check em out at www.dummies.com/go/illustratorcs_fd.

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◀ PREVIOUS NEXT ▶

About All Those Little Icons

Scattered throughout this book you find some nifty little icons that point out bits of information that are especially useful, important, or noteworthy.

New Feature

Check out these special guys for the scoop on what's new in Illustrator CS. The sky's the limit when you follow these hot air balloons.

Remember

Remember helps you remember to remember. The information you find at these icons is stuff that you use on a regular basis in Illustrator. Write it down on your hand so that you can refer to it at any instant. Just don't wash that hand! Or better yet, bookmark the page or remember the advice you find there.

Technical Stuff

Look to these icons for utterly fascinating techno-trivia that most people never need to know. This information is the kind you can drop into a conversation at a party to remind people how much smarter you are than everyone else. (Assuming that you plan to go home alone, that is.)

Tip

This bull's-eye points out information that can help you do something faster, easier, or better; save you time and money; or make you the hero of the beach. Or at least make you a little less stressed during a production crunch!

Warning

Watch out! This impending-explosion icon means that danger lurks nearby. Heed it when directed to those things you should avoid and what things you must absolutely never do.

Road Signs along the Way

You will see some special ways I make text look in this book, such as bold print or shortcut keys or paths for how to find things. Here s a quick legend for the road signs you should watch for.

When I ask you to type (enter) something in a text box, for example **I make it bold**. When you see a construction like this Choose Edit Paste that means to go to the Edit menu and choose Paste from there. Keyboard shortcuts look like Ctrl+Z (Windows) or ⌘ +Z (Mac).

Where to Go from Here

Illustrator is a graphics adventure waiting for you to take it on. This book is your guide for that adventure. If you're ravenous to know everything now, you can rush through the text as fast as you can, starting with [Chapter 1](#) and charging right through to the end. Or you can take your time, pick a point that interests you, explore it at your leisure, and then come back to a different place in the book later. Whatever works best for you, this book is your ready-willing-and-able guide for the journey. All you have to do is start your computer, launch Illustrator, turn the page, and let the adventure begin.

Part I: Driving People Crazy Illustrator s Bum Rap

Chapter List

[Chapter 1](#): Introducing the World of Illustrator [Chapter 2](#): Following the Righteous Path [Chapter 3](#): Doing Everyday Things with Illustrator

In this part . . .

Here you meet the main character of the book: Adobe Illustrator CS. You get a look at its illustrious past, its remarkable powers, its place in the universe, and (most importantly) what it can do for you. You probe the difference between vectors and pixels. You hover above the various parts of Illustrator and watch what they do. By the end of this part, you uncover a straightforward and easy-going program behind the complex, sometimes intimidating exterior of Illustrator.

Chapter 1: Introducing the World of Illustrator

Overview

In This Chapter

- Getting a look at how graphic artists use Illustrator
- Becoming familiar with the Illustrator interface
- Noting some Mac and Windows differences
- Creating new documents
- Saving your artwork
- Printing Illustrator documents
- Bailing out of a document (and Illustrator itself)

The first time you run Illustrator, you'll probably think that Adobe *Intimidator* would be a more appropriate name for Adobe Illustrator. The program's dozens of tools, hundreds of commands, and more than 30 palettes can transform confident, secure individuals into drooling, confused, and frustrated drones.

The situation doesn't have to be that way, of course. Sure, all that stuff is scary. Even more frightening to some is the

prospect of facing the giant white nothingness of the Document window the endless possibilities, the confusion over where to start. This chapter helps you get past that initial stage and move forward into the mystical state of *eagerly awaiting* (instead of fearing) each new feature and function.

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◀ PREVIOUS

NEXT ▶

From Humble Origins to Master of the Graphics Universe

As its box proudly proclaims, Adobe Illustrator is the Industry Standard Graphics Software. But the software didn't always enjoy that standing. Illustrator evolved from a geeky math experiment into the graphics powerhouse it is today.

A brief history of Illustrator

Until the mid-1980s, computer art was limited to blocky-looking video games, spheroid reflections, and the movie *Tron*. Then something happened to change all that (in addition to Jeff Bridges' refusal to make a sequel) PostScript, a computer language created especially for printers. Adobe created PostScript specifically to help printers produce millions of teeny-tiny dots on the page, without running out of memory. (Graphics files were notoriously huge relative to the teeny tiny computers of the day.)

In 1987, Adobe released Illustrator 1.1, which was designed primarily to be a *front end* for PostScript—a way to make its capabilities actually usable. At that time, the concept of artwork that is scalable to any size *without loss of quality* (one world-beating advantage of creating art within Illustrator) was brand new. Illustrator gave companies the opportunity to have electronic versions of their logos that could be printed at any size.

In the ten-plus years since Version 1.1, Adobe Illustrator has become the Web-ready, giant application that it is today. Millions of people around the world use Illustrator, and its *thousands* of features, big and small, meet a wide variety of graphics needs. Oddly enough, the one aspect of Illustrator that *hasn't* changed is the perceived intimidation factor. Version 1.1 had several tools, many menu items, a neurosis-inducing Pen tool, Bézier curves, and that way-scary blank page when you started it up. Version CS still has nearly every feature that 1.1 did and adds a staggering array of new features including 3D, new type enhancements and Scribble, but it still has that way-scary blank page. Illustrator 1.1 was a playful little kitten compared with the beast that is Illustrator CS!

Illustrator's place in the cosmos

Professional graphic artists have a toolbox of programs that they use to create the books, magazines, newspapers, packaging, advertisements, and Web sites that you see every day. Any professional will tell you that you need the right tool for the job to do the job well. The right tools (in this case) are software products—drawing programs, paint programs, and products for page layout and Web-authoring. *Drawing programs*, such as Adobe Illustrator, are the best tools for creating crisp, professional-looking graphics (such as logos), working with creative type effects, and re-creating photographs from line drawings. *Painting programs* (often called *image editing programs*), such as Adobe Photoshop, provide tools to color-correct, retouch, and edit digital photographs and re-create natural media effects, such as hand-painting. Page layout programs, such as Adobe InDesign or QuarkXPress, enable you to combine graphics that you create in drawing and paint programs with text for print publishing. You can use Web-authoring tools (such as Macromedia Dreamweaver or Adobe GoLive) to combine graphics, text, sound, animation, and interactivity for presentation on the World Wide Web.

Although each tool performs a fairly specific (if wide-ranging) task, there is some crossover between applications. For example, Illustrator has some limited image editing capabilities, but very few people ever use them. Because you can edit images with complete control and freedom in Photoshop, why use the wrong tool for the job? QuarkXPress enables you to run type along a curve, but Illustrator has so many tools for creative type effects that you'd be silly to do them anywhere else.

By using Illustrator on its own, you can create an astonishing variety of graphics and type effects. When you combine it with paint, page layout, and Web-authoring programs, you have the tools you need to create print and Web publications that match the quality of anything you see in the stands or on-screen today.

In the field of professional graphics and publishing, each software program has to perform only a few basic functions: graphics creation, image editing, page layout (for print), or Web layout.

Illustrator is the *de facto* standard in graphics creation. While there are two competing programs out there (Macromedia FreeHand and CorelDRAW), Illustrator is used three times as much as the other two products combined. This is mainly because it's the best in several ways, from feature breadth and depth to tight integration with other standard applications and formats, including Photoshop and PDF.

Adobe has products in the other categories (two in the page layout category). One benefit of using Illustrator is that it works very well (as you may expect) with the other Adobe products, most of which have a similar interface and way of working. If you know one Adobe product well, chances are you'll have an easy time of figuring out other Adobe products.

Illustrator excels at creating and editing artwork of all types. In fact, you can use Illustrator to create and edit nearly anything that didn't start out as a photograph. (For more about the differences between photographs and artwork created with Illustrator, see [Chapter 2](#).)

Starting Up Illustrator and Revving It a Little

To get Illustrator running, choose Illustrator from the Start menu (Windows) or double-click the application icon (Mac). (The latter method also works in Windows, if you're a Mac user who happens to be using Windows. Don't worry; I won't tell a soul. Honest.)

The Illustrator startup process displays the *splash screen*—an image to look at while the program is cranking up.

As Illustrator continues the startup process, the flower image disappears and is replaced with something entirely new for Version CS: The Welcome to Adobe Illustrator dialog box, shown in [Figure 1-1](#). The Welcome to Adobe Illustrator dialog box gives the following options to start using Illustrator:



Figure 1-1: The Welcome to Adobe Illustrator dialog box.

- - What's New in Illustrator:** This option displays all the new features in the most recent version, with handy tips on how to get the most out of each new feature.
- - Tutorials:** A video runs, showing both new features as well as basic concepts.
- - Cool Extras:** This option takes you to special features in the product you may not find otherwise.
- - New Document:** Click this icon to display the New Document dialog box (as shown in [Figure 1-2](#)).



Figure 1-2: The New Document Dialog Box

- **New from Template:** Illustrator ships with an amazing array of professional templates to get you started creating all sorts of snazzy documents, from logos to brochures to DVD box artwork.
- **Open Document:** This option takes you straight to the Open dialog box, so you can open existing artwork in Illustrator.

Before you start a new document, you have to answer a few questions in the New Document dialog box about the name, page size, units of measurement, orientation, and color mode that you plan to use.

What's in a Name (field)?

You can give your new document a name in the Name field. If you don't, Illustrator names it Untitled-1, and every new document you create is titled sequentially Untitled-2, Untitled-3, and so on, until you quit the program. When you relaunch, you'll be right back at Untitled-1. If you don't give a name to the new document, you get another chance when you save it. The advantage to naming your document is that if you accumulate a whole bunch of unsaved *files* (not recommended!), you can't tell them apart. Besides, you see the name of the document at the top of the document in the Title bar, so you don't forget what you're doing.

Page size, units, and orientation

You set your page size by choosing a predefined size from the Size drop-down menu or by typing values into the Height and Width fields. Your page size truly matters only when you're printing your document directly out of Illustrator. Otherwise, it just exists as a point of reference—a guide to show you how far things are apart from each other. One great thing about Illustrator: For the most part, size doesn't matter (no, really). When you create graphics for the Web, you can determine the size of the graphic when you save it. When you're creating graphics for print, most of the time you'll be creating graphics to be imported into page layout applications, such as QuarkXPress, PageMaker, or InDesign. In the latter case, although it's always best to size your image in Illustrator, you can scale the graphic to the size you need it in your page layout. In either case, the Web browser or page layout application recognizes your Illustrator drawing, ignoring the page size.

Page size is good for two things: proofing and conceptualization. Often you'll want to print your artwork on paper directly from Illustrator to get an idea of what it looks like. In this case, set the Size to the size paper you've loaded in your printer. While creating graphics, keep in mind the size of the page or browser window that you're creating for in this case, set the Height and Width to whatever the target output is. For example, if you're creating for the Web, you may want to set the size to 640 pixels x 480 pixels, which is a fairly standard size for computer screens, to help

you visualize the final artwork. Actually, you can change the size of the artwork to be anything you want, at any time, and that's one of the great things about creating in Illustrator.

Tip

By default, Illustrator measures image size in *points* (1 point = 1/72 inch). If that unit of measurement is unfamiliar to you, be sure to select a different unit from the Units drop-down menu. Your ruler also changes (when you choose View Show Rulers) units to the type you selected. And although it won't change the ruler units, you can also type the unit of measurement along with the number when you specify values for page size in the Height and Width fields. When you open a new document, it comes up showing a width in points—say, for instance, 612 pt. If you want to specify a width of 10 inches or 30 centimeters, just type (respectively) **10 in** or **30 cm** in the Width field. If you don't know the standard abbreviation for a unit of measurement, you can type the whole word out (for example, **10 inches** or **30 centimeters**). Illustrator understands what you mean and does the conversion for you. And it will do so wherever you enter a unit of measurement, not only in the New Document dialog box. Smart, very smart!

CMYK or RGB?

CMYK or RGB? In Illustrator, this question is a bit more significant than the ubiquitous question, Paper or plastic? To understand why you have to answer Illustrator's question, you need a little more history and some technobabble. (Sorry, I'll try to keep this brief.)

Illustrator has been around for a long time, back when putting color images on the Web was impossible and interactive multimedia was little more than a buzzword. In those days, the main reason for creating documents in color on the computer was so you could print them out in color. Color printing almost always uses a CMYK process—for Cyan, Magenta, Yellow, and black inks (the *K* stands for black because RGB has dibs on *B*, which stands for *blue*). These four colors, blended in different amounts, produce the full range of colors you see in printed material. So back then, Illustrator used only CMYK colors because nobody needed to do anything in color besides print.

Then along came interactive multimedia—in effect, the lights, camera, sound, and action for computer users. Shortly after that came the Web. Because images used for multimedia and the Web appear only on the computer screen, a need emerged for RGB images. *So what's RGB, already?* Okay, I'm getting to that: Computer screens create the

colors you see by using electrons to make a coating of phosphors glow Red, Green, or Blue (hence RGB) in different intensities. If you're creating content for multimedia applications or for the Web, you need RGB images that look good on-screen. You probably don't give two hoots about CMYK. So Illustrator, trying to please everyone, added the capability to create colors in RGB.

Unfortunately, this new feature didn't quite please *everyone*. In fact, it upset some people quite a lot. And left a wake of money wasted, deadlines blown, marriages ruined, lives lost and empires crushed. (Well, okay, that's a little exaggeration, but *only* a little.) CMYK and RGB just didn't get along.

Printing in color meant using the standard four-color printing process: Every image had its own percentage of cyan, magenta, yellow, and black, so four sets of films were made (one for each of those colors); the final printed image combined the colors. Each set consisted of only four single-color plates (C, M, Y, and K) and that's all you'd expect to print out. But if your Illustrator file contained any RGB elements (even a few pixels' worth), you had big trouble: Three additional films would print out frequently at a cost of \$100 or more per film for *every* page that contained *any* RGB colors. If you weren't paying attention, one mistake like that could cost thousands of dollars. And a lot of people weren't paying attention because they'd never had to worry about RGB colors in an Illustrator file before. (You can bet they did after that!) To prevent this sort of uproar from happening again, Adobe wisely removed the capability to combine CMYK and RGB colors in the same document. That's why you have to specify CMYK or RGB before you start a new document. Sure, it's a hassle, but you're *so much* better off having this hassle now, rather than spending money for it later!

So which do you choose, CMYK or RGB? You may think it safe to assume that RGB is for multimedia or the Web and CMYK is for print. Okay, that's a *safe* assumption, but not necessarily the *best* assumption. If you aren't sure where you're going to output, pick RGB. You can always change to CMYK later if you're required to, and you'll be able to print directly to color printers just fine that way.

For the sake of your creativity, choose RGB when

-

You're creating for the Web or for multimedia: In this situation, you're always creating work that's going to be viewed in RGB and you've no practical reason whatever to use CMYK.

-

You're creating for print BUT do not need precise CMYK colors: If you don't have to specify exact CMYK values while you work, choose RGB. (You can convert to CMYK by using File Document Color Mode *before you print* just don't forget to, okay?) I know that approach sounds like asking for trouble, but I can give you three good reasons for using RGB this way:

-

Some of Illustrator's coolest features (including many Photoshop filter effects) only work with RGB color.

-

When you work in RGB, you can use the full range of colors *millions* of them that are possible on the computer. (CMYK only supports mere *thousands* of colors.) If you're creating content for both print and the Web, creating the image in RGB gives you the maximum color range possible in both CMYK *and* RGB.

-

Some desktop inkjet color printers print well in RGB. For example, Epson six color printers print a wider range (gamut) of colors in RGB than in CMYK.

For the sake of accuracy, choose CMYK when

- **You need precise CMYK colors:** Some artists who create for print use a swatch book of printed CMYK colors. They use only the specific CMYK colors they see in the book because they feel (and rightly so) that this is the only way to get a good idea of what that color will look like when it finally prints. If your designs have to meet such specific requirements, you should always work in CMYK. Some companies specify the exact CMYK colors they want in their publications. If you're working on a project for one of those companies, use CMYK.
- **You're creating for grayscale or black and white print:** In RGB, shades of gray exist by default as blends of red, green, and blue. If you're printing with black ink, this blending is a hassle because you always have to work with three colors instead of one. In CMYK, however, you can create shades of gray as percentages of black ink, ignoring all other colors (which you may as well do if they won't be visible anyway).

After you answer the three magic New Document questions (name, page specs, and color choice), click OK and behold: A blank page opens, inviting you to realize your creative potential. You're ready to start illustrating. If blank-page syndrome doesn't faze you and you want to dig into the good stuff right away, thumb over to [Chapter 2](#).

Exploring the Illustrator Workspace

Between figuring out what the 250+ menu items actually do and rearranging palettes (until you have a tiny little area on your document in which you can actually work), you may find the Illustrator environment a bit daunting. (If you do, you're far from alone.) The next sections are an overview of all the stuff that's preventing you from getting any work done. (That stuff is what the geeks call the *UI* pronounced *you eye* for *user interface*.)

A graphic handyman's Toolbox

The Illustrator Toolbox (that alien artifact in [Figure 1-3](#)) is the place that most people start when they use Illustrator. After showing you 24 tools, 6 odd-looking buttons, and a gang of giant square things, the Toolbox pretends that's all there is to it. Actually, the Toolbox has over 50 hidden tools. Call up most tools in Illustrator by clicking (once) the tool you want in the Toolbox. The cursor then changes to either something that looks like the tool, or in the case of special tools (Rectangle, Ellipse, and others) a cross-hair cursor.

The tools live in *toolslots*, which are subdivisions within the Toolbox. Many toolslots contain more than one tool, as indicated by a small black arrow in the bottom-right corner of the toolslot. To access a hidden tool, click and hold the mouse pointer on a tool in its toolslot. You then see a bunch of other (usually related) tools materialize by the toolslot that you clicked (as shown with the Pen tool in [Figure 1-3](#)). Use those other tools by dragging to the tool you want to use and releasing the mouse button.

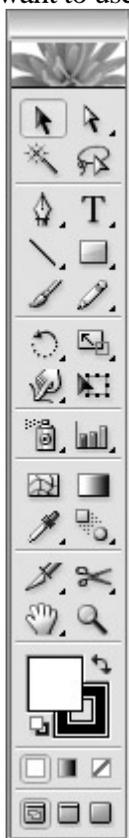


Figure 1-3: The Illustrator Toolbox; click and hold the pointer on a toolslot to display all the tools.

Tip

Drag over to the little bar to the right of the hidden tools in the toolslot and let go of the mouse button when the little bar becomes highlighted (refer to [Figure 1-3](#)). A separate little window appears containing all the tools from the toolslot. You can place this window anywhere on the screen. This procedure can save your sanity if you're constantly switching between two tools that share a toolslot. To get rid of this toolslot window, click the X (Windows) or the tiny white Close box (Mac) in its upper-left corner.

Tip

When you pause the mouse pointer over any tool, the name of the tool appears, followed by a letter. Well, no, the letters aren't grades given to the tools for their usefulness; the letters let you know which keys to press if you want quick access to the tools. (For instance, press the P key on your keyboard to get the Pen tool or R to get the Rotate tool.)

As you gaze at the Toolbox, notice that it doesn't have a Close or Expand box along its top. One possible explanation for this is that you go to the Toolbox for just about everything you do in Illustrator, and it's almost impossible to work without it. If you really want to, though, you can hide the Toolbox by selecting Hide Tools from the Window menu at the top of the screen. To bring back the Toolbox, go to the Window menu again and select Show Tools.

Tip

You can hide the Toolbox temporarily along with your palettes by pressing the Tab key. Although this feature can be unsettling if you don't know about it (if you hit the Tab key by accident, everything disappears except your graphics and the menu bar!), it's still mighty useful—especially if you're working on a small computer screen. You can work with everything hidden, hit the Tab key when you need to, select the tool or palette item you need, and get back to work unfettered by the things you aren't using. This approach is a lot faster than selecting Show or Hide from the Window menu whenever you want to do something different.

Palettes to suit any artist

Illustrator has a ton of palettes. You may think of a palette as something more closely associated with a painter than an illustrator, but nonetheless, Illustrator has about 30 of them. As with a painter's palette that holds the paints she uses most, an Illustrator palette provides quick access to the most frequently used commands and features. The contents of palettes are organized according to what they do. The Character palette contains commands to format individual pieces or big chunks of text, and the Color palette lets you create and change colors. Although Illustrator has dozens of palettes, you rarely need to have them all open at once. When entering text, for example, you want the Character palette open, but you probably don't need the Gradient palette open because the Gradient palette controls only gradients.

You open a palette by choosing it as a menu item. These all live in the Window menu (such as Window Colors). To close a palette, click the X (Windows) or the tiny white box (Mac) in its upper-left corner.

Tip

Fortunately, Illustrator can both tab and dock palettes to keep them more organized, giving you a wee bit of space in which you can actually draw and edit your artwork. *Tabbing* lets you stack palettes in one area so they overlap like index cards. *Docking* connects the top of one palette to the bottom of another so that both palettes are visible but take up as little space as possible.

By default, Illustrator displays the palettes shown in [Figure 1-4](#). Notice that some of the palettes are grouped into sets and offer you several tabs. (For instance, the Styles, Swatches, Brushes, and Symbols palettes are tabbed together in one set.) Initially, you see only the Styles palette; the Swatches, Brushes, and Symbols palettes are hidden behind the Styles palette. To see either of those palettes, click the tab for the one you want to view.

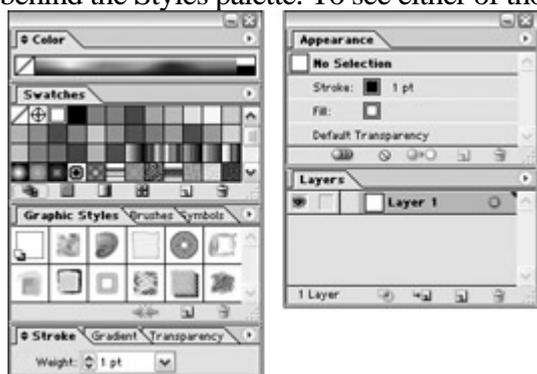


Figure 1-4: Palettes are tabbed together in a set.

You can combine palettes by any method that you feel works for you. To move a palette from one set to another, click and drag that palette's tab from one set into another or out by itself (which creates a new set). Illustrator doesn't limit you; you can combine any palette with any set. You can even put all of Illustrator's palettes into one set if you really want to—but I don't advise doing so; the tabs would all overlap so you couldn't tell what's what.

Another way to combine palettes is by docking them together, as shown in [Figure 1-5](#). Unlike tabbed palettes,

docked palettes are all out there in plain sight; you can see more than one palette in a set at the same time. To dock one palette to another, drag the tab of the first palette to the bottom of the other palette. A dark line appears on the bottom of the second palette when it's in docking position. When you release the mouse button, the first palette docks with the second one.



Figure 1-5: The Layers palette docked to the Styles palette.

Many Illustrator palettes have their own menus, which pop up when you click the triangle in the upper-right corner of the palette, as shown in [Figure 1-6](#).



Figure 1-6: Palettes also have their own menus.

Items in the palettes' pop-up menus relate specifically to each palette. This makes them easy to ignore and easy to figure out after you master the individual palette.

Menus with the finest cuisine

Illustrator menus are organized fairly well. Some menus are immediately obvious. You find commands having to do with type under the Type menu and commands for viewing your document under the View menu. Other menus are a little less intuitive and make sense only after you start using them. For instance, after you realize that *any one on-screen thing in Illustrator is an object*, you discover that items in the Object menu relate to objects. Other menus take a little more work and experimentation to understand. For instance, the Filter menu and the Effects menu have many items that appear identical, yet do very different things. Believe it or not, all these menus are arranged to make figuring out and using Illustrator as easy as possible.

To use an item in a menu, drag down to that item and release. Something should happen when you do that (no explosions or tsunamis as far as I know), depending on which menu item you select. Even the way a menu item appears on a menu can be a handy tip for example, consider the following characteristics:

•

Submenus: Many of Illustrator's menus have several submenus in them, indicated by a little triangle to the right of the menu item. To access a menu item in a submenu, drag down to the title of the submenu and then over to the item you want to use. (See [Figure 1-7](#).)

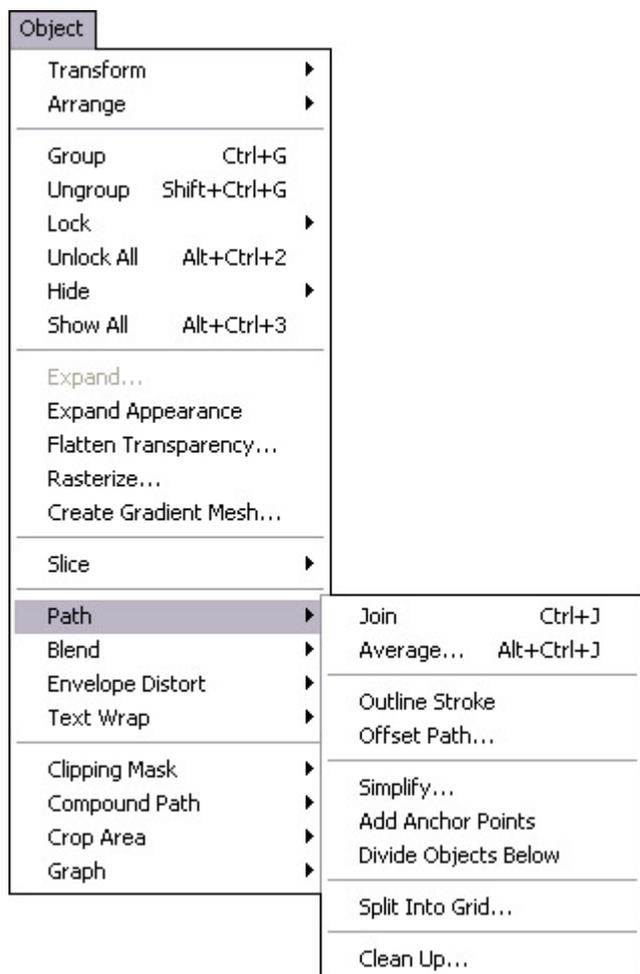


Figure 1-7: The Path submenu in the Object menu.

•

Keyboard commands: Most menu items in Illustrator have keyboard shortcuts (key combinations listed at the right) that can activate them.

•

More info needed: An ellipsis (. . .) indicates that when you click the item, a dialog box appears, requesting additional input from you.

•

Unavailable commands: A grayed-out menu item means Illustrator won't let you do anything with that item just now.

Mac and Windows issues spring eternal

Okay, I know some loyalties in this area are fierce can't we all just get along for a while? Regardless of which

system you use or like, you work in Illustrator pretty much the same way. A few little differences are important enough to mention, however, especially if you jump between the two systems:

-

The .ai extension: Windows users often need filename extensions after their filenames or the system refuses to look at the files. The Illustrator file extension is .ai. That's right, as in *aieee!* but without the *eee!*. Most file types (on Windows systems) have three-letter extensions; Illustrator uses two. Windows folks should save Illustrator documents with the .ai extension for maximum compatibility with all flavors of Windows. Having the wrong extension on the file can cause problems. If you were to put .aif on there, for example, Windows would try to open the file as a sound file, fail, and give you an error message!

Tip

Windows users are accustomed to using two- and three-letter filename extensions. Mac users don't have to, but they really should get in the habit of doing so. For starters, that keeps the peace when you send files and lets you instantly identify what the file is. Illustrator lets you save files in an alphabet soup of file formats, such as PDF (.pdf), TIFF (.tif), EPS (.eps), or JPEG (.jpg). Each of these formats has its own unique properties and purposes. When you see .eps on a file, chances are good that it's a graphic created for use in a page layout program. When you see .gif, you know it's a graphic created for display on the Web. File extensions can tell you a lot about your files even before you open them.

-

Right-click versus Ctrl+click: While in Illustrator, Windows users can right-click most places in Illustrator to display a contextual menu (see [Figure 1-8](#)). Mac users, who don't have a right mouse button, press the Ctrl key while clicking the mouse button. Contextual menus (clever creatures!) are context-sensitive: They recognize what the mouse is near when you click and give you options you can apply . . . the following, for example:

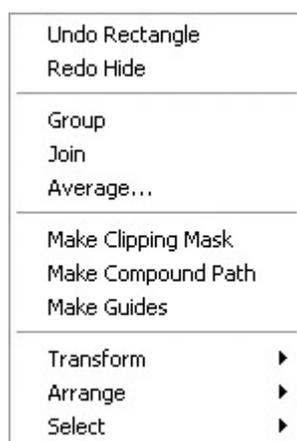


Figure 1-8: A contextual menu appears when you Ctrl + Click (Mac) or right-click(Windows).

○

Right-click (or Ctrl+click) the Ruler, and a context menu shows up, offering to help you change the Ruler's unit of measurement.

○

Right-click (or Ctrl+click) text, and you can change the font, size, and a slew of other options.

○

Click a path, and up come the options related to paths, and so on.

Tip

All the items found in contextual menus appear in the regular menus, too, so you never really *have* to use contextual menus. They're among those little luxuries (like a steering-wheel-warmer on a cold day) that make Illustrator so nice to use.

•

Performance: As of 2003, Windows systems have taken a decisive lead over Macs when it comes to performance. The difference is most apparent with graphics applications such as Photoshop and Illustrator, but you'll notice it with other applications as well. If you're thinking of purchasing a new system, and speed and responsiveness is important (or at least more important than the feel of the OS), I suggest getting a zippy PC over a (comparably) sluggish Mac.

Defining the Document Area

Illustrator uses a traditional art board as a metaphor; it's what you see when you create a new file (shown in [Figure 1-9](#)). You have the page you're working on (the Artboard), and the table the page sits on (called the Scratch area, but traditional artists will recognize it as a Pasteboard). When you create a new document, the Artboard appears as a rectangle in the middle of a white expanse. (The actual size and shape of the Artboard depends on what you enter for height and width when you create a new document.)



Figure 1-9: The Artboard and the Scratch area—the first two wiseguys you meet when you create a new Illustrator file.

The Artboard serves as a guide to show how large your artwork is (relative to the page size you chose when you created the document). Many people find it easier to create with a specific page size in mind. If you come from a traditional graphic arts background, you may find the idea of an Artboard and Pasteboard (or Scratch area) reassuring. You can create elements and leave them in the Scratch area, ready for you to grab and add to the artwork you're creating on the Artboard. As to how the Artboard affects your art—well, it doesn't. It's only a guide to help you get your bearings. Elements in the Scratch area still print if you print to large enough paper. If you save your Illustrator artwork as an EPS (Encapsulated PostScript) to bring it into a page layout program (or as a GIF to use on the Web), anything in the Scratch area is saved with it.

Tip

If you don't find the Artboard useful as a guide, you can hide it altogether by choosing **View > Hide Artboard**.

For printing a document, you may find the Page Tiling feature a little more significant than the Artboard. Illustrator smartly recognizes the printer that your document is currently selected to print to and creates a Page Tile (a rectangle), which is the size and shape of the largest area that the selected printer can print. You can recognize the Page Tiling feature by a thin, dotted line that appears just inside the Artboard if you set page size to the size of your printer paper.

Most printers show a printable area slightly smaller than the page size. Anything outside these guides doesn't print.

Even so, remember that this guide is based on *your* printer; what's inside someone else's printable area may not be the same.

Team LiB

◀ PREVIOUS NEXT ▶

Opening Existing Documents

To open any existing Illustrator document, choose File Open and then select the document you want (using the Open dialog box shown in [Figure 1-10](#); Mac dialog boxes look a little different).

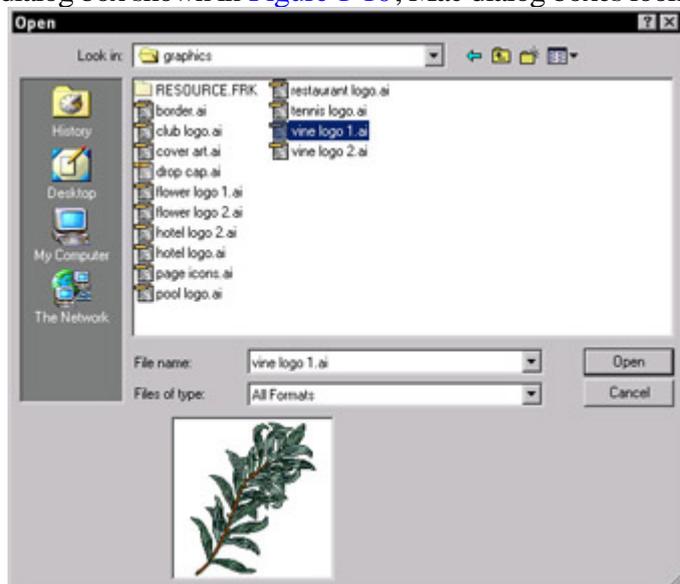


Figure 1-10: Use the Open dialog box to select the file you want to open.

Another way to open a document is by double-clicking the file itself. If you double-click an Illustrator file when Illustrator isn't running, the program launches for you automatically. (Glad it's not a missile.)

Viewing Illustrator Documents

Illustrator provides versatile options for viewing documents—including controls for zooming, scrolling, and hiding (or showing) certain document features. You can get close-up to the smallest areas of your artwork and make changes so minute that they aren't visible to the human eye—but you feel better knowing that your graphic is microscopically perfect. Or, to get a good feel for your artwork's effect in the real world, view your document at the actual size it prints at. Or you can view your on-screen objects as their skeletons of essential points and paths, with no strokes or colors to distract you from the true essence of your artwork. A view of any phase is available, from points-and-paths to perfect printout. Bottom line: You have to see what you're doing to know what you're doing. Illustrator offers that capability.

Zooming in and out of artwork

You can view your artwork at actual size (approximately its size when it prints), much larger, or much smaller. Changing the zoom amount changes only the image's on-screen appearance—not the image's actual size, the way it prints, or its appearance in another application. Zooming is like using binoculars to watch a neighbor violate the bylaws of the homeowners' association. Those unapproved maple saplings (and the sap who's planting them) don't actually change size; you just zoom in on them from a discreet distance.

The Zoom tool



The Zoom tool is the magnifying glass in the lower-right corner of the Toolbox. When you click the Zoom tool and move it over the document, a plus sign appears in the center of the magnifying glass. Clicking the Zoom tool makes the details of your artwork appear larger in the document window. You can click until you zoom in to 6,400 percent (64 times larger than actual size). [Figure 1-11](#) shows a document viewed at actual size and zoomed in to 400 percent.

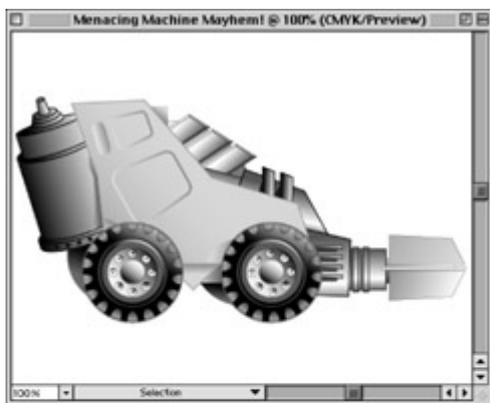


Figure 1-11: Two views of the artwork: actual size and zoomed to 400 percent. If you print while zoomed in, the image still prints at actual size.

The Zoom tool is actually two tools in one. When you hold down the Alt key (Option on the Mac), the magnifying glass contains a minus sign. Holding down the Alt or Option key and clicking your image with the Zoom tool causes your image to appear smaller. You can zoom out as far as 3.13 percent (where everything is really tiny). [Figure 1-12](#) shows the art from [Figure 1-11](#) as it looks at 25 percent of its actual size.



Figure 1-12: The artwork from [Figure 1-11](#) at 25 percent of its actual size.

Speed zoom ahead

Zooming is something Illustrator users do often enough to warrant the multitude of keyboard commands associated with this function. In order of usefulness, the following items represent some of the most useful speed-zoom techniques:

-

Use any tool to Zoom In: Press Ctrl+Space (⌘+Space on a Mac) and the tool you're using changes to the magnifying glass with a plus sign in it. Click the area where you want to zoom in. After you release the keys, the Zoom tool switches back to the tool you were previously using. This shortcut is *really* handy.

•

Use any tool to Zoom Out: Press Ctrl+Alt+Space (⌘+Option+Space on a Mac), and the tool you're using changes to the magnifying glass with a minus sign in it. Click the image to zoom out. After you release the keys, the Zoom tool switches back to the tool you were previously using. This shortcut is as handy as the temporary Zoom In tool.

•

Go to Actual Size: Press Ctrl+1 (⌘+1 on a Mac) to return to actual size. You can also double-click the Zoom tool to do this.

•

Go to Fit In Window view: Press Ctrl+0 (⌘+0 on a Mac) to zoom to the level at which your page fits into the window. You can also double-click the Hand tool to do this.

•

Zoom in and out: Press Ctrl++ (plus) (⌘++ [plus] on a Mac) to zoom in one level or Ctrl+- (minus) (⌘+- [minus] on a Mac) to zoom out one level.

•

Activate the Zoom In tool: Press Z to change to the Zoom In tool. If you've actually read to the bottom of this list, geekiness from someone you know is starting to rub off on you. I strongly advise taking a few days off away from your computer (and from said geek).

•

While Zooming: Press the spacebar to move around the current marquee (the dotted lines)

Scrolling around your document

You can use the scroll bars to move around your document, but they limit you to moving horizontally or vertically and only one of those directions at a time. If you're really cool (and you know you are), you can use the Hand tool to move around your document in any direction.

To use the Hand tool, choose it from the Toolbox. Then click and drag anywhere in the document. The artwork moves in the direction you drag. At first, this action may seem slightly awkward but power corrupts. After a few minutes of pushing your art around, you'll never want to go back to those nasty scroll bars.

Tip

You can use any tool as the Hand tool. To change a tool into the Hand tool, hold down the spacebar while you click the tool. Then click and drag just as you would with the Hand tool. Let go of the spacebar, and the tool you were using returns to its original form. This trick works with any tool except the Text tool. (If you try it with that tool, you just type space after space after space.)

Looking at the guts of your artwork

Typically, what you see in your Document window is pretty much what's going to print (the view in Preview mode). However, what you see isn't what the printer and Illustrator look at. Instead, they see all your Illustrator artwork and objects as a series of outlines, placed images, and text (the view in Outline mode). If you want to view your document in this skeletal form, choose View > Outline. Outline mode is a great diagnostic tool; it helps you understand how a document was made. [Figure 1-13](#) shows artwork in both Preview and Outline modes. Outline mode also makes it easier to select objects that are very close together.

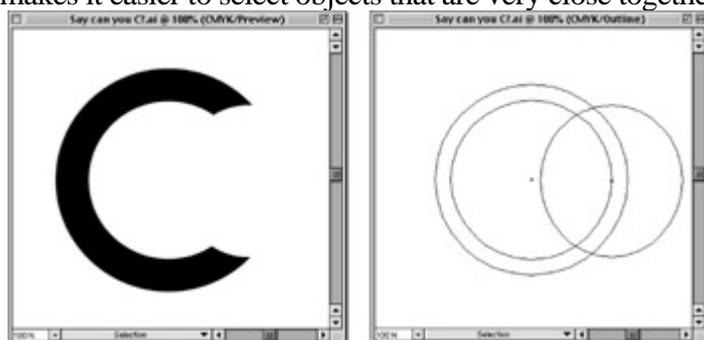


Figure 1-13: Art in Preview mode and Outline mode.

Notice that in Preview mode, the artwork appears to be the letter C; Outline mode shows the three circles (two white circles on top of a black circle) that create that appearance. Graphics like this can be tricky to work with; if you don't know how the object is made, you may assume (mistakenly, but logically enough) that you actually have a C-shaped object instead of three circles. As soon as you start making changes to it as though it were really a C, Illustrator starts acting completely illogical. Jumping into Outline mode lets you see the secret truth behind the artwork, helping you to understand how the art was made.

Using Templates

Few things in life are as frightening as a blank page staring you down. Knowing this, the good folks at Adobe have supplied hundreds of *templates* to get you started quickly and easily. Templates, such as the one shown in [Figure 1-14](#), provide you with a stylish yet fully customizable starting point. Because you can change so much in each template, from colors to fonts to objects, your use of a template is sure to be different than your buddy Larry's use of it. And, as evidenced by his questionable wardrobe, Larry has absolutely no design sense whatsoever.

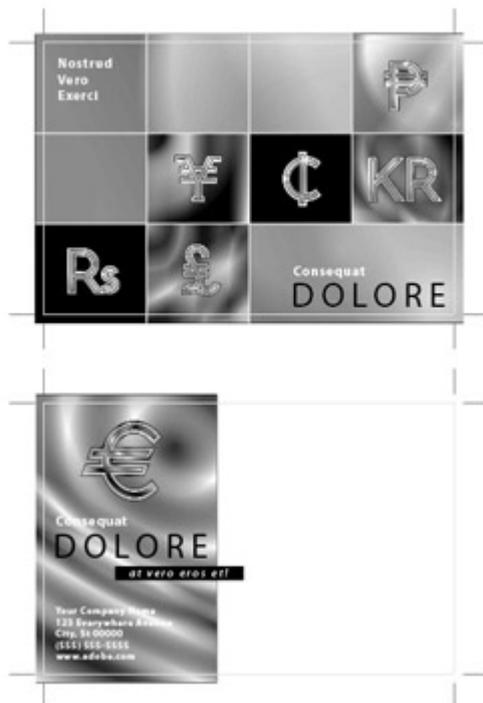


Figure 1-14: A template for a stylized postcard.

To use a template in Illustrator, select the **New from Template** option in the **Welcome to Adobe Illustrator** dialog box that I talked about earlier in the chapter, or choose **Fill New from Template**. The template opens up as an untitled document (don't be concerned about writing over the template; you're actually opening a copy of the original file).

Saving Illustrator Documents

The instant you accomplish something you like, you should save it. And you should save every few minutes, even if you haven't done something you like, because if you don't, you lose all the work and have to re-create it if you crash, accidentally quit, or accidentally shut off the power supply to your computer. Unlike applications such as Microsoft Word or Adobe InDesign, Illustrator has no auto-save feature. Anything you don't save is lost. Just remember that old TLA (three-letter acronym), SOS: Save Often, Silly! Saving only takes a second, and it saves not only your artwork but also your time and sanity.

To save a document, choose File Save. If you haven't previously saved the document, the Save As dialog box (shown in [Figure 1-15](#)) appears; reward its promptness by naming your file something appropriate, witty, and deep. Or type something hurried-but-meaningful, such as **gasdfoiu** or **jk123**, so you can challenge yourself later to figure out what that @#*! document is. (Just kidding.)

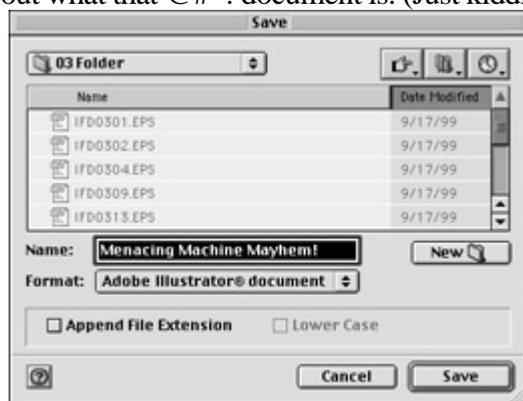


Figure 1-15: Name your masterpiece in the Save dialog box.

If you've already saved your document, the Save command updates the existing file. If you're not sure whether you previously saved, look at the title bar. If it reads *Untitled-1*, you probably haven't saved (only someone with a creepy sense of humor would pick *Untitled-1* as a title just to befuddle the rest of us).

Changing Your Mind

One of Illustrator's most powerful features may be strikingly familiar: Edit Undo gives you a way to take back the goof you just made. But that's so common these days; in Illustrator, Edit Undo is a multiple undo—it makes you the Master of Time! You can take your artwork back through time, step by step, all the way to when you first opened the document! If you make a mistake (or several), just choose Edit Undo (or press ⌘+Z on a Mac, Ctrl+Z with Windows) repeatedly, until you get back to the way things were before they went so wrong. To redo the last thing you undid, select Edit Redo (or press ⌘+Shift+Z on a Mac, Ctrl+Shift+Z with Windows). (A time machine with a reverse gear—way cool.)

Imagine creating with wild abandon—moving points, changing colors and line thicknesses, running filters—because in Illustrator, you can change your mind after the fact. Think of what you could obliterate from time—the misplaced stroke that looks like a bad tattoo, the missed goal that kept your team from the playoffs, the blind date that went so horribly wrong—well, okay, it only works in Illustrator. At least it works somewhere.

You can take a graphic back to the way it was when you first opened it, with one exception: If you close a file and then open it again, you can't go back to anything you did before you closed the file. You can, however, save a file and then go back to things that happened before you saved it—if you left the file open after you saved it. In that case, the only thing that can't be undone is the Save command: You still have a file on your hard drive that exists exactly as it did when you hit Save. This method can be useful if you have to create multiple revisions of the same document.

Printing Illustrator Documents

If your computer is hooked up or networked to a printer, you can print just about anything you create in Illustrator. Before you print, however, make sure that your artwork is within the Page Tiling boundaries (that dotted gray rectangle that shows up when you select View Show Page Tiling). Only items within these boundaries print. The dotted lines on the page indicate the trim area; if your image is outside the dotted lines, it won't print.

To print your artwork, choose File Print. The Print dialog box appears (see [Figure 1-16](#)). Click OK; soon a sheet of paper emerges from your printer with your artwork on it.

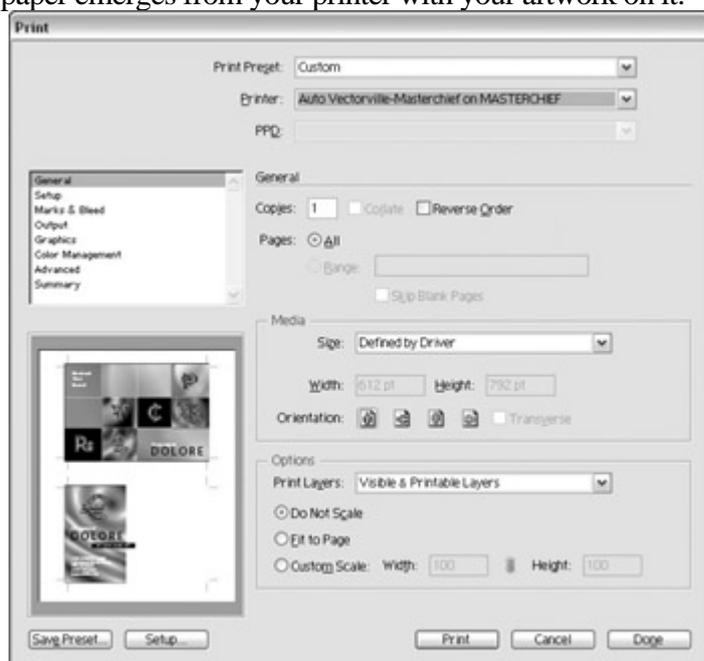


Figure 1-16: The Print dialog box, updated with lots of funky options for version CS.

Closing Documents and Quitting Illustrator

To close an Illustrator document, choose File Close. The document closes without a fuss. If you haven't saved before closing, a dialog box appears, asking whether you want to save changes made to your artwork. To quit Illustrator, choose File Exit (Windows) or File Quit (Mac). If you haven't saved before quitting, a dialog box appears and asks whether you want to save your changes. (Consistent good manners aren't they wonderful?)

Chapter 2: Following the Righteous Path

Overview

In This Chapter

- Understanding how paths and pixels work
- Knowing the differences between paths and pixels
- Determining when to use paths and when to use pixels
- Using PostScript printing and paths
- Creating paths

Being new to Illustrator typically means being new to paths. Paths are the heart and soul of Illustrator—its primary way to create graphics. Nearly all computer-generated graphics are either pixel-based or path-based (also known as vector-based—more on that later). Getting a firm grip on the differences between the two graphics types can help you create graphics of any type.

Pixel-based images (created in Adobe Photoshop as well as by scanners and digital cameras) use a fixed grid of tiny colored squares (kind of like a tiny mosaic tile) to create images on your screen. Your computer monitor's *resolution* is a measure of how detailed an on-screen image can be, based on how many pixels the screen can provide per square inch. To give you an idea of how small these pixels are, every square inch of the average monitor contains up to 9,216 pixels. Even so, monitors have a relatively low resolution; they don't use many pixels per inch compared with high-resolution printing, which can require 90,000 pixels in a square inch or more.

In spite of their astonishing quantity, pixels work just like mosaic tiles (or like the dots in a Seurat painting). Because

images are a bit less distinct from farther away, putting squares of different colors together results in a smooth picture when seen from a distance; the individual squares are (in effect) invisible. The more squares used to create a square inch of the image (that is, the higher the resolution), the smoother and more realistic the picture is.

In addition to their staggeringly small size, the range of colors pixels can have is equally astonishing. A single pixel can display only one color at a time, but that color can be any of 16.7 million.

Path-based (often called *vector-based*) graphics are much simpler and in some ways, easier to comprehend than their pixel-based cousins. Think of an image in a coloring book: A shape is defined by a line. Inside the line, you can add color. By using this simple method of shapes and color, you can create just about any picture you can imagine. In Illustrator, the shapes can be any size and complexity, and the lines can be as thick or as thin as you want, or even invisible. And the shapes can be filled with an astonishing variety of colors, patterns, and gradients (even pixel-based images), but the same basic coloring-book principle applies.

Whether Paths or Pixels Are Better

You choose between paths and pixels for different reasons. Paths are better for some things and pixels are better for others, and each approach has its strengths. The key to determining whether to use paths (which Illustrator creates) or pixels (from a program, such as Photoshop) is to be familiar with the capabilities of each method. [Figure 2-1](#) shows path-based artwork next to pixel-based artwork.

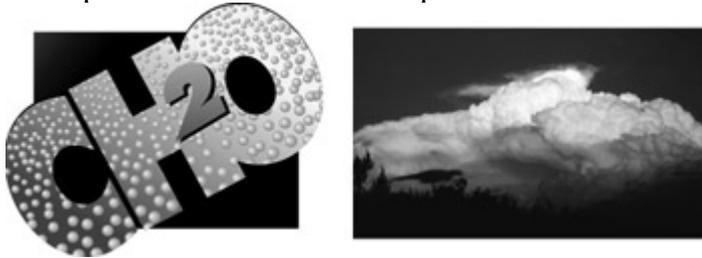


Figure 2-1: Path-based artwork (left) and pixel-based artwork (right).

Paths are generally better for type, logos, and precision graphics. Pixels are generally better for photographs, complex backgrounds, textures, and simulated lighting effects. Quite often, however, the proper combination of paths and pixels results in the best final illustration possible. Determining what combination to use is a lot easier when you refer to the advantages and drawbacks of both paths and pixels.

Paths: The ultimate flexibility in graphics

Paths are used to define any shape from a simple square or circle to the shape of South America. Because paths are the outline of these shapes and not the shapes themselves, they take up very little storage space. A path-based square that measures 15 x 15 feet takes up no more room in your computer than a 1-x-1-inch path-based square.

How can such a large square and such a tiny one accompany the same amount of computer memory? Through math, mostly. Looking at how Illustrator draws a square can help you make sense of all this information. To Illustrator, a square is simply a set of four locations—one for each of four points (the corners)—as well as any Fill or Stroke information (what color the square is). Where the points are doesn't matter; what matters is that you have four of them and they make a square when you connect the dots.

What about complex outlines? A semiaccurate representation of South America with a limited amount of detail probably needs dozens of points to define the shape of the continent. In this case, there's rarely a straight line anywhere—from point to point, it's nothing but curved lines. And because they need more information to describe them, those curved lines take up about twice as much disk space as straight lines do. Even so, a tiny little 1-inch-high illustration of South America can be enlarged to 15 feet tall and still have exactly the same file size because the illustration still has exactly the same number of points. Only the math that determines the location of those points has been changed to put them farther apart.

[Figure 2-2](#) shows South America next to a square that physically appears to be about three times as large as South America (well, three times as large as the illustration of South America). Which one is bigger in terms of file size? South America is. It has more detail and, therefore, more points.



Figure 2-2: The South America shape is actually a larger Illustrator file than the square because more points are used to define the continent's shape.

What's so cool about paths is something I previously alluded to: You can make paths much larger or smaller in physical dimensions without increasing the file size or losing image quality. You can rotate a path, flip it (*reflecting*), skew it (*shearing*), or distort it in a number of ways without changing the file size or detail. (Here's the secret: *All you're really changing is the location of the points.*) This near-effortless scalability makes Illustrator the perfect choice for creating logos that appear on business cards, letterheads, Web pages, various documents, banners, billboards, or signs.

Pixels: Detail and realism to spare

Pixel-based images are used for photographs because the fine random naturalistic detail is virtually impossible to create in a path-based image. Digitized photographs represent the majority of the pixel-based images in use today. The rest are mostly Web graphics and other on-screen images.

Technical Stuff

Even a low-resolution pixel-based image can have 5,184 squares of color per square inch, each of which can be any of 16.7 million different colors. In a path-based image, every different color (with a few exceptions) must be defined by a separate path. To equal the number of different colors that you can create in a pixel-based image you'd have to draw so many paths that . . . well, imagine covering a basketball with confetti, one piece at a time. For this reason, pixel-based images are the hands-down choice over path-based graphics if you're re-creating the continuous tones and irregular patterns found in nature, such as an outdoor scene with a lot of grass, trees, and furry animals.

On the other hand, paths are far superior to pixels if you want to maintain the quality of a graphic image despite enlarging and reducing its size. Think what you have to do to increase the size of artwork made with mosaic tiles. You have to increase the number of tiles unless you can enlarge the tiles that are already there. But if you did that, the tiles would be obvious from a distance. Same deal with pixel images. You have to add more tiles (pixels), or you see the pixels you already have showing up on-screen as big squares. And when you add pixels, you make the file size

larger while reducing the quality (worst of both worlds) because you can't get away with just tossing in any old pixels. An artisan may be able to add tiles to her mosaic and preserve its image quality, but the computer is just guessing about what tiles to add (in geek speak, a process called *interpolation*). There's just no way to enlarge a pixel-based image without reducing the quality, as shown in [Figure 2-3](#). Likewise, shrinking the image means throwing away pixels, which degrades the image because it then has fewer pixels available for showing detail. In technical circles, changing the number of pixels in an image is called *resampling*.

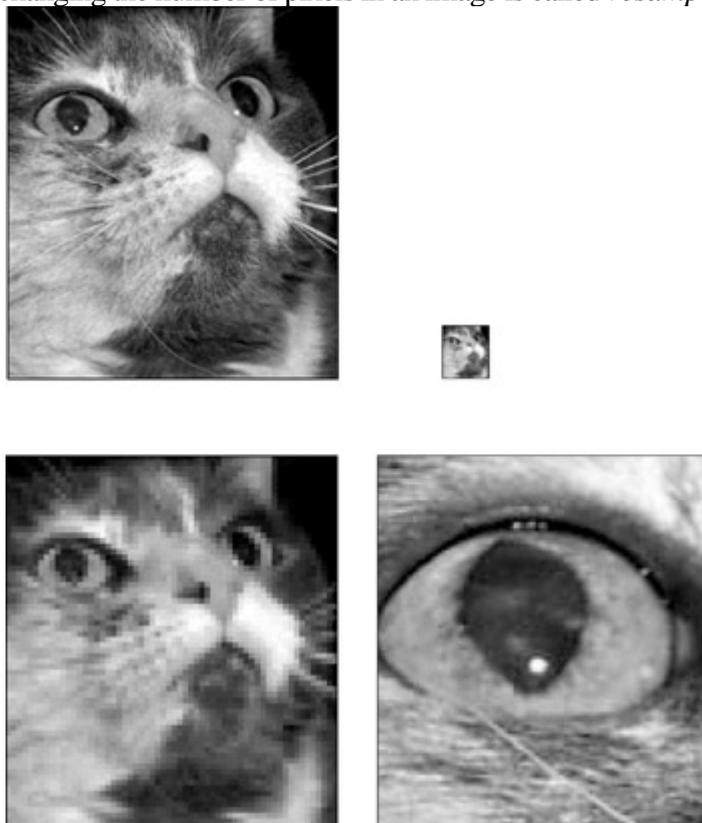


Figure 2-3: The effects of reducing and enlarging the image.

An image with thousands of pixels can be displayed on-screen or printed much larger with high quality than an image with only 900 pixels. Of course, all those pixels take up a whole lot more storage space on your hard drive. Path-based images have no such limitations.

How Paths and Pixels Compare

This is it—the definitive answer you’ve been looking for: Use pixels for photographic manipulation. File sizes are large but smaller than if you tried to create the same photographic image using paths. Pixel-based graphics that need to print or display at large sizes require larger file sizes than the same graphics printed or displayed at smaller sizes. Use path-based graphics to create any type of graphics; their file sizes are typically much smaller than their pixel-based counterparts (and you can always create pixel-based graphics from the path-based ones at a multitude of sizes and resolutions). A path-based graphic can be displayed or printed at any size, from microscopic to billboard, without any change in file size, yet always at maximum quality. And the best part is that path-based graphics are easily edited, unlike their every single pixel is a color pixel counterparts.

A comparison of path and pixel documents

The best way to show advantages of each format is to take a look at the same graphic created with both paths and pixels. The illustration shown in [Figure 2-4](#) is a logo, created with paths, for the country of Oddland to use on all its manufactured goods, as well as on signs, brochures, and other places.

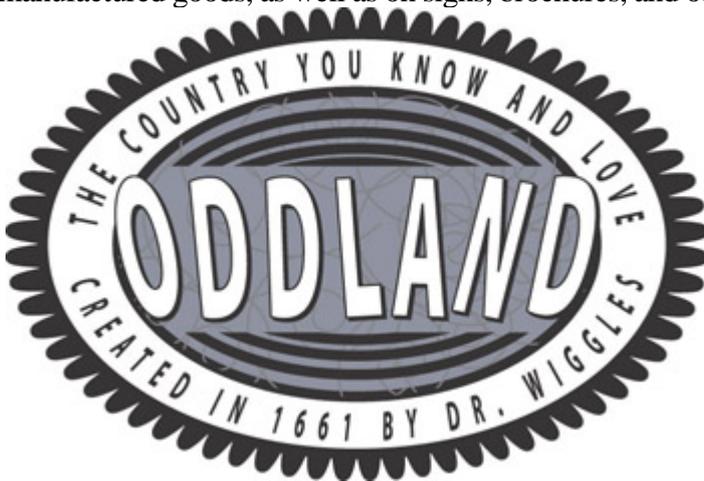


Figure 2-4: A logo for Oddland, created with paths and weighing in at 188K.

One thing you notice right away is that the logo is text-heavy. Paths represent text fairly well. A big advantage in creating this logo with paths is its scalability; you can enlarge or reduce it to virtually any size without changing the image quality. Compare [Figure 2-4](#) with [Figure 2-5](#), which shows a pixel-based version of the logo. (Looks like a clone, doesn't it? Looks can be deceiving.)



Figure 2-5: The same Oddland logo, created with pixels and tipping the scales at 1.2MB.

If you use a high enough resolution, the pixel-based logo looks as good as the path-based but its file size is 1.2MB (almost ten times the size of the path-based logo). Maybe that isn't a problem if you have a hard drive the size of New Jersey, but watch what happens when you change the size of the logo. If you enlarge the path-based version, you get the image on the left in [Figure 2-6](#).

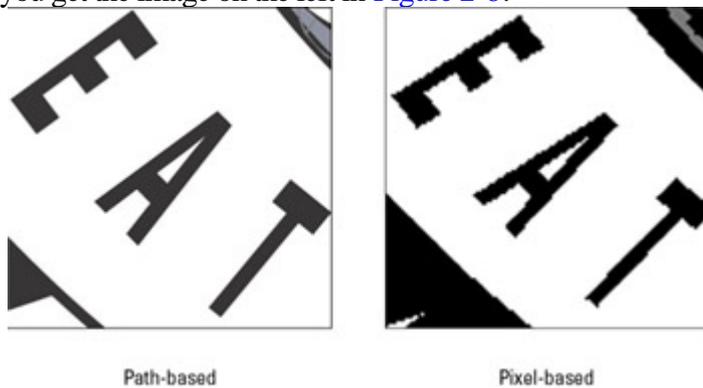


Figure 2-6: A section of Oddland logo, enlarged to five times its original size.

All I had room for in [Figure 2-6](#) was a smidgen of the logo the whole thing would be over 20 inches square but note how the edges remain perfectly smooth and crisp in the path-based version. And the file size is still only 188K! On the other hand, if you enlarge the pixel-based version, you get the image on the right. Notice the dreaded jagged edges. Worse, the whole logo at this size would become the Giant File That Ate New Jersey over 25MB in size more than 100 times the file size of the path version!

It is very difficult to create artwork approaching photographic realism with paths, but it can be done. An image of Venus, shown in [Figure 2-7](#), was created entirely within Illustrator and consisted entirely of paths.

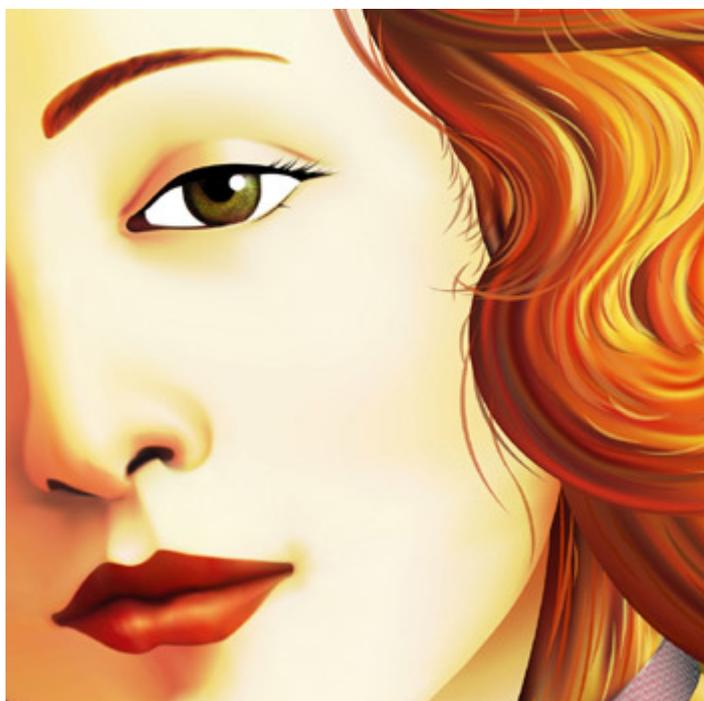


Figure 2-7: A close-up of Venus.

While difficult, you can achieve surreal photo-realistic effects with Illustrator, such as Venus's eye, shown zoomed in at several times its original size in [Figure 2-8](#).



Figure 2-8: The vectors-only version of Venus's eye, compared to the original Botticelli painting at the same level.

When to use paths and when to use pixels

In [Table 2-1](#), check out some attributes that are best created with paths and some that are best created with pixels.

Table 2-1: What Paths and Pixels Are Especially Good For

Use Paths if Your Artwork Contains	Use Pixels if Your Artwork Contains
Large amounts of type	Photographs
Geometric shapes	Complex naturalistic textures

Thin lines

Soft-edged random details

Tip

Often, for best results, you may have to combine pixels with paths (or vectors) in the same piece of art. Fortunately, Illustrator is a perfect tool for doing that. File Place enables you to bring pixel-based artwork into Illustrator to combine it with vector-based artwork.

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◀ PREVIOUS NEXT ▶

Paths and Printing

Illustrator sends paths directly to printers in order to print smooth-edged images. This happy circumstance is one reason that Illustrator can make such good-looking artwork; most printers are designed specifically for printing out path-based images.

Dot-matrix printers of the 80s gave way to laser printers and inkjets, and with them came a dramatic increase in speed (not to mention blessed quiet).

Which is faster a square or a square?

For basic shapes, path-based artwork prints much faster than pixel-based artwork. For instance, a 5-x-5-inch path-based square prints in a fraction of the time that it takes to print the same pixel-based square. Why? The printer needs only the four corner locations for the path-based square. For the pixel-based square, the printer needs to see each and every pixel that s on the way to the printer. (Imagine trying to count sand grains with tweezers, really fast.)

Printing paths: The evolution of Bézier curves

Printers path in much the same way that Illustrator does using points connected by lines. Think of a Connect-the-Dot game you did as a kid. Instead of processing each pixel, the Illustrator print code says, Connect this point to that point, that point to this one over here, and so on. All it takes is another bit of code to say, Now fill that shape with solid red or some other color.

This approach works well for objects with flat sides, but curves are another matter entirely. You d need to connect an infinite number of dots to make a perfect curve. Here s where Illustrator gets really clever. Instead of using straight lines between points, PostScript uses curves between points: *Bézier curves*, named after their creator, world-famous mathematician Pierre Bézier (pronounced *BEZ-zee-ay*).

The idea behind Bézier curves is that you need no more than four points to define any curved line: One point to say where the path begins, one point to say where the path ends, and two control points in between. Where you put each control point (relative to the end points) determines how much the line curves and in what direction on its way to meet the end point.

Fortunately, Illustrator spares users the headache of having to work out the math; you have a little magnet-like handle on-screen (the Bézier control point) that changes the direction of the curve. Okay, actually using it may be far from intuitive, but it does give Illustrator the capability to generate complex shapes with curves.

What s my vector, Victor?

You often hear the words *vector graphics* used to describe the kind of art created in Illustrator. In mathematics, a *vector* is a quantity, such as a force or velocity, having direction and magnitude and a line representing such a quantity drawn from its point of origin to its final position. In artists' terms, a *vector* is a line of a specific size drawn in a specific place. Hmm, vector graphics are simply graphics made with lines! The basic building blocks of every Illustrator graphic are just a bunch of lines. Those lines may have other information attached to them (such as color and width), but no matter how fancy they get, underneath they're still just lines.

So why not call such graphics line art? Unfortunately, that term is already taken. Line art is a specific type of traditional graphic. I could call such illustrations *Illustrator illustrations*, but that term is a little alliterative (is there an echo in here?) and not quite accurate. You can also create vector graphics in CorelDRAW and Macromedia FreeHand (though you'd be doing yourself a great disservice if you were to do so). So this book follows convention, using *vector graphics* to describe the kind of graphics you create in Illustrator. Pretty soon you'll be doing the same!

Gray s Anatomy of a Path

Paths can be a thorn in your side while you re getting up to speed with Illustrator. At first, points may seem like a necessary evil (with *evil* the key word here), but the more you know about how they re constructed, the easier it is for you to modify them. Eventually you may even stop cursing at your poor, defenseless monitor.

In Illustrator, it s polite to point

Each path consists of a series of points. These are called *anchor points* because they anchor the path. Another type of point is called a *direction point* (a point that determines the direction and distance of a curve), but when most people refer to a point in Illustrator, they mean an anchor point, which appears only in a curved path. A path has at least two anchor points to determine where it starts and where it ends. [Figure 2-9](#) shows a path and the locations of its anchor points.



Figure 2-9: A path with several anchor points (shown as little squares).

You can handle the truth

For basic shapes with straight lines, points are all that paths need. But as soon as you want curves on a path, you need direction points (also known as handles among Illustrator insiders). Direction points are connected to anchor points by direction lines. They control how a path curves. [Figure 2-10](#) shows the same path but with direction points showing.

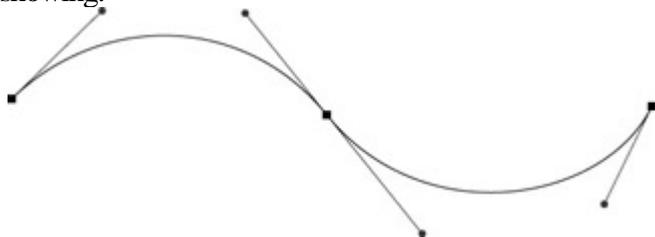


Figure 2-10: The same path from [Figure 2-9](#) but with direction points and direction lines showing.

Handles work like magnets for the paths that extend from points. The farther you drag a handle away from the path, the more that path curves toward the handle. [Figure 2-11](#) shows a few variations of a path between two points. In each of these variations, only the handle on the left has been moved.

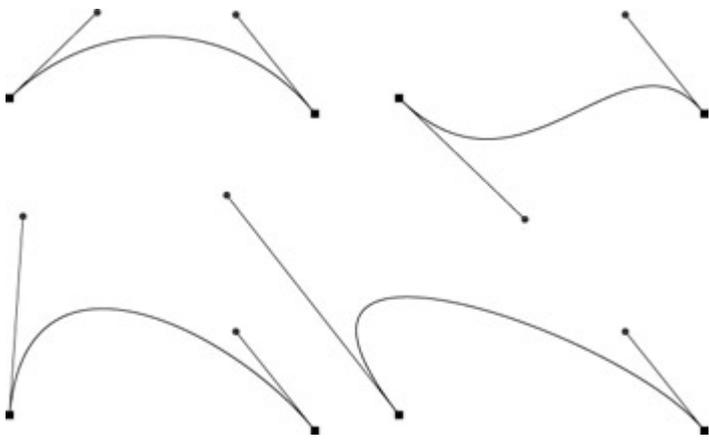


Figure 2-11: Variations of a path. The changes in the curve of the path occur as the handle on the left moves.

You can move the handles of paths by using the Direct Selection tool (the hollow arrow at the top of the Toolbox). Click the curve you want to adjust to select it. This action makes the direction points visible. Direction points are invisible unless the curve is selected with the Direct Selection tool. After the direction point is visible, click and drag the handle. [Figure 2-12](#) shows a circle with handles showing. Even basic Illustrator shapes use handles to create curves.

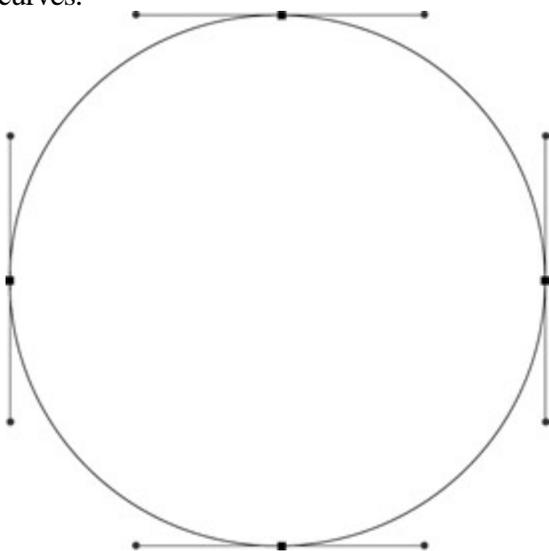


Figure 2-12: A circle with all the handles (direction points) showing.

Chapter 3: Doing Everyday Things with Illustrator

Overview

In This Chapter

- Selecting objects so they can be changed
- Moving objects in a document
- Rotating and resizing documents
- Looking at all the really fun stuff in Illustrator
- Using Illustrator with the Web
- Taking Illustrator documents into other programs
- Zeroing in on what Illustrator does best

The hard part for new users of Illustrator is figuring out just what it does. The program is so vast and has many capabilities that aren't immediately obvious or self-explanatory. Even seasoned Illustrator veterans often discover that they use many convoluted steps to accomplish something they can do with a single hidden command. This chapter is a tell-all exposé of everything that you can do in Illustrator (at least as much as I can in a single chapter). You'd need an entire book to cover such a complex program (er, um, which is why you're reading this). By the end of this chapter, you should have a good overview of the features of Illustrator and know where to look to find the things you

need to get the job done.

Team LiB

◀ PREVIOUS NEXT ▶

Picking Up Stuff and Moving It Around

Any time you want to do something to an Illustrator object, you must select it first. After you get the whole select-then-do thought lodged in your brain, many of Illustrator's functions come to you much more easily.

Illustrator has a wide variety of ways to select things, including five tools, a bunch of keyboard commands, and several menu items. Fortunately, even if you know only one or two of these methods, you can be off and running with Illustrator selections in no time, just like a pro. Using the selection tools enables you to select virtually anything in your document.

In [Chapter 6](#), I detail the process of selecting paths and objects. In this chapter, you discover the basics—all the ways of selecting, from tools and commands to menu items.

Discovering selection tools

Illustrator has five selection tools. You choose a tool according to the type of object(s) that you want to select. The selection tools are as follows (I love a parade):



Selection tool: This solid black arrow is the regular Selection tool. Use the Selection tool to select entire paths or groups by clicking them or dragging around them. If the object you click or drag around is part of a group, all the paths and objects in that group are selected as well. The Selection tool, located at the top left of the Toolbox, is plain but powerful.



Direct Selection tool: Also known as the hollow arrow, the Direct Selection tool enables you to select portions of paths—single points or segments—by clicking or dragging said points or segments. You can also use the Direct Selection tool to select other objects, such as placed images or text. The Direct Selection tool, located at the top right of the Toolbox, selects only the portions of the path that you click or drag.



Group Selection tool: This tool looks like a hollow arrow with a + symbol beside it. It selects up through paths and groups. The first click selects the entire path you click. Click the selected path again and you select the group that the first path is in. If you keep clicking, you continue to select groups of groups, all containing the group that the first group is in. The Group Selection tool shares a toolslot with the Direct Selection tool. Just click and hold on the Direct Selection tool, and the Group Selection will spring out from behind it.



Lasso tool: This tool looks like an anemic loop of string, until you use it to select points and path segments within an area you designate by dragging the mouse pointer—at which time it still looks anemic. The Lasso

tool is a go-anywhere version of the Direct Selection tool.



Magic Wand tool: Photoshop users will recognize this much-beloved tool. The Magic Wand tool selects multiple objects with similar attributes—fills, strokes, transparency—within a specific tolerance range. For example, you can select all objects that have a stroke weight of between five and ten points. The Magic Wand palette controls the various attributes and tolerance settings. For more on the Magic Wand, see [Chapter 6](#).

Illustrator provides two primary ways of using the Selection, Direct Selection, and Group Selection tools: by clicking and releasing the object or group you want to select, or by dragging a marquee around the objects you want to select. *Marquee* is techno-speak for the dotted line that's created when you drag with these tools (and all this time you thought it had to do with movie theaters).

The Select menu also provides a handy way to make selections. All the Illustrator selection commands are centralized within this new menu. Find more on the Select menu in [Chapter 6](#).

You can tell when an object is selected in Illustrator: Any selected object shows its guts on-screen—the path used to create the object, as well as any points needed to create the path. Text and placed images also show points (and sometimes paths) when they're highlighted, even though they aren't made up of paths and points (weird, isn't it?). [Figure 3-1](#) shows a pair of star illustrations; the star on the left is unselected, and the one on the right is selected.

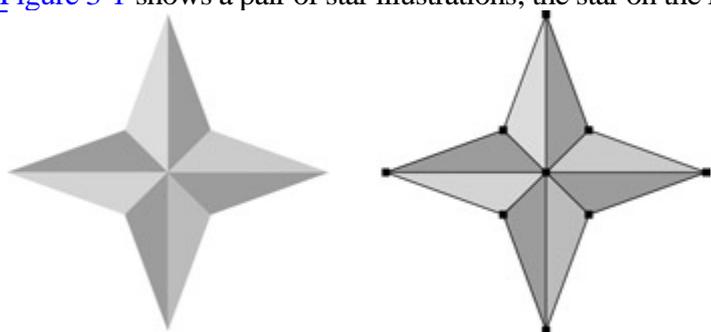


Figure 3-1: The left object is unselected; the right object is selected. Note the points and paths that appear on a selected object.

After an object is selected, you can do any number of things to it, such as change its color, move it, transform it, or even delete it. You may want to consider which tool you use to make the selection. One key difference between the arrow-shaped selection tools and the Lasso and Magic Wand selection tools is that the arrow tools also move objects that are selected; the Lasso and Magic Wand tools do not. If you're attempting to use an arrow tool to drag a marquee around an object and happen to click the object first, you move the object instead of selecting it. No marquee appears.

Moving and transforming objects

To move a selected object (or objects), just follow these steps:

1. **Select the object you want to move by using one of the selection tools.**
- 2.

Use the Selection tool or the Direct Selection tool; click and drag the selected object to the position you want to move it to.

Tip

Using the Selection or Direct Selection tools to click and drag an object that's already selected doesn't add to the selection or release the selection, but this action does enable you to move what's currently selected.

3.

Release the mouse button after the object is in position.

The object is all settled in at its new location.

Tip

Instead of dragging with the mouse, you can use the arrow keys to nudge anything that is selected a little bit at a time. This trick works no matter what tool you've selected in the Toolbox.



Illustrator power-users call the other things you can do to an object *transforming* it. These actions include rotating, resizing, reflecting, and skewing objects. Illustrator puts all these transformation tools together in the middle of the Toolbox. Regardless of which transformation tool you use, the process, shown in [Figure 3-2](#), is much the same as for moving objects. Just follow these steps:

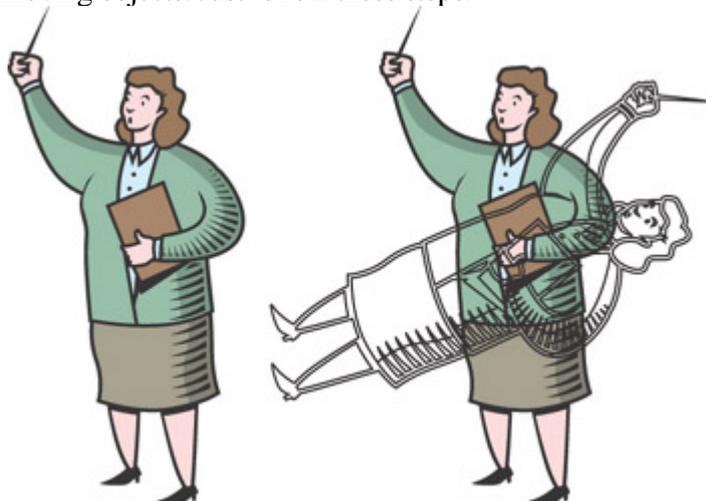


Figure 3-2: Rotating an object.

1.

Select the object you want to transform, using one of the selection tools.

2.

Choose the Rotate tool (or any transformation tool) from the Toolbox.

3.

Click the selected object and drag.

While you drag, the outlines of the object show how the object will be transformed after you release the mouse button.

4.

Release the mouse button when the object's preview matches how you want the object to appear.

As soon as you release the mouse, the object is transformed.

For more in-depth information on transforming objects, see [Chapter 12](#).

Distorting paths

Moving and transforming paths make them look different, but you can tell that the moved or transformed path is pretty much the original path in a different position, at a different angle, or maybe at a different size. Distorting paths, however, can make them look drastically different from the way they look originally.

Illustrator provides a number of different ways that paths can be distorted, but the majority of these ways fall into the category of effect-based distortions. These distortions, found in the Effect Distort menu, can create all sorts of interesting (and some downright ugly) effects. [Figure 3-3](#) shows how an innocent path can become grossly distorted in a number of ways by using some of the different distortion effects.



Figure 3-3: The original path (left) is (to the right) Puckered, Scribbled, Zig-Zagged, and Roughened.

Because distortion effects have no right settings, they produce immediate and profound changes to your artwork. They also all have previews, which show you what's going to happen to your artwork before you make any permanent change to its appearance.

To use a distortion effect, follow these steps:

1.

Select your artwork using any selection tool.

2.

Choose Effect Distort Pucker & Bloat (or any of the other distortion effects).

A dialog box opens, showing a distortion effect that has a Preview check box. Put a check mark in this box to make the effect show you what it's going to do to your artwork.

3.

Use the slider (a little triangle under a straight line) to set the amount of the distortion.

Drag the slider to the left; watch what happens to the artwork. Drag it to the right and look again.

4.

When you get something you like, click OK.

Tip

If the effect doesn't produce results that you like, click Cancel to exit the effect without changing the appearance of your artwork.

Tip

All effects change only the *appearance* of your artwork, not the artwork itself. At any time you can select the original object and delete the effect within the Appearance palette.

For more information on distortions and other ways to mess up or, enhance your artwork, check out [Bonus Chapter 1](#) on the Web at www.dummies.com/go/illustratorcs_fd.

Organizing objects

Illustrator provides many tools to help you organize your artwork. You can move objects above or behind each other, group objects together, and distribute objects to layers for heavy-duty organization.

To move an object behind all the other objects in a document, as shown in [Figure 3-4](#), follow these steps:

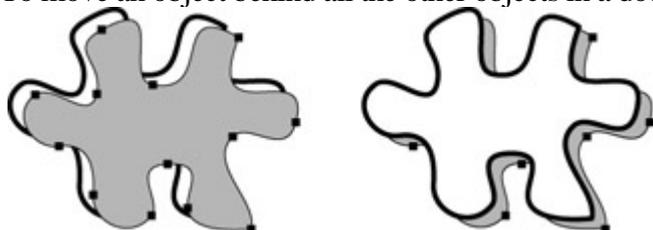


Figure 3-4: Moving and object behind other objects.

1.

Use any selection tool to select the object that you want to move behind another object.

2.

Choose Object Arrange Send to Back.

The selected object moves behind all the other objects in the document.

Selecting Object Arrange Bring to Front moves the selected object in front of all the objects in the document. Use the Send Backward and Bring Forward options to move the selected object just one level to the back or front of a stack of three or more objects. The Send to Current Layer command moves the selected object to the active layer in the Layers palette. (For more on layers, see [Chapter 13](#).)

These commands are the basic movement of objects back and forth in a document. You can also group a set of objects so that they always stay together (and are all selected at once, all the time). To group a series of objects, follow these steps:

1.

Select the objects that you want to group together.

To select more than one object, drag a marquee around the objects or hold down the Shift key and click each object you want to include in the group.

2.

Choose Object Group.

The objects are grouped together. The next time you click any one of them with the Selection tool, all are selected.

Tip

You can group two or more groups together to form a bigger group, and you can select objects along with a group (or several groups) and create a group out of them. Then you can group that group with more groups or objects. If you haven't turned into a full-fledged groupie by now, you can group that last group yet again with other groups or objects. And on and on until the men in white coats put you in a nice soft room.

Another, even more effective, method of organizing your artwork is to put related objects in layers. Using layers is like placing your artwork into separate sheets of clear plastic. A single layer can have as many pieces of artwork on it as you want. You can select all the pieces of artwork in a layer at the same time. You can lock the layers to keep them from being selected while they still remain visible. You can hide a layer (and everything on it) to get rid of artwork as if you'd deleted it but still have the option of bringing it back whenever you want. You can apply appearances and styles directly to layers. Layers are created, selected, and hidden (and that's just for starters) by using the Layers palette. See the Layers palette in [Figure 3-5](#).



Figure 3-5: The Layers palette.

You can do all sorts of amazing things by organizing your artwork into layers, so I devote a big section specifically to layers in [Chapter 13](#).

Team LiB

◀ PREVIOUS NEXT ▶

Using the Hard Stuff

Have you ever looked at an illustration and scratched your head and thought, How did they do *that*? Here's a secret. Chances are that it wasn't that hard. A slew of features in Illustrator let you do really cool things with little difficulty. The only catch is that you must walk before you can run. In Illustrator, this means being able to create simple shapes, color them, and move them in front of or behind one another (which I cover in [Chapters 4](#), [5](#), and [6](#)).

After you have those things down, you're ready to move on to the fun stuff. You'll be amazed at the things you can do with a simple command or two.

Transparency

When you draw a shape in Illustrator that's filled with a solid color or a gradient, the shape covers up any objects beneath it. You can move the object behind other objects in the document by selecting it with the Selection tool and using Object Arrange Send to Back, but you can't see through that shape to the objects behind it.

Transparency breaks those rules by enabling you to fade an object away (from 0%, or completely transparent; to 100%, or completely opaque; or any degree in between) to reveal the objects hidden beneath it. [Figure 3-6](#) shows this basic transparency at work with a partially transparent ellipse appearing above a logo.



Figure 3-6: The ellipse on top of the logo is set to be partially transparent.

Transparency is used to see through one part of a shape more than another part or to blend the colors of a shape with the colors beneath it in strange and interesting ways. Thumb through [Chapter 10](#) for more on transparency.

Blends

In the 1990s, morphing was all the rage in movies and TV shows. *Morphing* combines (averages) two images together in a series of steps so that the first image appears to be magically turning into the second. In Illustrator, you're able to use a similar technique—*blending*—to transform one object into another in as many steps as you want.

Blending lets objects change color, shape, and size, resulting in exciting effects. Illustrator's blends are live: You can blend between objects but still edit them after you create the blend. The objects in between change automatically to match the changes you make to the original objects, which allows you to tweak the way the blend looks without

having to start over. The top figure in [Figure 3-7](#) represents a step blend occurring between a small black circle and a larger gray triangle. Only the rightmost and leftmost objects were created by hand. The other objects are an average of the two created by the Blend tool. I cover blends in more detail in [Chapter 12](#).



Figure 3-7: An example of a blend between two objects.

Clipping masks

An Illustrator *clipping* mask (commonly referred to as a *mask* by longtime Illustrator users) is a path used to hide objects outside itself. For instance, you can mask out everything in an Illustrator drawing except for the area inside the path so only the area shows. Creating a clipping mask is quite simple, as shown in [Figure 3-8](#), with the following steps:

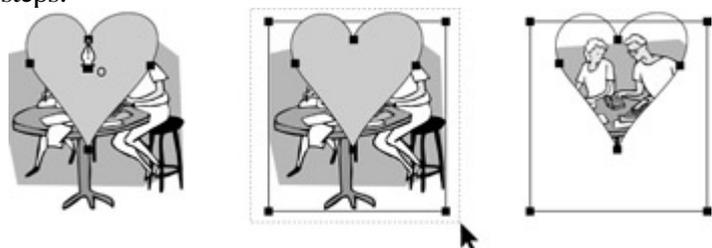


Figure 3-8: Masking artwork.

1.

Create a path to use as a mask on top of some other art.

The fill and stroke of the path don't matter because the path itself becomes invisible, along with anything outside the path. Be sure that the path you create is on top of the other art.

Tip

The art beneath the clipping mask can be as complex and have as many parts as you want. The top path masks all paths beneath it. You can use any tool to create this path (such as the Pen, Pencil, or Rectangle).

2.

Use any of the selection tools and select both the path you just created and the object(s) you want to mask.

3.

Choose Object Clipping Mask Make.

Anything selected that's outside the masking path is hidden, and the masking path itself becomes invisible. Nothing is deleted when you make a mask; it's just hidden. You can restore your artwork to its unmasked state by selecting Object Clipping Mask Release.

Compound paths and shapes

Compound paths join two or more paths together so that one path makes part of another invisible. Compound paths may sound complicated, but if you've ever typed anything in any computer program, you've been using them all along without knowing many letters are really compound paths! Any letter that has a hole in it (such as *B* or *O*) is a compound path. If you want to place text over something else and see things through the holes in the text, use compound paths, as shown in [Figure 3-9](#).



Figure 3-9: A compound path is laid over a piece of background art (which is visible through the two round holes).

A figure eight is a single compound path, made up of three paths. The two paths in the middle are *holes*—areas made transparent so you can see the background artwork through them.

As you may imagine, text characters have lots of holes in them—so they're all compound paths. A typical character, such as a lowercase *a*, is made up of two paths; the hole in the middle is one of those paths. If you want to magically transform a bit of text into a graphic object made of paths, select the text with a selection tool and choose **Type > Create Outlines**. The text changes from a text object to a series of compound paths (which you can then edit as you edit any other path).

You can make any number of overlapping paths into a compound path by selecting them and choosing **Object > Compound Path > Make**. If you want to turn the compound path back into two (or more) individual paths, select the compound path and choose **Object > Compound Path > Release**. [Figure 3-10](#) shows what happens when you release compound paths that were originally text objects. When you release the compound paths, the hollow part of the letter fills in, because the purpose of the compound path in the letter is to make those hollow parts of the letter transparent.



Figure 3-10: Text as text (left), as compound paths (middle), and as compound paths after release (right).

Compound paths work best when you keep things simple. If you stack too many objects on top of each other and try to make a compound path, holes may appear where you didn't expect them. But if you try to keep things to a

minimum (only use a few objects, and try not to have more than two objects overlapping in any one place) you'll get splendid results from the Compound Paths command.

Illustrator has also gone one step better, providing you with an easy way to create better compound paths by using compound shapes. Check them out in all their glory in [Chapter 4](#).

Flares

No longer are cool effects, such as flares, reserved to Photoshop territory. The Flare tool allows you to create effects, such as lens flares and reflections, that are photo realistic yet totally vector-based (as shown in [Figure 3-11](#)). That is, the effects can be easily edited, moved, and scaled to produce just the right look.

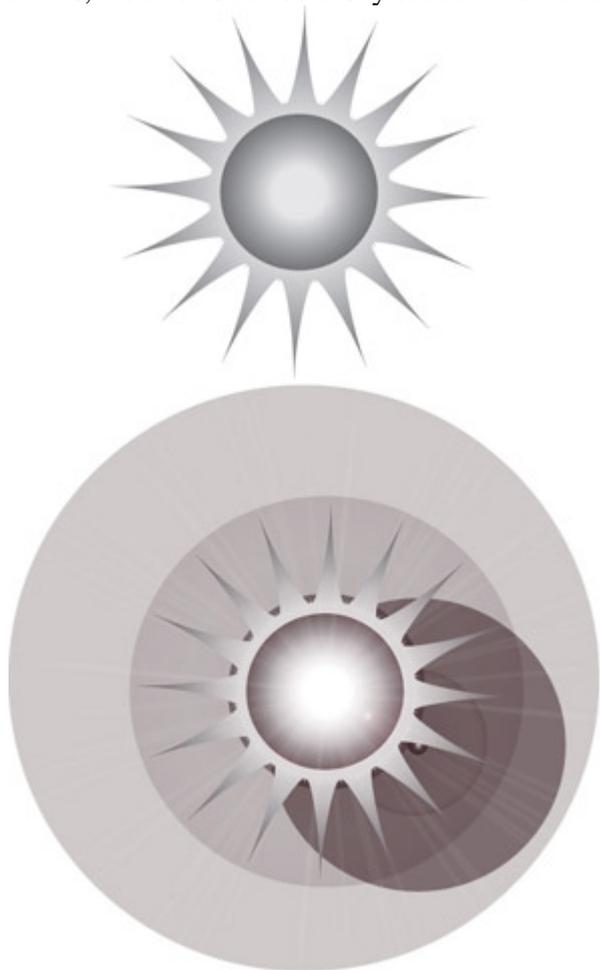


Figure 3-11: A boring sun gets transformed into a dazzling star of rays and rings.

To create your own lens flare, first create some interesting art and fill with the colors of your choice; then follow these steps:

1.



Select the Flare tool.

It shares a toolslot with the Rectangle tool.

2.

Double-click the Flare tool to bring up the Flare Options palette. Play with the various settings and then click OK.

These are the settings used for [Figure 3-11](#):

Center	100% Opacity and 50% Brightness
Halo	Growth 20% and Fuzziness 0%
Rays	Number 15, Longest 300%, and Fuzziness 100%
Rings	Path 100 pt, Number 10, Largest 41%, and Direction 42%

3.

Place your cursor over the place on your art where you want to establish your light source; click and drag.

You should see the appearance of some funky lines and circles. These are the rays and the halo.

Tip

Use your up or down arrow keys to interactively increase or decrease the number of rays.

4.

Place your cursor over the place on your art where you want to center your rings. Click and drag. The distance you drag also determines the length of the flare.

You should see the appearance of some circles of varying size and opacity. Your sun should now be decked out with a bright and beautiful lens flare.

5.

Deselect the flare and admire the results. If you re not quite happy, select the flare you just drew, double-click the Flare tool, and enter some different settings.

Entering the Wide World of the Web

Illustrator is a Web-happy application. Anything that you create in Illustrator can make an appearance on the Web in one form or another. Illustrator gives you mighty powers to create both vector-based and pixel-based images for use on the Web.

I devote an entire chapter ([Chapter 16](#)) to the Web. Illustrator does all sorts of Web-specific tasks, such as creating animations, optimizing pixel-based images, and providing a preview of how your artwork looks when viewed in a Web browser.

The following is a laundry list of Web-happy things you can do with Illustrator at no extra charge:

- **Create images without resolution headaches:** When you use a pixel-based graphics program, you must continually worry whether your graphics have enough resolution to display with the quality you want. In Illustrator, you can always create Web graphics with optimum quality because you decide on the resolution after you complete the image instead of when you start creating it.
- **Optimize artwork as pixel-based images:** You can save your art as JPEG, GIF, or PNG images, using the Save for Web command to preview how various color reductions and compressions affect the artwork.
- **Export artwork as Flash or SVG vector graphics:** Flash and Scalable Vector Graphic format (SVG) are new technologies that enable you to display vector (path-based) graphics on the Web. Before Flash and SVG, only pixel-based artwork could be displayed. Vector graphics on the Web are smaller and look better than their pixel-based counterparts.
- **Preview artwork as pixel-based graphics:** If you plan to save your artwork as GIF, JPEG, or PNG files, you can turn on the Pixel Preview mode while you create it. This makes Illustrator show you your artwork as close as possible to how it'll look after it's on the Web. With this mode turned off, the artwork displays as close as possible to how it'll look in print.
- **Apply object-based slicing:** Simply put, slices enable you to divide your image into pieces so that you can later apply separate loading or optimization settings or other HTML features, such as animation. However, rather than slicing an entire image based on a square grid, as in Photoshop or ImageReady, Illustrator enables you to apply slices to objects, groups of objects, or layers.

For more information on any of these topics, see [Chapter 16](#).

Team LiB

◀ PREVIOUS NEXT ▶

Saving the World

Well, maybe saving the world is a little bit of an overstatement, but saving your work is arguably the most important thing you can do in Illustrator. And you may feel as if you have saved the world when your client mentions 40 hours into the job that she needs the graphics to work in AutoCAD, and you say, Sure, no problem! instead of breaking down in tears. Or when your graphics look every bit as good on the Web as they do in print. Or when your computer crashes and you laugh it off because you didn't lose any work. The key to all these heroic scenarios is Illustrator's massive Save features, all found under the File menu: Save, Save As, Save a Copy, Save for Web, and Export.

Save

Choosing the Save command writes the document that you're working on to the hard drive, which is the fastest way to save a file.

Tip

Saving a file in Illustrator creates a file that not only Illustrator can read, but that file is also a bona fide PDF file as well, so anyone with Acrobat or the Adobe Reader can read and print the file.

If you open an Illustrator file from an older version of Illustrator and hit the Save button in Illustrator CS, the file saves as an Illustrator CS file. To save the file to be compatible with a previous version of Illustrator, you need to use the Export command.

Save As

Use the Save As command to save the open document to a different location from where it was originally, or to save an SVG, EPS, or PDF version of the file. Using the Save As command also saves new documents that haven't been saved before. When you create artwork for print, Save As is the command to use 90 percent of the time; it allows you to save in the EPS (Encapsulated PostScript) format. The EPS format is supported by many other non-Adobe applications for both the PC and the Mac. When you save a file in this format, you're assured almost universal compatibility in the world of print.

You also have the option of saving your file as a PDF (Portable Document Format). PDF is great for exchanging files for review and approval processes because it only requires that the recipient have Adobe Reader (a free download from Adobe, www.adobe.com) installed. The recipients don't need Illustrator or any graphics program. They don't even need to have any fonts you may have used in the file. If you save your file as a PDF, select the Preserve Illustrator Editing Capabilities option in the Adobe PDF Format Options dialog box. Then you can later open the file as an Illustrator file with access to edit the elements, fonts, colors, patterns, and type blocks.

Tip

The only difference between an Illustrator file saved as a PDF file (with Illustrator editing capabilities on) and one saved as a native Illustrator file is the extension following the filename, and the appearance of the icon in Windows or the Finder. PDF creates .pdf files, while native Illustrator creates .ai files. Both can be read in either Illustrator or Adobe Reader/Acrobat.

For more information on the Save As command and file formats, see [Chapter 17](#).

Save a Copy

The Save a Copy command has all the features of the Save As command but adds a twist: You can also use it to save all the information in your current document as a different file on your hard drive at a different location and sporting a different file format without changing anything in the current file. You can save multiple versions of the same file (say, one for printing and one for the Web). Moreover, if you need to restore the file to the way it was the last time it was saved using Save or Save As, you have a handy way to do so: the File Revert command. Revert breezes right past the Save a Copy command, allowing you to make a completely different series of changes.

Save for Web

The Save for Web command, as you probably guessed, enables you to save Illustrator graphics for display on the Web. Even better, you can use this command to save your files in any of the most commonly used Web graphics file formats: JPEG, GIF, PNG, Flash (SWF), or SVG. Best of all, the Save for Web dialog box provides a preview of what the file will look like after you save it, as well as what the file size and download time will be, so that you can manage the delicate balance between graphic quality and short download time. You can find a whole lot more information on the Save for Web command in [Chapter 16](#).

Export

The Export command could be called Save for Everything Else. Use it to save Illustrator files in an astonishing variety of formats from the commonplace (Photoshop) to the obscure (Pixar). Use the Export command when you need to save a graphic in a specific format that you can't find under the Save As or Save for Web command. Here's where to find every other file format you can use when you save an Illustrator file.

New Feature

To save artwork so that you can open it in a previous version of Illustrator, choose the Legacy Illustrator (.ai) option in the Save as Type drop-down menu in the Export dialog box.

The most commonly used formats found here are Legacy Illustrator (.ai), Flash (a format for displaying vector graphics on the Web), SVG, and Adobe Photoshop. Legacy Illustrator (.ai) allows users of older, lesser versions of Illustrator to open files you created and edited in Illustrator CS. Flash (SWF) files can be opened and edited in Flash-savvy applications, such as Macromedia Flash. The Photoshop format re-creates your Illustrator file as a Photoshop file, maintaining the features of the original file (such as Layers and Transparency) as closely as possible. [Chapters 16](#) and [17](#) provide further information on using Illustrator with these formats.

New Feature

Illustrator CS now has the ability to save in a format optimized for Microsoft Office applications. Choose File Save for Microsoft Office and a file is created that s guaranteed to work well in all your Office applications.

Using Illustrator for What It Does Best

Illustrator is a powerful tool, but it's limited to certain types of tasks. Knowing what Illustrator does best is key to getting the most out of the software.

Illustrator does anything having to do with path-based artwork extremely well and performs beyond the basics with pixel-based artwork. You can use Illustrator for page layout, but it really isn't designed for documents longer than a single page. You can also use Illustrator for some basic image adjustment, but that sort of thing is easier with Photoshop.

Any time you want to create art or graphics pieces that need to serve multiple purposes, use Illustrator. Illustrator's flexibility in transforming artwork is second to none – with equal ease, you can create artwork to appear on a business card, a bottle label, a poster, a billboard, television or film, or on the Web.

Illustrator isn't limited to portraying the way things are in the real world. You can use it to create things that may have no real-world equivalents. Give light bulbs spikes. Create a monster out of eyeballs. Whatever you imagine, Illustrator can help you create an image of it.

Part II: Drawing and Coloring Your Artwork

Chapter List

[Chapter 4](#): Shaping Up, Basically [Chapter 5](#): Getting Your Fill of Fills and Strokes [Chapter 6](#): Selecting and Editing Paths [Chapter 7](#): Wielding the Mighty Pen Tool [Chapter 8](#): Creating Straight and Curved Lines without the Pen Tool [Chapter 9](#): Creating Magnificent Brushstrokes [Chapter 10](#): Extreme Fills and Strokes [Chapter 11](#): Effectively Keeping Up Appearances, with Style(s)

In this part . . .

In this section, I cover the essentials of creating new graphics in Illustrator. You meet the various tools that create new graphics:

- The basic **shape tools** that you use to whomp up stars, rectangles, ellipses, and so forth in a jiffy
- The **Pencil tool**, your handy friend for drawing free-form lines (get it? hand-y?)
- The **Line** and **Arc tools**, which enable you to create quick and easy lines and curves
- The **Pen tool**, which gives you the power to create lines and shapes with astonishing precision
- The **Brush tool** for painting complex objects on-screen with ease

You also discover how to add solid colors, patterns, and gradients to your graphics. Finally, I slide you the skinny about some cool effects that you can create in Illustrator, such as fading out your artwork by using the Transparency feature; coloring a single piece of artwork with multiple colors, gradients, or patterns; and making your viewers' eyes bug out with 3D effects that'll have them wearing red and blue glasses.

Team LiB

◀ PREVIOUS NEXT ▶

Chapter 4: Shaping Up, Basically

Overview

In This Chapter

- Creating objects the easy way
- Customizing basic objects
- Combining objects to create other objects
- Spewing objects onto a page with the Symbolism tools

A regrettably large number of people avoid Illustrator because they find the whole point/path thing so intimidating. This situation is unfortunate but not surprising. When most people look at artwork, they see it as complete shapes, not as the lines that form the shapes. Working with points and paths forces you to see your artwork in a way that many people have never thought of before, which creates enough of a hurdle to scare people away from Illustrator.

Fortunately, Illustrator offers the shape-creation tools as a way to get a running start to clear that hurdle. The six shape-creation tools let you create basic shapes, such as rectangles, ellipses, stars, and polygons. With the shape-creation tools, you can create graphics without even thinking about points and paths! (Don't be fooled—the points and paths are still there, but the tools create them all for you with just a single click-and-drag. Ah, progress.)

In this chapter, you discover how to use the shape-creation tools, which offers you a good foundation for understanding and using the more complex features of Illustrator. You also find out how to combine simple shapes. Although the shape-creation tools create basic elements, they are by no means limited, especially when used in conjunction with the Pathfinder palette. Some people discover that they can create such an astonishing variety of graphics with the shape-creation tools that they can bypass more complex tools, such as the Pen and Pencil tools, altogether!

Creating Basic Shapes

Illustrator has six tools for creating shapes. Although you could create all those shapes with the Pen tool, you'd torment yourself if you did so. The specialized tools in Illustrator make the shapes easy to create. The six tools are named for (and look like) the shapes they create, as follows:

- **Rectangle:** Use this tool to make rectangles and squares. Hold down the Shift key when using this tool to get a perfect square.
- **Rounded Rectangle:** As you may expect, you get rounded corners on your rectangles and squares when you use this tool. Of course, if you recall high school geometry, you know that a round rectangle is a contradiction in terms. By definition, a rectangle is a four-sided polygon with each corner forming a 90° angle. Oh, well. So much for Euclid.
- **Ellipse:** This tool makes ellipses and circles. Hold down the Shift key when using this tool to get a perfect circle.
- **Polygon:** This tool makes objects with any number of sides from 3 to 1,000 with each side the same length. You can use this tool for triangles, pentagons, hexagons, and so forth.
- **Star:** This tool makes stars with any number of points between 3 and 1,000.
- **Flare:** This tool creates effects, such as lens flares and reflections, which are photo realistic, yet entirely vector-based. See [Chapter 3](#) for the complete lowdown on this exciting tool.

The shape-creation tools are located in a single row in the Toolbox, as shown in [Figure 4-1](#).

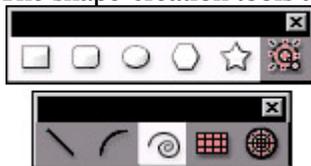


Figure 4-1: The six shape-creation tools.

Drawing rectangles and squares

To draw a rectangle, select the Rectangle tool in the Toolbox, and then click and drag where you want the rectangle to go. After you release the mouse button, a rectangle appears. To draw a square, you follow a slightly different procedure, as I describe in the following steps:

1.

Choose the Rectangle tool from the Toolbox.

2.

Click and drag with the tool. (Don t release the mouse button yet.)

3.

Press the Shift key.

The rectangle snaps into a square.

4.

Release the mouse button (but don t release the Shift key until after you release the mouse button).

A square appears. (If you release the Shift key before you release the mouse button, the square snaps back into a rectangle.)

You can draw a rounded-corner rectangle by choosing the Rounded Rectangle tool (hidden in the toolslot with the Rectangle tool) and draw with that instead of the regular Rectangle tool. You can access any of the hidden tools by clicking and holding on the visible tool; after a second the other tools in that toolslot appear.

If you want to create a rectangle with exact dimensions (for example, 28 points x 42 points), select the Rectangle tool and click and release your mouse, but don t drag. A dialog box appears, as shown in [Figure 4-2](#).

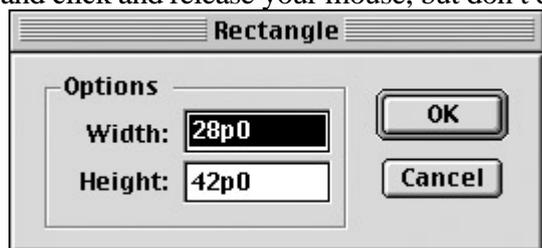


Figure 4-2: The Rectangle dialog box.

Type in height and width and then click OK. Illustrator draws a rectangle to those exact specifications.

Tip

Illustrator places the rectangle s upper-left corner at the spot where you click with the Rectangle tool. If you hold down the Alt key (Option on a Mac) at the same time, Illustrator places the rectangle s center at the spot where you click with the Rectangle tool.

Drawing ellipses and circles

To draw an ellipse, choose the Ellipse tool and click and drag in the document window. After you release the mouse button, an ellipse appears. To draw a perfect circle, hold down the Shift key while you draw with the Ellipse tool.

Tip

If you hold down the Alt key (Option on a Mac) at the same time that you click (but don't drag) with the Ellipse tool, Illustrator places the ellipse (or circle) from its center instead of from its upper-left edge.

Like with the Rectangle tool, clicking (without dragging) causes the Ellipse dialog box to appear, as shown in [Figure 4-3](#). Here you can type in an exact height and width for the ellipse. These values represent the distance across the ellipse at its widest and narrowest points.

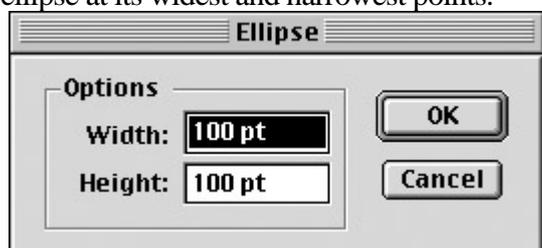


Figure 4-3: The Ellipse dialog box.

Creating polygons and stars

Illustrator has tools designed specifically for creating polygons and stars. Like rectangles and ovals, these shapes can be drawn with the Pen tool, but having a tool for creating them makes the process much easier, faster, and more accurate. Using these tools is fairly straightforward. As with the Rectangle and Ellipse tools, just click and drag and then release the mouse button when the shape is the size you want. Also, like with the Rectangle and Ellipse tools, just clicking (without dragging) with the Polygon or Star tool opens a dialog box, which you use to specify the shape's exact size (and other attributes).

Tip

Need to create stars at various sizes with a certain number of points? Or different sized polygons with the same number of sides? The dialog boxes for the Polygon and Star tools remember the number of sides and points you enter and use those settings for each subsequent shape you draw, even if you click and drag.

Pulling polygons

To create a polygon, click and drag with the Polygon tool. When the polygon is the size you want, release the mouse button. The new polygon appears. Because polygons are more complex than ellipses or rectangles, you can get all sorts of special capabilities by pressing certain keys as you draw. To customize the polygon as you create it, hold down any of the following keys as you drag:

- **Shift:** Constrains one side of the polygon so that it is parallel to the bottom of the page.
- **Up/Down Arrow:** Adds or deletes sides of the polygon while you draw it.
- **Spacebar:** Moves the polygon around as you draw it.
- **Tilde (~):** Creates multiple polygons while you draw. At times you can have so many polygons that they look like one solid figure, but each one is a separate entity that you can separate and move wherever you want. This feature can create quite astounding effects, as shown in [Figure 4-4](#). To use this feature, you must release the mouse button before you release the key or all duplicates disappear. This works when you draw any of the other shapes, too! By the way, to get the swirly effect, move your mouse clockwise or counterclockwise as you draw.

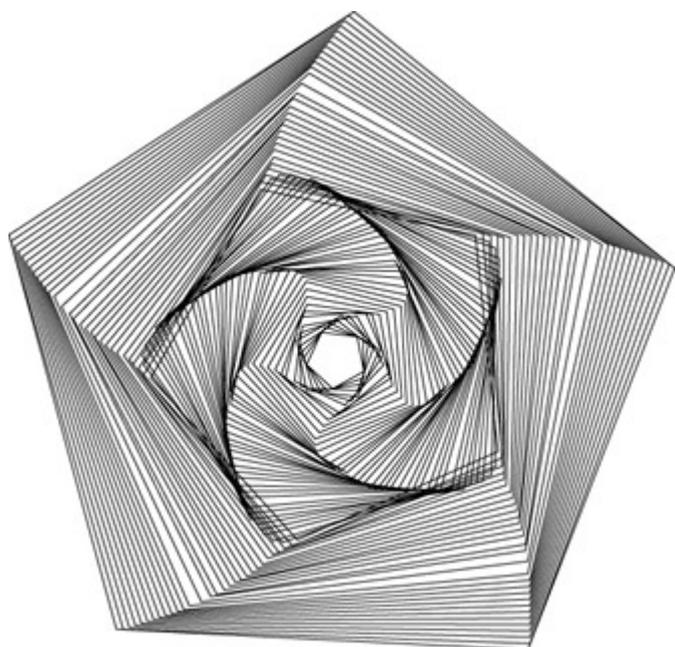


Figure 4-4: Press the tilde (~) key while you draw with the Polygon tool to produce a unique effect.

Clicking (without dragging) with the Polygon tool opens the Polygon dialog box, as shown in [Figure 4-5](#). Polygons use a Radius value instead of height and width. All sides of the polygon are the same distance from the center; this distance is the Radius value. To create a polygon of a specific width, type in half the width you want in the Radius field. You can type in any number of sides, from 3 to 1,000.

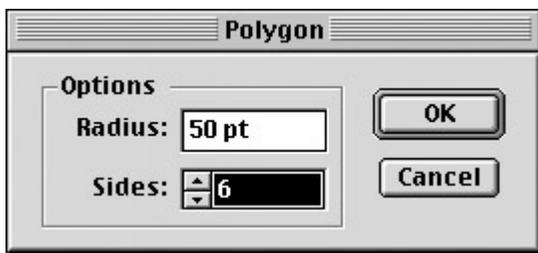


Figure 4-5: The Polygon dialog box.

Seeing stars

To create a star, click and drag with the Star tool. After you release the mouse button, a star is born. Stars are even more complex than polygons. Fortunately, you also have more keys for customizing options. To customize a star, use the following keys as you drag:

- **Shift:** Constrains one side of the star so that the bottom two points of the star are parallel to the bottom of the page.
- **Up/Down Arrow:** Adds/deletes points of the star while you draw it.
- **Ctrl (⌘ on a Mac):** Constrains the middle points (the inner radius) of the star; the outer ones still move.
- **Spacebar:** Moves the star around as you draw it.
- **Tilde (~):** Creates multiple stars as you draw.

Clicking (without dragging) with the Star tool opens the Star dialog box, as shown in [Figure 4-6](#). Stars have two radii that you can set in the Star dialog box. The first radius determines how far the inner points of the star are from the center. The second radius determines how far the outer points are from the center. In the Star dialog box, you can also set the number of points the star has. After you make your settings, click OK to create the star you specified. After you create a star using the Star dialog box, each star you create by clicking and dragging uses the same specifications, more or less. Regardless of each star's size, it has the same number of points (unless you change them using the up and down arrows), and the first and second radii maintain the same proportions, if not the same size. If you enter two inches for the first radius and one inch for the second, the second radius is 50 percent smaller for every star you create after you establish the settings in the dialog box, regardless of the star's size.

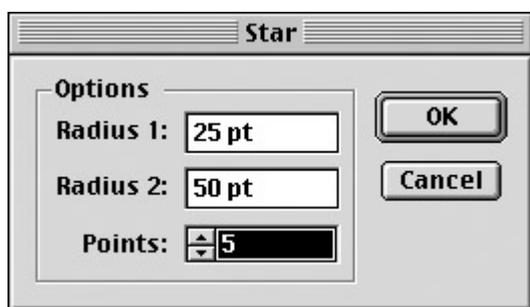


Figure 4-6: Use the Star dialog box to set the quantity and length of its points.

Electronic graph paper



The Rectangular Grid tool, which shares a toolslot with the Line tool, allows you to create grids of any size and configuration. Double-click the Rectangular Grid tool or simply click the tool on your Artboard (the area on which you draw) to access the Rectangular Grid Tool Options dialog box. Enter values for the size of the grid and the number of columns (called Horizontal Dividers) and rows (called Vertical Dividers). You can also enter a skew value that progressively increases or decreases the size of the rows and columns. The Fill Grid option when left unchecked creates a grid without a fill, and the Use Outside Rectangle as Frame option surrounds the grid lines with a rectangle.

The Polar Grid tool operates in a similar manner as the Rectangular Grid tool. In the Polar Grid Tool Options dialog box, you find options for Size and the number of Concentric Dividers (smaller circles that appear within the largest outer circle) and Radial Dividers (the lines that radiate from the center of the smallest circle to the edge of the largest circle). Using both radial and concentric dividers gives the effect of a spider's web, as shown in [Figure 4-7](#) (right). You also have the same Skew and Fill Grid options that you do with the Rectangular Grid tool. The Create Compound Paths from Ellipses option creates a polar grid where every other concentric circle is transparent. The effect creates a bull's-eye target, as shown in [Figure 4-7](#) (left).

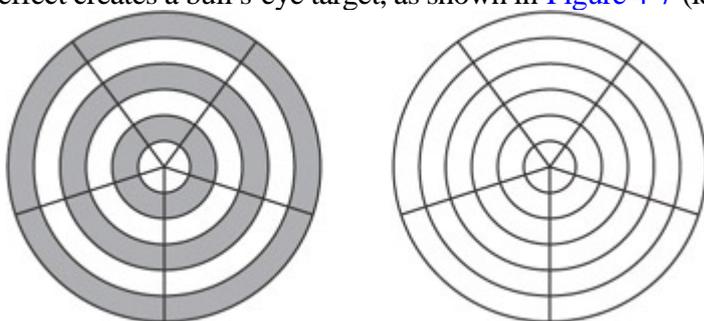


Figure 4-7: A polar grid with and without the compound paths option selected.

In addition to the grids created by the Rectangular Grid and Polar Grid tools, Illustrator can transform your background into electronic graph paper. Choose View Show Grid. To change the settings for the grid, choose Edit Preferences Guides and Grid. In the Guides and Grid Preferences dialog box, you find options for changing the color, style, and increments of the grid. If you choose View Snap to Grid, your objects snap to the grid corners whenever you move them or whenever you create new objects. When I say snap, I don't mean the objects automatically jump to the grid corners. What happens is a lot subtler: When you drag an object by using any selection tool, it sort of sticks a little when an edge of the object is over a grid corner. If you don't want the object to reside at that point, you can keep dragging. The stickiness is just enough to help you align the object. [Figure 4-8](#) shows a document with a grid behind it.

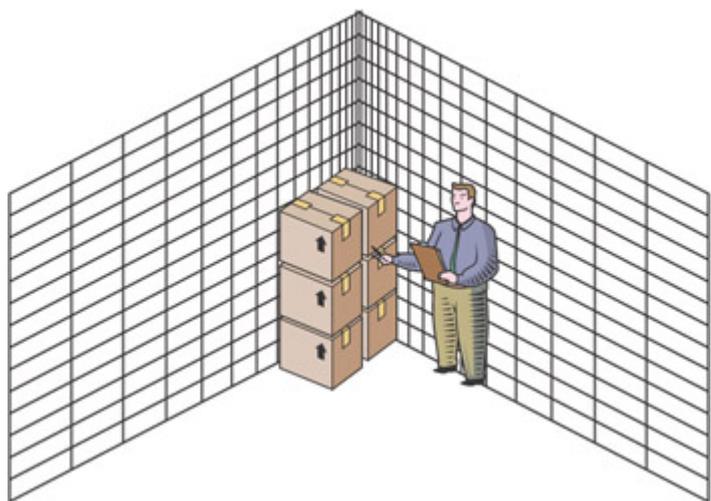


Figure 4-8: A document (in this case, a cartoon) with a grid behind it.

Putting Shapes Together

The basic shape-creation tools are great starting points for creating more complex illustrations because most complex shapes are simply many basic shapes put together. You may be astonished at what you can create simply by combining one basic shape with another. One of the quickest and easiest ways to do so in Illustrator is by using the Pathfinder palette.

The Pathfinder palette has a misleading name. All it really does is combine or separate two or more shapes in a variety of ways. You can use the Pathfinder palette to join two or more objects into one object, remove the shape of one object from another, cut apart two shapes where they overlap, or combine objects in many other ways.

To access the Pathfinder palette, choose Window Pathfinder. The Pathfinder palette appears, as shown in [Figure 4-9](#).

The Pathfinder palette is divided into two sections—Shape Modes and Pathfinders. Using the Pathfinder palette is simplicity itself: Just overlap two or more objects, select them all by clicking them with any selection tool (to select multiple objects, hold down the Shift key while clicking each object), and click the button that does the operation that you desire.

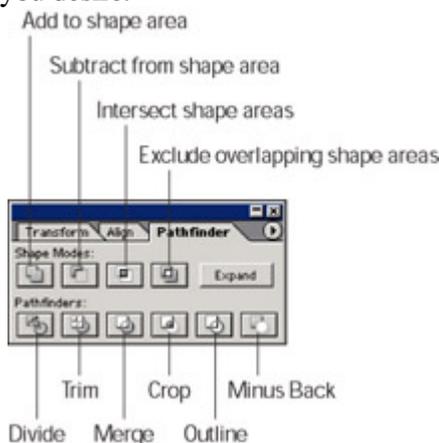


Figure 4-9: Use the Pathfinder palette to work with complex shapes in a variety of ways.

Remember

Knowing which button to click isn't always obvious, but don't worry about that. Simply keep in mind that when you want to combine or separate two or more objects, you're likely to find a button to help you in the Pathfinder palette. Click a button; if it doesn't give you what you want, choose Edit Undo and try a different button.

The results of the Pathfinder palette depend heavily on which object is in front and which object is behind. To change the stacking order of objects, select a single object with the Selection tool and choose Object Arrange. In the Arrange submenu, you can send the object to the back, bring it forward, or move it backward and forward one level at a time. To get a better idea of how the Pathfinder palette functions, use it on two basic objects (in this case, a circle and a star), as shown in [Figure 4-10](#).



Figure 4-10: Two basic shapes overlap from the Pathfinder palette.

Compound shapes

Not only does the Pathfinder palette enable you to create complex artwork from basic shapes, all the artwork you create remains fully editable. The Shape Modes portion of the palette is also easy to use. Overlap two or more objects, select them all, and click the button of the effect you want. The commands under the Shape Modes consist of the following:

- **Add to Shape Area:** Groups multiple objects so they're selectable as a unit but can also be selected individually with the Direct Selection or Group Selection tools. The resulting objects use the fill and stroke of the object that was on top before the objects were added together. By clicking the Expand button or by choosing the Expand Compound Shape command from the Pathfinder palette pop-up menu (accessed by clicking the triangle in the upper-right corner of the palette), the added objects are joined into a single physical object.

Tip

In all Shape Modes, the Expand Compound Shape command flattens the compound shape into a single path.

Tip

You can add additional shapes in a compound shape at any time. Also, use the Direct Selection tool to edit any path or anchor point on the compound shape.

- **Subtract from Shape Area:** Cuts away all selected objects in front of the backmost object, leaving a hole in the backmost object in the shape of whatever was in front of it. In [Figure 4-11](#), Subtract from Shape Area cuts away the star in front of the circle but also leaves the portion of the path that makes up the star tips that did not overlap the circle. By clicking the Expand button or choosing the Expand Compound Shape command from the Pathfinder palette pop-up menu, those star tips will be shaved off.

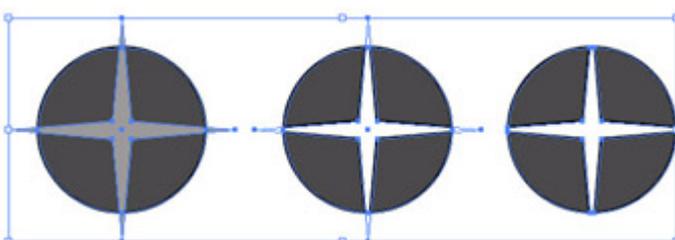


Figure 4-11: The results of using the Subtract from Shape Area command, and then with Expand.

Intersect Shape Areas: Cuts away all parts of the objects that don't overlap. The resulting object uses the fill and stroke color of the object that was on top before the objects were intersected. Here, Intersect Shape Areas joins the circle and star, using the fill and stroke color of the star (which was on top before the objects were intersected). Intersect also works on more than two objects. Clicking the Expand button or choosing the Expand Compound Shape command from the Pathfinder palette pop-up menu further simplifies the objects and deletes the remaining nonintersected portions of the paths of the original objects, as shown in [Figure 4-12](#).

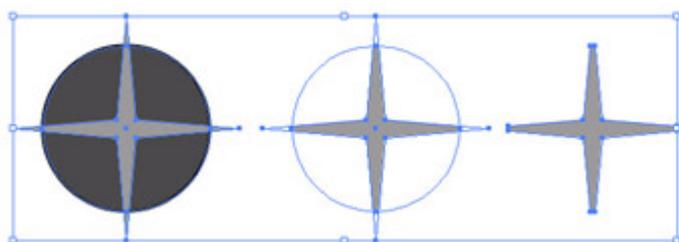


Figure 4-12: The results of using the Intersect Shape Areas command, and then with Expand.

Exclude Overlapping Shape Areas: Removes all parts of the objects that overlap and unites what's left into a single object (the opposite of Intersect). The remaining object uses the fill and stroke of the object that was on top before the objects were united. In [Figure 4-13](#), the Exclude Overlapping Shape Areas command cuts away all parts of the circle and star that overlap, uniting what is left into a single object that uses the fill and stroke color of the star (which was on top before the objects were united). Clicking the Expand button or choosing the Expand Compound Shape command from the Pathfinder palette pop-up menu eliminates any unnecessary anchor points.

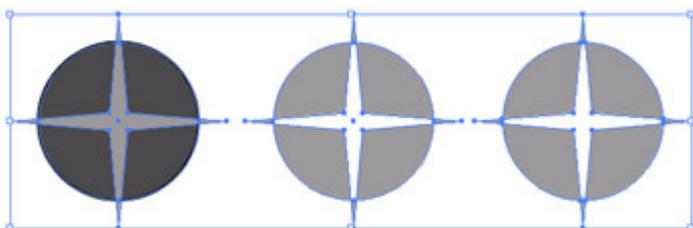


Figure 4-13: The results of using the Exclude Overlapping Shape Areas command, and then with Expand.

The Shape Modes effects can be combined, so knock yourself out. Unlike the Pathfinders commands, if you want to undo your compound shapes, simply select the Release Compound Shapes command from the Pathfinder palette pop-up menu. By clicking the Expand button or selecting the Expand Compound Shape command from the Pathfinder palette pop-up menu, you can further clean up or simplify your paths by eliminating unnecessary anchor points. The compound shapes are flattened and condensed into a new simplified shape. But be warned: After you use the Expand Compound Shape command, you can no longer release your compound shape by using the Release Compound Shapes command. The Expand feature permanently fuses your effect, so there's no going back.

Pathfinders

The commands under the Pathfinders portion of the Pathfinder palette are a mixed bag of effects. The Divide and Minus Back commands achieve results by cutting away specific parts of the image. [Figure 4-14](#) demonstrates the results of applying these two commands: Minus Back and Divide. The Trim, Merge, Crop, and Outline commands provide the means for tidying up your artwork before sending your creation out into the world. In [Figure 4-15](#), this

cleanup crew takes a bow.

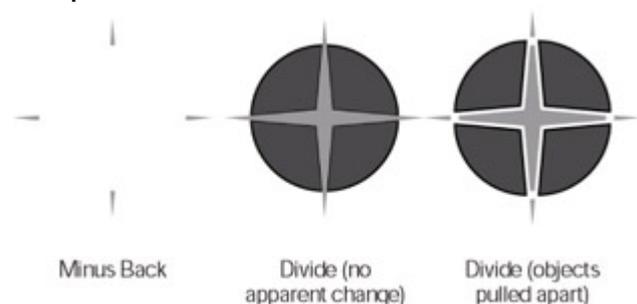


Figure 4-14: The results of using Minus Back (left) and Divide (two images on the right).

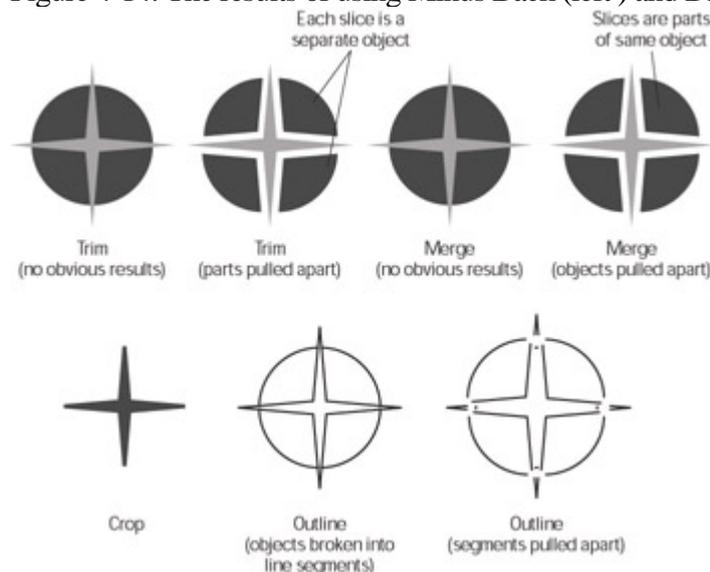


Figure 4-15: Cleaning up and checking the circle and star, using (left to right) the Trim, Merge, Crop, and Outline commands.

Here s a quick rundown of the Pathfinder commands found under the Pathfinder palette:

- Divide:** Breaks two overlapping objects into separate objects. This operation may look as though it hasn't done anything after you first apply it (middle, [Figure 4-14](#)). However, after you divide an object, you can move or color each piece individually (right, [Figure 4-14](#)). After the Divide button first breaks the overlapping star and circle into distinct paths, they look as if you've done nothing to them, even though the star and circle can be individually moved or colored (far right, [Figure 4-14](#)).
- Trim:** Removes any parts of objects hidden by other objects and also removes any strokes. As with Divide, this command may not produce visible results immediately (it affects only hidden items) as shown in [Figure 4-15](#). In [Figure 4-15](#), the Trim command removes any parts of the circle hidden by the star and also removes any strokes. At first, the command's results aren't visible (left) until you start changing the position of the pie slices of the circle (right) and they move as separate objects.
- Merge:** Removes any parts of objects hidden by other objects, removes strokes, and merges overlapping objects that have the same fill colors. This command functions almost the same way as the Trim command does, with the key difference being that this command merges objects of the same color together into a single object while Trim leaves them as separate objects. In [Figure 4-15](#), the Merge command removes any parts of the circle hidden by the star, removes strokes, and merges overlapping objects that have the same fill

colors (which the star and the circle do not).

- **Crop:** Divides two overlapping objects into separate objects where they overlap and then deletes everything outside the boundaries of the topmost object. In [Figure 4-15](#), the Crop command divides the star and circle into separate objects where they overlap and then deletes everything outside the boundaries of the star (the topmost object).

- **Outline:** Breaks objects into separate line segments with no fill colors. Of the two outlines shown in [Figure 4-15](#), the one on the left shows the visible effects of the command; the one on the right shows the now-separate line segments moved apart.

- **Minus Back:** Cuts away from the frontmost object all selected objects that are behind the frontmost object. The remaining object uses the fill and stroke color of the frontmost object. Here Minus Back cuts away the circle from the star and unites what's left (those four forlorn-looking points; refer to [Figure 4-14](#)) into a single object that uses the fill and stroke color of the star (which is the frontmost object).

Remember

If you stumble upon the Pathfinder commands under the Effects menu, don't confuse them with those found under the Pathfinder palette. The commands under the Effects menu change the appearance of an object without changing the underlying object itself. The Pathfinder commands found under the Effects menu are designed to be applied to groups of objects, layers, and type objects. They usually have no effect on a few overlapping shapes. For more on appearances and effects, see [Chapter 11](#).

Creating Objects by Using the Pathfinder Palette

By combining basic shapes, you can create just about anything you can imagine. So, how do you actually use the Shape Modes and Pathfinders commands to create such complex shapes? (Details, details.) Consider a couple of examples—a crescent moon and a sunrise.

Crescent moon

A crescent moon seems fairly simple to draw, but if you try to draw one accurately by hand, you get frustrated. The Pathfinder palette, however, makes drawing a crescent moon almost as easy as smiling and saying, Green cheese. Just follow these steps:

1.

Choose the Ellipse tool and draw a perfect circle by clicking and dragging the Ellipse tool while holding down the Shift key.

Tip

Let go of the mouse button before you let go of the Shift key, and a perfect circle appears.

2.

Repeat Step 1, except make the second circle smaller than the first.

3.

Choose the Selection tool and use it to position the second circle over the first, as shown in [Figure 4-16](#).

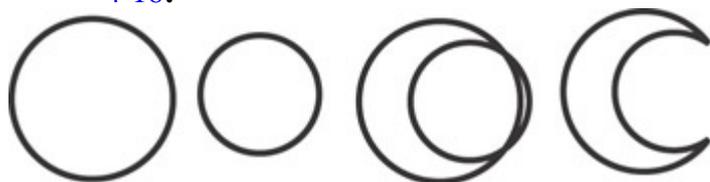


Figure 4-16: Creating a crescent moon.

4.

Select both circles. (Hold down the Shift key and click each circle with the Selection tool to select more than one object at a time.)

5.

Click the Subtract from Shape Area button in the Shape Modes portion of the Pathfinder palette.

Presto! A crescent moon appears!

Sunrise

What better way to follow a crescent moon than with a beautiful sunrise? Just follow these steps:

1.

Click and drag with the Rectangle tool to create a box.

2.

Click and drag with the Star tool to create a star. As you drag with the Star tool, repeatedly press the up-arrow (?) key.

A many-pointed star appears.

3.

Choose the Selection tool and use it to position the star over the rectangle so the two objects overlap, as shown in [Figure 4-17](#).

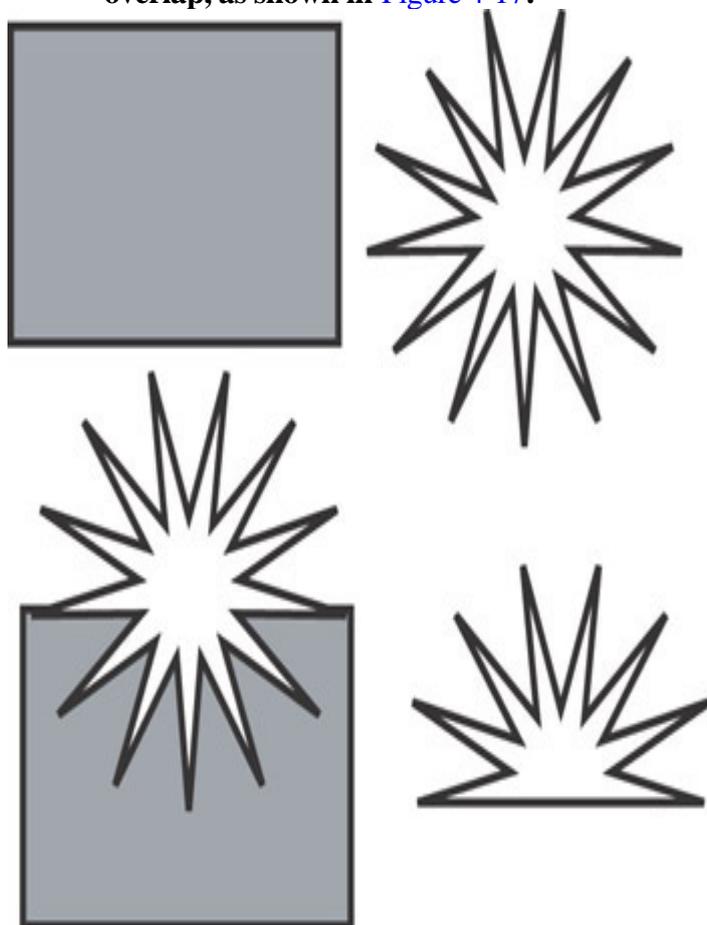


Figure 4-17: Creating a sunrise

4.

Select both the star and the rectangle. (Hold down the Shift key and click each object with the Selection tool so both objects are selected.)

5.

Click the Minus Back button in the Pathfinders portion of the Pathfinder palette.

Voilà a beautiful sunrise! (Well, almost. Still needs colors and a caffeinated beverage.)

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◀ PREVIOUS

NEXT ▶

Legal Graffiti

The Symbol Sprayer and its family of Symbolism tools, shown in [Figure 4-18](#), is how Adobe makes your job of producing repeating graphics easier and quicker. Feel like a kid (okay, a bad kid) and spray on-screen repeating graphics all over the place to your heart's content. No clogged spray nozzles, no paint drips, no fumes. Who could possibly resist that intriguing spray can sitting there in the Toolbox just begging to be picked up?

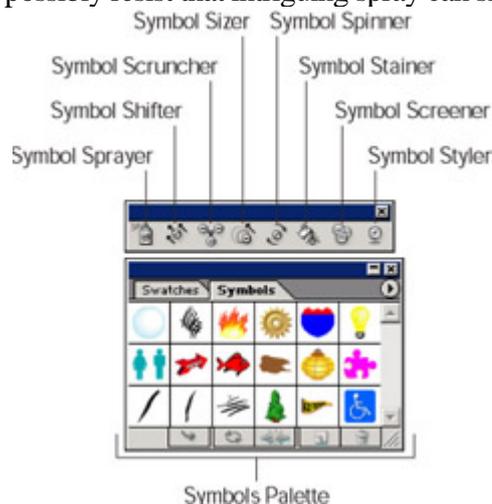


Figure 4-18: He who has the best toys wins: The Symbolism tools.

Technical Stuff

Symbols are reusable and repeatable elements that are used in animation. Although they can be graphics, buttons, movie clips, sound files, and even fonts, in Illustrator they can be comprised of any Illustrator object—vector- or pixel-based images or text. Each individual symbol is referred to as an *instance*. The beauty of symbols is that although you may have multiple instances of a symbol in your file, each instance references a single symbol in the Symbols palette, thereby keeping the file size extremely small.

Symbols provide a quick and easy way to create a large group of similar objects and an easy means to collectively edit these objects. Symbols can be used for most anything, but are especially handy in creating navigation buttons, borders, map icons, and masses of graphics, such as foliage, snowflakes, and stars.

Using the Symbol Sprayer

I like it when tools, such as the Symbol Sprayer, work the way that I think they should (unlike the tedious Pen tool). Follow these steps to become the master of your personal digital spray can:

1.

Select the Symbol Sprayer.

Note that the sprayer icon is surrounded by a circle, which represents the diameter of your sprayer. (Read the upcoming section, [Setting the Symbolism options](#), to discover how to change that size.)

2.

Choose Window Symbols.

The Symbols palette appears with a default library of symbols to choose from.

3.

Select a symbol from the Symbols palette, click the Symbolism tool on the Artboard, and drag it around the page.

A trail of symbols (of the one you chose) appears, mirroring the movement of your cursor while you drag it across your Artboard. (Check it out in [Figure 4-19](#).) Unless you feel the need to edit your symbols or create your own custom symbol, you're done!

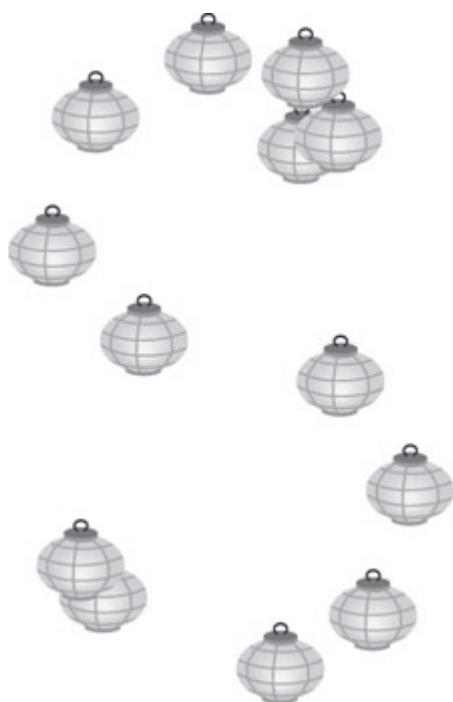


Figure 4-19: Pssst: Graffiti never had it so good (or legal).

Creating a custom symbol

If you're the creative type, create your own symbol. First create the artwork, which can include any Illustrator object vector- or pixel-based images or text. You can even use a combination of objects, as shown in [Figure 4-20](#). Next, select your artwork and do one of these three things: Click the New Symbol button (the little piece of paper at the bottom of the Symbols palette); choose the New Symbol option from the Symbols palette pop-up menu (accessed from the little triangle at the upper right of the Symbols palette); or drag and drop the art onto the Symbols palette. Voilà—a symbol is born.



Figure 4-20: Combine object types to create custom symbols. Just ducky.

Editing your symbols

The other Symbolism tools enable you to tweak your symbols to graphic perfection. To edit your symbols, first select the symbols with the Selection tool. Note how you select the bounding box (a temporary border surrounding objects) of the symbols and not the individual instances. That's because symbols are a unique breed of graphic that require a unique kind of editing. After you select the symbols, click and drag with the Symbolism tool of your choice:

- **Symbol Shifter:** Click and drag your mouse to shift the position of the symbols in relation to each other. The symbols move around the cursor as you drag, creating a sort of ripple effect.
- **Symbol Scruncher:** Click and hold down your mouse to move the symbols closer together. Hold down the Alt (Windows)/Option (Mac) key while clicking and holding down your mouse to move the symbols apart.
- **Symbol Sizer:** Hold your mouse button down to size the symbols larger. Hold down the Alt (Windows)/Option (Mac) key while manipulating your mouse to reduce the size of the symbols.

Tip

You can also use the Rotate and Scale tools to rotate and size symbols.

- **Symbol Spinner:** Click and drag your mouse in the desired direction to rotate the symbols.
-

Symbol Stainer: Hold your mouse down to tint the symbols by using the current Fill color.

-

Symbol Screener: Hold your mouse down to increase the transparency of the symbols.

-

Symbol Styler: Applies a style from the Styles palette onto the symbol. With the Symbol Styler, select and drag a style from the Styles palette onto a symbol instance.

Setting the Symbolism options

Double-click any of the Symbolism tools to bring up the Symbolism Tools Options dialog box, as shown in [Figure 4-21](#). Here you adjust the behavior of each tool.

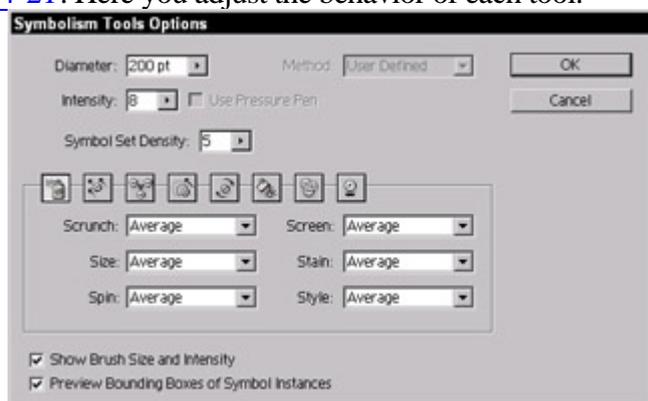


Figure 4-21: The Symbolism Tools Options dialog box: Grand Central for controlling the look of your symbols.

Select your tool icon from the row and then adjust its Diameter (1 999 points), the Intensity (1 10), and the Symbol Set Density (1 10). Most of the tools provide shortcut keys with which you adjust settings while you draw. I recommend keeping the Show Brush Size, Intensity, and Preview Bounding Boxes of Symbol Instances options selected (checked) so that you get a good idea of your tool coverage (and you get a box rather than a bazillion anchor points as your symbols spew forth).

In the Method option of the Symbolism Tools Options dialog box (refer to [Figure 4-21](#)), choose the User Defined setting to apply the settings within your Illustrator application to the Symbolism tools. For example, if you choose User Defined for your Stain setting for the Symbol Sprayer, the symbols appear with your current Fill color, regardless of the original color of the symbol.

Here are some other handy tips to keep in mind when working with symbols:

-

If you export your file as a Flash (SWF) file, your symbols are included in the symbol library of your Flash application. (See [Chapter 16](#).)

-

To place a single instance of a symbol, choose the Place Instance of Symbol option from the Symbols

palette pop-up menu, or click the Place Symbol Instance button at the bottom of the palette.

- **To convert a symbol into a regular Illustrator editable graphic**, select the symbol instance and click the Break Link to Symbol button at the bottom of the Symbols palette, or select the command from the Symbols palette pop-up menu. You can then modify the graphic, select it, and click the original symbol in the Symbols palette. Then, choose the Redefine Symbol option from the Symbols palette pop-up menu. Not only is the symbol revised, but any symbol instance on your Artboard is revised as well. Imagine having to change 1,000 little leaves on a tree if they were regular graphics and not symbols!

- **Symbolism tools can take advantage of a pressure-sensitive tablet.** Select the Use Pressure Pen option in the Symbolism Tool Options dialog box.

- **To name or rename your symbol**, double-click the symbol in the Symbols palette or choose Symbol Options from the Symbols palette pop-up menu.

- **To delete a symbol**, select it in the Symbols palette and click the Delete Symbol at the bottom of the Symbols palette, or choose the command from the Symbols palette pop-up menu.

- **To duplicate a symbol**, select it in the Symbols palette and choose Duplicate Symbol from the Symbols palette pop-up menu. Duplicating is handy for making variations of a symbol.

Chapter 5: Getting Your Fill of Fills and Strokes

Overview

In This Chapter

- Filling open paths
- Discovering how to use strokes
- Getting to know the Color and Swatches palettes
- Using and creating patterns
- Applying textures to paths
- Working with gradients

Fills and strokes give life to your artwork. If Illustrator were a coloring book, the fills and strokes would be the biggest, best box of crayons ever (only better because these colors always stay inside the lines). Better still, they're magic colors. You're not limited to a single solid color within an area. You can have gradients and patterns as well. And not only can you color inside the lines, you can color the lines themselves, make them thinner or thicker, or hide them altogether. Best of all, unlike crayons, these don't make a mess when your big sister grinds them into the carpet because you ran to show Mom your new artwork and forgot to clean up after yourself.

In this chapter, you discover the different boxes of crayons Illustrator has to offer, such as the Color and Swatches palettes, and how to color your artwork with them by using the Fill and Stroke boxes. You find out how to create

your own colors. Rounding things out, you get to know the special colors, gradients, and patterns in Illustrator, which stretch the meaning of what color really is.

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◀ PREVIOUS NEXT ▶

Understanding Fill and Stroke

A *fill* is a color enclosed by a path. A *stroke* is a line of color that precisely follows a path. To run the coloring book metaphor into the ground (carpet?), the stroke is the line, and the fill is the inside-the-line that you aren't supposed to color outside of (but you did anyway because you weren't about to let your parents stifle your creativity!). *Color* is a loose term here; it can mean a solid color, a pattern, or (in the case of fills) a gradient. In [Figure 5-1](#), you can see a variety of paths with different strokes and fills applied to them.

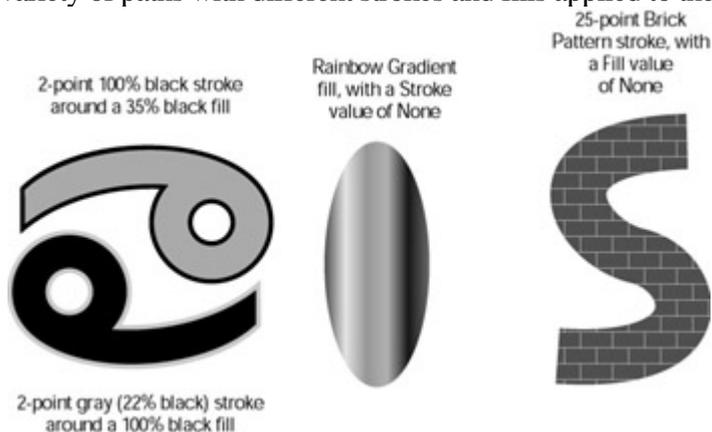


Figure 5-1: Paths with different fills and strokes applied to them.

Although a stroke can be any thickness, it always uses a path as its center. You can stylize your strokes with solid colors or patterns but not with gradients. (*Patterns* and *gradients* are special combinations of colors; read more about them in the upcoming section, *All the colors in the rainbow and then some.*) A *path* surrounds the area where you put the color. This area is the *fill* because, um, it's filled (with color).

Tip

Fills and strokes can obscure the boundaries of your paths, especially when you have very thick strokes on your paths, such as the S-shaped bricks in [Figure 5-1](#). To temporarily hide all fills and strokes, choose **View Outline**. This shows your artwork as just the paths, with all strokes and fills hidden. You can still edit the artwork as you would any other time. The only difference is that you can't see fills and strokes. To show all the colors again, choose **View Preview**.

You have many ways to create and modify fill and stroke color in Illustrator, but the quickest and easiest way to apply them is by using the Fill and Stroke boxes in the Toolbox, which looks remarkably like what you see in [Figure](#)

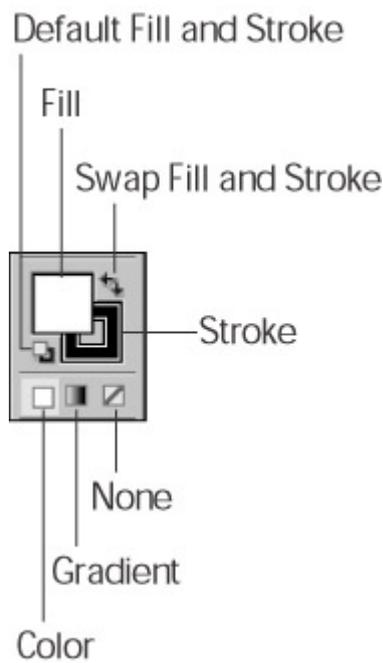


Figure 5-2: Fill and Stroke in the Toolbox.

You can change a fill or a stroke, but not both at the same time. You decide whether to change the fill or the stroke by selecting an object and then clicking the Fill (solid) box or the Stroke (bordered) box. The box you click comes to the front; after that, every color change you make is applied to whichever one you chose . . . until you choose the other one.

Some very useful features surround the Fill and Stroke boxes. Just to the upper right is a little curved line with arrows on both ends. Click this thingamajig (called the Swap Fill and Stroke button) to swap fill and stroke colors.

Tip

Press Shift+X on your keyboard and you swap fill and stroke colors without having to click anywhere!

To the lower left of the Fill and Stroke boxes are miniature white (Fill) and black bordered (Stroke) boxes. Click this Default Fill and Stroke button to set the Fill and Stroke boxes to their default colors: white for Fill and black for Stroke.

If you prefer fills and strokes in festive colors, here s the story: Beneath the Fill and Stroke boxes live three square buttons that handle colors. Click the first square (the Color button) to change the fill or stroke color to the last color that you used. Click the second square (the Gradient button) to change the color of the stroke or fill so that it matches the last-selected gradient you used. Click the third square (the None button) to use no fill or stroke color at all.

Tip

Double-clicking the Stroke or Fill boxes summons the Color Picker from which you can specify colors in a variety of ways. You can choose a color from a spectrum, using the true color field and the color slider, or define a color numerically. You can also select colors from the Color and Swatches palettes, as I describe later in this chapter.

Filling and stroking paths with color

You can fill a path with one color and stroke it with another, as shown in [Figure 5-3](#).



Figure 5-3: Filling and stroking a path with two different colors.

To fill a path with one color and stroke it with another, just follow these steps:

1.

With any of the selection tools, select the path that you want to color.

2.

In the Toolbox, click the Fill box (the solid one).

Doing so tells Illustrator to apply the next color you choose to the fill (but not the stroke) of selected paths.

3.

Choose Window Swatches.

The Swatches palette appears. The squares in this palette function in much the same way as do the three squares beneath the Fill and Stroke boxes in the Toolbox. Click any square in the palette to apply that swatch to the selected stroke or fill. (For more information, see [The Swatches Palette](#) later in this chapter.)

4.

Click any solid-color swatch.

(Well, okay, any swatch in the palette works. The ones that aren't solid colors are special colors, such as patterns and gradients—but sticking to solid colors is less confusing early on.)

5.

Click the Stroke box (the thick-bordered one) in the Toolbox.

Illustrator is ready for you to pick a stroke color.

6.

In the Swatches palette, choose a solid color, just as you did for the fill color in Step 4.

Tip

You can also drag and drop color onto your path. Simply drag a color swatch from the Swatches palette and drop it onto your path. Depending on whether the fill or stroke is selected in the Toolbox, either the fill or stroke is colored anew.

Making a bold stroke

When you follow the steps to color a stroke and don't see any change, you probably have too narrow of a stroke. Stroke widths can range anywhere from 0 points (pts) to 1,000 points (18 inches, or about 46 centimeters). If the stroke is too narrow to be visible on-screen, you can change the stroke width by using the Stroke palette, as shown in [Figure 5-4](#).

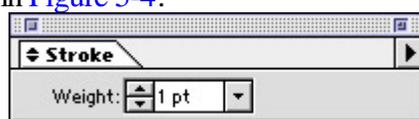


Figure 5-4: The Stroke palette.

To give the path a different stroke width:

1.

Select the path with any selection tool.

2.

Choose Window > Stroke.

The Stroke palette appears.

3.

Enter a new value or choose one from the Weight drop-down menu.

Adding multiple strokes to a single path

This power-user tip will have your friends writhing in jealous agony. Choosing the Add New Stroke option in the Appearance palette pop-up menu places a second stroke on your path. You can make this stroke a different color, width, and even apply an effect directly to it. To avoid confusion, always check to see which stroke is highlighted in the Appearance palette; that's the one that will be changed when you fool around with settings in the Stroke or Color palette.

Filling crossed and open paths

Sometimes a path crosses itself. For instance, a path in the shape of a figure eight crosses itself once. If you fill this path, the two round areas of the eight are full, as shown in [Figure 5-5](#).

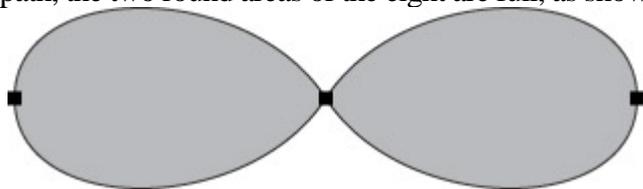


Figure 5-5: A filled path in a figure eight shape.

Open paths, which have separate starting and ending points, can be filled but the results are a little different from what you may expect. When you fill an open path, an *imaginary path* connects the first and last points of the original path. This imaginary path marks the limits of the fill area. If you apply a stroke to the figure, the stroke doesn't apply to the imaginary path. [Figure 5-6](#) shows open paths with fills in them. I use a dotted line to show where Illustrator creates the imaginary path between two end points.

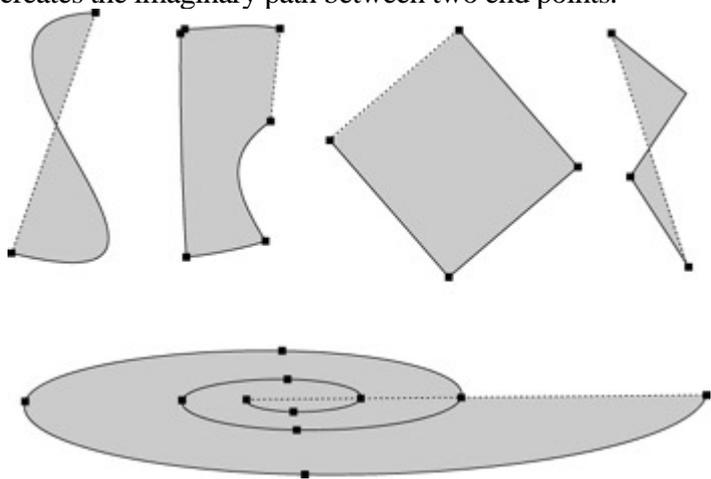


Figure 5-6: Open paths with fills and dotted lines connecting the starting and ending points.

The Swatches Palette

Illustrator stores colors in the Swatches palette for quick and easy access—and no matter how fast you grab a color, you never have to worry about splattering paint. The Swatches palette comes with a whole set of colors that are ready to use just by clicking them in the palette.

Additionally, Illustrator comes with many swatch libraries—sets of colors created for special purposes—so if your first-grade crayon box never seemed to have enough colors, you're in luck. You can even create your own custom colors by using the Color palette (see the later section, [The Color Palette](#)) and adding them to the Swatches palette.

Using the Swatches palette (shown in [Figure 5-7](#)) is almost as easy as looking at it. Select an object with any selection tool, click the Stroke or Fill box in the Toolbox, choose Window Swatches so that the Swatches palette appears, and then click any square in the Swatches palette to choose that color. The selected fill or stroke updates the instant you click the new color. No fuss, no muss, no melted crayons.

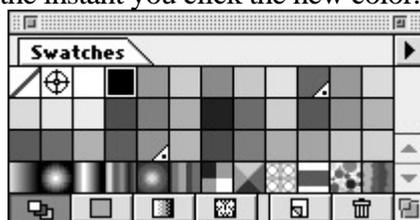


Figure 5-7: Choose colors from the Swatches palette.

All the colors in the rainbow and then some

The Swatches palette contains several different types of color swatches, each with its own range of purposes and uses. Here's the lineup:

-

Process color: This is your run-of-the-mill, straight-up color with no added bells or whistles. You can make a color for use on-screen or for print by mixing varying amounts of red, green, and blue (RGB) or cyan, magenta, yellow, and black (CMYK). For more information on using RGB versus CMYK colors, see [Chapter 1](#). These appear as solid color squares.

-

Spot colors: (Nope, not for creating polka dots or Dalmatians.) Spot colors are used exclusively in printing. The four-color CMYK printing process can create only a limited range of colors from its four basic color ingredients. To compensate, the process can also use spot colors of specified inks that come in a particular color. Many companies make spot colors, but most countries have one dominant company that sets the standards for spot-color printing in that country. (In the United States, it's Pantone; in Japan, it's TOYO.) The range of all colors that a company produces is its *library*. Illustrator includes swatch libraries from all the swatch-producing companies. Spot colors show up in the Swatches palette with little triangles in their lower right-hand corners; these triangles have a tiny spot in their corners.

- **Registration:** Registration is a special Illustrator color that uses 100 percent of all inks but although it looks like black on-screen, it is not for artwork. Registration (as a color, at least) exists for a very specific technical purpose: creating the Registration marks used by commercial printers to get things in proper alignment on press. If you aren't a commercial printer or haven't been specifically told to do so by a commercial printer, you should never use Registration. Registration looks like a crosshair in the Swatches palette.

Warning

If you use Registration to color your artwork, you get an unprintable sticky mess that will probably stink (chemically, at least), waste ink, and never dry.

- **None:** This color choice differs from White (which tells a printer to *put no ink in a particular space*, on the assumption that the paper itself supplies the white color). None, on the other hand, is the *complete absence* of color. In a picture, a white object is opaque; it blocks your view of any objects behind it. (You can't see the electric outlet behind a white refrigerator.) An object with a color of None is transparent—invisible. If you want to use a stroke but also want other objects to show through the fill (or let the fill show through the objects), choose None for the specific on-screen area you want to see through. None appears in the Swatches palette as a white square with a diagonal red line through it.

- **Gradients:** Gradients combine two or more colors in a smooth transition that shades from one color into the other.

- **Patterns:** If you really love wallpaper, you can use one or more objects in a tiled pattern to fill other objects.

The icons at the bottom of your palette (refer to [Figure 5-7](#)) allow for different swatch viewing options.

Swatch options for super colors

Swatches are a quick way to retrieve colors, but they do more. Double-click any swatch in the palette to open the Swatch Options dialog box, shown in all its useful glory in [Figure 5-8](#).

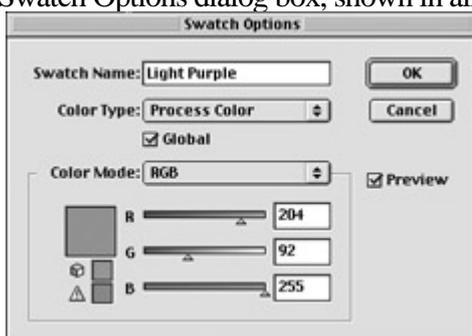


Figure 5-8: The Swatch Options dialog box.

The Swatch Options dialog box keeps you busy with choices and gives you creative possibilities. Here's the list:

- **Swatch Name:** Here you can give the color a distinctive name (such as Maine Blueberry) or change its name.

- **Color Type:** You can change a spot color to its closest CMYK or RGB equivalent. This is a handy option when your client provides you with a logo rendered in spot colors (Metallic puce? You're not kidding?) and you have to produce an image in CMYK or RGB.

Remember

Unfortunately, you can't go the other way around. Trying to change a process color into a spot color doesn't give you the closest spot color equivalent from the Pantone, TOYO, or any other color library. (For more about color libraries, see the following section, [Swatch libraries](#).)

- **Global:** After you select (check) this option, Illustrator remembers everything you color with a particular swatch. When you change the color of the swatch, everything with the old swatch's color updates to the new color. (Mercifully, Adobe didn't call this feature *The Old Swatcher*.) This feature's a great timesaver when you want to change a color scheme. You don't have to go back, reselect, and recolor everything—very handy, indeed.

- **Color Mode, gamut warnings, and color sliders:** These features are especially powerful when used with Global color. They all work just like the Color palette except that they apply your changes only to the currently selected swatch. See more on this palette in the section, [The Color Palette](#), later in this chapter.

Swatch libraries

Illustrator comes loaded with color choices in the form of swatch libraries—sets of color swatches created for specific purposes. (Pantone, for example, has several libraries devoted just to spot colors.) The libraries you get with Illustrator draw from all the major spot-color sources in the world. A Web library provides tried-and-true colors that work best on the Internet. To peruse these libraries, click **Window Swatch Libraries**. If you turn up a color that you simply must have, add it to your Swatches palette: Open the specific library you need, find the color you want, and click it. Instantly the color shows up in your Swatches palette, ready for you to use.

Tip

Some libraries contain hundreds of swatches, which can make finding a particular color difficult. Fortunately, swatch libraries have a Find field at the very top of the window. For example, if a client wants a logo done on a report cover in Pantone 185, just open one of the Pantone libraries (by choosing Window Swatch Libraries Pantone Coated). When the swatch library appears, type **185** in its Find field (the empty white rectangle at the top of the palette) to highlight Pantone 185C (the C is for coated) automatically you don't have to press any other key! Click Pantone 185C to add it to your Swatches palette and you're good to go.

Tip

If you need to choose spot colors for a project that will be offset printed, make sure to select your color from a printed swatch book manufactured by your chosen ink company. Never select the colors based on your on-screen view of the swatches in the library. Because of many variables, your screen can give you only its best match of the printed color. It will never be exact and frequently will be quite different.

The Color Palette

The Color palette is as close as Illustrator gets to a real-world artist's palette. You use it to create new colors by blending. Instead of mixing splotches of pigment and linseed oil with a brush (and getting half of it on your jeans), you move sliders to adjust how much of each component color goes into your new color.

Parts of the palette

The Color palette (see [Figure 5-9](#)) has several cool features, in addition to the color sliders, that make creating colors easier.

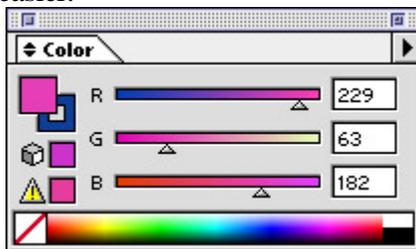


Figure 5-9: The Color palette is the closest you can get to a real artist's palette in Illustrator.

Here's a list of Color palette features:

- - Fill and Stroke boxes:** These function identically to the Fill and Stroke boxes in the Toolbox. They're available here in the Color palette for your convenience.
- - Color sliders and Color Value boxes:** You can create a new color by dragging these sliders to the left or right. The color in the Fill or Stroke box (whichever is in front) updates to reflect the change, as does any selected artwork. To specify an exact amount of a particular color, type a number into the Color Value box to the right of each color slider.
- - None:** Click the None button to choose a Stroke or Fill value of None.
- - Black-and-white:** You guessed it! Click Black to make the color black, and White to make it white. (Wait a minute. Was that a trick question?)
- - Spectrum bar:** In this little rectangle are all the colors that you can possibly create. Click anywhere on the Spectrum bar to choose a color. Well, okay, the spectrum is tiny; almost nobody picks exactly the right color on the first click. Use the spectrum to get a color that's in the right ballpark. Then use the sliders to make the

color precisely what you want.

- **Out-of-gamut color warnings:** As you create colors, tiny color boxes appear, warning you whether the color is outside the color gamut for print or the Web. (The *gamut* is the total range of colors that a method can create without having to alter any of the colors.) For the Web, the gamut is 216 colors; for print, it's several thousand. If you choose a color outside this range, that color can shift to another color. The Out-of-Web Color Warning is a square of color with a little cube beside it; the Out-of-Gamut Warning for Print is a square with an exclamation point inside a triangle beside it. Click the square to choose a color within the gamut that's closest to the color you chose. If you're creating for the Web, you can ignore the print gamut warning and vice versa if you're creating for print.

To create a new color by using the Color palette, follow these steps:

1.

Choose Window Color.

The Color palette appears.

2.

From the Color palette pop-up menu, choose a color model.

See the upcoming section, Modes and models, for more information.

3.

Click the Fill or Stroke box in the palette.

4.

Move the sliders of each component color to the left or to the right until the color you want appears in the Stroke or Fill box.

Of course, if you actually want to use the colors that you create in the Color palette (what a concept), you can do so in a couple of ways:

- **Use the color while you use the palette.** Anything already selected when you create a new Fill or Stroke color is filled or stroked with that color. (For example, you can fill a selected pterodactyl with teal or turquoise.)
- **Save the new color for later.** After you create the new color, you can save it to use again later. Here's how:

1.

Open the Swatches palette by choosing Window Swatches.

The Swatches palette appears.

2.

Click the Fill or Stroke box (whichever you just created) in either the Toolbox or the Color palette.

3.

Drag the Fill or Stroke box onto the Swatches palette.

Don't worry, you won't damage the Color palette when you drag away the Fill or Stroke box. Instead, you get a ghostly outline of the box while you drag it away. Release that outline on top of the Swatches palette to add the Fill or Stroke to the palette.

•

After you release the mouse, the color shows up in the Swatches palette for you to use again and again!
(Pteal pterodactyls ptravel in flocks? Who knew?)

With the new color in the Swatches palette, you can double-click it to open the Swatch Options dialog box. Here you can give it a name, make it a global color, or use any of the options I describe in the earlier section, Swatch options for super colors.

Modes and models

Mode and *model* are the Illustrator terms to define color. *Color mode* is the language of color your document speaks—either CMYK or RGB. *Color model* is a way of describing how to form the colors in the mode (color-language) your document uses.

All the colors used in the document (except spot colors) exist in one particular color mode, no matter what color model you use to create them. When you open a new document, you must decide whether to work in RGB or CMYK color. (See [Chapter 1](#) for the tale of two color modes.) Choose a color model from the Color palette pop-up menu (accessed by clicking the little triangle in the upper-right of the palette); see [Figure 5-10](#) for a mug shot.

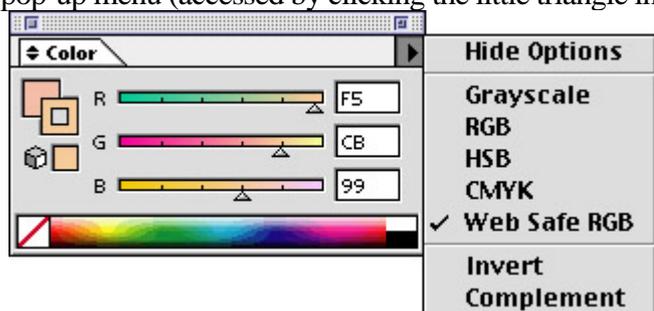


Figure 5-10: Different color models within the Color palette pop-up menu.

Suppose, for example, that you want a shade of gray while you're working in RGB mode. Shades of gray are hard to create in RGB because you have to drag all three red, green, and blue sliders to get the color you want. To dodge that complexity, switch the color model to Grayscale in the Color palette pop-up menu. Then you have just one slider to deal with and you can quickly create the exact shade of gray you want.

The Color palette is where you create the colors you need, using a variety of color models: Grayscale, RGB, HSB, CMYK, and Web Safe RGB. Each has a specific purpose, but really these different colors exist only to help you visualize the color that you're trying to create. The Color palette enables you to mix colors in any color model, but as

soon as you apply them, they convert to the color mode you're using.

The following list describes these color models and the best ways to use each:

- **Grayscale:** Colors express everything as a shade of gray. This model is handy when you're creating a black-and-white printing or just want a quick way to specify a shade of gray. Grayscale is measured in terms of ink values, with black as 100 percent—the most ink possible.
- **RGB:** Colors are based on the three colors (red, green, and blue) used by your monitor to generate all the colors that you see on-screen. These colors are designed for on-screen use, such as graphics for the Web. The amounts that you see in the Color Value boxes range from 0 to 255. They correspond to the intensity of the light projected by your computer screen. Computer screens use tiny red, green, and blue phosphors that glow with different intensities to create the colors that you see. The higher the value, the brighter the glow. Specifying 255 for all colors gives you pure white; a 0 value for all colors gives you pitch black. These numbers, however, are less important than your practical results. Pay attention to the Fill or Stroke boxes when you drag the sliders and see the color that results.
- **HSB:** Colors are seen in terms of hue, saturation, and brightness. Think of an HSB color in terms of a crayon. Hue is the color of the crayon, such as red. Saturation is how red that crayon is, such as brick red versus cherry red. Brightness is equivalent to how hard you press down when you use that crayon. This way of thinking may seem weird, but many painters and traditional artists find it very intuitive.
- **CMYK:** Colors are based on the four colors (cyan, magenta, yellow, and black) used in process printing. (Cyan is a light, bright blue; magenta is a bright purple color that's almost pink. You're on your own for yellow and black.) CMYK colors are designed to specify colors for print. *Process printing* enables people to achieve a wide variety of colors (including photographic-looking images) using only those four colors. CMYK colors work the opposite of the way RGB colors work: The more of each individual color, the darker the total color becomes. For instance, 0 percent of cyan, magenta, yellow, and black results in white; 100 percent of cyan, magenta, yellow, and black results in black. But nobody who knows better would ever create black for print by using 100 percent of all four colors—that would put way too much ink on the paper, resulting in a sticky mess.

Tip

Well, okay, in theory you could create black by using 100 percent of cyan, magenta, and yellow but printing inks (for the most part) are designed to be partially transparent, so they mix together better. The result would be a dark gray mess, not a crisp black. To create a black that really looks black, you have to add black to cyan, magenta, and yellow (fortunately, black ink is cheaper than those colors). Try using 100 percent black for black, adding just a little of the other three colors to make it look really black. (Such complications of even a basic concept may have driven some folks to make graphics only for the Web.)

•

Web Safe RGB: Most folks are probably used to working with the 16.7 million colors that most computer monitors can display these days. Of those colors, however, only 216 of them display consistently on Windows, Unix, and Macintosh computers. This reduced range of color is because of differences in operating systems, Web browsers, and color cards. Colors outside this range of 216 can dither when displayed on a system that can't really show them properly. *Dithering* is the computer's attempt to create the missing colors by using dots of two colors it can display, creating an optical illusion that the missing color is there. Dithering usually looks awful. (See [Chapter 16](#) for more on dithering.)

Tip

Use Web Safe RGB when you need colors that look their best on as many different computers and browsers as possible. (A corporate logo is a classic example.)

•

Hide Options, Invert, and Complement: The remaining choices aren't color models at all. Hide Options collapses the Color palette so that just the Spectrum, Black and White, and None show. Invert changes the selected color into its opposite, as if you had taken a color photograph of it and were looking at a negative. To understand Complement, think back to art class and the color wheel: *Complementary colors* are the colors on opposite sides of the color wheel. (Orange, for example, is the complementary color to blue. Roughly. Blue never looks bluer than when it's next to orange, and vice versa.) Put another way, choosing Complement chooses the one color that will contrast the most with the currently selected artwork.

Filling with Patterns and Textures

You can fill and stroke any path with a pattern. Patterns fill areas with repeating artwork.

Applying patterns to paths

To fill a path with a pattern, select the path, make sure the Fill box is active by clicking it in the Toolbox, and then click the pattern you want to use in the Swatches palette. The path fills with the pattern you selected. [Figure 5-11](#) shows the same path filled with different patterns.

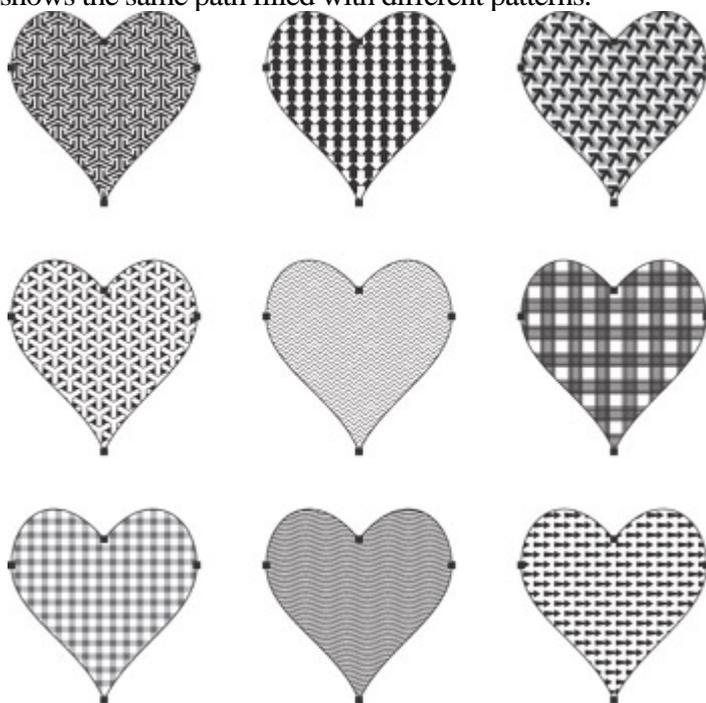


Figure 5-11: The same path with several different pattern fills.

You can apply a pattern to a stroke as well as to a fill. Applying a pattern is exactly like applying a solid color. (See the section, [The Swatches Palette](#), earlier in this chapter.) Click the object, click the Fill or Stroke box to put the pattern in the proper place, and then click the pattern swatch in the Swatches palette. When you apply a pattern to a stroke, you may need to make the stroke extra thick for the pattern to be visible. (See the section [Making a bold stroke](#) earlier in this chapter.)

Making patterns

You can easily turn most path-based artwork into a pattern (which hotly pursues the steps required to create a pattern out of paths).

To create a pattern out of paths, just follow these steps:

1.

Create the artwork that you want to use for a pattern.

For this example, a hammer.

2.

Select the artwork by using any of the selection tools.

3.

Drag the artwork from the Document window onto the Swatches palette and release the mouse button.

A new swatch appears in the Swatches palette containing a very tiny version of your artwork. Give the new swatch a name to make it easier to identify later.

4.

To name the new swatch, double-click it to open the Swatch Options dialog box.

5.

In this dialog box, enter the name of the pattern.

6.

Click OK.

The custom pattern appears in the Swatches dialog box.

7.

Apply your custom pattern to any path.

My pattern inside the oval certainly hammers home the point (sorry about that). Check it out in [Figure 5-12](#).

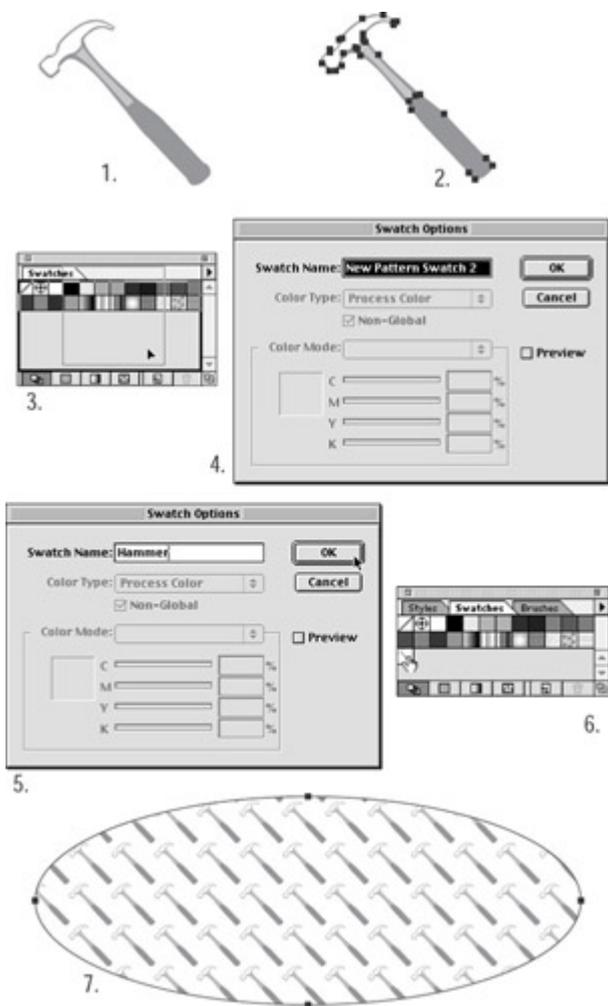


Figure 5-12: Creating a pattern from vector art of a hammer.
Tip

Occasionally, you may want to space out your pattern artwork so that the repeated pieces of artwork are farther away from each other. You can easily trick Illustrator into doing this by drawing an invisible rectangle (a rectangle with a fill and stroke of None) over your artwork. The bigger the rectangle, the farther apart the repeated pieces are. Select the artwork and the rectangle before you make your pattern. Illustrator isn't quite smart enough to realize that the rectangle is invisible. The program sees only the paths that make the rectangle and repeats the artwork based on those edges.

Using the Gradient Fill

Paths can be filled with colors that smoothly blend from one to another across a distance. These colors are *gradients*. Gradients can have any number of colors in them, with results that are nothing short of astonishing. [Figure 5-13](#) shows several paths with gradient fills.



Figure 5-13: Path objects with gradient fills.

Filling a path with a gradient involves two steps: creating the gradient and then applying it to a path. However, you can do this in any order. Often, it's easier to create a gradient, apply it to a path, and then continue to tweak it by changing, adding, or removing colors or by modifying the position or angle of the gradient. You can see how the gradient looks on an object instead of just in a small box.

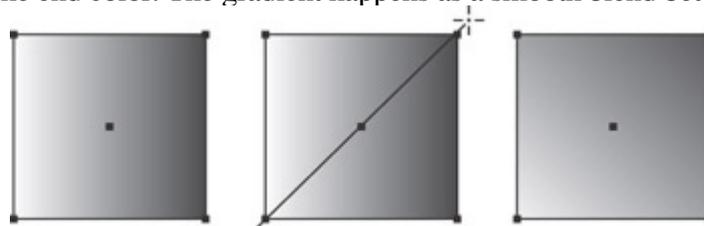
To fill a path with a gradient, select the path and then click a gradient in the Swatches palette. The object fills with a gradient that probably doesn't look a thing like what you want—but that's okay. By using the Gradient tool and the Gradient palette, you can tweak this gradient to your heart's content.

The Gradient tool



The Gradient tool (shown in the margin) doesn't actually create anything. Instead, it enables you to set the direction and the *duration* (the distance across which the gradient makes its transition from the beginning color to the ending color).

To use the Gradient tool, first use any selection tool to select an object that's filled with a gradient. Then click and drag across the gradient with the Gradient tool and release the mouse button when you get to the other side. The direction that you drag sets the direction of the blend. The place where you click gets 100 percent of the start color; the place where you release gets 100 percent of the end color. The gradient happens as a smooth blend between



those two points (as you can see in [Figure 5-14](#)).

Figure 5-14: Left: The square shows a default gradient applied. Center: Clicking and dragging with the Gradient tool. Right: The result.

The Gradient palette

If you don't like the colors of your gradient, you don't have to settle for the gradients that come in the Swatches palette. You can use the Gradient palette (by choosing Window Gradient) to change colors, add colors, remove colors, and change the way the colors behave. (See [Figure 5-15](#).)



Figure 5-15: Control color with the Gradient palette.

Tip

The Gradient palette looks simple compared with other palettes, but don't be deceived. In spite of its humble appearance, this palette lets you create just about any gradient you could ever want. The Gradient palette works with the Color palette and the Swatches palette, so keep both those palettes open whenever you edit a gradient.

The *gradient sliders* slide left and right. You use them to change how gradually (or not-so-gradually) your colors blend with each other. If you want the colors to blend without much nuance over a short distance, drag the sliders closer together. If you want the colors to blend more gradually across a longer distance, move the sliders farther apart.

Gradient-mania: Color-tweaking made simple

When you change a gradient in the Gradient palette, selected objects that are filled with that gradient update to reflect that change. You can see what's going on with the gradient more easily if you make an object and fill it with the gradient before you start making changes in the palette.

To change gradient colors, here's the highly artistic approach (no smock needed):

1.

Click one of the gradient sliders beneath the gradient bar.

The color of the slider appears in the Color palette.

2.

Create a different color in the Color palette.

As long as the gradient slider is selected, the color updates in the Gradient palette automatically. Is that slick or what?

Tip

As an alternative, you can click any solid color in the Swatches palette and drag it to the Gradient slider in the Gradient palette. You can also press the Alt (Option on the Mac) key and simply click a solid color swatch in the Swatches palette. The gradient updates with the new color.

Adding colors to the gradient is a lot easier than going to the paint store. Just follow these steps:

1.

Click beneath the gradient bar where there isn't any gradient slider.

A new slider appears where you click.

2.

Change the color of the new slider in the Color palette or press the Alt (Option on the Mac) key and click a solid color in the Swatches palette.

3.

Adjust the position of your gradient sliders if you desire.

Remember

To remove a color, click the gradient slider and drag it off the Gradient palette. To save the gradient, drag the gradient swatch from the Gradient palette (or from the Fill box in the Toolbox) to the Swatches palette. You can also simply click the New Swatch button (a dog-eared page icon) in the Swatches palette.

Between every pair of gradient sliders (on top of the gradient bar) is the midpoint slider. This sets the point at which the two colors blend at 50 percent of each color. You can also move this point by dragging it to the left or to the right. [Figure 5-16](#) gives you a look at ways to change the gradient.



Figure 5-16: First, moving the sliders closer together. Second, adding new color sliders. Third, moving the gradient midpoint.

The secret gradient

If you click the gradient swatches in the Swatches palette, you may notice that some gradients look like spheres or sunbursts. You may have tried to recreate one of these gradients, but no amount of clicking and dragging with the

Gradient tool and no amount of moving gradient sliders enables you to do that.

The trick is in a hidden option in the Gradient palette. Click the little triangle in the upper-right corner of the Gradient palette. The Gradient palette pop-up menu with only one item (Show Options) appears. Choose this option to make several more options appear in the palette, as shown in [Figure 5-17](#). The one you want is the Type option, which reveals two choices: Linear and Radial. Choose Radial. The beginning color is the center color. When you click and drag, the spot where you click sets the center of the gradient.



Figure 5-17: Choose Show Options from the Gradient palette pop-up menu to work with a radial gradient.

Chapter 6: Selecting and Editing Paths

Overview

In This Chapter

- Discovering different methods of selection
- Selecting objects, points, and groups
- Adding to and taking away from selections
- Using the Magic Wand tool
- Selecting without tools
- Understanding the Select menu
- Fine-tuning points

To change a path in Illustrator, you have to select it. In fact, 99 percent of the time you can't make any changes at all to a path unless it's selected. Some exceptions are when you change Document Color Mode (see [Chapter 1](#)) and when you use the Pen tool to continue on an existing path (see [Chapter 7](#)). Everything else requires that you make a selection.

When you make a selection in Illustrator, you're saying, "From this moment forward, I want to change this part of the artwork and nothing else." You're targeting a point, path, object, or objects for change. By using Illustrator's wide variety of selection tools and commands, you can target everything from a single point to your entire document. And the changes you make—the size, rotation, fill or stroke colors, and so on—simultaneously affect everything that you select.

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◀ PREVIOUS NEXT ▶

Selecting with Different Methods

Suppose you create a mondo-cool logo. With Illustrator, you can select

- The entire logo
- Any group of paths within the logo
- Any single path within the logo
- Any portion of any path or paths

Two oddities of selecting in Illustrator

When selecting in Illustrator, you may find a couple of oddities. For example, if you select just a point on a path, the point is all that you've selected. It shows up solid, but the rest of the points on the path remain unselected and show up as hollow. Then things get weird. Even though only one point is selected, any change that you make to the fill or stroke affects the entire path. (For more information on fills and strokes, see [Chapter 5](#).)

Another odd thing is that you can select a line segment, but Illustrator never shows you that the line segment is selected. If you click a segment, all the points on its path show as unselected (hollow). Nothing appears on-screen to indicate that only the segment is selected—but once again, changing the fill or stroke affects the entire path.

All these possibilities make selecting in Illustrator seem a rather daunting task. As if that weren't enough, Illustrator gives you five different selection tools, as shown in [Figure 6-1](#). In the following sections, you find out about these tools and what happens when you use them.

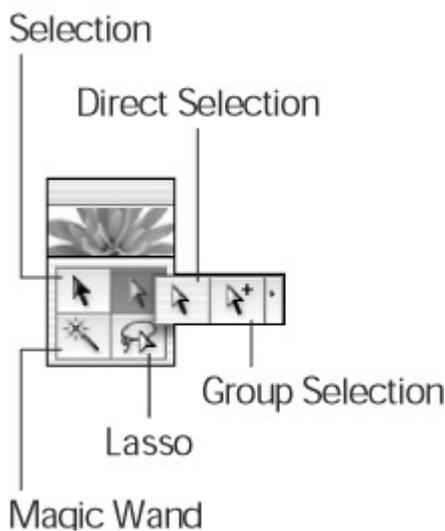


Figure 6-1: Illustrator has more tools for making selections than for any other single purpose.

Natural selection

Of the five selection tools in Illustrator—Selection, Direct Selection, Group Selection, Lasso, and Magic Wand—the *Selection tool* is more-or-less the main selection tool. It simply selects whatever you click. (The names of the other selection tools aren't quite as accurate in describing their functions, but hey—Selection tool was already taken.) To keep the confusion to a minimum, I call the tools by their Adobe-given names—in part so you know what the cute label refers to when you pause the cursor over a tool and see the name in the ToolTip.



You use the Selection tool to select objects or groups of objects. When you click a path, you select the entire path. If the path is part of a group, you select that group as well. A *group* is two or more separate objects that are joined together by choosing Object > Group. You join objects into a group to get the advantage of selecting all of them at once when you use the Selection tool to select them—which saves all that tedious clicking. (The Object > Ungroup command is just one of the fiendishly clever ways you can organize things in Illustrator—explore 'em all in [Chapter 13](#).)

You can select on-screen items with the Selection tool in two ways:

- - **Click the object that you want to select.** The object and any other object that's grouped with it are selected.
- - **Click and drag with the Selection tool.** As you do, a dotted rectangle called a *marquee* appears. Anything inside or touching the marquee is selected, enabling you to select more than one object or group at a time, as shown in [Figure 6-2](#).

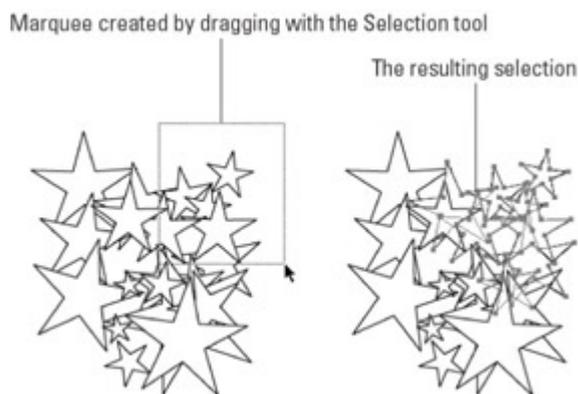


Figure 6-2: The Selection tool selects objects that are within (or touched by) the marquee.

Tip

If you click another path when one path is already selected, the path that you click is selected and the previously selected path is deselected. If you click an empty area, everything is deselected.

Also, if you click inside a path that's filled with None, you can't select that path. To select a path that has no fill, click the path itself. Similarly, when you're in Outline view mode (a way of looking at your paths with all fill and stroke colors hidden, accessed by selecting View|Outline), you click your paths to select them. (See [Chapter 5](#) for more info on fills and strokes.)

Direct selection



Use the Direct Selection tool to select individual points, path segments, type objects, and placed images by clicking them one at a time. If you drag a marquee with the Direct Selection tool, everything that the marquee encloses gets selected—all placed images, type objects, and portions of paths. [Figure 6-3](#) shows what's selected when you drag the Direct Selection marquee around several objects. (Note especially the star in the very center of the selected objects at the right of the figure: Some of its points are included in the selection; others aren't.)

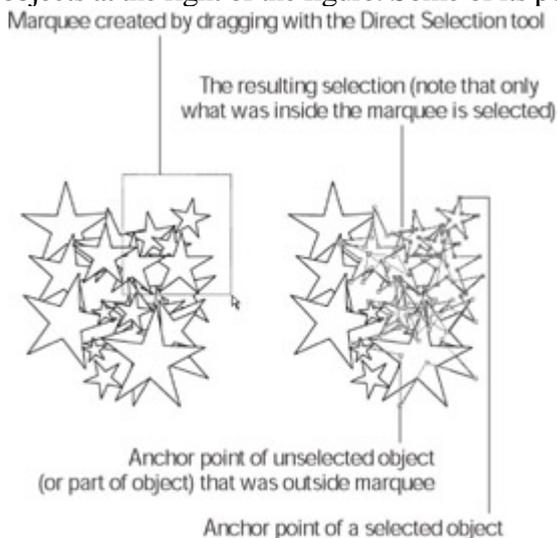


Figure 6-3: A selection in progress with the Direct Selection tool.

Tip

With the Direct Selection tool, if you select the interior of a path (if it's filled) rather than the edge or actual line of the path, you select the entire path rather than just the individual anchor point and path segments.

Group selection



Illustrator provides a special tool (Group Selection) for selecting—surprise!—groups. But the tool selects groups in a way different from the plain old Selection tool (which selects everything that's grouped to the object that you select). The Group Selection tool selects only one subgroup at a time.

A *subgroup* is a group within a group. Remember Statistics 101? (Don't make that face. What if it froze like that?) Suppose you want to create a graphic of a pencil. You start with the easy part—the lead. Then you go on to create something harder: that conical bit of wood that flares out around the lead and eventually becomes the rest of the pencil. After you get those two pieces positioned together the way you like, you want to keep them that way—so you group them together. (That way, you have to click only one of them with the Selection tool, and they move together.) Next, you create the rest of the pencil separately. After you bring all the pieces together, you want to keep them that way—so you group the lead and the cone with the rest of the pencil. All three objects are now a group. The lead and the cone are a subgroup of that group. You can continue grouping things, having as many subgroups as you want. Illustrator remembers the order in which you group things from the first subgroup to the last big group. When you click multiple times with the Group Selection tool, the first click selects the pencil lead, the second selects both the lead and the wood, and the third click selects the lead, the wood, and the rest of the pencil.

The Group Selection tool selects only one subgroup at a time, such as an object within a group, a single group within multiple groups, or a set of groups within the artwork. To find out how the Group Selection tool works, follow these steps:

1.

Select the Group Selection tool from the Toolbox.

2.

Click a path that's part of a group.

The path is selected entirely (all the points are solid; none are hollow), but the other objects in the group are not selected. (This result is an oddity of the tool. It first selects a single object, even though an object isn't really a group.)

3.

Click the same path again.

The next higher level of grouped objects is selected, as well as anything that has already been selected. Each time you click, you select the next higher level of grouping, until finally the all-encompassing group-of-all-groups is selected.

If you continue this crazed clicking, you wind up with groups of groups. For example, if you make several on-screen

drawings of pencils, you can group them so that you can move them all at once, draw a pencil box, and then group the pencils with the box. The Group Selection tool lets you select up from a single object to the group that the object belongs to, and so on. [Figure 6-4](#) applies this principle to the objects that form a pencil when grouped together.

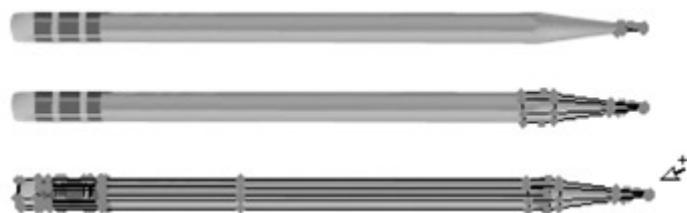


Figure 6-4: The Group Selection tool selects first the path, then the group that the path is in, and then the group that the first group is in.

Selecting more or less of what you have

Suppose you want to select a path on the left side of your document, and you also want to select a placed image on the right side of your document, but lots of paths are in between. You can't drag a marquee because you get all those unwanted paths in the middle. So you select the path on the left and then click the object on the right and the path on the left becomes deselected. Drat!

Use the Shift key to select more than one item at a time. If you hold down the Shift key and click a path with the Selection tool, you add that path to whatever is currently selected. If two paths are selected, pressing the Shift key and clicking another path results in all three paths being selected. You can also use the Shift key in conjunction with a selection marquee. The process is called *Shift-clicking*, and you can also use it to select fewer paths. For example, if you Shift-click one of the three selected paths shown in [Figure 6-5](#), you deselect that path, leaving only two selected paths.

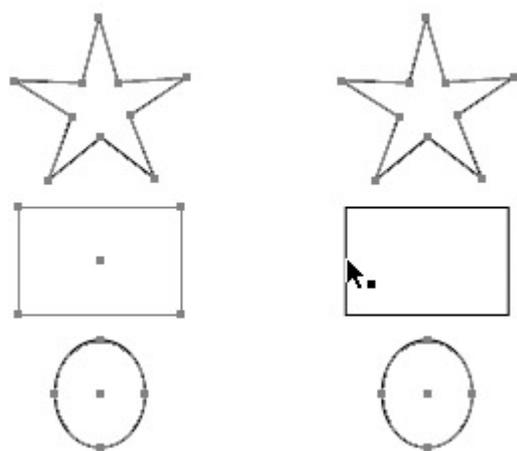


Figure 6-5: On the left are three selected paths. Shift-clicking the middle path leaves only two paths selected, as shown on the right.

Tip

Shift-clicking also works with the Direct Selection tool, except this action adds or subtracts single points instead of complete paths, unless you click the interior of a filled path, in which case you add or subtract complete paths.

Freeform selections



The Lasso tool acts similarly to dragging out a selection marquee, except this marquee can be any shape, not just rectangular. To use the tool, click and drag around the area that you want to select. When you release the mouse button, all points in that area are selected.

Tip

Pressing the Shift key with the Lasso tool allows you to add selections to anything that's already selected . . . but you probably guessed that already. What you haven't guessed (unless you're a bona fide psychic) is that you use the Alt (Option on the Mac) key to *subtract* from a selection. If you accidentally select something, you don't need to reselect. Press the Alt (Option on the Mac) key and drag around the points you don't want selected.

Selecting Magically with the Magic Wand



Use the Magic Wand tool to make selections based on similarities in various object attributes—exactly the same or based on a range of settings.

To use the tool, click the object, which can be either an open or closed path (for example, a square or a line). Illustrator then goes out and selects all objects that are similar to the object you clicked. How similar do the objects have to be? Excellent question! Read on to get the scoop.

Choose Window > Magic Wand or simply double-click the Magic Wand tool to bring up the Magic Wand palette, as shown in [Figure 6-6](#). Here you find settings for Fill, Stroke, Stroke Weight, Opacity, and Blending Mode attributes. Checking one or more of these attributes selects objects based on that particular attribute or attributes. The Tolerance setting establishes the range within which the attribute must fall to be selected. For example, if you select a stroke weight with a Tolerance setting of 2 points (pt) and click an object with a stroke weight of 5 pt, all objects with a stroke weight between 3 and 7 pt will be selected (5pt minus 2pt, and 5pt plus 2 pt). Similarly, if you check the Opacity option and set the Tolerance setting to 10%, all objects with an opacity between 40% and 60% are selected when you click an object with an opacity of 50%. The Tolerance settings for Fill and Stroke ranges from 0 to 255, which equates to the number of brightness levels. Rather than go into the techno-geek definition of brightness levels, a lower Tolerance setting selects only colors that are very similar to the object you click, whereas a higher Tolerance setting selects a wider range of colors. The only attribute that must be exactly the same is Blending Mode. (For more on blending modes, see [Chapter 10](#).)

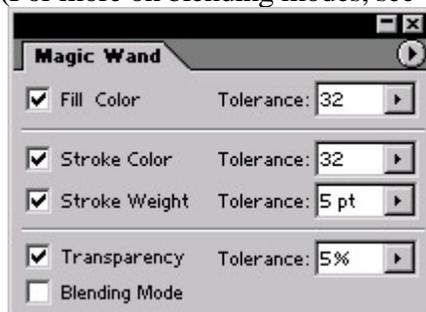


Figure 6-6: The Magic Wand palette offers Tolerance settings for various object attributes.

Selecting without Tools: The Select Menu

Sometimes selecting objects in Illustrator without using tools is easier or more convenient than selecting with tools. Because selecting is so important, Illustrator provides a menu entirely devoted to selection commands.

A giant vat of really sticky stuff

By far, the most common selection method in Illustrator is a keyboard command. By pressing `Ctrl+A` (`⌘+A` on the Mac), you select all the objects in the document. You can also choose `Select>All`, but the keyboard command is so useful that you'll probably memorize it in no time at all.

The opposite of `All` is `Deselect`, which deselects anything selected in the document (but you knew that). You don't have to select everything to use the command. If you have just one thing selected out of a hundred objects, `Deselect` deselects it. The keyboard command is easy to remember: `Ctrl+Shift+A` (`⌘+Shift+A` on the Mac).

The `Reselect` command reselects whatever was last selected using the Selection menu. The keyboard command is `Ctrl+6` (`⌘+6` on the Mac).

The `Inverse` command selects the art opposite of what's currently selected. In other words, everything that's currently selected becomes unselected, and everything else becomes selected. For example, if you select one of four squares, using the `Inverse` command selects the remaining three squares and deselects the original square. `Inverse` works only with entire paths. (The same goes for `Reselect`.) Using the same example, if you have only a single anchor point selected on the first square, the `Inverse` command still selects the other three squares and ignores the unselected three anchor points on the first square.

The `Next Object Above` and `Next Object Below` commands select objects based on their stacking order. For example, say you draw a square, a circle, and then a polygon. If you then select the square and choose `Select>Next Object Below`, Illustrator selects the circle. If you choose the command again, Illustrator selects the polygon, and so forth.

The `Save Selection` command allows you to save selections. Select an object (or objects) and choose `Select>Save Selection`. In the `Save Selection` dialog box, name the selection and click `OK`. The saved selection now appears at the bottom of the `Select` menu, just begging to be chosen. You can delete the saved selection or modify its name by choosing `Select>Edit Selection` and making the necessary changes in the `Edit Selection` dialog box.

The `Select>Object>All on Same Layer` command selects everything that resides on the currently active layer (the one that's highlighted in the `Layers` palette).

Specialized selection functions for important occasions

The Select menu contains a lot of other selection functions besides those mentioned in the earlier section, A giant vat of really sticky stuff. Located under the Same and Object submenus, these functions are designed to select objects that are similar in some way (such as style or fill color) to the object(s) already selected. [Figure 6-7](#) shows the Select menu.

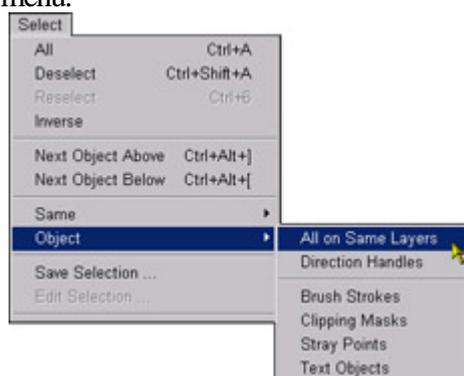


Figure 6-7: The Select menu provides a whole slew of selection goodies.

The four options that fall under the Object submenu are a bit less obvious:

-
- **Brush Strokes:** Selects all paths in the document that have brush strokes assigned to them.
- [Clipping Masks:](#) Selects paths used as masks in the document.
-
- **Direction Handles:** Selects the direction handles of the Bézier curves of selected objects. (For more on direction handles, see the [next section](#), [Editing and Adjusting Points.](#))
-
- **Stray Points:** Selects paths in your document that contain only a single point.

These commands can be vastly helpful in streamlining the editing process. For instance, if your client loves everything about the image except for that certain shade of blue, you can select one object that has that blue color in it, and then choose Select>Same>Stroke Color or Fill Color. With everything in that color selected, you can edit them all at once! If you're having trouble printing lines of a certain stroke weight, choose Select>Same>Stroke Weight and increase the stroke weight of all the lines. (See [Chapter 5](#) for more information on fills and strokes.) Other commands select items that have a history of problems printing on certain printers, such as stray points, brushstrokes, and masks. Selecting such items lets you modify them before printing. (See [Chapter 15](#) for more about printing.)

Editing and Adjusting Points

After you go through the trouble of selecting specific points, what do you do with them? Well, you can move them and change the kinds of points they are. You can also adjust their handles to change the shape of a curve.

A relocation bonus for points

You can move any selected point to any location. Because points (and not entire paths) are what you're moving, use the Direct Selection tool. Click any point with the Direct Selection tool and then drag the point to move it. You can do this in one step (click and drag at once) or in two separate steps (click and release and then drag the point). [Figure 6-8](#) shows a path with a point in its original location after it was moved with the Direct Selection tool.



Figure 6-8: Left: The original path. Right: The path after you move the selected point with Direct Selection.

Tip

To move points just a tiny little bit at a time but with precision use the arrow keys to nudge selected points in the direction of the arrow. One keystroke moves the point by an exact, smidgen-sized unit of measurement (1/72 of an inch, or .3528 millimeters) a unit of measure known in the design and publishing trades as a *point*.

Fine-tuning curves with direction points

If a point has *direction points* (those little gearshiftlike line segments) sticking out of it, you can use the Direct Selection tool to adjust the direction points, which adjusts the curves that shoot out from the points where the direction points connect to the curves.

Tip

Incidentally, the line that joins the direction point to the curve is called the *direction line*. Don't worry, only you can see the direction lines. They don't print or show up in the graphic when it's on the Web. Their only purpose is to show which anchor point is currently under the control of the direction point. The combination of the direction line and direction point is also commonly referred to as *direction handles* or just *plain handles*.

You probably noticed already that sometimes you see those gearshiftlike direction lines and direction points sticking out of points and sometimes you don't. When you click a point or a segment with the Direct Selection tool, you see the handles associated with that point or segment. However, if you Shift+click additional points, you lose those handles. [Figure 6-9](#) shows what happens when you use the Direct Selection tool to click (or enclose in a marquee) a



variety of different areas.

Figure 6-9: A selected curve reveals its direction points and direction lines.

When you can see the handles that you want to move, click and drag them. Note that missing a handle is very easy if you aren't really careful. (And making crude remarks when you do miss them is still considered bad form, even if no one else is around.) [Figure 6-10](#) shows the path from [Figure 6-9](#) with the direction points moved to different positions.



Figure 6-10: The curve from [Figure 6-9](#) after the direction points are moved

Converting anchor points

Illustrator has four types of anchor points: corner points, smooth points, and direction-changing points.

Straight-corner anchor points are in the corners of squares or triangles. Two path segments join in a corner point when neither of the connecting ends has a direction point associated with it. *Smooth anchor points* are used when two path segments continue smoothly, as in a circle or in a curving path. Both path segments have direction points linked together so that when you move one point, the other point moves in an equal and opposite direction, preserving the smooth curve. A *curved-corner anchor point* has two direction points that move in different

directions, enabling you to impose abrupt changes in direction. A *combination-corner anchor point* has one direction point, allowing a straight line to join a curved line at an abrupt angle. (For more on anchor point types, see [Chapter 7](#).)

Use the Illustrator Convert Anchor Point tool (which looks like an acute angle located in the same slot as the Pen tool) to change a point from one type into another. (For more about the types of anchor points and their usual behaviors, see [Chapters 2](#) and [7](#).) To use the Convert Anchor Point tool, put it on a point and click. What you do next determines the resulting point type:

- **To get a straight-corner anchor point:** Click an anchor point and release to change it into a straight corner point with no direction points.

Tip

This is a *quick-retract* method of point conversion.

- **To get a smooth anchor point:** Click an anchor point and drag it to change it into a smooth point with two linked direction points.

- **To get a curved-corner anchor point:** Click a direction point and drag. It moves independently of the opposite direction point.

- **To create a combination-corner anchor point from a smooth point or a curved-corner anchor point:** Click one of the direction points and drag it into the anchor point (leaving one direction point for the curved side of the point).

Adding and subtracting points (path math)

Illustrator has two tools that are used specifically for adding points to a path or for removing them. The Add Anchor Point tool adds points, and the Delete Anchor Point tool removes points. Both tools are located in the same slot as the Pen tool.

When you add an anchor point (or even several anchor points) with the Add Anchor Point tool, the path doesn't change shape (as shown in [Figure 6-11](#)), but you can move the point or points with the Direct Selection tool or convert them to other types of points by using the Convert Anchor Point tool.



Figure 6-11: Left : Original path. Right: Unchanged shape with new anchor points to added to three of the star's arms.

When you remove a point with the Delete Anchor Point tool, the path can change shape slightly or dramatically, depending on the shape. [Figure 6-12](#) shows what happens in two different circumstances.

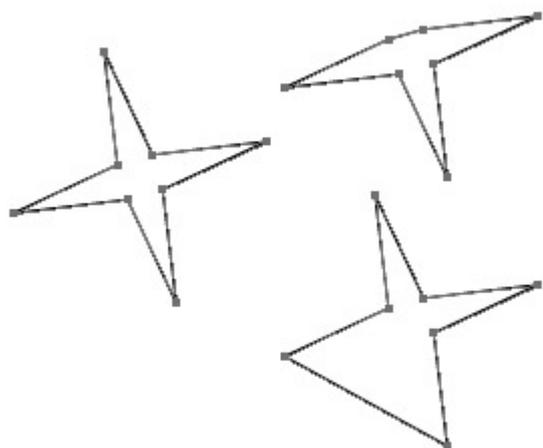


Figure 6-12: Left: Original path. Right: Removing two anchor points to create two different shapes.

Okay, have a squint at [Figure 6-12](#) for a moment. (Ow, that s gotta hurt. Not that hard.) You can probably tell immediately which anchor points were zapped with the Delete Anchor Point tool to change the image on the left into the upper- and lower-right images. In each case, only one point was removed. Powerful creatures, those anchor points.

Chapter 7: Wielding the Mighty Pen Tool

Overview

In This Chapter

- Using the Pen tool to create four different anchor points
- Drawing straight lines with the Pen tool
- Exploring the differences between open and closed paths
- Drawing smooth-curved lines with the Pen tool
- Making a seamless transition between curved and straight lines
- Drawing basic shapes with the Pen tool

Back in medieval times, circa 1982, straight and smooth-curved lines were drawn with elegant handheld implements such as a Rapidograph pen (an unwieldy, blotch-making tool), a ruler, and a French Curve. If you never had to use these torturous instruments, consider yourself lucky. With a Rapidograph pen, you got bumpy globs of ink and huge splotches that goosh onto the page each time you paused or changed direction.



Today, if you need a straight line or a curved one—or even if you *want* the appearance of bumpy globs of ink—you want to use the Illustrator Pen tool. This tool is a bit intimidating at first, but after you grasp a few concepts, you'll be drawing floor plans, customizing logos, and feeling really sorry for people who don't have Illustrator.

Unlike its handheld, inky counterpart, the Pen tool is not intuitive. You can't just pick it up and doodle; its functionality is far from obvious. This tool is unlike any drawing instrument in the world. But locked within the Pen tool are secrets and powers beyond those of mere physical ink. The Pen tool is a metaphysical doorway to the heavens of artistic exaltation; after you master the path of the Pen tool, all the riches of Illustrator can be yours. (You may even be unfazed by such hokey metaphors.)

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◀ PREVIOUS

NEXT ▶

Performing with the Pen, the Path, and the Anchor Points

No, this section isn't a retro look at obscure rock bands; it's about telling Illustrator where to go by creating the paths Illustrator relies on to create shapes and objects. *Paths* are instructions that tell your computer how to arrange straight- and curved-line segments on-screen. Each path is made up of *anchor points* (dots that appear on-screen). Between every two anchor points is the portion of the path called a *line segment*.

The Pen tool is probably as close as you ever get to calling up paths with the PostScript language unless you're an Adobe programming geek (in which case, the thought that you might need this book is frightening). For sanity's sake, I assume otherwise and get right to the point. Make that *points*. Understanding the anchor points that make up paths is critical to using the Pen tool. Anchor points have the following traits:

- At least two anchor points are required for every path. (One point maketh not a path, sayeth the sage.)
- Any number of anchor points can appear on a path—dozens, even hundreds, as long as that number is *not* one or zero. (Zero points make not a path, either, O wiseacre, grouseth the sage.)
- If an anchor point has a *direction point* (a black box you can grab and move with the mouse), the line segment extending from the anchor point is curved.
- If an anchor point has no direction point, the line segment extending from the anchor point is straight.
- You can use the Pen tool to create four types of anchor points (smooth, straight-corner, curved-corner, and combination-corner) to tell the computer how to get from one line segment to another. Care for a closer look? Coming right up.

Smooth anchor points

Smooth anchor points create a smoothly curved transition from one line segment to another. When you want a line that reminds you of the letter *S* (or some *S*-words, such as *sinuous* and *snaky*), use smooth anchor points. [Figure 7-1](#) shows two direction points creating a smooth anchor point on a path. The curve bends to follow the two direction points.

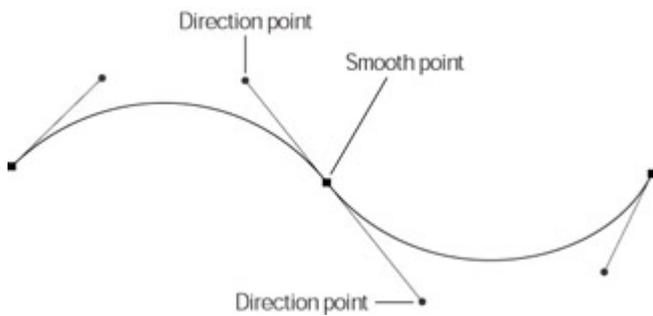


Figure 7-1: Smooth anchor points keep this path curving smoothly.

If you want to create circles or free-form shapes—such as puddles or shapes like those nonslip flower stickers for your bathtub floor—smooth anchor points are the way to go. Use the Pen tool to create a smooth anchor point by clicking and dragging with the mouse. As you drag, direction points, connected to the anchor point by direction lines, appear on either side of the anchor point (one at the tip of the Pen, the other on the opposite side of the anchor point). Think of those wacky direction points as magnets pulling the line segment toward them. The line segment bends to follow the direction point—just that easy, just that simple. (So far.)

Straight-corner anchor points

Straight-corner anchor points function as their name suggests and have both of the following characteristics:

- **One or two straight lines sticking out of them.** In [Figure 7-2](#), for example, the anchor point is where you find the hub if the two line segments were the hands of a clock.

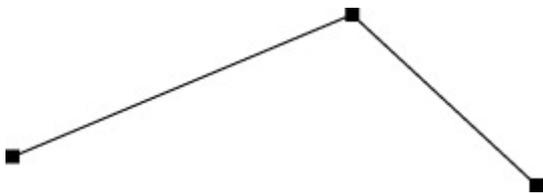


Figure 7-2: Use straight-corner anchor points when you need straight paths.

- **No direction points sticking out of them.** (Remember, direction points make curves.)

Think of these anchor points as the corner of an angle that you draw with a pencil and a protractor—except that you draw them on your computer (nobody bumps your arm so your nice sharp lead breaks off and . . . uh, never mind). To create straight-corner anchor points with the Pen tool, click and release; *do not drag*. Promptly release the mouse button the second you hear it click.

Use straight-corner anchor points to draw objects with hard angles—rectangles, triangles (note the whole-angle theme here)—anything that consists entirely of straight lines and *no* curves. Snakes, clouds, and country roads are entirely out of the question.

Curved-corner anchor points

Think of the *curved-corner* anchor point (also referred to as a *cusp point*) as the *m-curve* anchor point, or the point where the two bumps on a lowercase *m* are joined. If you look at this nice lowercase *m* through a magnifying glass, you can see a corner between the two bumps with curves coming out of it. The curved-corner anchor point may also remind you of a double fishhook turned upside down. You need these points to create not just lowercase *m*s, but also hearts (the Valentine variety, as shown in [Figure 7-3](#)).

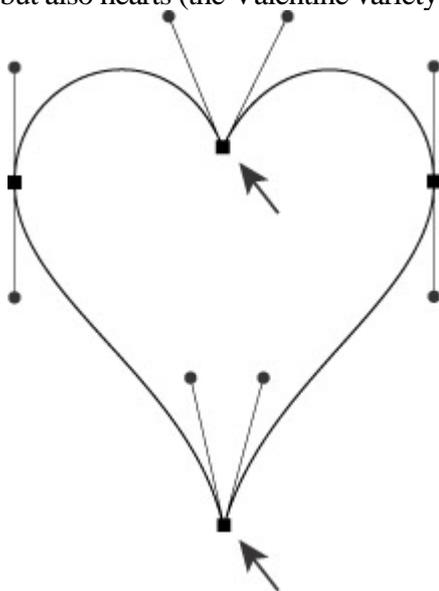


Figure 7-3: This heart, though not anatomically correct, shows two curved corner anchor points.

Consider the possibilities clovers, moons (old-fashioned crescents-with-little-noses), and other shapes you may see in a cereal bowl (except for blue diamonds those you draw with straight-corner anchor points). But beware that curved-corner anchor points are a little weird. To create one, you have to modify an existing anchor point by following these steps:

1.

Create a smooth anchor point while you re creating a path.

This works best after you draw at least one line segment.

2.

Press the Alt (Option on a Mac) key and then click and drag the smooth anchor point.

A direction point appears totally independent of the anchor point on the opposite side of the point. This new handle controls where the double-fishhook corner goes. You can drag the new handle nearer to the first direction point (the one for the original smooth anchor point) or anywhere else without affecting that first direction point.

Tip

You can also change a smooth anchor point into a curved-corner anchor point by pressing the Alt (Option on a Mac) key as you drag the smooth anchor point.

Combination-corner anchor points

If you want to use the Pen tool to draw rounded-corner rectangles such as classic TV screens, archways, and cylinders you need *combination-corner* anchor points. The combination that identifies this type of anchor point is a blending of two other types: smooth and straight-corner anchor points. You can identify a combination-corner anchor point by what you find sticking out of it: two line segments and only one direction point. This handle curves one of the line segments and leaves the other segment straight. Keep in mind that the handle is controlling the curved segment, not the straight segment, and these points are much easier to use.

As with curved-corner anchor points (mutant versions of their straight-corner cousins), you can't just say, I want one of those and *poof!* have one appear on-screen. To create the exotic combination-corner anchor point, you must modify an existing smooth or straight-corner anchor point. Which type you modify depends on where you want the curve to go:

- If you want the curve *before* the anchor point (the existing line segment is curved), you modify a smooth anchor point.
- If you want the curve *after* the anchor point (the existing line segment is straight), you modify a straight-corner anchor point.

Figure 7-4 shows how to create a combination-corner anchor point in either situation.

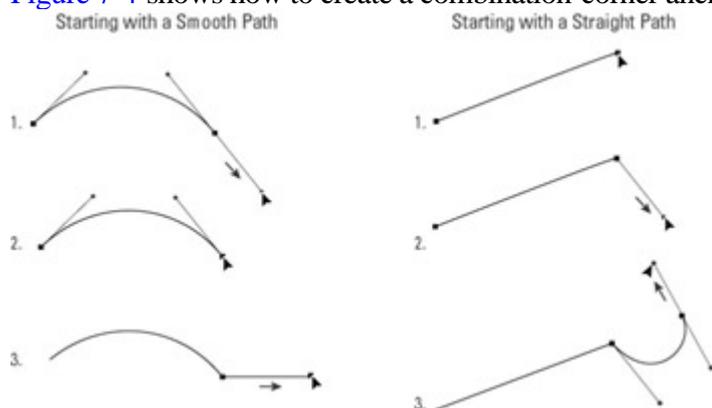


Figure 7-4: Two ways to create combination-corner anchor points: starting smooth(left) or straight(right).

Starting with a smooth path

To create a combination-corner anchor point from a smooth one (so that the curve precedes the anchor point), follow these steps:

1.
Click and drag the Pen tool; then, at another location, click and drag again to create a curved line.

To get an image that resembles [Figure 7-4](#), start in the upper-left quarter of a blank Illustrator document, click and drag up and to the right for the first drag in Step 1. Start your second drag at a place roughly parallel to your original starting point and about an inch to the right, dragging down and to the right.

Remember

To see what you're doing, you have to draw at least one line segment before you change the anchor point. That's the rule!

When you complete the two drags in Step 1, the most recent line segment ends in a smooth anchor point.

2.

Click the smooth anchor point that appeared after you clicked and dragged the second time in Step 1.

The direction point (handle) that extended out from the anchor point disappears.

3.

Move the mouse pointer to a place about an inch to the right of the most recent anchor point and click.

A straight path segment (straight because it's free from the influence of the direction point) appears. After you click, the two direction points (handles) disappear from the curved line that you drew in Step 1. The anchor point from which you drew your new straight segment is a combination-corner anchor point.

Starting with a straight path

To create a combination-corner anchor point from a straight-corner anchor point (so the curve comes after the anchor point), follow these steps:

1.

Using the Pen tool, click once and (without dragging) click again in a nearby location in the document.

To get an image that resembles the one in [Figure 7-4](#), start in the upper-right quarter of a blank Illustrator document, click once, and then—after moving the mouse pointer to the right and slightly higher—click again.

A straight path segment appears. You need this line segment so that you can see the difference in the path as you change the straight-corner anchor point to a combination-corner anchor point.

2.

Click the straight-corner anchor point you just created; hold down the mouse button and drag.

To get an image that resembles the one in [Figure 7-4](#), drag down and slightly to the right.

A new, single direction point (handle) extends from the anchor point.

3.

Click in another location and drag away from the anchor point.

To get an image that resembles the one in [Figure 7-4](#), click a spot in line with the previous anchor point, and then drag up and slightly to the left.

A curved path segment appears. The anchor point between the straight and curved line segments is now a combination-corner anchor point.

Creating Straight Lines with the Pen Tool

Using logic as valid as any followed by Holmes and Watson (not to mention Spock), you can deduce that you use straight-corner anchor points to draw straight lines with the Pen tool. Elementary. . . .

Harrumph. Elementary or not, you should jolly well see this marvel in action. To draw a triangle with the Pen tool (see [Figure 7-5](#)), just follow these steps:

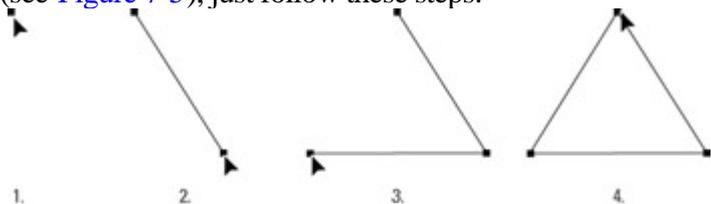


Figure 7-5: Drawing triangle with the Pen tool, using straight-corner anchor points.

1.

With the Pen tool, click (do not drag) in the Document window.

An anchor point appears after you release the mouse button. (Cute, isn't it? But lonely; it needs friends.)

2.

Click (don't drag) somewhere below and a little to the right of the first anchor point.

After you release the mouse button, a line appears between the first and second anchor points. They're joined, open, and ready to rock. You've created a fine-looking path.

3.

Click (don't drag!) somewhere a bit to the left of the second anchor point.

A stunning-looking angle appears. Maybe it's a skateboard ramp. Maybe it's a less-than sign flopped over, worn out from all those equations.

4.

Put your cursor on the first anchor point and click that puppy.

You created a triangle! Congratulations! Euclid would be proud.

Well, okay, you've heard this tune before, but once more with feeling: *Do not drag* if you want straight lines. If you drag, you're going to get curves. In fact, not dragging to get straight lines is probably harder than dragging to get curves. (If you want to take a break and go drag something, be my guest; you've earned it.)

Tip

You can create right angles and 45° angles with the Pen tool by holding down the Shift key while you draw.

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◀ PREVIOUS NEXT ▶

Open and Closed Paths

Paths in Illustrator are open or closed, one or the other, with nothing in between. Open and closed paths differ in the following ways:

- An *open path* has endpoints. It starts in one place and ends in another place — clearly a line segment, and not a polygon.
- A *closed path* has no starting point and no endpoint. Like that psychotic bunny in the battery commercial, it just keeps going and going in the same place — clearly the boundary of a solid shape. (Think of complete circles, Möbius strips, and so forth.)

Tip

Creating artwork with the Pen tool is much easier if you set your fill color to None, regardless of the final color you're going to fill your artwork with. When you use the Pen tool with a fill color selected, Illustrator treats every line you make as though it were a completed object by drawing a temporary, invisible line straight from the first anchor point in the path to the last anchor point, and then fills the enclosed area with the selected fill color. This is confusing at best because it hides parts of the path that you are creating and creates an object that appears to change shape completely with every click of the mouse. To avoid this mess, set your fill color to None while you create your path and change the fill color when the path is complete.

Creating Super-Precise Curves with the Pen Tool

The Illustrator Pen tool is a model of precision and accuracy. With it, you can draw virtually anything (or draw anything virtually). That is, of course, after you master drawing curves.

The Pen isn't designed to be maddening (as far as I know), but using it to draw successful curves *does* seem to require a psychological breakthrough. Illustrator users who struggle to figure out the Pen tool by themselves, without the handy guide you hold in your hands, may slog through months (or even years) of frustration before the breakthrough occurs. They happen upon shapes and curves that work for them and then they finally get it.

Therefore, I vow to spare you the pain of all that trial and error. The following sections begin this noble quest, in which you find the knight. . . .

Taming the draggin

(Sorry about the bad pun.) Where do you want your curve to go? Just drag in that direction. I know, I know, I told you *not* to drag. But in that situation, you were making straight lines. What's even less helpful, dragging is perhaps the most anti-intuitive action imaginable for creating curves. Regardless, I charge into the fray.

If you click and drag with the intent to create a curve, you get what looks like a straight line, as shown in [Figure 7-6](#). (Weird, isn't it?) Oddly enough, the line you get is twice as long as the distance you drag, extending in two directions from the spot where you initially click. After you release the mouse button, this line is *still* a straight line and still no curve in sight.

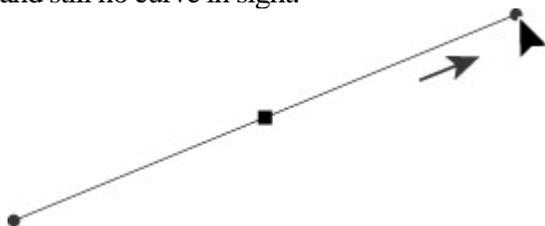


Figure 7-6: When creating a curve, drag out a straight line; the arrow shows the direction of the drag.

At this stage, what do you suppose is the most natural thing in the world to do? Sure it's to drag in another direction (typically at a 90° angle) from where you last released the mouse. And what are the most natural results? An ugly, curvy bump; a new straight line extending in both directions from the second anchor point; and a sudden yearning to direct a few choice expletives at Illustrator.

The problem is the second anchor point. Instead of clicking and dragging at a spot near where you first released the mouse button (a big no-no), you always click and drag (you don't have to drag, but I get to that later) *away* from where you released the mouse button as shown in [Figure 7-7](#). You understood correctly *away*. Weird, isn't it?

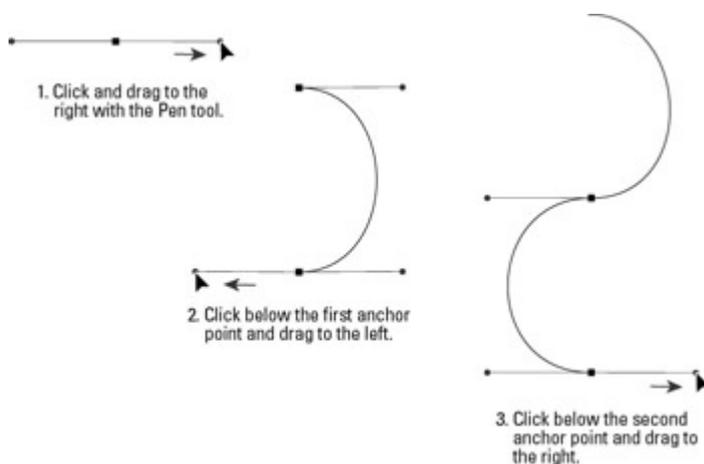


Figure 7-7: Creating gentle, smooth curves. (Friendly arrows indicate the direction to drag.)

To create a lovely, flowing curve for your own purposes, just follow these steps:

1.

Click and drag with the Pen tool.

A line extends from the anchor point where you clicked. That's okay; it's supposed to happen that way.

Tip

The line you see is actually a set of two direction points (connected to the curve by direction lines), cleverly disguised as lines with little control-handle boxes at each end. Whether you call them direction points or control handles, lines, or boxes, they don't print out. They're just tools for controlling the direction of the line segment that you're drawing.

2.

Without clicking, place your cursor *away* from both the anchor point *and* the direction points. Then click and drag in the direction *opposite* the direction you dragged to create the first anchor point.

At this stage, the best approach is to place that second click perpendicular to the direction lines. Note that as you drag, you can actually see the curve between the two anchor points take shape and change. If you drag the same distance that you dragged for the first anchor point, you create an even-looking curve.

3.

Finally, place your cursor away from the second point, still moving away from the first anchor point, and click and drag back in the same direction you dragged for the first anchor point.

After you release the mouse button, you see an *S* shape (or a backward *S*, depending on which way you first dragged). Rejoice! If you don't see the *S* or reverse-*S* shape, breathe deeply, count to 10, and try again, exercising superhuman patience and care. Think Clark Kent.

Tip

Remember that whole song and dance about pressing the Shift key so that new anchor points appear angled at a multiple of 45° relative to the last anchor point? Well, you can also use the Shift key to *constrain* the angle of control-handle lines to 45° , if you prefer. This action lets you make much more accurate curves than by drawing freestyle. Just don't press and hold the Shift key until *after* you begin dragging with the Pen tool. If you press the Shift key before you drag and release the key while you're dragging you get the 45° anchor point. If you continue to hold down the Shift key, you get the whole shebang: 45° control-handle lines as well as the anchor point.

Following the one-third rule

The optimal distance to drag a direction point from an anchor point is about one-third the distance you expect that line segment to be. So, for instance, if you plan to draw a curve that's about three inches long, drag the direction point out about one inch from the anchor point.

The one-third rule is perfect for creating the most natural, organic-looking curves possible. Breaking the rule can have the following dismal results:

- If you drag too little, you get curves that are too shallow around the middle of the line segment and too sharp at the anchor points.

- If you drag too much, you get curves that are quite sharp (like Dead Man's Curve) around the middle of the line segment and too straight around the anchor points (like that curve on the right in [Figure 7-8](#)).

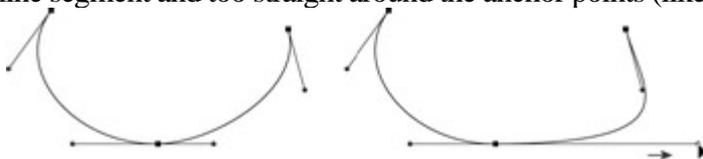


Figure 7-8: Left: Anchor points with direction point lines one-third the distance along the path. Right: Dragging too much.

Fortunately, on the left, [Figure 7-8](#) shows a perfect curve created with the proper use of direction point lines set to one-third the length of the path. Because you can use the Direct Selection tool (the hollow arrow) to adjust the position of the direction points after they're drawn, try to follow the one-third rule whenever possible. Doing so may keep you out of trouble and your vocabulary fit for sensitive listeners.

Following rules for the other two-thirds

The one-third rule is the most important rule when you're using the Pen tool to draw curves. Of course, you still have to deal with the *other* two-thirds of the line segment; that's where a few humble rules can serve you well. Even if you don't plan to follow them right away—because you're still at that awkward, rebellious age—you at least want to be familiar with these rules:

- **Drag in the direction of the path.** Dragging back toward the line segment you just drew results in hard-to-control curves and awkward-appearing line segments between the previous anchor point and the anchor point you're working with. If you need to go back toward the line segment, place an anchor point closer to the previous anchor point you created.
- **Focus on the upcoming segment as well as the current one.** You may notice that the line segment between the prior anchor point and the current anchor point can distract you because it changes as you drag. If you concentrate only on this line segment, the direction point you're dragging out for the *next* line segment probably won't be the right length or angle. You must master the past, present, and future when you use the Pen tool. (Aside from that, it isn't hard at all.)
- **Don't overcompensate for a misdrawn curve.** If you mess up on that last outgoing direction point, don't try to fix the line segment with the anchor point you're currently dragging. Instead, focus on the *next* segment; try to ignore the goof-up for now. You can always use the Direct Selection tool to fix the poor thing *after* you finish the path. [Chapter 6](#) has the lowdown on how you can adjust your path after you draw it.
- **Use different lengths for each direction point, as necessary.** This rule is the exception to the previous two rules. (You knew there had to be an exception.) If you click and drag and get a segment just right—only to realize that the next segment requires a longer or shorter control-handle line but the same angle—*release the mouse button when the segment is just right*. Then click the same anchor point again (*not* the direction point) and drag in the same direction as you previously dragged. Note that as you change the angle of the direction point on the *other* side (where the previous segment is), you aren't changing the length of that direction point line. And you can match the angle pretty easily because you can see both *before* and *after* versions of the previous line segment.
- **Place anchor points at curve transitions.** A *curve transition* is a place where the curve changes. Maybe it changes direction (going from clockwise to counterclockwise or vice versa). Maybe the curve gets smaller or larger. [Figure 7-9](#) shows a nice curvy path with anchor points placed properly at the transitions.

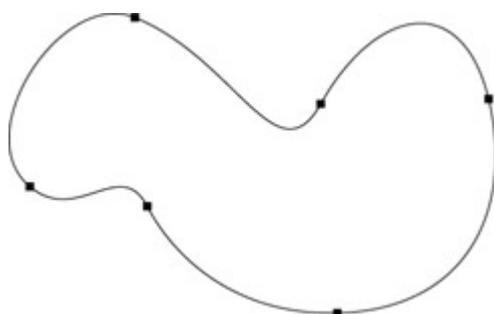


Figure 7-9: This path has points placed at the "correct" locations for the best possible curve.

Be environmentally conscious in your anchor point usage. Don't place anchor points where they're not needed. This rule goes for all types of anchor points. The fewer you have makes editing sections of the path easier (keeping in mind the previous rule, of course). Fewer anchor points also allow for quicker and trouble-free printing.

Tip

Holding down the Ctrl key (⌘ on the Mac) changes the currently selected tool into whatever selection tool you used last. This is very handy when you're drawing with the Pen tool because it enables you to move points while keeping the Pen tool selected. Click the Direct Selection tool before you choose the Pen tool. If you click, start to drag, and then realize that you clicked in a spot that just isn't going to work, just press the Ctrl key (⌘ on the Mac). This temporarily changes the Pen tool into the Direct Selection tool. Move your anchor point to a new location. Release the Ctrl key (⌘ on the Mac) and your anchor point moves to the new location, just like that!

Drawing the tricky anchor points with the Pen tool

A bit of practice with curves and smooth anchor points may get you used to smooth transitions from one line segment to another. Those anchor points are fairly easy to create—just click and drag a new point, and *whammo!* you have a smooth anchor point. But both the curved-corner anchor point and the combination-corner anchor point are a little trickier—they always require two steps. Still, they can't scare a veteran of the draggin' wars. Not a bit.

Curved-corner anchor points revisited

Because curved-corner anchor points have two curves sticking out of them (one on each side), they need two direction points (one for each curve). But because these points are anchoring independent curves, you have to make those direction points independent of each other. Here's the move: As you're dragging out a smooth anchor point, you can quickly change it into a curved-corner anchor point by pressing and releasing the Alt key (Option on the Mac). Doing so breaks the control-handle lines into independent lines.

Be sure to make your original line segment the proper length and angle before you press the Alt key (Option on a Mac). After you press the key, the only way to edit the line is to stop drawing and modify it with the Direct Selection tool. See [Chapter 6](#) for all sorts of great tips on how to get the most out of point adjustment by using the Direct Selection tool.

Combination-corner anchor points revisited

Using a similar fancy move, you can create combination-corner points from smooth or straight-corner anchor points while you're drawing. Here's how:

-

To go from a straight line into a curved line, as you're drawing a smooth anchor point, press the Alt key (Option on a Mac) after you click but before you release the mouse button. This action lets you drag the direction point for the next line segment without affecting the previous segment as Illustrator normally does. To create the curve, drag the direction point to wherever you need it.

-

To go from one curved line into another (with a curved-corner point instead of a smooth point), click and drag as though you were creating a smooth point. After you have the first curve the way you want it, but before you release the mouse button, press the Alt key (Option on a Mac). As soon as you press Alt (Option on a Mac), the second direction point moves independently of the first. Use this Alt (Option on a Mac) technique to move the direction point to wherever you need it.

These two techniques take a little practice because so much depends on the timing of when you press Alt (Option on a Mac). Don't worry, though. If you don't get it right the first time, you always have the Convert Anchor Point tool to fall back on.

Drawing Shapes with the Pen Tool

This section walks you through drawing some other basic shapes because knowing the best ways to do that can make the more complex shapes much easier to draw. Take, for example, a garden-variety circle shapes don't get any simpler than that . . . or do they? When you draw one in Illustrator, you can get widely differing results with the Pen tool.

Drawing a sad, lumpy circle with the Pen tool

You're probably saying to yourself, Why would anyone be foolish enough to draw a circle by using the Pen tool when you can draw a perfect circle in a single step by using the Ellipse tool? (which I cover in [Chapter 4](#)). A couple of reasons are

- **Practice makes perfect.** A circle is an object made entirely of smooth anchor points. Master the circle and you're the master of smooth curves!
- **The Ellipse tool makes perfect circles *every time*.** Sometimes you may want to be a little more creative than that, and drawing the imperfect circle you want with the Pen tool can be a lot faster than modifying a perfect circle created with the Ellipse tool.

So, without further ado, follow these steps, as shown in [Figure 7-10](#):

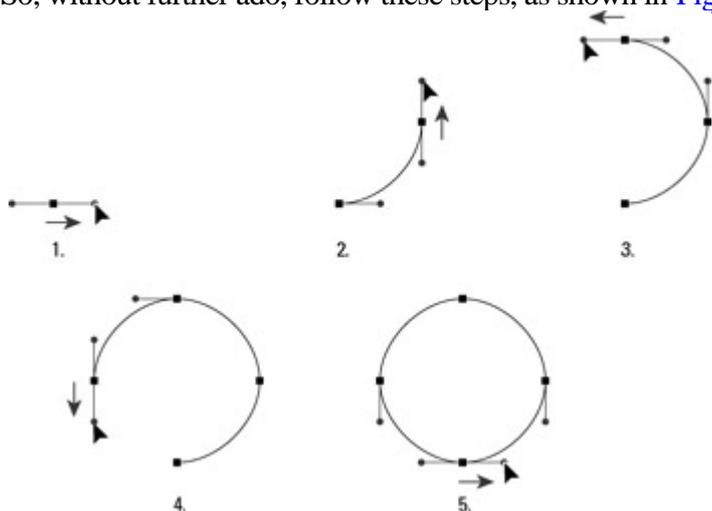


Figure 7-10: Drawing a circle (sort of) by using the Pen tool.

1.

Hold down the Shift key and click and drag to the right with the Pen tool; extend the direction point line about 1/4 inch.

2.

Keep pressing the Shift key, click about 1/2 inch above and to the right of the first anchor point, and drag up about 1/4 inch.

You've drawn an eye-pleasing arc—kind of a skateboard-ramp sorta thing.

3.

Keep pressing the Shift key, click about 1/2 inch above the second anchor point (directly above the first anchor point), and drag left about 1/4 inch.

You've drawn a lovely half circle. You're actually more than halfway there.

4.

With your left hand developing a cramp from holding down the Shift key, click about 1/2 inch to the left of the first anchor point and directly opposite the second anchor point, and then drag down about 1/4 inch.

(You can probably guess where I'm going with this last click. . . .)

5.

Click the first anchor point, drag to the right about 1/4 inch, and then (finally) release the Shift key.

Your creation is a perfectly *lumpy* circle! If your circle isn't as round as you want, select the Direct Selection tool (the hollow arrow) and tweak the points and direction points until the circle looks less lumpy.

Tip

Congratulations—you just drew a circle! Try drawing a second circle by using the same steps. And another. You'll find that not only does each circle get easier and better, but you'll have much more control whenever you create a smooth curve anywhere.

Drawing a heart

Ah, a real challenge. None of this "circle" stuff for you! Still, similarities to the circle abound. You do need four anchor points—two of them smooth points. And most of the anchor points need to be in similar positions to the anchor points you drew for the circle. Hmmm. [Figure 7-11](#) shows the procedure in all its glory. Just complete the following steps:

1.

Click and drag up about 1/4 inch; use the Shift key to constrain the angle of the direction point line to a perfectly vertical line.

2.

Move your cursor about 3/4 inch above and 1/2 inch to the right of the first anchor point and click and drag up about 1/4 inch. Use the Shift key to constrain the angle of the direction point.

3.

Move your cursor about 1/2 inch to the left and above the first anchor point, and then click and

drag down about 1/4 inch.

This procedure is almost too easy, isn't it? Well, take heart (so to speak). The next step tests your mettle.

4.

Press the Alt key (Option on a Mac), click the anchor point you just created, and drag *up* about 1/4 inch.

This action breaks the two control-handle lines and sets you up for a nice, curved-corner point at the top of the heart.

5.

Move your cursor about 1/2 inch to the left of the last anchor point and then click and drag down about 1/4 inch.

Tip

Again, you can press the Shift key to make sure you're dragging a perfectly vertical line.

6.

Move your cursor onto the first point, press the Alt key (Option on a Mac) and click and drag down about 1/4 inch.

This completes the heart. With all the practice you have, this shape probably looks a lot better than that circle you drew in the previous exercise.

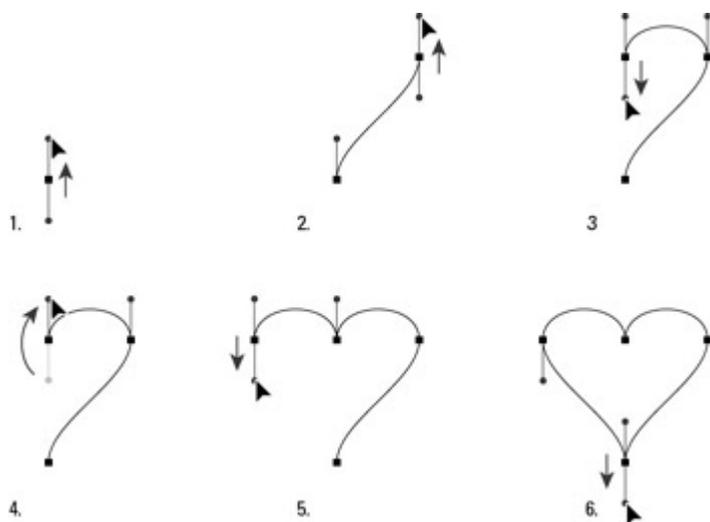


Figure 7-11: Drawing a heart with the Pen tool

Chapter 8: Creating Straight and Curved Lines without the Pen Tool

Overview

In This Chapter

- Discovering why the world loves to draw with the Pencil tool
- Generating paths with the Pencil tool
- Editing existing paths
- Using the Pencil tool preferences settings
- Smoothing out bumpy paths easily
- Deciding when to use the Pen or Pencil tool
- Using the Line Segment tool
- Creating and editing an arc

•

Drawing amazing spirals

In the beginning, there was the Pen tool. And users said that the Pen tool was good. But the users also said that the Pen tool was too hard. And too frustrating. And inefficient for quickly creating paths. And the users griped. And behold! Adobe gave them the Pencil tool – the wondrous, magical Pencil tool that makes creating paths as easy as drawing with a, well, *pencil*. And there was great rejoicing. But Adobe wasn't content to stop there, as you're also blessed with three other tools – the Line Segment, Arc, and Spiral tools.

In this chapter, you find out all about the Pencil tool and its buddies, the Line Segment, Arc, and Spiral tools. You discover how to create and modify paths, and customize these tools to match your personal drawing style. And then you can join in the rejoicing!

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◀ PREVIOUS

NEXT ▶

Using the Pencil Tool as a Pencil



Computer mice (mouses?) have never been good drawing tools; often you need a steady hand and more patience than the guy at the mall in the Santa suit needs. That was then. These days, the Illustrator Pencil tool makes even the most hopped-up-on-caffeine, impatient Picasso-wannabe into a computer artist. (Just looking at it makes you feel better about drawing, doesn't it?)

Minimal effort and hefty stress reduction

The whole idea behind the Pencil tool is to let you draw exactly what you want as quickly or slowly as you want. Regardless of the speed at which you draw, the resulting path appears the same (a nice thought for those of us on a deadline).

The Pencil tool can create smooth lines even when you're jittering around. (Unless you don't want it to in which case it makes funky jittery lines.) The Pencil tool is also intuitive. It looks like a pencil, and when you click and drag with it, it creates a line that more or less follows where you dragged, pretty much as a real pencil would do. (For contrast, look at the Pen tool. It looks like a pen, and yet it does nothing even remotely penlike!) And it allows you to fix your mistakes without ever having to push or pull a point or a handle.

The following steps (deftly illustrated in [Figure 8-1](#)) show you how to use the Pencil tool:

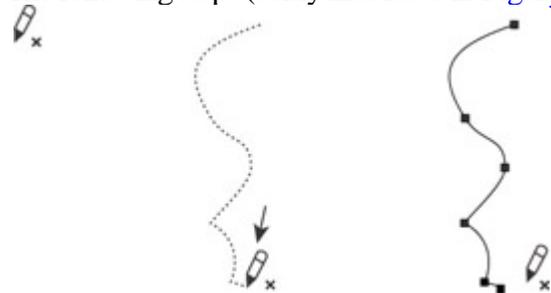


Figure 8-1: Drawing with the Pencil tool.

1.

Choose the Pencil tool from its slot in the Toolbox.

Your cursor changes into (surprise!) a pencil.

2.

Click and drag in the Document window. As you drag, a dotted line appears.

Think of these dots as breadcrumbs that show you where you've been.

3.

Release the mouse button after you amass a nice little trail of breadcrumbs (dots).

A path forms where the breadcrumbs were. (If Hansel and Gretel had used the Pencil tool, that poor witch would be alive today.)



If you stop drawing with the Pencil tool, you can just start up where you left off simply by clicking at the end of the path and continuing. Be careful, though. If you don't click close enough to the end of the path, you start a whole new path. Fortunately, the Pencil tool tells you when you're in the right place. When you're creating a new path, a little X appears to the right of the tip of the Pencil (shown at the bottom in the margin). When you're close enough to a selected path to add to it, the X disappears (shown at the top in the margin).

A few unexpected exceptions to all this bliss

You're right. Using the Pencil tool does sound too easy. Although the Pencil tool is undeniably wonderful, it can cause frustration (or at least uncertainty) in the unwary. Here are instances to watch out for (and avoid if possible):

- **You can't continue your path.** You need to select a path in order to add to it. For example, if you stop drawing, do something that deselects the path, and then return to drawing your path, you create a *second* path instead of extending the first one. To continue the path you were originally working on, you must select it *before* you start drawing again with the Pencil tool. Click the path, let go of the Ctrl key (⌘ on a Mac), and start drawing, starting at either end of the newly selected path.

Remember
To get to the selection cursor right away, hold down the Ctrl key (⌘ on a Mac).
- **You accidentally edit an existing path.** If you start a new Pencil path near a *selected* path, you can edit the selected path instead of creating a new one. In fact, you can do so with *any* path that was created with the Pen, Pencil, Line Segment, Arc, Spiral, Star, or any other tool in Illustrator. You can edit any of them with the Pencil tool. (So is the Pencil versatile or overzealous? Your call.)
- **You create a path that's too lumpy or too smooth.** You can set up the Pencil tool to be very smooth *or* very accurate. (In this case, *accurate* really means that it follows all the skittles and bumps you make as you draw). If someone you love changes the Pencil tool preferences (which you can access by double-clicking the Pencil tool), the Pencil retains those settings. Pencil tool preferences are loyal to the most recent user; they never return to their original settings.
- **You get a wacky fill or stroke as you draw.** This situation really isn't the Pencil tool's fault, but it's not exactly unknown to habitual Pencil tool users. If, before you start to draw, a nameless *somebody* sets the fill or stroke to something a little odd, *boom!* you get a mess. Fortunately, you can change the fill or stroke back to the default settings by pressing D. Before you know it, you're back to normal. (Well, at least the *path* is. . . .)

- **You can't close a path.** Often when you use the Pencil tool in an attempt to create a closed path (by ending the path where you started), you wind up with two points that are very close to one another without actually being joined. For some reason, the Pencil tool has a hard time making a closed path if you draw the entire path with one continuous stroke. When you near the end of the path, hold down the Alt key (Option on a Mac) and release the mouse with Alt (Option on a Mac) still pressed when the end of the line that you are drawing is near the beginning. The two ends of your path will be joined together.

- **You can't draw a straight line.** In Illustrator, pressing the Shift key doesn't keep the Pencil tool on a horizontal or vertical plane. Just about every other tool in Illustrator draws or moves in straight lines at 45° angles. In fact, just about every other tool in every Adobe product moves or draws in straight lines when you hold the Shift key down! But the Pencil tool can't even *think* straight! Fortunately, you can switch over to the Pen tool to draw straight lines and then switch back to the Pencil tool to create the rest of the drawing.

Cherishing the Multipurpose Pencil Tool

If you ever had one of those pocketknives with enough blades to do or fix anything, you can appreciate how much more the Pencil tool does than a mere pencil! Use the amazing Pencil tool to edit existing paths, create new paths, append one path to another, and close existing paths.



But wait, there's more! You can set the Pencil tool to work in a variety of ways so that it accurately reflects the way you want to draw, by setting its preferences. You can also use variations on the Pencil tool: the Smooth tool and the Eraser tool. The Pencil toolslot contains these two other pencil-like tools. Use the Smooth tool (which looks like a striped pencil) to make paths less bumpy, with nary a smear. Use the Eraser tool (an upside-down pencil) to zap away portions of paths, leaving no rubber crumbs to get into your keyboard.

Making the Pencil tool work just for you

You can set preferences for the Pencil tool by double-clicking the Pencil tool in the Toolbox. [Figure 8-2](#) shows the Pencil Tool Preferences dialog box. Straight out of the box, the Pencil tool works pretty well. But to be honest, it's really set up to work reasonably well for everyone and not set up to work as well as it possibly can for *you*. Use the Pencil tool preferences to make the tool work *just* for you, and don't settle for less than the best!

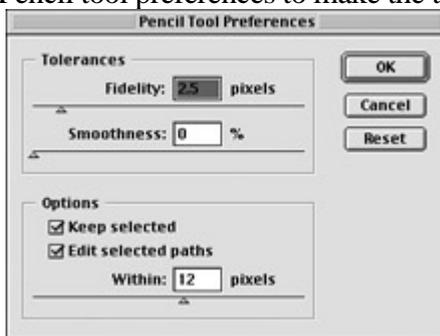


Figure 8-2: With the Pencil Tool Preferences dialog box, you can change the attributes of the Pencil tool.

Hi-fi and lo-fi paths

The first slider under Tolerances (at the top of the dialog box; refer to [Figure 8-2](#)) is labeled *Fidelity*. Nope, nothing to do with divorce courts—this kind of fidelity affects how closely the path follows where you drag the Pencil tool. A high setting (toward the left of the dialog box) means that the path matches precisely what you drew with the Pencil, adding as many points and corners as necessary. A low setting (toward the right of the dialog box) means that the path loosely follows what you drew, making a smoother line with fewer points. Paths created with the Fidelity slider all the way to the left appear more natural and bumpy; paths drawn with the slider all the way to the right appear smoother and more computerlike. Compare the images shown in [Figure 8-3](#). This Fidelity setting isn't just an arbitrary special effect; it's a way to make the Pencil tool match your personal drawing style.

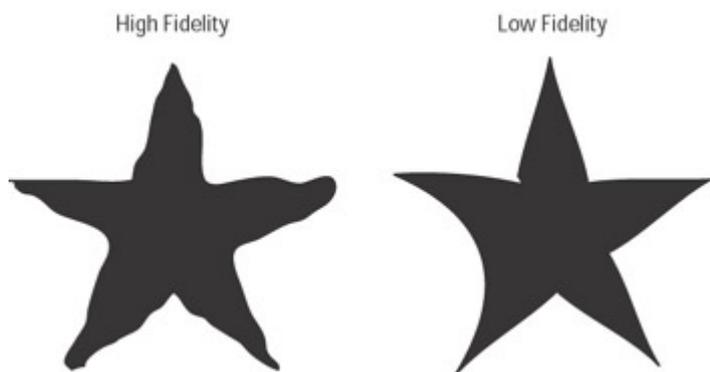


Figure 8-3: The path on the left was drawn with a Fidelity setting of .5 pixels; the path on the right was drawn with a Fidelity setting of 20 pixels.

Fidelity is measured in pixels. A pixel can mean many things as a unit of measurement. In this case, a *pixel* refers to a distance on your screen. (For more information, see the sidebar [Just how big IS a pixel?](#))

Drawing with the mouse is about as easy as drawing with a brick; the lines you make tend to be pretty shaky. The Fidelity slider determines how shaky your hand can be and still produce a smooth line. As you use the Pencil tool, you create a breadcrumb trail (a dotted line). After you release the mouse button, your computer pauses for a split second to create an imaginary line that is the average of all the movement you just made with the mouse. Then Illustrator compares that imaginary line with your breadcrumb trail and creates the actual path based on the Fidelity slider's setting.

Suppose that your Fidelity setting is 20 pixels—the lowest Fidelity setting possible. As you draw your naturally shaky line, you move away from the imaginary average line. With a setting of 20 pixels, Illustrator assumes that everything less than 20 pixels away from that imaginary line is unintentional shaking, induced by the unwieldy nature of the mouse (or by too much caffeine), so Illustrator just ignores that stuff when it creates the path. Everything more than 20 pixels away is considered intentional, which prompts Illustrator to put in a curve or a corner point.

All this is just an extended way of saying that if you're at one with yourself and the Universe and are a Zen master of mouse movement, you want to keep your Fidelity settings high. That way, you only move the mouse to exactly where you want the path, and you don't have Illustrator second-guessing what you *really* intended. However, if you have really shaky hands (as most of us do when we get too much caffeine and not enough sleep), you probably want to use a low Fidelity setting. More than likely, you fall somewhere between these two extremes. So just double-click the Pencil tool and set the Fidelity slider to match your style!

Now, that is smooth!

The second slider (refer to [Figure 8-2](#)) is a little harder for most people to figure out. The slider reads *Smoothness* but didn't the first slider smooth out the image? Drawing with the mouse can be pretty shaky, so this setting helps compensate for the shakiness in a slightly different way from the Fidelity setting. The Fidelity setting helps Illustrator determine whether you drew the path because you meant to—or if it was just because of the shaky mouse.

The Smoothness setting helps Illustrator figure out what kind of corner you meant to create when you deliberately changed the direction of the path. When you change the direction of a path, you can do it with a sharp corner point or with a smooth, curving point. When Illustrator converts your breadcrumb trail into a path, it must determine which of these points you truly intended to use. A Smoothness setting of 0% makes the Pencil tool use a corner point almost everywhere that the path changes direction. A Smoothness setting of 100% makes the Pencil tool use a smooth point in all but the most extreme path direction changes.

Again, the setting that works best for you is a matter of your personal style. If your lines are as shaky as a balloon vendor at a porcupine convention, set your Smoothness setting to 100%. If your hands are as steady as a gunslinger in a Western movie, leave it set to 0%. Otherwise, experiment until you find the right setting for you. [Figure 8-4](#) shows the same image created with different Smoothness settings. Note how the settings change the way the drawings look.

Technical Stuff

At first glance, the differences between the drawings on the right in [Figures 8-3](#) (low Fidelity) and 8-4 (high Smoothness) appear minimal. However, looks can be deceiving. The Smoothness and Fidelity settings are actually two distinct approaches to making a path: A low Fidelity setting creates a simplified curve by following the path you draw more loosely and using fewer points; a high Smoothness setting creates a smoother curve by using *different types* of points (smooth points as opposed to corner points) to create the path. Which is better? It really depends on your drawing style and some experimenting!

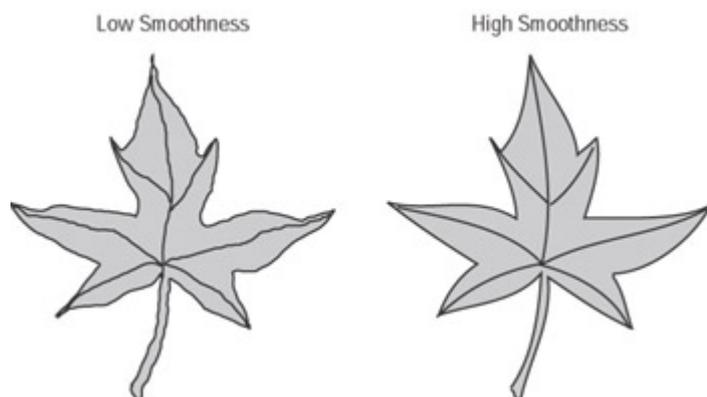


Figure 8-4: At left, a Smoothness setting of 0%; at right, a Smoothness setting of 100%.

Tweaking the Pencil tool: It's your option

Under Options in the Pencil Tool Preferences dialog box, you find two options: Keep Selected and Edit Selected Paths. These settings determine what happens to the path after you draw it and how the Pencil tool interacts with that path (or with other selected paths).

- **With Keep Selected checked:** The path you just created with the Pencil tool stays selected after you finish drawing and release the mouse button.

- **With Keep Selected unchecked:** The path you just created doesn't stay selected. (But you knew that.)

The Keep Selected option also determines how the Pencil tool affects selected paths, as follows:

- **Edit Selected Paths:** When you use the Pencil tool near any selected path (with the Keep Selected option checked), the path you just drew with the Pencil tool replaces the previous path. You can even adjust how close you need to be to that path to edit it; just tweak the Within setting, located just beneath the Edit Selected Paths option.

Remember

When the Edit Selected Paths option is not checked, the Pencil tool works the same regardless of whether Keep Selected is checked or unchecked. When the Edit Selected Paths option is checked, it changes the way the Pencil tool works. Instead of moving on to create a new path when you draw near a selected path, you linger over the old one to modify it.
- **With Keep Selected checked:** You can start drawing a path, stop, and then continue where you left off. If you decide to replace the path, you can place the Pencil tool near the path you just drew and start drawing a new one. (*Poof*. The old one disappears.) But beware: You have forbidden the Pencil tool to draw multiple paths that are close together.
- **With Keep Selected *and* Edit Selected Paths checked:** Every stroke you make that is close to another selected stroke replaces the old stroke with the new stroke.
- **With Keep Selected unchecked:** The Pencil tool can change only the paths you tell it to change (by first using a selection tool). By removing the check mark from Keep Selected, you enable the Pencil to draw hair or grass (for instance) with utter abandon. With Keep Selected unchecked you can also *edit* hair or grass, but don't forget to select the part you want to edit (by first using a selection tool).

Changing the path not penciled

A really amazing attribute of the Pencil tool is that you can use it to edit any path, and not just the paths created with it. For example, you can edit a circle, star, or path drawn with the Pen tool. You can replace any portion of any path with the Pencil tool, provided that the path is selected and the Edit Selected Path option is checked in the Pencil Tool Preferences dialog box. (See the section, *Making the Pencil tool work just for you*, earlier in this chapter.) Just make sure that the path is selected and then click and drag near the path to reshape it. The following steps walk you through the process of editing an existing path:

1.

Using any selection tool, select the path you want to modify.

The path need not have been created with the Pencil tool.

2.

Select the Pencil tool.

3.

Click near the part of the path you want to modify.

Tip

When the little X at the bottom right of the Pencil tool disappears, you know that you're close enough to click.

4.

Click and drag a new shape for the part of the path.

You can create any shape you want, but it must start and end near the existing path; otherwise, the new path won't reconnect with the old path.

5.

Release the mouse button.

The path reshapes itself into the new path you just drew.

Working with the all-natural Smoothie tool

Use the Illustrator Smooth tool to make your paths, well, *smoother*. (Not that you need me to tell you that, huh?) The Smooth tool lets you change the way a path looks *after* it's drawn, in the same way that the Pencil tool lets you change the way a path looks as it's being drawn.

Drag the Smooth tool over any selected path to smooth it. You aren't limited to smoothing paths drawn with the Pencil tool; you can smooth any path in Illustrator. Your results, however, depend on the path that you're smoothing (if you try smoothing a path that's already smooth, you aren't going to see much difference) and on the Smooth tool preferences.

You access the Smooth tool preferences by double-clicking the Smooth tool. The only two settings are Fidelity and Smoothness. These settings function identically to the settings in the Pencil Tool Preferences dialog box. (See the section, *Making the Pencil tool work just for you*, earlier in this chapter.) The only difference is that you apply them to lines that have already been drawn. Just sweep over them with the Smooth tool, and the result is as if you drew those paths by using different Pencil tool preferences settings.

Just how big IS a pixel?



Technical Stuff

That question has no easy answer, my friend. In the olden days, a pixel was 1/72 of an inch because computer screens used a fixed grid of 72 pixels x 72 pixels for every inch of screen. Nowadays, we use multisync monitors that let us change the number of pixels on the screen. How big is a pixel? Take the current resolution of your monitor, divide by its size, and then. . . . Better yet, forget all that and just pay attention to how the Pencil tool works with different Fidelity settings. Choose the one that works best for you, and don't worry about the numbers!



As you may expect, using the Smooth tool is pretty smooth. Here's the drill (or is it a sander?), as shown in [Figure 8-5](#):

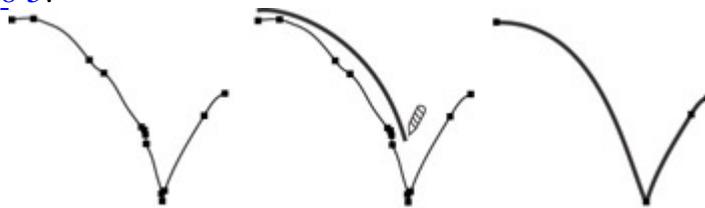


Figure 8-5: The Smooth tool in action.

1.

Using any selection tool, select the path that you want to smooth.

2.

Drag the Smooth tool on or near the path that you want to smooth.

Et voilà! The path is smooth.

Tip

The Eraser tool is so basic that it doesn't even warrant its own section. To use the tool, simply click and drag the tool over the portion of the path you want to remove. It may take a couple of swipes to eliminate what you want, so be patient. The Eraser tool also works with any path—not just those created with the Pencil tool. Also, with the Eraser tool, you don't have to set preferences.

Using the Pen with the Pencil

The Pen and Pencil tools are the primary tools for drawing in Illustrator, and they work really well together. As you gain a knack for knowing which tool to use when, your work flows more smoothly and your illustrations look more and more the way you want them to.

Swapping one tool for another

A common technique that's useful for combining the Pen and Pencil tools is to switch between them while drawing. You *can* click each tool whenever you decide to change from one to the other, but the really zippy way to do this is to press the key that corresponds to each tool. Press the P key (on your keyboard) to switch to the Pen tool and press the N key to switch to the Pencil tool.

As your drawing changes from free-flowing curves to precise straight lines and back, you want to change between the two tools: Just click the endpoint of the path you were previously drawing with the other tool and then continue drawing.

Tip

Watch those icons! Working with the Pen and Pencil tools together is much easier if you pay attention to what the icons are doing. When the Pen tool is over an endpoint, a little slash (/) appears to the lower right of the pen icon. When you're about to close a path, a hollow circle appears beside the tool. When you have the Pencil tool in position to edit a path, its icon doesn't have anything beside it. Both tools, however, get Xs beside them when they're about to create a new path.

Precision versus speed: You make the call

Keep in mind the types of shapes and paths that are best drawn with each tool. Here's a breakdown of the shapes and paths each tool draws best.

Shapes and paths best drawn with the Pen tool

To draw anything with straight lines, choose the Pen tool because the Pencil tool really can't draw a straight line. To

create a path or shape that has a smooth curve, you choose the Pen tool because the line the Pencil tool creates is just an average of the total strokes you make, which means absolute precision is impossible. Finally, to trace a logo or other scanned art that requires precision and accuracy, you're better off choosing the Pen tool because it offers you precision down to the thousandth of a millimeter.

Shapes and paths best drawn with the Pencil tool

When speed is more important than accuracy in your drawing; for example, when you need to put a lot of hairs onto your lovely kiwi-fruit illustration, and the precise length and position of each and every hair doesn't matter, choose the Pencil tool. For quick sketching, such as doodling an insulting picture of your favorite co-worker, choose the Pencil tool because you don't have to worry about each and every point and handle the way you do with the Pen tool. The Pencil tool lets you focus on creating the lines where they should be and lets Illustrator do the rest of the work for you. (Ah, progress.)

Lines Made Quick and Easy

You know you can't draw a straight line with the Pencil tool, and you've seen how tedious the Pen tool can be. So, you're probably thinking that drawing a line would be easier with that gloppy rapidograph pen and a metal ruler. Don't fret! The powers at Adobe have bestowed yet another tool for pen-phobic users: the Line Segment tool. With the Line Segment tool, you can make lines quickly and easily.

Working with the Line Segment tool



To create a line with the Line Segment tool, simply click at your desired starting point, drag, and release at your desired ending point. You can also click your Artboard with the Line Segment tool selected, enter a desired angle and length in the Line Segment Tool Options dialog box and click OK. Like most things that are super easy, the Line Segment tool has its drawbacks. For example, you're limited to creating a single line, as shown in [Figure 8-6](#). You can't create connecting lines like you can with the Pen or Pencil tools. You can, however, create lines that are perfectly vertical, horizontal, or at 45° angles. Just press the Shift key as you draw. You'll discover that as you drag your cursor, your line constrains to a 45° angle. After you create your line, you can edit it by selecting and moving either endpoint with the Direct Selection tool.

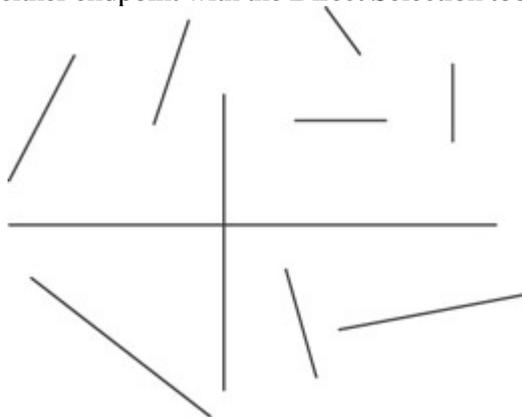


Figure 8-6: Line Segment tool lines are easy, but limited to single strokes.

Setting the tool options

Double-clicking the Line Segment tool in the Toolbox brings up the Line Segment Tool Options dialog box, in which you find only a few options: Length, Angle, and Fill Line. By deselecting the Fill Line option, the line appears with only a stroke, regardless of whether you have a fill selected in the Toolbox or Color palette. After you complete the drawing of your line, the Fill swatch in both the Toolbox and Color palette automatically reverts to None.

Curvy with the Arc Tool

In [Chapter 7](#), I tell you how to create a curve with the Pen tool—a sometimes painful two-step click-and-drag process. With the Arc tool, however, all you do is just click and drag. The longer you drag, the larger the arc. The angle you drag affects the angle of the arc. That's it. If only everything in life were so simple. To edit your arc, treat it as you would any other curve. Use the Direct Selection tool to select and move either of the anchor points or direction points on the curve. See [Chapter 6](#) for the complete editing lowdown.

Getting the arc you want

Maybe you're the finicky type and not completely satisfied with the arc created by using the default settings. Fortunately, the options in the Arc Segment Tool Options dialog box are numerous. Double-click the Arc tool to bring up the dialog box shown in [Figure 8-7](#). The best thing about this dialog box is that it gives you a preview of the settings as you adjust them.

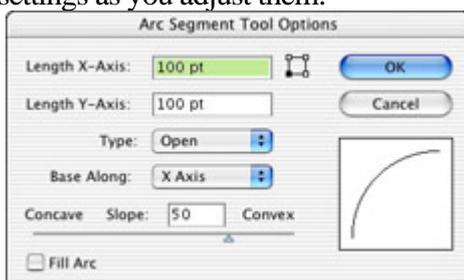


Figure 8-7: Design your arc here.

The preview thumbnail gives a nice visual representation of what happens to the arc as you change the lengths of the X (horizontal) and Y (vertical) axes. You have the choice of the type of arc—open or closed (think a slice of pizza). You can also choose where the base of your arc is anchored—either the X or Y axis. The slope slider allows you to adjust how concave (pushed in) or convex (pushed out) your curve appears. [Figure 8-8](#) shows examples of both concave and convex closed arcs. Deselect the Fill Arc option to create arcs with no fill, regardless of whether a fill is selected or not. The small square to the left of the OK button is a proxy box, which allows you to specify the point of origin for the arc.

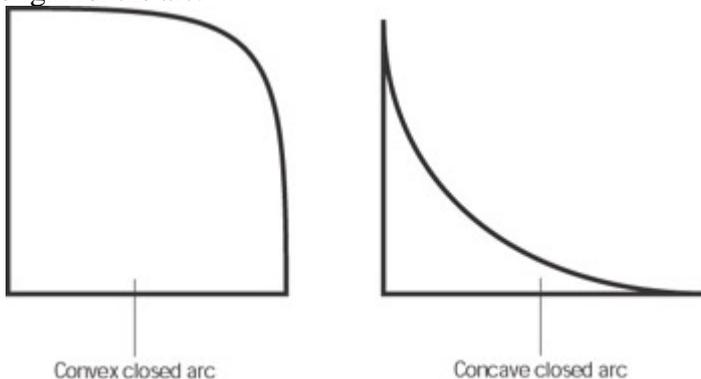


Figure 8-8: Two types of closed arcs.

Tip

When you select the Arc tool and click your Artboard, the Arc Segment Tool Options dialog box appears (just like it did when you double-clicked the Arc tool). When you click OK, an arc is drawn with the settings established in the dialog box . . . no dragging required!

Spiraling out of control

Spirals are notoriously hard to draw (without the Spiral tool). Using the Pen tool, you'd have to set up a complex grid and align points and direction points until the cows came home, had a good night's rest, went to work for the day, and then came home yet again. It's really, really hard. But the Spiral tool allows you to quickly create all sorts of snazzy-looking spirals from a loose-looking galaxy or whirlpool to the super-tight grooves on a 45 rpm record (ask your grandparents, kids). [Figure 8-9](#) shows some spirally artwork created primarily with the Spiral tool.

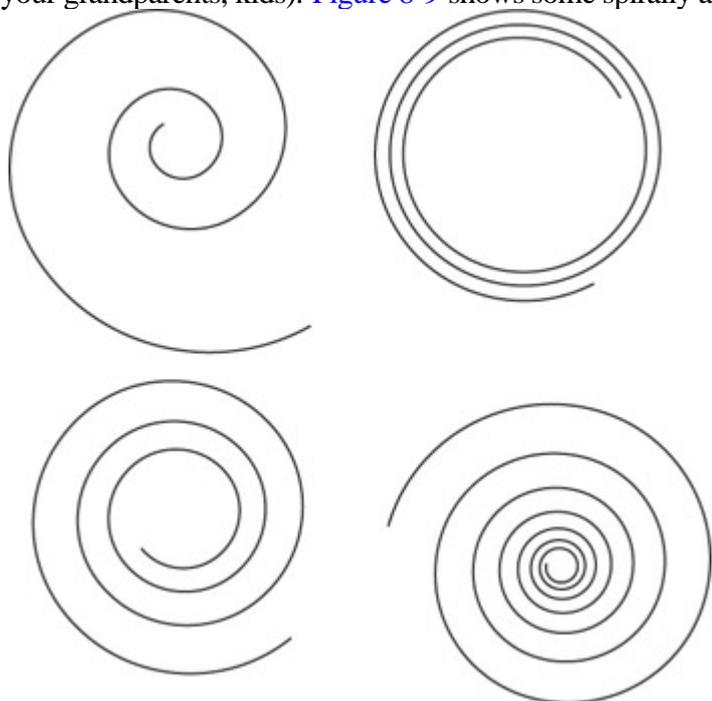


Figure 8-9: Spirals created with the Spiral tool.

To customize a spiral, you hold down one of the following keys as you drag:

- **Up/Down Arrow:** Adds or deletes the winds of the spiral as you're drawing it.
- **Ctrl (⌘ on a Mac):** Winds or unwinds the spiral (the outside moves, but the center stays where it is, making the spiral tighter or looser), which changes the number of winds.
- **Spacebar:** Allows you to move the spiral around with the mouse as you draw it.

•

Tilde (~): Creates multiple spirals as you draw.

Click the Artboard with the Spiral tool selected (instead of clicking and dragging) to open the Spiral dialog box, as shown in [Figure 8-10](#). In the Spiral dialog box, the Radius option is the distance from the center of the spiral to its outermost point. The Decay option determines how much larger or smaller each coil of the spiral is from the previous coil. Values close to 100% result in a tight spiral, and 100% results in a perfect circle. The Segments option determines how many coils make up the spiral. Each wind of the spiral is made of 4 segments; if you want 5 coils in the spiral, type **20** in the Segments field.

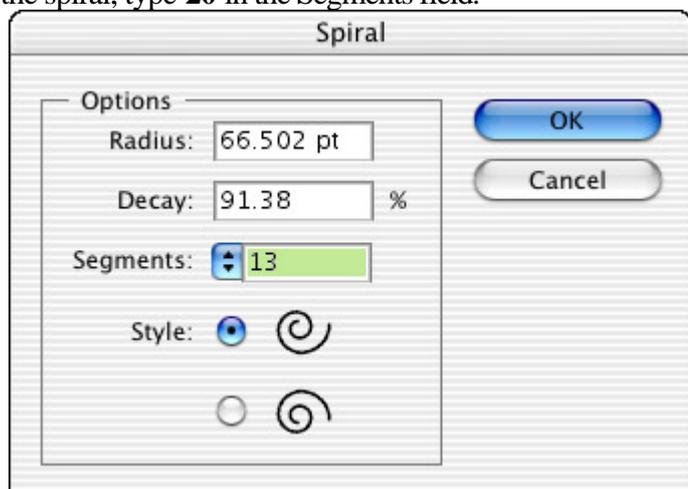


Figure 8-10: Use options in the Spiral dialog box to set the spiral's tightness.

Chapter 9: Creating Magnificent Brushstrokes

Overview

In This Chapter

- Understanding why the Paintbrush is unlike the Pen and Pencil tools
- Creating brushes from Illustrator artwork
- Looking at the four brush types

Hardcore users of Illustrator would never call it a *painting* program. So what if you can mix colors and use a paintbrush tool: To hardcore users, painting programs are what you'd call 1980 s pixel-based crudlike SuperPaint and MacPaint. Only drawing and illustration programs are vector-based. Regardless of what the hardcore users think, Illustrator has some of the most powerful painting capabilities of any graphics program, vector- or pixel-based.



What, for example, would you call this tool in the margin? In Illustrator, its name is the Paintbrush tool, but it's also at least one-third magic wand (the kind magicians use, not the Illustrator Magic Wand tool). In this chapter, you discover the magic of the Paintbrush tool and the wonders of vector-based brush strokes. You get to push the definitions of brush by creating brushstrokes of every conceivable size and shape, from brushes that make simple calligraphic strokes to brushes that make strokes using other Illustrator artwork.

Brushing Where No Stroke Has Gone Before

Brushes are wildly creative strokes that you can apply to paths. If you think of them this way, brushes become much easier to get a handle on (especially if they make you, er, bristle with frustration).

Brushes, as shown in [Figure 9-1](#), can be any of four different types: Art brushes, Scatter brushes, Calligraphic brushes, and Pattern brushes.

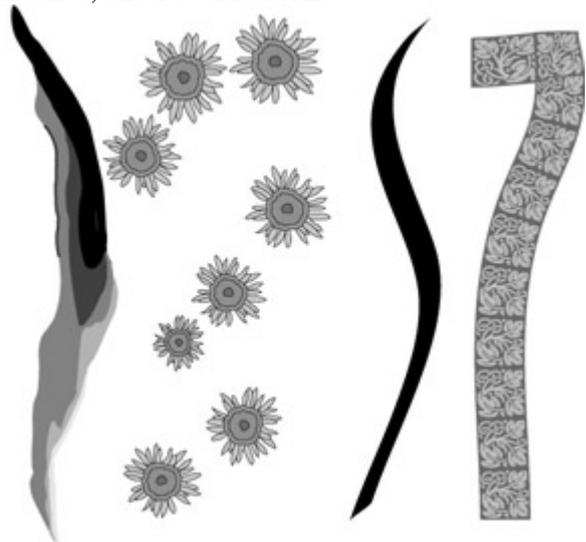


Figure 9-1: From left to right, examples of painting with an Art brush, a Scatter brush, a Calligraphic brush, and a Pattern brush.

- **Art brushes:** Stretch a single piece of artwork along an entire path.
- **Scatter brushes:** Scatter artwork around a path. The artwork is repeated, scaled, and rotated randomly. The Scatter brush is oddly similar to the Symbol Sprayer, but you find distinct differences, which I point out later in this chapter.
- **Calligraphic brushes:** Emulate drawing or writing with a calligraphy pen.
- **Pattern brushes:** Repeat artwork along a path that you draw with the Paintbrush tool. Unlike the random Scatter brush, the Pattern brush repeats the artwork in a precise pattern.

The Illustrator Brushes palette, shown in [Figure 9-2](#), contains samples of each of the four brush types. (Choose Window Brushes to display the Brushes palette.) In addition, see the [Creating a New Brush](#) section, later in this chapter, for help on taking virtually anything that you create in Illustrator and turning it into a brush.

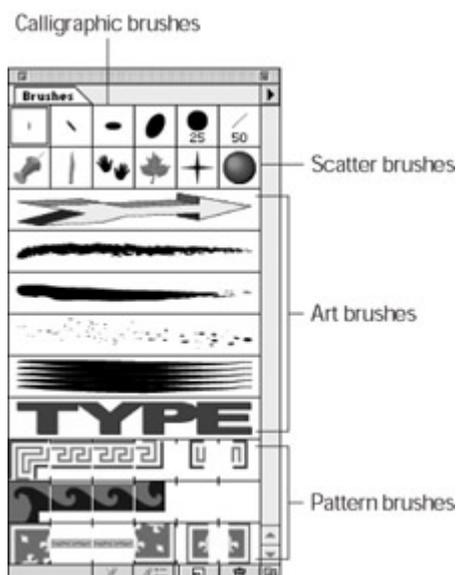


Figure 9-2: The default Brushes palette in Illustrator contains a smattering of the four different types of brushes.

Embracing your inner artist

Regardless of your artistic background or intentions, you can make astounding artwork by using the Paintbrush tool in combination with the different types of brushes. Of course, someone with an utter vacuum of talent (or more than the legally allowed measure of bad taste) may have an uphill battle to create something that looks good. Even so, you may be surprised at how quickly you can tool up some snazzy images, as shown in [Figure 9-3](#), by using the Paintbrush even if you're new to computer graphics. (Your secret is safe with us.) Just follow these steps:

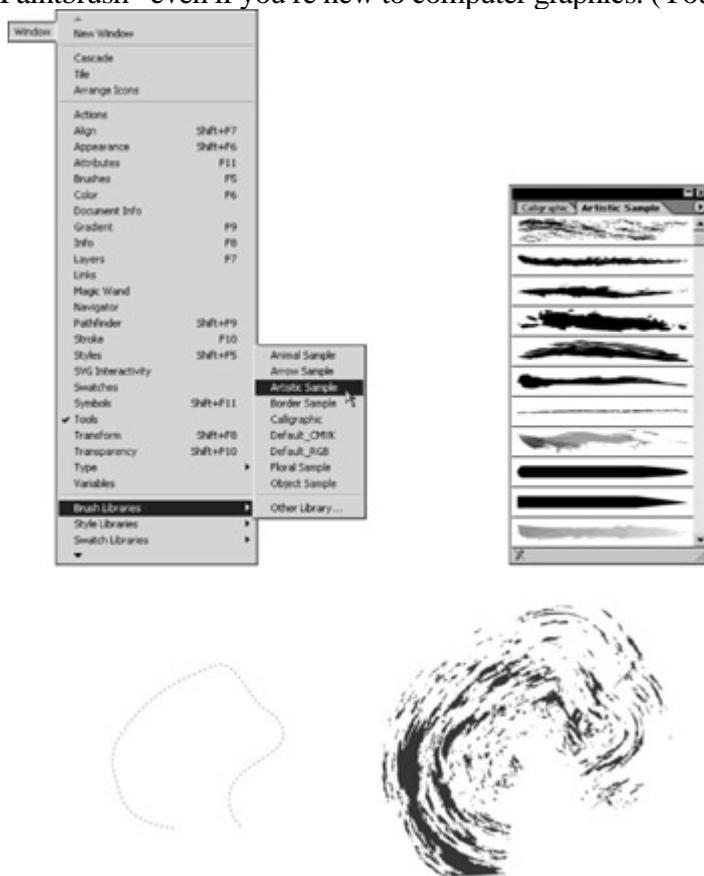


Figure 9-3: Creating wild and wacky strokes

Choose the Paintbrush tool from the Toolbox.

Your cursor changes into a little paintbrush.

2.

Choose Window Brush Libraries Artistic Sample.

After you release the mouse button, the Artistic Sample brush palette appears quicker than you can say *Jackson Pollock*.

3.

Click the Chalk Art brush.

Topmost in the palette, this brush looks like what you get by rubbing a stick of black pastel sideways against rough construction paper.

4.

Click and drag with the Paintbrush tool to draw a path where you want your new stroke to be.

5.

Release the mouse button.

The path you drew becomes the stroke of the brush that you chose. In this case, the Chalk Art brush's rough pastel stroke stretches along the entire length of the path. With the path still selected, try clicking the other brushes to get a feel for how these brushes look.

Tip

Because brushes reside on paths, you can change the position and dimensions of any brushstroke just as you modify any path. You can use the Pencil tool to reshape an existing path, or if you're really brave, you can use the Direct Selection tool to push and pull points and handles around until the brushstroke looks the way you want.

The Paintbrush tool options

The Paintbrush tool offers several options that you can use to customize the way it draws. All these options are found in the Paintbrush Tool Preferences dialog box, shown in [Figure 9-4](#), which appears after you double-click the Paintbrush tool. These preferences function almost identically to the Pencil tool preferences, with one exception: the Fill New Brush Strokes option. When you leave the check box for this option unchecked (which I recommend), Illustrator automatically sets the Fill color option to None. For a more exhaustive and exhausting explanation of the other settings, refer to [Chapter 8](#) where I discuss the Pencil tool preferences—the options are exactly the same in both name and function.

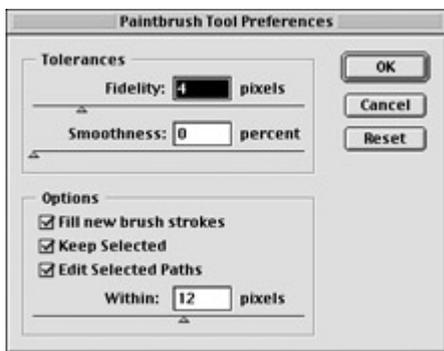


Figure 9-4: The Paint-brush Tool Preferences dialog box.

Tip

Why set the Fill color option to None? The path you make with the Paintbrush tool can contain a fill color, but brushstrokes can also be randomly placed pieces of artwork or have unique shapes. The stroke can appear partly inside and partly outside the fill color, which makes the fill seem random and unrelated to your stroke. Brushes work better when you don't use a fill color with them.

Creating a New Brush

Although Illustrator ships with several hundred brushes, obsessively creative folks can't stand to be limited to so few. To create your own brushes, go right ahead by using darn near any set of paths in Illustrator, as shown in [Figure 9-5](#). Furthermore, the process works to create a new Art, Pattern, or Scatter brush (but not a Calligraphic brush, which doesn't require external artwork).

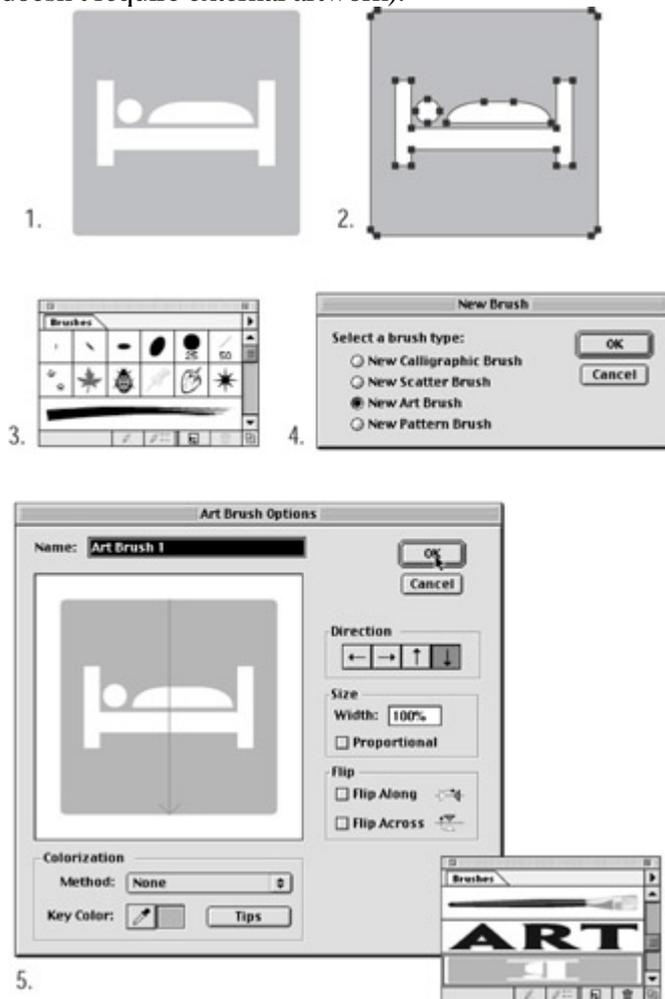


Figure 9-5: Creating a new brush

1.

Create (or open a document with) artwork that you want to use as a brush.

2.

Use any selection tool to select all the paths in the artwork.

3.

Click the New Brush button (it looks like a piece of paper) at the bottom of the Brushes palette (or choose New Brush from the Brushes palette pop-up menu).

The New Brush dialog box appears and asks what type of brush you want to create.

4.

Select New Art Brush, New Scatter Brush, or New Pattern Brush; then click OK.

(For the purpose of this example, I select the New Art Brush option.) The Art Brush Options dialog box appears.

5.

Click OK to accept the default settings.

If you're concerned about accepting the default settings in the Art Brush Options dialog box, keep in mind that you can always make changes to the Art Brush options by double-clicking the Art brush itself in the Brushes palette. I talk about all those different options in the section, [Working with the Different Brush Types](#), later in this chapter. These options have the same effect whether you're creating a new brush or modifying an existing one.

The new Art brush appears in the Brushes palette, ready for you to use.

Tip

Create all sorts of interesting effects by using text as Art brushes. Because brushes can contain only paths (not text objects), you must first change the text into paths before you can make it into a brush. Select the text object with a selection tool and then choose Type > Create Outlines.

Working with the Different Brush Types

Here are the four brush types and some options that you can use when painting with them.

Art brushes for times when you re a bit wacky

Art brushes take any Illustrator paths and stretch them along a path. [Figure 9-6](#) shows several examples of Art brushes.

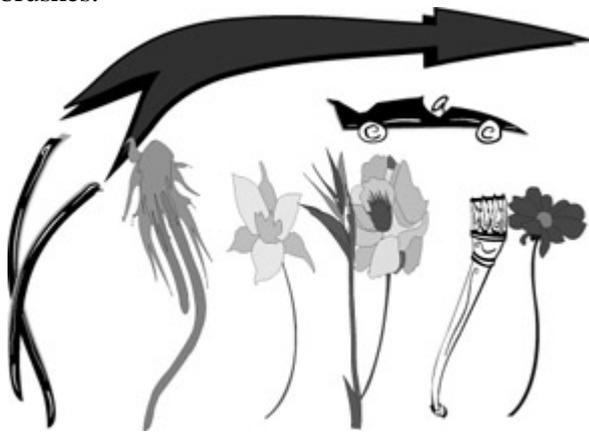


Figure 9-6: All these objects are (believe it or not) Art brushes.

You can use several Art Brush options to make Art brushes look exactly the way you want. [Figure 9-7](#) shows the Art Brush Options dialog box, accessed by double-clicking any Art brush in the Brushes palette.



Figure 9-7: The Art Brush Options box.

In the Art Brush Options dialog box are a variety of options to affect the way the brush makes a stroke. The following list describes how to use some of those options:

- **Name:** Give the brush a descriptive name here. This name appears when you choose View By Name from

the Brushes palette pop-up menu.

-

Preview: Select the Preview option to see any stroke in your artwork that uses the brush stroke you're changing. What you see is what you get—the stroke as it will look if you apply the new changes. This doesn't alter your actual artwork. This feature is extremely handy because you don't have to remember what all the different settings do—you can just watch what happens after you change them!

-

Direction: This option determines whether the graphic rotates clockwise or counterclockwise (relative to the path) as you stretch it.

-

Size: With the Proportional option selected, the artwork grows wider as the path gets longer. With the Proportional option deselected, the artwork stretches. You can enter a scaling percentage in the Width box.

-

Flip: This option resembles the Direction option, except that it flips the artwork upside down instead of rotating it.

-

Colorization: Brushes have fill and stroke colors of their own. They are ordinary Illustrator artwork endowed with the power to be brushes, meaning that distinct fill and stroke values are part of the deal. The Colorization setting determines whether the brush keeps the colors of the original artwork or replaces them with Fill and Stroke colors from the Toolbox. A Method setting of None preserves the original artwork's colors. Other settings blend the fill and stroke colors with the artwork. How they perform this miracle depends on the colors in the original artwork for the brush and on the specific options you choose.

Tip

Click the Tips button for a visual illustration of the various colorization settings.

Figure 9-8 shows the same brush with three different sets of options applied to it.



Figure 9-8: The same brush changed by only one setting produces variations like these.

Scatter brushes for times when you're a bit wacky

Scatter brushes are similar to Art brushes; they are made up of Illustrator paths. However, the similarities end there. Instead of stretching art along a path, Scatter brushes toss, fling, and *scatter* art along a path. [Figure 9-9](#) shows the result of using a Scatter brush.

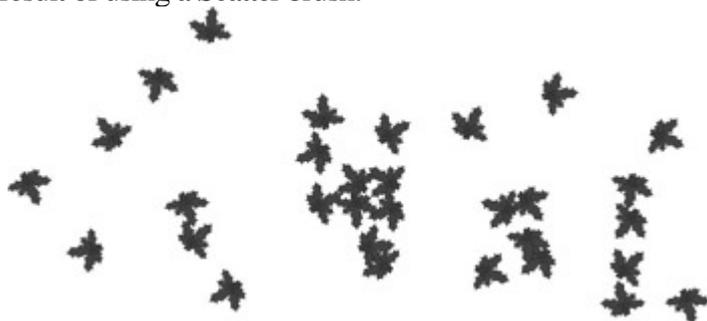


Figure 9-9: This artwork is actually a single path used as a Scatter brush.

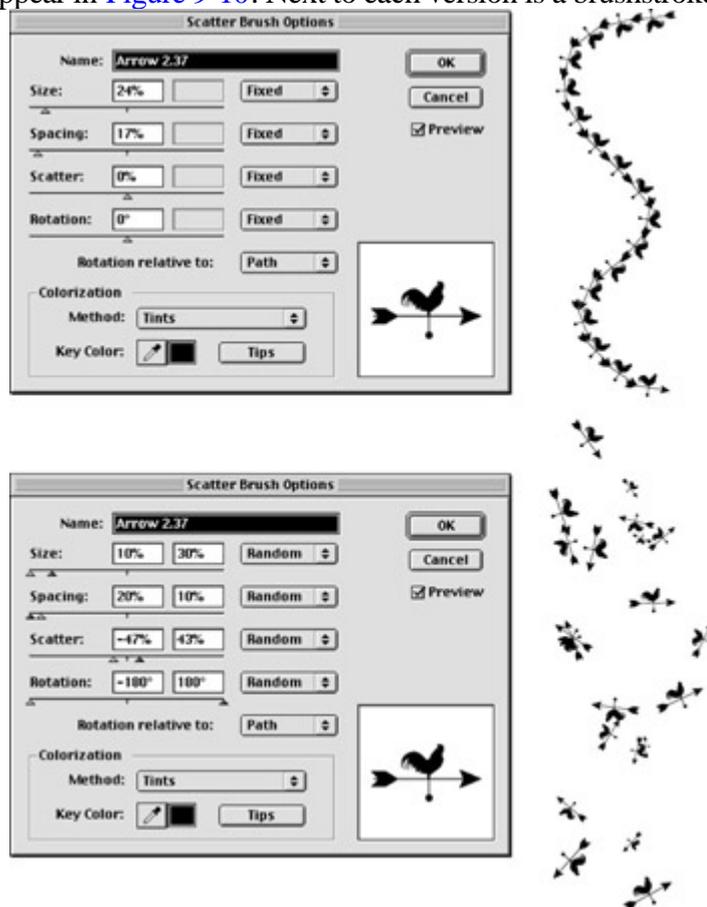
Technical Stuff

Scatter brushes have even more options than Art brushes, but Scatter brushes need more options. Imagine a brush of randomly scattered ladybugs becoming a brush of organized ladybugs that follow the path you create with the brush. To access the options of a Scatter brush, double-click any existing Scatter brush to view the Scatter Brush options dialog box (you see the same options when you create a new Scatter brush).

The Scatter brushes repeat and randomize artwork based on four variables: Size, Spacing, Scatter, and Rotation. You set the specific amounts for these options by dragging their respective sliders to the left or right. How the brush uses these values is determined by the method (Fixed, Random, or Pressure) that you select in the drop-down list boxes to the right of each slider. The following list describes how each method works:

- **Fixed:** This method uses the exact value in the associated text box, which you previously specified by using the slider.
- **Random:** This method gives you two sliders instead of one so that you can specify Minimum and Maximum amounts of variance in the associated option. For example, after you set the Size to a Minimum value of 50% and a Maximum value to 200%, the Scatter brush varies the artwork randomly between half its original size and twice its original size.
- **Pressure:** Like with Random, Pressure uses Minimum and Maximum amounts of variance in the associated option. This method works only when you have a pressure-sensitive tablet hooked to your computer. This feature is so cool that you may want to run out and buy one of these tablets, which is sort of using a mouse except that you draw with a pen-like stylus. Instead of just painting or not painting (your only options with a mouse), the stylus recognizes just how hard you press. The Minimum and Maximum settings correspond to the amount of pressure. The lightest pressure uses the minimum value; the hardest pressure uses the Maximum value. The values you get vary according to just how hard you press.

Two versions of the Scatter Brush Options dialog box appear in [Figure 9-10](#). Next to each version is a brushstroke



created with the option settings shown in the dialog box.

Figure 9-10: Two versions of the Scatter Brush Options dialog box and the artwork resulting from those options.

After you determine which method to use, set the sliders on the left side of the dialog box to specify how you want the artwork repeated along the path. Here are the options:

-
- **Size:** This option controls the size of the scattered objects relative to the original.
-
- **Spacing:** This option controls the amount of space that appears between the scattered objects.
-
- **Scatter:** This option controls how far away objects can scatter on either side of the path.
-
- **Rotation:** This option controls how the objects are rotated and whether they re rotated in relation to the path or to the document. [Figure 9-11](#) shows the difference between a Scatter brush rotation based on the path (left) and one based on the page (right).

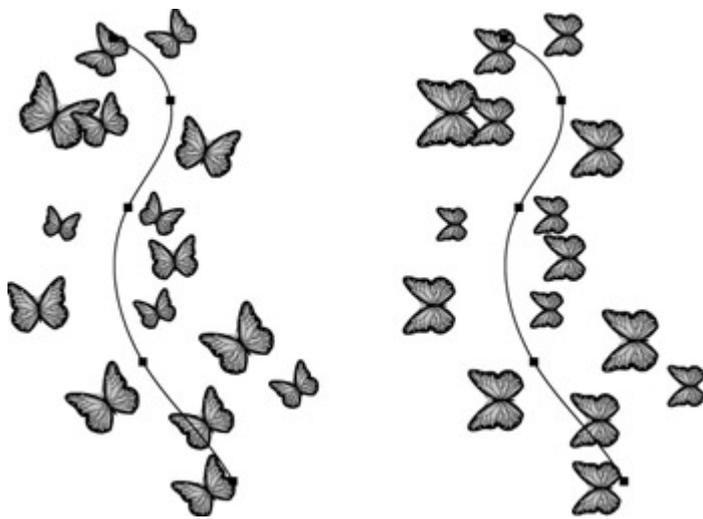


Figure 9-11: The Scatter brush on the left is set to rotate at 90 relative to the path; the one on the right is set to rotate at 90 relative to the page.

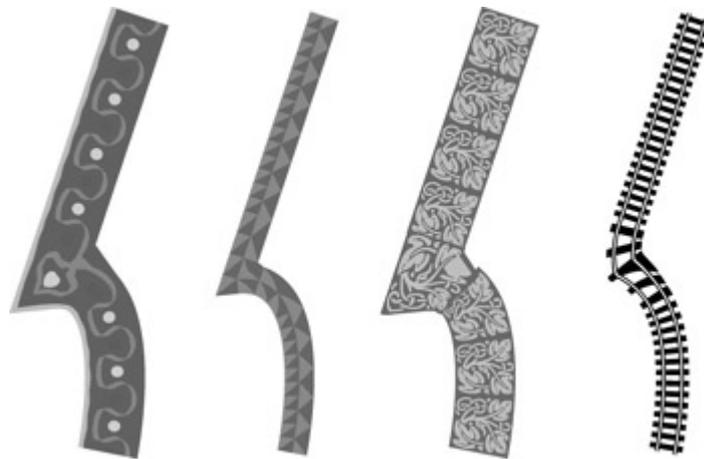
You probably noticed the glaring similarities between the Symbol Sprayer (discussed in detail in [Chapter 4](#)) and Scatter brushes. The results are often visually identical, and the process of making Scatter brushes is much like creating a symbol. [Table 9-1](#) lists the differences between the two.

Table 9-1: Differences Between Scatter Brushes and the Symbol Sprayer

Thing	Symbolism Tools	Scatter Brushes
Components	Paths, type, pixel-based images	Paths
Editability	Via Symbolism tools	Via Pencil or Direct Selection tools
Control	Nonexact manipulation	Precision changes via Options dialog box
Examples	Leaves on a tree, grass blades, hair, wisps of smoke	Footprints, marching ants,
Good for	Fills	Strokes

Pattern brushes too cool and utterly wacko

Pattern brushes (see [Figure 9-12](#)) are too cool for words, so I can just move on. Okay, no weaseling. For openers, you can use five different pieces of art for Pattern brushes rather than just one! Of course, that fact can also make them difficult to create. You need a graphic for straight lines and curves, one for inside corners, one for outside corners, one for the start of a line, and one for the end of a line. The results are worth the time and effort to make



sure that these five graphics work together.

Figure 9-12: A sampling of the Pattern brushes.

Tip

Well, okay, if making five pieces of art is too time intensive, you can get away with using just one. The Side pattern is the key pattern. If you don't create five different graphics, the Pattern brush just repeats the Side pattern for any missing pattern. But come on, now, that's cheating. If you want eye-popping results, make those five graphics and take full advantage of what this wonderful brush can do.

Making the artwork for a Pattern brush

If you find that creating a Pattern brush is pretty tricky and counterintuitive, you're not alone; a lot of trial and error is par for the course, especially at first. The first step in building a Pattern brush is to create the five pieces of artwork. Before you can do that, however, you need to know just what these pieces of artwork are for. Double-click a pattern brush in the Brushes palette to open the Pattern Brush Options dialog box for a peek at the possibilities. [Figure 9-13](#) shows the Pattern Brush Options dialog box, in which you tell Illustrator just where to put the artwork on a path. Pattern brushes are *context-sensitive*: They know what the specific part of the path they are on is supposed to look like so they use the graphic that corresponds to that part of the path.



Tile Options determines tile's appearance

Figure 9-13: Each Pattern brush tile knows where it is on a path and uses the corresponding artwork.

Tip

You may find it helpful to examine existing Pattern brushes. The Tile Options list in the Pattern Brush Options dialog box offers a sampling.

Setting Pattern Brush options

The Pattern Brush Options dialog box looks more complicated than it really is. Double-click any Pattern brush in the Brushes palette, and the Pattern Brush Options dialog box appears, displaying the following features:

- **Tiles:** These squares are thumbnail representations of each piece of artwork. Beneath each tile, a graphic shows the artwork's position on the path. Click a thumbnail to modify it by using the Tile Options list.
- **Tile Options:** Click these options to change your pattern tiles. Click None to remove the selected tile's graphic. (The Original option is already selected if you added your own graphics.) The remaining options correspond to the Pattern swatches in the Swatches palette. This arrangement enables you to use Pattern swatches as an alternative to creating your own tiles.
- **Colorization and Flip:** See the earlier section, Art brushes for times when you're a bit wacky, for details on these options.
- **Size:** Use the Scale option to enlarge or shrink the tiles as they run along the path. If they get too big, the Spacing option enables you to increase the distance between tiles.
-

Fit: This option determines how the tiles get distorted to fit around spaces that don't quite match the five different Tile types. The Stretch to Fit option distorts artwork the most, mashing it into whatever shape it needs to be to fit the path. The Add Space to Fit option adds space between tiles to distort them as little as possible. The Approximate Path option only works when the path is rectangular.

Positioning the artwork in the Pattern brush

After you create your graphics, think about what position each graphic is going to play. You may find it helpful to create a single guide that actually contains all five positions, as shown in [Figure 9-14](#). Use this graphic as a way of visualizing how each graphic element is going to work at the different points.

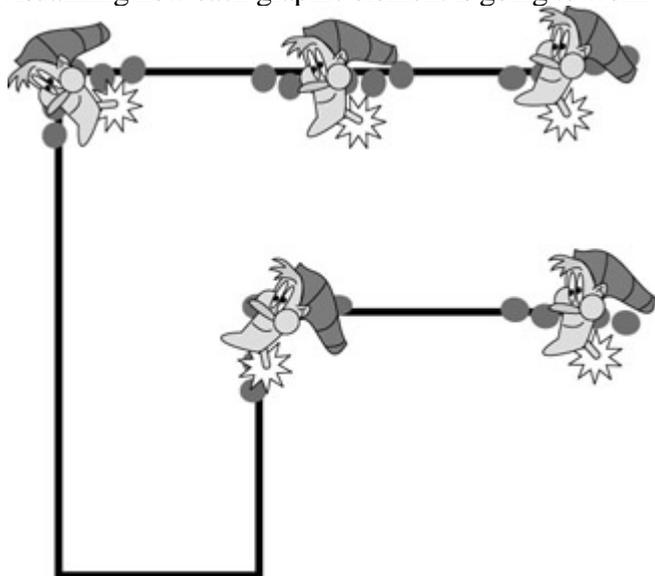


Figure 9-14: Creating a guideline with all five pattern positions can be a big help when you create the artwork for the Pattern brush.

Using the guideline, create five pieces of artwork to correspond to the positions on the path. Knowing exactly how each piece of the artwork needs to change in response to its position takes practice. Some differences can be subtle (such as between the starting art and ending art) or obvious (such as between the side piece and corner pieces), as shown in [Figure 9-15](#).



Figure 9-15: Left to right; The start, side, outside corner, inside corner, and end pieces.

After you have all the artwork, you're ready to create the Pattern brush. Forward, intrepid artist! Just follow these steps:

1.

Select the Side tile and click the New Brush button (it looks like a little piece of paper) in the Brushes palette.

The New Brush dialog box appears.

2.

Click the New Pattern Brush option and then click OK.

The Pattern Brush Options dialog box appears, with the Side tile in the proper position. (For a refresher on how that looks, refer to [Figure 9-13](#).)

3.

In the dialog box, give the new brush a name by typing it directly into the name box and click OK.

The new Pattern brush shows up in the Brushes palette. (Don't worry about the other options right now. I come back to those!)

Technically, the new brush is ready to use right now. (The side artwork fills in the other positions.) But true artists (no slackers here!) want to add the rest of the artwork to the brush. Naturally, this part of the process gets tricky. Notice that the brush, as it currently appears in [Figure 9-16](#), has six slots, two of which are filled by the side artwork. The remaining four slots are for the remaining four pieces. The next set of steps creates them.

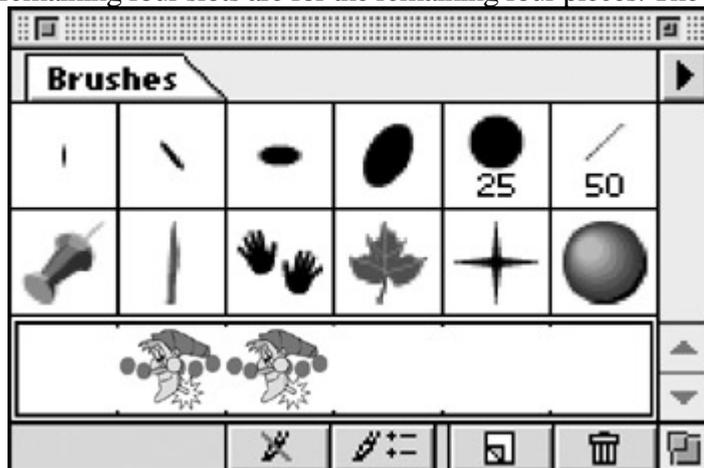


Figure 9-16: The new Pattern brush, awaiting the four remaining pieces.

Here's how true artists (the aesthetically dedicated) add the rest of the artwork to the brush, one piece at a time:

1.

Select the artwork and press and hold down the Alt key (Option on a Mac).

2.

While holding down the Alt key (Option on a Mac), drag the artwork onto the Pattern brush, over the appropriate slot, and then release the mouse button.

Tip

You're over a slot when a bold, dark line appears around the slot. Ah, but how do you know what the appropriate slot is? The brush has no label to tell you what's what. The Pattern Brush Options dialog box obligingly labels the slots, but tragically the order of the Pattern brushes in that dialog box does not correspond to the order in the Brushes palette. The only way to add a new brush to the Pattern brush is to hold down the Alt key (Option on a Mac) and drag it (kicking and screaming) onto the slot in the Brushes palette. But you're in luck! I labeled the slots in the brush for you in [Figure 9-17](#). So feel free to use the figure as a map.

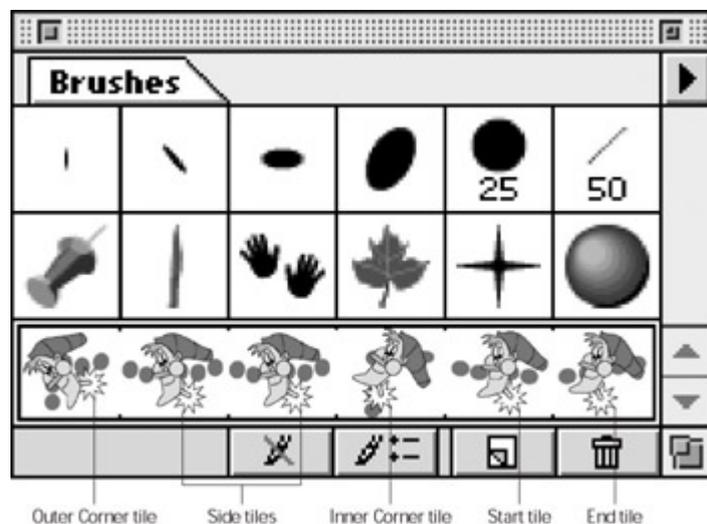


Figure 9-17: The Pattern Brush with its slots labeled.

Warning

Nothing stops you from putting a corner piece into the straight section or vice versa. Pay careful attention to where you drop your artwork when creating a pattern brush, or you can get some nasty-looking art as a result!

3.

The Pattern Brush Options dialog box appears, displaying the artwork in its appropriate place. Click OK.

Don't worry about the other options for now.

4.

Drag all the remaining graphics to their appointed places.

Tip

Each time you add a graphic, the Pattern Brush Options dialog box appears again. Just click OK and keep going.

Testing your new Pattern brush

When you finally have all your graphics in place, you can test the new brush by applying it to open and closed paths: After making sure that the new brush is selected in the Brushes palette, you create two simple graphics. Anything you create when a brush is selected uses that brush as its stroke, even when you aren't using the Paintbrush tool. Any path will work, but because the Pattern brush uses different artwork at corners, testing the shape on an object that has corners (such as a rectangle) is helpful. In this example, I use the Rectangle tool to create a square. With the new brush still selected, I choose the Paintbrush tool and paint a squiggly line. This procedure shows how the corner, side, and end tiles look on both curved and straight lines. Testing this way (as I did in [Figure 9-18](#)) gives you a good idea of whether all your artwork is working well in the new brush.

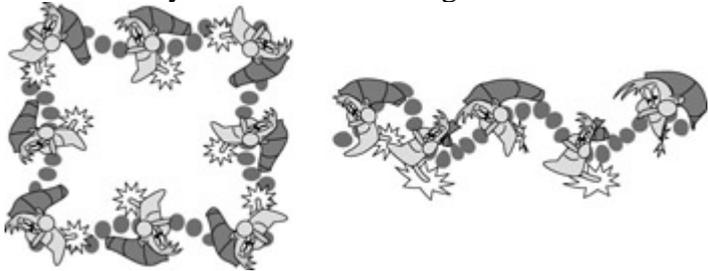


Figure 9-18: The new Pattern brush tested on a square and a squiggle.

Tip

If any of your tiles aren't working, tweak the original artwork, select it, and drag it back to the appropriate slot.

If you're suddenly inspired to create more Pattern brushes, a good way to start is by examining the Pattern brushes (nearly a hundred of them) that come with Illustrator. Tinker with them to figure out how they work and how to create them.

Calligraphic brushes for formal occasions

Calligraphic brushes create strokes that emulate the kind of strokes you make with real calligraphic pens; the strokes they make vary in width depending on the direction of the stroke. As the only brushes that aren't created by paths that you can drag into the Brushes palette, Calligraphic brushes are the nonconformist brushes in Illustrator. You set them up by using controls in the Calligraphic Brush Options dialog box (accessed by either creating a new brush or by double-clicking on an existing Calligraphic brush), as shown in [Figure 9-19](#).

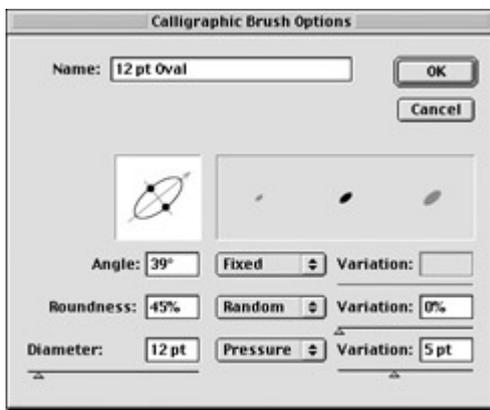


Figure 9-19: The Calligraphic Brush Options dialog box.

Calligraphic brushes are deceptively simple. Don't let the name fool you; you can use them to create any type of artwork, not just calligraphy. (Although they're especially good for emulating traditional pen-and-ink type drawings.)

Technical Stuff

Yep, the Calligraphic Brush tool seems a lot more like a real pen than the powerful-but-weird Pen tool. It may help to think of it this way: Calligraphy is an art practiced with brushes.

To create a Calligraphic brush, just follow these steps:

1.

Click the New Brush icon (it looks like a tiny piece of paper) in the Brushes palette.

The New Brush dialog box appears.

2.

Select the New Calligraphic Brush option and click OK.

The Calligraphic Brush Options dialog box appears and though it may look intimidating, you have only the following three options to set (after you name the brush):

○

Angle: If you were using a real-world brush (or pen, as the case may be), this setting would be the angle at which you're tilting the brush.

○

Roundness: This setting enables you to change just how round the brush is—from a narrow ellipse to a circle.

○

Diameter: This setting determines how large the brush is.

The boxes in the middle column determine how (and by how much) those first three options may vary, if at all. Select one of three options in these drop-down list boxes to determine whether the preceding three

options may vary not at all (Fixed), randomly (Random), or according to the amount of pressure you apply by using a pressure-sensitive stylus (Pressure).

Tip

The boxes in the third column enable you to set the amount by which those first three options may vary (if the method by which they may vary is either Random or Pressure). The higher the numbers, the greater the range of sizes the brush will produce. [Figure 9-20](#) offers a hint of what the Calligraphic Brush tool can do with a pressure-sensitive tablet. The variable width of the stroke adds sophistication to the cartoon.



Figure 9-20: Artwork created on a pressure-sensitive tablet using Calligraphic brushes.

3.

After you set your options, click OK.

The new Calligraphic brush appears in the Brushes palette for you to use.

As you begin creating artwork with brushes, you discover that it's just like painting with real paintbrushes—the best artwork requires a combination of several different brushes. Fortunately, you have an astonishing variety of brushes to choose from! The most well-stocked art supply store pales in comparison to the Brushes palette. Best of all, you don't have to pay extra whenever you need a new brush. You can just build your own!

Chapter 10: Extreme Fills and Strokes

Overview

In This Chapter

- Creating tone using the Mesh tool
- Making artwork partially transparent
- Blending artwork together
- Stroking your way to victory over drab art
- Creating custom strokes
- Hiding objects with other objects by using masks

To say that in Illustrator you can create just about anything you can imagine isn't an overstatement. The trick is to know which buttons to push to make your artistic vision become an Illustrator document. This chapter pushes fills and strokes to their limits, so you can create cool stuff. You know the stuff that, when you look at it, it makes you scratch your head and say, How did they do that? And then you wonder whether you'll ever be able to create anything as artistic.

Well, it isn't so hard. You just need to use some of the more arcane Illustrator tools (the Mesh tool, for example) and a few cantankerous menu commands that don't want to do anything unless you apply them just right. This chapter shows you how to use them to get good results with the tools and commands that take center stage. Like

temperamental sports cars, they re a little tricky to use but worth the effort!

Team LiB

◀ PREVIOUS NEXT ▶

Messing Around with Meshes

Illustrator is really great at filling areas with solid colors, continuous patterns, or gradients. Illustrator gets testy, though, when you try to create a continuous tone—such as the many skin tones that define a human face or the way colors fade into one another in a piece of folded fabric. However, the Illustrator Mesh tool is like a crotchety magician: If you talk nicely to it, it can help you bend the rules a bit. By using the Mesh tool, you can create amazing shading and tonal effects. Gradient *Meshes* overcome the limitations of gradients, the other Illustrator feature that enables you to blend colors. (For more on Gradients, see [Chapter 5](#).) Simple gradients fill areas with linear and radial color blends. Period. Gradient Meshes have no such limitation. You can use them to assign colors to the specific points and paths that make up an object. Where the mesh lines cross, you can assign a different color to every line and every point. These colors blend with the colors of the other points. Take a look at [Figure 10-1](#) for a sample of what you can do with a Gradient Mesh.

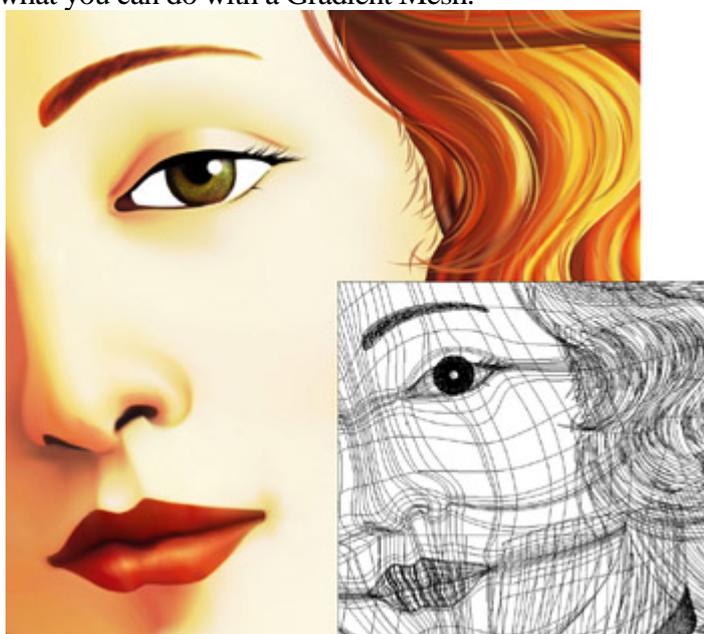


Figure 10-1: The artwork that made up the Illustrator Venus (left) was colored entirely by using the Mesh tool; the right side shows the paths and meshes that created it.

[Figure 10-1](#) may seem complex, but the difficulty lies much more in the artistry than in the technical aspects. The tool seems daunting at first, but you can tackle it if you begin by adding a highlight to a simple shape, as shown in [Figure 10-2](#).

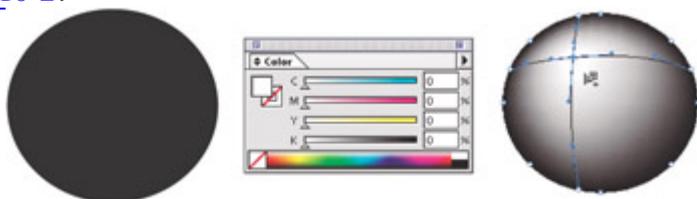


Figure 10-2: Use the Mesh tool to create a highlight in a path.

Adding a Gradient Mesh

To add a Gradient Mesh to a simple shape, just follow these steps:

1.

Create a shape by clicking and dragging with any of the basic object tools (see [Chapter 4](#) for more on basic objects) and fill the shape with a dark color. You can use any shape.

For this example, I create a circle and color it black.

2.

Deselect the path. (You can deselect everything by choosing Select Deselect.)

Deselecting the path enables you to pick a different color for the Mesh tool. If you choose a different color with the path selected, you change the color of the object.

3.

Set the fill color to any light color.

Choose Window Color to open the Color palette. Click the Fill box and choose a light color to use as a highlight. (Gradient Meshes use only fill colors and ignore stroke colors.)

4.



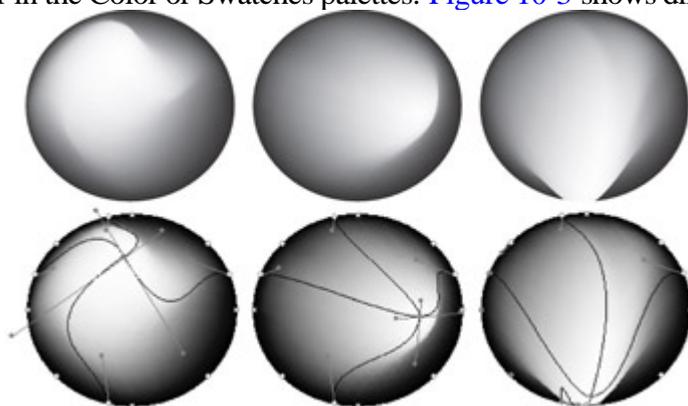
Choose the Mesh tool from the Toolbox and click the object to which you want to add a highlight.

As if by magic, two intersecting paths appear on the object, crossing at the spot where you clicked. This intersection is called the *mesh point*. These paths are the Gradient Mesh. The highlight appears where the paths intersect.

5.

Click other areas within the path to add more highlights as many as you want.

The paths that make up the Gradient Mesh can be edited the same as any other path. Click the mesh points in the path with the Direct Selection tool and move them to create different effects. Mesh points also have direction points, just like curved paths. (See [Chapter 6](#) for more on paths.) These direction points can be moved to change the shape of the gradient mesh. You can also change the color of any point or path segment by clicking it and choosing a different color in the Color or Swatches palettes. [Figure 10-3](#) shows different effects made by mashing the gradient



mesh around.

Figure 10-3: These objects use the same Gradient Mesh, but the mesh points have been moved by using the Direct Selection tool.

That's really all there is to this tool! I moved those points by using the Direct Selection tool and then tweaked the colors by selecting a point or a path and choosing a new color in the Color or Swatches palettes.

You can automate the process by clicking the object you want and choosing Object > Create Gradient Mesh. This method adds a Gradient Mesh to the object automatically. Illustrator does its best to estimate where the mesh paths should go by looking at the shape of the object and figuring out where the mesh paths should go to shade the object so that it looks three dimensional. You can even have the Gradient Mesh create the shading for you.

After you select the Gradient Mesh command, the Create Gradient Mesh dialog box opens (shown in [Figure 10-4](#)). Set your options, click OK, and the command does the mesh-y work for you. Here's the all-star lineup of options:

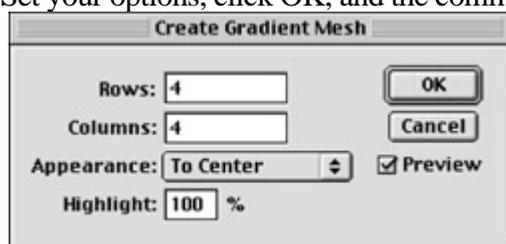


Figure 10-4: Set Gradient Mesh here.

- **Rows and Columns:** These options set the number of mesh paths that the command creates. The higher the number, the more control you have over the colors in your object (but the more complicated the graphic is to work with).

- **Appearance:** Select one of three Appearance options: To Center, To Edge, and Flat. The To Center option lightens colors to place a highlight in the center of the object, creating the appearance that the graphic is being pulled outward. The To Edge option places a highlight at the edges of the object, creating the appearance that the graphic is being pulled inward. The Flat option doesn't change any colors but still creates the mesh, so you can change colors on your own. See [Figure 10-5](#) for the differences between options.

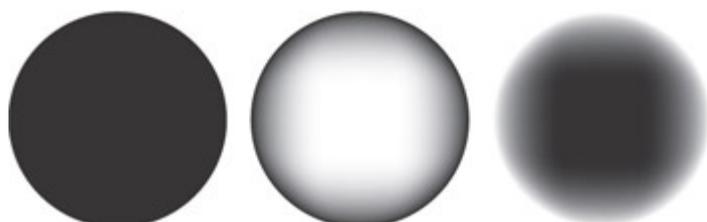


Figure 10-5: The same Gradient Mesh, with Appearance settings of Flat, To Center, and To Edge.

- **Highlight:** When you select an Appearance option of To Edge or To Center, the Highlight setting is the maximum amount that the colors lighten to create the 3D effect.

[Figure 10-5](#) shows an object with a highlight applied to it using the Illustrator automatic highlighting process.

Creating soft bevels with Gradient Mesh

You can use the Mesh tool to create a smooth beveled object. Follow these steps for a very basic, yet quite handy, method:

1.

Create a square by choosing the Rectangle tool and clicking the Artboard and dragging. Fill the square with a nice strong solid color, such as grass green or fire engine red.

Other shapes work with this, but a square is the simplest.

2.

Choose the Mesh tool, click just inside the upper-left corner, and again just inside the lower-right corner.

This creates a total of nine mesh patches on the square, as shown in [Figure 10-6](#).

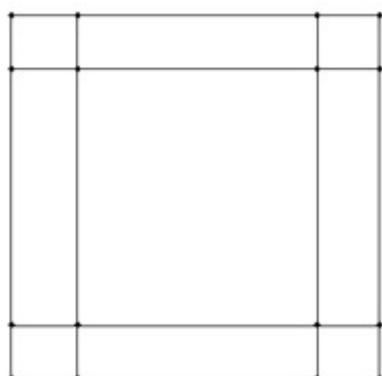


Figure 10-6: A square after two clicks with the Mesh tool.

3.

Choose the Direct Selection tool, drag a marquee around the four points along the top edge of the square. Then press the Shift key and drag a marquee around the unselected three points on the left edge of the square.

You have seven points selected now, around the top-left corner, all on the outside edge of the square.

4.

Choose Window Color.

The Color palette appears.

5.

Switch to CMYK mode (if you re not there already). Holding down the Shift key, drag the right-most triangle to the left about halfway.

You can change to CMYK mode (which shows CMYK sliders) in the Color palette by choosing it from the Color palette pop-up menu. The Shift key tints whatever color you selected in Step 1 when you drag a slider in the Color palette.

6.

Choose the Direct Selection tool, drag a marquee around the three rightmost points along the bottom edge of the square. Then press the Shift key, and drag a marquee around the middle two

points on the right edge of the square.

With the lower-right points selected, you re now ready to darken this corner of the square.

7.

Drag the K slider on the Color palette to the right until you ve darkened the lower-right edge to your liking.

The result looks something like [Figure 10-7](#).



Figure 10-7: The resulting beveled square.

Making Objects Partially Transparent and Blending Colors

By default, Illustrator creates objects that hide whatever is behind them. However, the Transparency palette enables you to change this situation. By using the Opacity option, you can fade objects so that the underlying objects show through them. You can also blend the colors in the top graphics with the underlying graphics (in an astonishing variety of ways) by using blend modes.

One of the powerful features of the Transparency palette is that everything you do in it is *live*—your paths suffer no permanent changes after you make them transparent. You can change opacity again and again—or remove it altogether if you want—without changing your path data. This capability gives you tremendous room to play and experiment with different opacities.

Fade away with opacity

In [Figure 10-8](#), a solid black oval faded-out to 40% opacity partly reveals an image behind it.



Figure 10-8: The oval at its original opacity (left) and faded to 40% (right) to reveal an image beneath.

To make something partially transparent, follow these steps:

1.

Select the object (or objects) that you want to fade.

When you select multiple objects, they all get the same opacity setting.

2.

Choose Window Transparency.

The Transparency palette appears, as shown in [Figure 10-9](#).



Figure 10-9: The Transparency palette.

3.

In the Transparency palette, drag the Opacity slider until it shows the percentage of opacity you want to give to the selected object(s).

After you release the mouse button, the selected objects become partially transparent.

Tip

By default, transparency applies evenly to both the fill and stroke. To assign the fill and the stroke independent Opacity values, use the Appearance palette. See [Chapter 11](#) for details.

Big fun with math! Blending graphics with blend modes

Pssst! Listen very, very carefully while I tell you what's really going on with blend modes. Here's the scoop: Forget the math and pay attention to what the resulting artwork looks like.

Technical Stuff

Illustrator defines every color mathematically. You see that math when you drag sliders in the Color palette. A bright red color may be defined as R:216, G:20, and B:7 (in RGB) or C:20%, M:95%, Y:95%, and K:5% (in CMYK). Each of these numbers reflects a different amount of a component color; every different color has its own color value.

Blend modes take the colors in an object and mix them with the colors in underlying objects, performing a mathematical calculation using numbers that identify the colors of the objects. Therefore, if the top object is red, the underlying object is blue, and you have the blend mode set to Multiply, red's number gets multiplied by blue's number. The resulting color is what you see. Other modes do more complex calculations. What does that mean? What's blue times red? What's the difference between yellow and mauve? What's the sound of one hand clapping?

In short, it doesn't matter. What the result looks like is what matters! Try this approach for yourself: Select the top object and choose a different blend mode. Blend modes hang out in the Transparency palette's Blend Mode menu, as shown in [Figure 10-10](#).

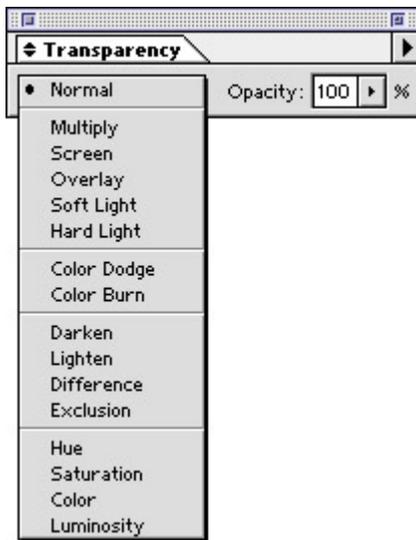


Figure 10-10: The Blend Mode pop-up menu in the Transparency palette.

[Figure 10-11](#) shows three different blend modes at work on the same image and they re completely changeable. If you try one and don t like it, just choose another from the menu.

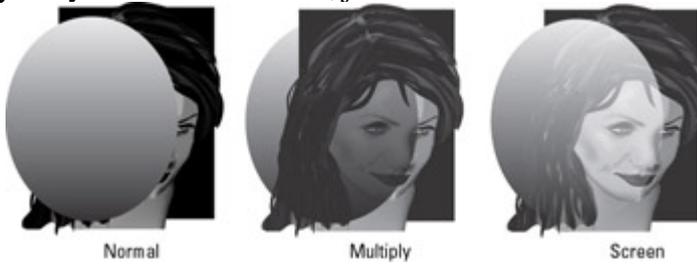


Figure 10-11: Three of the 16 possible blend modes in Illustrator.

Discovering How Strokes Work

Any path in Illustrator can pick up a stroke (. . . stroke . . . stroke! Sorry. Just daydreaming about going for a nice row on a lake). In Illustrator, a *stroke* is a line placed on a path. A stroke can be of any thickness, which Illustrator calls its *weight*. Strokes can be any color or pattern.

In [Chapter 9](#), I discuss the specialized strokes that you can make with the Paintbrush tool. The Pen and Pencil tools also provide distinctive strokes of their own ([Chapters 7](#) and [8](#), respectively).

In addition to color and weight, you can give strokes special attributes. These attributes include the specific look of corners (called *joins*) and endings (called *caps*), as well as whether the stroke has a pattern of dashes applied to it. To investigate all the advanced ways you can modify strokes, look at the Stroke palette shown in [Figure 10-12](#). (Choose Window Stroke and select Show Options from the Stroke palette pop-up menu.) To change the way a stroke appears, select a path and play around in the Stroke palette to see what happens. I won't tell a soul.

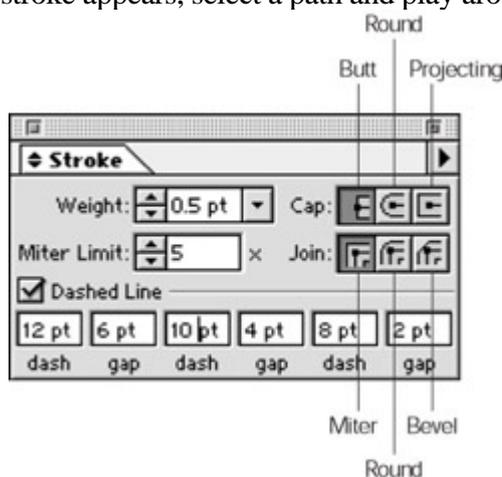


Figure 10-12: The Stroke palette displaying a full set of options.

Strokes are always applied to the center of a path, which means that the strokes, especially those of larger weight, can ooze beyond the path. The path runs along the exact middle of the stroke. For more information on the relationship between strokes and paths, see [Chapter 5](#).

Caps, Joins, and Dashes

A stroke can be (and often is) a continuous line of color that follows a path, even if the path is as convoluted as a strand of cooked spaghetti. But paths can also appear chopped up into dashes. You can tweak the shape of the dashes all at once, without having to fuss over every single one. You can set the shape that an individual *dash* (the basic unit of an *open path*) begins or ends with (its cap) and the shape of its corner points (its join).

Strokes can have any of three different caps and any of three different joins applied to them. Combine these with the almost-limitless combinations possible for dash patterns and weights, and you can see the incredible versatility of strokes. To access these additional options, choose Window Show Stroke. In the Stroke palette that appears, select Show Options from the palette pop-up menu; refer to [Figure 10-12](#).

Caps

Shaping the ends of the dashes that make up an open path can change the entire look of the path. For example, imagine a dashed line that's 500 dashes long. Then imagine that all 500 dashes have identical ends, shaped like one of the three shapes in [Figure 10-13](#).

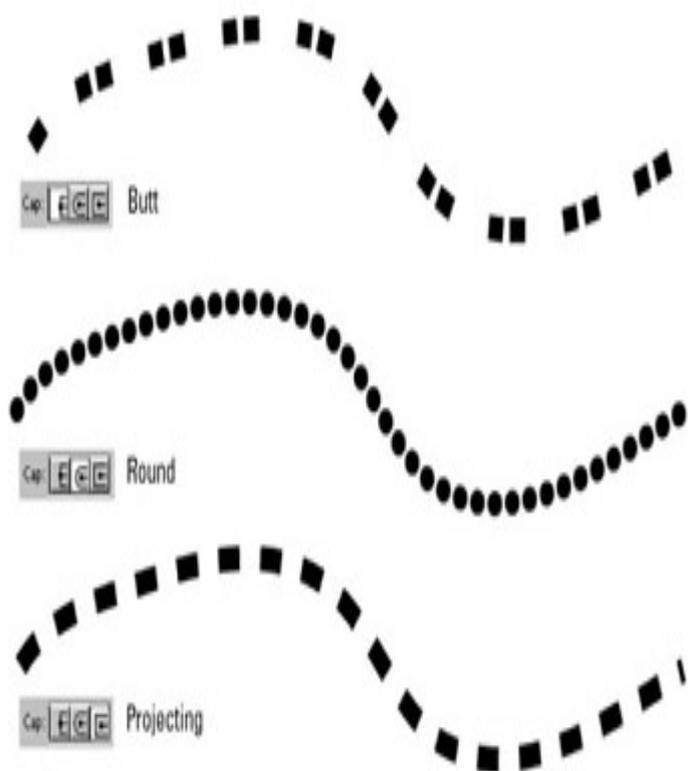


Figure 10-13: Three different caps on three paths.

Depending on which Cap setting you choose, you get three noticeably different capped lines. Here are the options:

-
- **Butt Cap:** Chops off the stroke at the ends.
-
- **Round Cap:** Extends the stroke past the ends (or around the dash location) with semicircular ends. (The radius of each semicircle equals half the stroke weight.)
-
- **Projecting Cap:** Extends the stroke past the ends (or around the dash location) with squared ends. (The amount of each extension equals half the stroke weight.)

To change the way a line is capped, select it with any selection tool, and then click the desired cap in the Stroke palette.

Joins

The Stroke palette offers three different joins. [Figure 10-14](#) shows how they appear on paths. Joins affect only corner points, not smooth points. (See [Chapter 6](#) for more info on corner points.) They make corners appear sharp



and pointy, blunt and rounded, or squared off.

Figure 10-14: Three different joins on a path (left to right): Miter, Round, and Bevel.

Depending on which Join setting you choose, you get three noticeably different corners. Here are the options:

-
- **Miter Join:** Causes the outside corner of the stroke to come to a sharp point.
-
- **Round Join:** Causes the outside corner of a stroke to come to a rounded or smooth curve.
-
- **Bevel Join:** Cuts off the corner so that the width of the stroke is the same at the bevel as on the rest of the stroke.

If these terms look familiar, then you're probably familiar with woodworking or you actually paid attention in industrial arts class.

Dashes

Dashes break up the stroke into repeating segments of any length, with gaps between them, also of any length. You can set up to three different dash sizes and three different gap sizes in any stroke, as shown in [Figure 10-15](#).

Dashes work with the Cap settings. (What the heck, call it a labor-saving device.) Whichever Cap setting you use applies to the ends of all the dashes, not just to the ends of the path.

To create a dashed line, follow these steps:

1.
Select the Dashed Line option in the Stroke palette.
2.
Set a dash size in the first dash box.

Remember that the Round and Projecting Cap settings extend the dash from its center by half the width of the stroke. Therefore, if you use the Projecting Cap setting and your dash setting is 10 points, on a line with a 20-point stroke, the dash will be 30 points long.

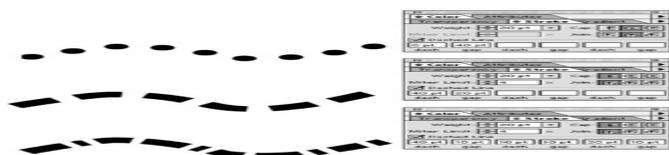


Figure 10-15: Three different dash patterns and the settings used to create them.

Tip

Choose a Butt Cap setting when you want your dashes to be an exact length that doesn't vary with the width of the stroke. If you want an exact circle for a dash (or a dot), use a 0-point dash. That creates a dot the width of the stroke.

3.
Set the gap size in the first gap box (the distance between the ends of the dashes).

Warning

This setting can be a little confusing if you're using the Round or Projecting Cap settings because these extend the length of the dash past the end of the dash and into the gap, based on the width of the stroke, creating a gap that looks smaller than what you specified. The width of the stroke also affects the gap size. If you want a gap of 20 points and you're using a 10-point stroke, set the gap size to 30 points.

Clipping Masks

No, they're not special headgear that the barber wears to entertain young customers. Clipping masks are simple, yet incredibly handy, Illustrator features. Simply put, they hide things. Like Effects and Transparency settings, Clipping Masks are live functions that make no permanent change to path data. They make things look different, but you can take them away with a single command, and your paths remain exactly as they were before.

Clipping masks use objects to hide other objects, as shown in [Figure 10-16](#). The top object (the masking object) becomes completely transparent. The underlying objects become invisible except for where the mask object is. The number of objects beneath the mask doesn't matter. Only the topmost object functions as the masking object. The top object's fill and stroke also don't matter, because the top object becomes invisible.



Figure 10-16: The original artwork, the masking object in front of the artwork, and the masked artwork.

To create a clipping mask, here's the drill:

1.

Create an object to be used as a mask.

Masks can be any shape or color. You can even use text as a mask.

2.

Position the object in front of whatever you want to mask out.

3.

Select the object and all the objects behind it that you want to mask out.

Shift-click with the Selection tool to select multiple objects.

4.

Choose Object Clipping Mask Make.

The masking object and anything outside the mask disappear, leaving just what's inside and behind the masking object.

Remember

The things that seem to disappear after you apply the mask aren't really gone. They're just hidden. You can bring them back by choosing Object Clipping Mask Release. Sometimes that's more impressive than pulling a rabbit out of your hat.

Chapter 11: Effectively Keeping Up Appearances, with Style(s)

Overview

In This Chapter

- Way-cool special effects with the Effect menu
- Looking at the Appearance palette
- Adding additional fills and strokes
- Combining Effect settings to create different effects
- Creating a style
- Manipulating existing styles

Back in the twentieth century, Illustrator was a straightforward program that offered relatively few (and relatively obvious) choices. You knew when you looked at a pink rectangle that it was made with four corner points joined by four paths and was filled with a single, solid pink color. But those days of blissful innocence are past. Now that pink rectangle may really be a red rectangle that some fiend faded to 50% Opacity by using the Transparency palette. And that rectangle may not be a rectangle at all, but a graphic of an old shoe that has been disguised as a rectangle using the Effect Convert to Shape Rectangle command. In this world of illusions, where anything can appear to be anything else and nothing is as it seems, what s an artist to do?

The truth is, the ability of Illustrator to make objects *look* different without changing the original object is amazing.

Illustrator lets you do incredibly powerful stuff that would be impossible otherwise, and more importantly, gives you incredible editability. Editability, you ask? That's one of the primary reasons to use Illustrator in the first place. The ability to go back at any time to change a small aspect of your artwork without having to redo all the work you initially put in is incredibly valuable.

Effects (and transparency) let you change the appearance of your artwork easily (again, without changing the underlying object). Illustrator has dozens of them, giving you power and flexibility beyond anything you can dream of.

In this chapter, you also discover a wonderful tool for cutting through (and taking control of) the illusions of Illustrator: the Appearance palette. The Appearance palette enables you to see exactly what secrets your artwork is hiding. If that were all it did, it'd be worth its weight in gold. But it does so much more! Beyond just seeing what's been done to an illustration, you also find out how to change the attributes of the illustration. For example, you can alter applied effects or delete them altogether.

You also discover how to use the Appearance palette to target only the fill of an object (or just the stroke) when you apply Transparency or Effects settings. You also use the Appearance palette to perform casual miracles that were impossible in any previous version of Illustrator, such as assigning multiple fills and strokes to a single object.

To make matters even better, you find out how to save all the Appearance settings as a style. Styles are saved in the Styles palette. You can apply a style to any object. In addition to being a quick way to apply all these attributes to objects, styles can be updated in a way that also updates all objects with those styles applied.

The Effect Menu

The Effect menu contains more amazing things than you see on a government-sponsored tour of Area 51 (okay, bad analogy . . . but there s a lot of stuff there, really). Everything that you apply remains *live* that is, changeable until you tell it to stop changing. Effects change the way an object looks but not the object itself. Applying effects is like telling the object to put on a specific costume, or changing the appearance of the world when you look through rose-colored glasses. No permanent change to the underlying object takes place.

Technical Stuff

Instead of rewriting the code for an object (which is what you tell Illustrator to do when you move a point), effects tack on extra code, leaving the original code untouched. You can change or remove the extra code, without affecting the original. It s sort of like when you put on a nice outfit you re still the same person underneath, but you have snazzy duds on that make you look different.

Ah, yes, all things must change and sometimes you get to change them. Contemplate the concept of *infinite editability* for a moment. An object in Illustrator is saying, Turn me into anything. Although Illustrator always provided the capability of manipulating points, the current version is the first to make such extreme changes possible but not permanent. You can simply get rid of them at any time, without putting a scratch on your original artwork, without having to redo it, without having to resort to Edit Undo, and without having to growl at the dog. Now that s progress.

Applying live effects to objects

[Figure 11-1](#) shows the difference between applying the Roughen command (gives a distressed look) as a permanent change as opposed to a live effect. The biggest difference is that the path on the non-live (dead?) object shows the additional points generated by the permanent Roughen command, found under the Filter menu. The live Roughen command, found under the Effects menu, leaves the path untouched.

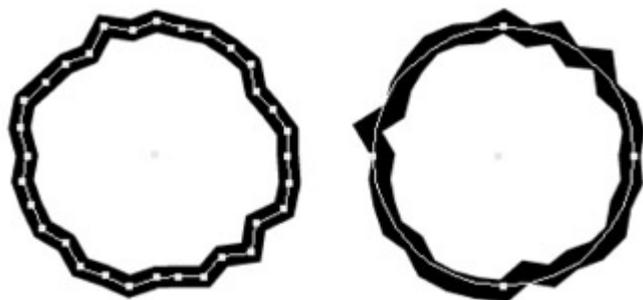


Figure 11-1: Filters versus effects: a path (left) roughened with the Roughen filter and the same path (right) roughened with the Roughen effect.

Warning

The trickiest part of the Effect menu is that many of its commands share names with commands found under the Filter menu. The dialog boxes are even identical! The results look the same, but the way the commands produce those results is different. Keep in mind that if you don't select the command from the Effect menu, you're probably permanently changing the artwork in some way. Pay attention to whether your paths change. If you see a difference, you can use Edit Undo and select the same command from the Effect menu. My recommendation is to avoid the Filter menu at all costs. You really don't need most of what's in there, and you're giving up editability by using it.

To apply an effect to a path, follow these steps:

1.

Select a path.

2.

Choose an effect from the Effect menu.

For example, you can choose Effect Distort & Transform Pucker & Bloat. A dialog box opens for that effect, and you can enter the specific settings.

Remember

You can always go back and change the settings if you don't like the result. (If only I could do that in real life.)

3.

Click OK to apply the effect to the path.

Warning

Some effects (many of these are in the second section of effects that starts with the Artistic effect) only work when the document is in RGB Document Color mode (see [Chapter 1](#)). If an effect is grayed-out (unavailable) after you select an object, your document is probably in CMYK (cyan, magenta, yellow, and black) mode. You can, however, work on artwork initially in RGB Document Color mode and change it to CMYK later.

Removing and changing effects

To change or remove effects, use the Appearance palette, as shown in [Figure 11-2](#). The Appearance palette is such an amazing palette that the majority of this chapter is devoted to it. For now, though, use the Appearance palette to remove and change effects.



Figure 11-2: The Gaussian Blur Effect in the Appearance palette.

Appearances aside (so to speak), removing an effect is as simple as following these steps:

1.

Select the object that has the effect that you want to remove.

2.

If the Appearance palette isn't visible (it is by default), choose Window Appearance.

In the Appearance palette, the selected object is listed as Object or Path. Beneath the object is a list that includes the stroke and fill of the object and all the effects applied to it.

3.

In the list, click the effect that you want to discard.

4.

Click the trashcan at the lower-right corner of the Appearance palette.

The effect disappears, and the object returns to its former appearance (before you applied the effect).

Tip

To change an effect, follow the preceding steps, except instead of clicking the trashcan, double-click the effect in the Appearance palette. The particular effect's dialog box opens, where you can enter new settings. Click OK to apply the effect with the new settings.

Warning

Do *not* go back to the Effect menu to change the settings of an effect that has been applied to an object, even if adding the effect is the last thing you've done. Instead of changing the settings on the existing effect, you actually apply *another* effect to the object on top of the existing one. While applying multiple effects to objects is often desired, it isn't if you're trying to edit the existing effect.

Find more details on the individual effects in [Bonus Chapter 1](#) online at www.dummies.com/go/illustratorcs_fd.

Rasterization effects

Not all effects can be generated from path-based artwork. That's where the Rasterization effects come in. These effects either change the original artwork into pixels or add new pixel-based images to achieve the desired effect. The effects in the second section of the Effect menu (from the Artistic effect down), as well as Drop Shadow, Feather, Inner Glow, Outer Glow, and Rasterize use pixels to achieve the change in appearance.

You control various attributes of these rasterization-based effects by choosing Effect > Document Raster Effects Settings. The Raster Effects Settings dialog box appears, as shown in [Figure 11-3](#).

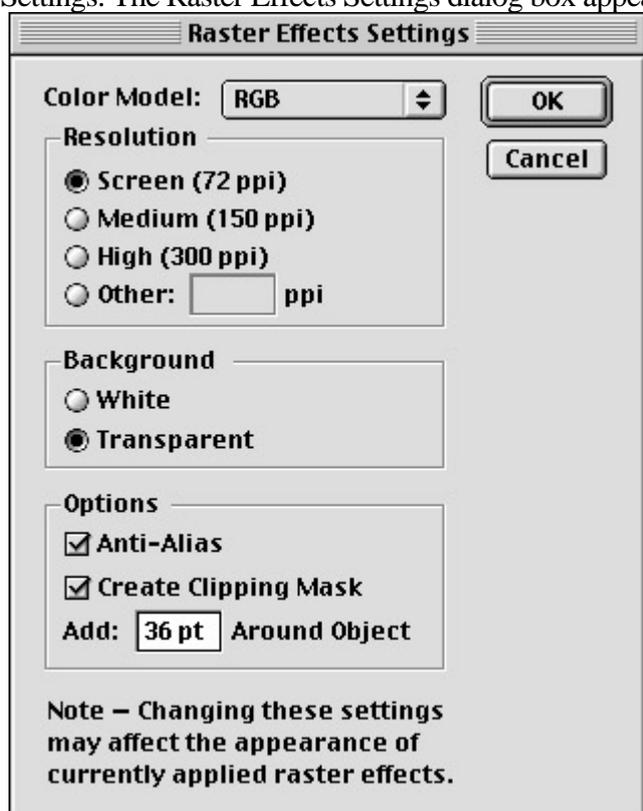


Figure 11-3: The Raster Effects Settings dialog box takes a bow.

In the Raster Effects Settings dialog box, you can set the following options:

-

Color Model: This setting determines the color model used by the resulting graphic. Try to use the color model of your target output as much as possible. If you're creating a graphic print in grayscale, choose Grayscale. If you're bound for the Web, choose RGB. Bitmap turns your art into harsh black and white tones, if you're into that sort of thing.

•

Resolution: This setting determines how much information the resulting image contains. Try to match this setting with the graphic's purpose. For the Web, select 72 ppi (pixels per inch). For most ink jet printers, 150 ppi is sufficient. For high-resolution printing, 300 ppi is a good, all-purpose size.

•

Background: Pixel-based images are always rectangular. If the graphic you're rasterizing is anything but rectangular, you have to add a background to make the graphic rectangular. The background can be white or transparent. White is fine for a stand-alone graphic, but if that graphic is in front of other objects, the white background obscures them. When that is the case, choose the Transparent setting.

•

Options: The Anti-Alias option adds a slight blurring wherever different colors meet. Believe it or not, this setting usually makes the resulting graphic look better. Results vary from graphic to graphic, of course, so try rasterizing with and without the Anti-Alias option selected. The Create Clipping Mask option matters only if you selected white for the Background setting. In Illustrator, a *clipping mask* is a special graphic that hides parts of other graphics. If you select the Create Clipping Mask option, a clipping mask is added to hide the white parts added to make the graphic rectangular.

•

Add: Typing a numeric value in this option box adds extra pixels around the graphic, just in case you need them. Hey, you never know! Nobody wants to run short of pixels, and this option actually helps prevent objects, such as drop shadows and other offset pixels, from getting clipped on the edges.

After you choose your settings, click OK and any existing (or future) effects that use pixels will use these settings.

The Appearance Palette

The Appearance palette, shown in [Figure 11-4](#), is where you go to see why your artwork looks the way it does. (Although, the palette can't explain why anybody would put neon-pink paisleys all over the place.) You can view the Appearance palette by choosing Window Appearance. When the Appearance palette wafts into view, it bears a vast treasure of option information. In its basic state, the palette displays Fill, Stroke, and Transparency settings. In its more complex state, the palette displays additional fills and strokes, and effects applied to those fills and strokes (as well as to the object itself).

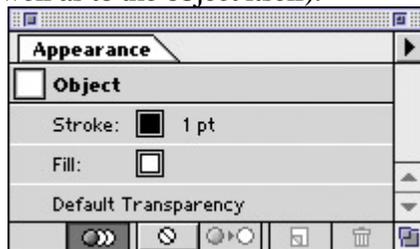


Figure 11-4: The Appearance palette.

Not to worry: This welter of information isn't nearly as confusing as your income tax form. Here's why: All along, in the course of creating your artwork, you've been putting all these information tidbits into the Appearance palette. You tell Illustrator to add info to this palette every time you set an option that changes the way your object looks (such as stroke, fill, and transparency).

Technical Stuff

The Appearance palette faithfully records all this information all the time, even if you don't look at it. (Good thing it doesn't record everything appearance related, like that big-bangs shag hairdo you were so proud of in 1976.)

Reading the Appearance palette

The Appearance palette, shown in [Figure 11-5](#), displays accumulated information about a particular object. What does it all mean? Is it important? Why oh why did Natalie ever leave the Maniacs? I'll answer the first questions, and leave the last one for a Behind the Music special.

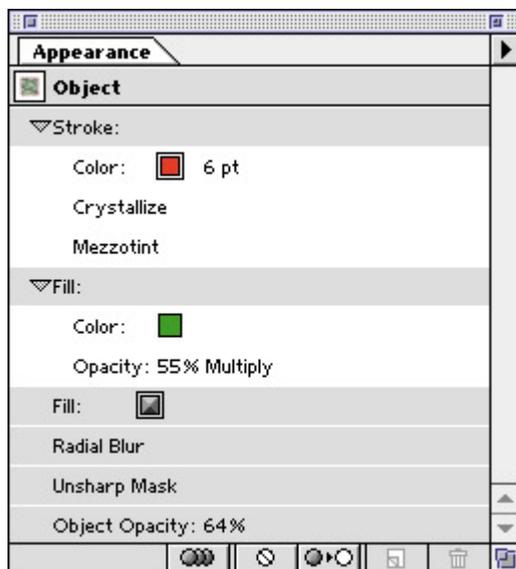


Figure 11-5: The Appearance palette displays an array of information about the object, such as the stroke and fill data shown here.

To make sense of all the Appearance palette's information, peruse the following list of its features:

- - Target:** This feature identifies the type of graphic that the information in the Appearance palette refers to. Typically this feature reads Object or Path, meaning the information in the palette refers to (or will be applied to) an appearance that is or will be applied to a single selected object. When you select a group or a layer, the target reads Group or Layer. If text is selected, the target reads Type. The target section is always at the top. A tiny thumbnail image emulates the appearance of the graphic.
- - Global effects:** These effects apply equally to, and affect all aspects of, the entire object. Whenever you apply Effects or Transparency settings (as I described earlier in this chapter) without using the Appearance palette, you apply the effects as global effects. Although they're usually the first attribute you apply, they always appear near the bottom of the list in the Appearance palette.

Tip

Another way to differentiate global effects from other effects is the way they line up with other items listed in the palette. Global effects appear in alignment with the Stroke and the Fill listings. Effects applied to a specific stroke are indented beneath the listing for that specific stroke. In [Figure 11-5](#), Radial Blur is the global effect.

- - Strokes:** Objects can have more than one stroke only when you add them through the Appearance palette (see the section, Adding fills and strokes, later in this chapter). Therefore, the first one (listed at the top) is typically the one also shown in the Toolbox. The target may have additional strokes listed here as well. Strokes can have effects applied to them specifically. In [Figure 11-5](#), you see a single stroke with a weight of 6 points. See [Chapter 5](#) for more information on strokes.

- **Stroke and Fill effects:** Effects can be applied directly to strokes and fills, instead of to the entire object, group, or layer. In this figure, the stroke has both a Crystallize and a Mezzotint effect applied to it.
- **Stroke and Fill transparency:** Each stroke and fill can have various Transparency settings applied to it. Here, the first fill has an Opacity setting of 55%.
- **Fill:** Each object (group or layer) can have multiple fills (as it can have multiple strokes). Each fill can also have any number of effects applied to it. This object has both a solid color fill and a pattern fill applied to it.
- **Transparency:** This feature is the transparency appearance for the entire object, group, or layer. In [Figure 11-5](#), the transparency is set to Object Opacity: 64%, meaning the entire object has been faded to 64%. If no special Transparency settings were applied, this would simply read Default Transparency. See [Chapter 10](#) for more information on the Transparency palette.

The top-to-bottom order of the fills and strokes in the Appearance palette reflect a front-to-back order in the graphic. Strokes and fills on top in the palette appear in front of the strokes and fills that are lower in the palette. Effects run from top to bottom in terms of which effect is applied to the graphic first.

Most of the items in the Appearance palette can be moved up and down through the list into different positions, and this change is reflected in the actual graphic. For instance, you can move the Feather effect applied to a stroke so that it is applied to a fill. You can also move the Feather effect so that it applies to the entire object. To move something in the Appearance palette, drag it up and down through the palette, just as you move things in the Layers palette.

If a fill or stroke has an effect applied to it, the little disclosure triangle automatically appears on the left and points down, listing the attributes of that fill or stroke. When you have a whole lot of different effects applied to a fill or stroke, the palette can get cumbersome. Clicking the disclosure triangle hides the list of effects. You can access the list at any time by clicking the disclosure triangle again.

Adding fills and strokes

[Chapter 5](#) explores fills and strokes in greater detail (and if you want to nip back there for more information, I can wait). When you apply a different stroke or fill to an object without using the Appearance palette, the fill or stroke replaces any existing fill or stroke. You don't have to settle for just one of each, though! By using the Appearance palette, as shown in [Figure 11-6](#), you can add as many fills and strokes as you want. This feature offers some interesting possibilities. For example, you can give a path three different colored strokes of different sizes, to create a striped path. Or you can apply a pattern fill over a solid-color fill.

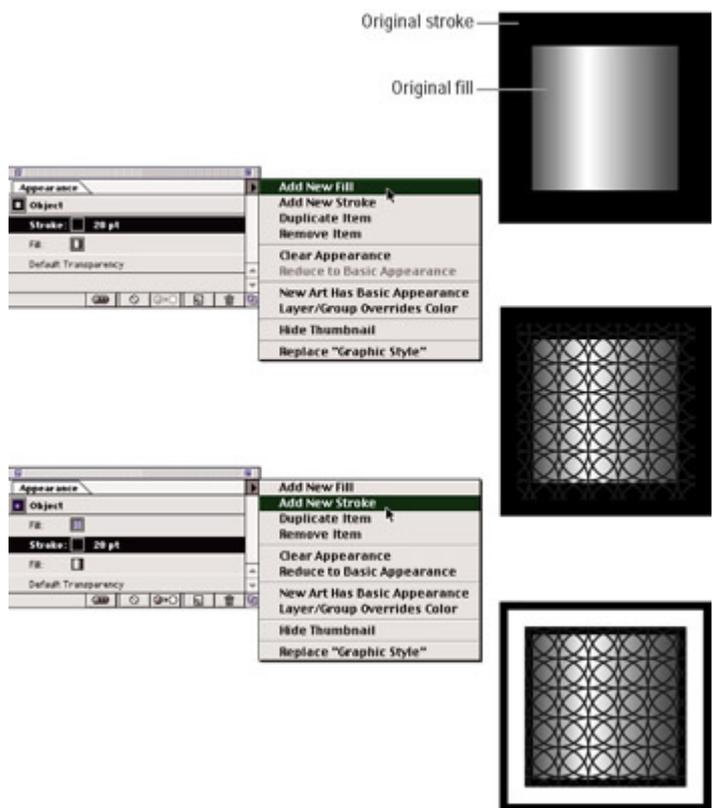


Figure 11-6: Adding fills and strokes to an object.

Just follow these steps to apply an additional fill and stroke to an object:

1.

Create an object with a fill color and a thick stroke.

In this example, I made a rectangle by clicking and dragging with the Rectangle tool. (See [Chapter 4](#) for more information on the rectangle tool.) I filled it with a gradient by clicking the Fill box in the Toolbox, and then by clicking a gradient swatch in the Swatches palette. I next added a 20-point black stroke to the square by clicking the Stroke box in the Toolbox, and then by clicking a black swatch in the Swatches palette, and finally by choosing 20 points from the Stroke palette. For more info on fills and strokes, see [Chapter 5](#).

2.

Choose the Add New Fill command from the Appearance palette pop-up menu.

Tip

Illustrator adds a fill, but you don't see any difference because the new fill is identical to the fill already there. The new fill is highlighted in the Appearance palette, however, and as soon as you select a new fill color from the Color palette or the Swatches palette, you see the new fill over the old one.

3.

With the new fill still highlighted in the Appearance palette, change the fill to a pattern fill from the Swatches palette.

For this example, change the fill to the pattern called Jaguar by clicking it in the Swatches palette.

If you don't know which pattern is the Jaguar pattern, pause your cursor for a moment above each swatch. Its name pops up.

4.

Choose the Add New Stroke command from the Appearance palette pop-up menu.

A stroke appears on top of the original stroke. As with the added fill color, the new stroke uses the same settings as the previous stroke, so you don't see an immediate difference.

5.

In the Color palette, change the color of the stroke to white and change its stroke width to 10 points.

After you add strokes and fills, you can move them around. Simply click them in the Appearance palette and drag up or down. As you drag, a black line appears in the palette, indicating where that fill or stroke will go after you release it.

Tip

Multiple fills and strokes work great with the Transparency palette. Each fill and stroke can have its own Transparency settings. This approach is a great way to blend fills and strokes together to achieve unique appearances. For example, if you apply a solid color fill over a pattern fill and then change the blend mode of the color fill to hue, you replace the color(s) in the pattern with the color of the solid color but still maintain all the detail of the pattern. See [Chapter 10](#) for more information on the Transparency palette and blend modes.

Changing the appearance of groups and layers

You can change the appearance of groups or layers as well as objects. Groups are collections of separate objects that have been grouped together (using the Object Group command) so that they act like a single object when you select them with the Selection tool (see [Chapter 3](#) for more information on the Group command). Similar to grouping, layers are a method of organizing multiple elements of your graphic into separate areas. [Chapter 13](#) discusses layers in depth.

To change the appearance, you need to *target* those groups or layers first. Targeting is a method of selecting a group or layer so that any changes made to the appearance affect all the objects in the group or layer. Changing the appearance of groups or layers creates a global appearance for all objects in the group or on the layer. Objects still maintain their individual appearance settings, but any group or layer changes are added to all the objects.

To change the appearance of a group by adding an effect, just follow these steps:

1.

Select a group by clicking it with the regular Selection tool.

2.

Add an effect to the group.

For this example, add a Gaussian Blur by choosing Effect Blur Gaussian Blur. In the Gaussian Blur dialog box that opens when you choose the effect, set the Radius to 5 and click OK.

All the objects in the group become blurred. Just like that. Wow.

On the other hand, targeting a layer to apply an effect is a little more unusual, as shown in [Figure 11-7](#).

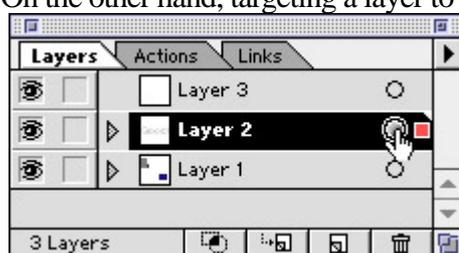


Figure 11-7: Targeting a layer to apply an effect.

Layers are a way to organize and arrange objects in your document. ([Chapter 13](#) talks about layers in depth.) Every time you add an object to a layer, the appearance of that object changes to match the settings of the layer. When that object goes to another layer, with different Layer Appearance settings, the object's appearance changes again.

To target and apply an effect to a layer, just follow these steps:

1.

Choose Window Layers.

The Layers palette opens (refer to [Figure 11-7](#)).

2.

In the Layers palette, click the Target Layer Appearance button beside the layer that has the appearance you want to change.

The Target Layer Appearance button is the circle to the right of the name of the layer in the Layers palette. Clicking this circle targets the layer, so your changes affect that layer.

3.

Add an effect to the layer.

For this example, choose Effect Stylize Feather. The Feather dialog box opens. Set the Feather Radius to 5 and click OK. All the objects in the layer are feathered. (Lay in a large supply of birdseed. Just kidding.)

Applying effects to strokes and fills

Normally, whenever you apply an effect, it's applied to the entire object. However, to keep matters interesting (or confusing), you can also apply any effect to either a stroke or a fill. Whichever one you change, the other remains unaffected, as shown in [Figure 11-8](#).

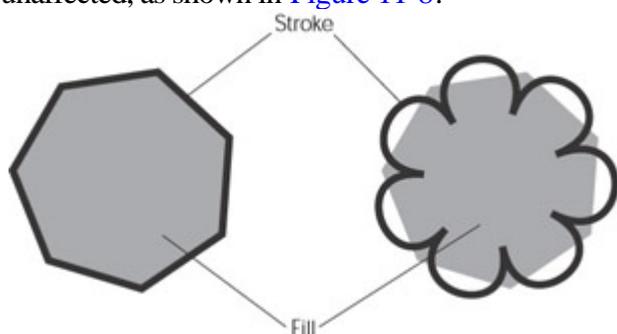


Figure 11-8: The Pucker & Bloat effect applied to the stroke, but not the fill.

To apply an effect to a stroke only or to a fill only, just follow these steps:

1.

Select an object by clicking it with the Selection tool.

2.

Choose Window Appearance to open the Appearance palette.

3.

In the Appearance palette, select the stroke or the fill to which you want to apply the effect.

For this example, select the stroke.

4.

Choose an effect from the Effect menu.

For this example, choose Effect Distort & Transform Pucker & Bloat. The Pucker & Bloat dialog box opens. Drag the slider towards Pucker (to the left) or towards Bloat (to the right). The effect applies to the path and takes an appropriate place in the Appearance palette.

When you look at your artwork, you see that only the stroke has been puckerred (or bloated, depending on what you chose). If you want to apply an effect just to a fill, follow the preceding steps, but select a fill instead of a stroke.

Going back to adjust settings

Any effect previously applied to an object, group, or layer can be modified. You can edit the effect by double-clicking it in the Appearance palette. After you do, the effect's dialog box appears, enabling you to edit the current values for that effect. If the effect dialog box has a Preview check box, place a check in it and watch your changes in real time!

Warning

Don't try to edit an effect you just applied by selecting that effect again in the Effect menu. Doing so applies the same effect a second time over the same path. Instead, double-click the effect in the Appearance palette.

Removing appearances

If you're tired of keeping up appearances (for example, you feel your artwork is too complex and want it to be cleaner and simpler, or you've added so many effects that printing or drawing on-screen takes too long), Illustrator gives you three ways to remove them (from on-screen artwork, that is). You can take an appearance apart (one attribute at a time), trash the whole appearance except the basics, or zap everything at once. Here's how you accomplish each of these tasks:

- **To get rid of a single effect, transparency setting, stroke, or fill:** Select what you want to remove in the Appearance palette and then click the little trashcan icon at the bottom right of the palette.
- **To get rid of all effects, extra fills and strokes, and transparencies:** Click the Reduce to Basic Appearance button (the button with two circles at the bottom center of the palette). This action strips away everything except one stroke and one fill color and resets the Default Transparency setting to a blend mode of normal and an Opacity setting of 100%. (See [Chapter 10](#) for more details on blend modes and Opacity settings.)
- **To clear everything away:** If you really want to clear the decks, leaving a path with no strokes or fills whatsoever, click the Clear Appearance button (the circle with a line through it at the bottom left of the palette).

Technical Stuff

Note that the Appearance palette always shows a Fill color, Stroke color, and Default Transparency setting for an object, even after you throw them away. Throwing away a fill or stroke automatically sets it to None; throwing away a transparency sets it to the Default Transparency setting, which is a blend mode of Normal and an Opacity setting of 100%.

Tip

If you're wondering what the last two buttons in the Appearance palette do, here's the skinny. The icon with the three overlapping circles enables you to specify whether appearance effects are applied to new objects. Click the button so that it becomes highlighted to apply just a single fill or stroke to new objects. You can also choose the New Art Has Basic Appearance option from the Appearance palette pop-up menu. Click the button so that it isn't highlighted to apply all the appearance effects to new objects. You can also deselect the New Art Has Basic Appearance option from the palette pop-up menu.

The dog-eared page icon is the Duplicate button. Select the appearance effect or attribute (stroke or fill) you want and click this button to create a duplicate.

Killing live effects until they're dead

Sometimes, you want to preserve the way an object looks, but get rid of all the things in the Appearance palette. One reason to do this is that all these multiple fills, strokes, and effects can take tremendous processing power when they are live. This situation can result in long print times, or long times redrawing whenever you make a change to your graphic. The drawback to live effects is that they are previews and need to be recalculated every time you make a change. You can kill these live effects so that they permanently change your graphic. You can no longer make individual adjustments to them or remove them, but all the calculations have been made and the graphic has been permanently changed. This results in a much simpler, if limited, graphic.

To permanently set all the live effects, choose Object Expand Appearance. The object expands, which is a completely counterintuitive way of saying the object gets simpler. All the settings made in the Appearance palette are really just previews. They haven't been applied to the graphic. Every time you make a change, that appearance needs to be completely recalculated. Expanding the object applies all those changes to it permanently, so the calculations don't have to be made again. The graphic is simpler, if less editable. [Figure 11-9](#) shows the difference between live and, um, dead objects.



Figure 11-9: A live effect (left) and after Expand Appearance is applied.

Figuring Out Styles

Styles are collections of colors, transparency settings, effects, and additional fills and strokes that can be applied to any path, group, or layer. Think of all that information in the Appearance palette. Saving it and applying it to different objects (without having to re-create all those settings) can significantly reduce the time and effort you spend. That's the advantage of using styles.

Another advantage is that any update in the style changes all the objects to which you apply that style. For instance, if you apply a style with a red fill and black stroke to a path, and later you update the style to an orange fill, the object you previously applied that style to changes to an orange fill and black stroke.

Applying styles to objects

Illustrator comes with a whole slew of premade styles that are stored in the Styles palette (see [Figure 11-10](#)), ready for you to use with just a click.



Figure 11-10: Applying a style to a path.

To apply a style to an object, follow these steps:

1.
Select an object.
2.
Open the Styles palette by choosing Window Styles.

The Styles palette appears.

3.
Click a thumbnail style in the Styles palette.

Doing so automatically applies all the settings to the selected object.

Creating and editing styles

You can create a style from any selected object in the document, as shown in [Figure 11-11](#). You can also create a style based on the current Appearance palette settings. (The Appearance palette contains the settings for the last object selected, even if that object isn't currently selected.)

1.

Select an object (or not, as the case may be).

If you don't select a path, the style you create adopts the current settings in the Appearance palette.

2.

Open the Styles palette by choosing Window Styles.

The Styles palette appears.

3.

Click the New Style button (the middle button at the bottom right of the Styles palette) or simply drag your object onto an empty space in the Styles palette.

A thumbnail representation of the new style appears in the Styles palette.

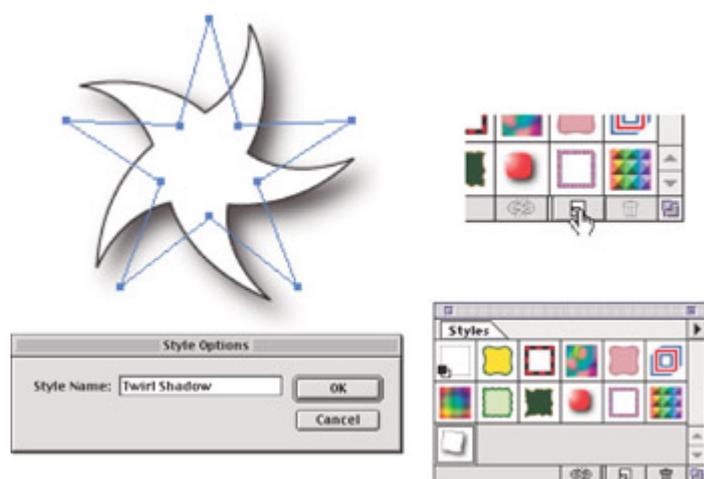


Figure 11-11: Creating a new style.

You have more than one method available to edit an existing style. Regardless of the method you use, Illustrator automatically updates all the objects that have that style applied to them to match the new style. The basic way to edit an existing style is to redefine it.

Tip

After you apply a style to an object, you can click the Break Link to Style button on the Styles palette to prevent Illustrator from updating the object to a new style if you redefine the existing one.

To redefine an existing style, as shown in [Figure 11-12](#), just follow these steps:

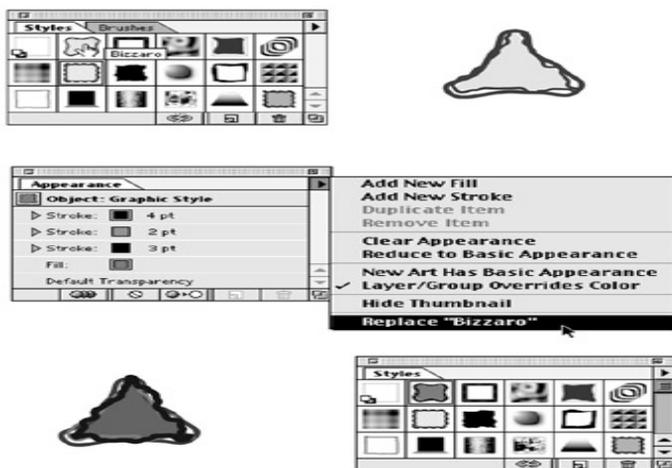


Figure 11-12: Redefining an existing style.

1.

Create a basic shape and apply a style to it.

In this instance, I created a triangle by using the Basic Shapes tool. Then I chose Window Styles and applied the style *Bermuda* to the triangle by clicking that style in the Styles palette.

2.

Edit the selected object as you normally would to create the new appearance that you want.

Change the fill and stroke, and/or add effects. In this case, I chose a darker fill color and added two strokes of different colors to the triangle by using the Add New Stroke command in the Appearance palette pop-up menu (which I describe in the *Adding fills and strokes* section of this chapter).

3.

After you're satisfied with the changes, open the Appearance palette by choosing Window Appearance. With the altered object still selected, choose *Redefine Style Style Name* from the Appearance palette pop-up menu, accessed by clicking the triangle in the upper-right corner of the Appearance palette.

You're replacing a style, but you have to do it through the Appearance palette. Go figure! Because the name of the style I edited in this example was *Bermuda*, the menu reads *Redefine Style Bermuda*. The menu changes to whatever name the style has been given.

Illustrator updates the style in the Styles palette with the changes and updates any object in the document that has that same style applied to it.

Another way to edit an existing style is to replace it with another set of Appearance settings. Set the fill, stroke, and effects for an object to make it look the way you want. Then hold down the Alt key (Option on a Mac) and drag the object over the thumbnail of the style that you want to replace in the Styles palette. It may look as if you're dragging that entire object into the Styles palette, but you're just dragging its fill, stroke, and effects settings (in other words, its appearance). To let you know that the object is in the proper position to replace the existing style, a black border appears around the style. Release the mouse to update the style to the Appearance settings of the selected object. Illustrator also updates all objects that share the style.

Spotting the difference between graphic and text styles

The Illustrator graphic styles are different from its text styles (text styles are discussed in [Chapter 14](#)). *Graphic styles* specify graphic attributes, such as fill color, stroke color, transparency, additional strokes and fills, and any applied effects. *Text styles* (Illustrator has two types: Character and Paragraph) specify text attributes, such as font, size, leading, alignment, and other Character palette and Paragraph palette settings.

The Illustrator graphic styles don't allow you to save text attributes, such as font and alignment, with them. However, you can apply graphic styles to text and text objects; the graphic styles just don't apply any text-specific attributes.

Applying graphic styles to text

Illustrator looks at text as a picture of letters and numbers—not as letters and numbers—and then applies a graphic style to that picture, as shown in [Figure 11-13](#).

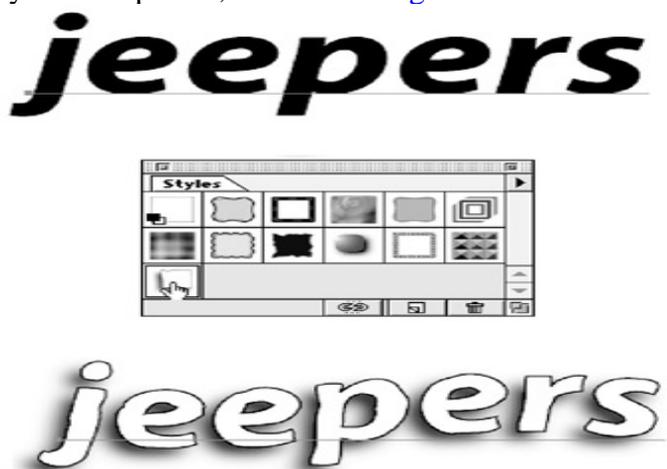


Figure 11-13: Applying a graphic style to text.

To apply a graphic style to text, just follow these steps:

- 1.
2. **Select text by using the Selection tool.**
3. **Display the Styles palette by choosing Window Styles.**
4. **Click a thumbnail in the Styles palette to apply that style to the text.**

Illustrator applies the graphic style you select to the text object.

You can quickly apply a style to text or other objects by selecting the style you want and then clicking with the Paint Bucket (which is located in the same slot as the Eyedropper tool) on anything you want to change to that style. (It's so much easier than dragging a real paint bucket. And you don't have to worry about the carpet. Is Illustrator great, or what?)

Team LiB

◀ PREVIOUS

NEXT ▶

Part III: Taking Your Paths to Obedience School

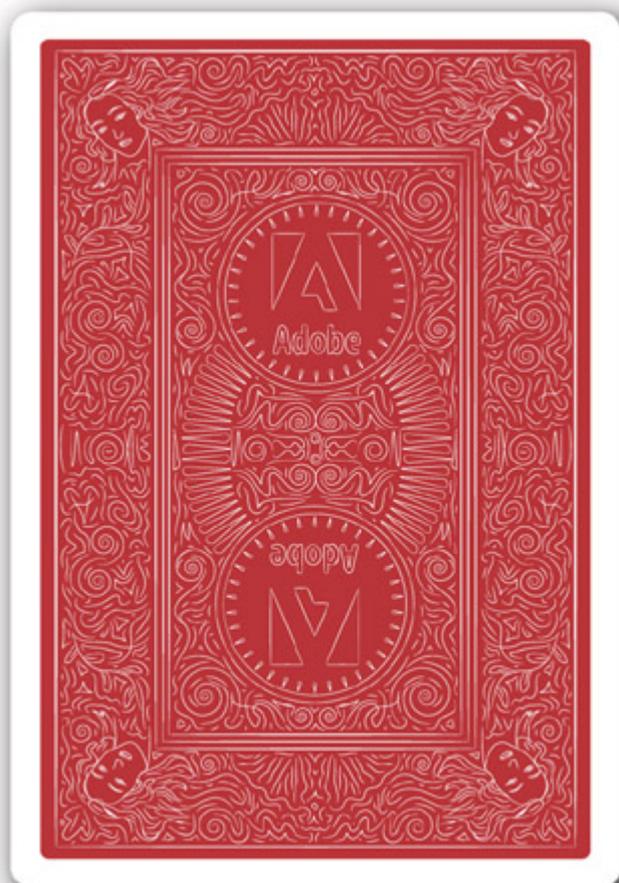
Chapter List

[Chapter 12](#): Pushing, Pulling, Poking, and Prodding [Chapter 13](#): Organizing Efficiently

In this part . . .

Half the battle in Illustrator is creating stuff. The other half is modifying and organizing the stuff you create. This part focuses on manipulating your creations into exactly what you want them to be. You start by selecting and moving pieces of artwork and the individual parts that make up the artwork. Then you can rotate, scale, skew, or mash your art around in a variety of ways. For a really exciting time (adventures in unbridled mutation), you transform one piece of artwork into another by using the Blend tool. Finally, Illustrator reveals a secret of the ages: Organizing is a fun and exciting activity (instead of a tedious chore that devours time like a slo-mo shark) when you use delightful innovations, such as layers, the Align palette, grid tools, and guides.

Color Plate 1



This artwork is created in Illustrator by using the Transform effect set to copy certain sections of artwork and reflect them at the same time. In this way, an object in a corner is modified, and the art in the other three corners changes in real time. The artwork was created for several decks of cards given out as gifts to the Illustrator team at Adobe.

Color Plate 2

3 GUESSES

- 25 TV Show
- 10 1970's
- 5 Saturday Night
- 3 After The Love Boat
- 2 "Da Plane! Da Plane!"
- 1 Mr. Rourke and Tattoo
- 0 Starts with an "F"

Fantasy Island

3 GUESSES 14th Century Historical Event

- 10 Western Europe
- 5 Disease
- 3 Millions of deaths
- 2 A form of Bubonic Plague
- 1 The "Something" Death

Black Death

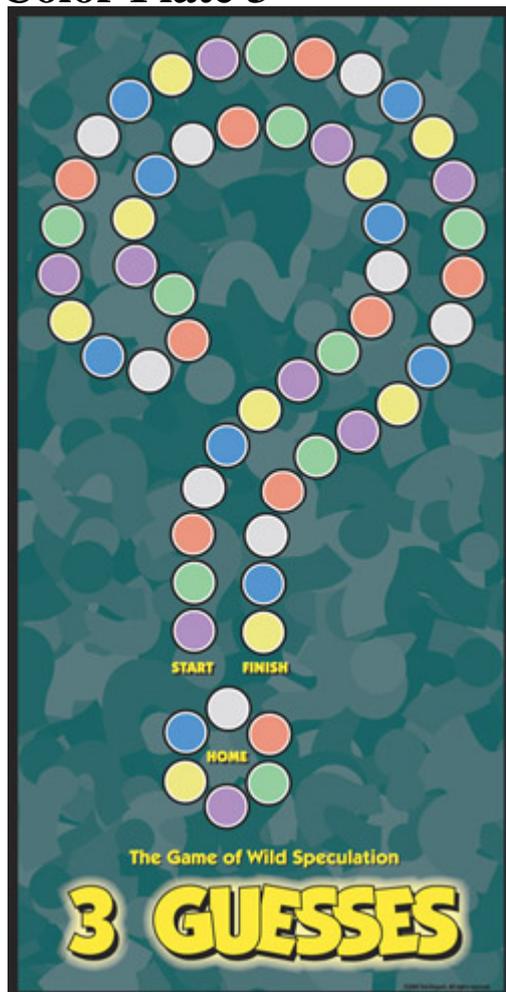
3 GUESSES 14th Century Historical Event

- 5 Western Europe
- 4 Disease
- 3 Millions of deaths
- 2 A form of Bubonic Plague
- 1 The "Something" Death

Black Death

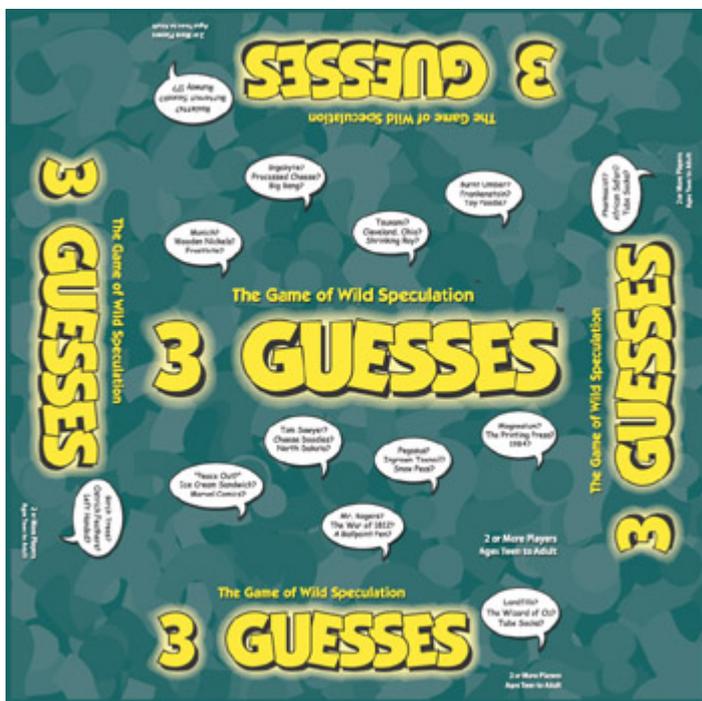
The evolution of game card design. While the actual design went through several iterations, these images capture the major shifts in both design and game play. A variety of fairly complex techniques are used, including the Convert to Shape effect for the circles/squares behind the numbers.

Color Plate 3



The background is made up of question marks turned into symbols and sprayed in a dense pattern, while the colored circular spaces are individual styles (one style per color). The colors can be changed quickly without affecting the number of each color (which is important to game play).

Color Plate 4



Packaging for boxes is often designed in this way: A flat version is printed and then glued onto the actual box. In other cases, the box artwork is printed directly on the packaging material.

Color Plate 5



This pencil is created out of a few very basic mesh objects. The pencils at the bottom are slight variations of the original pencil.

Color Plate 6



This eye-catching image is created by scanning a close-up cat photo and then posterizing the image in Photoshop. In Illustrator, the Pencil tool is set to a loose setting, and shapes are drawn around the posterized areas. The colors are changed to pastels, and the result is rather stunning.

Color Plate 7



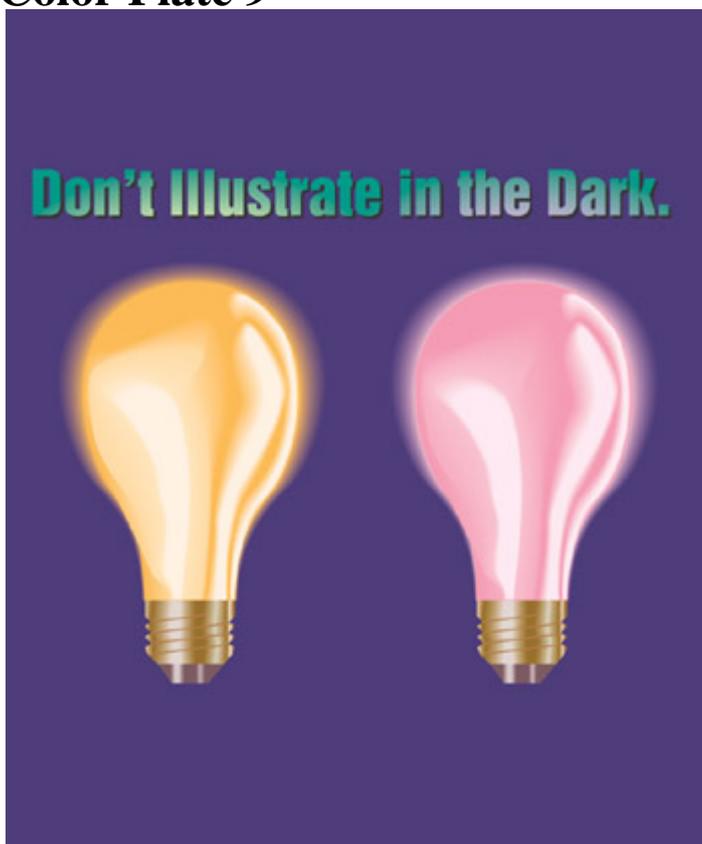
This logo has one aspect that is incredibly difficult to figure out for most Illustrator users: How does the ring go around the planet? You can't create it with 3D, and you can't create it normally. The trick is to cheat: Create two gradient rings, putting one in front of the planet and one behind. The one in front is masked in half, and the result is a ring that appears to go around the planet!

Color Plate 8



The notable characteristic of this license plate is the sense of depth you get from it. By using subtle beveling (copies of objects offset slightly and darkened and/or lightened), the image gains a tremendous amount of depth and realism.

Color Plate 9



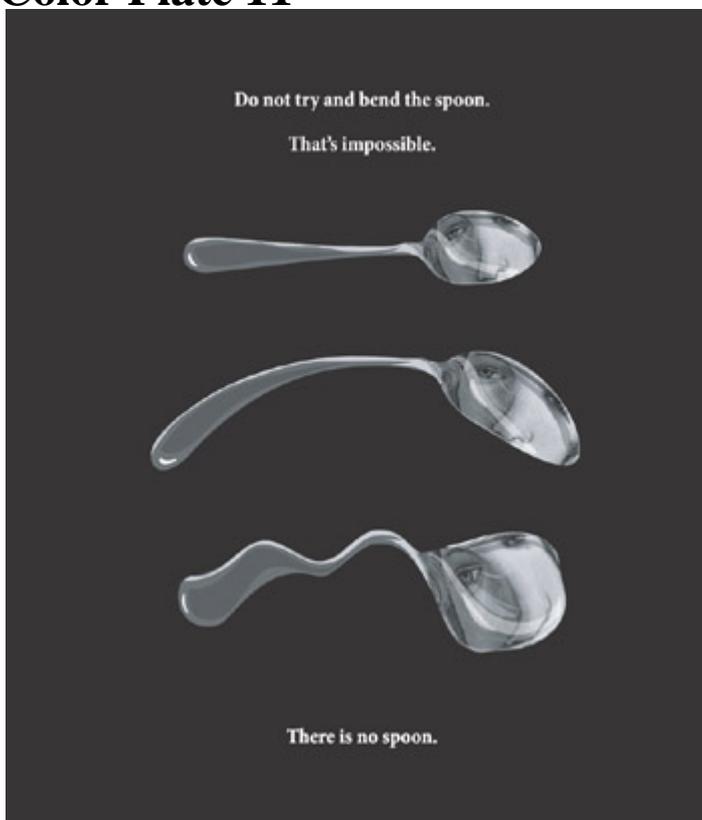
The light on the text is created by using the text as a mask on a glowing background. The detail in the light bulbs is created by using shape blends.

Color Plate 10



These clouds are created entirely with a single mesh object. Each point on the object is pulled, pushed, and colorized to achieve the final effect.

Color Plate 11



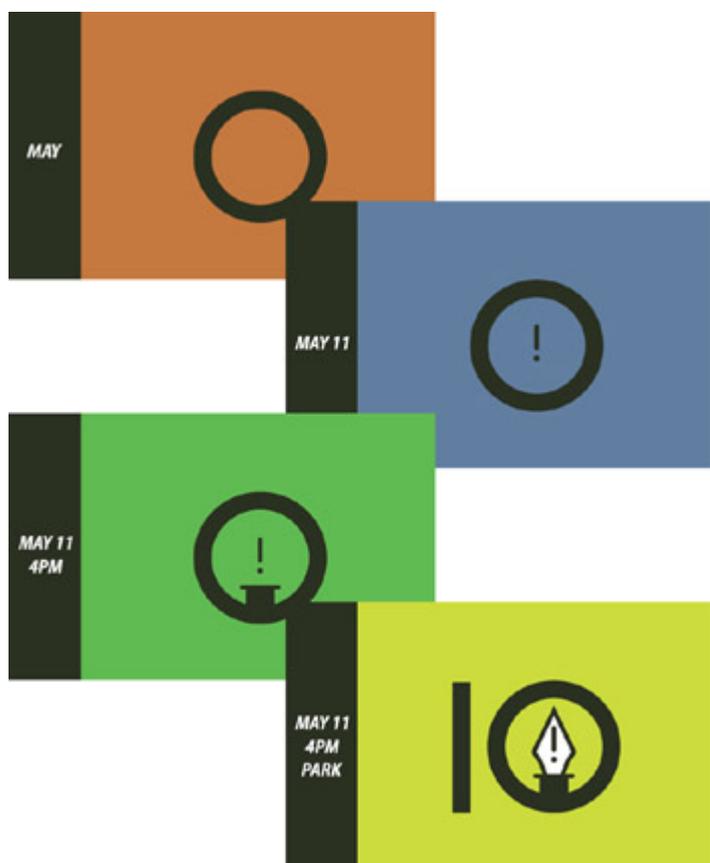
The first spoon is made of basic vector shapes with a masked image of Botticelli's Venus. The next two spoons are the same object with an Arc warp applied and the Warp Liquify tool applied, respectively.

Color Plate 12



This poster is done in two up mode for a large format (36 wide) printer. In order to give a finished look to a simplistic illustration, drop shadows are liberally used on the symbols and the names.

Color Plate 13



These posters displayed over the course of four weeks, starting at the upper left and working down to the lower right. They unveiled Illustrator 10 to Adobe employees.

Color Plate 14



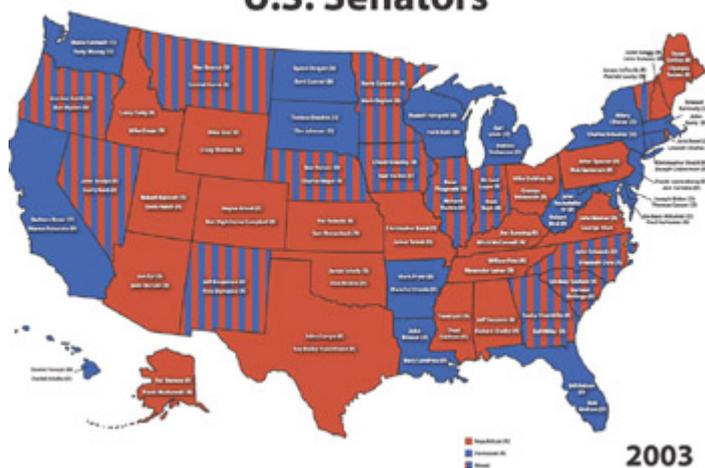
The background for this image is created by roughening strips of color in several rows and then placing them on top of each other at different angles with different transparency blend mode settings. A drop shadow used on the white text area makes the type pop more.

Color Plate 15



The base and shade of the lamp are created with the Illustrator 3D feature, but each is created separately in order to get the surface qualities right.

Color Plate 16 U.S. Senators



Illustrator is often used for graphical representation of data, such as this map showing the senators from each state and a colored representation of each state's senatorial alignment.

Chapter 12: Pushing, Pulling, Poking, and Prodding

Overview

In This Chapter

- Understanding how transformations work
- Using the Scale, Rotate, Reflect, and Shear tools
- Moving and shaking (even stirring) objects and portions of objects
- Blending paths until they're confused and happy

Art that you create in Illustrator can be modified in a number of ways. Perhaps the most powerful of these ways are transformations and distortions. These enable you to bend, move, and manipulate paths and other Illustrator objects like silly putty, shaping them to your every whim. (Power mongers, rejoice!)

In this chapter, you find out how to use the many Illustrator transformation tools to alter the shape of your artwork in any way you desire. In [Bonus Chapter 1](#), you dive into distortions. Go to www.dummies.com/go/illustratorcs_fd to find the bonus content.

Understanding the Five Transformation Sisters

You can do five fundamental things to paths: move, scale, rotate, reflect, and shear. Each of these transformations has both a tool and a dialog box associated with it. Move actually has three tools, if you count all the arrow tools (each of which are used to move selections).

The key to using all these tools (and their control-freak dialog boxes) is to select what you want to change first and then to apply the transformation. Use the Selection tool when you want to transform an entire object (shift-click with the Selection tool to transform multiple objects simultaneously) or use the Direct Selection tool to transform just a few points at a time.

Move

Illustrator enables you to move objects simply by clicking and dragging them with any of the selection arrows. [Figure 12-1](#), for example, shows an elaborate object moved from one spot to another.

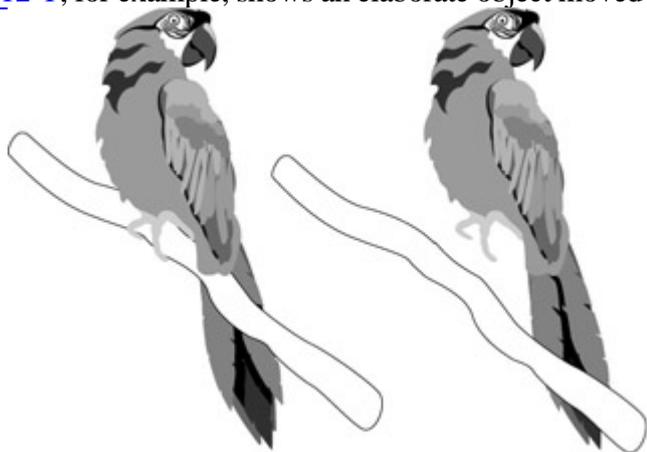


Figure 12-1: The original illustration (left) is modified (right) by using the Selection tool to move the bird. (Suddenly the parrot seems to defy gravity.)

Sometimes, you need to move a selection a specific amount. Suppose you draw a flower (or a weed, if your drawing skills aren't quite up to par yet), and you want to move this flower exactly one inch to the right.

To specify how much you want to move your object, follow these steps:

- 1.

Select your artwork and choose Object Transform Move.

The Move dialog box appears (see [Figure 12-2](#)).

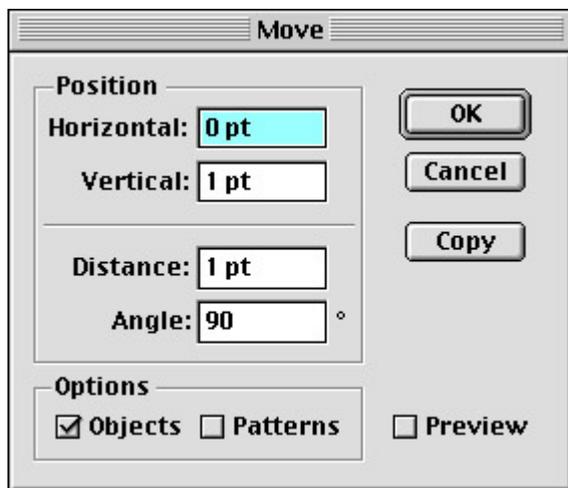


Figure 12-2: The Move dialog box.

You can also double-click any of the three arrow tools to access the Move dialog box.

2.

In the Distance field, type how far you want the object to move; in this case, type 1 in.

3.

Type 0 in the Angle field.

Setting the Angle field at 0 ensures that the object moves directly to the right without shifting up or down. Leave the other fields at their default settings.

4.

Click OK to exit the Move dialog box.

Tip

Okay, so you may wonder how Illustrator knows to move the flower just an inch to the *right*, instead of to the left. Well, Illustrator knows because the number you entered in the text field is a positive number. If you enter a negative number, the object moves to the left. In fact, the only way to move something to the left in the Move dialog box is to enter a negative number in the Horizontal text field. If you do that, the Angle field automatically changes to 180 degrees, which is to the left (0 degrees is to the right).

Remember

Tell Illustrator the appropriate measurement unit with these symbols: **in** for inches, **p** for picas, **pt** for points, **cm** for centimeters, **mm** for millimeters, or **px** for pixels.

Scale

To make something bigger or smaller in Illustrator, you *scale* it. Illustrator has a Scale tool, a Scale dialog box, and a Scale function as part of the bounding box that surrounds an object after you select it with the Selection tool. Not only can you make an object bigger or smaller, but you can also squish an item to change its size. For instance, you can make an item twice as high but the same width as it was originally. [Figure 12-3](#) shows what happens when you



scale an object.

Figure 12-3: The original artwork (left) scaled smaller (center) and larger (right).

Tip

The easiest way to scale art is not to use the Scale tool but to use the bounding box that appears around objects after you select them with the Selection tool. The bounding box enables you to scale and rotate artwork. To scale artwork, click and drag the handles (big, black squares) around the outside of the artwork.

If you hold down the Shift key as you drag the bounding box handles, you constrain the sizing of the bounding box (and the artwork) so that the width and height are scaled proportionately. This is typically a good thing—it prevents your artwork from getting really, really fat or really, really skinny as you scale it.

Tip

Holding down the Shift key as you use any of a variety of tools keeps the object constrained. For instance, with the Rotate tool, holding down the Shift key constrains rotation to 45° increments (a nice angle sideways, another nice angle upside down, another nice angle sideways the other way, and finally one more lovely angle straight up).

The bounding box is nice and all, but you don't find Illustrator Knights of the Galaxy using it because they like doing things the hard way (you know, greater evidence of artistic prowess, more prestige). The Scale tool is definitely more difficult to use than the bounding box for resizing artwork, but the Scale tool also has all sorts of capabilities that the bounding box doesn't have, such as scaling from a specific origin, using specific values, and copying as you scale. Locate these buried treasures by double-clicking the Scale tool in the Toolbox.

As a certain short, green, levitating philosopher once said, Try not. Do. Or do not. . . . Well, okay, you can just try the technique, as shown in [Figure 12-4](#), if you want to. The galaxy isn't at stake here.

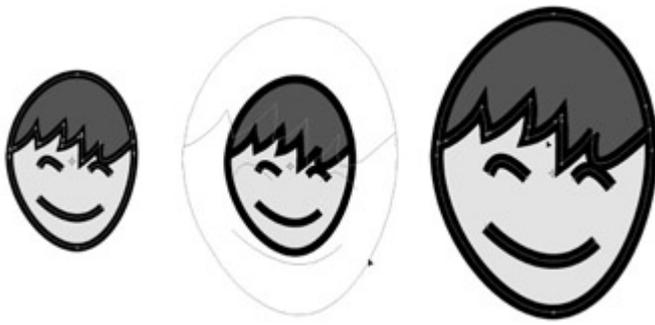


Figure 12-4: Original artwork selected (left); the hairline preview that appears when you drag with the Scale tool (center); the final scaled artwork (right).

To scale your artwork by using the Scale tool, just follow these steps:

1.

Select your artwork using the regular Selection tool.

2.

Choose the Scale tool.

The Scale tool icon is supposed to look like a small box being resized into a bigger box. Really. (Call it artistic license.)

3.

Click at the corner of the artwork and drag.

By default, the Scale tool scales from the center of the selection. When you drag, a hairline preview of your artwork appears, indicating the size and shape that your graphic will be after you release the mouse.

Drag away from the graphic to enlarge it; drag toward the center of the graphic to shrink it.

4.

Release the mouse button when the art is the size you want.

The artwork scales to that size.

Tip

All you accuracy addicts out there (you know who you are) can double-click the Scale tool in the Toolbox to indulge your habit: The Scale dialog box appears and offers a nice blank space in which you can type an exact scale percentage. (Some folks just have a hankering to know what an object looks like at 183 percent or 0.5597 percent of its current size.) You can also access this dialog box by choosing Object Transform and choosing your desired transformation.

But wait, there's more! You also have an option for choosing a Uniform or Non-Uniform scale change. Well, no, choosing Uniform won't dress up the object in khakis. Instead, the object acts as if you pressed some super Shift key and ends up looking like a bigger or smaller version of the original, identically proportioned (nary a squish anywhere). A Non-Uniform scale change enables you to enter separate scale percentages for horizontal or vertical measurements. In addition to scaling objects themselves, you can also scale patterns and/or strokes and effects, if your object(s) contains any of these attributes. See [Chapter 5](#) for more on patterns and strokes and [Chapter 11](#) for more on effects.

Tip

Not content with scaling from the center? The two-click method of using the Scale tool may soothe your yearning for alternatives. It enables you to move the origin point around the screen before scaling. The *origin point* is a place tacked to the Artboard around which the rest of the artwork scales. Normally, the origin point is in the middle of the selection, but you can put the origin point anywhere, even outside the selection! Just select the Scale tool from the Toolbox and click once before you do the click-and-drag routine to scale the object. Illustrator resets the origin point to the location where you single-clicked.

Tip

If you drag back across the origin point (or the middle if you didn't set one) while using the Scale tool, you may well flip the artwork over. That's a little disconcerting, but as long as you don't release the mouse button, you can always drag back and fix it. If you do release the mouse button, you can undo (choose Edit Undo).

Rotate

Spinning your artwork around in circles is a good way to whittle away an afternoon. Sometimes, I just sit, click, and spin, watching the artwork rotate on-screen. It's mesmerizing. Then again, I don't really get out all that much.

You can use the funky corner arrows in the bounding box (which shows up when you have something selected with the regular Selection tool) or by using the Rotate tool. The Rotate tool (like the Scale tool) enables you to set the origin point, which is the location the artwork rotates around. Double-clicking the Rotate tool also enables you to set a specific angle of rotation. [Figure 12-5](#) shows artwork before and after it's rotated with the Rotate tool.



Figure 12-5: The original artwork (left) and after it's rotated (right).

Reflect

Using the Reflect command, you can flip a selection over any axis, making a mirror image. [Figure 12-6](#) shows original

artwork before and after it's flipped over a 90° axis.

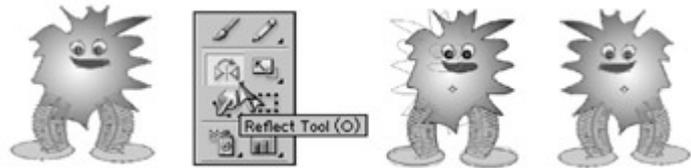


Figure 12-6: Reflecting the artwork by using the Reflect tool.

To use the Reflect tool to create a mirror image, just follow these steps:

1.

Select the artwork to be reflected.

2.

Choose the Reflect tool from the Toolbox.

3.

Press and hold the Shift key. (Release it after you release the mouse button in Step 5.)

The Shift key constrains the reflection to a 45° angle, which makes a horizontal reflection easier to accomplish. (Who knew it took so much work to be a beam of light? Other than Einstein. . . .)

4.

Click the far-right edge of the selected artwork and drag to the left.

5.

Release the mouse button (and then the Shift key) after the artwork flips over.

But that's not all! If you act now and double-click the Reflect tool, you get the Reflect dialog box (shown in [Figure 12-7](#)) absolutely free! Here are its exciting capabilities:

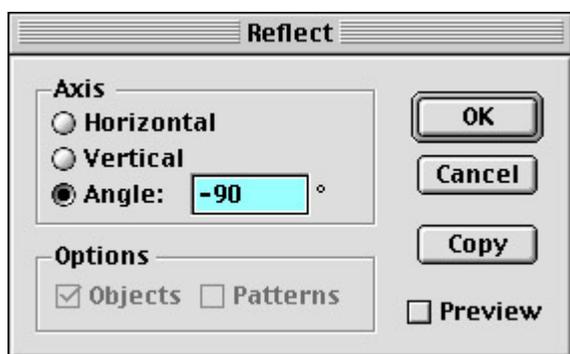


Figure 12-7: The Reflect dialog box.

-

Horizontal: Select this radio button to flip the image upside down while you reflect it.

-

Vertical: Select this radio button to flip the image over while you reflect it.

-

Angle: Select this radio button to rotate the image to a specified, um, angle while you reflect the image.

Shear

Most programs call this *skew*, but Illustrator takes the high road and uses a lofty aviation term. It's commonly used for creating cast shadows (the kind that fall away from an object, like your own shadow does on a sidewalk on a sunny afternoon, also known as perspective shadows) or cast reflection (like a still lake reflecting autumn trees).

The Shear tool can be tricky to use because it can quickly zip out of control and turn your artwork from a mild-mannered logo into something resembling Timothy Lear's nightmares. When you click and drag with the Shear tool, everything on the side of the origin point moves to where you drag it while everything on the other side of the origin point moves an equal distance in the opposite direction. The artwork in between distorts accordingly, and you get a slanted version of your artwork. If you drag too far or in the wrong direction, it's back to the land of funky spastic visions of inkblots.

Tip

To make the Shear tool easier to use, always use the two-click method. Before you drag with the Shear tool, click at the edge of the selected artwork to set the origin point. When you do this, you only have to pay attention to your artwork shearing in one direction. The overall effects are the same, but you don't have to worry about the artwork shearing in both directions.

To use the Shear tool:

1.

Select the artwork to be sheared.

2.

Choose the Shear tool from the Toolbox.

The Shear tool hides behind the Scale tool in the Toolbox. Click and hold on the Scale tool, and the Shear tool pops out from behind it.

3.

Click once at the edge of the artwork to be sheared.

This sets the origin point, making the Shear tool easier to control.

4.

Drag with the Shear tool.

The artwork *shears*, or distorts, to look slanted, as shown in [Figure 12-8](#).



Figure 12-8: Original artwork (left) and after shearing (right). Yeah, that s attractive.

Additional Transformation Tidbits

All this transforming may seem like some pretty amazing stuff. What's really amazing is the bevy of little extras that Illustrator has thoughtfully provided to make transforming easier and faster. The following sections in this chapter show you how to use these extras. Here's a list of what you can do:

- - **Use the Transform palette:** This palette keeps all the transformations in one handy place, where you can apply them by typing in numerical values.
- - **Copy while you transform:** Rotate a copy of your artwork.
- - **Transform each piece of artwork separately:** The Transform Each dialog box enables you to apply transformations to individual objects, instead of to everything at once. This feature is useful, believe it or not.
- - **Repeat the last transformation:** Do it again . . . and again . . . all with a simple menu command (or keystroke).
- - **Transform a portion of a path:** That's right, you can select just a few points and move, scale, rotate, reflect, or shear them. (This capability is especially useful if you want to give that virtual caterpillar a Mohawk.)

The Transform palette

The Transform palette, shown in [Figure 12-9](#), is a one-stop shopping location for all your transformation needs. Access the palette by choosing Window > Transform. The palette's quite powerful, as long as you don't mind the math.

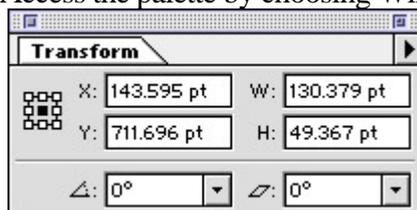


Figure 12-9: The Transform palette in all its glory.

By entering values in the Transform palette's fields, artwork can be moved, scaled, rotated, and sheared. The palette pop-up menu has options for reflecting (Flip Horizontal and Flip Vertical). This menu also contains options for scaling strokes and effects and transforming the object, the pattern, or both. The W and H (width and height) fields can take both *absolute measurements* (sizes specified in inches, centimeters, and so on) or *relative measurements* defined

by percentages. Just type the little extra bit after the number that specifies what kind of measurement the number represents **in** for inches, **cm** for centimeters, or **%** for a percentage.

Tip

If you hate to crunch numbers, rejoice! The Transform palette does the math for you! For instance, if you want an object to be one-third as wide as it currently is, just type **/3** after the current value in the text box for width, and the artwork will shrink to 1/3 of its original width.

Copying while transforming

All five of Illustrator's transformation functions enable you to copy objects as well as transform them. To accomplish this dazzler, Illustrator applies the transformation to a copy of the original selection, just as if you used cut-and-paste to copy the object, pasted it directly on top of the original, and applied the transformation. In Illustrator, you can do all that in one step.

When using the transformation tools, you can press the Alt key (Option on a Mac) to make a copy of your selection while transforming. Just press the Alt key (Option on a Mac) after you start dragging (not before) and hold it down until after you release the mouse button. Illustrator creates a duplicate of the selection.

Technical Stuff

Illustrator users do this sort of thing so often that they invented a couple of terms (*Alt-drag* for PCs, *Option-drag* for Macs), to mean *copy an object*. (Nine times out of ten, it means *move a copy*.)

[Figure 12-10](#) shows the way a sample of type looks after you transform it with the Shear tool while holding down the Alt key (Option on a Mac). The result is a cast shadow that appears in front of the original type (which Illustrator



treats as an object).

Figure 12-10: To get this cool cast shadow with the Shear tool, I copied the text object and filled with a gradient.

Tip

If you're using a dialog box to accomplish a transformation, click the Copy button instead of OK to create a *transformed duplicate* of the object. The original artwork stays untransformed.

Transform Each

The Transform Each dialog box (see [Figure 12-11](#)), accessed by choosing Object Transform Transform Each, does two things: First, it brings most of the transformations together into one dialog box. Second, it applies transformations to each of the selected objects separately, instead of all at once.



Figure 12-11: The Transform Each dialog box.

Oddly enough, this approach results in an effect that bears almost no resemblance to transforming everything at once. [Figure 12-12](#) shows the results of regular rotation versus the results of rotation using the Transform Each dialog box. (Just don't say I didn't warn you.)



Figure 12-12: Original artwork (left) after it's rotated with the Rotate tool (middle) and using the Transform Each dialog box (right).

Transform Again

After you transform something, you can repeat the transformation quickly by choosing Object Transform Transform Again; the keyboard shortcut is Ctrl+D (⌘+D on a Mac). This action simply repeats the previous transformation whether by tool or dialog box or palette and applies that transformation to the current selection. You can even deselect something, select something else, and apply the same transformation to the new selection.

The Transform Again command also works with copying selections, as shown in [Figure 12-13](#).

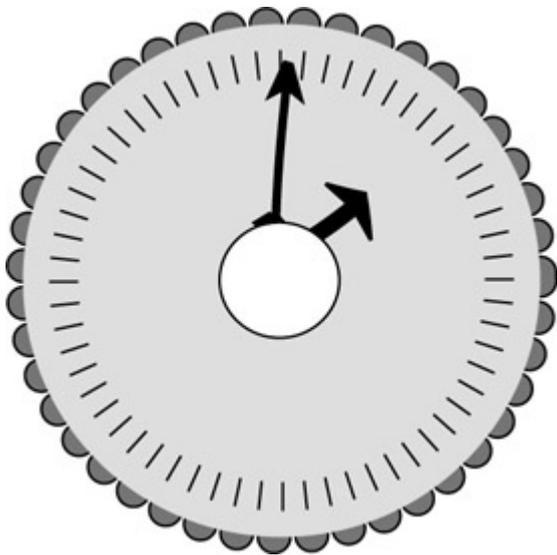


Figure 12-13: The tick marks on this clock were made with the Transform Again function by rotating a copy around the center in 6° increments.

Partial transformations

If you select just a section of a path, you can apply the five basic transformations to it, just as you do with an entire object. The result can be quite ordinary (as when you move a few points around) or rather unexpected (as when you scale, shear, or reflect just a few points), as shown in [Figure 12-14](#).



Figure 12-14: Moving and scaling a portion of a path.

The following steps select, move, and scale just a few points on a path (with some interesting results):

1.

Using the Direct Selection tool, click and drag over a portion of a path.

As you click and drag with the Direct Selection tool, a rectangular marquee appears. Only the points inside this marquee are selected.

2.

With the Direct Selection tool still selected, click a selected (solid) point and drag.

All the selected points move along with the one you click and drag. Be sure to click directly on a point that you've selected (indicated by a solid square); otherwise, you'll accidentally drop the selection and select something else.

3.

Release your mouse, choose the Scale tool, and then click the same point as Step 2 and drag.

Dragging toward the middle of the selected points brings them closer together. Dragging away moves them farther apart.

Tip

Don't click too near the middle of the points, or they get all cantankerous and hard to control.

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◀ PREVIOUS NEXT ▶

Blending: The Magic Transformation

This section covers what may well be the oddest feature in Illustrator. Illustrator can blend one path into another. For instance, you can blend the shape of a fish into a lowercase letter *f*. The result is a series of paths that slowly transform from one path into another. In addition to the shape changing from one path to another, the color (and style, if one exists) changes as well.

Technical Stuff

Sound familiar? No surprise. The results look a lot like the morphing effect you see in every werewolf-vampire-alien-shapeshifter movie made in the last ten years.

Only paths can be blended together. The paths can be open (lines, curves) or closed (shapes such as circles and squares). They can also contain either solid colors or gradients. You can select any number of paths (no more than three, though, for the best results) and blend them together, as shown in [Figure 12-15](#).

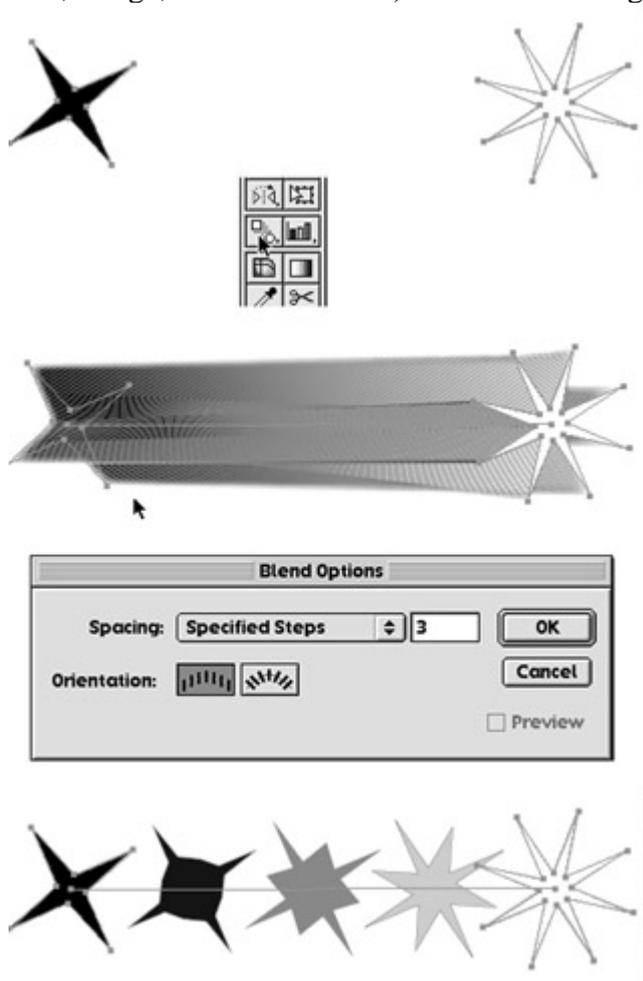


Figure 12-15: Creating a blend between two paths.

To create a blend that takes the artwork from one path to another, just follow these steps:

- 1.

Create two paths on opposite sides of the document.

2.

Choose the Blend tool from the Toolbox.

3.

Click one path, click the other path, and watch the blend appear.

The number of objects between the two original paths depends on how different the colors are.

4.

(Optional) To specify the number of steps between the paths, double-click the Blend tool.

5.

In the Blend Options dialog box that appears, select Specified Steps from the Spacing drop-down menu and enter the number of steps you want between the two paths. Click OK.

Illustrator creates the number of objects you specify between the two original paths.

Other options are available in the Blend Options dialog box besides the Specified Steps option. The Smooth Color option lets Illustrator automatically calculate the number of steps for the blend, which allows for a smooth transition of color and shapes. The Specified Distance option specifies the distance between steps in the blend based on the edge of one object to the edge of the next object. You can also specify the orientation of your blend either with the Align to Page orientation or the Align to Path orientation. The icons for each give you a visual of each orientation.

Tip

You can also edit your blends with selection tools, such as the Arrow or Lasso tools, or with the Rotate or Scale tools. If the blend still doesn't meet your expectations as you make your edits, you can undo a blend by choosing Object Blend Release.

Chapter 13: Organizing Efficiently

Overview

In This Chapter

- Arranging and stacking images
- Using the Layers palette
- Changing the stacking order of objects with the Layers palette
- Naming objects, groups, and layers
- Organizing artwork with groups
- Letting Smart Guides do the work for you
- Working with guides
- Aligning objects

A good way to think about how Illustrator objects relate to one another is to consider Illustrator objects like construction paper cutouts. You can arrange them any way you want, but in all likelihood, some will overlap. Each

piece of paper can then be tucked behind another piece or pulled out in front of another piece. Doing so results in totally different results, even though the paper cutouts never really change.

In this chapter, I focus primarily on stacking objects tucking them behind each other or bringing them forward to upstage each other and show you how to deal with stacking as easily as possible. In addition, a later section scrutinizes precision placement and aligning of objects.

Team LiB

◀ PREVIOUS

NEXT ▶

Stacking Illustrator Artwork

Illustrator automatically accomplishes front-to-back positioning for you in a straightforward, logical way. Each new object that you draw, place, or paste is positioned in front of the last object that you drew, placed, or pasted, resulting in a stack of artwork.

Unless you apply transparency (as I detail in [Chapter 10](#)), objects positioned in front of other objects tend to knock out the portions of the objects that they overlap. [Figure 13-1](#) shows Illustrator objects stacked in three different arrangements. The objects are in the same locations, but their stacking order is different. The result is completely different artwork in each example.

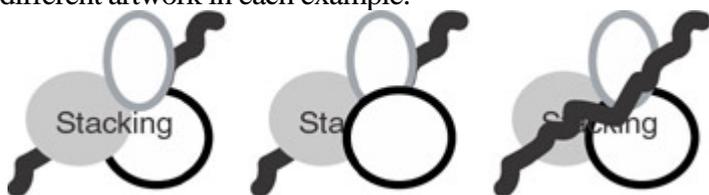


Figure 13-1: These arrangements of artwork are a result of changing the stacking order of the objects.

Stacking order

Illustrator treats on-screen objects as if they were playing cards stacked neatly on a table. (Think of yourself as standing next to the table and looking straight down on them. All the individual cards cannot be seen. You only see the topmost card.) *Stacking order* is the order of objects in the stack. The order of the objects in the stack is typically determined by when they are created or placed in the document, although you can change this order by using an Object Arrange command. Read more on the Arrange commands in the upcoming section, [Moving art up \(front\) or back \(down\) in the stacking order](#). The first object created sits at the bottom of the stack. In Illustrator, this is referred to as the *Back*. The next object created is in front of that object, and the most recent object created sits on top of all the others. The topmost position is considered to be the *Front*.

[Figure 13-2](#) shows a basic illustration and an imaginary side-edge view of that artwork as it would appear from the side.

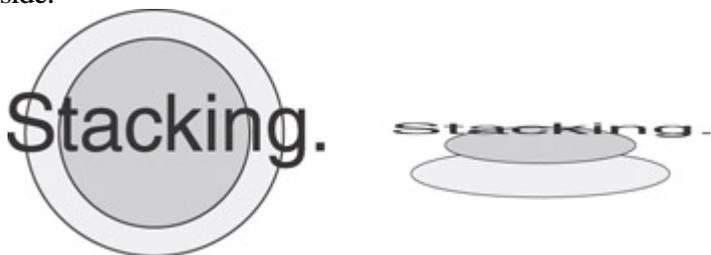


Figure 13-2: The illustration (left), shown from a sideways view (right).

Even when two objects appear visually side by side and do not overlap in any way, Illustrator still considers one object to be in front of the other—as if each object that you create in Illustrator were painted on a separate piece of transparent plastic. Often, the only time you can know the stacking order is when you move one object in front of another. That's the only time you need to know the stacking order because stacking order makes a difference only when objects overlap. When objects overlap improperly (like if a big yellow triangle hides the word *YIELD* that you really want in front of the triangle), you can use the Arrange commands to change stacking order.

Moving art up (front) or back (down) in the stacking order

Illustrator offers the following five commands to move objects up and down through the stacking order:

- **Object Arrange Bring to Front:** This command brings selected artwork to the top of the layer you're working on (more about layers in the [next section](#)) by putting that artwork in front of the other objects.
- **Object Arrange Send to Back:** This command moves selected artwork to the bottom of the layer you're working on by putting that artwork behind the other objects.
- **Object Arrange Bring Forward:** This command brings selected artwork forward (that is, upward in the stack) one step at a time.
- **Object Arrange Send Backward:** This command puts the selected artwork farther back (that is, downward in the stack) one step at a time.
- **Object Arrange Send to Current Layer:** This command moves the selected artwork from the layer it resides on to the layer selected in the Layers palette. For more on layers, see the section, [Using the Layers palette](#), coming up in this chapter.

Illustrator uses stacking order to keep track of all the objects on-screen, even when they don't overlap. The Bring Forward and Send Backward commands affect the stacking order, regardless. Whether you send an object backward or bring it forward, you may not see any difference if nothing's overlapping. Don't panic! The object really did move in the pecking order.

Managing the Mess

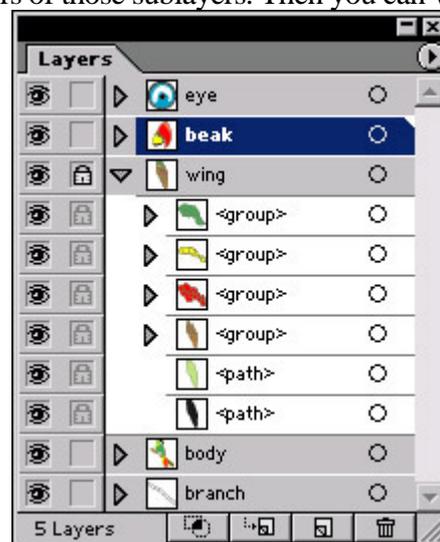
Although the commands for moving artwork may seem fairly flexible at first, that's only true if you keep the number of objects limited. After you start creating artwork with dozens (or even hundreds) of objects in it, the first four commands start showing their limitations and causing frustration. For instance, think of the hassle of putting an object in a precise order when you have a hundred different levels in the stack (Move it from level 94 to level 63? Sure, no problem. Right.), not to mention the challenge of selecting one object from among hundreds!

That situation is where the Layers palette comes in. Not only does it enable you to organize your artwork into layers, but it also gives you a much more flexible method of arranging your artwork within the stacking order. You can also do fiendish things to layers, such as hiding them so you can't see them, or locking them so you can see them but can't change them or duplicate them (along with their artwork) in a different document. This flexibility brings a great deal of sanity to working with complex illustrations.

Imagine that you're creating an image of a flock of birds in a maple tree. Your client wants to see the tree change according to the four seasons. She also wants to see the tree with and without the birds. You have one tree, fifty birds, and hundreds of leaves—and the whole image is set in spring. Oh, and the client is coming over to see the finished artwork in 15 minutes! Do you panic? No, you use layers! You separate the tree, birds, and leaves into separate layers. Then you can hide and reveal the bird layer to show the tree with and without the birds. Hide the layer with the leaves on it, and you have your maple tree in winter! To simulate seasons, duplicate the leaves layer twice. Then, again using the Layers palette, you can select all the leaves in one layer and change the fill colors to summer colors. Then go to the third leaf layer and change those colors to fall colors. By showing one layer while hiding the other two, you can create your fall, spring, and summer trees. There you have it! Eight pieces of artwork from one piece, in about as much time as it takes to describe it!

Using the Layers palette

The Layers palette, shown in [Figure 13-3](#), provides you with the means to do as much (or as little) organization as you want. You can split your artwork into layers, sublayers, and sublayers of those sublayers. Then you can view,



hide, select, rearrange, or delete any number of the layers and sublayers.

Figure 13-3: The Layers palette with multiple layers.

Thumbnails

The thumbnails on the Layers palette show what objects are on each layer. You can quickly select everything on that layer by clicking the Target circle. In addition, clicking the Target circle enables you to apply Transparency settings and effects to that layer, as I discuss in [Chapter 10](#).

Tip

Is the thumbnail too small to get an accurate view of the artwork? Select the Palette Options option from the Layers palette pop-up menu. The thumbnail size is determined by the row size. Choose from small, medium (the default size), or large; or choose the Other setting and type in any pixel size for your thumbnails.

I call it layer cake . . .

If you haven't opened the Layers palette before, you may be surprised to find that you've been working with layers all along. Whenever you create a new document, Illustrator automatically creates a layer to contain your artwork.

When you work with multiple layers, you may have to get accustomed to the Arrange commands, such as the Bring Forward and Send to Back commands. These commands work within layers but don't move objects from one layer to another. After you select an object and choose Object Arrange Bring to Front, Illustrator brings the object to the front of the layer that it currently occupies—but not all the way to the front of the document. So if another object is hanging around in a layer in front of the selected object and you use the Bring to Front command, the selected object may still be behind another object in the document. If this happens, you can use the Object Arrange Send to Current Layer command, or you can use Steps 3 and 4 in the following list to move artwork into another layer.

A good way to get a feel for the Layers palette is to break a piece of existing artwork into several layers, as shown in [Figure 13-4](#).

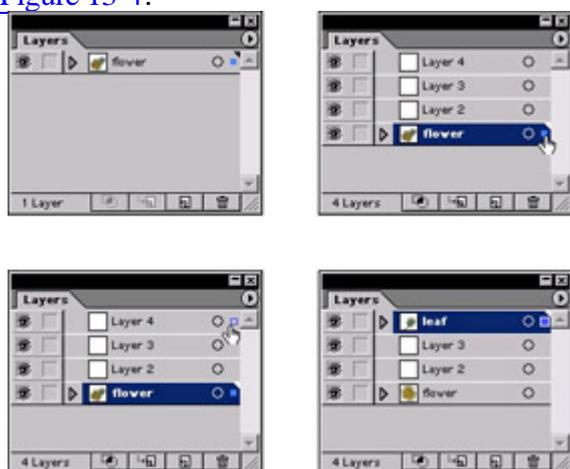


Figure 13-4: Placing existing artwork into multiple layers.

To separate your artwork into multiple layers, just follow these steps:

1.

Decide how you want to organize your artwork.

You may want to split it into similar elements such as type, pixel images, graphics, and a background.

2.

Create the additional layers you need for your artwork by clicking the Create New Layer button click once for each additional layer.

The Create New Layer button is the third button from the left at the bottom of the Layers palette; it looks like a sheet of paper with the bottom-left corner folded up to reveal a second sheet of paper underneath it. You can also choose the New Layer option from the Layers palette pop-up menu.

3.

With the Selection tool, select the graphic element in your artwork that you want to move to one of the other layers.

After you select the art, a little square appears to the right of the layer that currently contains the selected artwork.

4.

To move the art to another layer, click and drag the little square up or down in the Layers palette to the layer you want.

When you release the mouse button, the artwork has already changed layers. You may not see any apparent change in the artwork, but moving the artwork into a new layer changes the color of the selection highlights (the tiny, on-screen squares and lines that appear along the points and paths after you select something with any selection tool). The color changes to the selection highlight color for the new layer. It's a dead giveaway.

5.

Repeat the previous two steps until all your artwork is in the correct layers.

Changing the stacking order of layers

Layers, like individual objects, have a stacking order. This order is reflected in the Layers palette. The contents of layers at the bottom of the palette appear in back of the contents of layers at the top of the palette. To change the stacking order of a layer, click the name of the layer or its thumbnail and drag upwards or downwards in the Layers palette. As you drag, a black bar appears between layers to indicate where the layer will be moved to after you release the mouse. When this black bar is at the position you want the layer to occupy, release the mouse. The layer and all its contents move to that position.

Lock and Unlock, View and Hide

Well, no, I'm not suddenly writing rhythm-and-blues lyrics. You can lock layers by clicking the Lock/Unlock toggle button (the square just to the left of the thumbnail). Clicking it causes it to do the opposite of whatever it's currently

doing. If a layer is unlocked, for example, clicking the Lock/Unlock button locks the layer. If a layer is already locked, clicking the Lock/Unlock button unlocks the layer. So far, so good. But potential frustrations lurk.

When a layer is locked, you can see it, but you can't select it or alter it in any way. If you try to select anything in a locked layer, you select only the object behind it. After you get accustomed to this state of affairs, you find that layers are a great way to get things out of the way that you aren't working on and to preserve any artwork that you don't want accidentally changed.

Just to the left of the Lock/Unlock button is the View/Hide button (which looks like an eye). Why hide all that work? One word: safety. This button not only hides the artwork in the layer, but it also locks the artwork so you can't accidentally change it. The View/Hide button is also a great way to get things out of the way and to prevent accidents. It's also a great way to create multiple versions of artwork by showing and hiding different elements. (You know trees with several sets of leaves for different seasons, or football players with several uniforms, depending on their contracts. . . .)

Remember

Hidden artwork is always locked artwork. If it weren't locked, you could change that poor, hapless object without meaning to because you can't see hidden artwork. (Wow. Sometimes obvious stuff is so comforting.)

Copying layers (quickly and completely)

You can copy a layer along with all the artwork it contains by clicking the layer and dragging it on top of the Create New Layer button, which is just waiting around at the lower edge of the Layers palette, hoping that somebody will give it something to do. This technique is a great way to create multiple versions of artwork. You can duplicate one element many times, and then change the appearance for each layer. Show and hide the layers to compare and contrast the different versions.

Tip

To create a new sublayer (a layer within a layer), click the Create New Sublayer button at the bottom of the Layers palette, or select the New Sublayer option from the Layers palette pop-up menu.

Viewing objects and groups

After you click the little triangle to the left of a layer's name, you see an instant panorama of the groups and objects on that layer, as shown in [Figure 13-5](#).

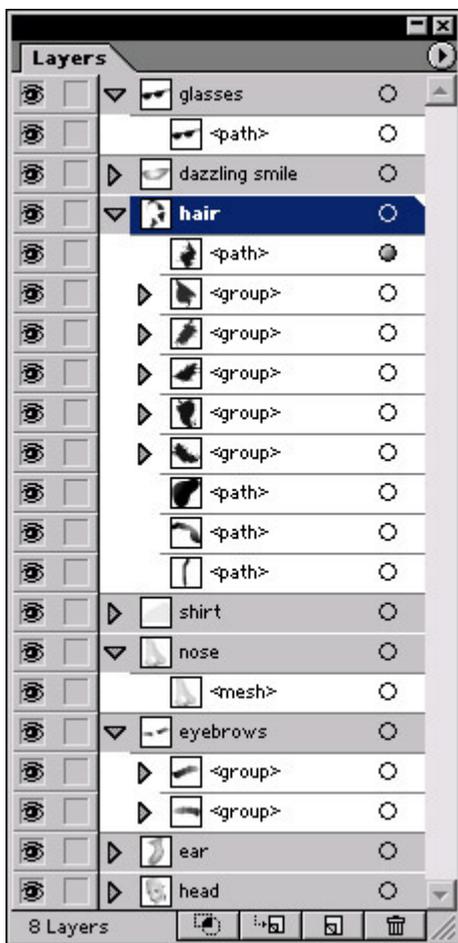


Figure 13-5: You can see the contents of a layer in the Layers palette by clicking the triangle to the left of the layer's name.

Using your options on layers, groups, and objects

You can give each layer, group, and object in Illustrator a name. If you don't name them, they wander around despondently, lugging their default names (such as <path> and Layer 1). Naming layers can be a great help for locating different objects. (Those teeny thumbnails can be awfully hard to distinguish.) Naming the layers provides you with instant recognition.

To change a layer's name, double-click that layer in the Layers palette. To change the name of a group, double-click that group in the Layers palette. And finally, to change the name of an object, double-click that object in the Layers palette. (Is there an echo in here? Nope, just consistency—part of good software design.) The Layer Options dialog box appears, as shown in [Figure 13-6](#).



Figure 13-6: The Layer Options dialog box.

The Layer Options dialog box offers several other options beyond just naming layers:

-

Name: Use this text box to type in a descriptive name for the layer.

•

Color: Set the selection highlight color here. Changing this option doesn't change any color in the artwork just the color used to show that something is highlighted.

•

Template: Selecting this check box enables you to give the layer a special designation and the following unique set of behaviors (which tells you that the layer is a template):

The layer is automatically locked so nothing on it can be selected or changed.

By default, pixel-based artwork shows as dimmed, which allows you to focus on your own artwork better while still being able to see the template artwork. Think of the layer as virtual tracing paper. You can, however, uncheck (deselect) this option if you so desire.

Tip

The names of the Template layers are italicized, so they're easy to spot in the Layers palette.

Template layers do not print, and they aren't included with your artwork when you use the Save for Web command.

You can create a different version of a particular piece of artwork and put the existing artwork in a Template layer where it's out of the way. It won't print, but you can still see it.

•

Lock and Show: These options can be checked and unchecked to enable you to perform the same function as selecting the Lock/Unlock and View/Hide buttons in the Layers palette.

•

Preview: Selecting this check box allows you to see your artwork in Preview mode. When unchecked, it displays the current layer's artwork in Outline view; all other artwork in the document remains in Preview view.

•

Print: This option can be checked or unchecked to make the layer printable or not printable.

•

Dim Images to: This option enables you to dim pixel-based artwork to any set percentage. You may want

to do so for tracing purposes so that you can focus on your Illustrator artwork while using the faded pixel artwork as a guide.

Tip

You can move objects, groups, and layers around inside the Layers palette, doing all sorts of strange things to your artwork. You can move objects from one layer to another, move groups inside other groups, and even nest layers by dragging them inside each other. Try doing this and watch out for surprises.

Imposing Slavish Conformity with Groups

Grouping objects is a great way to organize your artwork; it gives several objects a common address, so to speak, where Illustrator can find them. After you click any one of them with the Selection tool, you automatically select all the objects in the group.

To create a group of objects, select the objects that you want to include and then choose Object Group. You won't see any physical change in the artwork, but from that point onward, all objects in the group are selected at once (provided that you use the regular Selection tool to select them).

Technical Stuff

The main difference between layers and groups is that grouping organizes objects by *their relationships to other objects* rather than by their position inside a layer. As any former high-school student can tell you, belonging to a group means having to conform to its rules. Consider these rules, for example:

-

Grouped objects must exist in the same layer: You accomplish this by selecting two objects in different layers and grouping them. The bottommost object gets moved into the layer that the topmost object inhabits.

-

Groups can be grouped together: You accomplish this by selecting two or more groups and choosing Object Group. If you have two groups called *Football Team* and *Cheerleaders*, for example, you can group them in another group called *Stadium*.

-

Grouped objects can be ungrouped: You accomplish this by selecting the group and choosing Object Ungroup. (Or maybe you can get an object in the group to do something uncool. . . .)

See [Chapter 6](#) for more information on selecting groups.

Lining Up

Illustrator provides several ways to make things line up as neatly as possible. Instead of just eyeballing the things in the line (which sounds sort of icky), you can have Illustrator help you make sure everything lines up just right. In fact, so many ways to align things exist that you don't need to figure out all the different methods. Just pick the one that makes sense to you and use it.

Two of the more-arcane-but-useful functions in Illustrator are tricky to find and use, but are worth the effort:

- **Snap to Point:** This function (choose View Snap to Point) snaps your cursor to a nearby point (on a path) whenever you're near to it. This function is perfect for butting objects up against each other.
- **Constraining via Shift.** This function (hold down the Shift key after you make your selection) constrains movement of objects to 0, 45, or 90 degrees (and all sorts of combinations thereof).

Remember

If you want your objects to move in a constrained fashion, make sure that you hold down the Shift key after you make your selection and keep holding it down until after you release the mouse button. If you hold the Shift key down before you make your selection, you add that selection to anything else that you've already selected. If you let go of the Shift key before you let go of your mouse button, you release the constraint, and the object is positioned somewhere far from where you want it to be.

Guides that are truly smarter than most of us

What if Illustrator knew what you were thinking? Science fiction? Maybe. But Illustrator is smart enough to know what you want to align—if you turn on Smart Guides, that is (by choosing View Smart Guides). These little helpers come out and start drawing temporary guides for you all over the place. Suddenly you can align objects in all sorts of ways.

Here's how this feature works. When the Smart Guides feature is on, it watches you work. As your cursor passes over different objects, Smart Guides draws lines from the points that you drag over, showing you how they align.

Although Smart Guides come in handy, they cause enough busy blinking of objects and lines to compete with the Saturday morning cartoons. I advise that you keep them turned off unless you're doing some serious organizing or

drawing and can use the visual cues.

Let the rulers guide you . . .

You can create a guide of your own if you drag out from one of the rulers (click the ruler and drag it into the document). Think of these guides as individual grid lines. You can use them to align artwork horizontally or vertically wherever you want without having your whole screen become littered with grid work like you do whenever you choose View Show Grid.

Unlike Smart Guides, the guides you create on your own give you no additional information about your artwork. They're just lines that hang out behind your artwork to use as a point of reference. When View Snap to Grid is turned on, objects snap to guides as well (even if you aren't using a grid).

You can drag out as many of these guides as you want or need. To move a guide that you've dragged out, choose View Guides Lock Guides and toggle the option off. Then click and drag the guide that you want to move. You can also press the Delete key after clicking a guide to remove it altogether. This action lets you customize your guides so that they're in the exact position you need to help you with the specific artwork you're creating.

Tip

Lock your guides after you move them by choosing View Guides Lock Guides and toggling the option on.

I'm a path, I'm a guide

You can turn any path into a guide by selecting the path and choosing View Guides Make Guides. That means circles, squares, wavy lines, or an entire logo can be used as a guide. You can also turn any guide back into a path (even the ruler guides) by selecting it and choosing View Guides Release Guides. Guides need to be unlocked and selected for this to work.

If you need to move or delete a single guide, you can press Ctrl+Shift (⌘+Shift on a Mac) and then double-click the guide to unlock it and change it into a path. (Just press the Delete key afterward to make it disappear.)

Tip

You can always clear out all the guides in a document by choosing View Clear Guides.

Alignment

The Illustrator Align palette enables you to align and distribute selected objects just by clicking a button. Open the Align palette by choosing Window Align. The little pictures on each button in the palette show what the button does after you click it.

The top row of buttons aligns objects. You can align objects horizontally or vertically. If you align objects horizontally to the left, Illustrator aligns the leftmost points in the objects. If you center objects horizontally, Illustrator aligns the centers of the objects.

The final location of the objects may seem a little random at times because the Align command aligns them to a point that is the average of the locations of the objects. For instance, if you align two objects vertically by their centers and one object is on the right side of the page and the other is on the left side the objects will align somewhere near the center of the page. To get them exactly where you want them, you may need to click and drag the objects with the Selection tool after you align them. Still, the Align palette saves you a whole lot of time getting there.

The bottom row of buttons distributes objects. In other words, these buttons move selected objects so that they are the same distance apart. The Distribute Objects option takes the two objects that are the farthest apart and distributes the remaining objects between these two objects.

The Align palette is a good way to align things that you've already created in Illustrator and simply need to straighten up a bit. If everything you've created is all helter-skelter (or just helter work with), Align adjusts your artwork until it looks just right. Or left. Or centered. (It's pretty handy and politically neutral.)

Part IV: Practically Speaking: Type, Print, and Files

Chapter List

[Chapter 14](#): Introducing Letters and Such (Type 101) [Chapter 15](#): Printing Your Masterpiece [Chapter 16](#): Putting Your Art on the Web [Chapter 17](#): Moving Files Into and Out of Illustrator

In this part . . .

In our visually oriented culture, the way that words look can be as full of meaning as what they say. Small wonder that creating fancy, artistic type is one of the most popular uses of Illustrator. Illustrator offers easy (and practically limitless) ways to create *wow-look-at-that* artwork with a few simple steps.

In this part, I cover all the great stuff you can do with the newly enhanced type features, from aligning your characters and changing their size to making type flow around a circle or inside a shape. You also discover how to unlock the secrets of mastering the appearance of your type, from editing the minutest part of a letter to using the Create Outlines command.

Also, don't miss the scoop on printing your creations, putting them on the Web, and how to move files in and out of Illustrator CS.

Chapter 14: Introducing Letters and Such (Type 101)

Overview

In This Chapter

- Uncovering why Illustrator has so much type stuff
- Understanding type terms
- Mixing fonts effectively
- Measuring type
- Spacing out lines of type
- Changing the space between letters
- Stretching and squishing type
- Aligning type to one side or another
- Creating type on a path

- Making type flow within shapes
- Making type flow around shapes
- Linking text blocks together
- Changing the path, not the type
- Using type as a mask
- Turning type into paths

Type is undoubtedly one of Illustrator's strongest areas. All the things that Illustrator does best—logos, advertisements, posters, Web-page graphics—depend on text and typography. Many Illustrator features interact with type in some way; and the program's type capabilities are pretty straightforward after you know where they are and what they can do.

In this chapter, I talk about Illustrator type. (If you're already familiar with controlling type in Microsoft Word or some other piece of word-processing software, you're already familiar with many of these terms.) To ease the journey, this chapter covers locating the Illustrator controls—and deciphering the Illustrator way of doing things. Finally, I describe how to get the most out of type and how to turn Illustrator from a glorified word-processor into an astounding type-modifying tool that can do just about anything to type, such as put it on irregularly shaped paths, wrap it around objects, give it an irregular shape, and put objects in it—and that's just for openers.

Using the Word Processor from Outer Space

If you think of the Illustrator type capabilities as an extended word-processing program, you're in the right ballpark; people frequently mention Illustrator's amazing typographical control. The basics of type (such as fonts, size, and alignment) work much the same in Illustrator as they do in most software programs. But Illustrator also packs some advanced typographical capabilities—such as saving files in three of the most universally recognized file formats (EPS, GIF, and JPEG). What sets this program apart from the rest is that you can do wonderful things with type and use it just about anywhere.

Controlling type in Illustrator

Illustrator has a variety of places where you can work with type options: the Type menu, the Character palette, the Paragraph palette, the Character Style palette, the Paragraph style palette, and the OpenType palette. 95 percent of what you need, however, resides in the Character and Paragraph palettes, shown in [Figure 14-1](#). These two palettes are essential knowledge for Illustrator users; so is a good grasp (so to speak) of the Type tool(s) in the Toolbox.

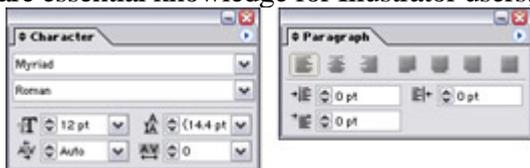


Figure 14-1: The Character and the Paragraph palettes.

The Type tool(s)

You don't need anything but the Type tool to create type (as shown in [Figure 14-2](#))—although the Type tool by itself



won't let you change anything about your type.

Figure 14-2: Creating point type in Illustrator.

Tip

Several type tools hide behind the standard Type tool. While they're convenient for quickly creating type on a path, area type, or vertically-oriented type, you can get away with using only the standard Type tool, if you know a few clever shortcuts. To make type on a path with the standard Type tool, just click any open path with it—the type flows on the path. To make type flow within an area, just click a closed path with the standard Type tool, and your type fills the path. See the sections, [Typing on a Path](#) and [Typing inside a Path](#), later in this chapter for more details.

Starting with the Type tool, follow these steps to create type:

1.

Choose the Type tool (which looks like a letter *T*) from the Illustrator Toolbox.

2.

Click where you want the text to start.

A flashing insertion point appears. (If you accidentally click and drag at this point, you create a text box that contains your type. For more information on the text box, see the next series of steps.)

3.

Start typing.

This process is the most basic way to create type. What you actually do in the preceding steps is create *point type*, which is a single line of type that doesn't wrap (move to the next line) automatically. You have to press Enter (Windows) or Return (Mac) if you want to add a line beneath this line; otherwise, the line you're typing continues to infinity.

You can also create rectangle type (type that's confined within a rectangular area) with the Type tool, as shown in [Figure 14-3](#). Just follow these steps:



Figure 14-3: Creating rectangle type in Illustrator.

1.

Choose the Type tool from the Illustrator Toolbox.

2.

Click and drag with the Type tool.

As you drag, a rectangular marquee grows from the cursor. You can only type text inside the area of the marquee.

3.

Release the mouse button.

A flashing insertion point appears in the upper-right corner of the text box.

4.

Start typing.

As you reach the right edge of the text box, the text wraps to the next line.

In both cases, you create a type object. You can treat this type object like any other Illustrator object. (After you select it, the familiar path and point symbols show up to indicate the selection.)

Tip

With both point type and rectangle type, you can always get to the next line by pressing Enter (Windows) or Return (Mac) on the keyboard.

The Character palette

The Character palette, found by selecting Window Type Character, is the place where you make changes to individual characters (letters, numbers, and punctuation). [Figure 14-4](#) shows the Character palette with all the pieces labeled.

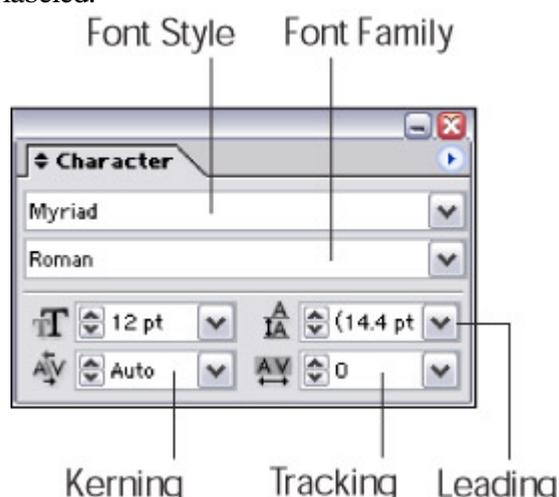


Figure 14-4: The Character palette in Illustrator.

To make text changes by using the Character palette, you first need to select the text you want to change. You can select text in three ways:

-

Click the text with a selection arrow. This action selects all the text in the text object. Even though the text isn't highlighted (rather, it has a simple underline, or the outline of a rectangle), you can still change the size, font, and alignment.

-

Click and drag the Type tool across the type that you want to select. When you click and drag, a black box appears behind the selected text to indicate that the text is selected. This is what Illustrator means by *highlighting*. Only highlighted text is changed. But watch out! If you click and drag too far away from your targeted text, you make a new text box instead of selecting the text.

Tip

Pay attention to the Type tool's cursor; it always alerts you about what the tool is going to do. When the cursor is in position to create a new text box, a dotted rectangle appears around it. If it's in the right place to select text, the dotted rectangle disappears. To select text, click and drag when you see only the I-beam text tool cursor with no box around it.

-

Double- or triple-click with the Type tool. Double-clicking a word selects the entire word. Triple-clicking selects the entire paragraph in which the word appears.

The Paragraph palette

The Paragraph palette (shown in [Figure 14-5](#)) is the place to make type changes that affect whole paragraphs. If you haven't dealt with this feature in other software, you may be in for a bit of a tussle. To view the palette, choose Window > Type > Paragraph. Then things start to get a little strange.

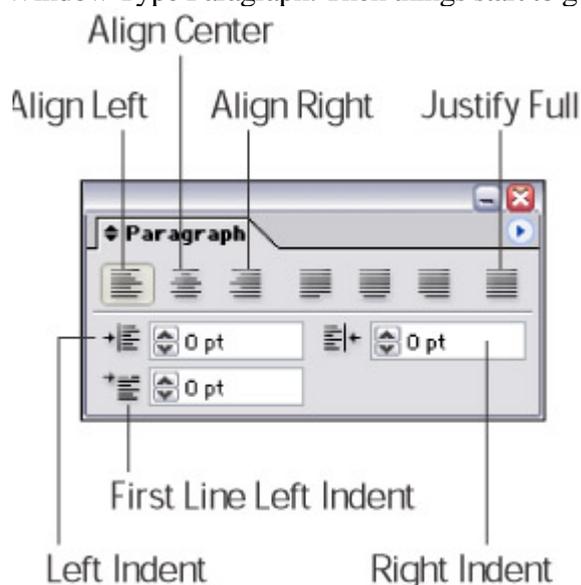


Figure 14-5: The Paragraph palette in Illustrator.

To Illustrator, a paragraph consists of the type contained between returns. Even if you type only one letter, press Enter (Windows) or Return (Mac), and type another letter, Illustrator considers that each of those letters as a paragraph.

You don't have to select an entire paragraph for the Paragraph palette functions to make changes. Paragraph palette changes affect the entire paragraph, regardless of what you select. For instance, even if you highlight only a single letter, changing a paragraph option affects the entire paragraph, not just that single character. In fact, you don't even need to select anything to make paragraph changes—just click the paragraph you want to change with the Type tool (you see a blinking insertion point where you click), and paragraph changes affect the entire paragraph. All of the options in the Paragraph palette are designed to affect an entire paragraph regardless of the selection.

Introducing the Strange Land of Type

Although much of Illustrator may seem new and different, it describes type with a language steeped in centuries of tradition (not to mention 17 years of Illustrator history), so some of the terms may sound strange.

Fonts, typefaces, and font families

You often hear these terms used interchangeably. Fonts, typefaces, and font families actually have distinct meanings; for this book's purposes, you deal primarily with fonts. *Fonts* are sets of common letterforms that give consistent, distinct designs to the entire alphabet, all the numbers, and a boatload of symbols. [Figure 14-6](#) shows a variety of fonts.

Helvetica

Arial Black

Courier

New Baskerville

Sand

Skia

Figure 14-6: Several different fonts.

You change fonts in Illustrator quite easily, as shown in [Figure 14-7](#), by following these steps:

Change is good.

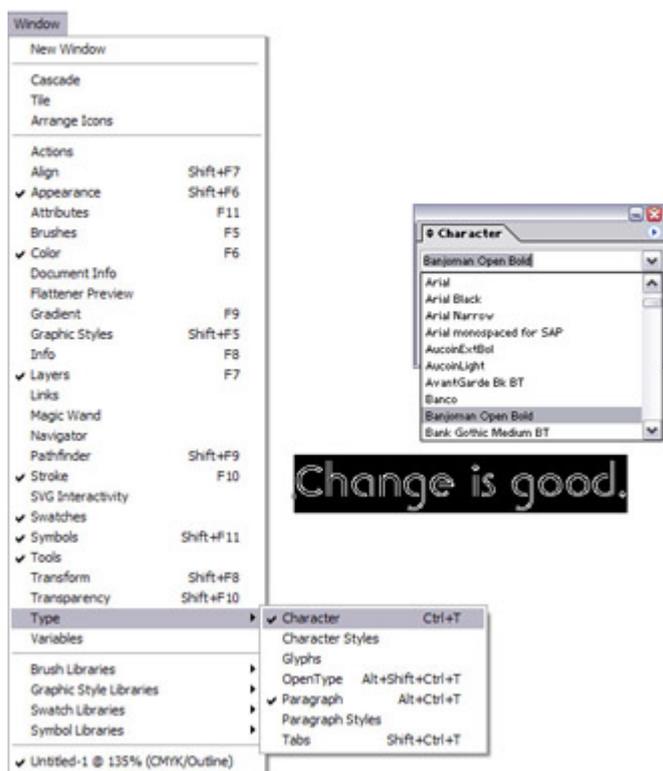


Figure 14-7: Changing fonts in Illustrator.

1.

Using either the Type tool or a selection tool, select the type you want to modify.

2.

Choose Window > Type > Character.

The Character palette appears. The family name of the currently selected font appears at the upper left of the Character palette. Beside the Font Family name is the Font Style box, with a downward-pointing triangle just to the right.

3.

Click the downward-pointing triangle next to the Font Style box.

A pop-up menu presents you with a list of all the fonts on your computer.

4.

Pick a font from the list and click its name.

After you release the mouse button, the selected text changes to the font you chose.

Technical Stuff

You may be miffed to find that Illustrator doesn't have buttons for making fonts bold and italic. Programs with such features are usually faking it, as not every font family has genuine bold and italic versions. If a program takes the non-italic version and tilts it (or the non-bold version and thickens it), the resulting false impression can waste money. The *faux* bold and italics may look okay on-screen and even print out okay on an inkjet printer. But when an imagesetter (a professional high-resolution printer) rejects them as fake, they show up on the page as the ordinary non-bold, non-italic fonts that they are *after* you had costly films made.

As you peruse the list of fonts, notice that the font styles appear in submenus of the main list. This feature shows you related versions of a particular font. For instance, [Figure 14-8](#) shows samples of three font styles in the same family. Top to bottom, they are Times Roman, Times Bold, and Times Italic (first two words of the third line). All are in the same submenu of the Times menu item. Font styles in the same font family have a similar look and work well together.

Change is good.
Bold is better.
I agree, he thought.

Figure 14-8: These font styles are part of the Times font family and look good placed together.

Serif and sans serif

Fonts are generally divided into two categories: serif and sans serif. Serif fonts have little doohickeys called serifs on the tips of letters and numbers; sans serif fonts don't have them (in this case, sans means "not gonna happen here").

Goodbye.
Hello.

[Figure 14-9](#) shows examples of serif and sans serif fonts.

Figure 14-9: Serif (top; serifs are circled) and sans serif (bottom) fonts.

Why choose serif or sans serif? Traditionally, serif fonts are used for large areas of text because the serifs make the text easier to read. Sans serif fonts are used for headlines because they stand out more boldly. However, as wider ranges of fonts have become available to wider ranges of users, more people are breaking the traditional font-choice rules. Traditional usage isn't always the case anymore. Books and magazines still use serif fonts (more than sans serif fonts) for long passages of text, but you can find many exceptions to the rule. Sans serif type is often easier to read on-screen; those little serifs are frequently just too small to display properly on low-resolution computer screens.

Remember

When you're creating for print, a wise idea is to print your Illustrator text throughout the creative process. The printed page can differ slightly from what you see on-screen. If you're creating text for Web graphics, consider yourself lucky; when you have your graphics and the text looking good on-screen, mission accomplished!

Tip

To make Illustrator show as closely as possible what your text will look like on the Web, choose View Pixel Preview.

The biggest Don't Do It that I can think of

Back in 1987, when Illustrator and PageMaker just hit the scene, many computer users without an artistic bone in their bodies created documents and graphics. They got carried away with the computer's magnificent ability to mix and match fonts. The printed results often looked short of professional: busy, trashy, and hard to read. Lately, font madness has struck again with Web pages so your loyal author makes this impassioned plea:

Don't use too many fonts on the same page the way I just did.

What's too many? Well, the awful no-no I just inflicted on the page has five. If you run out of fingers (on one hand) while counting fonts, you have too many. The classic limit is three fonts (including any bold or italic versions of the main font you're using).

Exploring Size, Leading, and Other Mysterious Numbers

The world of type has a lot of measuring associated with it. You have to keep in mind point size, leading, x-height, kerning, baseline shift, tracking, horizontal scale, vertical scale, em-width, and other arcane matters that only the Secret Brotherhood of Typesetters really cares about. All these numbers affect the appearance of your type. Some of these measurements are important; some of them aren't. The following sections let you in on which is which and on how to understand and use each type setting in Illustrator. [Figure 14-10](#) shows where to find some of these measurements on the letters themselves.

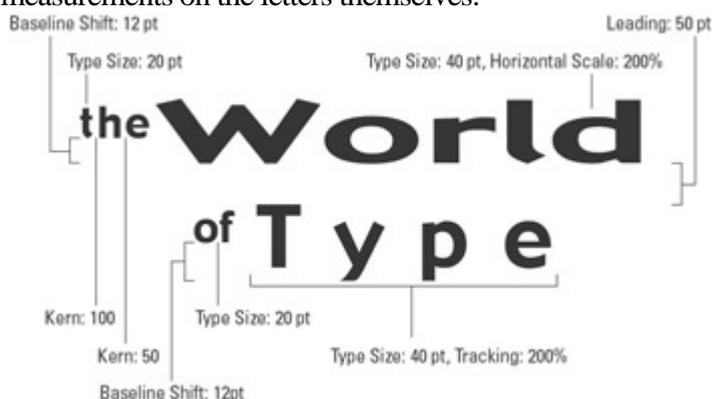


Figure 14-10: Measurements for letters.

Measuring can be just plain odd

The size of type is measured in *points*. An inch has 72 points. A quarter-inch has 18 points. That's the easy part. The hard part is that type isn't measured from top to bottom. Rather, type is measured from its ascenders and descenders for the entire font. You know those cute little tails that hang down from the lowercase g, j, p, q, and y? Well, those tails are called *descenders*; the *ascenders* are the upper parts of letters, such as the tall parts of lowercase *d* and *k* and of UPPERCASE letters.

Words, such as *anon* (all lowercase, no ascenders or descenders), seem to have a smaller type size than words such as *Mr. Ripley*, even though they're the same type size. Type is measured from the uppermost point to the lowermost point that is possible to create using that font. Even if you aren't using any ascenders and descenders in the words that you're typing, the font size has to leave room for them (see [Figure 14-11](#)) in case words, such as *Rumpelstiltskin* or *syzygy*, show up in the sentence.

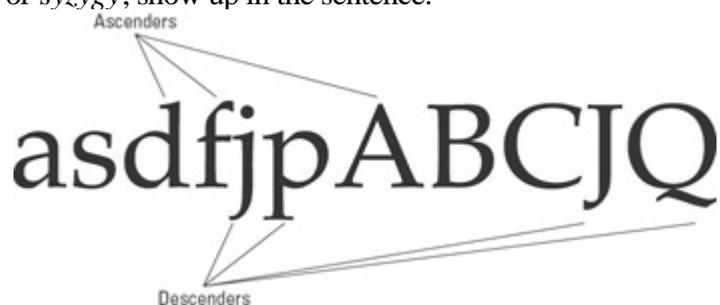


Figure 14-11: Font size allows enough space to accommodate all the possible ascenders and descenders in a font.

Things get really wacky when you mix different fonts. Each font can have completely different heights for its ascenders and descenders, creating the appearance of completely different font sizes, even though the actual space from the topmost point to the lowest point for both entire alphabets is identical.

Tip

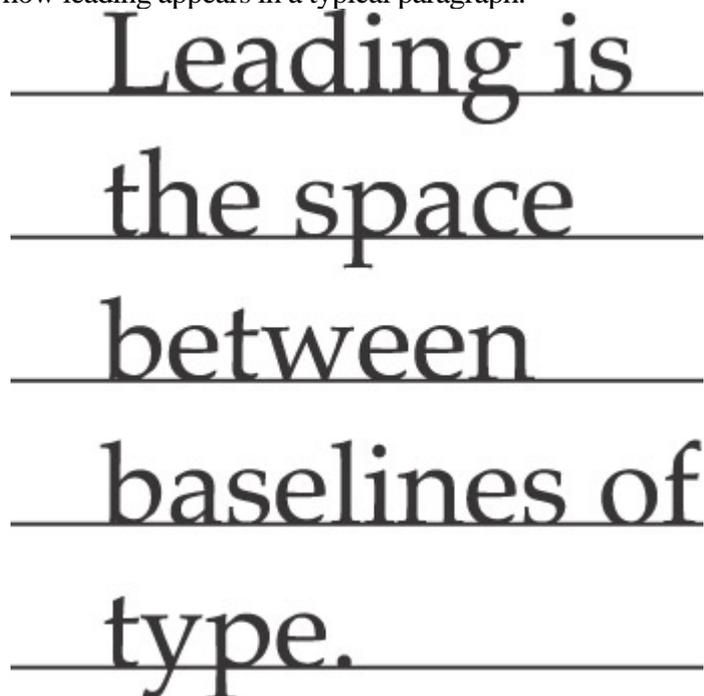
For another example, sneak a peek at the mishmash of fonts I stuck in *The biggest Don't Do It that I can think of* section (earlier in this chapter): They're all 12-point fonts.

You can set the point size of your type in the Character palette, right below the font. Pick a value from the pop-up menu or type in a value in the field provided and press Enter (Windows) or Return (Mac).

A good guideline is that capital letters are about two-thirds the point size, and that lowercase letters without descenders or ascenders (like the lowercase *a*) are about one-half the point size. So if you want a letter *a* that's one inch (72 points) high, you have to specify it as 144 pt (two inches) tall.

Measuring can be just plain annoying

The space between rows (lines) of letters has an even stranger story. First, the space is called *leading*. Second, the space is measured not between the descenders of the line you're on and the ascenders of the line below (which would make sense), but rather between the *baseline* of the line you're on and the baseline of the line above the line you're on. The baseline is the line on which most letters rest (those that don't have descenders). [Figure 14-12](#) shows how leading appears in a typical paragraph.



The diagram shows the text "Leading is the space between baselines of type." arranged in five lines. Each line is underlined with a horizontal line. The vertical distance between the baseline of one line and the baseline of the line above it is highlighted as the leading.

Figure 14-12: Leading is the space between the baselines of type.

You set the leading in the spot to the right of the font size in the Character palette. If a number appears in parentheses, that's the automatic value of the leading—120 percent of the point size, rounded up to the next half point.

Tip

If the amount of leading matches the point size, the descenders of one line touch the ascenders of the line below. In the majority of cases, that's a *large* no-no.

Spacing out while staring at type

Yet another thing to worry about (or ignore, if you choose to) is the space between individual letters that are next to each other. This space can be called two things (specifically to confuse the novice):

- **UTracking:** The space between letters in a series of letters
- **UKerning:** The space between two specific characters

[Figure 14-13](#) shows the difference (sorta) between these two.



Tracking

Kerning

Figure 14-13: Tracking and kerning in Illustrator

Change the kerning by placing your cursor where you want to change the space between two characters. Change the tracking by highlighting a series of characters. Then change the appropriate field in the Character palette, as indicated in [Figure 14-14](#).



Figure 14-14: Changing the kerning and tracking values in the Character palette.

Typically, you can leave these values alone. However, when setting short sets of large type, for example, the type can look much better when it's kerned more tightly. Many rules and guidelines exist for proper kerning and tracking, but the best designers set these by eye. If the type looks good, it's probably kerned correctly.

Putting type on the rack

You can stretch your type to make it wider or taller. By changing the values in the Vertical Scale and Horizontal Scale boxes (shown in [Figure 14-15](#)), you can reshape type into all manner of oddness.

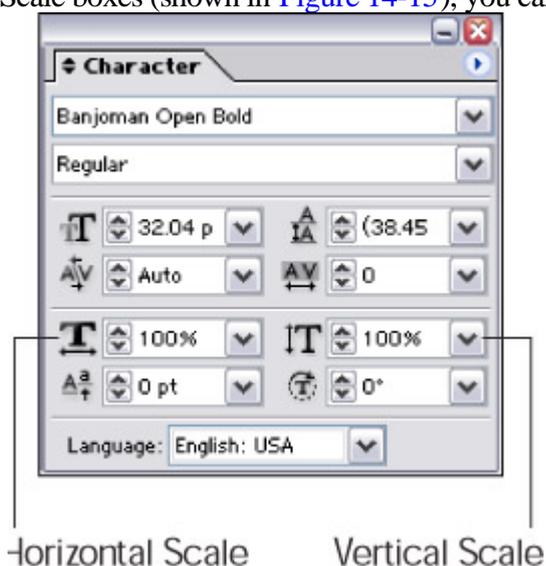


Figure 14-15: Vertical Scale and Horizontal Scale text boxes in the Character palette, along with examples in type.
Tip

In general, this sort of modification is frowned upon, unless used sparingly and only to produce a small degree of change.

Moving on up and down

Whereas leading sets how far apart the lines of text are, the baseline shift controls the vertical position of the text after it's been moved via the leading value. Use the field at the bottom of the Character palette to change the baseline shift. Positive numbers move selected text up; negative numbers move selected text down. [Figure 14-16](#) shows a

paragraph with a word of text that has a shifted baseline.

This is a normal paragraph
except for the ^{odd} baseline
shift on the word "odd."

Figure 14-16: Using baseline shift within a paragraph.

Team LiB

◀ PREVIOUS NEXT ▶

Adjusting Entire Paragraphs

The Paragraph palette provides controls for modifying all the text in a paragraph at once. These controls are quite different from those in the Character palette. (Don't want any silly old consistency to spoil the fun, now do we?)

Changing the alignment of a paragraph

At the top of the Paragraph palette are seven buttons that set the alignment of paragraphs. Although the buttons are tiny, if you squint hard enough at them, you can see that the tiny graphic image on each one mimics the alignment that they create. Position the cursor over the button without clicking and a Tooltip appears and tells you what it is.

To align a paragraph, click anywhere inside it with the Text tool; then click the alignment button in the Paragraph palette. By default, paragraphs align to the left side with their right edge ragged and uneven. Choose the Align Right setting, and the opposite is true (right edge smooth, left edge ragged). Try the Align Center setting for ragged left and right edges with centered lines of text. Use the Justify Full Lines setting for straight left and right edges (except for the last line if it's not a full line). Finally, the Justify All Lines setting keeps all lines (including the bottom one) even on both the left and the right. [Figure 14-17](#) shows examples of these alignments (and which buttons to click to get them).

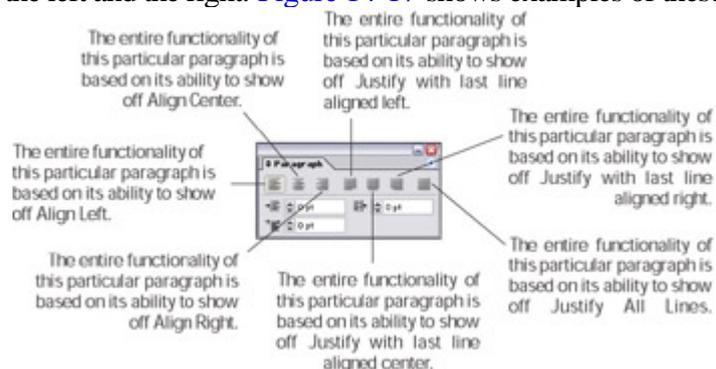


Figure 14-17: Text results of different text alignments in Illustrator.

Changing the space around the paragraph

The Paragraph palette in Illustrator offers three options for adjusting the space around a paragraph, plus an option to set how far from the left edge of the paragraph the first line starts. [Figure 14-18](#) shows these options.



Figure 14-18: Controls for changing the amount of space around a paragraph.

The Left Indent setting is for modifying the position of the left edge of the paragraph. The larger the number, the farther to the right the left edge moves.

The First Line Left Indent setting moves the first line of the paragraph left or right relative to the left edge of the paragraph. Use a negative number to make the first line come out from paragraph s left edge, as shown in [Figure 14-19](#). Use a positive number to push the first line in to the right of the paragraph s left edge.

**He appeared to a woman in the parking lot of
a grocery store. She was putting her
groceries into her car.**

He asked: "Do you have the time?"

She looked up and there he was. Elvis.

The King! Alive!

Figure 14-19: Bringing out the left edge of a paragraph with a negative number.

The Right Indent setting adjusts the paragraph s right edge. The larger the number, the farther to the left the edge moves.

The Space Before Paragraph setting adjusts the amount of space before the current paragraph. If you select a bunch of paragraphs, changing this setting puts space between each one of the paragraphs.

Using the basic options available in Character palette and the Paragraph palette, you can create astounding feats of typesetting. These two palettes provide the core for nearly everything you do with type in Illustrator. Using them, you can equal or surpass just about anything you can create on a single page in any word-processing or page-layout application.

Typing on a Path

Many people think that Illustrator is paths. A *path* is a series of anchor points and straight and curved line segments that define shapes. (For more information on paths, see [Chapters 7](#) and [8](#).) And putting type on a path has long been one of the greatest capabilities of Illustrator. That said, you're up against a bizarre learning curve when using type in Illustrator. Initially, getting the type onto the path is pretty straightforward but manipulating the type after that is a bit harder, and the effort required, such as for putting type on both sides of a circle, is downright silly.

Getting type to stick to a slippery slope

To place type on a path, such as the one shown in [Figure 14-20](#), follow these steps:

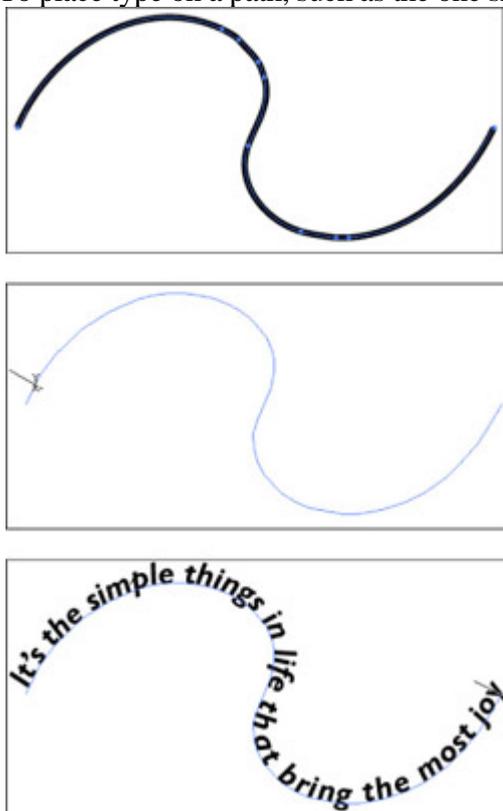


Figure 14-20: Creating type on a path.

1.

Select the Pen or Pencil tool from the Toolbox. Using the Pen or Pencil tool, create the path on which you want to place your type.

Tip

For more information on creating paths, see [Chapters 7](#) and [8](#).

Don't be concerned with the fill and stroke of the path; they become invisible as soon as you type on the path.

2.

Select the Path Type tool from the Toolbox.

The Path Type tool is hidden in the Type toolslot.

3.

Click the path at the place where you want the text to begin.

A blinking insertion point appears at that juncture.

4.

Start typing.

The text runs along the path while you type. When you're done typing, select the regular Selection tool.

After the type appears, you can edit it just as you would edit regular type with the exception that the type is stuck to your path. However, with the type attached to the path, you can move the type along the path in either direction, as shown in [Figure 14-21](#). Just follow these steps:

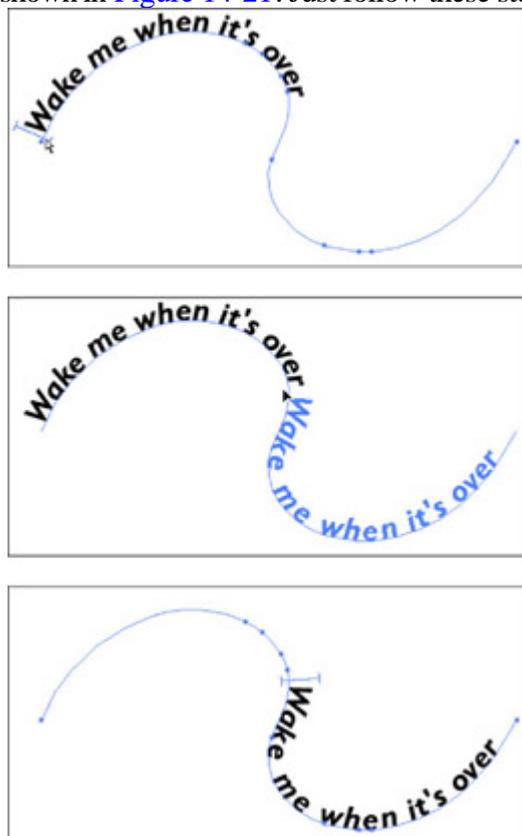


Figure 14-21: Moving type along a path.

1.

Using a selection tool, click the path that contains the path type.

An I-beam cursor appears at the left edge of the type.

2.

Click the I-beam and drag it along the path.

The type moves while you drag.

3.

Release the mouse button when the type is where you want it.

Remember

Be careful when you drag the I-beam cursor along the path. If you accidentally move the tip of your cursor below the path, the type flips upside down on the path. (As industry wags say of weird stuff that consistently happens on-screen, That s a feature, not a bug! In this case, it *is* a feature, believe it or not.) Don t panic; just move the cursor back above the path and watch while the type rights itself.

Press the Alt key (Option on a Mac) to duplicate text while you drag it along a path. Doing so duplicates both the type and the path. (Even though you don t actually see the duplicated path, it s there.)

In the [next section](#), you find out how to use this technique to create type on both the top and bottom of a circle.

Solving the age-old type- on-a-circle mystery

To place type on a circle, you simply click a circle (path) with the Path Type tool and begin typing. Putting text on both the top and the bottom of a circle (without half the text turning upside-down), however, isn t as easy. All the type on a path must have the same orientation, which can be right-side up or upside down but not a mix of the two.

Read through the following steps to discover how to place type on the top of a circle (shown in [Figure 14-22](#)). Then read through the next set of steps to discover how to put type on the bottom of the same circle (shown in [Figure 14-23](#)).

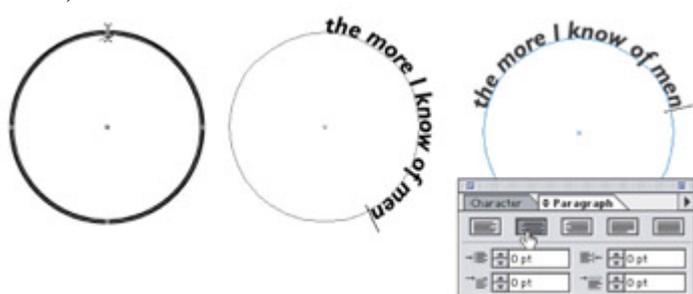


Figure 14-22: Putting type on the top of a circle.

Follow these steps to put type on the top of a circle:

1.

Select the Ellipse tool (which looks like an oval) from the Toolbox to draw a circle. Press the Shift key while you draw to change the oval into a perfect circle.

See [Chapter 4](#) for more on the Ellipse tool.

2.

Select the Path Type tool from the Toolbox and click the top of the circle.

A blinking insertion point appears on the top of the circle.

3.

Type your text.

Notice that the type starts to run down the right side of the circle. Don't worry; it's all part of the plan.

4.

In the Paragraph palette, click the Align Center button.

Tip

You can find the Paragraph palette by choosing Window > Type > Paragraph. The Align Center button is the second button from the left along the top row of buttons in the Paragraph palette. After you click the Align Center button, the text centers itself on the top of the circle.

Here's how to put type in the bottom of a circle (see [Figure 14-23](#)):

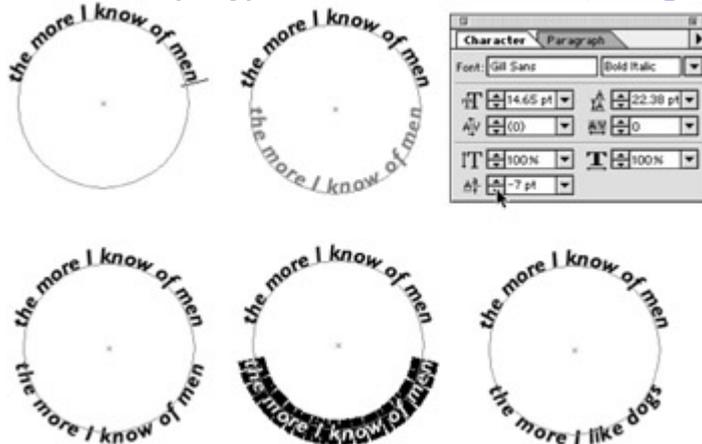


Figure 14-23: Putting type on the bottom of a circle.

1.

Select the regular Selection tool from the Toolbox and then click the circle text that you created in the previous step list.

An I-beam cursor appears at the point where you click.

2.

Press the Alt key (Option on a Mac), hold down the mouse button, and with the Selection tool drag the I-beam to the bottom of the circle.

Tip

Don't release the mouse button until you move the cursor up into the circle just a bit.

Holding the Alt key (Option on a Mac) duplicates the text while you drag it. Doing so also duplicates the circle that the text is on but because that circle is invisible, you won't see it. Moving the cursor into the circle flips the type so that you can read it right-side up on the bottom and at the top of the circle.

3.

In the Character palette, click the down triangle of the Baseline Shift field until the type appears *outside* (below) the circle.

The Baseline Shift field is at the bottom left of the Character palette. If it isn't visible, choose Show Options from the Character palette's pop-up menu.

4.

Select the Type tool from the Toolbox and then select the type at the bottom of the circle.

5.

Type the text that you want to appear at the bottom of the circle.

In this set of steps, you actually create two separate circles with type on them. Because the circles overlap precisely, however, you get the illusion that the type is on just one circle. If you click and drag the circle with the Selection tool, you drag away the circle with the text in the bottom, thus destroying the illusion.

Typing inside a Path

An interesting feature in Illustrator is the typographical capability to flow text within any shape. The shape acts as a container for the text, and the text fills the shape matching it as closely as possible. For example, you can have a listing of the members of the California House of Representatives flow within a shape of the state of California.

To get text to flow within a specific shape, as shown in [Figure 14-24](#), follow these steps:

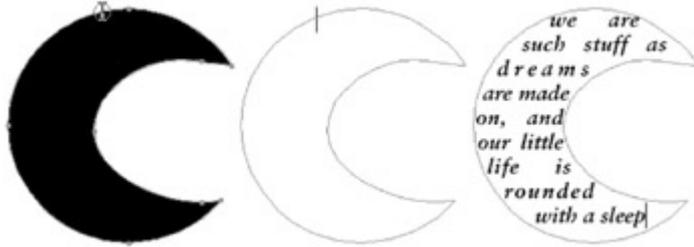


Figure 14-24: Flowing text within a path.

1.

Create a path by using the Pen, Pencil, or any of the basic shapes tools. (See [Chapters 4](#), [7](#), and [8](#) for more on these tools.)

Tip

This works best with a closed path, but the one shape you shouldn't flow text into is a rectangle because that's identical to creating a text box, which defeats the purpose.

2.



Select the Area Type tool from the Toolbox.

3.

3. Click the path through which you want type to flow.

4.

4. Start typing.

While you type, text flows within the object.

Tip

For best results with text, make sure that you activate (click) Justify All Lines in the Paragraph palette. This feature spreads lines of type evenly to the left and right edges of the path. In addition, use fairly small type because large letters usually can't fill in the details of the path.

Remember

You can adjust the path of area type just as you do any other path by clicking and dragging a point with the Direct Selection tool ([Chapter 6](#)) or by using the Pencil tool ([Chapter 8](#)) to edit the path.

Typing around a Path

Typing around paths is sort of the opposite of typing within an area; type flows around the outside of a shape (or shapes) rather than within a shape. This technique is referred to as a *text wrap* or a *type wrap*. You don't have a special tool for flowing type around paths, but you do have to choose a command with both the type and the path selected. See how text flows around a shape in [Figure 14-25](#).



Figure 14-25: Regular type with type wrap applied.

To flow text around the outside of a shape, follow these steps:

1.

T

Create a text box by clicking and dragging with the Type tool.

2.

2.Type text into the box until it s full.

3.

3.Create a path by using any of the Illustrator tools and place the path in front of the text.

Remember

You get the best results by using a closed path rather than an open one. You can use as many paths and text boxes as you want. (I used three bees and one text box in [Figure 14-26](#).) All text wraps around all paths.

4.

4.Choose the regular Selection tool from the Toolbox.

5.

5.Select the text and the path by holding the Shift key while clicking each of them.

6.

6.Choose Object Text Wrap Make Text Wrap.

The text flows around the shape.

Remember

The most important thing to do when you wrap text around a path is to make sure that the path is in front of the text. Typically, if you try to make text wrap around a path and the procedure doesn't work, the shape is probably behind the text. If this happens, click the path with the Selection tool and choose Object Arrange Bring to Front, which moves the object in front of the text. Select the path and the text again and then choose Object Text Wrap Make Text Wrap. To undo the wrap, choose Object Text Wrap Release Text Wrap.

Tip

You can use several shapes for the text to wrap around, or you can add a shape later by selecting the new shape with the Selection tool, along with the existing text and/or shape objects, and choosing Object Text Wrap Make Text Wrap.

Flowing Type from Path to Path

You can link any text that is within a shape (area type or rectangle type) to other paths so that the text flows from one path to another. For instance, a story about a pesky fruit fly can start in a path in the shape of a banana and then continue automatically into normal rectangular columns of text. Whenever changes occur in the text within the banana shape, the text in the rectangle moves accordingly.

This process works by selecting the path that currently has text in it along with another path (or paths). You then choose **Type Threaded Text Create**. [Figure 14-26](#) shows text that is linked so that it flows among several different shapes. The text flows from shape to shape in the chronological order that they were created. If you don't see any change when you choose **Link**, your first text box probably doesn't have enough text in it to overflow into the linked box. Just type more in the first text box, and flowing prevails. To undo the link, choose **Type Threaded Text Release Selection**.



Figure 14-26: Type flowing along several paths.

Adjusting the Path (Not the Type)

After you create path type, area type, wrapped type, or linked blocks of type, you may discover situations in which you want to change only the path and not the type. By default, if you select the path and the type together, you change only the type. So how can you change the path?

The secret to changing the path is to use the Direct Selection tool to select the path and then make your changes to the fill and stroke. Check out [Figure 14-27](#) to see how you can alter the circle path by using different fills and strokes



on the circle to which the type is attached.

Figure 14-27: Circle type with a new fill (gradient) and stroke (pattern) on the circle.

Using Type as a Mask

Illustrator enables you to do a remarkable number of things to your type, but some modifications seem forbidden. For example, if you try to fill type with a gradient (read through [Chapter 5](#)), the type just turns black. And what if you want to get really fancy and fill text with another piece of artwork that you create in Illustrator? There's just no way you can do that!

Or is there?

By using the Clipping Mask feature (read more about this in [Chapter 10](#)), you can create the appearance that text is being filled with a gradient, artwork, or anything that you can put the text in front of. And what can't you put text in front of? Absolutely . . . nothing! (Say it again, y'all. . .)

A *clipping mask* is a special feature of Illustrator: It uses the front-most object (called the *clipping object*) to hide the objects behind it in a unique way. Everything outside the clipping object is hidden, and the fill and the stroke of the clipping object become transparent, enabling you to see whatever's behind and apparently filling the clipping object. A *type mask* is what you get when you use type as your clipping object. This may sound strange but makes a lot more sense after you create a type mask of your own.

Creating a type mask is simple. Here's how:

1.

1. Create the artwork you want to fill your type with.

Remember

This can be absolutely anything. The only catch is that it must be bigger than the type that you want to use as fill.

For example, if you want to fill your text with a gradient, you create a rectangle (or any other object, provided that it's larger than your type) and fill it with a gradient (see [Chapter 5](#)), or create the artwork that you want to fill the type with. You can even use a pixel-based image, such as a scanned photograph of your loved one. The only stipulation is that whatever you fill the text with must be larger than the text. Think of the text as a cookie cutter and the object you're filling the text with as cookie dough. You cut away everything outside the text.

2.

2. Create type in front of whatever you want to fill the text with.

Create your type by using the ordinary Type tool. Using the Character palette, choose a font size large enough so that the type is almost (but not quite) as large as the artwork behind it. If you already created your type, select it with any selection tool and choose Object Arrange Bring to Front and drag it in front of your object.

3.

3. Use any selection tool to select the text and the object or objects behind the text and then choose Object Clipping Mask Make.

To select multiple objects, just hold down the Shift key while clicking each of them with any selection tool.

After you choose Object Clipping Mask Make, the fill and stroke of the text disappear and are replaced by the contents of whatever is behind the text. Anything outside the area of the text becomes invisible, or masked-out. See the process in action in [Figure 14-28](#).



Figure 14-28: The type mask in action: text in front of objects (top) and type masking the objects (bottom).

Tip

With type masks, the text is still ordinary text. You can highlight the text, change the font, type in different words, and so on, while retaining the masking properties.

Any time that you want to make the text stop masking out what's behind it, select the text and choose Object Clipping Mask Release.

Converting Type to Paths

The type possibilities in Illustrator are nigh infinite. To make them truly infinite, you need take only one step—convert the type to paths. You gain absolute control over every point of every letter of every word of type.

Remember

Edit carefully and spell-check the text before you convert it. After you convert text to a path, you can't edit it as type. You also can't highlight it with the Type tool and retype it, change the font, or anything editorial like that.

You may want to make this conversion for the following reasons:

- **UTo manipulate type like you do any other object in Illustrator:** Type stops being type and becomes just another Illustrator path, at which point you can do absolutely anything to it that you can do to other paths, specifically using the Direct Selection tool on individual points and segments of those paths.
- **UTo bypass the need for the font files associated with the type:** If you give someone a graphic file containing a type that isn't installed on the recipient's computer, the graphic won't display or print properly if opened in Illustrator or placed into a page-layout program. Converting the type to paths creates a file that displays and prints exactly as you created it, regardless of the fonts installed on the recipient's computer.

Tip

This action is also a good way to make sure that the text can't be retyped. You should always convert text to paths for any logo that you send to other people, which helps guarantee that the logo always looks how you created it.

To convert type to paths, as shown in [Figure 14-29](#), follow these steps:

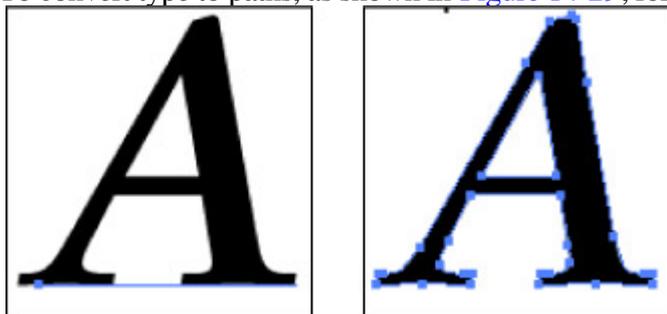


Figure 14-29: Left: The letter A as type. Right: The letter A converted to paths.

1. Use the Selection tool to select the type that you want to convert to a path.

Okay, you're altering type, so you should be able to do this by using the Type tool—but you can't. This is just one of those little frustrations that have been around for years in Illustrator.

2.

2. Choose Type > Create Outlines.

All the points that make up the type suddenly appear, enabling you to edit the type while you edit any other object in Illustrator (as shown in [Figure 14-30](#)). Why the name *Create Outlines*? Only some long-gone Adobe programmer knows for sure. A better name may be *Create Paths from Text*, which is what this command really does.



Figure 14-30: Here's the letter A after the points are moved and a gradient fill is applied.

Type Styles

Illustrator CS introduces the concept of styled type, through paragraph and character styles. Styles are just a fancy name for a collection of character or paragraph attributes that allow you to make several changes at once.

For instance, you may want to use the exact same font, point size, and justification for all your type in a document. Instead of changing each of the settings each time you create a type object, you can use a style to change all the settings at once. Even better, if you decide that the initial font, or size, or justification needs to be changed, you can simply update the style, and all the type with that style applied changes instantly!

Of the two types of type styles in Illustrator, Paragraph styles are much more common and powerful. For not only do they contain all the attributes you find in the Paragraph palette, but also all the character attributes as well. Character styles only contain character attributes (and are useful for type within paragraphs, where you don't want an entire paragraph to change).

To create a paragraph style, set up your type just the way you want it to appear, and then click the New Style button in the Paragraph palette. To apply that style to type, select a type object or make a selection with the Type tool, and then click the name of the style once in the Paragraph palette.

Chapter 15: Printing Your Masterpiece

Overview

In This Chapter

- Working with printing in mind
- Sizing artwork to fit a page
- Printing black-and-white illustrations
- Printing color illustrations
- Understanding the strange issue of color separations

When designing your artwork, keep in mind how it will look if it's going to be printed. If you know what medium you're going to print your artwork on, you can save yourself time in the long run. For instance, if you create a stunning logo, full of vibrant colors and subtle hues and reflections, you probably can't use that logo in a black-and-white context. In this chapter, I provide some great ideas to keep in mind while you create your artwork—and you can also refer to this chapter when you arrive at the printing process.

If you just want to print, read the [next section](#). If you want to discover all the stuff behind what goes into printing, check out the upcoming section, [What You See Is Roughly What You Get](#). Or, if you want the nitty-gritty about setting up Illustrator for printing (plus even more details on printing), skip ahead to the section, [Setting Up Your Page to Print \(You Hope\)](#).

Printing Quickly

If you have a printer hooked up to your computer or network, you can print just about anything that you can create in Illustrator.

Before you print, make sure that your artwork is inside the printable area. A dotted gray line indicates the printable area; anything outside the dotted line doesn't print. If you don't see a dotted gray line, choose View Show Page Tiling. To hide the line, choose View Hide Page Tiling.

To print your artwork, choose File Print. When the Print dialog box appears, press Enter (Return on a Mac), or click the Print/OK button. You now have a printed version of your Illustrator creation. Pressing Enter (Return on a Mac) without adjusting any settings in the Print dialog box is known in the trade as *running with the defaults*. Defaults are settings that are made automatically when you install Illustrator and they work just fine for printing artwork from Illustrator. When your creations don't print as you expect them to, however, you need to adjust the other settings, which I discuss throughout this chapter.

What You See Is Roughly What You Get

Whatever you create on-screen, you can print (theoretically). And what you print looks pretty much like what you see on your monitor. Note that I say pretty much and not exactly. Here s why:

- **Resolution differences:** Your monitor resolution is much lower than your printer resolution. You may think that everything you print will look better than it does on-screen in most cases, you d be correct. Sometimes, however, that extra resolution makes problems that you can t see on-screen, such as dust, dirt, scratches, and other pesky artifacts, stand out in print.
- **Aliasing differences:** By default, Illustrator displays art and text on your monitor as *anti-aliased* (the edges where colors meet blend together, producing a more visually appealing image on-screen). Printed pages are not anti-aliased, and images print smoothly and cleanly.
- **Color differences:** Your monitor displays color images by lighting up little red, green, and blue phosphorescent squares called *pixels*, whereas printing produces color images by applying dots of ink on paper. Creating colors by completely different physical processes causes a major difference between what you see on-screen and what you get in print.

With these points in mind, you should regularly print your artwork during the creation process to make sure that the printed result is as close as possible to what you re designing on-screen. That way, you can modify your artwork to avoid surprises when you print the final product. After some practice, you develop an eye for what a printout will look like, even when you re working entirely on-screen.

Setting Up Your Page to Print (You Hope)

Long ago in the Dark Ages, people slaved over drafting tables, among matte knives and ink bottles, struggling to create graphics while gagging on glue fumes. At last, at the dawn of the new millennium, computer systems forever replaced those ancient torture devices. These days you can whip up a document in Illustrator, feed pure white paper into a printer, and *let er rip!* (Uh, maybe I ought to rephrase that.) Just keep in mind that even a killer graphic has one more hurdle to clear—the leap from electronic file to hard copy. Sometimes artwork prints vertically on the page when you intend it to print horizontally. Sometimes the artwork doesn't fit on the page. Although I can't cover every problem that can occur in printing, in this section I look at a few of the major causes of printing problems in Illustrator and how to handle them.

Printer type and page size

Use the Page Setup or Print Setup dialog box to set up your page so that it prints properly. You can view your Page Setup or Print Setup dialog box by choosing that option from the File menu.

The easiest way to print is to choose File Print and press Enter (Return on a Mac) after the Print dialog box appears. This process works fine nine times out of ten. But then there's that pesky tenth time when things don't print quite the way you expect. Often you can correct the problem by using options from the Page Setup or Print Setup dialog box, as shown in [Figure 15-1](#) and [Figure 15-2](#), respectively.

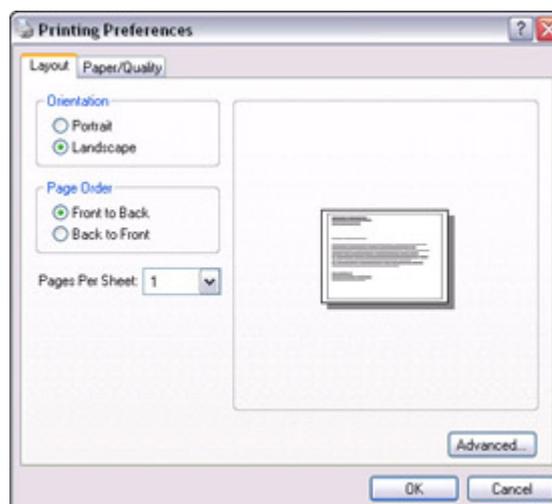
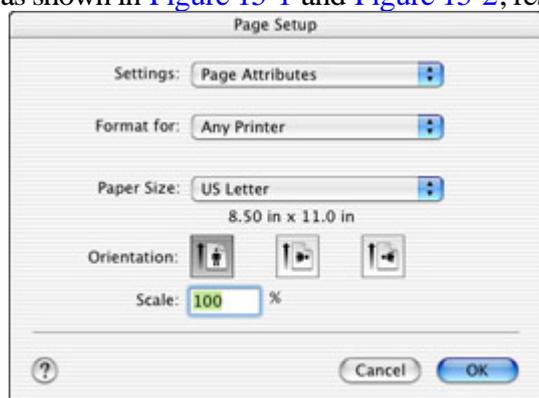


Figure 15-1: The Page Setup dialog box on a Macintosh.

Figure 15-2: The Print Setup dialog box in Windows.

The dialog boxes in the figures may look different from what appears on-screen depending on the specific printer you're using, but the basic options remain pretty much the same.

For Mac users, Page Setup contains the information that Illustrator needs about what type of printer you're using, how big the pages are, and other information, such as whether the printer is color or black and white. Print Setup does the same song and dance for Windows. You have dozens of options, but don't panic—some are specific to the Macintosh and others to the PC using Windows.

The only options you need to care about

Imagine establishing an oasis of simplicity in the sea of everyday confusion. Well, you can, if you focus on these few options in the Page Setup or Print Setup dialog box:

-

Name (Windows)/Format For (Mac): The top of the Page Setup or Print Setup dialog box indicates the printer you want to use. Click the printer name, and a drop-down menu appears listing all the printers that you have access to (in an ideal world, where your software and networked hardware are set up properly). If you have access to only one printer, this setting remains the same all the time. The printer that you are currently printing to should always be selected because it sends important information to the rest of the Page Setup or Print Setup dialog box, such as the page sizes that are available with the currently selected printer.

-

Size (Windows)/Paper (Mac): This drop-down menu enables you to see the available page sizes for the printer that is selected in the Format For or Name menu. Make sure that you select the right page size for the paper you plan to print on.

-

Orientation: This setting determines whether your page prints the tall way (represented on the Mac by a button with an androgynous human figure standing upright, and in Windows by the Portrait radio button) or the wide way (represented on the Mac by the button with an androgynous human lying down, or in Windows by the Landscape radio button).

-

Scale to Fit or % of Normal Size (Windows)/Scale (Mac): This value (located in Page Setup on the main panel and in Print Setup after clicking the Properties button and then the Graphics tab) controls the size of the illustration. The value is defined as a percentage of the artwork's size inside Illustrator. For example, if you have a logo that's 1 inch x 1 inch in Illustrator, changing the scale to 250 percent results in the logo scaling up to 2.5 inches x 2.5 inches when printed.

Remember

Check the Page Setup or Print Setup dialog box settings whenever you choose a different page size or print to a printer other than the one you were previously using. Doing so saves trees, frustration, and nearby delicate ears.

Printing Mechanics

After you make sure that your Page or Print Setup settings are correct (typically they're fine unless someone mucks them up), you're ready to commit your masterpiece to paper.

Printing composite proofs

Printing a composite proof is really printing what you see on-screen to a single sheet of paper. You do this kind of printing all the time. If you have a color printer, your result looks really close (hopefully) to what's on-screen. If you have a black-and-white printer, you get a black-and-white version of what's on-screen.

The other kind of printing is called printing separations. Printing separations means generating a separate sheet of paper (or, more likely, film) for each ink to be used when the artwork is printed. I discuss separations in more detail in the section, [All about Way-Scary Separations](#), later in this chapter.

You can print composite proofs by following these steps:

1.

Choose File Print from the menu.

The Print dialog box appears.

2.

Select the appropriate printing options (as I detail in the [next section](#), **Important printing options).**

3.

Click OK (Print on a Mac).

Important printing options

The Print dialog box ([Figure 15-3](#) is a mug shot of the Mac and Windows versions) has all sorts of options, but only a few of them are worth noticing. Fortunately, the default settings are usually what you want anyway—for example, one copy of whatever you send to the printer of your choice. However, for situations in which the current setting is not what you want, the following handy options are lurking in the Print dialog box:

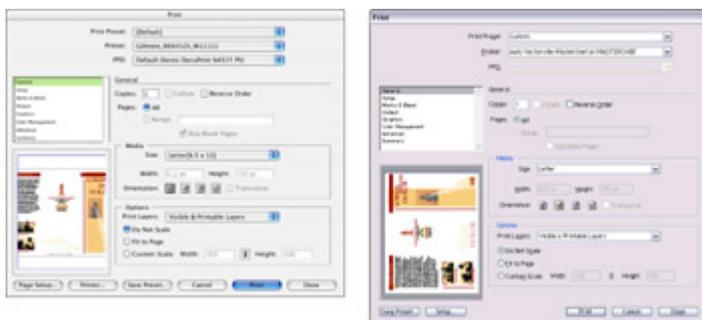


Figure 15-3: A typical Print dialog box for a Mac (left) and for a Windows PC (right).

- **Name (Windows)/Printer (Mac):** The top of the Print dialog box indicates the printer that you intend to use. If you have only one printer, this setting is most likely correct all the time. If you have more than one printer, you can see which one you're currently using. You can change the printer setting here as well.

- **Number of Copies (Windows)/Copies (Mac):** This option shows the number of copies of your artwork that you want to print, each on a separate sheet.

- **Pages From (Windows)/Pages (Mac):** Illustrator can't really have multiple pages (a page one, two, three, and so on). It can, however, print one page across several pages (in effect, a very large single page). Before you print, choose File Document Setup and then select the Tile Imageable Areas radio button in the Document Setup dialog box. Artwork that hangs outside the Artboard prints on separate pages. You can then print the artwork on multiple pages, tiling it so that you can cut and paste the artwork by hand into a big poster, if you want. (Using these options, you can make your artwork larger than your page size by as much as 18 feet!)

Remember

Unfortunately, the implementation of this feature is abysmal (which is why I don't mention it anywhere in this book beyond this paragraph). For instance, you have no way of telling which pages your artwork is on, even though you have to specify the pages in the Print Range option in the Print dialog box. This inevitably leads to paper waste. Even when you do get the thing to print out properly, you still have to cut up your pages and tape them together. If you need poster-sized output, you're much better off printing it at your local service bureau on a large-format output device.

All about Way-Scary Separations

Separations print a separate page for each color of ink that you use in a document. Printing separations is a good way to double-check your work before you send it to a service bureau to be made into film or plates. If you never do that, skip this section.

Technical Stuff

If you do send your work to a service bureau to be made into film or plates, printing separations can save you a lot of time. For example, suppose you plan to print a job using black ink and the spot color Pantone 185. After printing separations, you get pages for cyan, magenta, yellow, and Pantone 185, rather than just pages for black and Pantone 185. You know immediately that some of the colors you used were created as cyan, magenta, yellow, black (CMYK) process colors, not as spot colors. (Read more on spot colors later in this section.) On closer examination of the pages, you see that the black type you used exists on all pages, and you know that the type was specified as Registration, not as Black. Registration and Black look identical on-screen, but Registration is a special color that's used exclusively by printers (for those little marks that help center the content on the page). Registration is totally unsuitable for artwork. (Ack! No! Don't print that ink drawing in Registration! You'll only get a page full of gunk.)

I could fill a book with information about looking at separations to find out information about potential problems in your artwork. The book would be painfully long and boring, however, and one I don't want to write. My advice: Print separations and leave it at that. Perhaps the best place to find out more about separations is your service bureau. The people there can help you examine your separations. In fact, many service bureaus require that you provide laser print separations when you place a print order so they know the file is properly prepared.

The concept behind printing separations from Illustrator is straightforward. Because printing in color requires different inks, which are applied to paper sequentially on a printing press, each ink gets its own printing plate. Illustrator generates film, paper, or even the individual plates themselves—one for each color of ink.

Traditionally, full-color artwork is printed using four different inks (and therefore four plates): cyan, magenta, yellow, and black (CMYK). If you have a CMYK document in Illustrator, you're working in the environment that's perfect for full-color printing. Check out [Figure 15-4](#) for a composite image and the four separations used to create it. (All are shown here in black and white, of course.)



Figure 15-4: The original artwork (left) shown as four separations (right).

Remember, separations are not in color

Separations don't print in color; they print in black and white. It doesn't matter to the printing press what color each plate is; the color is determined by the ink that's used with a particular plate.

Printing separations

Okay, anybody except a jet pilot may find the Output section of the Print dialog box (shown in [Figure 15-5](#)) a bit intimidating. But don't panic at the sight of all those controls. Instead, create the artwork that you want to separate. (Be sure to save any changes before you continue.) Then use the following steps to set up your document for separation printing:

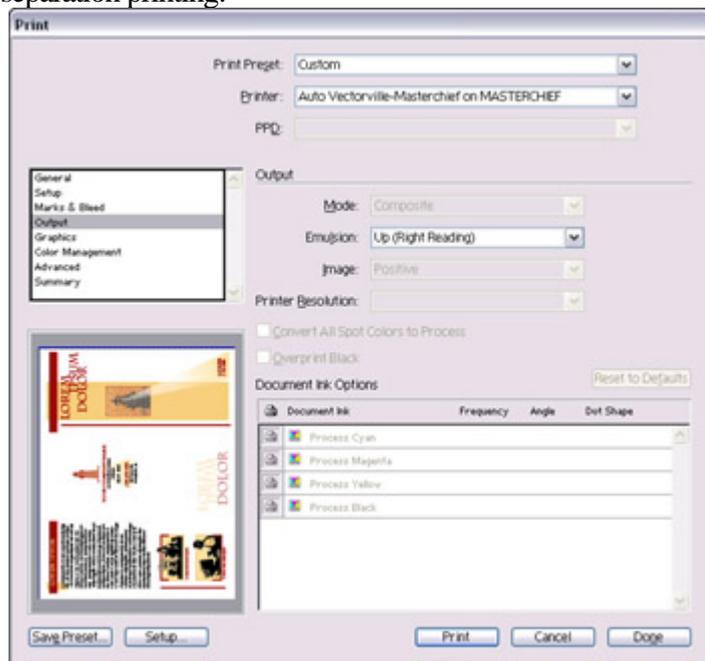


Figure 15-5: Use the Output section of the Print dialog box for printing separations.

1.

Choose File Print and click Output.

The output options in the Print dialog box appear.

2.

Choose the Separations (Host-Based) option in the Mode drop-down menu.

The ink check boxes are now enabled.

3.

Make sure that the settings (Emulsion, Image, and Printer Resolution) are correct.

If you aren't sure whether they're correct, leave the default settings as they are and check with the representative from your offset printing company.

4.

Click the icon to the left of any color that you want to print.

5.

Click the Print button after you finish making changes.

By the way, if you need a quick refresher on the uses of CMYK and RGB (red, green, blue), sneak a peek at [Chapter 1](#). I won't tell a soul.

Chapter 16: Putting Your Art on the Web

Overview

In This Chapter

- Designing for the Web in Illustrator
- Differentiating between raster and vector formats on the Web
- Saving JPEG, GIF, and PNG for the Web
- Exporting Flash and SVG
- Creating and optimizing slices

Illustrator is the perfect tool for creating and designing graphical elements for Web pages. That statement may surprise you because most Web graphics are pixel-based, whereas Illustrator is a vector-based graphics tool. In Illustrator, however, the big advantage to creating Web graphics is in the resolution independence of vector-based graphics (as I discuss in [Chapter 1](#)). You can create a graphic once, scale it to be any size you need it to be (even use it for print in addition to the Web), and it will always be a high-quality rendition of your creation.

In this chapter, you peer into the myriad ways of preparing Illustrator graphics for the Web and figure out how to determine the options that best meet the needs of individual graphics. You also find out about how some new file formats, such as Flash and SVG, help you put vector-based graphics on the Web preserving the advantages of vector-based graphics (such as small file size and maximum quality, no matter at what size you view or print the graphics).

From Illustrator to the Web

When you create a graphic in a pixel-based program, such as Photoshop, you have to decide how big you want the graphic to be from the very start. If you want to enlarge the graphic, you add pixels; if you want to make the graphic smaller, you throw away pixels. Either way, you get a blurry, lower-quality image. But with Illustrator, you don't have these problems. Even though you ultimately create pixel-based graphics, your graphics don't become pixel-based until you save or export them. You can save the Illustrator file many times at different sizes, and each one will be at the best possible quality!

The differences between creating for the Web and creating for print happen when you save your graphic. Whenever you create artwork in Illustrator for the Web, you work just as always. The key difference is in how you save your work after you create it. The only other difference that you may find is in the color choices whenever you create a graphic for the GIF file format. (More on that in a moment.) Otherwise, the creative processes for Web and print are identical.

Because you view Web graphics on-screen, you have a much better idea of how they will look after you put them on a Web site than you would if you were going to print them. Colors on-screen (and on the Web, which is always displayed on a screen) consist of red, green, and blue (RGB) pixel combinations. So if you create graphics just for the Web, RGB documents (for more on RGB see [Chapter 1](#)) are your best bet. If you create things for both screen and print, RGB gives you the greatest flexibility.

Using Web colors only

Suppose that you're in a room full of Web designers and you hear them talk about *Web-safe color space* and the *Web palette*. You look around discreetly. A dapper man in a dark suit steps out from behind the potted plant and tells you, "You're traveling through another dimension . . . and a weird piano riff starts to play. . . ."

Granted, Web design can seem pretty weird. At least the number of colors is relatively small. *Web-safe color* refers to a set of 216 colors that look the same in all Web browsers and on all computer platforms. If you've been creating for print for any length of time, you may be used to using an almost unlimited range of colors. A mere 216 colors may seem limited at first, but there's method in the madness.

One key benefit of the GIF file format is that you can specify exact colors to use in your artwork *after* the artwork is created. The catch is that you can only choose from the 256 colors that the GIF format supports. (Other formats, such as RGB support up to 16.7 million colors. Yikes!) So how do you get 216 out of 256? Well, unfortunately, only 216 colors actually display the same on all Web browsers and computer platforms. That's what makes them Web safe.

What happens if you use a color outside of those 216? Whenever a computer encounters a color it can't display, it *dithers* the colors. The computer takes the colors that it can display and tries to emulate the missing color, putting alternating squares close together of the colors that it can display. If you look at the monitor from a distance and squint, you see a color that looks very similar to your original color.

Dithering is especially noticeable in large areas of solid color. The effects vary from computer to computer and browser to browser. Sometimes the effects aren't noticeable at all. Sometimes you get an obvious plaid or striped pattern. Other times, you get plaids and stripes together (and that is such a fashion *faux pas*).

Remember

Bottom line: If it's critical that your colors display consistently (and without dithering) to as many viewers as possible (as in the case of a corporate logo on a home page), use Web-safe colors. Use these Web-safe colors when you save your Illustrator graphic for the Web or when you first create your graphic in Illustrator. You can change the colors in your previously created Illustrator artwork by choosing File Save for Web. Or you can start out using Web-safe colors to build your artwork (which may save some hassle down the line) by choosing Window Swatch Libraries Web. The Web color palette is shown in [Figure 16-1](#).

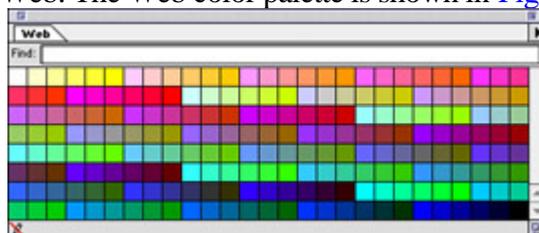


Figure 16-1: The Illustrator Web color palette.

Just click any color in this palette and add it to your Swatches palette so that you can use it just as you do any other color. If you use colors only from this palette, you ensure that your artwork uses only Web-safe colors. However, many Illustrator features (such as blends, color filters, and transparencies) can quickly turn even these colors into unsafe colors. Illustrator likes millions and millions of colors. . . .

Don't let all this talk of Web-safe colors make you gun-shy. In some situations, Web-safe colors are vital (for example, in logos and large on-screen areas of solid color) in other situations, they just don't matter. Dithering is most obvious in large areas of solid color; if your graphic is made up of many small parts, the dithering won't really be noticeable.

Tip

The Save for Web command enables you to decide at any time whether to use Web-safe colors when you save your illustration (See the section later in this chapter, [Creating Web-Specific Pixel Graphics](#).)

Working in Pixel Preview mode

The majority of graphics created for the Web are pixel-based. The two most widely supported graphics file formats on the Web are JPEG and GIF, and these formats save only pixel data, not vector data. (See [Chapter 2](#).) When your graphics are in either of these formats, the majority of Internet users will be able to view your graphics. Fortunately, Illustrator can save graphics as both JPEGs and GIFs. Because pixel-based and vector-based images can look quite different, Illustrator has a special preview mode designed for when you're creating graphics for the Web: Pixel Preview mode. In Pixel Preview mode, you can see what your vector artwork will look like when it's turned into pixels for display on the Web. That way, you get a better idea of what the final artwork will look like on

the Web (rather than waiting to be surprised when you see it in the browser for the first time).

To turn on Pixel Preview mode, choose View Pixel Preview. You may not notice anything different on-screen until you zoom in closer than 100%. Try 200% to really see the pixel detail. [Figure 16-2](#) shows Pixel Preview turned off and turned on at 200%.



Figure 16-2: Pixel Preview turned off (left) versus Pixel Preview turned on (right).

This approach is much more convenient than using the File Save for Web command to convert your graphic into pixels to see how it will look, and then having to resave it if it looks awful. With Pixel Preview mode, you can edit the graphics live while you're viewing the pixels.

Choosing a file format

Deciding what file format to use is almost as perplexing as picking between paper and plastic in the checkout line. Annoyingly, no single correct answer exists when you have to decide which file format to use for the Web. What works best for your purpose normally turns out to be a compromise between what you want and what you can have.

Well, okay, what can you have? You can use any of five file formats to put your graphics on the Web: GIF, JPEG, PNG, Flash (SWF), and SVG. The basic difference is in how each format presents your artwork. Consider this thumbnail comparison:

- **GIF, JPEG, and PNG** require that vector-based files be converted to pixel-based artwork. The results look sketchier but load faster.
- **Flash (SWF) and SVG** preserve the paths you create in Illustrator though sometimes they come with gigantic file sizes.

Each format has unique benefits and drawbacks. And here they come now.

GIF file format

GIF is a great format for traditional Illustrator graphics which means almost no gradients, blends, or fine details. GIF

(Graphics Interchange Format) uses a maximum of 256 colors, but typically you want to use even fewer. The fewer colors you use, the smaller your files.

GIF works best with simple graphics that have large areas of solid color. GIF compression encodes an area of solid color as if it were one big pixel. The more solid colors you have (almost regardless of how much on-screen area they cover), the smaller the file size. But if you use gradients, soft drop shadows, or really complex graphics, you introduce more instructions into the file, and the file gets a lot bigger.

In the process of compressing all the different colors in your image (sometimes thousands or millions) down to 256 or fewer, you can get banding and dithering. *Banding* happens when a range of different colors gets compressed into one solid color and looks like a big stripe in your image where you didn't intend to put one. *Dithering* is Illustrator's way of simulating missing colors by putting tiny squares of the remaining colors close together. This type of dithering is separate from any additional dithering that happens when you don't use Web-safe colors; see the [previous section](#), Using Web colors only.

GIF files differ from JPEG files in two important ways: They can have transparent areas, and you can specify the exact colors you want (such as Web-safe colors) when you save the file.

Remember

GIF is one of the most widely recognized graphics formats for the Web. If you use a GIF file, you virtually guarantee that all your site's visitors can open it in their browsers.

JPEG file format

JPEG is among the most widely recognized graphics formats for the Web. Anything that you save in JPEG format can be viewed by almost everyone. The JPEG format (created by the Joint Photographic Experts Group) provides the best compression possible for digitized photographs by throwing information away. Don't fret too much about this situation. JPEG does so intelligently—examining the image and removing data where the human eye is least likely to notice the absence. What this amazing feat of mathematics means to you as an artist, however, is that your graphics files should start out with a lot of information—so that if you have to throw out a lot of the information, you still have a lot left. Unlike GIFs, JPEGs can't have transparent areas and offer no way to specify exact colors.

Tip

Complex images with lots of gradients, blends, and soft shadows make good JPEGs. Alas, this format is really lousy for graphics that have big areas of solid color. You can't hide the loss of information. Basically, if the image looks good as a GIF, it may look bad as a JPEG—and vice versa. Fortunately, you can decide which format works best by using the Save for Web command.

PNG file format

PNG (Portable Network Graphics) format has a split personality PNG-8 and PNG-24. The graphics quality that you can get with simple GIFs is also available with PNG-8 graphics. PNG-24, on the other hand, is as adept at handling complex images as JPEG. PNG-8 and PNG-24 files can have transparent areas and PNG-24 compression is lossless, which means no reduction in image quality.

Why don't you just use PNG for everything? Well, first, PNG offers no way to control how much compression is applied to the image; you can't make the image smaller (as you can with a JPEG). More importantly, PNG is not as universal as JPEG and GIF; you don't see PNG format nearly as often on the Web. If you use this format, not all your visitors can view the graphic on their browsers. Some may need to install a special piece of software called a *plug-in* so their browsers can read PNG graphics. This situation creates enough hassle that some visitors turn away from Web pages using PNG graphics to avoid downloading and installing the PNG plug-in.

Tip

If your primary concern is image quality, use PNG-24. If you want the maximum number of people to view your work on the Web and the maximum control over file size, use GIF or JPEG.

Macromedia Flash (SWF) file format

The Macromedia Flash (or SWF) file format, created by Macromedia, is one of the cooler things to happen on the Web in recent years. Flash is the current standard for vector graphics on the Web. Not only does it support vector-based graphics, but it also supports animation, sound, and interactivity. Of course (as per Murphy's Law of Innovation), something so cool can't be perfect, and Flash has its blemishes, too. First, nearly every browser requires a plug-in to view a Flash file, which limits your audience from the start. Second, Flash doesn't support cool Illustrator features, such as transparency, object blends, and gradient meshes. Last, Flash files don't play well with others. If you try to tie the Flash files into other non-Flash aspects of your Web site, you may run into difficulty.

SVG file format

SVG (Scalable Vector Graphics) format is the upcoming standard for vector graphics. It's the coolest thing that will happen to the Web in the near future which means that you still have a while to wait. As with Flash graphics, the current versions of most browsers need a plug-in in order to be able to read SVG files.

Ah, but the upside is tantalizing. SVG supports anything that you can create in Illustrator, as well as animation and interactivity. SVG files can interact with HyperText Markup Language (HTML) pages and work in conjunction with eXtensible Markup Language (XML)-driven Web sites. A long list of companies, including Adobe and Corel, are fully behind SVG. It may well become the dominant vector-based graphics format in a few years (perhaps by the time the International Space Station is complete). Watch out for the following pitfalls:

-

I m waiting: Although the industry has great expectations for SVG by 2005, it may not seize the vector-based graphics crown on schedule.

-

I m still waiting: Although SVG is one of the coolest formats out there, it has yet to be adopted on a wide scale.

So which file format is best, already?

Sorry, but I can t tell you which file format is the best choice for you to use. That answer depends on what you need the file format to do and what tradeoffs you re willing to live with. That s the most practical answer for now.

However, a summary may help ward off the Too-Many-Choices headache, so here goes:

- **Maximum compatibility:** Use GIFs and JPEGs if you want maximum compatibility with as many people as possible.
- **Simplicity:** Use GIFs for simple graphics with large, solid colors or for transparency.
- **Complexity:** Use JPEGs for more complex graphics with gradients and so forth.
- **Maximum quality:** Use PNG for maximum-quality complex graphics when compatibility isn t an issue.
- **Web considerations:** Use Flash when you need to publish vector-based graphics on the Web and want as much compatibility as possible (but don t require as much compatibility as with GIFs and JPEGs).
- **La vida loca:** Use SVG when you want as many bells and whistles as possible and are willing to throw compatibility to the wind.

If we re all lucky, everyone will eventually adopt SVG as the standard, and we won t have to worry about issues, such as which file format to use. (Of course, you gotta ask yourself: Do I feel lucky?) Until then, choosing the right file format is a juggling act that balances features, quality, and compatibility.

Creating Web-Specific Pixel Graphics

Most graphics on the Web are not vector-based but pixel-based because of compatibility issues. Regardless of which pixel format you use, Illustrator gives you the same dialog box from which to export your artwork. Choosing File Save for Web displays the Save for Web dialog box, as shown in [Figure 16-3](#).

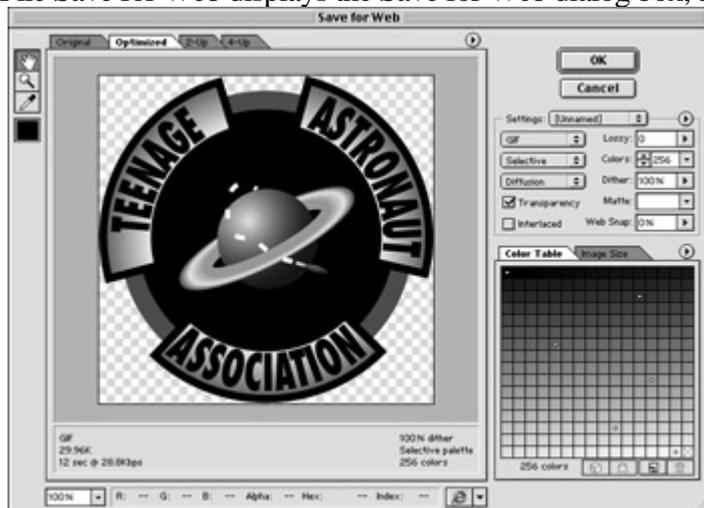


Figure 16-3: Preview your image in the Save for Web dialog box.

The Save for Web dialog box may appear a bit intimidating at first, but it's actually quite easy to use. Although you do have to wade through a lot of settings, the dialog box provides you with a preview of the image, so that you can see how the settings affect the image's quality. The dialog box also gives you the file size and an estimate of how long the graphic will take to download—important considerations in creating graphics for the Web.

The dialog box is slightly different, depending on the file format you're working with, but the following few features remain consistent in any format you use:

- Original, Optimized, 2-Up, 4-Up:** These tabs let you view the image at different settings. Click the Original tab to view the image before any settings are applied. Click the Optimized tab to see how the image will look after you save it with the current settings. Click the 2-Up and 4-Up tabs to see the image at multiple settings at once. These last views are the most useful. Your goal when saving your image, no matter what format you use, is always to resemble the original as closely as possible while maintaining the smallest file size (and lowest download time). The ability to compare the image at different settings with the original is vital to achieving this goal. To use the 2-Up and 4-Up settings, click either of the tabs. Then click one of the images to select it. Any settings you make apply only to that selected image. Click a different image to apply different settings. Illustrator saves whatever image is selected (at whatever settings) after you click OK.

- File Size and Download Time:** These features tell you how large your file is and how long that file will take to download over a 28.8 modem. This information is very important. Think of every second required for a graphic to download as another second the viewer has to get bored and click away from your page. Weigh this download time against the quality of the graphic and ask yourself whether having those extra colors, a

little less banding, or a better-looking graphic is worth the download time.

-
-
- **File Format:** This drop-down menu is where you choose the format GIF, JPEG, PNG-8, PNG-24, SWF, or SVG.
-
- **The remainder of the settings:** The remainder of the fields around the File Format menu are the file settings and the unique settings of that format. After you choose a format, the remainder of the settings change to match the features of that format. These settings are covered in depth under each file format in the next few sections of this chapter.
-
- **Color Table:** This tab shows you the exact colors used when you save the file in GIF or PNG-8 format. Here you can delete colors (or shift non-Web-safe colors to Web-safe colors).
-
- **Image Size:** This tab lets you set the size (in pixels) of the image as you save it. This setting is the actual physical size of the image as it displays in the browser, not the file size.
-
- **Layers:** Illustrator allows you to export your file as Cascading Style Sheet (CSS) layers. An advanced feature, CSS layers, enables you to selectively hide or show layers on your Web page. They also allow for transparent overlapping slices. For more on CSS layers, see the section, Cascading Style Sheet layers, later in this chapter.
-
- **Slices:** The Slice Select tool enables you to select slices you made to your object in Illustrator. Slicing your artwork divides your artwork into individual pieces allowing your file to load in sections on your Web page. Slices also enable you to assign features, such as rollovers and links, to individual slices. There s more on slices in the section, Cascading Style Sheet layers, later in this chapter.

Saving a graphic as a GIF file

To save your graphic as a GIF, follow these steps:

1.

Choose File Save for Web.

The Save for Web dialog box appears.

2.

Select GIF from the File Format drop-down menu (refer to [Figure 16-3](#)).

3.

Click the 2-Up or 4-Up tab at the top of the graphic.

After you choose either 2-Up or 4-Up, the first graphic is your original image, and the second is selected as the Optimized image. As you change your file settings, this graphic updates to preview those changes. Clicking the third or fourth graphic (in 4-Up view) lets you make different settings and simultaneously compare and contrast them to find the best settings. Adjust your settings to find the best balance of small file size and best image quality. Every setting you change affects both of those things. Watch the image carefully to see how the changes affect it.

4.

Adjust the settings for the graphic:

○

Color Reduction Algorithm: This delightfully descriptive setting (the drop-down menu beneath the File Format menu) simply means that you take the many colors in your image and reduce them to 256 or fewer colors. How do you want to do that? Your choices are Perceptual, Selective, Adaptive, Web, or Custom. The first three are pretty much the same. The Perceptual setting makes the colors as close as possible to whatever colors the human eye perceives in the original image (so they say). The Selective setting does the same thing but uses as many Web-safe colors as possible. The Adaptive setting makes the remaining colors as mathematically close to the original as possible. The Web setting uses the closest Web-safe colors to the colors that are in the image. The Custom setting is for power users who want to create their own color-reduction algorithms.

Tip

Your choices are really between the Perceptual and Web settings. The Perceptual setting gives you an image as close as possible to your original creation. The Web setting gives you an image that looks the same no matter what computer or Web browser it s on. Unfortunately, the Perceptual setting usually looks great, whereas the Web setting dithers things substantially. But look at the Web choice this way: This is as bad as the image is going to look. With any other setting, the graphic is going to look better or worse unpredictably. With the Web setting, you know exactly how much dithering is going on, and nothing more will happen to the image. Compare the second image in [Figure 16-4](#) with the third, which is selected. The only difference between the two is the Color Reduction algorithm. Although noticeable dithering appears in the Web-safe image, it doesn't look unacceptably bad, and the file size is a little smaller.



Figure 16-4: Saving a GIF in the Save for Web dialog box.

○

Dithering algorithm: This is the actual shape of the dithering pattern. The No Dither setting won't dither the image at all. The Diffusion setting randomizes the dithering pattern to make it less noticeable. The Pattern setting dithers in a fixed grid. The Noise setting is even more random than the Diffusion setting, making any dither even less noticeable. Sadly, the settings that produce the least noticeable dithering also create the highest file sizes. The Noise setting produces the largest files, and the Diffusion setting the second largest. The Pattern setting produces small files with noticeable stripes. The No Dither setting produces obvious bands of color in the image. Notice the sky in [Figure 16-4](#). A No Dither setting causes the stripes. Here again, your goal is to strike a balance between the smallest size and the best quality.

○

Transparency: How do you want to treat the parts of your image that have no graphics? Do you want them to be transparent or filled with the Matte color (explained later in this list)? Check this box to make them transparent.

○

Interlaced: This setting makes the file larger so that it seems to be downloading faster, which seems like a contradiction. When a graphic is interlaced, it first loads a very low-resolution version to the Web browser, and then the full-resolution version. Graphics seem to load faster, but the Interlaced setting is just soothing the user by showing something useful happening. Without interlacing, the whole page has to download before you can look at it. (The page actually loads faster this way; it only *seems* to take forever.) Impatient people may want to select this box (unless, of course, they already skipped this list).

○

Lossy: This setting reduces file size by as much as 40 percent by eliminating pixels (at the expense of image quality). Use as much Lossy as you can get away with but don't ruin your image.

Tip

The Lossy setting won't work with the Interlacing setting turned on.

○

Colors: This setting is the total number of colors used in the image. Sometimes, reducing the number results in a smaller image, but doing so doesn't usually have as much effect as the Dither and Lossy settings.

○

Dither: If you select the Pattern, Noise, or Diffusion settings for a dither method, you can use this setting to turn down the amount of dithering. Lower amounts result in smaller graphics with more noticeable dithering patterns.

○

Matte: If you don't choose the Transparency box, the Matte color fills areas of your image where there are no graphics. If you're using transparency and know what color you plan to use for the background of the Web page, you can set the Matte color to the background color and the pixels at the edge of your graphic will blend with the background, creating a more visually appealing image. If you don't know what the background color will be, set the Matte color to None. Otherwise, the edge pixels may blend to a different color from your background, producing an obvious fringe around the graphic, as if it were snipped hastily out of a different background.

○

Web Snap: If you aren't using the Web setting for your color reduction algorithm, you can use the Web Snap setting to convert some of the colors (starting with those used most in the image) to Web-safe colors. This setting is a great way to achieve a balance between quality and compatibility. By changing just the largest areas of color to Web-safe colors, you can avoid the dithering problem in places where it will be most noticeable. The higher the setting, the more colors Illustrator converts to Web-safe colors.

After you make your settings on several images and decide which image works best for you, click that image, and then click OK. The graphic saves as a GIF, ready for you to use on your Web page.

Saving a graphic as a JPEG file

In Illustrator, JPEGs are easier to make than GIFs. You only need to worry about one setting: Quality. Of course, quality can be specified in two ways. (Simplicity? Well, almost.)

To save your artwork as a JPEG, follow these steps:

1.

Choose File Save for Web.

The Save for Web dialog box appears.

2.

Choose JPEG from the File Format drop-down menu.

3.

Click the 2-Up or 4-Up tab at the top of the graphic.

For more on viewing options, see the earlier section, *Saving a graphic as a GIF file*, in this chapter.

4.

Choose a Quality setting.

You can choose the Quality setting in two ways, but the effects are identical: by choosing it from the Quality drop-down menu or by entering a number into the Quality field.

○

The Quality drop-down menu: The menu offers you a choice of four preset values: Maximum, High, Medium, and Low. These options refer to the quality level of the image, not the amount of compression applied. A Maximum quality level produces (as you may expect) the largest file sizes and the highest-quality images.

○

The Quality field: In this field, just to the right of the drop-down menu, you type in any value from 100 (maximum quality) to 0. Use the lowest Quality setting possible that doesn't destroy your image. You

may notice that the loss of quality in your image shows up as weird patterns that weren't there before. These patterns are especially noticeable where two large areas of different colors meet. Notice the weirdness (called *artifacting*) in the fourth image in [Figure 16-5](#). A little of this is tolerable in the name of smaller files, but too much becomes distracting.

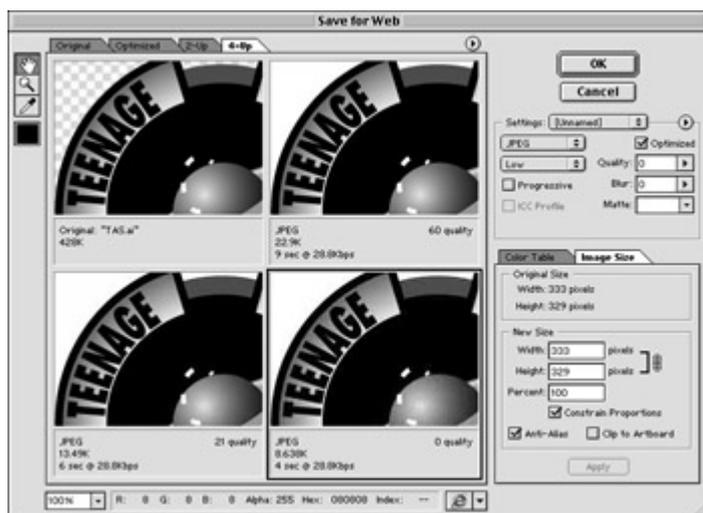


Figure 16-5: Saving a JPEG from the Save for Web dialog box.

Tip

Note: Entering settings in the Quality field is identical to choosing values from the Quality drop-down menu. In the menu, the values of Maximum, High, Medium, and Low correspond (respectively) to settings of 80, 60, 30, and 10 in the Quality field.

5.

Adjust the other settings.

○

Progressive: Like interlacing for GIFs, the Progressive setting creates the illusion that the image loads faster on Web browsers by loading a low-resolution version of the graphic first and then turning it into a higher-resolution image. In actuality, the image takes longer to load because Progressive files are larger, but viewers feel as though the download is going faster because they see things happening while they wait, rather than waiting for the whole download before they see anything.

○

Blur: Blur is a fairly useless setting. The goal is to reduce the artifacting in the image by blurring it. Unfortunately, the setting blurs the whole image, not just the artifacts, creating problems where none existed before. Leave this set to zero and ignore it. (Unless, of course, you're feeling a little misty.)

○

Matte: JPEGs can have no transparent areas, so wherever no graphic exists, Illustrator fills in with this color. A setting of None fills in with white.

Saving a graphic as a PNG-8 or PNG-24 file

The settings for PNG-8 are identical to those for GIF except you don't get a Lossy option. (Read through the earlier section, [Saving a graphic as a GIF file.](#)) Put PNG-8 wherever you see GIF. No settings exist for PNG-24, except Transparency, Interlacing, and Matte options; what you get is what you get. Choose the PNG-24 file format, and the compression scheme does its thing. Either you like the result (and click OK), or you don't (and choose GIF or JPEG instead).

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◀ PREVIOUS NEXT ▶

Creating Web-Specific Vector Graphics

Vectors have several advantages over pixels. One of the chief advantages is their small size, especially for basic graphics such as logos and buttons. Another advantage is their ability to be scaled without any loss of quality.

Saving a graphic as a Macromedia Flash file

Flash is a very versatile format developed by Macromedia. Not only can you use Flash to show vector graphics on the Web, you can also animate and add sound and interactivity to them. In Illustrator, you can create the graphic and do limited animation with it. Beyond that, you have to use another application (such as Adobe LiveMotion or Macromedia Flash) to take full advantage of the format. For this reason, the Export to Macromedia Flash (SWF) command is really intended to prepare artwork for export to one of these other applications, rather than to create artwork to go directly to the Web. Not that you can't put a Flash file created in Illustrator directly on the Web. You certainly can, but then you're tapping into just a fraction of what Flash can do.

Still, if you want your Illustrator artwork on the Web as vector data, Flash is currently the way to go. The one drawback to the format is the need for a browser plug-in in order for people to see your graphic in their browsers. This situation can make your graphic inaccessible to some people. However, Flash is such a popular format that many people have the plug-in installed in their browsers. Chances are quite good that many people will be able to see your work without problems.

So if your primary concern is that your graphic appears on the Web with no-holds-barred top quality (and print with the best possible quality to boot), use the Flash format.

To save a graphic in Flash format, just follow these steps:

1.

Choose File Export.

The Export dialog box appears.

2.

Specify a name, location, and file format for your document.

In this case, choose Macromedia Flash (SWF) from the file format drop-down menu.

3.

Click OK.

The Macromedia Flash (SWF) Format Options dialog box appears, as shown in [Figure 16-6](#).

The Macromedia Flash (SWF) Format Options dialog box gives you the following options.

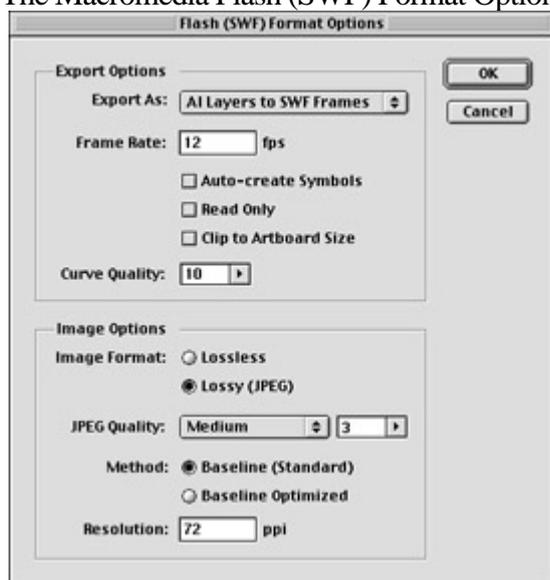


Figure 16-6: Exporting an AI file to an SWF file with the Macromedia Flash (SWF) Format Options dialog box.

- **Export Options:** These options enable you to establish, among other things, how the layers in your file are handled and how fast those layers appear in the animation.

-

Export As: This drop-down menu has three options: AI File to SWF File, AI Layers to SWF Frames, and AI Layers to SWF Files. (*AI* is short for Adobe Illustrator and refers to the file you're currently saving. *SWF* is another term for a Flash file.) The option you choose determines how Illustrator layers (see [Chapter 13](#)) are handled when you save them. The AI File to SWF File option flattens all the layers into a single image, just as if you were printing the illustration. The AI Layers to SWF Frames option builds a special file that, when loaded to a browser, displays each layer in sequence starting with the first layer and stopping with the last. You can use this option to create a slide show by putting a different graphic on each layer, or to do simple animations. The final option, AI Layers to SWF Files, exports each layer as a separate Flash file.

-

Frame Rate: This setting determines how fast the Flash file flips through the different Illustrator layers after you choose the AI Layers to SWF Frames option from the Export As menu. Each layer is considered a frame, and the number you enter here is the number of frames you want to appear every second.

-

Looping: Select this setting to create a file that plays repeatedly when you choose the Export As AI Layers to SWF Frames option.

-

Generate HTML: Select this setting to generate a HyperText Markup Language (HTML) file so that your Flash (SWF) file appears in your browser at its correct and original size rather than filling the window. No more additional editing hassles.

-

Read Only: Select this setting to create a file that people can view but not change in any way. Also, the file cannot be edited in any Flash application.

○

Clip to Artboard Size: Select this setting to crop out any artwork that is off the Artboard.

○

Curve Quality: The higher this setting (from 1 to 10), the closer the graphic is to your Illustrator file and the larger your file size. Lower settings provide lower quality with smaller file sizes. Yet again, you're plagued by the agonizing compromise between file size and image quality!

●

Image Options: These options may never come into play in the graphic you're exporting; they only matter if you have a pixel-based image (such as a scan) incorporated into your Illustrator file or if you create your artwork using transparencies, *complex gradients* (gradients with more than eight colors), gradient meshes, or effects. (See [Chapter 10](#) for more info.) The Flash format doesn't support these features, so it turns them into pixels in the final Flash file (your other Illustrator graphics remain vector-based). The following Image Options determine how to handle these pixel graphics:

○

Lossless: Select this radio button to save the pixel graphics in PNG-24 format. Don't worry; the Flash plug-in takes care of any compatibility issues with the PNG format. Use this option if you're exporting your graphic for further editing in Flash because you can apply further compression settings in those programs. The Lossless option lets you start with the highest possible quality.

○

Lossy: Select this radio button to save the graphics as JPEGs. Choosing the Lossy option enables you to choose a corresponding JPEG quality. See the [JPEG file format](#) and the [Saving a graphic as a JPEG file](#) sections, earlier in this chapter, for more on JPEGs and compression settings.

○

Method: Stick with the Baseline (Standard) option to ensure a format that's recognized by most browsers. Selecting the Baseline Optimized setting optimizes the color but isn't recognized by all browsers.

○

Resolution: This setting determines how much information the graphics contain; 72 ppi (pixels per inch) is perfect for on-screen display, but if you want people to be able to print your graphics, you may want to go up to 150 ppi, or even 300. Watch out, though, because this high setting results in huge file sizes.

After you complete all your settings, click OK to save your file in Flash format.

You can export Flash (SWF) files that include symbols. When opened in a Flash application, the symbols are included in the Symbol library of the application.

Saving a graphic as a SVG file

Scalable Vector Graphics (SVG) are great, but . . . well . . . futuristic. Look at it this way. You go to your local car dealer and you find the car of your dreams, with every feature that you ever wanted and some that you didn't know even existed. The gas mileage is great, the color you want is in stock, and you can drive the car off the lot today! And the price? It's about half the price you're willing to pay! But just as you're about to sign on the dotted line, the dealer informs you that there's one little catch: The car runs on a special kind of gas. All the major gas stations have committed to start carrying the special gas in the future, but right now the special gas is not available. What do you do? Take the risk and invest the money, or purchase a car for which you know you can get gas?

SVG is technically great. It offers everything that Flash does, with promises for a whole lot more, such as total support for everything you can create in Illustrator. Also, the format is much more open than the Flash format. To create Flash files, you must use an application that specifically supports Flash format, such as Illustrator or LiveMotion. However, if you knew how, you could write SVG files in any word-processing program. In the future, SVG files may integrate seamlessly with Web pages without requiring plug-ins or anything else, meaning that you may get maximum quality and maximum compatibility, and issues such as file formats, dithering, and Web-safe colors, will become concerns of the past.

Unfortunately, for now, you may still have a hard time finding that special gas. All the major software companies have pledged support for SVG, but that support isn't there yet. The industry moves so fast that no one can say how long SVG may take to catch on. By the time you read this, that transformation may have occurred. As a matter of fact, Adobe has begun this transformation. But it may be years until SVG rolls off the tongue as easily as JPEG. (PNG has been around for years and is only just beginning to be adopted.)

So if you want to live a life of action and adventure on the leading edge of technology, start saving your files as SVG right now. Create graphics so insanely great that people are forced to risk computer crashes and other frustrations to download and use the unstable plug-ins that they need to view your SVG files. Go on. I dare you. I double-dare you. I double-dog dare you. If you can pull it off, you're the coolest kid in town and will be far ahead of everybody else. If you can't, you still have GIFs and JPEGs and Flash files to fall back on.

To create an SVG file, just follow these steps:

1.

Choose File Save.

The Save dialog box appears. The SVG file format can be saved directly rather than exported. You can also open an SVG file directly into Illustrator. And if that isn't enough, Illustrator lets you open SVG files that were created in other SVG-savvy applications.

2.

Choose SVG (SVG) from the Format drop-down menu. Specify a name and location for your document.

3.

Click Save.

The SVG Options dialog box appears, as shown in [Figure 16-7](#).

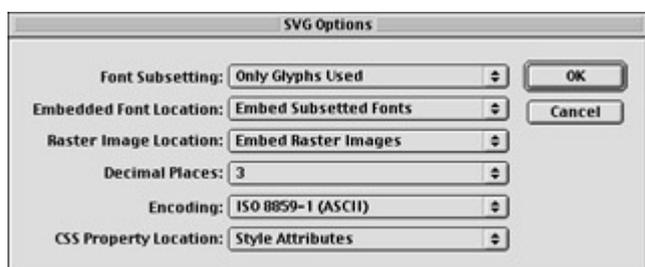


Figure 16-7: Saving an SVG file with the SVG Options dialog box.

4.

Establish your desired settings and click OK.

Check out the following list to get the lowdown on each option.

The SVG Options dialog box offers the following options:

-

Fonts: This option enables you to embed various font groupings in your SVG file.

-

Subsetting: The SVG format lets you embed the fonts that you use in the document in the SVG file. Fonts have been one of the major stumbling blocks for designers on the Web. Simply put, whoever has different fonts from yours installed on his or her computer may see your text, but not necessarily as you created it. Your font subsetting choice eliminates this problem by making the fonts you used part of the SWF file. You have seven choices for subsetted fonts.

Select the None (Use System Fonts) subsetting option if you don't want to embed any fonts, if you didn't use text in your graphic, or if you converted your text to outlines.

Select the Only Glyphs Used option to embed just the font info for the specific letters you used. This option creates a smaller file, but the graphic is less editable than when you include all glyphs because you can use only letters that are already used in the file. If you just want people to see the graphic the way you created it, select the Only Glyphs Used option.

Technical Stuff

Glyph is just a weird name for letter; you've seen it before in the word *hieroglyphics*.

Select the All Glyphs option to include all the characters of all the fonts you used. Even if you used just one letter out of Futura Condensed, all the letters, upper- and lowercase, and all special characters are included. If you want people to be able to make changes to your text, select the All Glyphs option.

Like the All Glyphs option, the other values Common English, Common English Glyphs Used, Common Roman, and Common Roman Glyphs Used are useful when the textual content of the SVG file may change.

-

Location: You can choose to have your fonts built directly into the file (Embed) or collected in another

location (Link). The Embed option results in a larger file, but you have only one piece to take care of. The Link option results in multiple files.

-

Images: Like with fonts, you can choose to have any placed pixel images in your document built into the SVG file (Embed) or stored externally (Link). The Embed option creates a larger file that is completely self-contained. The Link option creates a separate folder for pixel graphics.

-

Preserve Illustrator Editing Capabilities: Select this check box to include a fully editable Illustrator file with your SVG file so that you can make revisions easily and more efficiently. Beware that checking this option increases your file size.

The following options appear when you click the Advanced button in the SVG Options dialog box (refer to [Figure 16-7](#)).

-

CSS Properties: This option lets you determine where your Cascading Style Sheet (CSS) properties are located. *Cascading Style Sheets* are a standard method of imposing consistent display characteristics on HTML documents. Many Web sites use CSS as a dynamic and flexible way to format Web pages. Talk with your Webmaster about the best settings to use.

-

Decimal Places: Higher values (from 1 to 7) for this setting result in better image quality with (what a big surprise!) larger file sizes.

-

Encoding: The SVG format provides several encoding methods to support alphabets in different languages, such as Kanji. The default setting of Unicode (UTF-8) is fine for 95 percent of the SVG files you ever create.

-

Optimize for Adobe SVG Viewer: Select this check box to optimize the image (you see the image faster) for the Adobe SVG Viewer (a plug-in you use to view SVG files in your browser).

-

Include Slicing Data: Select this check box to preserve all slicing information. Slicing carves up your image to allow for better optimization and the ability to assign separate animation features to each chunk. For more on slicing, see the section, [Slicing and Dicing Your Graphics](#), later in this chapter.

-

Include File Info: Includes metadata, such as author and creation/revision dates.

Forget about the last option here on variable data (Include Extended Syntax for Variable Data). It's way above the scope of this book. But if you have a need to know, check out *Illustrator CS Bible* by Ted Alspach and Jennifer Alspach, published by Wiley Publishing, Inc.

Illustrator has a live SVG effects feature in which effects, such as shadows and blurs, can be added to vector objects. These effects are great because they aren't *rasterized* (turned into pixels) until the file is actually viewed in the browser—the quality is maintained, regardless of size. File sizes are still small, and the new effects can be created and edited, although some XML expertise is needed.

Remember

Although all this razzmatazz is great, you still need a plug-in to view SVG files. The SVG Viewer plug-in is installed when you install Illustrator. You can also get the latest version of the plug-in at www.adobe.com/svg.

Although I focus in this chapter on a very specific part of Web graphics production (getting your graphic into a file format that can be displayed on the Web), this is just the start. Actually putting that graphic where people can see it is another saga entirely, one that involves Web-authoring tools (or hand-coding HTML), service providers, and a whole alphabet soup of FTPs, URLs, and other confusing TLAs (three-letter acronyms). As you may have guessed, actually getting the graphic onto the Web in a real-live Web page goes beyond the scope of this one book.

The critical step in creating a Web graphic is saving the file. After you save a graphic for the Web, you have many, many options, all of which affect your graphic in different and significant ways. If you aren't producing the Web site yourself, have a discussion with the site's Webmaster before you save the graphic to find out what formats and options work best for the site.

Slicing and Dicing Your Graphics

If you're an avid Web surfer, you've probably encountered a site or two where the graphics appear on-screen in separate chunks. In the Web world, these chunks are referred to as *slices*. Slices are useful for a number of reasons. They can provide a better experience for viewers by allowing them to immediately see portions of the image while it loads rather than having to wait for an entire large image to load. Another benefit is that slicing the image into sections that appear in multiple places on your site makes it load more quickly on the next place after the image loads in one place. Also, each slice can be optimized separately, which increases loading speed. Depending on your image, revising a slice or two can be quicker than revising an entire image. Finally, you can selectively assign features, such as rollovers, links, and animation to slices. Have I convinced you yet of the merits of slices? Good. In the next section, I show you how slices work in Illustrator.

Creating slices

In Illustrator, slices can be applied to objects (vector- or pixel-based or text), groups of objects, or layers. And when any of these are edited, the slices are automatically updated. Read through the following steps for how to create slices. You do need to first create a piece of artwork, however. I recommend using at least one block of text, one group of objects, and one pixel-based image. For this example, I used a mock Web page.

1.

Choose View Show Slices.

Now you can see your slices while you create them.

2.

With the Selection tool, select an object on your Artboard.

In this example, I selected the logo. This kind of slice is referred to as an *object-based* slice.

3.

Choose Object Slice Make, and then deselect the object by clicking the Artboard away from the object.

After you release the mouse, lines and numbers appear. The red lines and numbers indicate a user-defined slice—one that you made. The pink lines and numbers indicate that Illustrator automatically created the slices. [Figure 16-8](#) shows the sliced artwork.

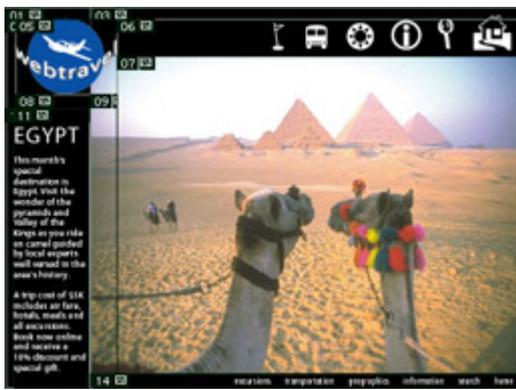


Figure 16-8: It slices, it dices, it darned near makes julienne fries.

4.

Select your group, choose Object Slice Make, and then deselect the group by clicking the Artboard away from the object.

The group is now assigned a user-defined slice. If you edit any of your objects scaling the logo, for example the slices update automatically, as shown in [Figure 16-9](#).

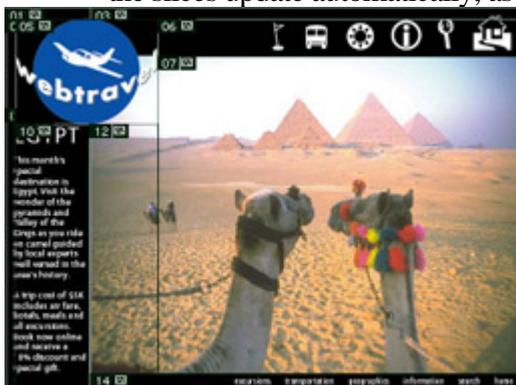


Figure 16-9: Editing an object makes the slices update automatically.

5.

Select the text block and choose Object Slice Make.

Keep the slice selected.

6.

Choose Object Slice Slice Options.

The Slice Options dialog box appears.

7.

In the Slice Options dialog box, select the HTML Text option from the Slice Type drop-down menu.

The HTML options appear.

8.

Select your alignment option and click OK.

Now it's time to optimize the slices. *Optimizing* is the process of assigning quality and compression settings to your images.

9.

Choose File Save for Web.

For more on the Save for Web dialog box and all its settings, see the section, [Creating Web-Specific Pixel Graphics](#), earlier in this chapter.

10.

In the Save for Web dialog box, select any pixel-based slices with the Slice Select tool (the second tool from the top) and select the JPEG option from the file formats drop-down menu.

11.

Choose your compression settings from the compression drop-down menu.

I chose high compression because I think quality is important. For the skinny on compression, see the earlier section, [Choosing a file format](#).

12.

Select your slices that contain vector-based graphics and then assign a GIF file format to each.

Choose your desired palette and other options. You can also assign PNG, SWF, or SVG formats, if so desired.

13.

After you optimize all your slices, click Save to generate an HTML table with your slices. Leave the format as HTML and Images.

14.

Click Save.

If you don't want to save a file, click the Done button to return to your Artboard.

Your file is sliced and diced and ready to be incorporated into your Web site.

Here are a few more things you may want to know about slicing:

- **You can manually slice your image by using the Slice tool.** Just grab the tool from the Toolbox and drag around the portion of your artwork that you want the slice to contain. Slice boundaries can be adjusted by using the Selection tool. Manual slices do not update automatically like object-based slices do.
- **You can apply slices to layers.** These are referred to as layer-based slices. Target a layer in the Layers palette (for more on layers, see [Chapter 13](#)), and choose Object Slice Make. The size of the slice is determined by the layer's bounding box.
-

- **To eliminate a slice, select it and choose Object Slice Release.**

- **To delete all slices, choose Object Slice Delete All.**

- **To show or hide your slice outlines, choose View Show/Hide Slices.**

- **You can combine several slices into a single larger one.** Select them all and choose Object Slice Combine Slices. You can also divide slices into a user-specified number of slices or pixels by choosing Object Slice Divide Slices.

- **To create slices based on a selection of object(s), choose Object Slice Create from Selection.**

Cascading Style Sheet layers

Layer-based slices can also be exported as Cascading Style Sheet (CSS) layers. Using CSS layers enables you to assign (set) a multitude of properties to the elements on your Web page (typefaces, colors, spacing, graphics). They also enable you to create transparent overlapping slices. Use CSS layers to show and hide certain layers on your Web page. For example, you can produce a Web site with text in three languages on three separate layers and then make the layer matching the language of the browser visible while the others remain hidden.

The realm of CSS is fairly advanced, but for my purposes here I show you the very basic steps of how to create a file with CSS layers:

1.

After your file is created, choose File Save for Web.

The Save for Web dialog box appears.

2.

Click the Layers tab at the bottom right.

3.

Select the Export as CSS Layers check box.

Select each layer in your file from the Layer drop-down menu. Make sure that you select one of the options: Visible, Hidden, or Do Not Export.

4.

Click Save.

An HTML file, which includes CSS layers, is created.

5.

6. **In the Save Optimized As dialog box that appears, specify a name and location for your file.**

7. **Click the Output Settings button.**

8. **In the Output Settings dialog box that appears, make sure that the HTML option is selected from the second menu from the top.**

9. **Select the Generate CSS option from the Slice Output section.**

Click OK and then Save.

Your file has been created and saved. Click the Done button to close the Save for Web dialog box.

Remember

All platforms and browsers (and their versions) do not equally support Cascading Style Sheets, its versions, and its many facets. The differences are too great to list here, but you can see them all at the Browser Compatibility Chart on the WebReview.com site (www.webreview.com/browsers/browsers.shtml).

Chapter 17: Moving Files Into and Out of Illustrator

Overview

In This Chapter

- Placing different files into an Illustrator document
- Managing linked files
- Exporting graphics from Illustrator
- Working with Photoshop files in Illustrator

Although you can certainly take a file from concept to final printing using only Illustrator, you probably shouldn't. It's a specialized program, created to be one small (but vitally important) part in a production cycle.

In a typical production cycle, text is created in a word-processing program, such as Microsoft Word; scanned images are edited in an image-editing program, such as Photoshop; and vector-based graphics are created in Illustrator or Macromedia Freehand. Finally, all these elements are combined in a page layout program (such as InDesign, PageMaker, or QuarkXPress) or a Web-design application (such as Adobe GoLive or Macromedia Dreamweaver).

Attempting to make Illustrator perform all aspects of the production cycle is like trying to build a house with only a hammer. You may be able to do it, but the task takes you a lot more time to complete, the result looks really awful, and you're a lot more tired and frustrated than if you'd used the right tools for the job in the first place.

Don't get me wrong. Illustrator is a strong link in that production cycle. You can save Illustrator files in nearly *three dozen* different file formats! If you create something in Illustrator and save it properly, you can open your creation in

just about any application that ever supported graphics on any platform even bizarre and forgotten computer platforms, such as Amiga!

The bottom line is that Illustrator is designed to create files for use in other programs as well as to receive graphics files created in other programs. Harnessing the full power of Illustrator means making the program work well (and play nicely) with other programs in other words, getting files into and out of Illustrator.

In this chapter, you find out how to make Illustrator play well with others by bringing files that weren't created in Illustrator into your Illustrator document and by moving Illustrator files into other applications.

Team LiB

◀ PREVIOUS NEXT ▶

Bringing Files Into Illustrator

You can bring graphics or text into Illustrator in several different ways, but the most straightforward, Joe-Friday way is to use the Place command from the File menu. Every type of graphic or text that can be inserted in Illustrator can be placed with this command, making it the one-stop location for all file importing. The [Getting Files Out of Illustrator](#) section (later in this chapter) contains a list of the most common file formats that Illustrator can both export and import.

When you place artwork into Illustrator, you usually have the option of either *embedding* or *linking* the artwork. Each of these processes has different implications for file size and storage:

-

Embedding: Makes the placed artwork part of the Illustrator file, even though the artwork was created elsewhere. That way, you need only the single Illustrator file for your artwork to print properly.

Remember

Embedding can dramatically increase the file size.

-

Linking: Creates a link in the Illustrator document to the placed artwork. The file size of the Illustrator document is smaller as a result, and any change to the linked file is automatically reflected in the Illustrator document. Linking also enables the file to be updated outside of Illustrator (while maintaining the link). In order for linked files to print properly, both the Illustrator file and all linked files must be present.

To place a graphic in Illustrator, follow these steps:

- 1.

Choose File Place.

The Place dialog box appears, as shown in [Figure 17-1](#), so that you can choose the file that you want to place.

- 2.

Select the file that you want to place.

If you don't have any files lying around, look in the Sample Files folder (located in the Adobe Illustrator application folder) and pick one of those files.



Figure 17-1: Select a document to embed or link with the Place dialog box.

3.

Choose to link or embed the file you want to place.

To create a link between the file you want to place and the Illustrator file (the default setting), make sure that the Link box (lower left) is selected. To embed the file you want to place in the Illustrator file, deselect the Link box.

4.

Choose to use the graphic as an artistic element or a template.

If you select the Template check box (lower left), Illustrator creates a special layer for the pixel-based image. (See [Chapter 13](#) for more on layers.) This layer is locked (you can't change anything on the layer), and the graphic is dimmed, making the graphic 50 percent lighter. Template layers also don't print and aren't included in the artwork when you use the Save for Web command. Template layers are especially useful when you plan to use the pixel-based image as a guide for tracing in Illustrator.

5.

Choose to replace or add the graphic to the rest of the placed graphics (if necessary).

This option is available only after you've already placed a graphic in the file and that graphic is selected. You have the option of replacing that graphic with the graphic that you're about to place or bringing the new graphic in as a separate graphic. Just select the Replace check box to replace the selected graphic, or leave the box unchecked to leave the selected graphic alone.

6.

Click the Place button.

Which is better, linking or embedding?

If you're just playing around to see how the program works, it doesn't matter whether you link or embed. But if you're working on a production with tight deadlines and making rapid changes to your document and money is on the line, I recommend that you link whenever possible. Linking makes the chore of changing placed images much easier.

When you embed something, it exists totally within a single Illustrator file: Your artwork is locked down. You can't do anything to it other than move it, scale it (and other such transformations), or run a Photoshop filter/effect on it. That's all, folks—and that isn't much. You can't edit your artwork in another application; because it's embedded in Illustrator, it won't respond to other applications. The term *embedding* is quite literal—it's stuck in there. You can't get your artwork out unless you pry it out with the Export command. (More on that in the section, [Getting Files Out of Illustrator](#), later in this chapter).

Here's an example. You recently sent a completed job to your service bureau, but it can't be printed because your five pixel-based images are embedded—two in RGB (red, green, blue) mode and the rest in CMYK (cyan, magenta, yellow, black). The images need to be in CMYK for the job to print properly. Illustrator can't convert pixel data from RGB to CMYK. (Illustrator can only convert vector data.) You need to use Photoshop to convert the pixel images. If the images are linked, however, the folks at your service bureau can change them by opening the image in Photoshop, making the change, and then updating the link—a quick process that takes about a minute on a fast computer.

Because the images are embedded, however, you have two options. You can deliver the original pixel-based graphics over to the service bureau (assuming that your company has one, that you didn't send the job over at the last minute, and that the service bureau is still open). Or you can rack up bad karma if you make the staff at the service bureau do this for you. This situation entails separating each image into its own layer in Illustrator, exporting the entire document as a Photoshop file; opening the document in Photoshop; deleting all the other layers; cropping the image to the right size; changing the color mode; saving the image; going back to Illustrator; and replacing the graphic. Whew! And this assumes that the service bureau staff actually knows how to do this, which not many people do.

Tip

If you know beyond a doubt that your images are perfect, pristine, and final, and never need changing in any way, you can embed them. If your feet touch the earth like the rest of ours do, link your images.

Remember

The only hassle that comes with linking is that you have to provide all the linked images with your Illustrator file whenever it leaves your computer because your file won't print properly without them. This procedure is a minor hassle, however, considering the amount of hassle it saves!

Managing links

Whenever you place an image into Illustrator and link it, the image isn't actually in your document—the same way that Dan Rather isn't actually in your house when you watch the news on TV. What you see in Illustrator is a preview of the file—an image of the image, so to speak. Think of the actual file as broadcasting an image of itself to Illustrator while the file itself sits somewhere else on your hard drive. You look at the preview on-screen; when the document prints, the actual file supplies the image for the document. If the actual file gets moved, modified, or deleted, you have a problem—especially if you're printing—because Illustrator uses the preview image instead of the real file. The preview image in Illustrator contains just enough info to be displayed on-screen, but not nearly enough info to print with any quality. Fortunately, Illustrator provides you with a powerful tool to help you manage links: the Links palette.

You can find the Links palette by choosing Window > Links. What you get looks remarkably like [Figure 17-2](#), even if you don't have thumbnails of all those people.



Figure 17-2: Use the Links palette for total link control.

The Links palette shows you all the placed images in your document; alerts you if anything is amiss; and enables you to update, edit, or replace the images—all with the click of a mouse.

Tip

The Links palette includes embedded images as well, even though they aren't technically links.

To use the Links palette, you must first understand what the palette is telling you. The Links palette informs you about the status of the graphic through alerts. *Alerts* are tiny icons that appear beside the names of the graphics in the Links palette. They look a little like buttons, but they are strictly informative: Alerts warn you when there is a potential problem with the link. You can fix most problems by clicking the graphic within the Links palette, and then by clicking the Replace Link or Update Link buttons at the bottom of the palette (more on these options in just a second).

The alerts provide the following information:

- **Embedded:** The Embedded icon shows a rectangle overlapping a triangle. This icon indicates that the image data is completely contained within the Illustrator document and not linked to an external file. This situation isn't necessarily a problem, but it can be. See the section *Which is better, linking or embedding?* earlier in this chapter. No un-embed button exists. The only way to turn this embedded image into a linked file is to click the Update Link button at the bottom of the palette, locate the original file on the hard drive, and replace the file with the Link option checked.
- **Missing:** A question mark inside a red octagon (or stop sign) shows that the actual image file is missing. This information is good to know because the linked image still shows up in Illustrator even if the information that the file needs to print properly is missing. You can fix this image by clicking the Replace Link button. (More about this in a moment.)
- **Modified:** A triangle with an exclamation point (sort of like an emphatic yield sign) indicates that the actual linked image has been changed outside of Illustrator. This information is also vital because Illustrator still displays the original image.
-

No icon means that everything is okay: This isn't really an alert. (Yeah, that would be pretty silly Warning! Everything is normal!) But it's worth noting that when nothing is wrong with a linked image, the palette shows just the filename of the image, its thumbnail, and nothing else.

After you identify the problems with the linked graphics, you can manage them by using the buttons along the bottom of the Links palette (refer to [Figure 17-2](#)), by clicking the problem graphic in the Links palette, and then by clicking one of the following four buttons:

- **Replace Link:** This is the first button from the left. Click this button when your image is missing or when you want to swap the selected graphic with another graphic on your hard drive. After you click this button, the Place dialog box opens. Choose a different file or locate the missing file on your hard drive, and then click Place. The new image replaces the old one.
- **Go to Link:** Second from the left, this button is handy for locating and selecting linked graphics. Click the linked graphic in the Links palette and click the Go to Link button. This action selects the graphic in the document as if you clicked it by using the Selection tool. Clicking this button also centers the view on the graphic, making the graphic easy to spot whenever you have a lot of other graphics in the document.
- **Update Link:** Click this third button whenever you see the Modified warning beside a link. This action updates the selected link with the latest information from the original file.
- **Edit Original:** This fourth button is available only for linked images—not for embedded images. After you click this option, the selected image opens in the original application that created it.

Tip

The Edit Original option is a great way to modify images. After you place a Photoshop image, for example, click this button to launch Photoshop and open the image. In Photoshop, you can make the necessary changes and then save your image. When you go back to Illustrator, it asks whether you want to update your modified image. Click OK to update the information.

Your goal, as you work with placed images, is to avoid all question marks and exclamation points in your Links palette. Fix these problems by using the buttons at the bottom of the palette.

The Links palette offers a few more tidbits through its pop-up menu to help you manage links. Click the triangle in the upper-right corner of the palette (refer to [Figure 17-2](#)) to access the Links palette pop-up menu. Here you find Replace, Go to Link, Update Link, and Edit Original commands that duplicate the functions of the buttons along the bottom. You also find various Sort commands, such as Sort by Name, which alphabetizes the linked images within the palette. You can also reorganize the palette by using Show commands, such as Show Embedded, which hides all

linked graphics. The Show and Sort commands are useful only when you have several linked images, which is rare in an Illustrator document. The two most useful things in the Links palette pop-up menu are the Embed Image and Information commands. Here's how you use them:

-

Embed Image: Click a linked image in the Links palette and choose the Embed Image command to embed the image into the Illustrator file.

-

Information: Click an image in the Links palette and choose the Information command to open the Link Information dialog box. This dialog box is strictly informative. You can't make any changes here, but you find out lots of information about the selected graphic, such as the image's location on the hard drive, the image's file size, the image's file type, when the image was created, and a whole lot more. You can also access this dialog box by double-clicking the name of the link.

Getting Files Out of Illustrator

Files that are *native* to Illustrator (files saved in the Illustrator format within Illustrator) can't be read by every application. However, these files are Portable Document Format- (PDF) based, so any application that can read PDFs generated by Acrobat 5 or a later version (including Acrobat Reader 5.0) can also read Illustrator files. For the applications that can't read Illustrator-native files, Illustrator can export a number of different file formats.

To decide which format to use, consider the eventual use of the file. For instance, if you're posting your artwork on a Web page, you probably want to use either JPEG or GIF formats. (Find out more about these formats in [Chapter 16](#).) If you want to place your file in a Microsoft Word document, you can use EPS, EMF, or BMP formats. (More on those formats in a moment.)

Tip

Typically, the manual that accompanies your software describes which file formats it accepts. Illustrator supports the export of 17 different formats, so just choose a format that works in the target application from the list of available formats.

To export your artwork in a certain format, choose File Export from the File menu, choose the format you want from the Format list, and save the file. Some Export formats open an additional dialog box for that specific file format after you click Save. You'll also find various file formats under the Save for Web command, such as PNG, GIF, and SVG as well as JPEG and SWF, which are also found under the Export command.

Remember

Not all file formats support vector-based data! (See [Chapter 2](#) for details.) If you use EPS, PDF, Flash, or SVG, you preserve your paths; but most other formats convert your Illustrator files to pixels.

The following list is a brief summary of the most useful file formats available in Illustrator:

- **EPS:** Encapsulated PostScript files are accepted by most software packages. Raster and vector-based data are preserved in EPS files.
- For more information about vector-based and pixel-based graphics, see [Chapters 2](#) and [16](#).
- **GIF:** Graphics Interchange Format files are commonly used on the Web for files with few colors (good for solid-color logos and text).

-
-
- **JPEG:** Joint Photographic Experts Group files are highly compressible files that are used on the Web. They re especially good for photographs.
-
- **PNG:** Portable Network Graphics files are the most flexible of the Web formats, providing support for compression and detail in a single file format.
-
- **TIFF:** Tagged Image File Format files are the industry standard for pixel-based images for print work.
-
- **PDF:** Portable Document Format files are designed to keep the look and feel of the original artwork and can be read by anyone with a copy of the free Adobe Acrobat Reader (www.adobe.com).
-
- **PICT:** PICT files are the built-in Macintosh pixel format. Export any graphics to be viewed on Macintosh screens as PICT files.
-
- **BMP:** BMP files are the built-in pixel format of Windows. Use the BMP format to export any graphics that will be viewed on Windows screens.
-
- **EMF:** Enhanced MetaFile formatted files are perfect for embedding graphics in Microsoft Office applications, such as Word, Excel, and PowerPoint.
-
- **PSD:** Photoshop Document files are native Photoshop files, which can contain Photoshop layer information.
-
- **Flash:** Flash files are a vector-based graphic format for the Web.
-
- **SVG:** Scaleable Vector Graphics files are the up-and-coming Web standard of vector-based graphic formats.

Tip

Whenever you export files, use the same name as the original document file but with a different extension (the three letters after a filename, traditionally required by Windows and DOS computers). These letters tell you the format of the file just by looking at its name.

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◀ PREVIOUS NEXT ▶

Working with Illustrator and Photoshop

Illustrator and Photoshop, both from Adobe, provide unique and useful integration capabilities. You can take files from either application and put them directly into the other application in five ways: dragging and dropping; copying and pasting (almost identical to cutting and pasting); placing; exporting and importing; or opening. Each method produces slightly different results to meet your every need, whim, or desire. (Well, okay, just the desires that center on moving files between graphics applications. You have those all the time, right?)

Tip

If you ever bring something from Illustrator into Photoshop (or vice versa) and something weird happens (parts of the image are missing, odd lines streak through the image, nothing happens, or your computer crashes), try saving the file as an earlier version, such as Illustrator 8 or Illustrator 6. Close the file and open it again before you try to copy and paste. Saving a file in an earlier version enables the application to understand the file.

Making life easy: Copy and paste, drag and drop

The copy and paste and drag and drop methods of getting a file from one program to the other are incredibly easy. Open a file in Photoshop, and then open a file in Illustrator. Make a selection in either program, choose Copy from the Edit menu, and then go to the other application and choose Paste from the Edit menu. Or simply click a selection in either program and drag the selection from that one application into an open window in the other application. In Illustrator, you can use any selection tool to do the dragging. In Photoshop, you need to use the Move tool.

After you move graphics this way, they appear at the height and width that they were when created in the other program. After you drag a graphic from Illustrator to Photoshop, the graphic rasterizes automatically. *Rasterize* is a two-dollar word for the process that converts vector-based data into pixel-based data.

Whenever you copy and paste a graphic from Illustrator into Photoshop, the Paste dialog box appears, as shown in [Figure 17-3](#). Choose from the three radio buttons there to select your pasting preference: pixels, paths, or shape layer.



Figure 17-3: Pasting Illustrator data into Photoshop.

Your first impulse may be to paste the graphic as paths. After all, Illustrator uses paths, not pixels, so you expect this method to preserve your original Illustrator files as they are. Unfortunately, although Photoshop uses paths similar to Illustrator's paths, they work very differently in Photoshop than they do in Illustrator. For example, paths in Photoshop can't have strokes or fills, although paths can be used to fill or stroke an image in Photoshop and to do other important Photoshop-specific things. You just can't use the path to print or display information on the Web.

Your other option is to paste your graphics as a shape layer. Shape layers were first introduced in Photoshop 6 and allow vector-based data to be retained without rasterization. In order to retain the vector-based data of shape layers, however, they must reside in a layered file, which limits your file formats to TIFF, PDF, or native PSD. Paste the Illustrator graphic as pixels if your end goal is to create and save a pixel-based Photoshop image.

Copying and pasting or dragging and dropping from Photoshop to Illustrator is easier than going from Illustrator to Photoshop (and that's pretty darn easy). You don't have to worry about the paths-to-pixels issue. Just make your selection and drag it by using the Move tool; or copy the image, go to an open Illustrator document, and paste the image. That's it!

You may assume (quite logically) that because moving Illustrator files into Photoshop rasterizes the files, moving Photoshop files into Illustrator must vectorize them. Not true. The pixels in a Photoshop file stay pixels, subject to all the laws and limitations of pixels anywhere else. For example, Illustrator vector-based data prints out at the highest quality no matter how much you scale, skew, rotate, or distort the data. But pixel-based data within Illustrator starts to *degrade* (the data gets blurry or worse) if you enlarge it or shrink it. Rotating, skewing, or distorting the pixel-based data has similar negative effects. Although you don't have to worry about resolution for vector-based data, you do have to make sure that your pixel data has a high enough resolution: 72 points per inch (ppi) for the Web and anywhere from 150 ppi to 300 ppi or higher for print.

When you drop or paste into Photoshop, the artwork appears inside a preview box, as shown in [Figure 17-4](#). I cannot overstate the handiness of this preview box. While inside the preview box, the graphic isn't really in Photoshop yet. You can position the graphic, rotate it, and then scale the preview. Then double-click inside the preview box (or press Enter for Windows or Return for Mac), and Photoshop rasterizes the graphic at the best quality possible. If you rotate and scale the image after it's been rasterized, you blur and otherwise degrade the image.



Figure 17-4: The Place preview box in Photoshop provides the highest quality and greatest flexibility for Illustrator files brought into Photoshop.

Tip

Photoshop graphics that are dragged and dropped or copied and pasted into Illustrator files are always embedded.

Placing files

Placing files into Photoshop or Illustrator is one of the more versatile ways to bring data into the application. Each application provides a variety of options that aren't available by using any other method.

Placing Illustrator files in Photoshop

To place an Illustrator file into Photoshop, open a Photoshop file and choose File Place. Select a saved Illustrator file (it doesn't need to be open) from the Place dialog box and click OK. The file opens in Photoshop inside a preview box just like it does when pasting or dropping.

Placing Photoshop files in Illustrator

Placing Photoshop files into Illustrator is identical to placing any other graphic into Illustrator. See the section, [Bringing Files Into Illustrator](#), earlier in this chapter.

Now opening in an application near you

Native files can be read by the opposite application. In other words, Photoshop can read Illustrator files, and Illustrator can read Photoshop files. One advantage of this capability is that you don't need to have any document already open.

To open a Photoshop file in Illustrator, choose Open from the Illustrator File menu and select the Photoshop file. The Photoshop file opens in a new document within Illustrator, in the color mode of the Photoshop file.

To open an Illustrator file in Photoshop, choose Open from the Photoshop File menu and select the Illustrator file. The Photoshop Rasterize dialog box appears, as shown in [Figure 17-5](#). If you saved a file as an EPS or if you exported it in an Illustrator 10 or earlier format, this dialog box's name is Rasterize Generic EPS Format. If you save the file in Illustrator CS format, this dialog box is Rasterize Generic PDF. Otherwise, these dialog box options are identical, no matter which name you see.

In the Rasterize dialog box, you set the width, height, resolution, and color mode of your graphic. Your exact settings should reflect, as closely as possible, the final purpose of the graphic. You should determine whether the graphic is going to be viewed on-screen (Web, multimedia) or if it's going to be printed (desktop or offset). The more you alter these settings after you rasterize the graphic, the more you degrade it.

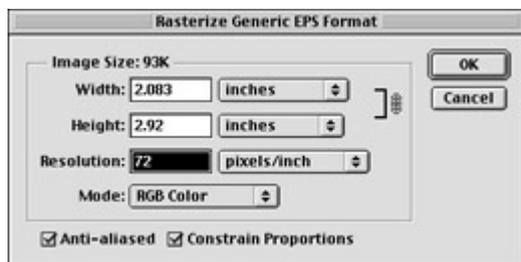


Figure 17-5: Use the Rasterize dialog box to refine your graphic settings.

Exporting a graphic

Exporting is almost the opposite of placing. Instead of bringing a graphic into an application, you're getting it out of an application. Exporting has two big advantages. First, you don't need a copy of the other application to create the graphic in that format. Second, Illustrator layers export as separate Photoshop layers, instead of as one flattened graphic (layers don't stay intact when pasting, dragging, or placing an Illustrator file into Photoshop). (See [Chapter 13](#) for more info on Illustrator layers.) Sadly, Photoshop layers don't export to layers in Illustrator (though you can get Photoshop layers by using the Open command on a Photoshop file).

You can export any path that you create in Photoshop as an Illustrator file. To export paths from Photoshop, choose File > Export Paths to Illustrator. The Export Paths dialog box opens from which you specify those paths to export. Select a path, click Save, and an Illustrator file is created that contains your path.

Exporting from Illustrator is much more powerful than exporting from Photoshop because you can choose to export all your Illustrator layers as separate Photoshop layers. This option provides great versatility in case you want to further edit your graphics in Photoshop.

To export your Illustrator graphic as a Photoshop file, choose File > Export. Name the file in the Name field and choose Photoshop (PSD) as your format. After you click OK, the Photoshop Options dialog box appears, as shown in [Figure 17-6](#).

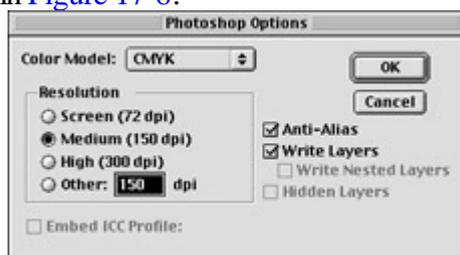


Figure 17-6: Set resolution in the Photoshop Options dialog box.

In the Photoshop Options dialog box, you determine color model, resolution (for more on resolution and which is best for what purpose, see [Chapter 2](#)), anti-aliasing, and whether to export the graphic as a single, flattened layer or as multiple layers. Select the Write Layers check box to export the Illustrator layers as Photoshop layers. With this option unchecked, you export the file as a single, flattened layer. With this option checked, your layers export as separate Photoshop layers.

Tip

When in doubt, select the Write Layers option. You can easily delete or flatten the layers in Photoshop (by using the Photoshop Layers palette) if you decide you don't want them.

You also have the option of exporting your file with slices and image maps for use on the Web. For more on Illustrator and the Web, see [Chapter 16](#). Also, you can export your image with compound shapes. When you bring compound shapes into Photoshop, they become editable clipping masks. Conversely, your Photoshop clipping masks become editable compound shapes when brought into Illustrator.

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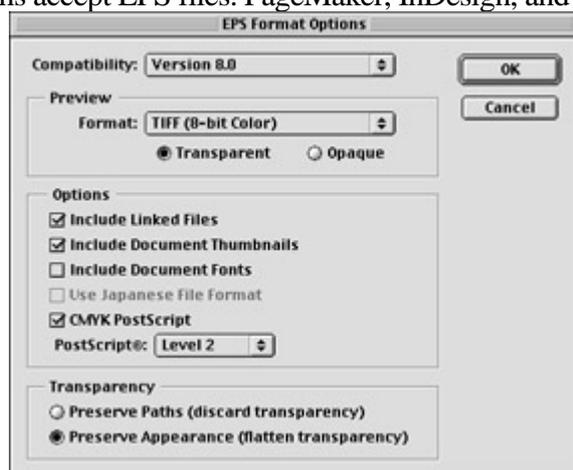
◀ PREVIOUS NEXT ▶

Using Adobe Illustrator with Nearly Everything Else

Illustrator works great with Photoshop and InDesign. But what happens when you want to use Illustrator with other products? To make your Illustrator files compatible with as wide a range of applications as possible, you need to go with the standards. Standard file formats are the formats that the majority of applications can use. Whenever you save something using a standard file format, you're almost guaranteed that anyone can open it, regardless of platform or application, just as long as he or she is using an industry standard application, such as QuarkXPress.

For Web graphics, the standard formats are GIF and JPEG. As of this writing, PNG, Flash, and SVG don't have the universal acceptance needed to declare them standards. Keep an eye on them, however; times change fast. For more information on saving files in these formats, see [Chapter 16](#).

For printing hard copy, the standard format for vector-based graphics is EPS; the Illustrator options for this format appear in the EPS Format Options dialog box ([Figure 17-7](#)). Virtually all page layout, word-processing, and graphics applications accept EPS files. PageMaker, InDesign, and QuarkXPress all accept EPS files and work well



with the file format.

Figure 17-7: Set compatibility, preview, and other options in the EPS Format Options dialog box.

Fortunately, saving EPS files is vastly simpler than saving for the Web. Choose File Save As, name the file there, and choose Illustrator EPS for the format. Click Save, and the EPS Format Options dialog box opens. (Refer to [Figure 17-7](#).) Typically, running with the defaults (just click OK without changing any settings) works fine. In case you want something different, bone up on the other settings in this dialog box:

-

Compatibility: You can open and edit Illustrator EPS files just as you do any other Illustrator files. Suppose a friend is helping out with a graphics project and doesn't have the latest version of Illustrator. To give an EPS file to this person for editing, set the Compatibility option to match whatever earlier version your friend is using. Otherwise, leave the file set to Version 11.

Warning

Saving your file to be compatible with an earlier version can alter your graphic. For example, Illustrator 3 doesn't support gradients. If you used gradients, they get broken up into separate objects for every different color in the gradient. The graphic looks the same, but editing can be a problem. The fact that you can save files in the Illustrator 3 format is a testament to Illustrator's compatibility with other applications. Illustrator 3 was outdated almost ten years ago! (That's the computer equivalent of being fluent in ancient Greek.)

- **Preview:** Use these options to set how the Preview image displays when linked (Format) and whether the Preview image is transparent or opaque.

-

- **Format:** This option determines how you create the Preview image, which displays when the graphic is linked to a document in another application. Preview doesn't affect how the image is printed—only how it displays on-screen. Choose the TIFF (8-bit Color) setting for Windows (which most Mac applications can read) or the Macintosh (8-bit Color) setting for Macs (which most Windows applications can read). However, if your PC has problems reading the Mac file, change your preview to the TIFF (8-bit color) setting.

-

- **Transparent or Opaque:** These radio button options exist only when you choose the TIFF (8-bit color) setting for your Preview image. Select one to determine how transparent areas in your graphic are handled. Typically, you want to set this to the Transparent option, but if you're using the graphic in any Microsoft Office application, you need to select the Opaque option for full-compatibility.

- **Include Linked Files:** Select this check box to embed any linked files in your image.

- **Include Document Thumbnails:** In the Open dialog box of some applications, you get a thumbnail picture of the file, which lets you see the picture before you open the file. Select this check box to create one of those thumbnails.

- **Include Document Fonts:** Select this check box to build any fonts that you use in your document into the EPS file. Although selecting this option increases file size, it also ensures that your document displays and prints properly if the fonts don't exist on the computer used to open the file.

CMYK PostScript: If you use any RGB colors in your document, this option enables them to print on a four-color, CMYK PostScript printer. This check box is a good one to select, just in case.

•

PostScript: Choose levels here to set the PostScript level at which the file prints. PostScript is the language that printers use. You want to use the highest level that the printer is capable of. The latest printers support Level 3, but these files don't print properly on older printers. If the file doesn't print, try using a lower level. Be aware that lower levels can print more slowly and with less quality than Level 3. (But hey, that's better than not printing at all!)

Warning

If you save your file with Illustrator CS compatibility, you can't save it with Level 1 PostScript. Export the file as an Illustrator 8 file (or an earlier version) to change to Level 1.

Tip

Quite frankly, if you have to print at Level 1, you may want to hunt down a better printer. Level 1 printers probably cost you money every time you print to them because they're slow and don't print well.

•

Transparency: This setting appears whenever you set the Compatibility option to any version prior to Illustrator 9. (Transparency was introduced in Illustrator 9. See [Chapter 10](#) for more info.) This feature enables you to make an object semitransparent so that an object beneath it shows through as a blend of the two objects. (Think of a semitransparent red circle overlapping a blue circle, making the overlapped portion appear purple.) Because this is an Illustrator 9 feature, earlier versions don't support it. When you save an Illustrator CS file as Illustrator 8 or earlier, use a Transparency option to determine how to translate transparent objects into something that earlier versions can understand.

Choose from two radio buttons to either discard or flatten transparency: Preserve Paths and Preserve Appearance, respectively. The Preserve Paths option discards transparency altogether, keeping the same shapes that you originally created but making the graphic look very different. For example, a red and blue overlapping circle would look just like that, with no purple area where the two overlap. Select the Preserve Appearance option to create new shapes to maintain the look of the transparency. For instance, new paths are created for the purple area where the two circles overlapped. The Preserve Appearance option is almost always the way to go; it keeps your artwork looking exactly the way you created it.

Warning

If you use the Transparency option when you save an Illustrator document in an older format, you may get some strange and unexpected results. Save in the latest format (Illustrator CS) if you can.

After you complete your settings, click OK. Your Illustrator file is saved as an EPS file, ready to use just about anywhere!

After you master saving your Illustrator artwork as an EPS, you can create graphics that are compatible with every major print publishing application available. Saving graphics as GIFs or JPEGs (which I cover in [Chapter 16](#)) enables you to make artwork that can be displayed in nearly every Web browser in existence. Add the ability to move files back and forth between Illustrator and Photoshop, as well as the many export options, and you can create graphics that work anywhere.

Team LiB

◀ PREVIOUS NEXT ▶

Part V: The Part of Tens

Chapter List

[Chapter 18](#): Ten Production-Enhancing Tips [Chapter 19](#): Ten (Or So) Ways to Customize Illustrator

In this part . . .

This section is a mishmash of things so specialized that they need special attention. Find tips on how to increase your productivity and customize Illustrator just the way you want. The info you find here ranges from nuts-and-bolts kind of stuff to downright silly toys. From hidden goodies to obscure trivia to quality-enhancing production techniques, this part has something for everyone!

Chapter 18: Ten Production-Enhancing Tips

Overview

In This Chapter

- Making holes in objects
- Avoiding using Photoshop filters in Illustrator, and why
- Getting gradients to print properly
- Making complex graphics simpler
- Hiding elements you aren't using
- Using the ToolTips
- Changing your units of measurement on a whim
- Moving brushes, swatches, and styles between documents
- Placing documents within documents within documents

-

Making type easier to select

If you can picture something, you can probably create it in Illustrator. The only trick is knowing how to create it. People who use Illustrator rely on thousands of little tricks to make their lives easier, make production faster, avoid unnecessary hassle and expense, and generally make their world a better place to live. Well, those thousands of tricks may not all fit in one book, but here are ten simple ways to jazz up your use of Illustrator.

Team LiB

◀ PREVIOUS NEXT ▶

Punching Holes

Take a close look at the two pictures in [Figure 18-1](#). In the image on the left, the hole in the center is actually a white circle that makes the life preserver appear to have a hole in its center. In Illustrator, white is a color that is really there and it blocks anything behind it. In the second picture, the hole in the center really is a hole, revealing whatever is behind it (in this case, an alarmed passenger noticing just how few life preservers his ship has).



Figure 18-1: A life preserver without a hole (left) and with a hole (right). Similar but not the same. (Just ask the guy on the right).

How is this remarkable feat accomplished? If you set the fill color for the white circle to None, just that circle becomes transparent, revealing the gray circle behind it so that won't work. The trick is to use compound paths. The Compound Paths command joins two or more paths in such a way that wherever the paths overlap, you get a hole revealing whatever is lurking behind the paths. Incidentally, this is how the holes in letters, such as O and P, are created, so that when you run type over an object, you see the object through the holes.

All you need to create a compound path is two objects—one to serve as a cutting tool and one to serve as a place to put the hole. Then follow these handy do-it-yourself steps (no safety goggles required):

1.

Place the object that you'll be using to make a hole in front of the object in which you want to cut the hole.

2.

Select both objects with any selection tool.

3.

Choose Object > Compound Path > Make.

Where the paths overlap, you get a see-through area—you know, a hole.

Tip

To make the paths behave normally again, select the objects and choose Object > Compound Path > Release.

Tip

Perform the same feat by using the Pathfinder palette and selecting the Subtract from Shape Area command from the Shape Modes section. For more details, see [Chapter 4](#).

Use Photoshop Effects, Not Photoshop Filters!

Oftentimes folks are confused about the Filter menu and the Effects menu. Don't be. There are many distinctions between the two, the most important being that effects change the appearance of your artwork, not the artwork itself, lending you the ability to change the original underlying artwork at any time.

Even though the Photoshop (pixel-based) filters at the bottom of the Filter menu and the Effects menu are exactly the same, there's a huge difference between the two when it comes to usability. Here's a little Adobe inside secret: The only reason the Photoshop filters are still in the Filter menu is because the Adobe programmers didn't have time to take them out properly; there's absolutely no reason you should ever use them. Effects filters can be applied to type, images, or paths, while Filter filters can only be applied to embedded images.

In fact, if it weren't for a few of the filters in the Colors menu, you'd never need the Filter menu at all.

When White Isn't Nothing

Double negatives aside, here's a little tip that can save you beaucoup bucks whenever you use gradients and spot colors in artwork you're creating for print.

If you work with print publishing, you come to think of the color white as being *nothing*. In most of the familiar printing techniques, specifying the color white means *don't put down any ink* (or toner, or dye, or any of the methods for putting color on paper) for anything colored white. White ink doesn't exist (except in rare situations) and no, correction fluid doesn't count. The white that you see in print publications is just the white of the paper.

Tip

This approach depends on an actual, tangible piece of paper to provide the white for the image. To save yourself untold woe, don't use the technique I describe here if your artwork is destined to live on the Web. It's strictly a hard-copy issue.

Suppose you're creating a two-color publication using black ink and a nice blue Pantone 273 ink. The publication may be pretty dull in only two colors, but that's all you have a budget for, so you decide to spice things up by using gradients. You create lovely gradients by blending Pantone 273 into white (assuming that white means *no ink*). Unfortunately, in terms of gradients, Illustrator thinks of a blend as a whole new CMYK (cyan, magenta, yellow, black) color (see [Chapter 1](#)) so the blend between white and a spot color, such as Pantone 273, involves much more complicated instructions to the computer than you may have intended.

Sure, your graphics look perfect, but unbeknownst to you, your job has mutated from a two-color job to a five-color job. Usually, you discover this after your job is already at the printer, and then you have to pay hundreds of extra dollars for a mistake you didn't even know you made.

The trick is to use the same Pantone color for all steps of the gradient (see [Figure 18-2](#)). Just follow these steps:

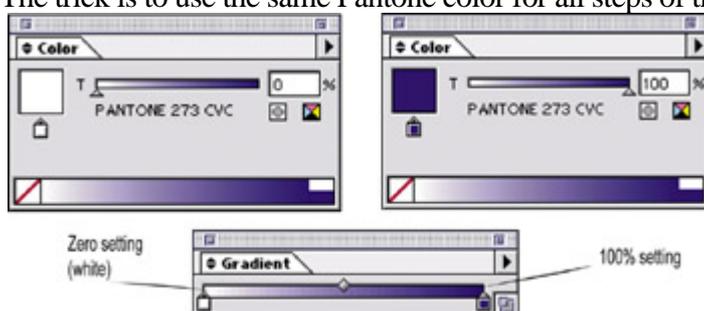


Figure 18-2: The same color is used at two different tint percent-ages, specified in the Color palette.

1.

Choose Window Gradient.

The Gradient palette appears.

2.

Choose Window Swatch Libraries Pantone Coated (or another swatch library of your choice).

The Pantone swatch library opens.

3.

Click the color of your choice in the Pantone library and drag the color from the library onto a color stop in the Gradient palette.

A *color stop* is the icon that looks like a little house; it represents a color in the gradient.

Repeat this until all color stops in the Gradient palette are the same color. (See [Chapter 10](#) for more information on gradients.)

At this point, the gradient is one solid color. Not a gradient at all, really. But wait!

4.

Double-click a color stop in the Gradient palette.

The Color palette opens, showing the Pantone color set to 100%.

5.

Set the tint of the Pantone color to 0%.

This action gives you true, one-ink spot-color gradients that use the paper as white in that good old traditional way. See [Chapter 10](#) for more info on gradients.

Expanding to Get to the Root of the Artwork

If you piled on the effects to some artwork, sometimes making adjustments to the end result is hard. If you're absolutely sure that you'll never need to go back and edit the original artwork, you can expand the artwork into traditional artwork that includes all the pieces necessary to create the appearance you see on-screen.

To expand an object, follow these steps and examine [Figure 18-3](#):

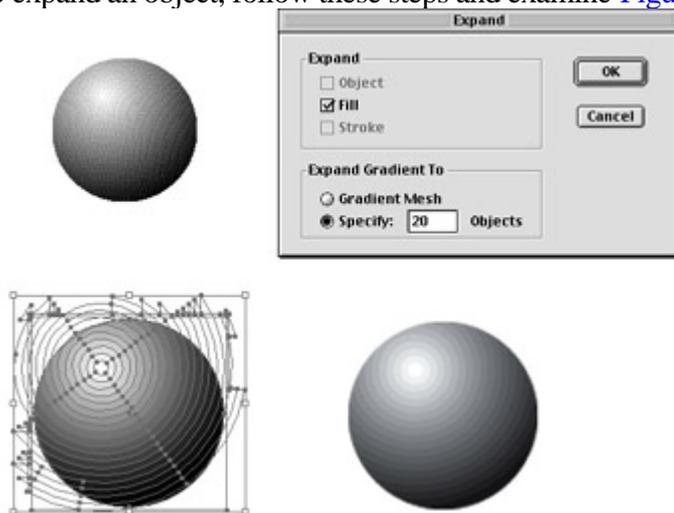


Figure 18-3: The original object with a gradient fill (top left) is expanded (bottom left) to 20 objects (with paths showing) and the final object (bottom right).

1.

Select the object with any selection tool.

2.

Choose Object Expand.

The Expand dialog box opens.

3.

In the Expand dialog box, choose to expand the fill, the stroke, and the object (if you selected an object blend) by selecting those check boxes.

Select the Fill check box to expand the fill and simplify gradients. Select the Stroke box to create custom brushes, and select the Fill or Stroke box to create patterns or just leave all three selected to cover all your bases.

Quick! Hide!

Simply hiding things can greatly improve your productivity in Illustrator. Otherwise, you may have a hard time seeing your current creation with all the floating palettes and interface elements in the way.

You can hide all open palettes and the Toolbox by pressing the Tab key (unless the Type tool is selected and a blinking I-beam cursor is on your page—then you just insert a Tab into your text). Press the Tab key again to bring everything back.

If you're creating exclusively for the Web, hide the Artboard and the Page Tiling feature. These features show you the size of the page you're printing to and the printable area on that page. This information is useless if you're never going to print! Choose View Hide Artboard and View Hide Page Tiling to make them go away.

Have you ever made an object that contains so many points that after you select it you can't tell what the object is anymore for all the highlighted points and lines? You can hide these, too, while keeping the object selected. Choose View Hide Edges to make the highlights disappear.

You can hide everything you have open on your computer (including your desktop) except for the current Illustrator document by clicking the Full

Screen Mode with Menu Bar button in the Toolbox, as shown in [Figure 18-4](#). To hide everything including the Menu bar, click the Full Screen Mode button. (You can toggle through these modes by pressing the F key on your keyboard; this works for both PCs and Macs.) To get a completely unobscured view of your artwork, switch to the Full Screen Mode view and press the Tab key to hide your palettes. Real power-users work this way, using keyboard shortcuts to access all the tools and menu items.



Figure 18-4: The View Mode buttons enable you to view your graphic in a variety of ways.

Taking a Tip from Illustrator

Illustrator has a helpful feature: *ToolTips*. If you hover your cursor over a tool for a moment, a little yellow box of text pops up telling you what the tool is. If the tool has a keyboard shortcut, that shortcut appears in parentheses after the name.

ToolTips, despite their name, don't work with tools alone. (And they don't give you tips—just the names of things. Go figure.) They work just about anywhere in Illustrator that you can position a cursor. ToolTips give you information about whatever the cursor is over. Hover over a color swatch, and the ToolTip tells you the name of that color. Hover over a brush, and it tells you the name of the brush. Not sure what a cryptic icon in the Pathfinder palette means? Just let the ToolTip tell you.

ToolTips are invaluable whenever you're using the program because there are just too many things to remember. With ToolTips, you don't have to!

Tip

To turn ToolTips off or on, choose Edit Preferences General and select (check) or clear (uncheck) the Show ToolTips check box.

Changing Your Units Whenever You Want

Do you feel that no matter what you do, your units of measure seem to be wrong? Are they always set to points, for example, when you really want inches? (Sometimes centimeters are easier to work with.) Fortunately, Illustrator lets you change your mind on the fly.

To see your measurement options, choose **View Show Rulers** and then right-click in **Windows** (Ctrl+click on the Mac) any location on the rulers at the top and side of your screen. You get a drop-down menu that shows all the units of measurement that Illustrator understands. Choose the unit you desire, and from that moment on, Illustrator uses that unit of measurement.

Tip

You can reposition rulers by clicking and dragging out from where the rulers meet at the upper-left corner. To reset them, double-click that corner.

However, you don't have to change your unit of measurement to use a different one. In any field where you specify an amount (such as the **Height** and **Width** options in the **Rectangle** dialog box), just type in the amount you want, followed by the abbreviation of the unit of measurement that you want to use. If you don't know the abbreviation, just use the whole name. Illustrator makes the conversions for you.

Tip

Want to impress your friends with a great Power User tip? You can cycle through the different measurement units by pressing **Ctrl+Alt+Shift+U** (⌘+Option+Shift+U on the Mac). It helps to have your rulers up when doing this so you can see what the current measurement system is.

Reusing Your Brushes, Swatches, and Libraries

Has this ever happened to you? You go through the trouble to create custom brushes, beautiful colors, and outstanding appearances, save them in the Styles palette, and later discover that they re all specific to the document that you created them in. Rats! To prevent that from happening to you again, you can open the swatches, brushes, and styles that you created in one document in any other document.

For example, to get the brushes from another document, choose **Window Brush Libraries Other Library**. An Open dialog box appears. Choose the document with the brushes that you want to add to the current document, as if you were going to open it. Click **Open**. Instead of opening that document, Illustrator opens the custom brushes in their own palette, ready for you to use. Follow the same steps, choosing **Window Swatch Libraries Other Library** or **Window Style Libraries Other Library** to add your swatches or styles.

Avoiding Russian Dolls

Have you ever seen those cute Russian dolls? You know, the hollow doll that you open to find another smaller doll inside? And then you open that one to find an even smaller doll inside? And then you open *that* doll. . . .

Illustrator enables you to create the digital equivalent of those Russian dolls. You place a Photoshop image into Illustrator, rotate the image, add text over the image, and save the whole thing as an Illustrator file. To add more, create a new document in Illustrator, placing the previously created Illustrator graphic (which also contains within it a Photoshop file) into the new document by using the File Place command. You save this Photoshop file within an Illustrator file within another Illustrator file as an EPS file and place it within a page layout document. You have a Photoshop file now embedded four layers deep within the page layout document. (Dizzy yet?)

Although nothing prevents you from creating the digital equivalent of a Russian doll, editing the file is very difficult. A better method is to open Illustrator files and copy them into a document rather than placing them, especially if you want to do edits later on.

Remember

Subscribe to the KISS method: Keep It Simple, Sillygoose! Avoid going more than three places from the original file (such as a Photoshop file placed inside an Illustrator file, placed inside an InDesign document, with scaling happening in only one of those places). Two places are even better if you can limit yourself. If you need to bring Illustrator data from one Illustrator document to another, open both documents and copy and paste the info rather than place it.

Selecting Type When You Want

If you work with type and objects, you may discover how annoying it is to select an object that's lurking behind type. Even when you click where there's obviously no type, you still select the type instead of the object behind it. This happens because one of Illustrator's most annoying features is turned on. The Type Area Select feature automatically selects type when you click anywhere in its area—not just when you click directly on the type or its path.

Turn off this (ahem) feature by choosing Edit Preferences Type & Auto Tracing. In the Type & Auto Tracing Preferences dialog box, remove the check mark from the Type Area Select check box. Click OK. Breathe easier. Henceforth, type shall be selected whenever you click directly on a letter or on its path, and at no other time, by royal proclamation of the user.

Chapter 19: Ten (Or So) Ways to Customize Illustrator

Overview

In This Chapter

- Telling palettes where to go
- Setting up custom keyboard shortcuts
- Getting easier access to tools
- Changing the start-up documents
- Tweaking the default settings
- Editing preferences
- Creating Actions

Keyboard commands are great shortcuts you gotta love em, finger cramps and all but what if you could make them easier to use? Or maybe you have some styles that you use all the time and you want them to be (gasp) available all the time. And how about that quirky default page size that each new document shows up wearing? Well, if you itch to tinker, adjust, and fine-tune (but you misplaced your ball-peen hammer), you've come to the right place. This chapter shows you how to adjust, redefine, and yes, customize the way Illustrator works for you.

Warning

Before you go on a feature-tweaking rampage, consider this: You're changing the way Illustrator works. So a word to the wise: Read first. Then, if you like what you see, make a change and try it out for a while before you change anything else. Return to default settings if you make a mistake.

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◀ PREVIOUS NEXT ▶

Positioning Palettes

Illustrator saves all palette positions just as they are when you quit Illustrator. The next time that you use Illustrator, the palettes appear right where you left them. This structure is handy most of the time, but your palettes can get a bit disorganized if you move them all over the place while chasing a creative inspiration. If you want to get them back to Square One with no fuss, read on.

Because Illustrator saves the palette positions in the Preference file, you can save a set or sets of palette positions for later use by saving a copy of the Preference file. Whenever you need to reset the palettes to their convenient locations, replace the active Preference file with the saved version.

Warning

Keep in mind that this shuffling of files may zap other Preference settings, such as your units of measurement or your Pencil Tool preferences (see [Chapter 8](#)) that you may have changed.

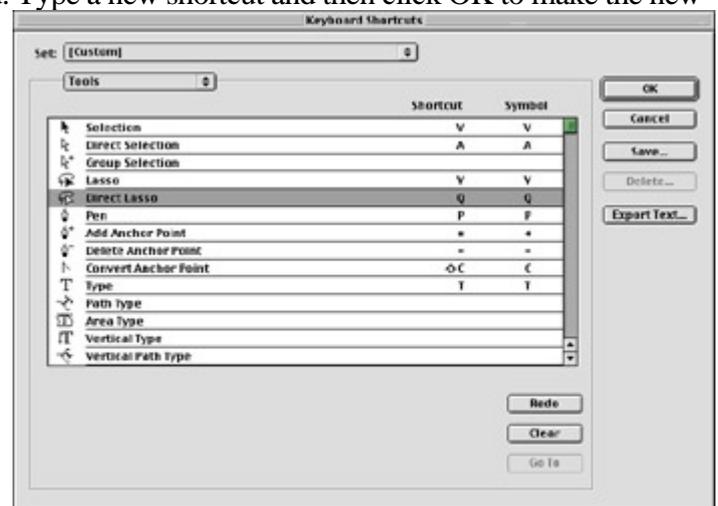
On the Mac, the Preferences file is inside the System folder, tucked inside a Preferences folder that is tucked inside the Adobe Illustrator CS folder. Hey, sometimes obvious is nice. In Windows, this Preferences file is called AI Prefs and is also located in the Adobe Illustrator CS folder.

The Flexible Toolbox

Give each tool its own keyboard shortcut. For example, pressing the V key brings up the Selection tool and pressing the Z key brings up the Zoom tool.

Tip

To change the keyboard shortcut for a tool (or to add shortcuts for tools that don't have any), choose Edit Keyboard Shortcuts. In the Keyboard Shortcuts dialog box, shown in [Figure 19-1](#), choose Tools from the drop-down menu at the top left of the dialog box (if it's not already selected), find the tool you want to change (or add) and then highlight the current command. Type a new shortcut and then click OK to make the new



shortcut available.

Figure 19-1: The Keyboard Shortcuts dialog box customizes tool commands.

Changing the Items on the Menu

You can customize all the Illustrator menu commands by using the Keyboard Shortcuts dialog box (refer to [Figure 19-1](#)). Go to this dialog box by choosing Edit Keyboard Shortcuts.

You can redefine even the most common commands, such as Open and New, with different keyboard shortcuts. To add a new keyboard shortcut, follow these steps:

1.

Choose Edit Keyboard Shortcuts.

The Keyboard Shortcuts dialog box opens.

2.

Choose Menu Commands from the drop-down menu at the top left of the dialog box (the default name is Tools).

A list of all Illustrator menus appears. Click the arrow beside the menu name to open the complete list of items under that menu. If the item already has a keyboard shortcut, you find it listed to the right of the menu item, in the Shortcut column.

3.

Change the keyboard shortcuts by highlighting the current keyboard shortcut, typing a new shortcut, and pressing Enter.

Tip

If the item has no keyboard shortcut assigned to it, you can give it one. To highlight the empty space, click in the Shortcut column (to the right of the menu item) and type in your shortcut there.

You can also print out a big sheet of all the keyboard shortcuts, even if you haven't changed any of them. To print out all the keyboard shortcuts, follow these steps:

1.

Choose Edit Keyboard Shortcuts.

The Keyboard Shortcuts dialog box opens.

2.

Click the Export Text button in the lower right of the Keyboard Shortcuts dialog box.

A Save dialog box opens.

3.

Name the text file that you want to contain your keyboard shortcuts, specify a location for it on your hard drive, and then click OK to save the text file.

4.

Open any word processing program on your computer, choose File Open, open the text file you just created, and then print it as you would any word processing document.

Tip

You can always return to the original keyboard commands by choosing Illustrator Factory Defaults from the Set drop-down menu in the upper-left corner of the Keyboard Shortcuts dialog box.

The Start-Up Document

You may notice that whenever you open a new document in Illustrator, the new document always appears the same way. For example, the Artboard and Page Tiling are always visible, the Swatches palette always has the same contents, and so on. The appearance of a new document doesn't happen by random chance but is determined by the start-up document file. This document controls the way that each new document is created, and you can change it to make each new document open the way that you want it to. Here are some items that you can change in this document:

- **Number of layers:** If you only need three, this option makes it so.
- **Zoom percentage:** If you find the best balance of detail and readability at a 63 percent zoom, that zoom is yours.
- **Artboard and Page Tiling:** You can show or hide these to suit your needs.
- **Window size:** This option is especially handy if you're working on several images at once.
- **Styles:** Add the styles you want and delete the ones you don't – the result is exactly what you have for your new documents.
- **Swatches:** You can make the Swatches palette open with exactly the swatches you want – no more, no less.
- **Brushes:** New documents open with the brushes you have in the Brushes palette at the time you save the start-up document. (How about leopard spots?)

To change the start-up document, follow these steps:

1.

Open the start-up document in Illustrator.

Illustrator has two of these: Adobe Illustrator Startup_CMYK and Adobe Illustrator Startup_RGB. You can find them inside your Plug-Ins folder (located in the Adobe Illustrator CS folder).

Tip

CMYK (cyan, magenta, yellow, black) documents and RGB (red, green, blue) documents (see [Chapter 1](#)) have separate start-up documents. This arrangement enables you to tailor each start-up document to the specific work environment. For instance, RGB files are often used for Web graphics and CMYK is used for print graphics. In the RGB start-up file, you can hide the Artboard and Page Tiling (which are print-specific features); you can also turn on Pixel Preview. In the CMYK file, you can add color swatches that represent your company's corporate colors to the Swatches palette.

2.

Make changes to any of the items on the handy list that precedes these steps.

For example, if you want new documents to have three layers instead of one, put three layers in the Layers palette. The layers don't need any artwork in them; just the act of adding layers in the Layers palette is enough. If you want Pixel Preview turned on automatically, choose it from the View menu. Add or delete swatches from the Swatches palette, and so forth.

3.

Save the document and close it.

Henceforth, each new document that you create reflects the items that you change in the start-up document.

Tip

The start-up document does not change existing documents.

Changing the Default Settings

Don't stop with the start-up document—you can change the way the entire Illustrator application works. Assuming that you have a plan (handy to have at a time like this), choose Edit Preferences General. Behold: The General Preferences dialog box appears, as shown in [Figure 19-2](#).



Figure 19-2: The General Preferences dialog box.

The General Preferences dialog box is just the first of several preferences dialog boxes containing a multitude of options for you to change. Each change affects the way that the application works, and Illustrator saves these changes when you quit the program, regardless of the documents that you're working in.

Warning

Don't start changing preference settings all helter-skelter when you first stumble across this dialog box. Doing so may cause unexpected behaviors in the application. Illustrator may start printing your letterhead in hieroglyphics. A better idea is to look at the list of items and only change one at a time, testing each item after you change it, even writing down what you did so you can remember the changes. If the results of a change aren't up to snuff, then be sure to change the preference back to its original setting.

Changing Hidden Commands You Never Knew About

In addition to those nice, respectable, visible menu commands and tool shortcuts, all sorts of nifty shortcuts just hang around in Illustrator without a single menu item or tool associated with them. These shortcuts are handy commands, such as Increase Type Size: Ctrl+Shift (Windows) ⌘+Shift (Mac). Even better, every one of these commands can be customized. Simply scroll through the Keyboard Shortcuts dialog box to find every command that exists in Illustrator. (Choose Edit Keyboard Shortcuts to get there.) If you find one that looks as though it may be useful to you, give it a new shortcut.

Using a Master Document

Although the start-up document enables you to customize certain items in your new documents, you're limited to one start-up document (well, two actually: one for RGB and one for CMYK). If you're really clever (and of course you are), you can simply use multiple documents as your start-up documents, without having to swap them in and out of the Plug-Ins folder.

Tip

Try keeping a folder full of seemingly empty documents that contain special sets of styles, swatches, brushes, and layers. When you open one that has the stuff you want, choose Save As. In effect, you get a custom document, without the process of loading or creating any of the styles, swatches, brushes, or layers that you're using.

Action Jackson

Have you ever found yourself doing things again and again (such as typing the word *redundant* dozens of times)? Have you ever wished that your computer could do some of this tedious work for you? Well, that's where Actions come in. Actions make Illustrator do the grunt work while you get to do all the fun stuff.

Illustrator comes with hundreds of Actions, although only a dozen are installed with the software. You can find the rest on your Illustrator application CD-ROM. Better yet, you can make your own Actions! *Actions* can be virtually any series of Illustrator activities, such as scaling, rotating, changing colors, or bringing selections to the front. You can even use Actions to select objects if they have specific names.

Tip

One of the handiest uses for Actions is creating compound keyboard shortcuts. For example, you can perform a set of procedures, such as Create New Layer, Place, and Scale at the same time, without even wrenching your back. Instead of performing all three keyboard commands individually, you can easily set up an Action to do all three simultaneously. Result: One keyboard command does three tasks! You just smile and watch. Choose Window Actions, and meet the friendly Actions palette in [Figure 19-3](#).



Figure 19-3: The Actions palette puts power at your virtual fingertips.

To use any Action, click it in the Actions palette and then click the Play Current Selection button (the right-pointing arrow) at the bottom of the palette.

Creating your own Action feels something like taping your voice or image and then playing it back. When you record an Action, Illustrator watches what you do and records every step as closely as possible. (This procedure is a lot like creating a macro in Word.)

Remember

Computers have no imagination; you have to tell them exactly what to do. Therefore, your recorded Actions must use precise values. Anything that requires a level of human interaction does not get recorded. In effect, Illustrator says, That's not my department. So there. For example, creating a one-inch rectangle is a precise action. Drawing a squiggly line is not. You can't always know in advance whether Illustrator can record all the actions you perform—but you know for certain after you play it back. Hey, it's not a program; it's an adventure.

To create your own Action, just follow these steps:

1.

Open a new document in Illustrator and choose Window Actions.

The Actions palette opens.

2.

Click the Create New Action button.

The New Action dialog box opens.

3.

Name the Action and click the Record button.

For example, type the name **Red Rectangle** for the Action. After you click the Record button, the Action records everything you do, tapping your phone, and transmitting that information back to Adobe where they're keeping a file on you. Just kidding. Honest.

4.

Perform a series of actions with the keyboard or the mouse.

For the example, select the Rectangle tool and drag out a rectangle in the document. Then choose a red swatch from the Swatches palette for the Fill color.

5.

Click the Stop Playing/Recording button.

The Action shows up on the Actions palette, ready for, um, *action*. Great gung-ho attitude, eh? But hold on a minute. . . .

6.

Prepare to test your Action.

In this case, delete your original rectangle. This finishing touch prevents the Action from creating another rectangle of the exact same size, shape, color, and position.

7.

Test your Action by clicking the name of the Action and then clicking the Play Current Selection button.

If the Action does exactly what you planned, it's ready for duty.

Tip

The preceding example is a simple Action. With a bit of practice, you can create infinitely more complex Actions. This wonder results from a simple fact: An Action records (nearly) everything you do from the time you start recording to the time you click Stop. The Action can be a simple menu command or something as complex as the creation of some amazing artwork, as if by magic.

Team LiB

◀ PREVIOUS NEXT ▶

Sticky Settings

Some of the things that you do in Illustrator remain sticky until you quit the application. For example, if you create a rectangle that is 1 x 2 inches, the next time that you click with the Rectangle tool, the values are automatically set to 1 x 2 inches. All the dialog boxes in Illustrator remember what you did last during your current Illustrator session. (But don't worry; they won't tell a soul.)

Remember

Between sessions, the entries in the Preferences dialog box and the positions of the palettes are all that remain constant. Oh, well. At least *something* does.

Bonus Chapter 1: Taking Images Out of the Realm of Reality

Overview

In This Chapter

- Applying unusual distortions to artwork
- Using the Liquify tools
- Enveloping with ease
- Jumping into the next dimension

As you can read in [Chapter 12](#), transformations—those critters that scale and rotate—can truly transmogrify your art. In this chapter, I venture into a universe where things are just a wee bit off kilter. Okay, to be honest, things are way strange. But cool!

Hang with me while I traverse the more esoteric world of distortions, oozing liquidations, and all things 3D. Be prepared to pucker up—and try not to become too bloated along the way.

Applying Distortion Effects

In this section, I cover the tried-and-true distortions that are part of the Illustrator Effect menu. While many of these effects are also located in the Filter menu, don't even *think* of using the filters instead of the effects. Filters are one-shot, destruction-harboring relics of the twentieth century, while effects are fully editable and much more in line with the other capabilities of Illustrator.

Pucker & Bloat

No, this isn't what happens after overdosing on lemonade during a heat wave. The Pucker & Bloat effect (formerly called Punk & Bloat), accessed by choosing Effect Distort Pucker & Bloat, squeezes and bulges paths by moving points and handles in the opposite directions from each other. Check out [Figure BC1](#) to see what happens to text outlines when they get puckered and bloated.



Figure BC1: Pucker & Bloat. Can you guess which is which?

Tip

The Pucker & Bloat effect is related to the number of points on a path. The more points, the more pucker spikes and bloat bubbles. You can add points via the Add Anchor Point tool (in the slot with the Pen tool) or by choosing Object Path Add Anchor Points. For more on paths and anchor points, see [Chapter 7](#).

Roughen and Scribble & Tweak

For making artwork look messy, the Roughen effect and the Scribble & Tweak effect are your best bets. (To access these effects, choose Effect Distort and then choose either Roughen or Scribble & Tweak.) The Roughen effect adds additional points to your paths and moves those points around, making the artwork look, well, rougher, as if it were drawn with a very shaky hand. Use the Scribble & Tweak effect to move existing points and handles around to make the artwork look a lot looser, as if it were hastily scribbled. What's unique about these effects is that the results are totally random so that the graphic they produce appears much less rigid and more natural. As you can see in [Figure BC2](#), applying these effects to existing artwork can result in unique effects, such as a hand-drawn appearance.



Figure BC2: This artwork is roughened to give the appearance of hand-drawn artwork.

Zig Zag

Using the Zig Zag effect adds points to your artwork and then moves every other point in and the remaining points out, giving an evenly saw-toothed appearance. That may sound contradictory, but hang with me. See the results of using the Zig Zag effect in [Figure BC3](#). To access the Zig Zag effect, choose Effect Distort Zig Zag.



Figure BC3: Use the Zig Zag effect to create effects like this. (Another espresso, please.)

Free Distort

Use the Free Distort effect (Effect Distort Free Distort) to surround an object with a box and independently pull the handles of the box to distort that object. This is like warping (see later in this chapter) without all the curves. The Free Distort effect is quite handy for making Star Wars style type (see [Figure BC4](#)) or other forced perspectives.

After years of turmoil and fierce competition, Adobe Illustrator has finally emerged as the clear winner in the graphics application arena.

The remnants of Macromedia FreeHand and CorelDRAW still litter the galaxy, but one by one they are turning to the Adobe side.

Adobe Illustrator CS raises the stakes even further, with amazingly tight integration with Photoshop CS, InDesign CS, GoLive CS, and Acrobat 6.

New 3D functionality crushes the wannabe's in the graphics space while providing capabilities never before seen on a desktop...

Figure BC4: The Free Distort effect can make type appear to fade off into the background.

Twist

The Twist effect (Effect Distort Twist) twirls your object based on the value that you enter in the Angle field in the Twist dialog box. It's like rotating the outside without rotating the inside, to create a sort of top-down-looking-in-the-blender effect, as shown in [Figure BC5](#).



Figure BC5: Twist blends together artwork.

Warps

Any type of Illustrator object—vector- or pixel-based images or text can be warped. The 15 kinds of warps may look familiar because they share the same names as those that appear under the Envelope Distort Make With Warp Style menu. (Read the section, later in this chapter, called *At warp speed.*) Although these distortion warps may seem to apply the same results, there are some differences.

To apply a warp, select your artwork, choose **Effect Warp**, and then choose your desired warp from the submenu. Warps, just as other effects, distort the look of the object without altering the actual object itself, as shown in [Figure BC6](#).



Figure BC6: A star appears warped, but its underlying skeletal structure remains unchanged.

Other effects goodies

Here are some other juicy tidbits on effects:

- **Edit an effect:** Double-click the effect's name in the Appearance palette (Window Appearance).
- **Reuse a customized effect:** Save the effect as a style, which can then be applied to other objects. For more on styles, see [Chapter 11](#).
- **Edit the original object:** Choose the Direct Selection tool and manipulate the anchor points of the object.
- **Edit text:** Revise text without changing the effect.

Tip

Select distorted text: Choose View Smart Guides. Smart Guides make selection a snap. If Smart Guides doesn't work, choose View Outline, which shows the original, noneffected type.

Team LiB

◀ PREVIOUS NEXT ▶

Creating Graphic Ooze with Liquification

The next level of distortions is so much fun to play with that you may never get any work done. Partly because they're tools, and partly because they only affect a small section of your artwork at once, you'll find yourself tweaking and distorto-painting for hours.

Liquifying without a blender

The Illustrator Liquify tools enable you to easily apply distortions to objects directly on your page. In other words, you aren't confined to the confines of a dialog box with sliders, like you are with the distortion effects that I describe in the earlier section, [Applying Distortion Effects](#). Liquify tools offer you the freedom to pull, twist, and otherwise wreak havoc on your image with total liberty and creative abandon.

To perform the rite of liquification, first select your artwork and then select your torture tool of choice from the Toolbox. Check out [Figure BC7](#) for an illustration of each liquification tool/type and name. I created each of these cartoons with default settings, applying different Liquify tools to adjust the hair curl and nose of my poor victim.

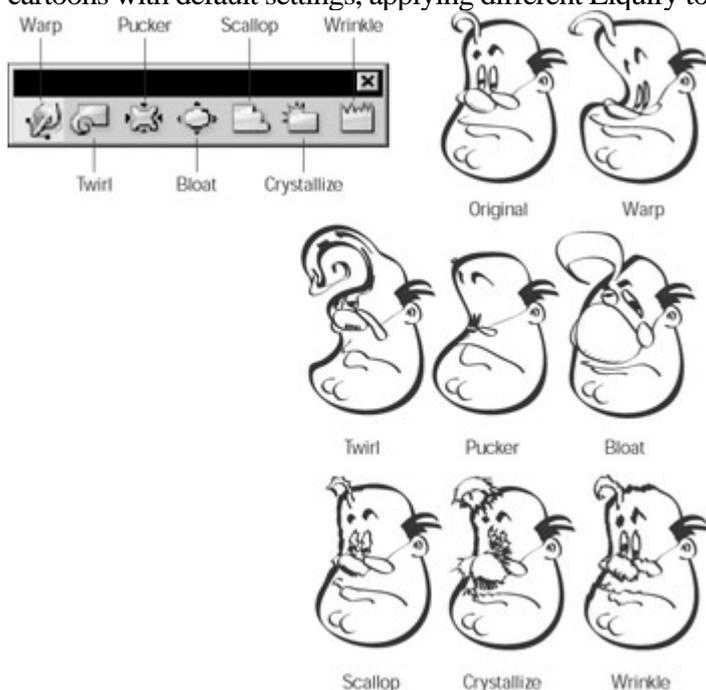


Figure BC7: One poor schmoe who's gone through the Liquidation mill.

Here are the Liquify tools and how to use them for maximum fun. Just click the tool that you want and follow the instructions from there. Refer to [Figure BC7](#) to match each tool with its effect.

-

Warp: Drag your mouse to push the pixels forward — they move with your cursor.

-

Twirl: Drag or hold your mouse down to rotate the pixels. The longer you hold your mouse down, the greater the twirl.

•

Pucker: Hold your mouse to move the pixels toward the center of your cursor. Holding your mouse down longer results in more of a pucker.

•

Bloat: Hold your mouse to move the pixels outwards from the center of your cursor. Holding your mouse down longer results in a bigger bloat.

•

Scallop: Drag or hold your mouse down to create a rounded, scalloped edge. The longer you hold your mouse down, the more intense the scallop.

•

Crystallize: Drag or hold your mouse down to create a spiked edge. Holding the mouse down longer creates a spikier effect.

•

Wrinkle: Drag or hold your mouse down to create a distressed, shaky-hand edge. I know you've probably caught on that if you hold the mouse down longer, the effect will be increasingly wrinkled.

Tip

Using a pressure-sensitive tablet with the Liquify tools gives you even more control over their effects.

Liquify options

Each Liquify tool has a corresponding Options dialog box that controls the tool's settings. This dialog box can be accessed by double-clicking any of the Liquify tools in the Toolbox. And although I recommend experimentation to get a real feel for how the Liquify tools operate, peruse the upcoming list for guidelines on how the various settings affect the tools' behavior.

•

Brush options: Use these three options to define your brush size, angle, and intensity.

○

Global Brush Dimensions: Select the size of your brush from a range of 1 to 1,000 points (pt). Set width and height sizes independently to create oval-shaped brushes.

Tip

Hold down the Alt key (Option on a Mac) before clicking with a Liquify tool to change the brush size on the fly.

○

Angle: Specify the angle of your oval brushes from 360° to 360°.

○

Intensity: Establish the intensity of your brush from a range of 0 to 100%. The greater the percentage, the greater (or more intense) the tool's effect.

●

Use Pressure Pen: For those fortunate owners of pressure-sensitive tablets, select (check) this option to take advantage of greater control and finer tuning offered by these devices.

●

Warp/Twirl/Pucker/Bloat options: That's a mouthful, eh? Use these options to set anchor points and edge smoothness.

○

Detail: Use the Detail option to control how many additional anchor points that you add to the path. A higher Detail value (10 is the max) results in more anchor points.

○

Simplify: Check the Simplify option in conjunction with the Detail option to eliminate unnecessary anchor points (those that don't contribute to the shape) added by a higher Detail value. The higher the Simplify value, the smoother the edge.

●

Twirl Rate: A ballerina's dream. The higher the rate, the quicker the twirl appears and the curlier it is. See [Figure BC8](#) for an example of two different twirl rates.

●

Scallop/Crystallize/Wrinkle options: In addition to the Global Brush Dimensions and Detail options, these last three tools also offer a few additional options.

○

Complexity: The higher the Complexity value (1-15), the more anchor points are added to the object during the distortion, as shown in [Figure BC9](#).

○

Brush Affects Anchor Points: Use the Brush Affects Anchor Points option to apply the distortion to the anchor points, as shown in [Figure BC10](#).

○

Brush Affects In Tangent Handles: Use this option to apply the distortion to the first Bézier curve directional handles.

○

Brush Affects Out Tangent Handles: Use this option to apply the distortion to the second Bézier curve directional handles.

I recommend keeping the Always Show Brush Size options selected (checked). Doing so enables you to view the actual size of your brush while you work rather than just seeing a cross-hair icon.



Figure BC8: Different twirl rates affect the speed and curliness of the twirl distortion.



Figure BC9: A Scallop distortion with two different Complexity settings.



Figure BC10: A Crystallize distortion using three different brush settings.

Tip

To distort live text by using the Liquify tools, you must first apply an Envelope Mesh effect to it (see the following tip). While the Liquify tools are indeed cool, use them sparingly on type. Your type must still be legible. How else are people going to find their way to your groovy garage sale of 1960s-era black-light posters? For more on creating and working with type, see [Chapter 14](#).

Tip

You can use the Liquify tools as live effects on anything in your document, but there's a catch: You need to use the Object Envelope Make with Mesh command on the selected artwork first. You distort the mesh, not the objects, but the visual result will be that the selected artwork/pixels/type are distorted (while in reality the original objects are intact). The higher the number of rows and columns you use in the Make with Mesh dialog box, the more detail you have with the Liquify tools. See more about the Envelope Mesh command in the section entitled, [What a mesh](#), coming up later in this chapter.

Pushing the Envelope

One of the deepest and most powerful features of Illustrator is enveloping. Intriguing, varied, and downright fun, enveloping can be applied to everything in your document – vector objects, text, pixel-based images, gradient meshes, patterns, and more. What's even better is that the envelopes remain live so that you can keep revising your distorted objects to your heart's content.

You have three ways to apply an Envelope distortion to your artwork: from a warp, a mesh, or a path. Depending on what kind of effect that you're going for, one may be more suitable than the others.

At warp speed

To create an Envelope distortion by using a warp, follow these steps:

1.

Select your artwork with the Selection tool.

Remember

Your artwork can be path- or pixel-based, or even text. This example includes a line of text and a pixel-based image of some cheesy Groucho-esque disguise glasses. I opened the image of the glasses, created the text with the Type tool, and then positioned it under the glasses with the Selection tool.

2.

Choose Object Envelope Distort Make With Warp.

The Warp Options dialog box appears, offering an array of options.

3.

Choose your desired style from the drop-down menu.

Each of the 15 styles offers a corresponding icon giving you an idea of the warp effect. Make sure to select (check) the Preview option so that you can see the results.

Note how the Envelope grid appears over the artwork. For this example, I chose the Squeeze option, which creates an hourglass effect.

4.

In the Warp Options dialog box, select the Horizontal or Vertical options (if available and if you

want to distort the proportions of the warp) and adjust the Bend and Distortion options.

My mutation includes selecting the Horizontal option and boosting the Bend option to 100%. Adjust the Horizontal and Vertical percentages to skew the style to the left, right, top, or bottom. Adjusting the Bend option to either end of the scale intensifies the effect. For this example, these options are at the default settings of 0.

5.

Click OK and admire the results.

See the distortion in [Figure BC11](#). Note how both the image and the type were distorted with the warp. If an image can stand a little tweaking, select the Direct Selection tool and click your Envelope path. Choose an anchor point on that path and drag to adjust the Envelope path. Your artwork distorts to fit the revised envelope.

What a mesh

The Make From Mesh method of Envelope distortion applies a grid of specified rows and columns over your artwork. Select the points on the mesh with the Direct Selection tool to distort the artwork underneath. See [Figure BC12](#) to view the Envelope Mesh distortion in action.

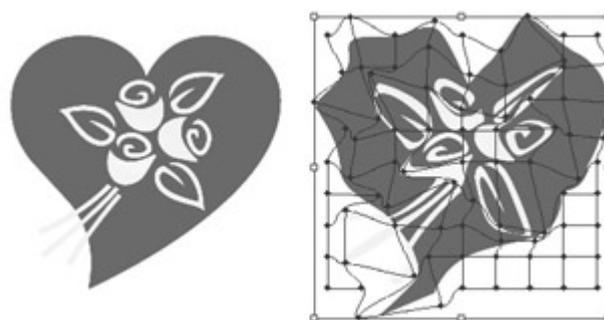


Figure BC11: Putting the squeeze on Groucho. Oucho!

Figure BC12: Use an Envelope Mesh distortion to distort your image by manipulating points on a grid.

Tip

You can add additional points on the mesh grid with the Mesh tool. See [Chapter 10](#) for more on using the Mesh tool.

Pathways

The last method of Envelope distortion enables you to use any path as the envelope for the distortion. This can be very handy when creating logos because objects, scans, and type can all fit neatly into a specified shape, such as an oval. Follow these steps to find out how to use a path for the envelope:

1.

Create a path for your envelope and place it over your artwork.

Remember

The Envelope path must be the frontmost object.

In [Figure BC13](#), a circle for the Envelope path is placed over the text and pixel-based apple image.

2.

Select the path and your artwork with the Selection tool and choose Object > Envelope Distort > Make With Top Object.

Your artwork is distorted to fit inside the path, as shown in [Figure BC13](#).



Figure BC13: Fitting an apple and some text nicely into a circle.

Here are a few other pertinent details regarding envelopes:

- **Change the contents within the envelope rather than the envelope itself:** Select your envelope and choose Object > Envelope Distort > Edit Contents. Then feel free to modify your artwork – change the color, edit the text, and so on.
- **Release (undo) the envelope:** Choose Object > Envelope Distort > Release.
-

Permanently apply your envelope: Choose Object Envelope Distort Expand. Your art looks the same, but you re no longer able to edit the contents or release the envelope.

-

Apply envelope distorts to linear gradients, pattern fills, or appearance attributes: You must select these options in the Envelope Options dialog box (Object Envelope Distort Envelope Options).

More Dimensions than a 2D Program Should Have

New Feature

Illustrator CS adds 3D capabilities to what has been, for all drawing intents and illustration purposes, a 2D program. No longer are you limited to flat artwork with artist renditions of 3D that you've had to painstakingly create from scratch. Now you can generate true 3D objects (though you still have to move each of the 3D objects around in essentially two dimensions).

You won't find better, more comprehensive 3D functionality in any other 2D program. You *will* find better, more comprehensive 3D functionality in 3D software such as LightWave or Maya, but why spend loads of money and deal with a super steep learning curve when you're probably just going to want the basics anyway? 3D software is primarily for 3D modeling, so you can create your own *Shrek* or *Doom*. The interesting thing about that is that those folks tend to use Illustrator for the basic designs and shapes that are later modeled with the high-end 3D software.

Another benefit is that 3D in Illustrator is easy. So easy I considered not writing this section. So easy that you'll be creating 3D objects in, er, about one step. So easy that you'd expect the feature to be trying out for a spot as one of the floozies on *The Bachelor*. Okay, okay, nothing's *that* easy. But 3D comes close.

What lovely extrusions you have

When people think of 3D, they usually think of extrusions. Of course, they think of those extrusions as 3D, not extrusions, or Adobe would've called the feature extrusions and more. Or something a little more snazzy. Extruding is the process of taking your artwork and giving it weight. Giving it depth. Giving it a 3D look. [Figure BC14](#) shows some boring, regular old type next to amazingly compelling extruded type.

To extrude type, follow these steps:

1.

Select the object you want to extrude.

You can extrude paths and type, but not pixels.

If you like, you can apply 3D effects to groups or layers, not just paths. 3D effects work like any other effect in that way.

2.

Choose Effect 3D Extrude & Bevel.

The 3D Options dialog box appears (shown in [Figure BC15](#)).

3.

Click OK, and voilà! Your art is now 3D.



Figure BC14: Mild-mannered text and its super-powered 3D alter ego.

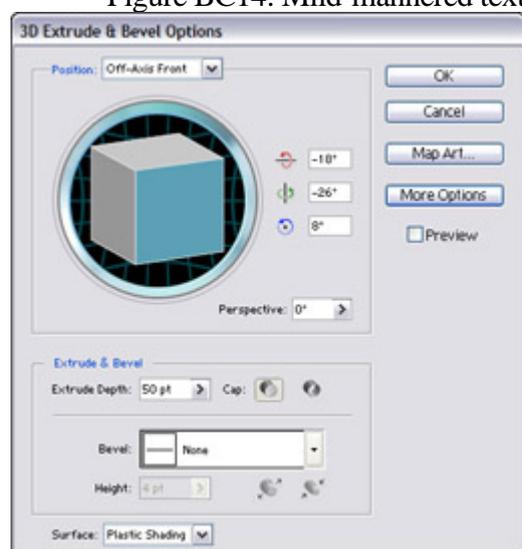


Figure BC15: The 3D Options dialog box.

Options? 3D is supposed to be easy, right?

You're probably thinking to yourself, Gee, self, why are all those funky controls in the dialog box if I don't have to use 'em? The secret is the title of the dialog box: It's the 3D *Options* dialog box, which lets you change options for your 3D object. It's Adobe's way of making you less intimidated than you probably should be, considering the huge leap you just made going from 2D to 3D.

Before you start wiggling the controls, check the Preview check box. That allows you to see the results of your wiggling every time you release the mouse button (or choose a different control). You may have to move the dialog box out of the way in order for you to see your artwork. Here's a breakdown of the controls and what they do, from top to bottom on the left side:

- **Position:** Select one of these options to quickly rotate your artwork. Unless you're really scared of the Big

Cube option, or you need to get back from some rotation that is out of control, don't bother with these, just play Spin the Cube.

- **The Big Cube:** This rocks. For a seemingly tame cube, this is the probably the most important control in the whole dialog box. Place your cursor on a flat side of the cube, click and drag, and your artwork rotates along with the cube. When you release the mouse button (assuming you have the Preview check box checked), your artwork is redrawn at its new rotation. If you really want control over your artwork rotation, use the following techniques:

-

Single Axis Rotation: Place your cursor on the edge of any cube face, and the cursor changes to a cute little double-sided curved arrow. This arrow means you only rotate the artwork around that axis of the object. Try it; it's very intuitive.

Tip

Hold down the Shift key and the cursor changes into a little double right angle arrow. When you click and drag with the Shift key pressed, it rotates around the *Artboard* x and y axes only.

-

Rotate like the Rotate tool: What if you just want to spin your artwork the same way the Illustrator Rotate tool rotates? Rotating this way is rotating around the *z axis*, the axis of the Artboard that starts behind the screen and ends between your eyes. To rotate around the z axis, click the outside round rim of the cube and drag.

- **3 Degrees of Rotation:** Now imagine Kevin Bacon in the cube . . . the three little boxes with degrees in them are the rotation amount around each of the x, y, and z axes.

- **Perspective:** This control simulates how close the camera is to the object. It doesn't make the artwork bigger or smaller (that's the confusing part), but instead just distorts it a little to simulate camera distance. The more you increase the perspective (drag it to the right), the more distorted objects look (and the closer the artwork seems to the camera). [Figure BC16](#) shows the same 3D artwork with different perspective amounts.

- **Extrude Depth:** This is how deep your artwork goes when you extrude it. The larger the number, the farther back the extrusion, and the thicker it appears.

Read on in the *Mr. Bevel-dere* section to find out about the bevel options in the 3D Options dialog box.



Figure BC16: Artwork at increasing perspective settings.

Mr. Bevel-dere

The ancient book of Chinese patterns has a quote I'm fond of repeating: When art stale, spice with bevels. But don't wait until *your* art starts getting a little boring in order to add these edge enhancements. Illustrator ships with all sorts of bevels you can use now.

Tip

While you probably apply bevels to artwork that's extruded, you don't have to; you can apply it to conventional, flat, plain-old-vanilla 2D artwork to give some pop to your masterpiece.

To apply a bevel to selected artwork, open the 3D Options dialog box. If you've already applied an extrusion to your artwork, you can simply double-click the 3D Bevel & Extrude entry in the Appearance palette. If not, choose Effect 3D Bevel & Extrude, and pick a bevel from the drop-down menu. As long as you have the Preview check box checked, you see the bevel you picked applied to the artwork instantly. [Figure BC17](#) shows bevels applied to text to give a stately, important look.



Figure BC17: Look at the classy bevels on this text.

If you don't want any extrusion or 3D rotation, set the Extrusion Depth to 0, and change the Rotation setting to the Front option. Then pick your bevel (remember to never pick your friend's bevel), and set the depth of the bevel with the slider above it. Voilà! You beveled your artwork, as shown in [Figure BC18](#).



Figure BC18: Flat, 2D artwork with just a hint of 3D bevel.

Revolving 2D into 3D

Extruding is the most common form of creating 3D from 2D, but much more interesting is revolving 2D art into 3D art.

No, no, you shouldn't feel guilty about thinking that it sounds too confusing to be of any use to you. Revolving is a pretty strange concept. The closest real-world example to revolving is probably a pottery wheel, though Illustrator isn't quite as messy and doesn't require the Righteous Brothers to be singing in the background. Another example for you woodworker wannabe s would be lathing; the same process that makes baseball bats, chair legs, and toothpicks.

[Figure BC19](#) shows some examples of 2D artwork and the resulted revolved 3D art. These examples took just seconds to create using the Illustrator 3D controls.

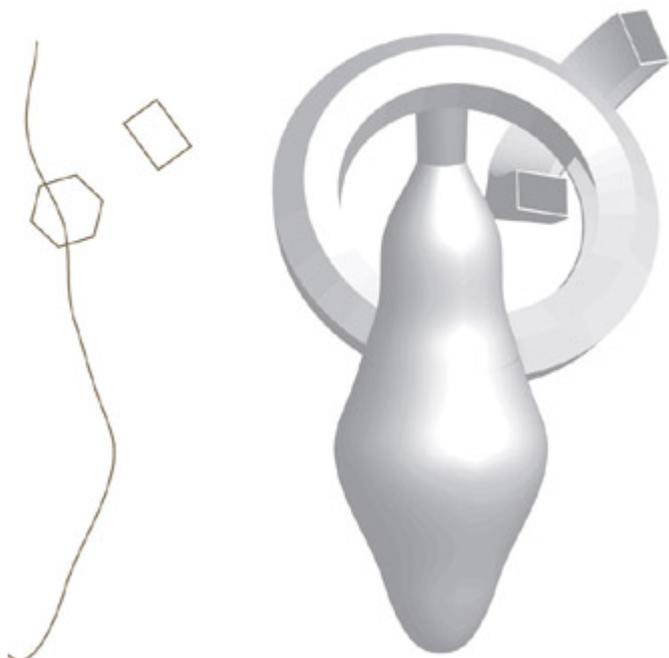


Figure BC19: 2D artwork (left) is revolved into 3D artwork (right).

You create 3D evolved artwork in pretty much the same way you created 3D extruded artwork, except that you choose Effect 3D Revolve. The Extrude section of the 3D Options dialog box is replaced with the Revolve section shown in [Figure BC20](#).



Figure BC20: The Revolve section of the 3D options dialog box.

The options here aren't quite as straightforward as they could be:

- **Angle:** This control sets the angle of the revolve. Normally the angle is 90°, which will spin the object around a vertical axis.
- **Amount:** This control sets the amount of revolving. At 360 degrees (the default value), the object revolves completely around its left edge, making a complete circle (when viewed from the top). The more you lower

the amount, the more the object changes: from a complete circle to something with a bite taken out of it, to a half circle, to a little pie wedge (again, viewed from the top).

-

Offset: This control lets you revolve around a different location. The farther the offset, the more of a hole you'll see in objects rotated 360 degrees.

When revolving, you'll notice that it's a little confusing to determine exactly which amount or angle to use in order to get the desired result. Use the Preview check box, which gives you an up-to-date outlook on exactly what you're changing. Also, don't forget to use the Big Cube option to rotate your artwork into a position where you can see it; oftentimes the result is hidden because of the angle you're viewing.

Lighting and surface qualities

If you haven't noticed by now, overwhelmed as you may be by the various options and controls for extrusions and revolves, a cute little button called More Options resides above the Preview check box. Click this guy and not only does the button change to read Fewer Options (by far the least impressive of the button's functions), but it also opens a whole new set of options and controls at the bottom of the dialog box, including a snazzy-looking sphere and a bunch of indecipherable numbers.

These options control lighting and surface properties; they may seem a bit daunting at first, but the important items (there are only two of them), are really super-easy to use.

Super-easy setting #1: Surface

The Surface drop-down menu contains controls for customizing the surface type. Your choices are:

-

Plastic Shading (the default): This option makes your artwork look like it's right out of the preschool row in Toys-R-Us. Shiny, happy, glossy-looking plastic art.

-

Wireframe: This option is the 3D guts view. Each piece of the 3D object is outlined and shown. Great for technical-looking pieces, such as the one in [Figure BC21](#).

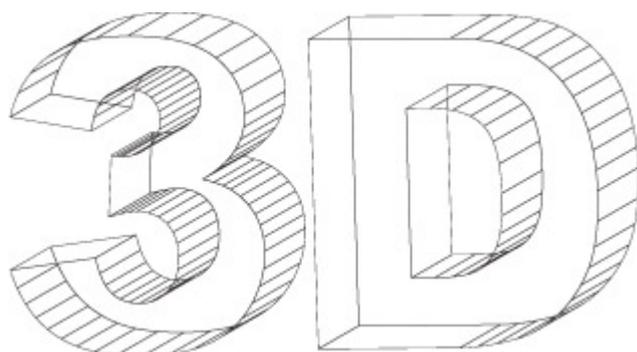


Figure BC21: This is so techy, and you can create it in mere seconds!

- **No Shading:** Possibly the least-used of the surface options, the no Shading option generates artwork that is the exact same color as the original 2D artwork. Ick.

- **Diffuse Shading:** Soft, smooth shading that gradually moves from bright light to darker shading. [Figure BC22](#) shows the difference between plastic and diffuse shading.

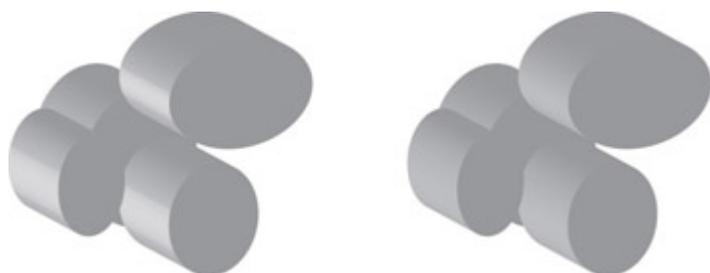


Figure BC22: The same 3D artwork with plastic (left) and diffuse (right) shading.

Tip

Surface properties, specifically Plastic and Diffuse shading, need curves to show any half-decent results. If you try these settings on an extruded square or star, you'll be a little disappointed. Try them out on revolved artwork, curvy artwork you've extruded, or any artwork with curved bevels.

Super-easy setting #2: Lights

See the pretty sphere? It's the place where you can mess around with lighting. The sphere represents your artwork (kind of like the cube that represents it for rotation). The little square with a circle in it is a light source, shining on your new 3D artwork. Think of this light source as a 100-watt incandescent bulb stuck in Uncle Fester's mouth, the expensive soft-white, natural light type that sets you back about \$4 a pop.

Move Uncle Fester's head around by clicking and dragging the little circle-in-a-square thingy, and when you release the mouse button, your artwork changes appearance, as the light is hitting it at a different angle.

Tip

If you're really super-cool, need to impress your been-there, seen-it-all friends, and your computer isn't a 1992 refit reject from some government agency, you can press the Shift key as you move around the light source. Watch the artwork as you do this; it'll update in real time! Ooooooh.

If that were all you could do with lights and surfaces, it would be enough for your already high expectations. But the wizards in the Adobe think tanks (it keeps most engineers in sensory-deprivation chambers, not because doing so makes them write better code, but because marketing types need something to laugh about during their four martini lunches) have added all sorts of other abilities, from adding multiple lights to controlling the glossiness of your plastic. Twiddle the controls a bit, and you radically change the appearance of your artwork, such as the examples in [Figure BC23](#).



Figure BC23: No, it didn't take hours to create all these different pieces of art . . . just a few seconds applying different lighting and surface effects from the 3D Options dialog box.

Wrapping art around 3D art

Okay, so you've made your donut, and you'd like to put sprinkles on it. Or you've created fuzzy dice, but they aren't fuzzy (and they don't have big ole dots yet).

What can you do? Draw them on the edges manually? Sure, if you majored in Perspectives in college. Assuming you didn't, however, you'll probably like the ability of Illustrator to place artwork on the sides of 3D objects. Illustrator does this through symbols; anything you can make as a symbol can be applied to any side of a 3D object. If you can make fuzzy squares with big ole dots on them, you can apply them to extruded squares. You need to supply your own El Camino, however.

The best way to apply artwork to 3D objects is to make the 3D object *first*, without the artwork. Doing everything at once is possible, but you have to keep track of too many things to be very productive. In the case of the fuzzy (to be) dice, make your cube first by extruding a square (extrude it exactly the same amount as the width or height; they should be the same). Then make six fuzzy sides (if you're fuzz-challenged, just make a dot pattern). Sure, you can get away with three sides, because that's all you can see anyway, but what if you want a pair of fuzzy dice? You'll probably want to show different sides of each die. You don't want people laughing at your fuzzy dice, do you?

Each fuzzy side needs to be made into a symbol (drag the art into the Symbols palette to do this). Then select the cube, double-click the 3D Extrude & Bevel entry in the Appearance palette, and click the Map Art button, at which time the Map Art dialog box appears, as shown in [Figure BC24](#).

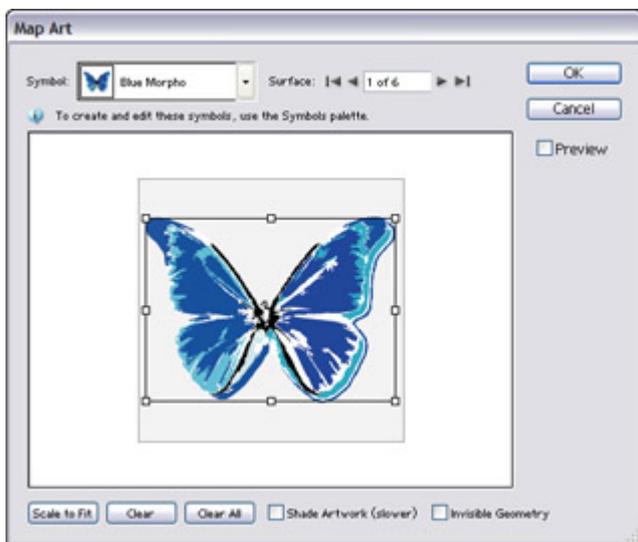


Figure BC24: The Map Art dialog box when you have an extruded square selected.

Slowly, methodically choose a side, and then choose a symbol from the menu. The symbol is applied to your artwork. Change sides and repeat until you've spotted your die, then click OK and bask in the glory of your new creation, like the one shown in [Figure BC25](#).



Figure BC25: Fuzzy dice straight from Illustrator. But you can tell your friends you picked them up on that trip over the border.

Tip

Try adding other cool effects to 3D, such as warps or transparency, for some really amazing effects. [Figure BC26](#) shows the dice I created as official Las Vegas-style craps dice, with completely transparent insides (to see the dots on the hidden sides of the dice, I checked the Show Hidden Faces option at the bottom of the 3D Options dialog box).

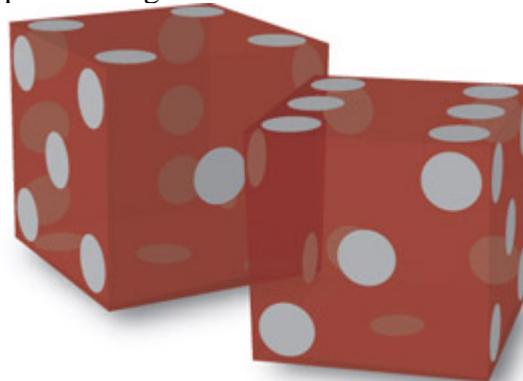


Figure BC26: Official Vegas-style dice, with classic razor edges.

Index

Symbols & Numerics

- ... (ellipsis), [23](#)
- 2-Up tab (Save for Web dialog box), [301](#)
- 3 Degrees of Rotation option (3D Options dialog box), [BC17](#)
- 3D art, revolving 2D art into, [BC19 BC21](#)
- 3D objects
 - extruding type, [BC15 BC16](#)
 - overview of, [BC15](#)
 - wrapping art around, [BC23 BC25](#)
- 3D Options dialog box
 - bevel options, [BC18 BC19](#)
 - lighting and surface controls, [BC21 BC23](#)
 - options, [BC17 BC18](#)
 - overview of, [BC15 BC16](#)
 - Revolve section, [BC19 BC21](#)
 - Show Hidden Faces option, [BC24 BC25](#)
- 4-Up tab (Save for Web dialog box), [301](#)

Index

A

absolute measurement, [232](#)

accessing

- Color Picker, [95](#)
- hidden tool, [19](#)
- tool with shortcut, [19](#)

Action, creating, [355](#) [357](#)

Actions palette, [356](#)

actual size, returning to, [30](#)

Add Anchor Point tool, [127](#) [128](#), [BC2](#)

Add New Fill command (Appearance palette), [210](#)

Add New Stroke command (Appearance palette), [211](#)

Add option (Raster Effects Settings dialog box), [206](#)

Add to Shape Area command (Pathfinder palette), [80](#)

adjusting path without changing type, [278](#) [279](#)

Adobe

- GoLive, [12](#)
- InDesign, [12](#), [332](#)
- Photoshop, [12](#), [13](#), [327](#) [331](#)
- PostScript, [12](#)
- Reader, [66](#)

Adobe PDF Format Options dialog box, [66](#)

.ai extension, [24](#), [67](#)

alert (Links palette), [323](#)

aliasing and printing, [284](#)

Align Center (Paragraph palette), [269](#), [274](#)

Align Left (Paragraph palette), [269](#)

Align palette, [251](#)

Align Right (Paragraph palette), [269](#)

Align to Page orientation (Blend Options dialog box), [237](#)

Align to Path orientation (Blend Options dialog box), [237](#)

alignment of paragraph, changing, [269](#)

All on Same Layer command (Select menu), [123](#)

Alspach, Jennifer, *Illustrator CS Bible*, [313](#)

Alspach, Ted

- Illustrator Bible* (Versions 7.0, 8.0, 9.0, 10), [3](#)
- Illustrator CS Bible*, [313](#)
- Illustrator Studio Secrets*, [3](#)
- Macworld Illustrator Bible*, [2](#)

Alt key (Windows)

- dragging and, [233](#)
- subtracting from selection with, [121](#)

Always Show Brush Size option (Liquify tools), [BC9](#)

- anchor point
- combination-corner, [133](#) [135](#), [142](#) [143](#)
- converting, [126](#) [127](#)
- curved-corner, [132](#) [133](#), [142](#)
- description of, [47](#), [48](#), [130](#)
- placement of, [141](#), [142](#)
- smooth, [130](#) [131](#)
- straight-corner, [131](#) [132](#)
- Angle option
- Calligraphic Brush Options dialog box, [182](#)
- Reflect dialog box, [230](#)
- Anti-Alias option (Raster Effects Settings dialog box), [206](#)
- anti-aliasing, [284](#)
- Appearance option (Create Gradient Mesh dialog box), [189](#)
- Appearance palette
- Add New Fill command, [210](#)
- Add New Stroke command, [211](#)
- adding fill or stroke using, [209](#) [211](#)
- editing effects in, [213](#) [214](#)
- groups and layers, changing, [211](#) [212](#)
- moving item in, [209](#)
- overview of, [56](#), [202](#), [206](#) [207](#)
- reading, [207](#) [209](#)
- removing and changing effects, [204](#) [205](#)
- removing appearances, [214](#) [215](#)
- replacing style in, [218](#), [219](#)
- strokes and fills, applying effects to, [213](#)
- applying
- bevel, [BC18](#) [BC19](#)
- effect, [202](#), [203](#) [204](#), [213](#)
- graphic style to text, [219](#) [220](#)
- pattern, [107](#) [108](#)
- slices to layers, [317](#)
- style to object, [216](#)
- Arc Segment Tool Options dialog box, [159](#) [160](#)
- Arc tool, [159](#) [160](#)
- Area Type tool, [276](#)
- arrow keys
- moving selected object with, [53](#)
- moving selected points with, [125](#)
- Polygon tool and, [74](#)
- arrow tools. *See* [Direct Selection tool](#); [Group Selection tool](#); [Selection tool](#)
- Art Brush Options dialog box, [169](#) [171](#)
- Art brushes, [164](#), [169](#) [171](#)
- Artboard
- hiding, [344](#)
- origin point, moving, [228](#)
- overview of, [26](#) [27](#)
- artifacting, [305](#)
- artistic ability, [1](#)
- Artistic Sample brush palette, [165](#)
- artwork
- creating and editing, [13](#)
- exporting, [56](#), [65](#), [67](#)
- hiding in layer, [245](#)

making for Pattern brushes, [176](#)
optimizing as pixel-based image, [64](#)
positioning in Pattern brushes, [177](#) [180](#)
previewing, [65](#)
scalability of, [12](#), [39](#)
separating into layers, [243](#) [245](#)
ascender, [265](#)

Team LiB

◀ PREVIOUS

NEXT ▶

Index

B

Back position, [240](#)
Background option (Raster Effects Settings dialog box), [205](#)
banding, [297](#)
baseline, [266](#)
baseline shift, [268](#)
Baseline Shift field (Character palette), [274](#)
bevel, applying, [BC18 BC19](#)
Bevel Join, [197](#)
beveled object, creating, [189 191](#)
Bézier curve, [46](#)
Big Cube option (3D Options dialog box), [BC17](#)
Black-and-white option (Color palette), [102](#)
Blend Mode menu (Transparency palette), [193](#)
blend modes, [193 194](#)
Blend Options dialog box, [237](#)
Blend tool, [59, 237 238](#)
blending, [59, 236 238](#)
Bloat tool, [BC7, BC8](#)
Blur setting (File Format menu), [306](#)
BMP file, [327](#)
bold text, [261, 262](#)
[bonus chapter](#) on Web, [6, 205, 223](#)
bounding box
editing symbols and, [89](#)
scaling artwork with, [226](#)
brightness, [105](#)
Bring Forward command (Object menu), [241](#)
Bring to Front command (Object menu), [241, 243](#)
bringing file into Illustrator, [320 321](#)
Browser Compatibility Chart, [318](#)
Brush options (Liquify tools), [BC8](#)
Brush Strokes option (Select menu), [123](#)
brushes
Art, [169 171](#)
Calligraphic, [181 183](#)
creating, [167 169](#)
description of, [163](#)
fill color and, [167](#)
Paintbrush tool and, [164 166](#)
Pattern, [174 181](#)
reusing, [346 347](#)
Scatter, [171 174](#)

types of, [164](#)

Brushes palette

New Brush button, [167](#)

overview of, [164](#), [165](#)

Butt Cap, [196](#)

Team LiB

◀ PREVIOUS NEXT ▶

Index

C

Calligraphic Brush Options dialog box, [181](#), [182](#)

Calligraphic brushes, [164](#), [165](#), [181](#) [183](#)

cap, [194](#), [195](#) [196](#)

Cascading Style Sheet (CSS), [313](#), [317](#) [318](#)

cast shadow or reflection, creating, [230](#), [233](#)

Chalk Art brush, [165](#)

changing

alignment of paragraph, [269](#)

default settings, [354](#)

effect, [205](#)

font, [260](#) [262](#)

gradient color, [112](#)

keyboard shortcuts, [350](#) [352](#)

space around paragraph, [269](#) [270](#)

stacking order of objects, [245](#)

unit of measurement, [346](#)

width of stroke, [97](#)

Character palette

baseline shift, [268](#)

leading, setting, [266](#)

overview of, [21](#), [256](#), [258](#) [259](#)

point size, setting, [265](#)

tracking and kerning settings, [267](#)

Vertical Scale and Horizontal Scale boxes, [267](#) [268](#)

circle

Ellipse tool, drawing with, [72](#), [73](#)

Pen tool, drawing with, [143](#) [145](#)

placing type on, [272](#) [275](#)

Clear Appearance button (Appearance palette), [214](#)

Clip to Artboard Size setting (Macromedia Flash [SWF] Format Options dialog box), [309](#)

clipping mask

creating, [198](#) [199](#)

description of, [60](#), [61](#)

Raster Effects Settings dialog box and, [206](#)

type, using as, [279](#) [280](#)

Clipping Mask feature, [279](#) [281](#)

Clipping Masks option (Select menu), [123](#)

closed path

description of, [136](#), [237](#)

Pencil tool and, [150](#)

closing

document, [35](#)

- palette, [21](#)
- toolslot window, [19](#)
- cm (centimeters), [225](#)
- CMYK color model (Color palette), [106](#)
- CMYK (Cyan, Magenta, Yellow, and black ink) process, [16](#) [17](#), [18](#)
- CMYK document
 - printing, [290](#)
 - start-up document for, [353](#)
- CMYK PostScript (EPS Format Options dialog box), [334](#)
- color. *See also* [Color palette](#); [Swatches palette](#)
- blend modes and, [193](#) [194](#)
- complementary, [106](#)
- definition of, [94](#)
- filling and stroking paths with, [96](#)
- paths and, [40](#)
- printing and, [284](#)
- Web-safe, [294](#) [296](#)
- white, [339](#), [341](#) [343](#)
- Color button (Toolbox), [95](#)
- color mode, [104](#)
- Color Mode option (Swatch Options dialog box), [101](#)
- color model, [104](#)
- Color Model option (Raster Effects Settings dialog box), [205](#)
- Color option (Layer Options dialog box), [247](#)
- Color palette
 - creating new color using, [103](#)
 - features, [102](#) [103](#)
 - Gradient palette and, [111](#)
 - mode and model, [104](#) [106](#)
 - overview of, [21](#)
 - using color created in, [104](#)
- Color Picker, accessing, [95](#)
- color printing and CMYK process, [16](#) [17](#)
- Color Reduction Algorithm (File Format menu), [302](#) [303](#)
- color sliders
- Color palette, [102](#)
- Swatch Options dialog box, [101](#)
- color stop icon, [342](#)
- Color Table tab (Save for Web dialog box), [301](#)
- Color Type option (Swatch Options dialog box), [100](#)
- Color Value box (Color palette), [102](#)
- Colorization option (Art Brush Options dialog box), [170](#)
- Colors setting (File Format menu), [304](#)
- Columns option (Create Gradient Mesh dialog box), [188](#)
- combination-corner anchor point, [126](#), [127](#), [133](#) [135](#), [142](#) [143](#)
- combining
 - palettes, [22](#)
 - slices, [317](#)
- command. *See also specific commands*
- menu, customizing, [351](#) [352](#)
- unavailable, [23](#)
- Compatibility setting (EPS Format Options dialog box), [333](#)
- Complement option (Color palette), [106](#)
- complementary color, [106](#)
- complex gradient, [309](#)

- composite proof, printing, [287](#) [288](#)
- compound path, [60](#) [62](#)
- Compound Paths command (Object menu), [62](#), [340](#)
- conceptualization and page size, [16](#)
- context-sensitivity of Pattern brushes, [176](#)
- contextual menu, [24](#), [25](#)
- Convert Anchor Point tool, [127](#)
- converting
 - anchor point, [126](#) [127](#)
 - symbol into editable graphic, [91](#)
 - type to paths, [281](#) [282](#)
 - unit of measurement, [16](#)
- Cool Extras option (Welcome to Adobe Illustrator dialog box), [14](#)
- copying
 - layers, [246](#)
 - placing compared to, [347](#)
 - while transforming, [232](#) [233](#)
- CorelDRAW, [13](#), [47](#)
- corner point, [126](#)
- Create Clipping Mask option (Raster Effects Settings dialog box), [206](#)
- Create Gradient Mesh dialog box, [188](#) [189](#)
- Create New Layer button (Layers palette), [244](#)
- Create New Sublayer button (Layers palette), [246](#)
- crescent moon, creating, [84](#) [85](#)
- Crop command (Pathfinder palette), [83](#), [84](#)
- crossed path, [97](#)
- Crystallize tool, [BC7](#), [BC8](#)
- CSS (Cascading Style Sheet), [313](#), [317](#) [318](#)
- CSS Properties option (SVG Options dialog box), [313](#)
- curve, drawing
 - Arc tool, [159](#) [160](#)
 - dragging and, [137](#) [139](#)
 - line segment and, [140](#) [141](#)
 - one-third rule, [139](#) [140](#)
 - overview of, [137](#)
 - Pen tool and, [157](#)
- Curve Quality setting (Macromedia Flash [SWF] Format Options dialog box), [309](#)
- curve transition, placing anchor points at, [141](#), [142](#)
- curved-corner anchor point, [126](#), [127](#), [132](#) [133](#), [142](#)
- cuspid point. *See* [curved-corner anchor point](#)
- customizing
 - keyboard shortcuts, [350](#) [352](#)
 - polygon, [74](#), [75](#)
 - star, [75](#)
- start-up document file, [352](#) [353](#)
- cyan, [106](#)

Index

D

dashes, [195](#), [197](#) [198](#)

Decay option (Spiral dialog box), [161](#), [162](#)

Decimal Places option (SVG Options dialog box), [313](#)

default settings

changing, [354](#)

printing and, [284](#)

degrading image, [329](#)

Delete Anchor Point tool, [127](#) [128](#)

deleting. *See also* [releasing](#); [removing](#)

all slices, [317](#)

guide, [251](#)

symbol, [91](#)

descender, [264](#) [265](#)

Deselect command (Select menu), [122](#)

Deselect the Fill Arc option (Arc Segment Tool Options dialog box), [160](#)

deselecting, [187](#). *See also* [selecting](#)

Diameter option (Calligraphic Brush Options dialog box), [182](#)

Diffuse Shading (Surface drop-down menu), [BC21](#), [BC22](#)

Dim Images to option (Layer Options dialog box), [248](#)

Direct Selection tool

adjusting path without changing type, [278](#) [279](#)

Gradient Mesh and, [187](#) [188](#)

marquee created by dragging with, [119](#)

moving handles of path using, [48](#)

moving points using, [124](#)

moving selected object using, [53](#)

overview of, [52](#), [118](#)

transforming points and, [224](#)

Direction Handles option (Select menu), [123](#)

direction line, [48](#), [125](#)

Direction option (Art Brush Options dialog box), [170](#)

direction point

description of, [47](#), [48](#), [49](#)

fine-tuning curve with, [125](#) [126](#)

using different lengths for each, [141](#)

displaying Toolbox, [20](#)

distorting path, [54](#) [56](#)

distortion effects

Envelope distortion, [BC11](#) [BC14](#)

Free Distort, [BC4](#)

Liquify tools, [BC6](#) [BC11](#)

overview of, [BC1](#)

Pucker & Bloat, [BC2](#)
Roughen, [BC2 BC3](#)
Scribble & Tweak, [BC2](#)
text and, [BC11](#)
Twist, [BC4](#)
warps, [BC4 BC5](#)
Zig Zag, [BC3](#)
Distribute Objects option (Align palette), [251](#)
Dither setting (File Format menu), [304](#)
dithering
definition of, [106](#), [295](#)
GIF file format and, [297](#)
Dithering algorithm setting (File Format menu), [303](#)
Divide command (Pathfinder palette), [82 83](#)
dividing slice, [317](#)
docking palette, [21](#), [22](#)
document. *See also* [file](#)
closing, [35](#)
CMYK, [290](#), [353](#)
master, creating and using, [355](#)
naming, [14](#)
opening existing, [27](#)
path-based compared to pixel-based, [42 44](#)
printing, [34 35](#)
RGB, [294](#), [353](#)
saving, [33](#)
viewing, [28 32](#)
Document Setup dialog box, [288](#)
doing, learning by, [2](#)
double-clicking file to open document, [27](#)
Download Time feature (Save for Web dialog box), [301](#)
dragging
Alt key (Windows) and, [233](#)
to create curves, [137 139](#)
in direction of path, [140](#)
drawing lines and, [136](#)
Option key (Mac) and, [233](#)
Pencil tool and, [148](#)
text along path, [271](#)
drawing. *See also* [Pen tool](#); [Pencil tool](#)
circle, [72](#), [73](#), [143 145](#)
curve, [137 141](#), [157](#), [159 160](#)
ellipse, [73 74](#)
heart, [145 146](#)
line, [136](#), [158 159](#)
triangle, [135 136](#)
drawing program, [12](#)
Dreamweaver (Macromedia), [12](#)
Duplicate button (Appearance palette), [215](#)
duplicating symbol, [91](#)

Index

E

Edit Original button (Links palette), [325](#)

Edit Selected Paths option (Pencil Tool Preferences dialog box), [153](#) [154](#), [155](#)

Edit Selection command (Select menu), [123](#)

editability, infinite, [202](#)

editing

brushstrokes, [166](#)

effects, [213](#) [214](#), [BC6](#)

envelope, [BC14](#)

existing style, [217](#) [218](#), [219](#)

Gradient Mesh, [187](#) [188](#)

path, [149](#)

path-based graphic, [42](#)

Pencil tool and, [149](#), [154](#) [155](#)

points, [124](#) [128](#)

symbols, [89](#) [90](#)

text, [BC6](#)

type on path, [271](#)

Edit Keyboard Shortcuts, [350](#), [351](#)

Edit Preferences General, [345](#), [354](#)

Edit Preferences Guides and Grid, [77](#)

Edit Preferences Type & Auto Tracing, [348](#)

Edit Redo, [34](#)

Edit Undo, [34](#)

Effect menu

Document Raster Effects Settings command, [205](#)

overview of, [202](#) [203](#), [341](#), [BC1](#)

Pathfinder commands, [83](#)

Roughen command, [203](#)

Effect Distort, [55](#)

Effect Distort & Transform Pucker & Bloat, [213](#)

Effect Distort Free Distort, [BC4](#)

Effect Distort Pucker & Bloat, [BC2](#)

Effect Distort Roughen, [BC2](#)

Effect Distort Scribble & Tweak, [BC2](#)

Effect Distort Twist, [BC4](#)

Effect Distort Zig Zag, [BC3](#)

Effect 3D Extrude & Bevel, [BC15](#), [BC18](#)

Effect 3D Revolve, [BC19](#)

Effect Warp, [BC4](#)

effects. *See also* [distortion effects](#); [Effect menu](#)

applying, [202](#), [203](#) [204](#)

applying to strokes and fills, [213](#)

- distorting path, [54](#) [56](#)
- editing, [213](#) [214](#), [BC6](#)
- global, differentiating, [208](#)
- live SVG, [314](#)
- overview of, [201](#)
- permanently setting live, [215](#)
- photo-realistic, [44](#)
- Rasterization, [205](#) [206](#)
- removing and changing, [204](#) [205](#)
- reusing, [BC6](#)
- RGB Document Color mode and, [204](#)
- Ellipse dialog box, [73](#) [74](#)
- ellipse, drawing, [73](#) [74](#)
- Ellipse tool, [72](#), [73](#)
- ellipsis (. . .), [23](#)
- Embed Images command (Links palette), [325](#)
- Embedded icon (Links palette), [324](#)
- embedding file
 - linking compared to, [322](#) [323](#)
 - overview of, [320](#) [321](#)
- EMF (Enhanced MetaFile) file, [327](#)
- Encapsulated PostScript format. *See* [EPS format](#)
- Encoding option (SVG Options dialog box), [313](#)
- enlarging image, [43](#)
- Envelope distortion
 - mesh, creating using, [BC12](#) [BC13](#)
 - overview of, [BC11](#)
 - pathways and, [BC13](#) [BC14](#)
 - warp, creating using, [BC12](#)
- Envelope Mesh, [BC11](#), [BC12](#) [BC13](#)
- EPS (Encapsulated PostScript) format
 - description of, [66](#), [326](#)
 - as standard, [332](#)
 - .eps extension, [24](#)
 - EPS Format Options dialog box, [332](#) [335](#)
- Epson six color printers, [18](#)
- Eraser tool, [150](#), [156](#)
- Exclude Overlapping Shape Areas command (Pathfinder palette), [80](#) [81](#)
- exiting program, [35](#)
- Expand Compound Shape command (Pathfinder palette), [80](#), [82](#)
- expanding object, [343](#) [344](#)
- Export As menu (Macromedia Flash [SWF] Format Options dialog box), [309](#)
- Export command (File menu), [67](#)
- Export options (Macromedia Flash [SWF] Format Options dialog box), [308](#)
- Export Text button (Keyboard Shortcuts dialog box), [352](#)
- Export to Macromedia Flash (SWF) command, [307](#)
- exporting
 - artwork, [56](#)
 - file formats and, [326](#) [327](#)
 - graphic, [331](#) [332](#)
 - symbol, [91](#)
- Extrude Depth option (3D Options dialog box), [BC17](#)
- extruding type, [BC15](#) [BC16](#)

Index

F

Fidelity slider (Pencil Tool Preferences dialog box), [151](#) [152](#), [153](#)

file. *See also* [document](#)

BMP, [327](#)

bringing into Illustrator, [320](#) [321](#)

double-clicking to open, [27](#)

embedding, [320](#) [322](#)

EMF, [327](#)

linking, [320](#) [321](#), [322](#) [325](#)

opening, [330](#) [331](#)

PDF, [66](#), [325](#) [326](#)

PICT, [327](#)

placing, [330](#), [347](#)

PSD, [327](#), [331](#)

saving to be compatible with earlier version, [333](#)

size of, [38](#) [42](#)

start-up document, [352-353](#)

TIFF, [326](#) [327](#)

File Format menu (Save for Web dialog box), [301](#)

file formats

choosing between, [299](#) [300](#)

exporting and, [326](#) [327](#)

extensions for, [24](#)

Flash (SWF), [298](#) [299](#)

GIF, [294](#), [296](#), [297](#)

JPEG, [296](#), [297](#), [298](#)

overview of, [297](#) [299](#)

PNG, [298](#)

Save for Web command and, [67](#)

standard, [332](#)

SVG, [299](#)

File Size feature (Save for Web dialog box), [301](#)

File Close, [35](#)

File Document Color Mode, [18](#)

File Document Setup, [288](#)

File Exit (Windows), [35](#)

File Export, [67](#), [308](#), [331](#)

File Export Paths to Illustrator (Photoshop), [331](#)

File New from Template, [33](#)

File Open, [27](#)

File Place, [45](#), [320](#), [330](#)

File Print, [34](#), [284](#)

File Quit (Mac), [35](#)

File Revert, [67](#)
File Save, [33](#), [65](#) [66](#)
File Save a Copy, [66](#) [67](#)
File Save As, [66](#)
File Save for Microsoft Office, [67](#)
File Save for Web, [67](#), [295](#), [296](#), [300](#)
fill
applying effect to, [213](#)
applying pattern to, [107](#)
crossed and open paths, [97](#) [98](#)
gradient, [110](#)
overview of, [94](#) [95](#)
paths with color, [96](#)
Fill box
Color palette, [102](#)
Toolbox, [94](#) [95](#)
Fill feature (Appearance palette), [208](#)
Fill New Brush Strokes option (Paintbrush Tool Preferences dialog box), [167](#)
Filter menu, [203](#), [341](#)
First Line Left Indent (Paragraph palette), [269](#) [270](#)
Fit In Window view, going to, [30](#)
Fit option (Pattern Brush Options dialog box), [177](#)
Fixed method (Scatter Brush Options dialog box), [172](#)
Flare tool, [62](#), [72](#)
flares, [62](#) [64](#)
Flash graphic, exporting artwork as, [65](#), [67](#)
Flash (SWF) file format
overview of, [298](#) [299](#), [300](#), [327](#)
saving graphic as, [307](#) [310](#)
Flip option (Art Brush Options dialog box), [170](#)
flowing text from path to path, [278](#)
font
changing, [260](#) [262](#)
limiting number of on page, [263](#) [264](#)
serif and sans serif, [262](#) [263](#)
font family, [261](#)
font style, [261](#), [262](#)
Fonts option (SVG Options dialog box), [312](#) [313](#)
Format For option (Page Setup dialog box), [286](#) [287](#)
4-Up tab (Save for Web dialog box), [301](#)
Frame Rate setting (Macromedia Flash [SWF] Format Options dialog box), [309](#)
Free Distort effect, [BC4](#)
FreeHand (Macromedia), [13](#), [47](#)
Front position, [240](#)
Full Screen Mode button, [344](#) [345](#)

Index

G

gamut warnings

Color palette, [103](#)

Swatch Options dialog box, [101](#)

General Preferences dialog box, [354](#)

Generate HTML setting (Macromedia Flash [SWF] Format Options dialog box), [309](#)

.gif extension, [24](#)

GIF (Graphics Interchange Format) file format

overview of, [294](#), [296](#), [297](#), [326](#) [327](#)

saving graphic as, [302](#) [305](#)

as standard, [332](#)

uses of, [299](#)

Global effects (Appearance palette), [208](#)

Global option (Swatch Options dialog box), [101](#)

glyph, [312](#)

Go to Link button (Links palette), [324](#)

GoLive (Adobe), [12](#)

gradient

adding color to, [112](#)

complex, [309](#)

overview of, [110](#)

Pantone color and, [342](#)

Gradient button (Toolbox), [95](#)

gradient color, changing, [112](#)

Gradient Mesh

adding, [187](#) [189](#)

creating soft bevels with, [189](#) [191](#)

overview of, [186](#)

Gradient palette

overview of, [21](#), [111](#)

Show Options, [113](#)

Gradient tool, [110](#) [111](#)

Gradients (Swatches palette), [100](#)

graphic style

applying to text, [219](#) [220](#)

overview of, [218](#)

graphics. *See also* [path-based image](#); [pixel-based image](#); [vector-based image](#); [Web graphics](#)

creating for Web compared to creating for print, [294](#)

degrading, [329](#)

enlarging, [43](#)

exporting, [331](#) [332](#)

Flash (SWF) file, saving as, [307](#) [310](#)

GIF file, saving as, [302](#) [305](#)

JPEG file, saving as, [305 306](#)
photo-realistic effects, [44](#)
PNG file, saving as, [307](#)
ruler and, [16](#)
SVG file, saving as, [310 314](#)
Graphics Interchange Format. *See* [GIF file format](#)
grayscale and CMYK color, [18](#)
Grayscale color model (Color palette), [104 105](#)
group. *See also* [grouping objects](#)
changing appearance of, [211 212](#)
definition of, [117](#)
selecting, [118 119](#), [120](#)
Group Selection tool, [52](#), [53](#), [118 119](#), [120](#)
grouping objects, [57](#), [248 249](#)

Index

H

Hand tool, [30](#) [31](#)

handle, [48](#), [125](#). *See also* [direction point](#)

heart, drawing with Pen tool, [145](#) [146](#)

hidden tool, accessing, [19](#)

Hide Options (Color palette), [106](#)

hiding

Artboard, [26](#)

artwork in layer, [245](#)

clipping mask and, [198](#) [199](#)

fills and strokes, [94](#)

highlights, [344](#)

items, [344](#) [345](#)

slice outlines, [317](#)

Toolbox, [20](#)

Highlight option (Create Gradient Mesh dialog box), [189](#)

highlighting text, [259](#)

highlights, hiding, [344](#)

history of Illustrator, [12](#)

hole, creating, [60](#), [339](#) [340](#)

Horizontal option (Reflect dialog box), [230](#)

Horizontal Scale box (Character palette), [267](#) [268](#)

HSB color model (Color palette), [105](#)

hue, [105](#)

Index

I

Illustrator

exiting, [35](#)

history of, [12](#)

new features, [12](#)

place of in cosmos, [12](#) [13](#)

starting, [13](#) [14](#)

strengths of, [68](#), [319](#) [320](#)

versions of, [2](#) [3](#)

Illustrator Bibles, Versions 7.0, 8.0, 9.0, 10 (Ted Alspach), [3](#)

Illustrator CS Bible (Ted Alspach and Jennifer Alspach), [313](#)

Illustrator Studio Secrets (Ted Alspach), [3](#)

image. *See* [graphics](#); [path-based image](#); [pixel-based image](#); [vector-based image](#); [Web graphics](#)

image editing program, [12](#)

Image Options (Macromedia Flash [SWF] Format Options dialog box), [309](#) [310](#)

Image Size tab (Save for Web dialog box), [301](#)

Images option (SVG Options dialog box), [313](#)

imaginary path, [97](#)

in (inches), [225](#)

Include Document Fonts (EPS Format Options dialog box), [334](#)

Include Document Thumbnails (EPS Format Options dialog box), [334](#)

Include File Info option (SVG Options dialog box), [313](#)

Include Linked Files check box (EPS Format Options dialog box), [334](#)

Include Slicing Data option (SVG Options dialog box), [313](#)

Increase Type Size command, [355](#)

InDesign (Adobe), [12](#), [332](#)

Information command (Links palette), [325](#)

instance, [86](#)

Interlaced setting (File Format menu), [304](#)

interpolation, [41](#)

Intersect Shape Areas command (Pathfinder palette), [80](#), [81](#)

intimidation factor, [11](#), [12](#)

Inverse command (Select menu), [123](#)

Invert option (Color palette), [106](#)

italic text, [261](#), [262](#)

Index

J

join, [194](#), [196](#) [197](#)

JPEG (Joint Photographic Experts Group) file format

GIF file format compared to, [297](#)

overview of, [296](#), [298](#), [326](#) [327](#)

saving graphic in, [305](#) [306](#)

as standard, [332](#)

uses of, [299](#)

Justify All Lines (Paragraph palette), [269](#), [276](#)

Justify Full Lines (Paragraph palette), [269](#)

Index

K

Keep Selected option (Pencil Tool Preferences dialog box), [153](#) [154](#)

kerning, [266](#) [267](#)

keyboard shortcuts

for command, changing, [351](#) [352](#)

compound, creating, [355](#)

cycle through measurement units, [346](#)

deselecting object, [122](#)

finding, [23](#)

finding hidden, [354](#) [355](#)

Pen and Pencil tools, [157](#)

printing list of, [352](#)

Redo command, [34](#)

repeat transformation, [234](#)

reselecting object, [122](#)

selecting object, [122](#)

selection tool, [141](#)

speed-zoom, [29](#) [30](#)

Swap Fill and Stroke button, [95](#)

for tool, changing, [350](#) [351](#)

tools, [19](#)

Undo command, [34](#)

Keyboard Shortcuts dialog box, [350](#) [351](#), [355](#)

KPT Vector Effects (HSC Software), [2](#) [3](#)

Index

L

Lasso tool, [52](#), [53](#), [120](#) [121](#)

Layer Options dialog box, [247](#) [248](#)

layers

applying slices to, [317](#)

Cascading Style Sheet (CSS), [317](#) [318](#)

changing appearance of, [211](#) [212](#)

copying, [246](#)

groups compared to, [248](#) [249](#)

naming, [247](#)

overview of, [242](#)

putting related objects in, [57](#) [58](#)

separating artwork into, [243](#) [245](#)

viewing objects and groups on, [246](#)

Layers palette

Create New Sublayer button, [246](#)

Lock/Unlock toggle button, [245](#)

overview of, [57](#) [58](#), [212](#), [242](#) [243](#)

separating artwork into layers, [243](#) [245](#)

thumbnails on, [243](#)

View/Hide button, [245](#)

Layers tab (Save for Web dialog box), [302](#)

leading, [266](#)

learning curve, [4](#)

Left Indent (Paragraph palette), [269](#)

Legacy Illustrator (.ai) format, [24](#), [67](#)

lens flare, creating, [62](#) [64](#)

library, reusing, [346](#) [347](#)

lighting effects, [BC22](#) [BC23](#)

line. *See also* [line segment](#)

dashed, creating, [197](#) [198](#)

drawing with Line Segment tool, [158](#) [159](#)

straight, creating with Pen tool, [135](#) [136](#), [157](#)

line art, [47](#)

line segment

description of, [130](#)

Pen tool and, [140](#) [141](#)

selecting, [116](#)

Line Segment tool, [158](#) [159](#)

lining up objects, [249](#) [251](#)

linking files

embedding compared to, [322](#) [323](#)

managing links, [323](#) [325](#)

overview of, [320 321](#)

Links palette, [323 325](#)

liquification

Options dialog boxes, [BC8 BC11](#)

overview of, [BC6 BC8](#)

Lock option (Layer Options dialog box), [248](#)

Lock/Unlock toggle button (Layers palette), [245](#)

logic, underlying, [1](#)

Looping setting (Macromedia Flash [SWF] Format Options dialog box), [309](#)

Lossless button (Macromedia Flash [SWF] Format Options dialog box), [310](#)

lossless compression, [298](#)

Lossy button (Macromedia Flash [SWF] Format Options dialog box), [310](#)

Lossy setting (File Format menu), [304](#)

Team LiB

◀ PREVIOUS NEXT ▶

Index

M

Macintosh

Ctrl+click, [24](#)

File Quit, [35](#)

Option key, [121](#), [233](#)

Page Setup dialog box, [285](#) [287](#)

performance issues, [24](#)

Macromedia

Dreamweaver, [12](#)

Flash, [67](#)

Flash (SWF) file format, [298](#) [299](#), [300](#), [307](#) [310](#), [327](#)

FreeHand, [13](#), [47](#)

Macromedia Flash (SWF) Format Options dialog box, [308](#) [310](#)

Macworld Illustrator Bible (Alspach), [2](#)

magenta, [106](#)

Magic Wand palette, [52](#), [121](#) [122](#)

Magic Wand tool, [52](#), [53](#), [121](#) [122](#)

Map Art dialog box, [BC24](#)

marquee, [53](#), [117](#)

mask. *See* [clipping mask](#)

master document, creating and using, [355](#)

Matte setting (File Format menu), [304](#), [306](#)

memory and paths, [38](#) [39](#)

menu commands, customizing, [351](#) [352](#)

menus

contextual, [24](#), [25](#)

overview of, [23](#)

palettes and, [22](#) [23](#)

Merge command (Pathfinder palette), [83](#), [84](#)

mesh point, [187](#)

Mesh tool, [185](#) [187](#), [189](#) [191](#)

Method option (Macromedia Flash [SWF] Format Options dialog box), [310](#)

Minus Back command (Pathfinder palette), [82](#), [83](#)

Missing icon (Links palette), [324](#)

Miter Join, [197](#)

mm (millimeters), [225](#)

Modified icon (Links palette), [324](#)

moon, crescent, creating, [84](#) [85](#)

morphing, [59](#)

mouse, drawing with. *See* [Pencil tool](#)

Move dialog box, [224](#) [225](#)

Move tool, [224](#) [225](#)

moving

in document, [30 31](#)
graphics between Illustrator and Photoshop, [327 329](#)
guide, [251](#)
item in Appearance palette, [209](#)
object, [53](#)
object behind other object, [56](#)
object with Arrange commands, [242](#)
origin point, [228](#)
palette, [22](#)
points, [124 125](#)

Team LiB

◀ PREVIOUS NEXT ▶

Index

N

Name option

Art Brush Options dialog box, [170](#)

Layer Options dialog box, [247](#)

Print Setup dialog box, [286](#) [287](#)

Name/Printer option (Print dialog box), [288](#)

naming

document, [14](#)

layer, [247](#)

swatch or color, [100](#)

symbol, [91](#)

New Art Has Basic Appearance option (Appearance palette), [214](#)

New Brush dialog box, [167](#) [168](#)

New Document dialog box

color choice, [16](#) [18](#)

Name field, [14](#)

overview of, [14](#), [15](#)

page size and units, [15](#) [16](#)

New Document option (Welcome to Adobe Illustrator dialog box), [14](#)

New from Template option (Welcome to Adobe Illustrator dialog box), [14](#), [33](#)

New Layer option (Layers palette), [244](#)

New Style button

Paragraph palette, [283](#)

Styles palette, [217](#)

New Sublayer option (Layers palette), [246](#)

New Swatch button (Swatches palette), [112](#)

Next Object Above command (Select menu), [123](#)

Next Object Below command (Select menu), [123](#)

No Shading (Surface drop-down menu), [BC21](#)

None button

Color palette, [102](#)

Swatches palette, [100](#)

Toolbox, [95](#)

Non-Uniform scale change, [228](#)

Number of Copies/Copies option (Print dialog box), [288](#)

Index

O

Object menu, [23](#)
Object Arrange, [79](#), [240](#)
Object Arrange Bring Forward, [241](#)
Object Arrange Bring to Front, [57](#), [241](#), [243](#)
Object Arrange Send Backward, [241](#)
Object Arrange Send to Back, [56](#), [58](#), [241](#)
Object Arrange Send to Current Layer, [241](#), [243](#)
object-based slice, [315](#)
Object Blend Release, [237](#)
Object Clipping Mask Make, [60](#), [199](#), [280](#)
Object Clipping Mask Release, [60](#), [199](#), [280](#)
Object Compound Path Make, [61](#), [340](#)
Object Compound Path Release, [61](#), [340](#)
Object Create Gradient Mesh, [188](#)
Object Envelope Distort Edit Contents, [BC14](#)
Object Envelope Distort Envelope Options, [BC14](#)
Object Envelope Distort Expand, [BC14](#)
Object Envelope Distort Make With Top Object, [BC14](#)
Object Envelope Distort Make With Warp, [BC12](#)
Object Envelope Distort Release, [BC14](#)
Object Envelope Make with Mesh, [BC11](#)
Object Expand Appearance, [215](#), [343](#)
Object Group, [57](#), [117](#), [248](#)
Object Path Add Anchor Points, [BC2](#)
objects. *See also* [organizing objects](#); [3D objects](#)
applying effects to, [203](#) [204](#)
applying style to, [216](#)
beveled, creating, [189](#) [191](#)
expanding, [343](#) [344](#)
grouping, [57](#), [248](#) [249](#)
moving and transforming, [53](#) [54](#)
moving behind other object, [56](#)
moving with Arrange commands, [242](#)
organizing, [56](#) [58](#)
rotating, [54](#), [55](#)
scaling, [225](#) [226](#)
selecting, [51](#) [53](#), [54](#)
selecting multiple, [120](#)
stacking, [239](#) [240](#), [241](#)
stacking order of, [79](#), [240](#) [241](#), [245](#)
transformed duplicate of, creating, [233](#)
type, creating, [258](#)

- Object Slice Combine Slices, [317](#)
- Object Slice Create from Selection, [317](#)
- Object Slice Delete All, [317](#)
- Object Slice Divide Slices, [317](#)
- Object Slice Make, [315](#)
- Object Slice Release, [317](#)
- Object Text Wrap Make Text Wrap, [277](#), [278](#)
- Object Text Wrap Release Text Wrap, [278](#)
- Object Transform Move, [224](#)
- Object Transform Transform Again, [234](#)
- Object Transform Transform Each, [233](#)
- Opacity setting (Magic Wand palette), [121](#) [122](#)
- Opacity slider (Transparency palette), [192](#)
- Open dialog box, [27](#)
- Open Document option (Welcome to Adobe Illustrator dialog box), [14](#)
- open path
 - dash and, [195](#)
 - description of, [98](#), [136](#), [237](#)
 - opening
 - existing document, [27](#)
- Illustrator file in Photoshop, [330](#) [331](#)
- palette, [21](#)
- Photoshop file in Illustrator, [330](#)
- Optimize for Adobe SVG Viewer option (SVG Options dialog box), [313](#)
- Optimized tab (Save for Web dialog box), [301](#)
- optimizing
 - artwork as pixel-based image, [64](#)
 - description of, [316](#)
- Option key (Mac)
 - dragging and, [233](#)
 - subtracting from selection with, [121](#)
- Options option (Raster Effects Settings dialog box), [206](#)
- organizing objects. *See also* [layers](#)
 - grouping, [57](#) [58](#), [248](#) [249](#)
 - lining up, [249](#) [251](#)
 - moving, [53](#), [56](#) [57](#), [242](#)
- Orientation option
- Page Setup dialog box, [287](#)
- Print Setup dialog box, [287](#)
- origin point, moving, [228](#)
- Original tab (Save for Web dialog box), [301](#)
- Outline command (Pathfinder palette), [83](#), [84](#)
- Outline mode, [31](#) [32](#)
- Out-of-Gamut warnings (Color palette), [103](#)
- output
 - choosing color process based on, [17](#) [18](#)
 - printing and, [284](#)
 - overcompensating for misdrawn curve, [141](#)

Index

P

p (picas), [225](#)

page layout program, [12](#)

Page Setup dialog box (Mac)

options, [286](#) [287](#)

overview of, [285](#) [286](#)

page size

Artboard size and, [26](#)

setting, [15](#) [16](#)

Page Tiling feature

hiding, [344](#)

overview of, [27](#), [34](#)

Pages From/Pages option (Print dialog box), [288](#) [289](#)

Paint Bucket, [220](#)

Paintbrush tool and brushes, [164](#) [166](#)

Paintbrush Tool Preferences dialog box, [166](#) [167](#)

painting program, [12](#)

palettes. *See also specific palettes*

hiding, [344](#)

overview of, [21](#) [23](#)

positioning, [350](#)

Pantone color, [342](#)

Paper option (Page Setup dialog box), [287](#)

Paragraph palette

alignment of paragraph, changing, [269](#)

New Style button, [283](#)

overview of, [256](#), [259](#) [260](#), [268](#)

space around paragraph, changing, [269](#) [270](#)

paragraph style, creating, [283](#)

partial transformation, [235](#) [236](#)

Paste dialog box, [328](#)

Pasteboard, [26](#)

Path Type tool, [271](#)

path-based image

description of, [38](#), [39](#), [42](#)

enlarging, [43](#)

photo-realistic effects, [44](#) [45](#)

turning into pattern, [108](#) [109](#)

Pathfinder palette

creating object with, [84](#)

crescent moon, creating, [84](#) [85](#)

Pathfinders portion of, [82](#) [84](#)

Shape Modes portion of, [80](#) [82](#)

- shapes, combining with, [78 79](#)
- Subtract from Shape Area command, [340](#)
- sunrise, creating, [85 86](#)
- paths
 - adding multiple strokes to, [97](#)
 - adjusting without changing type, [278 279](#)
 - applying effect to, [203 204](#)
 - applying pattern to, [107 108](#)
 - blending, [236 238](#)
 - choosing to use, [38 40](#), [45](#)
 - clipping mask, [60](#), [61](#)
 - color and, [40](#)
 - compound, [60 62](#)
 - converting type to, [281 282](#)
 - creating pattern out of, [108 109](#)
 - description of, [37](#), [130](#), [270](#)
 - distorting, [54 56](#)
 - editing with Pencil tool, [154 155](#)
 - as envelope for distortion, [BC13 BC14](#)
 - filling and stroking with color, [96](#)
 - filling crossed and open, [97 98](#)
 - filling with gradient, [110](#)
 - flowing text from one to another, [278](#)
 - imaginary, [97](#)
 - open compared to closed, [136](#), [237](#)
 - Photoshop and, [328](#)
 - pixels compared to, [41 45](#)
 - placing type on, [271 272](#)
 - points and, [47](#), [48](#)
 - printing and, [45 47](#)
 - selecting, [115](#)
 - Selection tool, [116 117](#)
 - smooth, creating anchor point from, [134](#)
 - smoothing, [155 156](#)
 - straight, creating anchor point from, [135](#)
 - strokes and, [94](#), [194](#)
 - turning into guide, [250 251](#)
 - typing around, [276 278](#)
 - typing inside, [275 276](#)
- pattern
 - applying to path, [107 108](#)
 - creating out of paths, [108 109](#)
- Pattern Brush Options dialog box, [176 177](#)
- Pattern brushes
 - making artwork for, [176](#)
 - options, setting, [176 177](#)
 - overview of, [164](#), [165](#), [174 175](#)
 - positioning artwork in, [177 180](#)
 - testing, [180 181](#)
- Patterns (Swatches palette), [100](#)
- PDF (Portable Document Format) file, [66](#), [325 326](#)
- Pen tool
 - anchor points and, [130](#)
 - choosing, [157](#)
 - circle, drawing with, [143 145](#)

- combination-corner anchor point and, [133 135](#), [142 143](#)
- curved-corner anchor point and, [132 133](#), [142](#)
- dragging with to create curves, [137 139](#)
- heart, drawing with, [145 146](#)
- line segment and, [140 141](#)
- None option for fill color and, [137](#)
- one-third rule and, [139 140](#)
- overview of, [129](#)
- selection tools and, [141](#)
- smooth anchor points and, [130 131](#)
- straight line, creating with, [135 136](#)
- straight-corner anchor point and, [131 132](#)
- switching between Pencil tool and, [157](#)
- Pencil tool. *See also* [Pencil Tool Preferences dialog box](#)
- choosing, [157](#)
- editing with, [154 155](#)
- overview of, [147](#), [150](#)
- preferences, setting, [149 151](#)
- problems with, [149 150](#)
- switching between Pen tool and, [157](#)
- using, [148 149](#)
- Pencil Tool Preferences dialog box
 - Fidelity slider, [151 152](#), [153](#)
 - Keep Selected and Edit Selected Paths options, [153 154](#)
 - overview of, [150](#), [151](#)
 - Smoothness slider, [152 153](#), [154](#)
- Perceptual setting (Color Reduction Algorithm), [302 303](#)
- performance comparison, Windows and Mac, [24](#)
- Perspective option (3D Options dialog box), [BC17](#)
- photograph, digitized, as pixel-based image, [40](#)
- photo-realistic effects, [44](#)
- Photoshop (Adobe)
 - exporting path from, [331](#)
 - integration capabilities, [327](#)
 - methods of moving files, [327 329](#)
 - opening Illustrator file in, [330 331](#)
 - overview of, [12](#), [13](#)
 - Rasterize dialog box, [330 331](#)
 - Photoshop Options dialog box, [331 332](#)
 - PICT file, [327](#)
 - Pixel Preview mode, [65](#), [296](#)
- pixel-based image
 - description of, [37 38](#), [39](#), [43](#)
 - optimizing artwork as, [64](#)
 - previewing artwork as, [65](#)
- printing, [46](#)
- size of, [293 294](#)
- pixels
 - choosing to use, [38](#), [40 41](#), [45](#)
 - fidelity slider and, [151](#)
 - paths compared to, [41 45](#)
 - size of, [156](#)
- Place command (File menu), [320](#)
- Place dialog box, [320 321](#)
- placing file, [330](#), [347](#)

Plastic Shading (Surface drop-down menu), [BC21](#), [BC22](#)
plug-ins
Flash, [307](#)
KPT Vector Effects (HSC Software), [2 3](#)
PNG file format and, [298](#)
SVG Viewer, [314](#)
Vector Tools (Extensis), [3](#)
PNG (Portable Network Graphics) file format
overview of, [298](#), [300](#), [326 327](#)
saving graphic in, [307](#)
point type, [257](#), [258](#)
points
adding or deleting, [127 128](#)
description of, [16](#)
editing and adjusting, [124 128](#)
paths and, [47](#), [48](#)
selecting, [116](#)
size of type as measured in, [264 265](#)
Polar Grid tool, [77](#)
Polygon dialog box, [75](#), [76](#)
polygon, drawing, [74 75](#)
Polygon tool, [72](#), [74 75](#)
Portable Document Format (PDF) file, [66](#), [325 326](#)
Portable Network Graphics file format. *See* [PNG file format](#)
Position option (3D Options dialog box), [BC17](#)
positioning palette, [350](#)
PostScript (Adobe), [12](#)
PostScript setting (EPS Format Options dialog box), [334](#)
Preserve Appearance button (EPS Format Options dialog box), [335](#)
Preserve Illustrator Editing Capabilities option (SVG Options dialog box), [313](#)
Preserve Paths button (EPS Format Options dialog box), [335](#)
Pressure method (Scatter Brush Options dialog box), [172](#)
pressure-sensitive tables, [91](#), [BC8](#), [BC9](#)
preview box (Photoshop), [329](#)
Preview check box (3D Options dialog box), [BC17](#), [BC20](#)
preview image, [323](#)
Preview mode, [31 32](#)
Preview option
Art Brush Options dialog box, [170](#)
Layer Options dialog box, [248](#)
Preview setting (EPS Format Options dialog box), [333 334](#)
previewing
artwork as pixel-based graphic, [65](#)
distortion, [55](#)
text on Web, [263](#)
Print dialog box
options, [288 289](#)
Output section, [290 292](#)
overview of, [34 35](#), [284](#)
Print option (Layer Options dialog box), [248](#)
Print Setup dialog box (Windows)
options, [286 287](#)
overview of, [285 286](#)
printable area, [284](#)
printing

color, [16](#) [17](#), [18](#)
composite proofs, [287](#) [288](#)
document, [34](#) [35](#)
Level 1 and, [334](#)
limitations of output, [284](#)
list of keyboard shortcuts, [352](#)
overview of, [283](#)
Page Setup (Mac) or Print Setup (Windows) dialog box, [285](#) [286](#)
Page Tiling feature and, [27](#)
paths and, [45](#) [47](#)
process printing, [106](#)
separations, [288](#), [289](#) [292](#)
Process color (Swatches palette), [99](#)
process printing, [106](#)
Progressive setting (File Format menu), [306](#)
Projecting Cap, [196](#)
proofing and page size, [16](#)
PSD file, [327](#), [331](#)
pt (points), [225](#)
Pucker & Bloat effect, [213](#), [BC2](#)
Pucker tool, [BC7](#)
Puckered effect, [56](#)
px (pixels), [225](#)

Index

Q

Quality drop-down menu (File Format menu), [305](#) [306](#)

QuarkXPress, [12](#), [13](#), [332](#)

quick-retract method of point conversion, [127](#)

quitting program, [35](#)

Index

R

- Radial option (Gradient palette), [113](#)
- Radius option (Spiral dialog box), [161](#), [162](#)
- Radius value (polygon), [75](#)
- Random method (Scatter Brush Options dialog box), [172](#)
- Rapidograph pen, [129](#)
- Raster Effects Settings dialog box, [205](#) [206](#)
- Rasterization effects, [205](#) [206](#)
- rasterize, [328](#)
- Rasterize dialog box (Photoshop), [330](#) [331](#)
- Read Only setting (Macromedia Flash [SWF] Format Options dialog box), [309](#)
- recording Action, [356](#) [357](#)
- Rectangle dialog box, [73](#)
- rectangle, drawing, [72](#) [73](#)
- Rectangle tool, [72](#) [73](#)
- rectangle type, [257](#) [258](#)
- Rectangular Grid tool, [76](#) [77](#)
- Redo command, [34](#)
- Reduce to Basic Appearance button (Appearance palette), [214](#)
- Reflect dialog box, [230](#)
- Reflect tool, [228](#) [230](#)
- reflecting
 - object, [54](#)
 - path, [39](#)
- Registration (Swatches palette), [99](#) [100](#), [289](#) [290](#)
- relative measurement, [232](#)
- Release Compound Shapes command (Pathfinder palette), [82](#)
- releasing
 - blend, [237](#)
 - clipping mask, [199](#), [280](#)
 - compound path, [61](#) [62](#), [340](#)
 - envelope, [BC14](#)
 - slice, [317](#)
 - text wrap, [278](#)
- removing. *See also* [deleting](#); [releasing](#)
 - appearances, [214](#) [215](#)
 - effect, [204](#)
 - repeating graphics, producing, [86](#) [91](#)
 - repeating transformation, [234](#) [235](#)
- Replace Link button (Links palette), [324](#)
- resampling, [41](#)
- Reselect command (Select menu), [122](#)
- resizing object, [54](#)

resolution

overview of, [37](#), [64](#)

printing and, [284](#)

Resolution option (Raster Effects Settings dialog box), [205](#)

Resolution setting (Macromedia Flash [SWF] Format Options dialog box), [310](#)

reusing

brush, swatch, or library, [346](#) [347](#)

effect, [BC6](#)

Revert command (File menu), [67](#)

revolving 2D art into 3D art, [BC19](#) [BC21](#)

RGB color model (Color palette), [105](#)

RGB document

start-up document for, [353](#)

Web and, [294](#)

RGB Document Color mode, [204](#)

RGB (Red, Green, Blue) process, [17](#) [18](#)

Right Indent (Paragraph palette), [270](#)

Rotate tool, [226](#), [228](#)

rotating object, [54](#), [55](#)

Rotation option (Scatter Brush Options dialog box), [174](#)

Roughen command

Edit menu, [203](#)

Filter menu, [203](#)

Roughen effect, [56](#), [BC2](#) [BC3](#)

Round Cap, [196](#)

Round Join, [197](#)

Rounded Rectangle tool, [72](#), [73](#)

Roundness option (Calligraphic Brush Options dialog box), [182](#)

Rows option (Create Gradient Mesh dialog box), [188](#)

ruler

guides from, [250](#)

image size and, [16](#)

repositioning, [346](#)

Index

S

- sans serif font, [262](#) [263](#)
- saturation, [105](#)
- Save a Copy command (File menu), [66](#) [67](#)
- Save As command (File menu), [66](#)
- Save As dialog box, [33](#)
- Save command (File menu), [33](#), [65](#) [66](#)
- Save for Microsoft Office command (File menu), [67](#)
- Save for Web command (File menu), [64](#), [67](#), [295](#), [296](#)
- Save for Web dialog box, [300](#) [302](#)
- Save Selection command (Select menu), [123](#)
- saving
 - document, [33](#)
 - file formats and, [24](#)
 - file to be compatible with earlier version, [67](#), [333](#)
 - as Flash (SWF) file, [307](#) [310](#)
 - as GIF file, [302](#) [305](#)
 - as JPEG file, [305](#) [306](#)
 - as PNG file, [307](#)
 - Scratch area and, [26](#)
 - as SVG file, [310](#) [314](#)
 - scalability of artwork, [12](#), [39](#)
 - Scalable Vector Graphic format. *See* [SVG format](#)
 - Scale dialog box, [227](#)
 - Scale option (Page Setup dialog box), [287](#)
 - Scale to Fit or % of Normal Size option (Print Setup dialog box), [287](#)
 - Scale tool, [225](#) [228](#)
 - Scallop tool, [BC7](#), [BC8](#)
 - Scallop/Crystallize/Wrinkle options (Liquify tools), [BC9](#), [BC10](#), [BC11](#)
 - Scatter Brush Options dialog box, [172](#) [174](#)
 - Scatter brushes, [164](#), [165](#), [171](#) [174](#)
 - Scatter option (Scatter Brush Options dialog box), [174](#)
 - Scratch area, [26](#)
 - Scribble & Tweak effect, [BC2](#)
 - Scribbled effect, [56](#)
 - scrolling, [30](#) [31](#)
 - Segments option (Spiral dialog box), [161](#), [162](#)
- Select menu
 - Object submenu, [123](#)
 - overview of, [53](#), [122](#) [123](#)
 - Same submenu, [124](#)
 - Select All, [122](#)
 - Select Deselect, [187](#)

selecting. *See also* [Direct Selection tool](#); [Group Selection tool](#); [Selection tool](#)

line segment, [116](#)

menu item, [23](#)

multiple objects, [120](#)

object, [51](#) [53](#), [54](#)

path, [115](#), [149](#)

point on path, [116](#)

symbol, [89](#)

text, [258](#) [259](#)

tools, [52](#) [53](#), [116](#) [117](#)

transformation tools and, [224](#)

Type Area Select feature, [348](#)

Selection tool

moving selected object using, [53](#)

overview of, [52](#), [116](#) [117](#)

transforming object and, [224](#)

Send Backward command (Object menu), [241](#)

Send to Back command (Object menu), [241](#)

Send to Current Layer command (Object menu), [57](#), [241](#), [243](#)

separating artwork into layers, [243](#) [245](#)

separations, printing, [288](#), [289](#) [292](#)

serif font, [262](#) [263](#)

service bureau, using for printing, [289](#), [290](#)

shape. *See also* [drawing](#); [shapes](#), [combining](#)

adding Gradient Mesh to, [187](#) [189](#)

flowing text within, [275](#) [276](#)

typing around, [276](#) [278](#)

shape-creation tools, [71](#) [72](#). *See also* [Pen tool](#)

shapes, combining

compound shapes, [80](#) [82](#)

crescent moon, creating, [84](#) [85](#)

Pathfinder palette and, [78](#) [84](#)

sunrise, creating, [85](#) [86](#)

Shear tool, [230](#) [231](#)

shearing path, [39](#)

Shift key

constraining object using, [249](#)

light source and, [BC22](#)

Line Segment tool and, [158](#)

Pen tool and, [136](#), [139](#)

Pencil tool and, [150](#)

selecting and, [120](#)

tools and, [226](#)

Shift-clicking, [120](#), [121](#)

shortcuts. *See* [keyboard shortcuts](#)

Show Hidden Faces option (3D Options dialog box), [BC24](#) [BC25](#)

Show option (Layer Options dialog box), [248](#)

sidebars, [3](#)

size

actual, returning to, [30](#)

of file, paths and, [38](#) [39](#), [42](#)

of file, pixels and, [40](#) [41](#)

of page, setting, [15](#) [16](#)

of pixel, [156](#)

of thumbnail on Layers palette, [243](#)

Size option

Art Brush Options dialog box, [170](#)

Pattern Brush Options dialog box, [177](#)

Print Setup dialog box, [287](#)

Scatter Brush Options dialog box, [174](#)

skewing object, [54](#). *See also* [Shear tool](#)

Slice Select tool, [302](#)

Slice tool, [317](#)

slices

creating, [315](#) [317](#)

description of, [65](#), [314](#)

exporting as Cascading Style Sheet layers, [317](#) [318](#)

Smart Guides (View menu), [249](#) [250](#), [BC6](#)

smooth anchor point, [126](#), [127](#), [130](#) [131](#)

Smooth Color option (Blend Options dialog box), [237](#)

smooth path, creating combination-corner anchor point from, [134](#)

Smooth tool, [150](#), [155](#) [156](#)

Smoothness slider (Pencil Tool Preferences dialog box), [152](#) [153](#), [154](#)

Snap to Point function (View menu), [249](#)

Space Before Paragraph setting (Paragraph palette), [270](#)

spacing between letters, [266](#) [267](#)

Spacing option (Scatter Brush Options dialog box), [174](#)

Specified Distance option (Blend Options dialog box), [237](#)

Specified Steps option (Blend Options dialog box), [237](#)

Spectrum bar (Color palette), [103](#)

speed-zoom techniques, [29](#) [30](#)

Spiral dialog box, [161](#), [162](#)

Spiral tool, [160](#) [162](#)

splash screen, [14](#)

spot colors

blending, [342](#)

choosing for project, [102](#)

Spot colors (Swatches palette), [99](#)

square, drawing, [72](#) [73](#)

stacking objects

Arrange commands, [241](#)

overview of, [239](#) [240](#)

stacking order of objects

changing, [245](#)

overview of, [79](#), [240](#) [241](#)

Star dialog box, [76](#)

Star tool, [72](#), [75](#) [76](#)

starting Illustrator, [13](#) [14](#)

start-up document file, customizing, [352](#) [353](#)

sticky settings, [357](#)

straight path, creating combination-corner anchor point from, [135](#)

straight-corner anchor point, [126](#), [127](#), [131](#) [132](#)

Stray Points option (Select menu), [123](#)

stroke

adding multiple to single path, [97](#)

applying effect to, [213](#)

applying pattern to, [108](#)

attributes of, [194](#)

caps, [195](#) [196](#)

changing width of, [97](#)

- dashes, [195](#), [197](#) [198](#)
- joins, [196](#) [197](#)
- overview of, [94](#) [95](#), [194](#)
- paths and, [194](#)
- paths with color, [96](#)
- Stroke and Fill effects (Appearance palette), [208](#)
- Stroke and Fill transparency (Appearance palette), [208](#)
- Stroke box
- Color palette, [102](#)
- Toolbox, [94](#) [95](#)
- Stroke palette, [97](#), [194](#) [195](#)
- Strokes feature (Appearance palette), [208](#)
- style
 - applying, [216](#)
 - creating and editing, [216](#) [218](#), [219](#)
 - graphic compared to text, [218](#) [219](#)
 - overview of, [215](#) [216](#)
 - type styles, [283](#)
- Styles palette
 - New Style button, [217](#)
 - overview of, [202](#), [216](#)
 - subgroup, [118](#)
 - submenu, [23](#), [25](#)
- Subtract from Shape Area command (Pathfinder palette), [80](#), [81](#), [340](#)
- sunrise, creating, [85](#) [86](#)
- Surface drop-down menu, [BC21](#) [BC22](#)
- SVG Options dialog box, [311](#) [313](#)
- SVG (Scalable Vector Graphics) format
 - exporting artwork as, [65](#)
 - overview of, [299](#), [300](#), [327](#)
 - saving graphic in, [310](#) [314](#)
- SVG Viewer plug-in, [314](#)
- Swap Fill and Stroke button (Shift+X), [95](#)
- swatch library, [101](#) [102](#)
- Swatch Options dialog box, [100](#) [101](#)
- swatch, reusing, [346](#) [347](#)
- Swatches palette
 - color swatches, [99](#) [100](#)
- Gradient palette and, [111](#)
- New Swatch button, [112](#)
- opening, [96](#)
- overview of, [98](#) [99](#)
- SWF file format. *See* [Flash \(SWF\) file format](#)
- Symbol Screener tool, [90](#)
- Symbol Scruncher tool, [90](#)
- Symbol Shifter tool, [89](#)
- Symbol Sizer tool, [90](#)
- Symbol Spinner tool, [90](#)
- Symbol Sprayer tool, [87](#) [88](#), [174](#)
- Symbol Stainer tool, [90](#)
- Symbol Styler tool, [90](#)
- Symbolism Tool Options dialog box, [90](#) [91](#)
- Symbolism tools
 - custom symbol, creating, [88](#) [89](#)
 - editing symbols, [89](#) [90](#)

overview of, [86](#) [87](#)

Symbol Sprayer, [87](#) [88](#)

Symbols palette

Delete Symbol, [91](#)

Duplicate Symbol, [91](#)

New Symbol button, [88](#)

opening, [87](#)

Place Instance of Symbol option, [91](#)

Team LiB

◀ PREVIOUS NEXT ▶

Index

T

Tab key, [20](#)
tabbing palettes, [21](#) [22](#)
Tagged Image File Format (TIFF) file, [326](#) [327](#)
Target feature (Appearance palette), [208](#)
Target Layer Appearance button (Layers palette), [212](#)
targeting, [211](#)
Technical Stuff icon, [3](#)
Template option (Layer Options dialog box), [247](#) [248](#)
templates, [32](#) [33](#)
testing
Action, [357](#)
Pattern brush, [180](#) [181](#)
text. *See also* [type](#)
applying graphic style to, [219](#) [220](#)
bold and italic, [261](#), [262](#)
as clipping mask, [279](#) [281](#)
distortion effects and, [BC11](#)
editing, [BC6](#)
flowing from path to path, [278](#)
flowing within shape, [275](#) [276](#)
placing on circle, [272](#) [275](#)
placing on path, [271](#) [272](#)
selecting, [258](#) [259](#)
text characters
as Art brushes, [169](#)
as compound paths, [60](#)
text style, [218](#)
text wrapping, [276](#) [278](#)
3 Degrees of Rotation option (3D Options dialog box), [BC17](#)
3D objects
extruding type, [BC15](#) [BC16](#)
overview of, [BC15](#)
wrapping art around, [BC23](#) [BC25](#)
3D Options dialog box
bevel options, [BC18](#) [BC19](#)
lighting and surface controls, [BC21](#) [BC23](#)
options, [BC17](#) [BC18](#)
overview of, [BC15](#) [BC16](#)
Revolve section, [BC19](#) [BC21](#)
Show Hidden Faces option, [BC24](#) [BC25](#)
thumbnails on Layers palette, [243](#)
TIFF (Tagged Image File Format) file, [326](#) [327](#)

tilde (~) key

Polygon tool and, [74](#), [75](#)

Spiral tool and, [161](#)

Star tool and, [75](#)

Tile Imageable Areas button (Document Setup dialog box), [288](#)

Tile Options option (Pattern Brush Options dialog box), [177](#)

Tiles option (Pattern Brush Options dialog box), [176](#)

Tolerance setting (Magic Wand palette), [121](#) [122](#)

tool

accessing hidden, [19](#)

changing keyboard shortcut for, [350](#) [351](#)

Toolbox. *See also* [Direct Selection tool](#); [Pen tool](#)

Add Anchor Point tool, [127](#) [128](#), [BC2](#)

Arc tool, [159](#) [160](#)

Area Type tool, [276](#)

Blend tool, [59](#), [237](#) [238](#)

Bloat tool, [BC7](#), [BC8](#)

Convert Anchor Point tool, [127](#)

Crystallize tool, [BC7](#), [BC8](#)

Delete Anchor Point tool, [127](#) [128](#)

Ellipse tool, [72](#), [73](#)

Eraser tool, [150](#), [156](#)

Fill and Stroke boxes, [94](#) [95](#)

Flare tool, [62](#), [72](#)

Gradient tool, [110](#) [111](#)

Group Selection tool, [52](#), [53](#), [118](#) [119](#), [120](#)

Hand tool, [30](#) [31](#)

Lasso tool, [52](#), [53](#), [120](#) [121](#)

Line Segment tool, [158](#) [159](#)

Liquify tools, [BC7](#)

Magic Wand tool, [52](#), [53](#), [121](#) [122](#)

Mesh tool, [185](#) [187](#), [189](#) [191](#)

Move tool, [224](#) [225](#)

Paintbrush tool, [164](#) [166](#)

Path Type tool, [271](#)

Pencil tool, [148](#) [155](#), [157](#)

Polar Grid tool, [77](#)

Polygon tool, [72](#), [74](#) [75](#)

Pucker tool, [BC7](#)

Rectangle tool, [72](#) [73](#)

Rectangular Grid tool, [76](#) [77](#)

Reflect tool, [228](#) [230](#)

Rotate tool, [226](#), [228](#)

Rounded Rectangle tool, [72](#), [73](#)

Scale tool, [225](#) [228](#)

Scallop tool, [BC7](#), [BC8](#)

Selection tool, [52](#), [53](#), [116](#) [117](#), [224](#)

shape-creation tools, [71](#) [72](#)

Shear tool, [230](#) [231](#)

Slice Select tool, [302](#)

Slice tool, [317](#)

Smooth tool, [150](#), [155](#) [156](#)

Spiral tool, [160](#) [162](#)

Star tool, [72](#), [75](#) [76](#)

Symbol Screener tool, [90](#)

Symbol Scruncher tool, [90](#)
Symbol Shifter tool, [89](#)
Symbol Sizer tool, [90](#)
Symbol Spinner tool, [90](#)
Symbol Sprayer tool, [87](#) [88](#), [174](#)
Symbol Stainer tool, [90](#)
Symbol Styler tool, [90](#)
Symbolism tools, [86](#) [91](#)
Twirl, [BC7](#)
Type tool, [256](#) [258](#)
Warp, [BC7](#)
Wrinkle, [BC7](#), [BC8](#)
Zoom tool, [28](#) [29](#)
toolslots, [19](#)
ToolTips, [269](#), [345](#)
tracking, [266](#) [267](#)
Transform Again command, [234](#) [235](#)
Transform Each dialog box, [231](#), [233](#) [234](#)
Transform palette, [231](#), [232](#)
transformation tools
 blending, [236](#) [238](#)
 Move, [224](#) [225](#)
 overview of, [223](#) [224](#), [231](#) [232](#)
 partial transformation, [235](#) [236](#)
 Reflect, [228](#) [230](#)
 Rotate, [228](#)
 Scale, [225](#) [228](#)
 Shear, [230](#) [231](#)
 transforming
 object, [53](#) [54](#)
 rotating, [55](#)
 text into graphic object made of paths, [60](#)
 transparency, [58](#) [59](#)
 Transparency feature (Appearance palette), [208](#)
 Transparency palette
 Blend Mode menu, [193](#)
 Opacity slider, [192](#)
 overview of, [191](#), [211](#)
 Transparency setting
 EPS Format Options dialog box, [335](#)
 File Format menu, [304](#)
 trashcan icon (Appearance palette), [214](#)
 triangle, drawing, [135](#) [136](#)
 Trim command (Pathfinder palette), [83](#), [84](#)
 turning ToolTips off or on, [345](#)
 Tutorials option (Welcome to Adobe Illustrator dialog box), [14](#)
 Twirl Rate option (Liquify tools), [BC9](#), [BC10](#)
 Twirl tool, [BC7](#)
 Twist effect, [BC4](#)
 2-Up tab (Save for Web dialog box), [301](#)
type
 converting to paths, [281](#) [282](#)
 extruding, [BC15](#) [BC16](#)
 Type Area Select feature, [348](#)
 Type & Auto Tracing Preferences dialog box, [348](#)

type mask, creating, [279 281](#)

Type menu, [23](#)

type styles, [283](#)

Type tool, [256 258](#)

Type Create Outlines, [60](#), [169](#), [282](#)

Type Threaded Text Create, [278](#)

Type Threaded Text Release Selection, [278](#)

typing

around path, [276 278](#)

inside path, [275 276](#)

typographical capabilities, [255 256](#)

Team LiB

◀ PREVIOUS NEXT ▶

Index

U

UI. *See* [user interface](#)

Undo command, [34](#)

Uniform scale change, [227](#) [228](#)

unit of measurement

changing, [346](#)

overview of, [16](#), [225](#)

for type, [264](#) [266](#)

Update Link button (Links palette), [324](#)

Use Pressure Pen options (Liquify tools), [BC9](#)

user interface (UI)

menus, [23](#)

palettes, [21](#) [23](#)

Toolbox, [19](#) [20](#)

Index

V

- vector, [47](#)
- vector graphics
 - description of, [47](#)
 - on Web, [65](#)
- Vector Tools (Extensis), [3](#)
- vector-based image
 - description of, [38](#)
 - resolution independence of, [293](#)
- Vertical option (Reflect dialog box), [230](#)
- Vertical Scale box (Character palette), [267](#) [268](#)
- View menu, [23](#)
- View Mode buttons, [345](#)
- View Guides Lock Guides, [250](#)
- View Guides Make Guides, [250](#)
- View Guides Release Guides, [250](#)
- View Hide Artboard, [26](#), [344](#)
- View/Hide button (Layers palette), [245](#)
- View Hide Edges, [344](#)
- View Hide Page Tiling, [284](#), [344](#)
- viewing
 - document, [28](#) [32](#)
 - objects and groups on later, [246](#)
 - tools in toolslot, [19](#)
- Web graphics, [294](#)
- View Outline, [31](#), [94](#), [BC6](#)
- View Pixel Preview, [263](#), [296](#)
- View Preview, [94](#)
- View Show Grid, [77](#) [78](#), [250](#)
- View Show Page Tiling, [34](#), [284](#)
- View Show Rulers, [16](#), [346](#)
- View Show Slices, [315](#)
- View Show/Hide Slices, [317](#)
- View Smart Guides, [249](#) [250](#), [BC6](#)
- View Snap to Grid, [77](#), [250](#)
- View Snap to Point, [249](#)

Index

W

warp

creating Envelope distortion using, [BC12](#)

description of, [BC4 BC5](#)

Warp tool, [BC7](#)

Warp/Twirl/Pucker/Bloat options (Liquify tools), [BC9](#)

Web applications, [64 65](#)

Web graphics

overview of, [293](#)

Pixel Preview mode, [296](#)

viewing, [294](#)

Web Safe RGB color model (Color palette), [106](#)

Web setting (Color Reduction Algorithm), [302 303](#)

Web sites

Adobe, [66](#)

bonus chapters, [6](#), [205](#), [223](#)

Browser Compatibility Chart, [318](#)

distortion information, [56](#)

SVG Viewer plug-in, [314](#)

Web Snap setting (File Format menu), [304 305](#)

Web-authoring tool, [12](#)

Web-safe color space, [294 296](#)

weight of stroke, [194](#)

Welcome to Adobe Illustrator dialog box, [14](#), [15](#)

What's New in Illustrator (Welcome to Adobe Illustrator dialog box), [14](#)

white color, [339](#), [341 343](#)

Window Actions, [355](#)

Window Align, [251](#)

Window Appearance, [204](#)

Window Brush Libraries Artistic Sample, [165](#), [166](#)

Window Brush Libraries Other Library, [347](#)

Window Brushes, [164](#)

Window Color, [103](#)

Window Gradient, [111](#)

Window Layers, [212](#)

Window Links, [323](#)

Window Magic Wand, [121](#)

Window Pathfinder, [78](#)

Windows

.ai extension, [24](#)

Alt key, [121](#), [233](#)

File Exit, [35](#)

performance in, [24](#)

Print Setup dialog box, [285](#) [287](#)
right-clicking in, [24](#)
Window Stroke, [97](#), [194](#)
Window Style Libraries Other Library, [347](#)
Window Styles, [216](#)
Window Swatch Libraries, [101](#)
Window Swatch Libraries Other Library, [347](#)
Window Swatch Libraries Pantone Coated, [101](#) [102](#), [342](#)
Window Swatch Libraries Web, [295](#)
Window Swatches, [96](#)
Window Symbols, [87](#)
Window Transform, [232](#)
Window Transparency, [192](#)
Window Type Character, [258](#)
Window Type Paragraph, [259](#)
Wireframe (Surface drop-down menu), [BC21](#), [BC22](#)
workspace. *See* [user interface](#)
wrapping art around 3D objects, [BC23](#) [BC25](#)
Wrinkle tool, [BC7](#), [BC8](#)
Write Layers check box (Photoshop Options dialog box), [331](#) [332](#)

Index

Z

Zig Zag effect, [56](#), [BC3](#)

Zoom tool, [28](#) [29](#)

zooming in and out, [28](#) [30](#)

List of Figures

[Chapter 1: Introducing the World of Illustrator](#)

[Figure 1-1](#): The Welcome to Adobe Illustrator dialog box. [Figure 1-2](#): The New Document Dialog Box [Figure 1-3](#): The Illustrator Toolbox; click and hold the pointer on a toolslot to display all the tools. [Figure 1-4](#): Palettes are tabbed together in a set. [Figure 1-5](#): The Layers palette docked to the Styles palette. [Figure 1-6](#): Palettes also have their own menus. [Figure 1-7](#): The Path submenu in the Object menu. [Figure 1-8](#): A contextual menu appears when you Ctrl + Click (Mac) or right-click (Windows). [Figure 1-9](#): The Artboard and the Scratch area—the first two wiseguys you meet when you create a new Illustrator file. [Figure 1-10](#): Use the Open dialog box to select the file you want to open. [Figure 1-11](#): Two views of the artwork: actual size and zoomed to 400 percent. If you print while zoomed in, the image still prints at actual size. [Figure 1-12](#): The artwork from Figure 1-11 at 25 percent of its actual size. [Figure 1-13](#): Art in Preview mode and Outline mode. [Figure 1-14](#): A template for a stylized postcard. [Figure 1-15](#): Name your masterpiece in the Save dialog box. [Figure 1-16](#): The Print dialog box, updated with lots of funky options for version CS.

[Chapter 2: Following the Righteous Path](#)

[Figure 2-1](#): Path-based artwork (left) and pixel-based artwork (right). [Figure 2-2](#): The South America shape is actually a larger Illustrator file than the square because more points are used to define the continent's shape. [Figure 2-3](#): The effects of reducing and enlarging the image. [Figure 2-4](#): A logo for Oddland, created with paths and weighing in at 188K. [Figure 2-5](#): The same Oddland logo, created with pixels and tipping the scales at 1.2MB. [Figure 2-6](#): A section of Oddland logo, enlarged to five times its original size. [Figure 2-7](#): A close-up of Venus. [Figure 2-8](#): The vectors-only version of Venus's eye, compared to the original Botticelli painting at the same level. [Figure 2-9](#): A path with several anchor points (shown as little squares). [Figure 2-10](#): The same path from Figure 2-9 but with direction points and direction lines showing. [Figure 2-11](#): Variations of a path. The changes in the curve of the path occur as the handle on the left moves. [Figure 2-12](#): A circle with all the handles (direction points) showing.

[Chapter 3: Doing Everyday Things with Illustrator](#)

[Figure 3-1](#): The left object is unselected; the right object is selected. Note the points and paths that appear on a selected object. [Figure 3-2](#): Rotating an object. [Figure 3-3](#): The original path (left) is (to the right) Puckered, Scribbled, Zig-Zagged, and Roughened. [Figure 3-4](#): Moving and object behind other objects. [Figure 3-5](#): The Layers palette. [Figure 3-6](#): The ellipse on top of the logo is set to be partially transparent. [Figure 3-7](#): An example of a blend between two objects. [Figure 3-8](#): Masking artwork. [Figure 3-9](#): A compound path is laid over a piece of background art (which is visible through the two round holes). [Figure 3-10](#): Text as text (left), as compound paths (middle), and as compound paths after release (right). [Figure 3-11](#): A boring sun gets transformed into a dazzling star of rays and rings.

[Chapter 4: Shaping Up, Basically](#)

[Figure 4-1](#): The six shape-creation tools. [Figure 4-2](#): The Rectangle dialog box. [Figure 4-3](#): The Ellipse dialog box. [Figure 4-4](#): Press the tilde (~) key while you draw with the Polygon tool to produce a unique effect. [Figure 4-5](#): The Polygon dialog box. [Figure 4-6](#): Use the Star dialog box to set the quantity and length of its points. [Figure 4-7](#): A polar grid with and without the compound paths option selected. [Figure 4-8](#): A document (in this case, a cartoon) with a grid behind it. [Figure 4-9](#): Use the Pathfinder palette to work with complex shapes in a variety of ways. [Figure 4-10](#): Two basic shapes overlap from the Pathfinder palette. [Figure 4-11](#): The results of using the Subtract from Shape Area command, and then with Expand. [Figure 4-12](#): The results of using the Intersect Shape Areas command, and then with Expand. [Figure 4-13](#): The results of using the Exclude Overlapping Shape Areas command, and then with Expand. [Figure 4-14](#): The results of using Minus Back (left) and Divide (two images on the right). [Figure 4-15](#): Cleaning up and checking the circle and star, using (left to right) the Trim, Merge, Crop, and Outline commands. [Figure 4-16](#): Creating a crescent moon. [Figure 4-17](#): Creating a sunrise. [Figure 4-18](#): He who has the best toys wins: The Symbolism tools. [Figure 4-19](#): Pssst: Graffiti never had it so good (or legal). [Figure 4-20](#): Combine object types to create custom symbols. Just ducky. [Figure 4-21](#): The Symbolism Tools Options dialog box: Grand Central for controlling the look of your symbols.

[Chapter 5: Getting Your Fill of Fills and Strokes](#)

[Figure 5-1](#): Paths with different fills and strokes applied to them. [Figure 5-2](#): Fill and Stroke in the Toolbox. [Figure 5-3](#): Filling and stroking a path with two different colors. [Figure 5-4](#): The Stroke palette. [Figure 5-5](#): A filled path in a figure eight shape. [Figure 5-6](#): Open paths with fills and dotted lines connecting the starting and ending points. [Figure 5-7](#): Choose colors from the Swatches palette. [Figure 5-8](#): The Swatch Options dialog box. [Figure 5-9](#): The Color palette is the closest you can get to a real artist's palette in Illustrator. [Figure 5-10](#): Different color models within the Color palette pop-up menu. [Figure 5-11](#): The same path with several different pattern fills. [Figure 5-12](#): Creating a pattern from vector art of a hammer. [Figure 5-13](#): Path objects with gradient fills. [Figure 5-14](#): Left: The square shows a default gradient applied. Center: Clicking and dragging with the Gradient tool. Right: The result. [Figure 5-15](#): Control color with the Gradient palette. [Figure 5-16](#): First, moving the sliders closer together. Second, adding new color sliders. Third, moving the gradient midpoint. [Figure 5-17](#): Choose Show Options from the Gradient palette pop-up menu to work with a radial gradient.

[Chapter 6: Selecting and Editing Paths](#)

[Figure 6-1](#): Illustrator has more tools for making selections than for any other single purpose. [Figure 6-2](#): The Selection tool selects objects that are within (or touched by) the marquee. [Figure 6-3](#): A selection in progress with the Direct Selection tool. [Figure 6-4](#): The Group Selection tool selects first the path, then the group that the path is in, and then the group that the first group is in. [Figure 6-5](#): On the left are three selected paths. Shift-clicking the middle path leaves only two paths selected, as shown on the right. [Figure 6-6](#): The Magic Wand palette offers Tolerance settings for various object attributes. [Figure 6-7](#): The Select menu provides a whole slew of selection goodies. [Figure 6-8](#): Left: The original path. Right: The path after you move the selected point with Direct Selection. [Figure 6-9](#): A selected curve reveals its direction points and direction lines. [Figure 6-10](#): The curve from Figure 6-9 after the direction points are moved. [Figure 6-11](#): Left: Original path. Right: Unchanged shape with new anchor points to added to three of the star's arms. [Figure 6-12](#): Left: Original path. Right: Removing two anchor points to create two different shapes.

[Chapter 7: Wielding the Mighty Pen Tool](#)

[Figure 7-1](#): Smooth anchor points keep this path curving smoothly. [Figure 7-2](#): Use straight-corner anchor points when you need straight paths. [Figure 7-3](#): This heart, though not anatomically correct, shows two curved corner

anchor points. [Figure 7-4](#): Two ways to create combination-corner anchor points: starting smooth(left) or straight(right). [Figure 7-5](#): Drawing triangle with the Pen tool, using straight-corner anchor points. [Figure 7-6](#): When creating a curve, drag out a straight line; the arrow shows the direction of the drag. [Figure 7-7](#): Creating gentle, smooth curves. (Friendly arrows indicate the direction to drag.) [Figure 7-8](#): Left: Anchor points with direction point lines one-third the distance along the path. Right: Dragging too much. [Figure 7-9](#): This path has points placed at the "correct" locations for the best possible curve. [Figure 7-10](#): Drawing a circle (sort of) by using the Pen tool. [Figure 7-11](#): Drawing a heart with the Pen tool

[Chapter 8: Creating Straight and Curved Lines without the Pen Tool](#)

[Figure 8-1](#): Drawing with the Pencil tool. [Figure 8-2](#): With the Pencil Tool Preferences dialog box, you can change the attributes of the Pencil tool. [Figure 8-3](#): The path on the left was drawn with a Fidelity setting of .5 pixels; the path on the right was drawn with a Fidelity setting of 20 pixels. [Figure 8-4](#): At left, a Smoothness setting of 0%; at right, a Smoothness setting of 100%. [Figure 8-5](#): The Smooth tool in action. [Figure 8-6](#): Line Segment tool lines are easy, but limited to single strokes. [Figure 8-7](#): Design your arc here. [Figure 8-8](#): Two types of closed arcs. [Figure 8-9](#): Spirals created with the Spiral tool. [Figure 8-10](#): Use options in the Spiral dialog box to set the spiral's tightness.

[Chapter 9: Creating Magnificent Brushstrokes](#)

[Figure 9-1](#): From left to right, examples of painting with an Art brush, a Scatter brush, a Calligraphic brush, and a Pattern brush. [Figure 9-2](#): The default Brushes palette in Illustrator contains a smattering of the four different types of brushes. [Figure 9-3](#): Creating wild and wacky strokes [Figure 9-4](#): The Paint-brush Tool Preferences dialog box. [Figure 9-5](#): Creating a new brush [Figure 9-6](#): All these objects are (believe it or not) Art brushes. [Figure 9-7](#): The Art Brush Options box. [Figure 9-8](#): The same brush changed by only one setting produces variations like these. [Figure 9-9](#): This artwork is actually a single path used as a Scatter brush. [Figure 9-10](#): Two versions of the Scatter Brush Options dialog box and the artwork resulting from those options. [Figure 9-11](#): The Scatter brush on the left is set to rotate at 90 relative to the path; the one on the right is set to rotate at 90 relative to the page. [Figure 9-12](#): A sampling of the Pattern brushes. [Figure 9-13](#): Each Pattern brush title knows where it is on a path and uses the corresponding artwork. [Figure 9-14](#): Creating a guideline with all five pattern positions can be a big help when you create the artwork for the Pattern brush. [Figure 9-15](#): Left to right; The start, side, outside corner, inside corner, and end pieces. [Figure 9-16](#): The new Pattern brush, awaiting the four remaining pieces. [Figure 9-17](#): The Pattern Brush with its slots labeled. [Figure 9-18](#): The new Pattern brush tested on a square and a squiggle. [Figure 9-19](#): The Calligraphic Brush Options dialog box. [Figure 9-20](#): Artwork created on a pressure-sensitive tablet using Calligraphic brushes.

[Chapter 10: Extreme Fills and Strokes](#)

[Figure 10-1](#): The artwork that made up the Illustrator Venus (left) was colored entirely by using the Mesh tool; the right side shows the paths and meshes that created it. [Figure 10-2](#): Use the Mesh tool to create a highlight in a path. [Figure 10-3](#): These objects use the same Gradient Mesh, but the mesh points have been moved by using the Direct Selection tool. [Figure 10-4](#): Set Gradient Mesh here. [Figure 10-5](#): The same Gradient Mesh, with Appearance settings of Flat, To Center, and To Edge. [Figure 10-6](#): A square after two clicks with the Mesh tool. [Figure 10-7](#): The resulting beveled square. [Figure 10-8](#): The oval at its original opacity (left) and faded to 40% (right) to reveal an image beneath. [Figure 10-9](#): The Transparency palette. [Figure 10-10](#): The Blend Mode pop-up menu in the Transparency palette. [Figure 10-11](#): Three of the 16 possible blend modes in Illustrator. [Figure 10-12](#): The Stroke palette displaying a full set of options. [Figure 10-13](#): Three different caps on three paths. [Figure 10-14](#): Three

different joins on a path (left to right): Miter, Round, and Bevel. [Figure 10-15](#): Three different dash patterns and the settings used to create them. [Figure 10-16](#): The original artwork, the masking object in front of the artwork, and the masked artwork.

[Chapter 11: Effectively Keeping Up Appearances, with Style\(s\)](#)

[Figure 11-1](#): Filters versus effects: a path (left) roughened with the Roughen filter and the same path (right) roughened with the Roughen effect. [Figure 11-2](#): The Gaussian Blur Effect in the Appearance palette. [Figure 11-3](#): The Raster Effects Settings dialog box takes a bow. [Figure 11-4](#): The Appearance palette. [Figure 11-5](#): The Appearance palette displays an array of information about the object, such as the stroke and fill data shown here. [Figure 11-6](#): Adding fills and strokes to an object. [Figure 11-7](#): Targeting a layer to apply an effect. [Figure 11-8](#): The Pucker & Bloat effect applied to the stroke, but not the fill. [Figure 11-9](#): A live effect (left) and after Expand Appearance is applied. [Figure 11-10](#): Applying a style to a path. [Figure 11-11](#): Creating a new style. [Figure 11-12](#): Redefining an existing style. [Figure 11-13](#): Applying a graphic style to text.

[Chapter 12: Pushing, Pulling, Poking, and Prodding](#)

[Figure 12-1](#): The original illustration (left) is modified (right) by using the Selection tool to move the bird. (Suddenly the parrot seems to defy gravity.) [Figure 12-2](#): The Move dialog box. [Figure 12-3](#): The original artwork (left) scaled smaller (center) and larger (right). [Figure 12-4](#): Original artwork selected (left); the hairline preview that appears when you drag with the Scale tool (center); the final scaled artwork (right). [Figure 12-5](#): The original artwork (left) and after it's rotated (right). [Figure 12-6](#): Reflecting the artwork by using the Reflect tool. [Figure 12-7](#): The Reflect dialog box. [Figure 12-8](#): Original artwork (left) and after shearing (right). Yeah, that's attractive. [Figure 12-9](#): The Transform palette in all its glory. [Figure 12-10](#): To get this cool cast shadow with the Shear tool, I copied the text object and filled with a gradient. [Figure 12-11](#): The Transform Each dialog box. [Figure 12-12](#): Original artwork (left) after it's rotated with the Rotate tool (middle) and using the Transform Each dialog box (right). [Figure 12-13](#): The tick marks on this clock were made with the Transform Again function by rotating a copy around the center in 6° increments. [Figure 12-14](#): Moving and scaling a portion of a path. [Figure 12-15](#): Creating a blend between two paths.

[Chapter 13: Organizing Efficiently](#)

[Figure 13-1](#): These arrangements of artwork are a result of changing the stacking order of the objects. [Figure 13-2](#): The illustration (left), shown from a sideways view (right). [Figure 13-3](#): The Layers palette with multiple layers. [Figure 13-4](#): Placing existing artwork into multiple layers. [Figure 13-5](#): You can see the contents of a layer in the Layers palette by clicking the triangle to the left of the layer's name. [Figure 13-6](#): The Layer Options dialog box.

[Chapter 14: Introducing Letters and Such \(Type 101\)](#)

[Figure 14-1](#): The Character and the Paragraph palettes. [Figure 14-2](#): Creating point type in Illustrator. [Figure 14-3](#): Creating rectangle type in Illustrator. [Figure 14-4](#): The Character palette in Illustrator. [Figure 14-5](#): The Paragraph palette in Illustrator. [Figure 14-6](#): Several different fonts. [Figure 14-7](#): Changing fonts in Illustrator. [Figure 14-8](#): These font styles are part of the Times font family and look good placed together. [Figure 14-9](#): Serif (top; serifs are

circled) and sans serif (bottom) fonts. [Figure 14-10](#): Measurements for letters. [Figure 14-11](#): Font size allows enough space to accommodate all the possible ascenders and descenders in a font. [Figure 14-12](#): Leading is the space between the baselines of type. [Figure 14-13](#): Tracking and kerning in Illustrator [Figure 14-14](#): Changing the kerning and tracking values in the Character palette. [Figure 14-15](#): Vertical Scale and Horizontal Scale text boxes in the Character palette, along with examples in type. [Figure 14-16](#): Using baseline shift within a paragraph. [Figure 14-17](#): Text results of different text alignments in Illustrator. [Figure 14-18](#): Controls for changing the amount of space around a paragraph. [Figure 14-19](#): Bringing out the left edge of a paragraph with a negative number. [Figure 14-20](#): Creating type on a path. [Figure 14-21](#): Moving type along a path. [Figure 14-22](#): Putting type on the top of a circle. [Figure 14-23](#): Putting type on the bottom of a circle. [Figure 14-24](#): Flowing text within a path. [Figure 14-25](#): Regular type with type wrap applied. [Figure 14-26](#): Type flowing along several paths. [Figure 14-27](#): Circle type with a new fill (gradient) and stroke (pattern) on the circle. [Figure 14-28](#): The type mask in action: text in front of objects (top) and type masking the objects (bottom). [Figure 14-29](#): Left: The letter A as type. Right: The letter A converted to paths. [Figure 14-30](#): Here s the letter A after the points are moved and a gradient fill is applied.

[Chapter 15: Printing Your Masterpiece](#)

[Figure 15-1](#): The Page Setup dialog box on a Macintosh. [Figure 15-2](#): The Print Setup dialog box in Windows. [Figure 15-3](#): A typical Print dialog box for a Mac (left) and for a Windows PC (right). [Figure 15-4](#): The original artwork (left) shown as four separations (right). [Figure 15-5](#): Use the Output section of the Print dialog box for printing separations.

[Chapter 16: Putting Your Art on the Web](#)

[Figure 16-1](#): The Illustrator Web color palette. [Figure 16-2](#): Pixel Preview turned off (left) versus Pixel Preview turned on (right). [Figure 16-3](#): Preview your image in the Save for Web dialog box. [Figure 16-4](#): Saving a GIF in the Save for Web dialog box. [Figure 16-5](#): Saving a JPEG from the Save for Web dialog box. [Figure 16-6](#): Exporting an AI file to an SWF file with the Macromedia Flash (SWF) Format Options dialog box. [Figure 16-7](#): Saving an SVG file with the SVG Options dialog box. [Figure 16-8](#): It slices, it dices, it darned near makes julienne fries. [Figure 16-9](#): Editing an object makes the slices update automatically.

[Chapter 17: Moving Files Into and Out of Illustrator](#)

[Figure 17-1](#): Select a document to embed or link with the Place dialog box. [Figure 17-2](#): Use the Links palette for total link control. [Figure 17-3](#): Pasting Illustrator data into Photoshop. [Figure 17-4](#): The Place preview box in Photoshop provides the highest quality and greatest flexibility for Illustrator files brought into Photoshop. [Figure 17-5](#): Use the Rasterize dialog box to refine your graphic settings. [Figure 17-6](#): Set resolution in the Photoshop Options dialog box. [Figure 17-7](#): Set compatibility, preview, and other options in the EPS Format Options dialog box.

[Chapter 18: Ten Production-Enhancing Tips](#)

[Figure 18-1](#): A life preserver without a hole (left) and with a hole (right). Similar but not the same. (Just ask the guy on the right). [Figure 18-2](#): The same color is used at two different tint percent-ages, specified in the Color palette. [Figure 18-3](#): The original object with a gradient fill (top left) is expanded (bottom left) to 20 objects (with paths showing) and the final object (bottom right). [Figure 18-4](#): The View Mode buttons enable you to view your graphic in a variety of ways.

[Chapter 19](#): Ten (Or So) Ways to Customize Illustrator

[Figure 19-1](#): The Keyboard Shortcuts dialog box customizes tool commands. [Figure 19-2](#): The General Preferences dialog box. [Figure 19-3](#): The Actions palette puts power at your virtual fingertips.

[Bonus Chapter 1](#): Taking Images Out of the Realm of Reality

[Figure BC1](#): Pucker & Bloat. Can you guess which is which? [Figure BC2](#): This artwork is roughened to give the appearance of hand-drawn artwork. [Figure BC3](#): Use the Zig Zag effect to create effects like this. (Another espresso, please.) [Figure BC4](#): The Free Distort effect can make type appear to fade off into the background. [Figure BC5](#): Twist blends together artwork. [Figure BC6](#): A star appears warped, but its underlying skeletal structure remains unchanged. [Figure BC7](#): One poor schmoe who's gone through the Liquidation mill. [Figure BC8](#): Different twirl rates affect the speed and curliness of the twirl distortion. [Figure BC9](#): A Scallop distortion with two different Complexity settings. [Figure BC10](#): A Crystallize distortion using three different brush settings. [Figure BC11](#): Putting the squeeze on Groucho. Oucho! [Figure BC12](#): Use an Envelope Mesh distortion to distort your image by manipulating points on a grid. [Figure BC13](#): Fitting an apple and some text nicely into a circle. [Figure BC14](#): Mild-mannered text and its super-powered 3D alter ego. [Figure BC15](#): The 3D Options dialog box. [Figure BC16](#): Artwork at increasing perspective settings. [Figure BC17](#): Look at the classy bevels on this text. [Figure BC18](#): Flat, 2D artwork with just a hint of 3D bevel. [Figure BC19](#): 2D artwork (left) is revolved into 3D artwork (right). [Figure BC20](#): The Revolve section of the 3D options dialog box. [Figure BC21](#): This is so techy, and you can create it in mere seconds! [Figure BC22](#): The same 3D artwork with plastic (left) and diffuse (right) shading. [Figure BC23](#): No, it didn't take hours to create all these different pieces of art . . . just a few seconds applying different lighting and surface effects from the 3D Options dialog box. [Figure BC24](#): The Map Art dialog box when you have an extruded square selected. [Figure BC25](#): Fuzzy dice straight from Illustrator. But you can tell your friends you picked them up on that trip over the border. [Figure BC26](#): Official Vegas-style dice, with classic razor edges.

List of Tables

[Chapter 2](#): Following the Righteous Path

[Table 2-1](#): What Paths and Pixels Are Especially Good For

[Chapter 9](#): Creating Magnificent Brushstrokes

[Table 9-1](#): Differences Between Scatter Brushes and the Symbol Sprayer

List of Sidebars

[Chapter 6: Selecting and Editing Paths](#)

[Two oddities of selecting in Illustrator](#)

[Chapter 8: Creating Straight and Curved Lines without the Pen Tool](#)

[Just how big IS a pixel?](#)