Saving your Illustrator document to a PDF file.
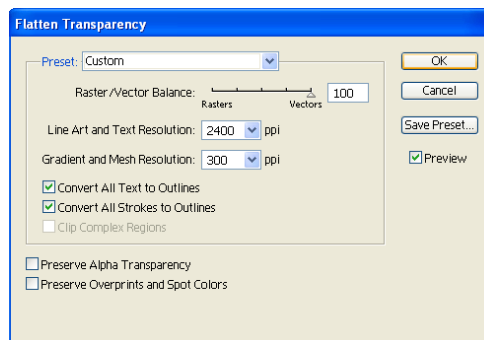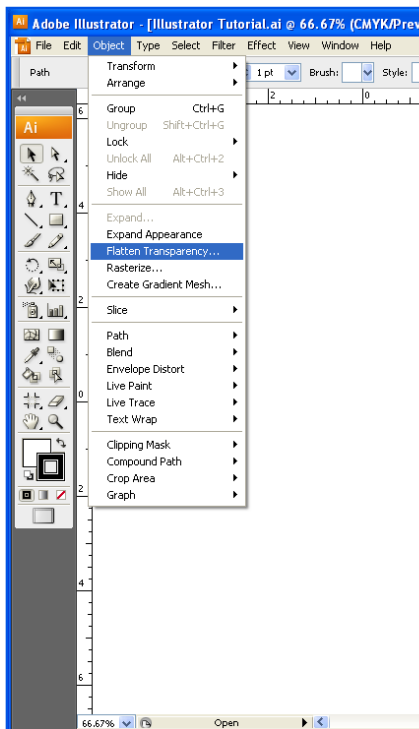
This tutorial is designed to show the best way to save an Illustrator file to a PDF, for use with our system. It will also show the best setting to save time when uploading the files to the website.
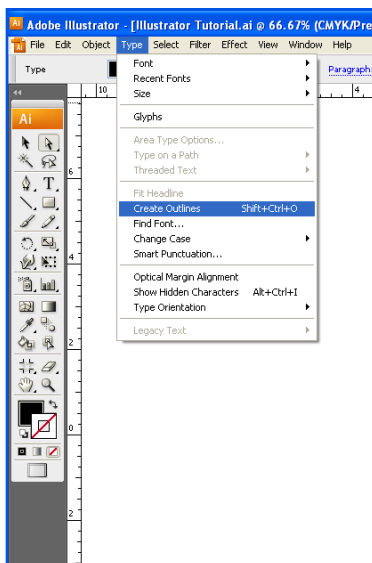
Pre-Save options

It is always a good practice to simplify the document before saving to PDF. This includes Flattening all transparencies, Creating outlines on all text, Embedding all placed images and Expanding all Pantone and Spot colors to CMYK.
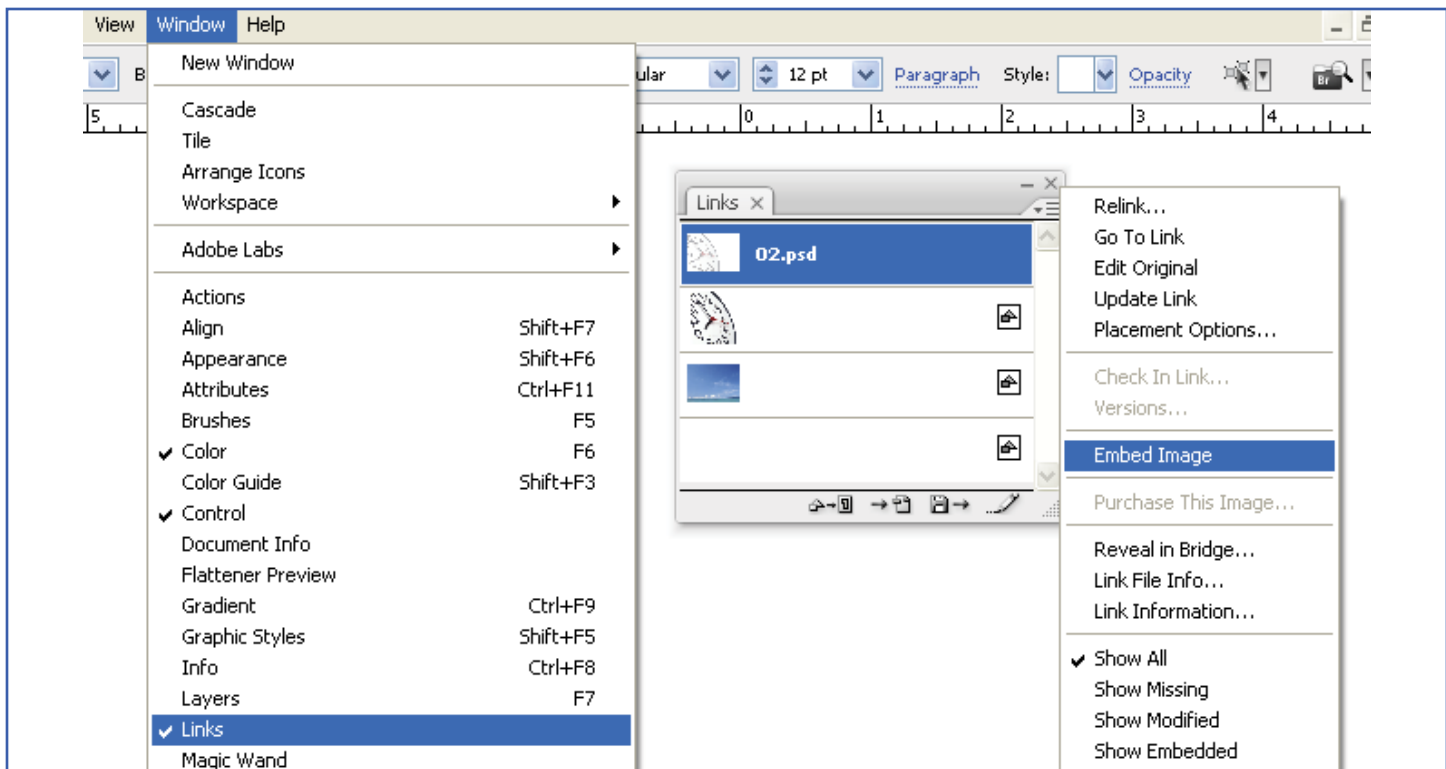
Flatten Transparency will flatten all raster effects, such as drop shadows and feathered boxes and images. If this is not done lines may appear in the artwork where those effects overlap vector art and placed images.

Note: All vector art prints at 2400dpi and all raster art at 300dpi, so using those values will insure the best quality when flattening the the transparencies.

Creating Outlines from all text insures that there will be no font issues with your file when it is processed and Ripped. Do a select all *(Command A mac or Control A pc)* and under the "Type" menu select the Create Outlines option.
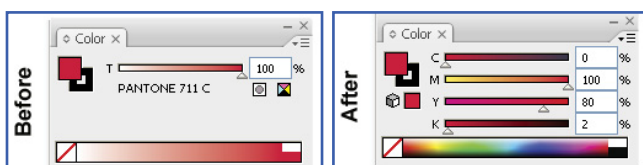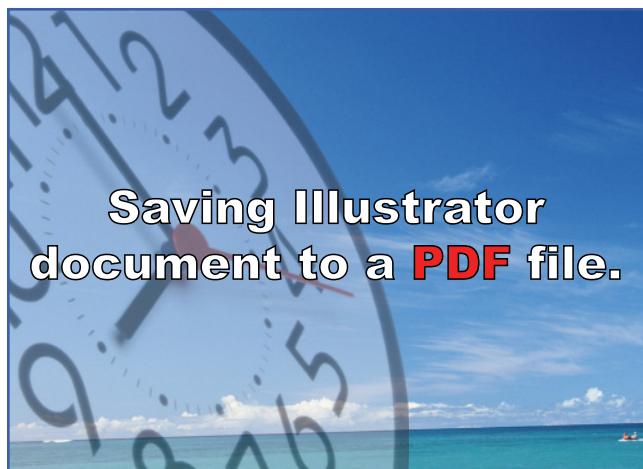
Note: be sure to do a final check on all of the text to be sure that everything still appear how you intend it to. Also note that if there are any text objects that are locked, they will need to be unlocked before you can create outlines on them.

Embed Image: Embedding all images will insure that all artwork is included in your PDF and will also help in the event that we need to bring the file back into Illustrator for any reason.

Select each link and under the link palette options the Embed Image option is highlighted above. If the option is grayed out, then the image is already embedded.

Note: *You will also notice that there is an icon next to the link if it is embedded.*

Expand Spot Colors: PMS and other Spot colors may have undesirable color shifts when converted to CMYK. They also can cause problems when transparency effects are combined with them. For this reason it is important to expand all Pantone and Spot colors to CMYK before saving as a PDF.

Select each piece of art that has a Spot color applied to either the Fill or Stroke of it. Then in the color palette click on the CMYK icon to expand the color.

Note: *If a Spot color is applied to both the fill and stroke of an object, this process will have to be done to both.*

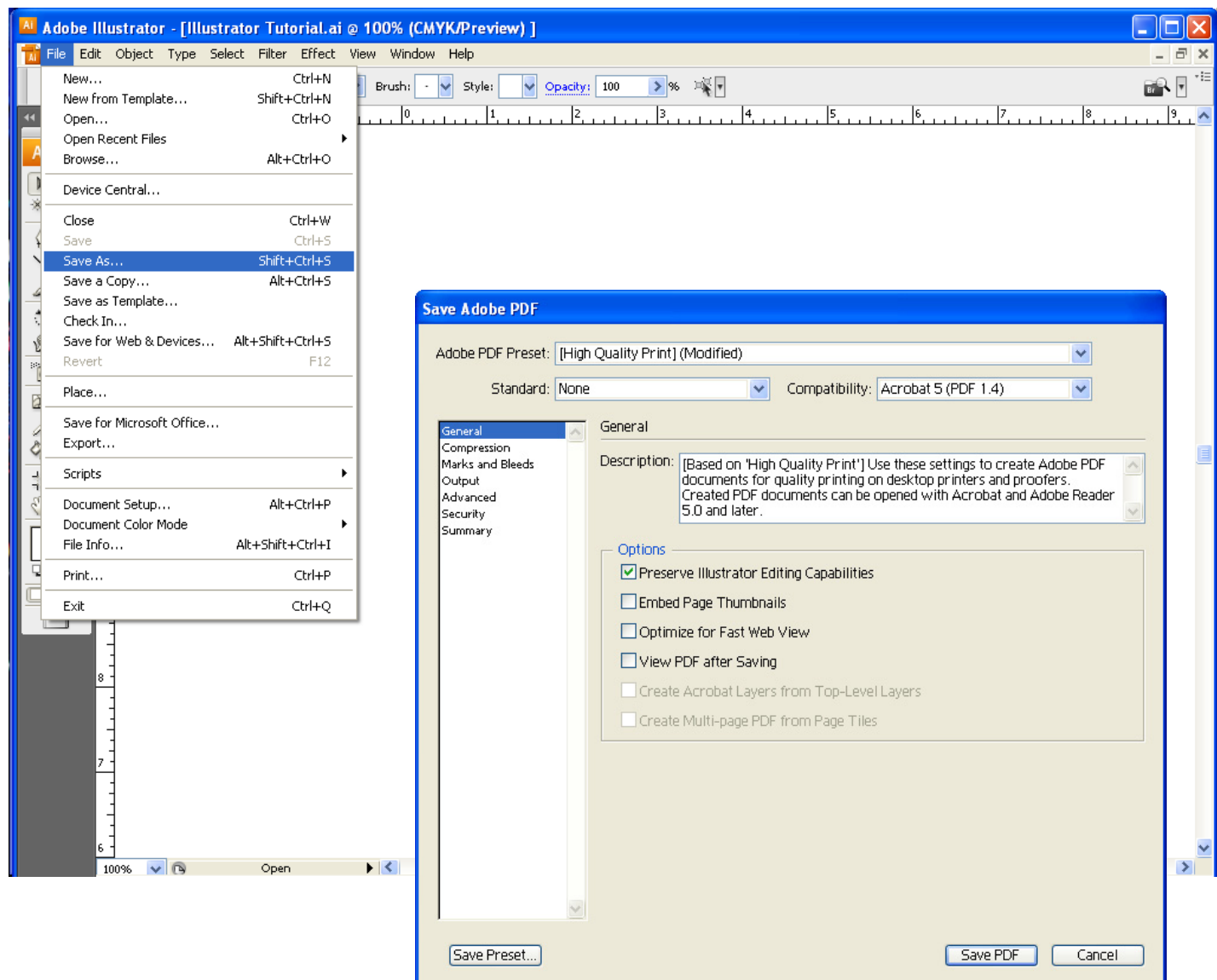**After the file has been prepared and simplified, we are ready to save it as a PDF.**

Step 1

Under the "File" menu choose the "Save As" option.

To start choose the "High Quality Print" or "Press Quality" setting. (We will be modifying the settings a little).

GENERAL:

Uncheck the "Optimize for Fast Web View" setting under "Options".

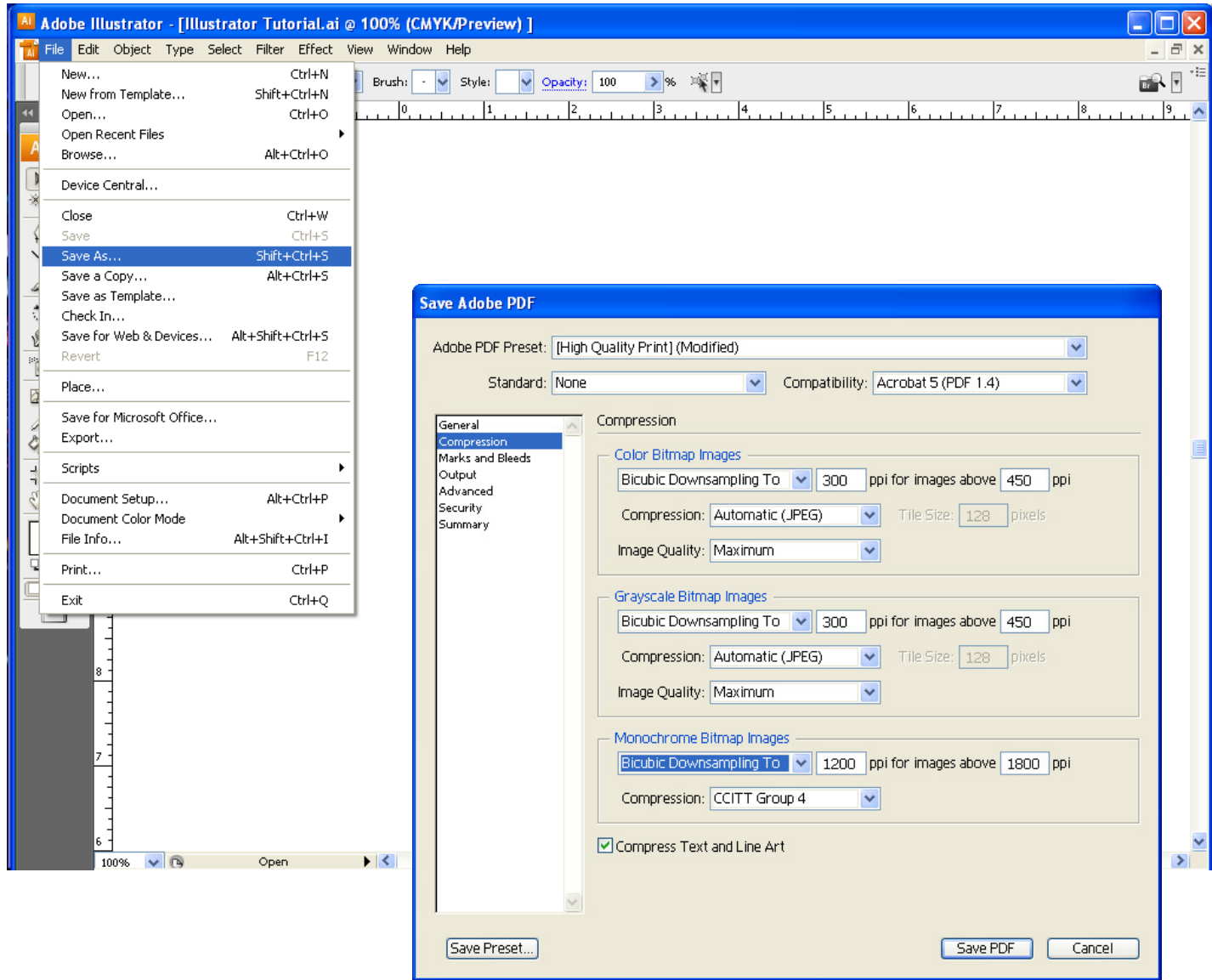Leave the "Preserve Illustrator Editing Capabilities" option checked.

Step 2

COMPRESSION:

Set Color Bitmap Images to 300ppi for images above 450ppi with the compression set to "JPEG" and the Quality set to "Maximum"

Set Grayscale Bitmap Images to 300ppi for images above 450ppi with the compression set to "JPEG" and the Quality set to "Maximum"

Set Monochrome Bitmap Images to 1200ppi for images above 1800ppi with the compression set to "CCITT Group 4".

Note: You can also use ZIP compression because it uses non-lossy compression. It will make a larger file that will take longer to upload, but with smaller files, such as business cards and postcards, the larger size is usually minimal.
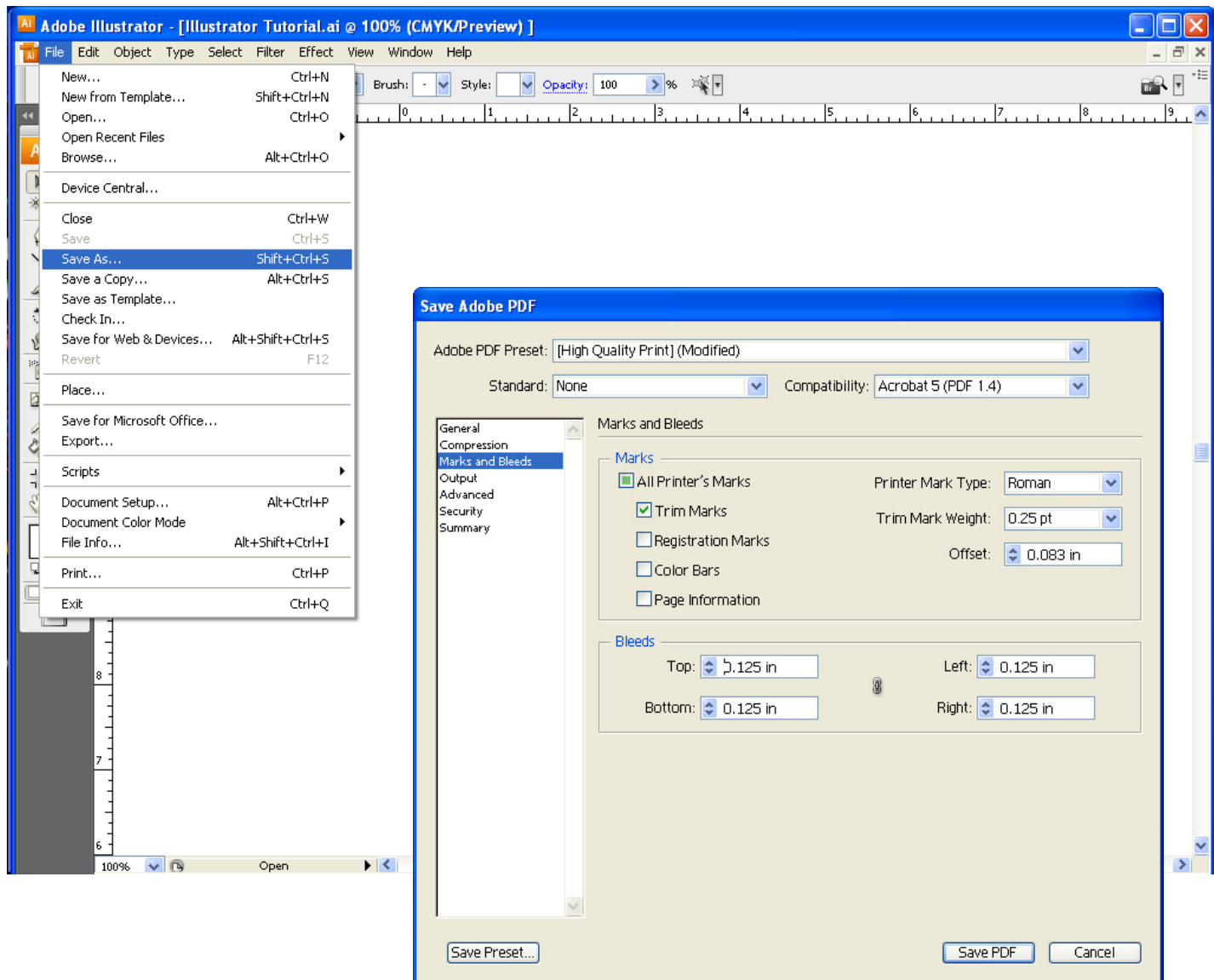
Step 3

MARKS AND BLEEDS:

Under "Marks" check the "Trim Marks" option and leave the others unchecked.

Under "Bleeds" set all four to .125 in

Note: Having less than 1/8" bleed may cause your order to have delays. Also note that if you are using a version of Illustrator prior to Illustrator 12 (CS2), you will need to enlarge your pagesize to allow for the bleed.

Step 4

OUTPUT:

Under the "Color" option set "Color Conversion" to "No Conversion" and set "Profile Inclusion Policy" to "Don't Include Profile".

Note: It is very important to be sure that your file is CMYK, before saving PDF. It is also very important to be sure to expand all Pantone and Spot colors to CMYK before saving PDF. Failing to do this may result in delays with your order.