

LESSON 1: GETTING STARTED WITH ILLUSTRATOR

INTRODUCTION

A well-organized workspace is a key component of any successful design practice. It ensures that you can produce high-quality work without wasting precious time and energy. In Lesson 1, you'll explore the workspace and the many task-specific panels Illustrator offers. You'll also learn how to customize your workspace, adding and structuring layers and sublayers to help keep your files organized.

SECTION 1.1: AN OVERVIEW OF THE WORKSPACE

Read the following section. Then read Lesson 1 (pages 30–45) and Lesson 3 (pages 78–79) in your textbook.

Objective

When you complete this section, you'll be able to identify the components of the Illustrator workspace and execute basic tasks, such as open, create, and close files.

The Illustrator workspace is made up of menus, toolbars, and panels that allow you to manipulate your artwork. Each tool or panel is designed to create or modify a specific element of the document you're working on. For example, to create, apply, or change a color, you would use the Color or Swatches panel. To add a layer, you would use the Layers panel.

When you first open Illustrator, you might be presented with the Start screen, which displays the recent files you've worked on and those you've saved on the Creative Cloud. Whenever you don't have a document open, Illustrator will show the Start screen. If you don't want to see this screen, go to **Illustrator CC > Preferences > General** (macOS) or **Edit > Preferences > General** (Windows) and check off the **Show the Start Workspace When No Documents Are Open** box. If at any time you want to see the Start screen, select **Start** from the Workspace menu.

Taking the time to get familiar with the Illustrator workspace will save you a lot of time in the long run. You'll learn how to access and use Illustrator's many panels throughout this course, but for now, pay particular attention to the following areas:

- *Menu bar*—Located at the top of the screen, this contains menus organized by topic. Each menu allows you to select other options.
- *Control panel*—Located under the Menu bar, this provides options for the currently selected tool.
- *Tools panel or toolbar*—Located to the left of the workspace, this houses tools used to create and edit images. These tools are grouped by function.
- *Workspaces menu*—Located in the top-right corner of the screen, this allows you to change the workspace based on the type of project you're working on. For example, the Web option will display panels needed when you're working on a web project, such as the Asset Export panel.
- *Panels*—Located to the right of the workspace, these are small windows that allow you to change specific things about your image.
- *Panels dock*—Located to the right of the workspace, this houses panels and panel groups for easy access during a project.
- *Status bar*—Located in the lower-left corner of the workspace, this allows you quick access to the zoom and artboard navigation menus as well as some display options.

Opening, Creating, and Closing Files

Opening a file in Illustrator is quite similar to the process in other applications. Simply click **File > Open** and then navigate to the location of the image you would like to open.

To create a new document, click **File > New** to open the New Document dialog box. At the top, you'll see a number of document options, each with its own settings to choose from. Click on the different tabs and notice how the options change in the Preset Details panel on the right, where you can name your document as well as select its width and height, orientation, color mode, and many other attributes.

If you click on **More Settings** at the bottom of the selection panel, you'll get even more options. Because you're only getting familiar with the workspace at the moment, click on **Print**, select **Letter** in the Blank Document Presets on the left, and click **OK** (Figure 1).

When you open or create a document, it will display in a tabbed window in the middle of the workspace. Until you save the new document, the tab will be named "Untitled" (Figure 2).

You can float the window or change its appearance by clicking **Window > Arrange** and choosing the option that works for you. You can re-dock the document at any time by clicking in the title bar, dragging it toward the top until a blue line appears, and then letting go. To close a document, simply click the **X** in the top left of the window tab.

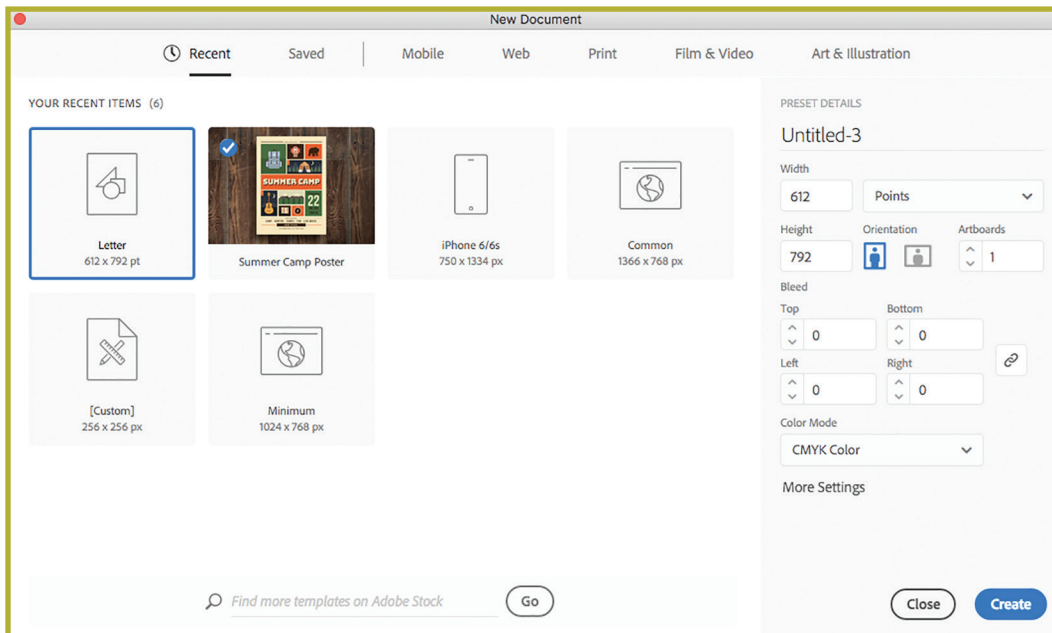


FIGURE 1—New Document Dialog Box

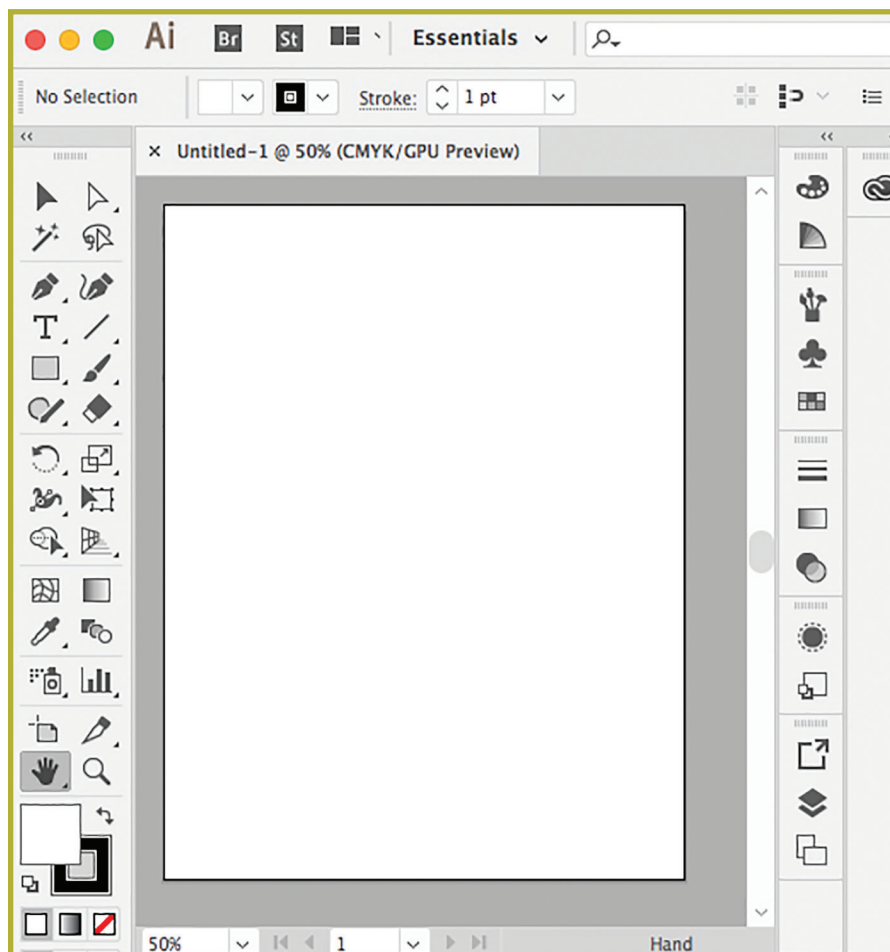


FIGURE 2—Untitled Document

Opening, Expanding, Collapsing, Floating, Docking, and Organizing Panels

Each panel was chosen to fit the needs of a particular type of work—such as Web, for example. Panels appear on the right side of the workspace by default. Preset panel combinations can be accessed via the Workspace menu. To select an individual panel that isn't open, click **Window** and select the panel you want.

Panels can be organized to create a workflow that works for you. You can expand, collapse, float, dock, move, and group panels for maximum flexibility. For example, you might want the Swatches panel to be grouped with the Color and Color Guide panels. To do this, click the **Swatches** icon (or the tab, if the panel is expanded) and drag it toward the section where the other two panels are until you see a blue line; then let go.

To close a panel, click on the icon (collapsed view) or the tab (expanded view) and drag the panel out of the dock (Figures 3 and 4). Then, simply click the **X** in the top-left corner of the floating panel.

Each panel comes with additional options, which can be accessed by clicking the icon in the top-right corner of the panel. At the bottom of each panel are a number of relevant shortcuts. For example, the Layers panel has shortcuts for creating new layers and sublayers.

It's possible to create your own personalized set of panels. To do this, you can start with the Essentials workspace by closing the panels you don't need while opening and organizing the ones you do need. Once you're happy with the result, click **New Workspace** under the Workspace menu and give it a name (such as "Icon Design"). Creating custom workspaces can save you a lot of time if you do different types of work.

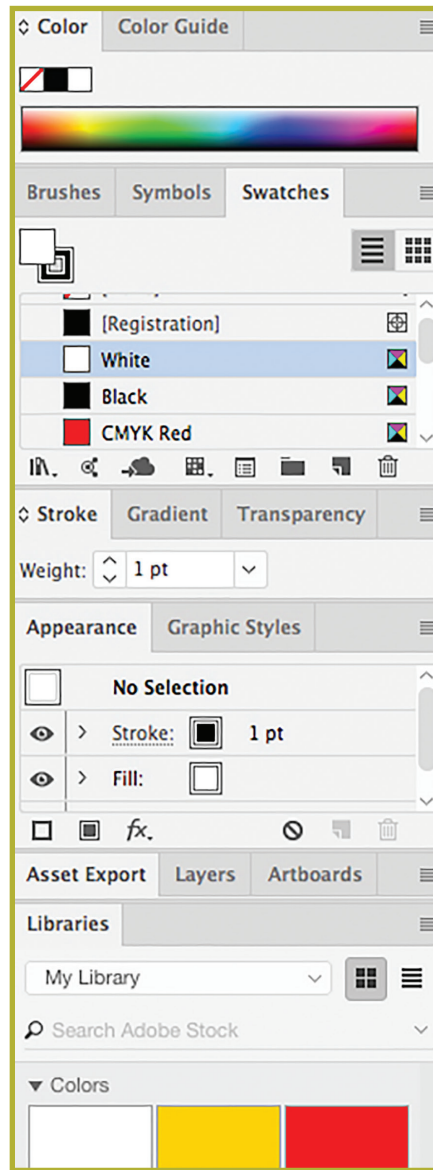


FIGURE 3—Panels in Collapsed View (left)

FIGURE 4—Panels in Expanded View (right)

Customizing the Tools Panel

The Tools panel, or the *toolbar*, can be displayed in a single- or double-row format by clicking the double arrows located at the top (Figure 5). A small arrow in the bottom-right corner of the tool icon indicates that more options are hidden. To access these options, click and hold the mouse button on the icon.

To use a tool, click on it and apply it to your document. For example, click on the Paintbrush tool and start drawing on your document. Then select the Eraser tool and erase the line you drew.

It's possible to create your own Tools panel by clicking **Window > Tools > New Tools Panel**. Give the new toolbar a descriptive name, click **OK**, and you'll be presented with a blank bar. To populate it, click on a tool in the existing toolbar and drag it onto the + sign in the new panel. When you're done, you can close the default panel and replace it with the new one. Return to the default settings anytime by clicking **Window > Tools > Default**.

Navigating the Control Panel

The selections available in the Control panel, located at the top of the workspace, will change whenever you use a different tool to work on your document. For example, when you choose the Type tool and click in your document, the Control panel displays options that allow you to adjust the tool's attributes and how it's used, such as the Character, Paragraph, Align, and Transform panels, which are shown at the top of Figure 6. The Control panel is a very useful tool to ensure that you've selected the proper settings.



FIGURE 5—The Tools Panel

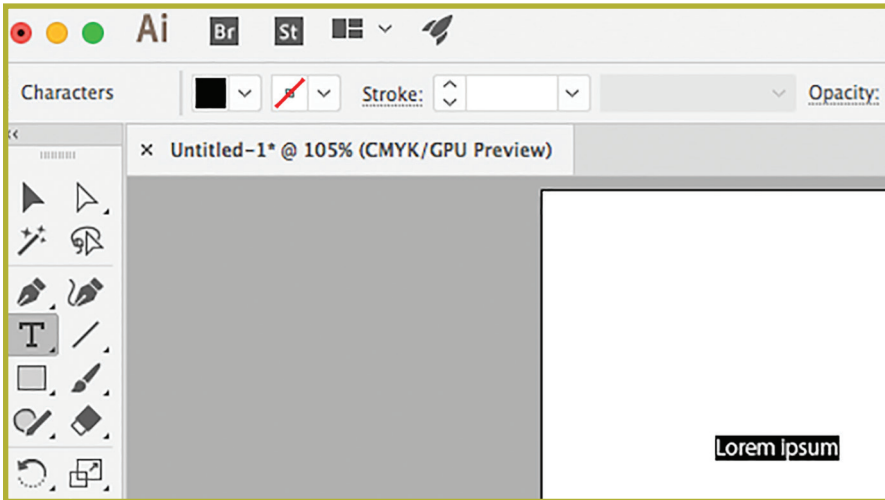


FIGURE 6—The Control Panel with the Type Tool Selected

Practice on Your Own 1.1

Explore the different Illustrator panels on your own, creating and saving a customized workspace that's perfect for you. *Remember:* There are many more panels under the Window menu that might not be open.

Your custom workspace should make sense for the type of work you do or plan to do. As you create it, ask yourself these questions:

- What type of work am I most likely to use Illustrator for?
- Which tasks would fit together logically within the context of my work?
- Which panels am I likely to use the most?
- Which panels am I likely to never or seldom use?
- What panel organization will make my work more efficient?



Self-Check 1.1

At the end of each section of *Graphic Design and Production*, you'll be asked to pause and check your understanding of what you've just read by completing a Self-Check exercise. Answering these questions will help you review what you've studied so far. Please complete *Self-Check 1.1* now.

Respond to the following based on your reading.

1. How do you select a workspace in Illustrator?
2. How do you float and dock panels?
3. How do you access additional options for a particular tool?
4. How do you change the Tools panel from a single to a double row?
5. What's the purpose of the Control panel?
6. How do you create a customized Tools panel?
7. How do you access additional panel options?
8. What are the four viewing modes offered by Illustrator, and why would you use each one?
9. What's the purpose of data recovery, and how do you turn the feature on and off?
10. In what area of the workspace would you find a way to zoom in and out of your artwork and a way to navigate through your document?

Check your answers with those in the back of this study guide.

SECTION 1.2:

SELECTING AND USING TOOLS

Read the following section. Then read Lesson 1 (pages 46–57) and Lesson 2 in your textbook.

Objective

When you complete this section, you'll be able to recognize, select, and use Illustrator tools.

Selecting the Right Tool for the Job

Depending on the type of creative work you do, you may find yourself using certain Illustrator tools all the time and others very rarely. Regardless of the work you do, it's important to explore and experiment with the tools to understand their functions. In this way, you'll more fully benefit from all that Illustrator has to offer.

To select a tool, click on its icon in the Tools panel. Remember that some tools have hidden options that can be accessed by clicking and holding the mouse button on the icon.

Take a look at some of the tools you'll most likely use:

- *Selection*—This tool allows you to select, move, and resize objects. It's probably the most used tool in Illustrator.
- *Direct Selection and Group Selection*—The Direct Selection tool enables you to select anchor points on the path segments that are automatically created when you draw in Illustrator. This allows you to reshape the object.

The Group Selection tool, which hides under the Direct Selection tool, allows you to select multiple objects by first clicking on one object and then clicking on others while holding down the **Shift** key.
- *Magic Wand and Lasso*—These tools are also used to select objects. When you click on an object with the Magic Wand, it will select all the elements in your document that share the exact same attributes, such as shapes with the same color. The Lasso tool allows you to make more precise selections by wrapping the “lasso” line around an object or part of an object.
- *Pen and Curvature*—Both of these tools can be used to draw lines with anchor points, giving you a lot of flexibility over the shapes you create.
- *Text*—This is an important tool in your creative arsenal when it comes time to create and manipulate text in your document. It comes with many hidden options for added flexibility.

- *Rectangle*—This tool and its hidden options, such as Rounded Rectangle and Ellipse, are the fastest ways to create simple shapes.
- *Paintbrush*—This tool allows you to create elements using a variety of width and brush definitions for a more handmade effect.
- *Eyedropper*—As in Photoshop, this tool enables you to quickly identify and select a color.
- *Hand*—This tool allows you to move your artwork inside the document window to focus on a particular area.
- *Zoom*—This tool allows you to magnify and reduce the view of your artwork in predetermined increments.

Now that you have a better idea what some Illustrator tools do, it's time to see them in action.

If you haven't already, be sure to download the lesson files using the instructions from the "Getting Started" section of your textbook. You'll need them to follow along with the tutorials in the textbook to help synthesize the information.

You'll also need to download the compressed file named "GRD115 Supplemental Student Files." This file contains the files you'll need to follow along with the tutorials described in this study guide, and it can be found on your student portal.

Using the Selection Tool

Open the *Section_1-2.ai* file you downloaded from the student files. You'll notice that the robot's eyes aren't the same size in the file. How do you make them the same size and line them up?

The first thing you need to do is select one of them with the Selection tool. Then, to modify the size of an object, you can either click and grab the corner of the frame, which displays the width and height measurements, or you can click **Transform** in the Control panel for more precision (Figure 7).

Change the width to 100 and the height to 125. If the **Link** icon is selected, the dimensions will adjust proportionally. If you don't want this to happen, click off the link. Now select the second eye and repeat the process.

Now the eyes are the same size, but they're not oriented at the same angle. Using the Selection tool, you can move the eyes on the artwork until they align. You can also reopen the Transform panel and change the rotate value to 350 for both eyes.

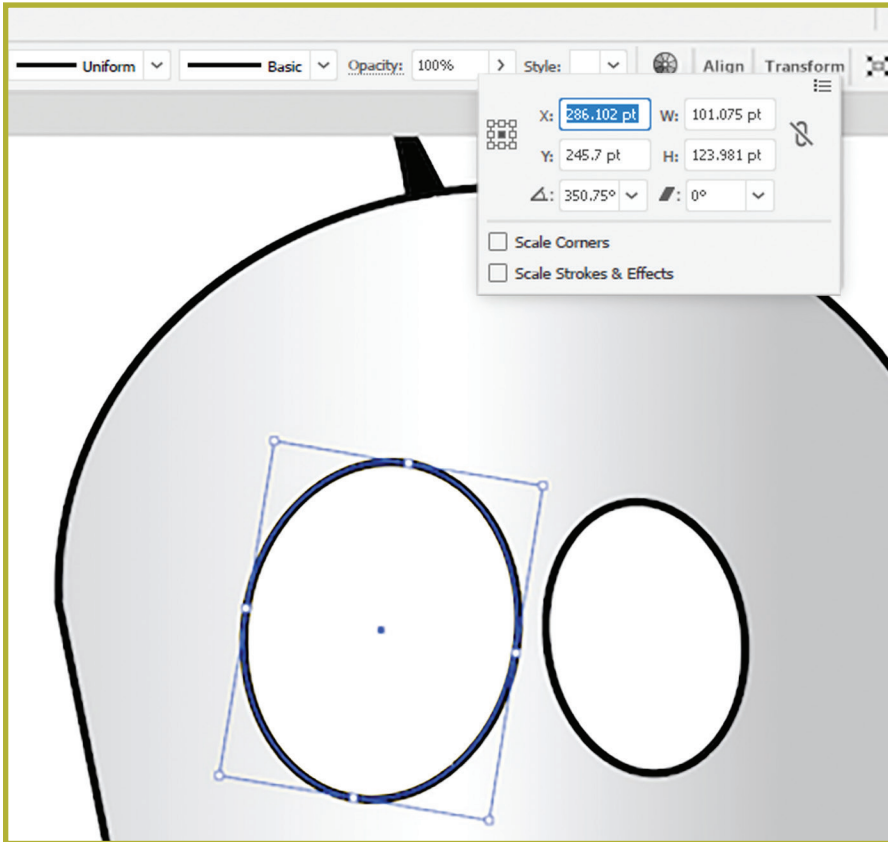


FIGURE 7—The Transform Panel

Furthermore, you can change the Y value of both shapes so that they're aligned vertically, or do the following:

1. Select one eye and then the other while holding down the **Shift** key.
2. Click the **Vertical Align Center** icon in the Control panel.

There are many other ways to select and align objects, which are explained in detail in textbook Lesson 2.

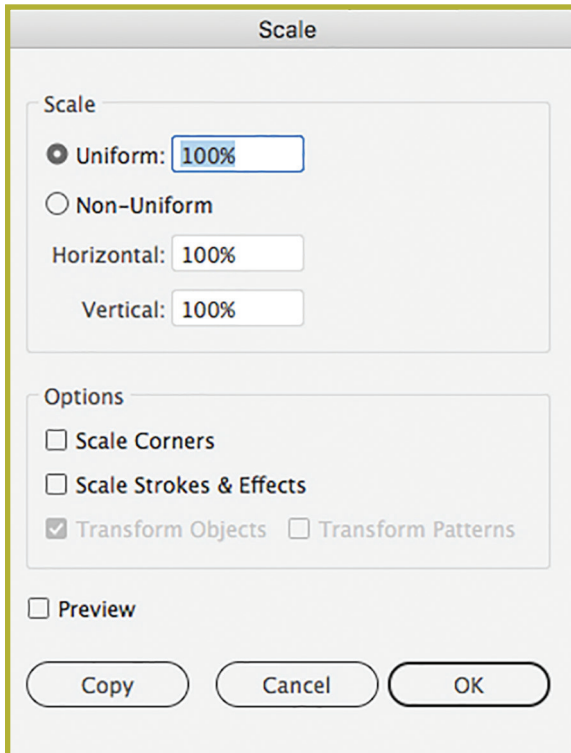
Using the Zoom Tool

The Zoom tool is very useful for navigating around your artwork. Select the **Zoom** tool and click on the artwork. Every time you click, the view is magnified by a specific percentage, which is also displayed in the Status bar at the bottom of the workspace.

Press **Option** (macOS) or **Alt** (Windows) before clicking to reduce the magnification. You can also drag the Zoom tool across the artwork to zoom in and out. Finally, double-clicking on the tool fits the artwork in the document window.

Using the Lasso and Scale Tools

Now you'll add another robot to the document. You'll first need to make the existing robot smaller to leave space for the others. To do so, use the Lasso tool to draw around the robot and select it. Then, click **Object > Group** or use the shortcut **Command + G** (macOS) or **Control + G** (Windows).



To change the size, double-click the Scale tool to open the dialog box (Figure 8). You want to preserve the uniformity of the robot, so choose the Uniform option and change the value to 50%. Use the Selection tool to move the smaller robot to one side. To make a duplicate, hold the **Option** (macOS) or **Alt** (Windows) key and drag the shape away from the original. You could use the Scale tool again to make the duplicate even smaller and change its opacity in the Control panel to show perspective.

FIGURE 8—The Scale Tool Dialog Box

Using the Fill and Stroke Tools

To add or modify the color of an object, use one of the selection tools to select the object. Then, double-click on either the **Fill** or **Stroke** tool to open the Color Picker dialog box, where you're presented with many options (Figure 9).

You'll look at the various color modes later in the course. For now, use the large pane on the left or the slider to pick a color. You can preview the difference between the new and current color in the rectangle next to the slider. When you click **OK**, you'll see the color appear at the bottom of the Tools panel. You also should see that the color was applied to the object you selected.

It's possible to use the Fill and Stroke drop-down menus in the Control panel to add or modify the color of an object. There are a number of other options next to the Stroke menu that you can apply to the stroke, such as weight, profile, and definition.

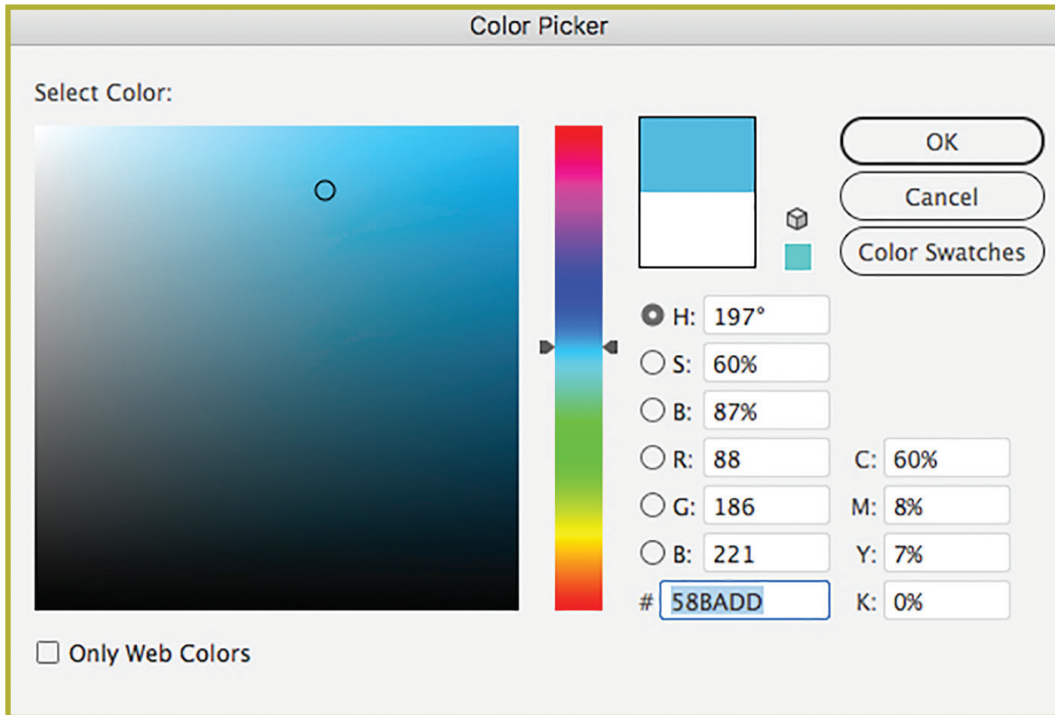


FIGURE 9—The Color Picker Dialog Box

Practice on Your Own 1.2

Create a modified version of the robot in the *Section_1-2.ai* file. This is a good opportunity for you to explore the many tools Illustrator puts at your disposal. At a minimum, your custom robot should include the following modifications:

- Different colors
- Different shapes for the hands
- Three antennas
- Head tilted to the left
- A ball in each hand

At the end of each lesson, your textbook has Review Questions. Once you've completed your reading, answer the Review Questions at the end of Lessons 1 and 2 in your textbook. Then, check your answers with those provided in the Review Answers section at the end of each textbook lesson.



Self-Check 1.2

Respond to the following based on your reading.

1. How do you select a tool?
2. Name three tools you can use to select an object.
3. What's the relationship between the Tools panel and the Control panel?
4. What would be the quickest tool to change the size of an object? The most precise?
5. What's the purpose of an anchor point, and what tool would you use to select one?
6. If you wanted to draw a star, what tool would you use?
7. Is it possible to erase objects in an artwork? How?
8. Which two tools could you use to rotate an object?
9. What tool would you use if you wanted to replicate a color in an artwork?
10. Name two methods to change the color of a stroke.

Check your answers with those in the back of this study guide.

SECTION 1.3: ORGANIZING YOUR ARTWORK WITH LAYERS

Read the following section. Then read Lesson 9 in your textbook.

Objective

When you complete this section, you'll be able to create layers and sublayers using the Layers panel.

Layers can be used in Illustrator to separate and organize the various elements of your artwork. Both layers and sublayers can help you ensure that you don't edit or delete the wrong item. They're especially useful when creating many versions of a design, such as multiple options of a poster or icon.

Exploring the Layers Panel

By default, the Layers panel is located at the bottom of the panel dock. If it's not there, click **Window > Layers** to open it. Then, open the *Section_1-3.ai* file from your downloaded student files to follow along.

Looking at the Layers panel, you can see two layers (Figure 10). Click on the small arrow next to the Final Art thumbnail image to reveal all the sublayers that belong to that layer. Click the small arrow next to the bird thumbnail (third from the top) to reveal sub-sublayers. Close the sublayers by clicking the arrows again.

Now click the eye in the left-hand column (called the Visibility column) of the Background layer. The hand and the background frame disappear. Click in the first column to make it reappear. Being able to hide items on the artwork is very useful when working on a specific element, in that you can do so without other items getting in the way.

Open the Background sublayers. Click the square to the right of the eye on the Background layer (the Edit column). The layer is now locked and can't be edited or deleted (Figure 11). Notice how all the sub-sublayers also have been locked.

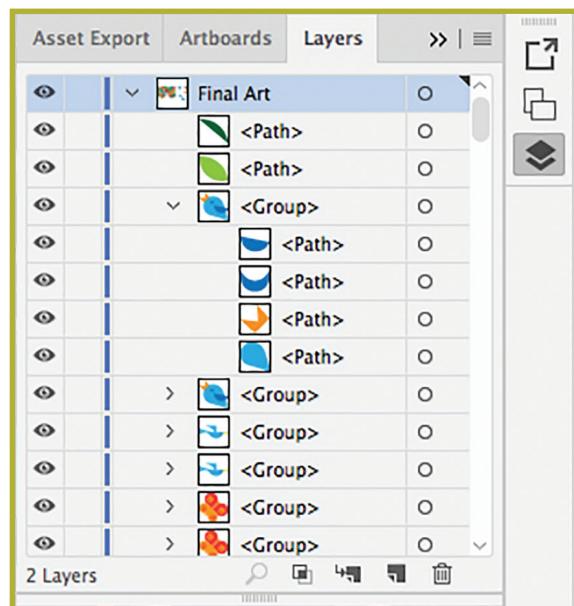


FIGURE 10—The Layers Panel

To unlock the layers again, click the padlock. This feature is extremely useful to avoid affecting the elements you aren't working on. To lock all of the layers except the one you want to work on, select the layer and click **Lock Others** in the panel menu at the top right.

To the right of the layer name is the Target column with circles or rings. When you click the circle next to Background, it becomes a double ring. This means that the items on the layer are targeted and can be affected or edited using the Appearance panel.

If you open the Appearance panel and change the opacity, for example, you can see that all the items on the Background layer have been affected.

At the bottom of the Layers panel are a number of icons. These are shortcuts, such as New Layer and Delete "(Selection)." These options and many more are available by clicking the menu icon in the top right (Figure 12). To change the appearance of the panel, click **Panel Options** at the bottom of the menu.

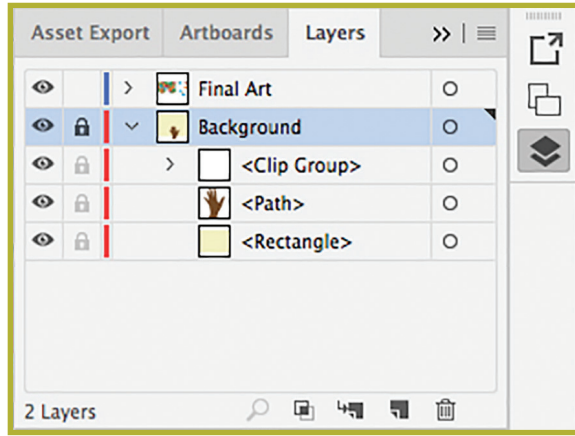


FIGURE 11—Locked Layers

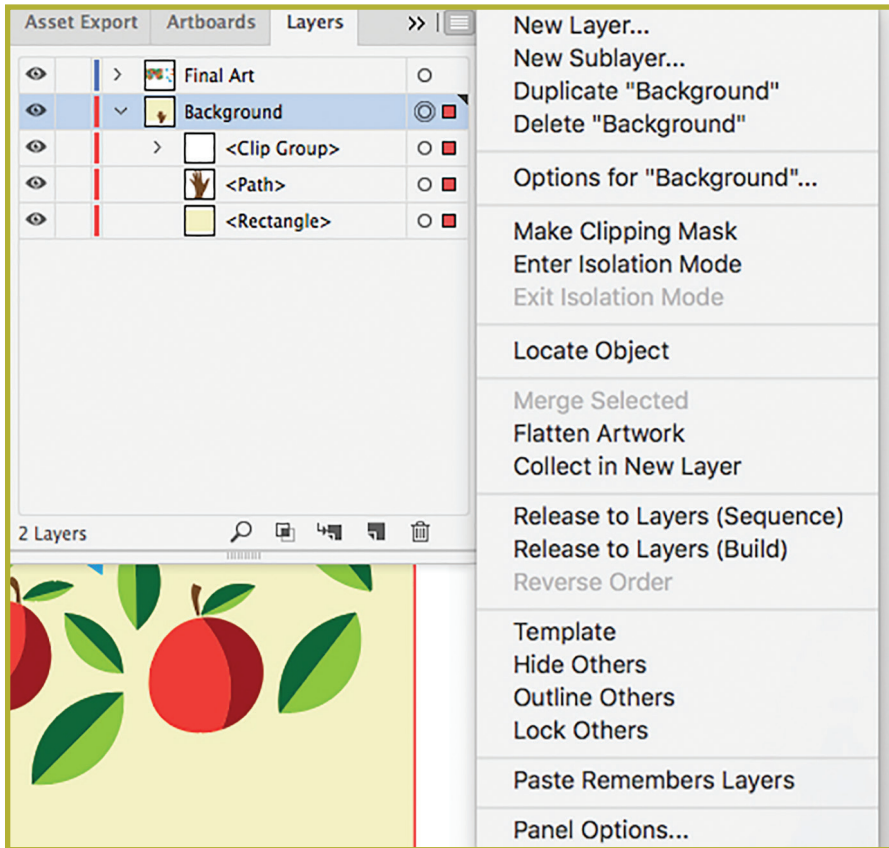


FIGURE 12—Layers Panel Options Menu

Creating and Deleting Layers and Sublayers

Start off by organizing your document using layers. When you create a new document, it comes with a single layer named “Layer 1” (Figure 13). If you leave it like that and start adding items to your artwork, they’ll all go into Layer 1. This can get confusing if you have many elements, and it will make editing more difficult, leading to potential mistakes. By creating layers and sub-layers, you can avoid these issues.

Rename Layer 1 by double-clicking on it and typing a new name. Then, you have a number of ways that you can add some new layers. The first way is to go into the panel menu and select **New Layer** to open the Layer Options dialog box, where you can name and assign a color to your new layer (Figure 14). Assigning a distinct color to each layer is a good idea: When you select a layer, its bounding frame will be the same color as the layer, giving you a visual hint.

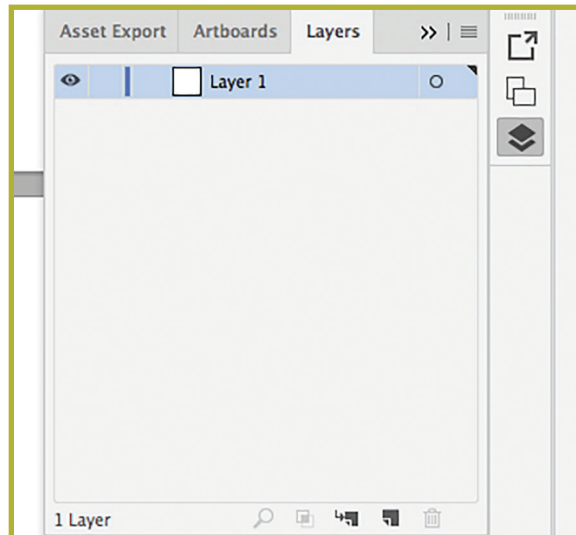


FIGURE 13—The Layers Panel for a New Document

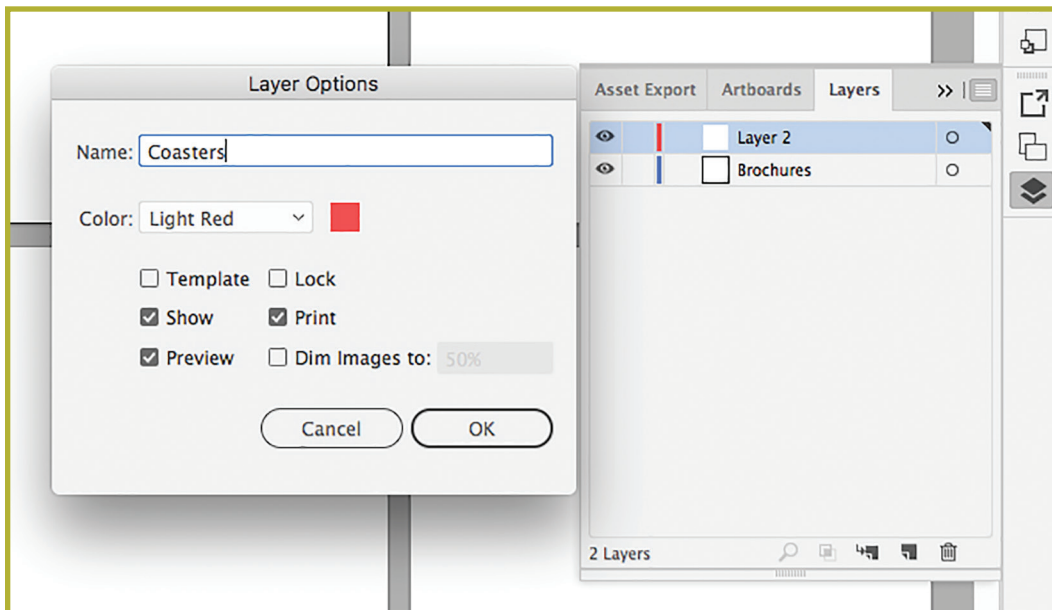


FIGURE 14—Layers Options Dialog Box

You also could create a new layer by clicking the **New Layer** icon at the bottom of the panel and then double-clicking on its name to change it. Finally, you can simply duplicate an existing layer. This is especially useful when you want to replicate the existing layer-sublayers structure (Figure 15). Do this by selecting the layer and then clicking **Duplicate** in the panel menu or by dragging the layer onto the **New Layer** icon at the bottom of the panel. Then, double-click the layer to rename it.

There also are a number of ways to create sublayers. First, select an existing sublayer (or several at a time), click **Option** (macOS) or **Alt** (Windows), and drag it onto another layer until it turns blue. Then release. Other ways to add a sublayer include selecting **New Sublayer** in the panel menu or clicking the **Create New Sublayer** icon at the bottom of the panel and then double-clicking on it to rename. You even can create sub-sublayers by selecting a sublayer and clicking the **New Sublayer** icon.

To delete a layer or sublayer, select it and either click **Delete** in the Options menu or the **Delete Selection** (trash can) icon at the bottom of the panel.

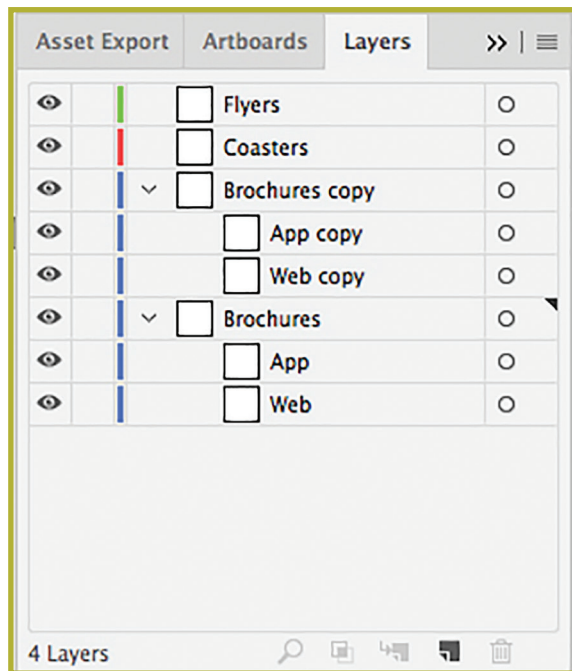


FIGURE 15—Layer Duplicated with Existing Structure

Organizing Layers and Sublayers

Creating layers and sublayers is a great way to organize the elements in your artwork, but there are a few more things you can do. For example, you can assign the same color to each layer and its sublayers. To change the color, double-click on the layer or sublayer to open the Layer Options dialog box, where you'll find a color menu.

Another useful habit is to organize the layers alphabetically. To move a layer, first hide all the sublayers. Then select the layer and drag it to a new location until a blue line appears. You can do the same thing for sublayers, sub-sublayers, and so on (Figure 16).

Taking the time to organize your artwork will make your process more efficient. It also reduces the risk of editing or deleting an element by mistake.

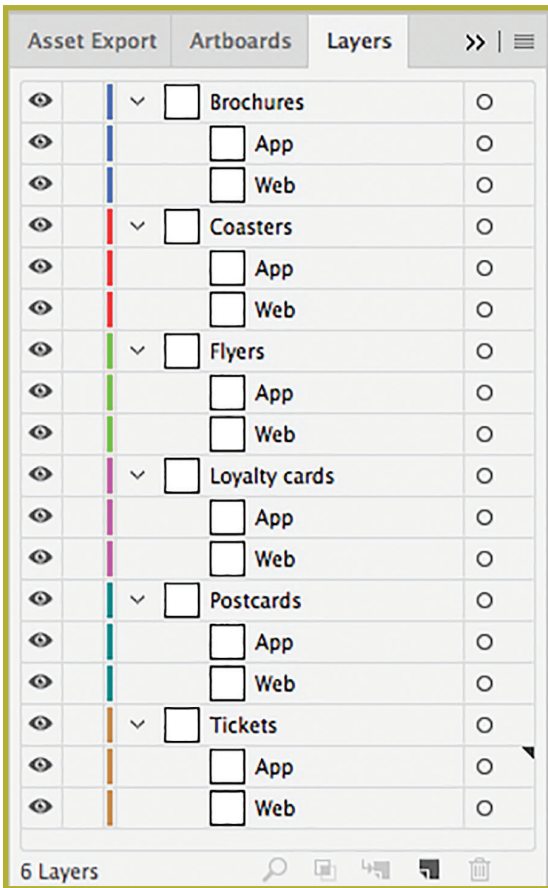


FIGURE 16—Completed Layer and Sublayer Structure

Practice on Your Own 1.3

Create a new document with a structure of layers and sublayers. At a minimum, your document should include the following:

- Four layers
- Three sublayers for each layer
- One sub-sublayer for each sublayer
- Proper typographic and visual organization

Once you've completed your reading, answer the Review Questions at the end of Lesson 9 in your textbook. Then, check your answers with those provided in the Review Answers section at the end of the textbook lesson.