



Innovation & Research Commons @ RBD Library

Innovation & Research Commons  
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## KEY FEATURES AND TOOLS OF ADOBE ILLUSTRATOR

### BASICS OF INTERFACE

- Create a new document by selecting, File, New, Document. Choose from Print/Web/Mobile, preset options, Name it, set orientation and number of artboards.
- Edit Artboards to make changes to a document after creating it.
- Save work as an .ai file. (Illustrator Format). You can also "save as" to keep multiple versions. Export final product as a EPS, PDF, SVG, PNG, and more.
- Cmd or Ctrl-Z is undo. Shift-Cmd-A or Shift-Ctrl-A is deselect.
- Hover over tools to see what it is, each tool gets an options bar at the top of your screen when clicked on. Click and hold get more tools.
- Select View, Fit artboard in window to see an entire artboard. Cmd/Ctrl + and - can be used to zoom in and out. You can pan the screen using the space bar. Select Window menu, select panels, snap/ collapse panels.
- Select View, Show guides to view default Smart guides. Use these to help line up objects.
- Use the select tool to move part of an object. Shift allows you to add more objects to your selection.
- Screen modes such as Normal and Full screen can be used to adjust your project view.
- Color fill and stroke tools allows you to adjust the fill and outline colors of shapes.

### USING SHAPES

Shapes are building blocks that can be combined to create new ones. They are live, meaning that can be edited without another tool.

- The Rectangle Tool can be used to create a four sided Polygon. Press and hold for different shapes.
- Click the object to reveal resizing handles, widgets for editing corner radius, and adjusting the number of sides.
- Combine shapes with the Shape Builder tool. Drag across to add a shape. Use Alt/Option to drag shapes or click to remove portions of them.
- Use arrange to organize the order of shapes.
- Use the Selection tool to group shapes by holding shift to select multiple objects and selection Object, Group.
- Copy and paste shapes to the front so they can be flipped for symmetry.
- To transform shapes, Select, View, view bounding box, properties panel values, shift key while rotating Shift-Alt Shift-Option. Drag to resize from the center.

- To use the Rotate tool, select the shape, rotate tool, select a random rotation point, and shift-drag to rotate.
- To use the Align tool, select objects, and Align to.
- To use the Eraser tool, select the content you would like to erase. Hold shift to erase straight.

## **CREATING LINES**

A line is a Path, with start and end anchor points, connected by said Path.

- Select Rectangle tool, Line Segment tool. Lines are live. Rotate a line by pointer off an end and drag. Adjust stroke weight and line options. To move a line, select the center point.
- To cut a path, use the Eraser tool and Scissors tool.
- To paint a line, select Window, Brushes, panel- Brush Library. Select an object and choose a brush.

## **ARTBOARDS**

Select Window, Artboards. Artboards are like pages. Use the Artboard tool to create new ones.

- To duplicate select Properties, Artboard Options, and hold down Alt or Option-drag to duplicate.

## **TRACE**

Trace images to create shapes you can edit.

- Add raster images by choosing File, Place.
- Select image, click Image Trace in panel, choose trace preset, click Expand.
- Use the Direction Selection tool Lasso to drag around traced artwork. Then Copy and Paste.
- To group artwork as a single object, select it all and select Group.

## **TEXT**

- To use the Type tool, click to add point type. This is good for posters or a single line of text. Click and drag to create area type text for paragraphs of text.
- Use the Selection tool to make changes to text, double-click on text to add more or edit. Press enter to go to the next line, you can also scale or stretch with handles.
- You can use File, Place to put text documents in a type area. (RTF, Word, TXT)
- Highlight text to change formatting in the panel. Options include Adobe Fonts, tracking (space between characters), leading (space between lines).
- To use Text on a path, select the Type tool, place your cursor on a path, press Alt/ Option and click right outside of the path, then you can highlight and format the text using the selection tool and rotate bounding box.
- To Reshape text, select Type, Create Outlines. Then use the selection tool, Select text object, ungroup. Then use the selection tool to drag letters Separately. Direct selection tool, drag across part of letters to select and anchor points, drag one of anchor points to reshape the letter.

## COLOR

Fill colors fill an objects background and Stroke Colors fills the lines of an object.

- Colors can be typed in with the CMYK code, or colors can be selected with the eyedropper tool.
- Use Swatches to save color; Select color, Swatches, new Swatch, Global = change all with this color, indicated in Swatches, double-click swatch to edit it, Global change
- Select Add to my Library for access to swatches in other documents and apps.
- To use Gradients, select fill color, select a gradient, gradient options, Double-click color buttons to change color, use Gradient Tool to choose direction of gradient.
- To Recolor artwork, select art to recolor, or select all, recolor in panel, link harmonies for help in choosing recoloring, use the eyedropper to go back to original colors.

## PATHS AND CURVES

Illustrator allows you to create open paths, closed paths, and curves.

- Using the Direct selection tool, you can select anchor points to control paths
- To use the Pencil tool, double-click for options, press Alt or Option-drag to draw a straight path.
- To use the Curvature tool, click to set anchor points in a path, then, double click to make it straight. Use the Selection tool to click a path and click the Curvature tool to edit the path. Click to add anchors.
- To combine paths. Select paths, Object, Path, Join to join ends closest.

## LAYERS

Select Window, Layers to show panel. You can create new layers and double click to rename. Select content in file and drag colored clock in layer to another. You can also Select an object, Locate Object in the Layers panel to find it in the layer.

## IMAGES

Select File, Place, link or embed. Use the selection tool to shift-drag handle for resizing. Cropping is also available.

## EFFECTS

Vector effects are visible when the object is selected in the Effects or Appearance panel.



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**FOR ASSISTANCE VISIT:**

<https://aub.ie/ircinstruction>