GETTING STARTED

Composition & Defamiliarization: Using Adobe Illustrator as a Tool

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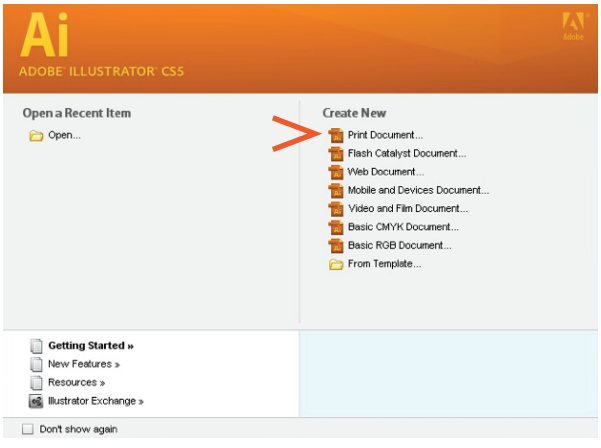
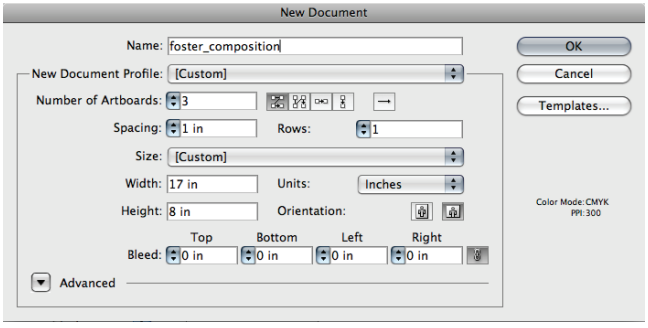
Drawing and Composition Module
OTIS College of Art and Design

Trash preferences + Open Illustrator

1. From the dock at the left, right, top, or bottom of your monitor screen, open the Finder .
2. When working on any computer other than yours it is smart to begin by resetting Illustrator's preferences to default by dragging them to the trash. From your finder, click on Library, then Preferences, then Adobe Illustrator CS5 Settings. Drag the Adobe Illustrator Prefs to the trash on your dock.
3. From the dock open the Finder again. Select Applications, then click the Adobe Illustrator CS5 folder, then click the Adobe Illustrator CS5 icon to open the program.

Open a new document

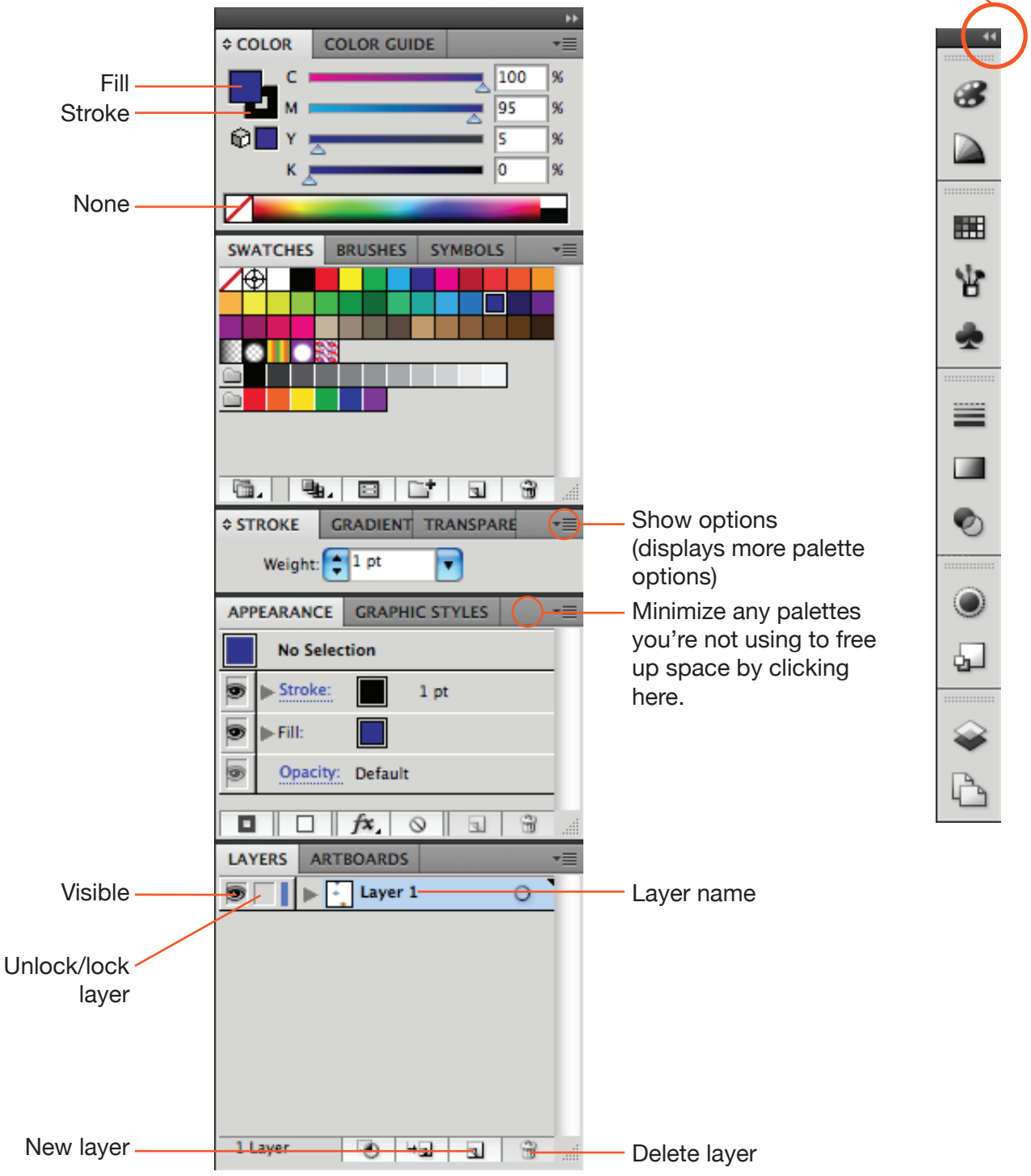




- From the Illustrator Welcome Screen select the Print Document profile on the right. This ensures that your document will be ready to print working in CMYK color mode.
- Name the file with your last name_composition .
- Type in 3 for the Number of Artboards.
- Change the units to inches.
- Change the Spacing to 1 in.
- Select a width and height within 11 and 17 in. For example: 11 x 11 in. or 17 x 8 in.
- Click OK.

YOUR PALETTES

From the top menu under Window, move your cursor over Workspace and select Essentials. This will display your palettes and should look like the bar on the right. Click these arrows to expand the palettes:

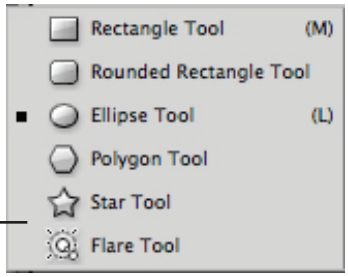


USING YOUR TOOLBAR

All the tools you need to make vector objects and text on your artboard.

Selection Tool (V)

Hover your cursor over a too and a text box will identify the tool and its hotkey.



The tool bar groups tools together and are indicated by a small triangel at the bottom right of each icon.

Click and hold down the tool for the additional tool menu. Release your cursor over the tool you want to select.

NAVIGATING

Six commands you should know to move around and work easily:

⌘ Z	Undo undoes your last step. Use this ANY TIME you make a move you don't like. You can undo several steps by repeating ⌘ Z.
Space bar	Hand tool Hold down the space bar (anytime except when using text) click, and drag to easily move your art board around. When you release the space bar, it will automatically switch back to the tool you were using.
⌘ +	Zoom in
⌘ –	Zoom out
⌘ C	COPY selected objects
⌘ V	PASTE to paste them elsewhere, creating duplicates.

TRY THESE OUT

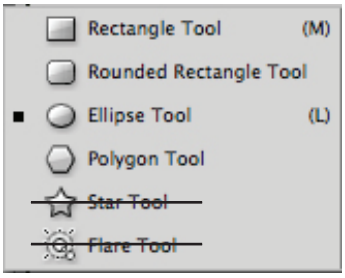
Toggle between zooming in and out and moving your artboard around with the hand tool.

Use your shape tool to make a shape. Select it with your selection tool. Then copy and paste it.

QUICK SHEET: Tools You Will Be Using

Selection Tool (V)

Be careful! Don't use the white cursor. This is the direct selection tool used for specifically editing individual nodes.



Shape Tools

Pencil Tool (N)

Eraser Tool (Shift + E)

Rotate Tool (R)

Scale Tool (S)

Free Transform Tool (E)

Artboard Tool (Shift + O)

Like any other tool. To exit Artboard Mode simply select another tool.

Hand Tool (H)

Zoom Tool (Z)

Swap Fill and Stroke (Shift X)

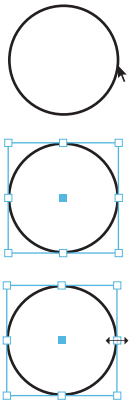
Fill (X)

Stroke (Click to activate) (X)

None (/)

TRANSFORMING OBJECTS

Using the selection tool click on an object.

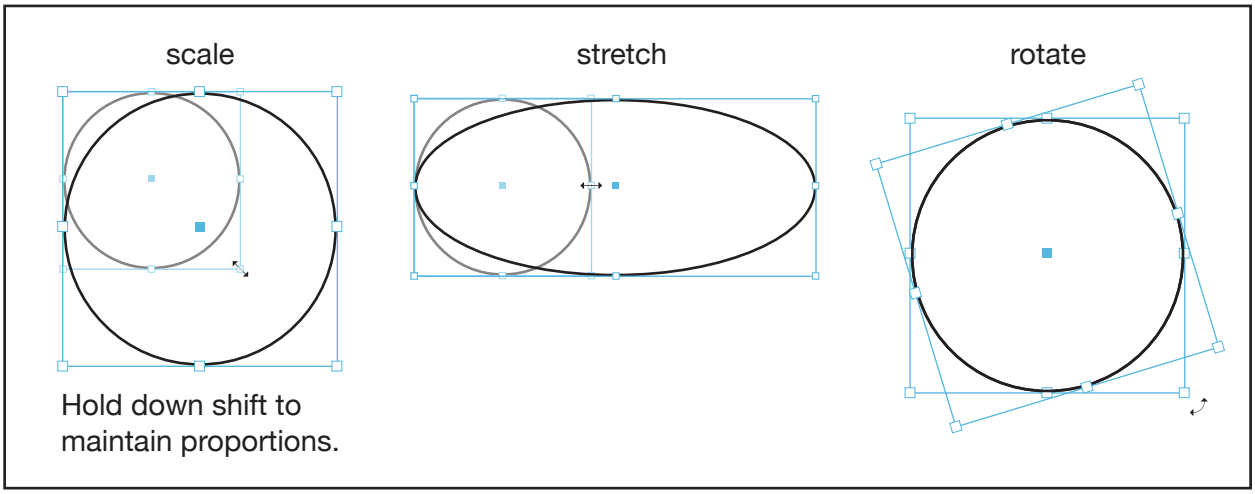


A bounding box will appear with points on its corners and sides indicating that it is selected. An object must be selected to move or alter it.

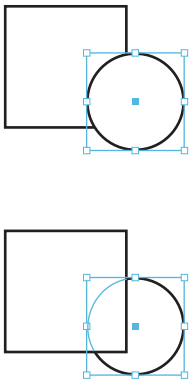
Once selected, click and drag to move it anywhere.

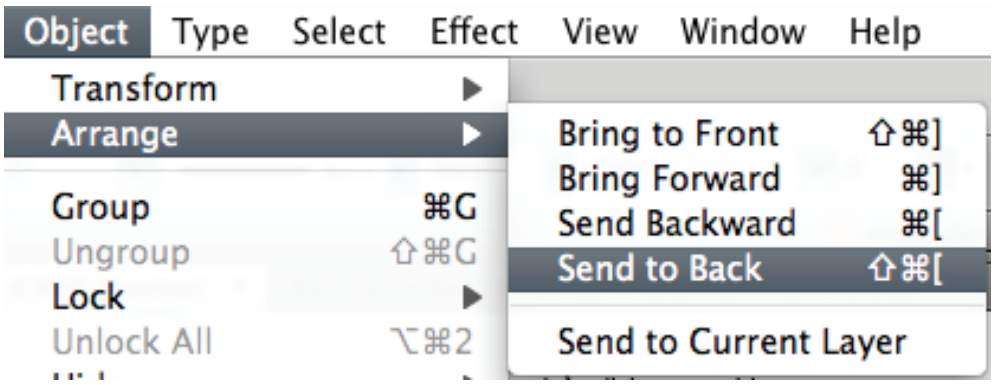
Hover your cursor over a point, and the cursor will change to a double arrow designating a tranformation: scale, stretch, or rotate.

Click and drag to scale, stretch, or rotate.



Arrange to Front or Back



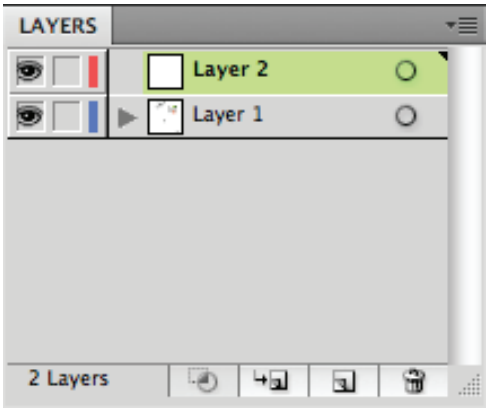


SETTING UP YOUR LAYERS

1. From the File pulldown menu select “Save as” and save this AI file to your flash drive or the student drive where you will be able to find and access it. IT IS VERY IMPORTANT NOT TO LOSE YOUR FILE!

2. In your layers palette click the bottom icon “create new layer”

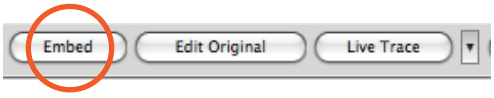
   Notice the current layer selected highlights itself green.



3. From the File pulldown menu select “Place” and select the first of your jpgs you want to work with.

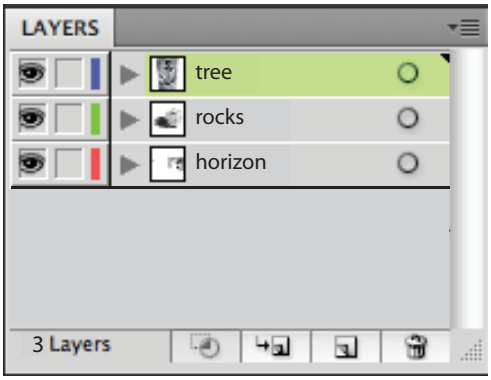
   This object will have a box around it that should correspond to the color of the layer selected.

4. With your jpg still selected click “Embed” at the top of your screen.



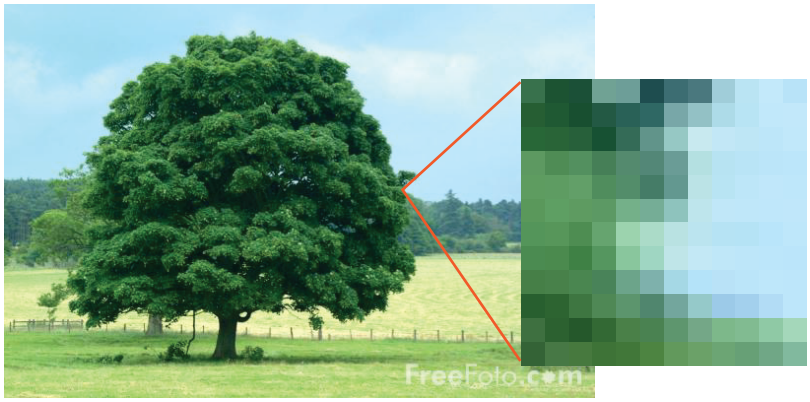
5. Double-click the layer title and retitle it something that will help you know what’s on that layer.

6. Follow the steps above to place 3 of your jpgs, each on a new layer and name them.

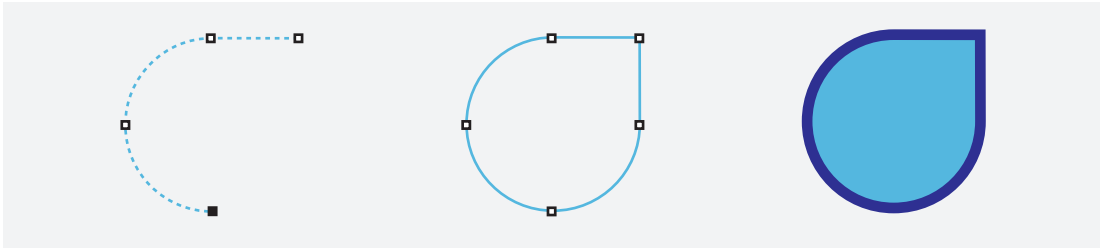


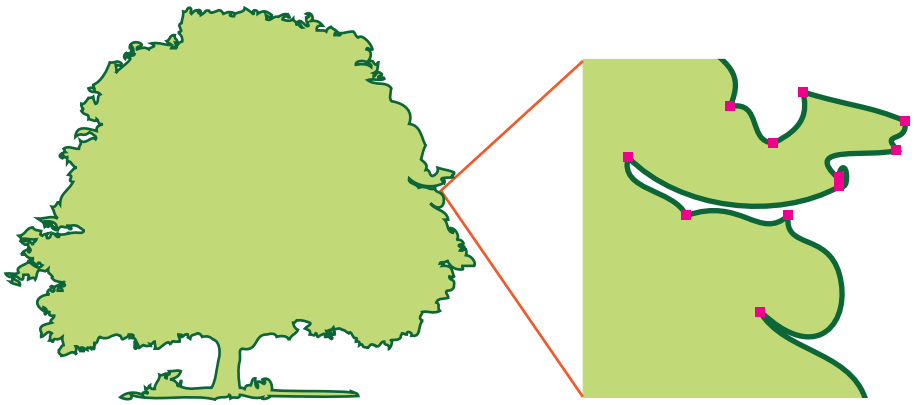
BITMAP vs VECTOR GRAPHIC

Bitmaps render images on a pixel by pixel basis, each pixel corresponding to a specific color. These pixels are mapped out so that they create a whole image (also referred to as raster.) These take on file extensions of tiff, jpg, bmp, png, gif. The size of a pixel is a measurement and does not change. The number of pixels is what determines the size of the image. A bitmap can be as small as 1 pixel, or up to thousands of pixels per inch.



Rather than creating an image pixel by pixel, vector based graphics are composed of points with connecting lines and curves that are filled with color. Where a computer must read every pixel in a bitmap of a red square, in a vector red square, it only has to read four points and the fill color red. This allows vector based graphics to be scaled, stretched, and altered without loosing information. The computer reads how the graphic is drawn, much like connect the dots.





LIVE TRACE: BITMAP TO VECTOR

1. Click one of your jpgs with the selection tool and click ⌘C. Make a new layer in your layers pallette and click ⌘V. Title this layer “trace 1”.

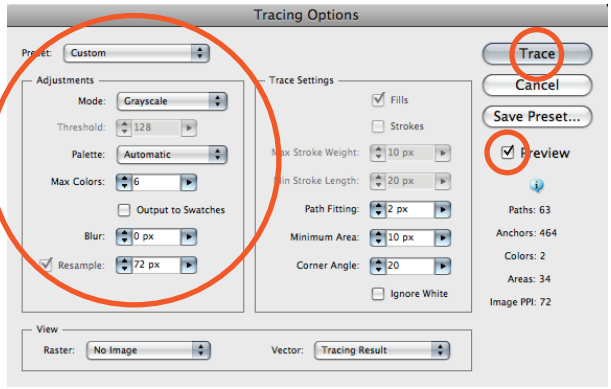
2. Select the jpg on your new trace layer and click the “Live Trace” button at the top of your screen.

3. Click the “Tracing options dialog icon” at the top of your screen.

4. Enable the “Preview” box and select Gray-scale.

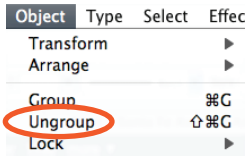
5. Make changes to Max colors and keep them below 6.

6. Adjust the Blur until you have a simplified image.



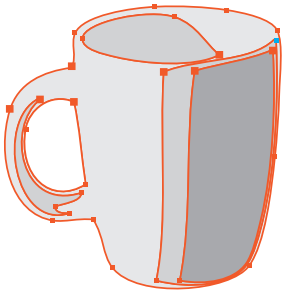
7. Once you find the adjustments you want to work with click the Trace button. Click the Expand button at the top of your screen to convert the trace preview to a vector.

8. With your object still selected click “Ungroup” from the Object pulldown menu at the top of your screen. Now the pieces of your object are separate and you can change the color of each separately or alter them in any other way.



original jpg: pixel based

live trace preview



expanded: vector based