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Effects quick reference

Effect

Action

Effect > 3D

Convert open or closed paths, or bitmap objects, into three-dimensional (3D) objects, which you can rotate, light, and shade.

See also: [Create 3D objects](#)

Effect > Artistic

Simulate a painterly appearance on traditional media.

See also: [Artistic effects](#)

Effect > Blur

Retouch images and smooth transitions by averaging the pixels next to the hard edges of defined lines and shaded areas in an image.

See also: [Blur effects](#)

Effect > Brush Strokes

Create a painterly or fine-arts look using different brush- and ink- stroke effects.

See also: [Brush Strokes effects](#)

Effect > Convert To Shape

Reshape either a vector or a bitmap object.

See also: [Reshaping objects with effects](#)

Effect > Crop Marks

Applies crop marks to the selected object.

See also: [Specify crop marks for trimming or aligning](#)

Effect > Distort & Transform

(top section of menu)

Reshape vector objects, or apply the effects to a fill or stroke added to a bitmap object with the Appearance panel.

See also: [Reshaping objects with effects](#)

Effect > Distort

(bottom section of menu)

Geometrically distort and reshape an image.

See also: [Distort effects \(bottom of menu\)](#)

Effect > Path

Offset an object's path relative to its original location, turn type into a set of compound paths that you can edit and manipulate as you would any other graphic object, and change the stroke of a selected object to a filled object that's the same width as the original stroke. You can also apply these commands to a fill or stroke added to a bitmap object with the Appearance panel.

See also: [Offset duplicate objects](#), [Convert type to outlines](#), [Convert strokes to compound paths](#)

Effect > Pathfinder

Combine groups, layers, or sublayers into single editable objects.

See also: [Apply Pathfinder effects](#)

Effect > Pixelate

Sharply define a selection by clumping pixels of similar color values.

See also: [Pixelate effects](#)

Effect > Rasterize

Convert a vector object to a bitmap object.

See also: [Rasterize a vector object](#)

Effect > Sharpen

Focus blurry images by increasing the contrast of adjacent pixels.

See also: [Sharpen effect](#)

Effect > Sketch

Add texture to images, often for a three-dimensional effect. The effects are also useful for creating a fine-arts or hand-drawn look.

See also: [Sketch effects](#)

Effect > Stylize

(top section of menu)

Add arrowheads, drop shadows, round corners, feathered-edged, glowing, and scribble-styled appearances to objects.

See also: [Create a drop shadow](#), [Apply an inner or outer glow](#), [Add arrowheads](#), [Feather the edges of an object](#), [Create a sketch using the Scribble effect](#), [Round the corners of objects](#)

Effect > Stylize

(bottom section of menu)

The Glowing Edges command produces a painted or impressionistic effect on a selection by displacing pixels and by finding and heightening contrast in an image.

See also: [Stylize effect \(bottom of menu\)](#)

Effect > SVG Filters

Add XML-based graphic properties such as drop shadows to your artwork.

See also: [Apply SVG effects](#)

Effect > Texture

Give an image the appearance of depth or substance, or add an organic look.

See also: [Texture effects](#)

Effect > Video

Optimize images captured from video or artwork intended for television.

See also: [Video effects](#)

Effect > Warp

Distort or deform objects, including paths, text, meshes, blends, and raster images.

See also: [Reshaping objects with effects](#)

Artistic effects

Artistic effects are raster-based and use the document's raster effects settings whenever you apply the effect to a vector object.

Colored Pencil

Draws an image using colored pencils on a solid background. Important edges are retained and given a rough crosshatch appearance; the solid background color shows through the smoother areas.

Cutout

Portrays an image as though it were made from roughly cut-out pieces of colored paper. High-contrast images appear as if in silhouette; colored images are built up as if from several layers of colored paper.

Dry Brush

Paints the edges of the image using a dry-brush technique (between oil and watercolor). The

effect simplifies an image by reducing its range of colors.

Film Grain

Applies an even pattern to the shadow tones and midtones of an image. A smoother, more saturated pattern is added to the image's lighter areas. This effect is useful for eliminating banding in blends and visually unifying elements from various sources.

Fresco

Paints an image in a coarse manner using short, rounded strokes as if hastily applied.

Neon Glow

Adds various types of glows to the objects in an image. This effect is useful for coloring an image while softening its look. To select a glow color, click the glow box and select a color from the color picker.

Paint Daubs

Lets you choose from various brush sizes (from 1 to 50) and types for a painterly effect. Brush types include simple, light rough, light dark, wide sharp, wide blurry, and sparkle.

Palette Knife

Reduces detail in an image to give the effect of a thinly painted canvas that reveals the texture underneath.

Plastic Wrap

Coats the image as if in shiny plastic, accentuating the surface detail.

Poster Edges

Reduces the number of colors in an image according to the Posterization value you set; then finds the edges of the image and draws black lines on them. Broader areas of the image have simple shading, while fine, dark detail is distributed throughout the image.

Rough Pastels

Makes an image appear as if stroked with colored pastel chalk on a textured background. In areas of bright color, the chalk appears thick with little texture; in darker areas, the chalk appears scraped off to reveal the texture.

Smudge Stick

Softens an image using short diagonal strokes to smudge or smear the darker areas of the images. Lighter areas become brighter and lose detail.

Sponge

Creates images with highly textured areas of contrasting color as if painted with a sponge.

Underpainting

Paints the image on a textured background, and then paints the final image over it.

Watercolor

Paints the image in a watercolor style, simplifying details, and using a medium brush loaded with water and color. Where significant tonal changes occur at edges, the effect saturates the color.

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[How to create 3D objects in Illustrator](#)

Learn all about working with 3D effects in Adobe Illustrator.

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[Summary of effects in Illustrator](#)

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[How to reshape objects using effects in Illustrator](#)

Learn about reshaping objects using effects in Adobe Illustrator.

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Blur effects

The commands in the Blur submenu in the Effect menu are raster-based and use the document's raster effects settings whenever you apply the effect to a vector object.

Gaussian Blur

Quickly blurs a selection by an adjustable amount. This effect removes high-frequency detail and can produce a hazy effect.

Radial Blur

Simulates the soft blur created by a zooming or rotating camera. Choose Spin to blur along concentric circular lines, and then specify a degree of rotation. Choose Zoom to blur along radial lines, as if zooming in or out of the image, and specify an amount from 1 to 100. Blur quality ranges from Draft for the fastest but grainy results to Good and Best for smoother results, which are indistinguishable except on a large selection. Specify the origin of the blur by dragging the pattern in the Blur Center box.

Smart Blur

Blurs an image with precision. You can specify a radius, a threshold, and a blur quality. The Radius value determines the size of the area searched for dissimilar pixels. The Threshold value determines how dissimilar the pixels must be before they are affected. You also can set a mode for the entire selection (Normal) or for the edges of color transitions (Edge Only and Overlay). Where significant contrast occurs, Edge Only applies black-and-white edges, and Overlay Edge applies white.

Brush Strokes effects

The Brush Strokes effects are raster-based and use the document's raster effects settings whenever you apply the effect to a vector object.

Accented Edges

Accentuates the edges of an image. When the Edge Brightness control is set to a high value, the accents resemble white chalk. When it is set to a low value, the accents resemble black ink.

Angled Strokes

Repaints an image using diagonal strokes. The lighter areas of the image are painted in strokes going in one direction, while the darker areas are painted in strokes going the opposite direction.

Crosshatch

Preserves the details and features of the original image while adding texture and roughening the edges of the colored areas in the image with simulated pencil hatching. The Strength option controls the number of hatching passes (from 1 to 3).

Dark Strokes

Paints dark areas of an image closer to black with short strokes, and paints lighter areas of the image with long, white strokes.

Ink Outlines

Redraws an image with fine narrow lines over the original details, in pen-and-ink style.

Spatter

Replicates the effect of a spatter airbrush. Increasing the values of the options simplifies the overall effect.

Sprayed Strokes

Repaints an image using its dominant colors with angled, sprayed strokes of color.

Sumi-e

Paints an image in Japanese style as if with a wet brush full of black ink on rice paper. The effect is soft, blurry edges with rich blacks.

Distort effects (bottom of menu)

The Distort commands can be very memory-intensive. They are raster-based and use the document's raster effects settings whenever you apply the effect to a vector object.

Diffuse Glow

Renders an image as if it were being viewed through a soft diffusion filter. The effect adds see-through white noise to an image, with the glow fading from the

center of a selection.

Glass

Makes an image appear as if it were being viewed through different types of glass. You can choose a preset glass effect or create your own glass surface using a Photoshop file. You can adjust scaling, distortion, and smoothness settings, as well as texturizing options.

Ocean Ripple

Adds randomly spaced ripples to the artwork, making the artwork look as if it were under water.

Pixelate effects

The Pixelate effects are raster-based and use the document's raster effects settings whenever you apply the effect to a vector object.

Color Halftone

Simulates the effect of using an enlarged halftone screen on each channel of the image. For each channel, the effect divides the image into rectangles and replaces each rectangle with a circle. The circle size is proportional to the brightness of the rectangle.

To use the effect, enter a value in pixels for the maximum radius of a halftone dot (from 4 to 127), and enter a screen-angle value (the angle of the dot relative to the true horizontal) for one or more channels. For Grayscale images, use only channel 1. For RGB images, use channels 1, 2, and 3, which correspond to the red, green, and blue channels. For CMYK images, use all four channels, which correspond to the cyan, magenta, yellow, and black channels.

Crystallize

Clumps colors into polygon shapes.

Mezzotint

Converts an image to a random pattern of black-and-white areas, or of fully saturated colors in a color image. To use the effect, choose a dot pattern from the Type pop-up menu in the Mezzotint dialog box.

Pointillize

Breaks up the color in an image into randomly placed dots, as in a pointillist painting, and uses the background color as a canvas area between the dots.

Sharpen effect

The Unsharp Mask command in the Sharpen submenu in the Effect menu focuses blurry images by increasing the contrast of adjacent pixels. This effect is raster-based and uses the document's raster effects settings whenever you apply the

effect to a vector graphic.

Unsharp Mask

Finds the areas in the image where significant color changes occur and sharpens them. Use the Unsharp Mask effect to adjust the contrast of edge detail and produce a lighter and darker line on each side of the edge. This effect emphasizes the edge and creates the illusion of a sharper image.

Sketch effects

Many of the Sketch effects use black and white colors to redraw the image. The effects are raster-based and use the document's raster effects settings whenever you apply the effect to a vector graphic.

Bas Relief

Transforms an image to appear carved in low relief and lit to accent the surface variations. Dark areas of the image are colored black; light colors are colored white.

Chalk & Charcoal

Redraws an image's highlights and midtones with a solid midtone gray background drawn in coarse chalk. Shadow areas are replaced with diagonal charcoal lines. The charcoal is drawn in black, the chalk in white.

Charcoal

Redraws an image to create a posterized, smudged effect. Major edges are drawn boldly while midtones are sketched using a diagonal stroke. Charcoal is colored black; the paper is colored white.

Chrome

Treats the image as if it were a polished chrome surface. Highlights are high points and shadows are low points in the reflecting surface.

Conté Crayon

Replicates the texture of dense dark and pure white Conté crayons on an image. The Conté Crayon effect uses black for dark areas and the white for light areas.

Graphic Pen

Uses fine, linear ink strokes to capture the details in the original image. The effect replaces color in the original image using black for ink and white for paper. This command is especially striking with scanned images.

Halftone Pattern

Simulates the effect of a halftone screen while maintaining the continuous range of tones.

Note Paper

Creates an image that appears to be constructed of handmade paper. The effect simplifies an image, and combines the effect of the Grain command (Texture submenu) with an embossed appearance. Dark areas of the image appear as holes in the top layer of paper surrounded by white.

Photocopy

Simulates the effect of photocopying an image. Large areas of darkness tend to copy only around their edges; midtones fall away to either solid black or white.

Plaster

Molds an image as if from plaster, and then colorizes the result using black and white. Dark areas are raised; light areas are sunken.

Reticulation

Simulates the controlled shrinking and distorting of film emulsion to create an image that appears clumped in the shadow areas and lightly grained in the highlights.

Stamp

Simplifies the image to appear stamped with a rubber or wood stamp. This command is best used with black-and-white images.

Torn Edges

Reconstructs the image as ragged, torn pieces of paper, and then colorizes the image using black and white. This command is useful for images consisting of text or high-contrast objects.

Water Paper

Uses blotchy daubs that appear painted onto fibrous, damp paper, causing the colors to flow and blend.

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stylize effect (bottom of menu)

The Glowing Edges effect is raster-based and uses the document's raster effects settings whenever you apply the effect to a vector graphic.

Glowing Edges

Identifies the edges of color and adds a neon-like glow to them.

Texture effects

The Texture effects are raster-based and use the document's raster effects settings whenever you apply the effect to a vector graphic.

Craquelure

Paints an image onto a high-relief plaster surface, producing a fine network of

cracks that follow the contours of the image. Use this effect to create an embossing effect with images that contain a broad range of color or grayscale values.

Grain

Adds texture to an image by simulating different kinds of grain—regular, soft, sprinkles, clumped, contrasty, enlarged, stippled, horizontal, vertical, or speckle. For more information on using these texturizing options, see [Use texture and glass surface controls](#).

Mosaic Tiles

Draws the image as if it were made up of small chips or tiles and adds grout between the tiles. (In contrast, the Pixelate > Mosaic command breaks up an image into blocks of different-colored pixels.)

Patchwork

Breaks up an image into squares filled with the predominant color in that area of the image. The effect randomly reduces or increases the tile depth to replicate highlights and shadows.

Stained Glass

Repaints an image as single-colored adjacent cells outlined in the foreground color.

Texturizer

Applies a texture you select or create to an image.

Video effects

The Video effects are raster-based and use the document's raster effects settings whenever you apply the effect to a vector graphic.

De-Interlace

Smooths moving images captured on video by removing either the odd or even interlaced lines in a video image. You can choose to replace the discarded lines by duplication or interpolation.

NTSC Colors

Restricts the gamut of colors to those acceptable for television reproduction to prevent oversaturated colors from bleeding across television scan lines.

Use texture and glass surface controls

Some effects included in Illustrator have texturizing options, such as the Glass, Rough Pastels, Grain, and Fresco effects. The texturizing options can make an object appear as though painted onto various textures, such as canvas or brick, or viewed through glass blocks.

In the effect's dialog box, choose a texture type from the Texture pop-up menu (if available), or choose Load Texture (only available for Rough Pastels or Glass commands) to specify a file.

Set other options, if available:

Drag the Scaling slider to enlarge or reduce the effect on the bitmap image's surface.

Drag the Relief slider to adjust the depth of the texture's surface.

From the Light Direction pop-up menu, choose the direction from which you want the light to appear.

Select Invert to reverse the surface's light and dark colors.

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