

# Adobe Illustrator Cheat Sheet

A super-condensed collection of basic concepts and skills for creating great vector media using Adobe Illustrator <http://www.stevengbraun.com/ws/intro-adobe-illustrator>

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## WHEN SHOULD I USE ILLUSTRATOR?

Adobe Illustrator is ideal whenever you are working with vector graphics. In general, using Illustrator is advised when working with the following kinds of media:

- ◆ Predominately vector-based graphics with no or few raster images
- ◆ Media that need to be scaled to many different sizes for print and/or screen use
- ◆ Print media composed of single or few pages
- ◆ Typography

Adobe Illustrator is not ideal when working with the following kinds of media

- ◆ Predominately raster image-based graphics or vector work with significant amounts of images
- ◆ Multi-page layouts, such as pamphlets and books
- ◆ Photography

## CLIMBING THE SVG HIERARCHY

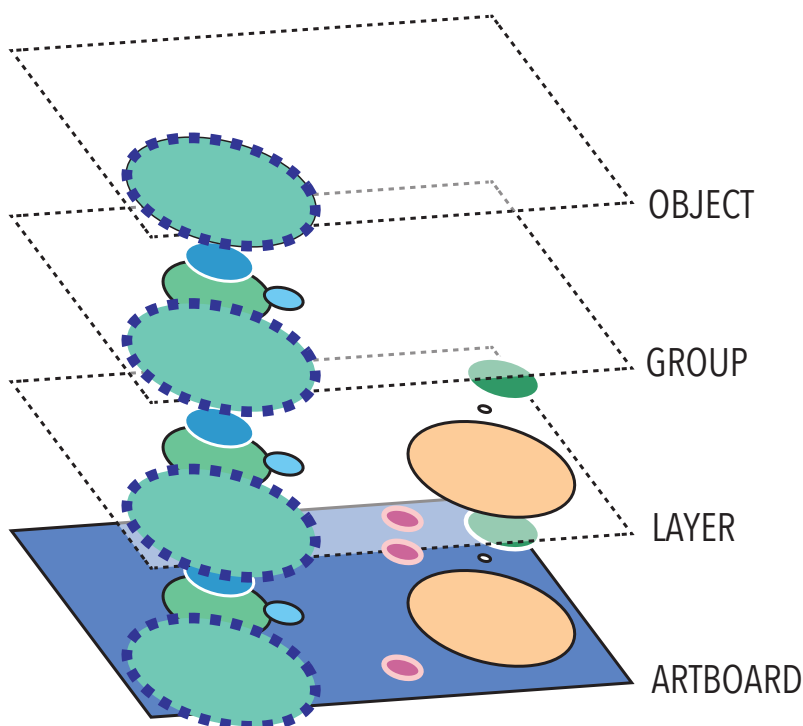
Adobe Illustrator creates scalable vector graphics, or SVG. When working with SVG, it is important to understand how its hierarchy of components come together to produce a vector drawing.

The **artboard** contains the entirety of a vector drawing with all of its components stacked in order on the canvas

The artboard is composed of many stacked **layers**, each of which contains a subcollection of objects

Objects in a layer may be aggregated in **groups**, which functionally are treated together as one composite object through which changes to appearance, such as scaling or rotation, propagate through all objects

Individual **objects** in a group, layer, and artboard have their own appearances, including stroke and fill attributes



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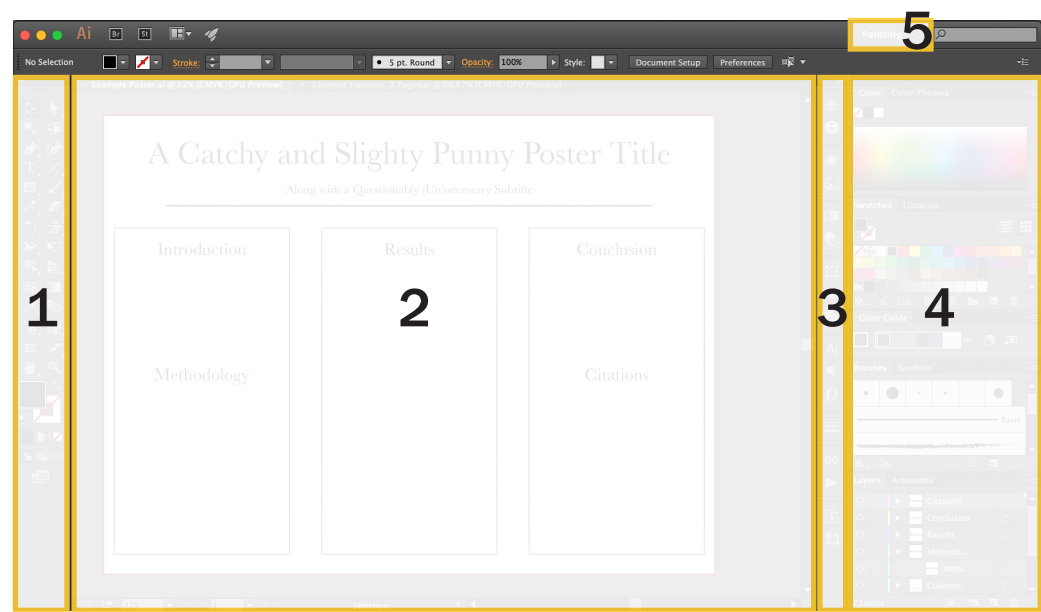
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## INITIALIZING DOCUMENTS

Depending on the kind of media you are creating (for print or the web), different settings are best for dimensions, units, bleed, color mode, and resolution when creating new documents.

	Examples	Typical Dimensions	Units	Bleed	Color Mode	Resolution
Print	Handouts, posters, books	8.5" x 11", 48" x 36", etc.	points, inches, picas	Variable by printer	CMYK	300 ppi
Web	Web layouts, logos, screen typography	Variable	pixels, points	Not applicable	RGB	72 ppi +

## THE ILLUSTRATOR WORKSPACE



- 1 Tools panel
- 2 Document window
- 3 View-specific attributes
- 4 View-specific panels
- 5 Selected view

## DOCUMENT SAVING FORMATS















- Adobe Illustrator (.ai) Native format, choose legacy Illustrator versions for backwards compatibility
- PDF (.pdf) Ideal for dissemination, can retain Illustrator editing capabilities if desired
- SVG (.svg) Stores the document in SVG markup (XML)
- To save as JPEG, PNG, TIFF... Select **File > Export...** and choose desired format

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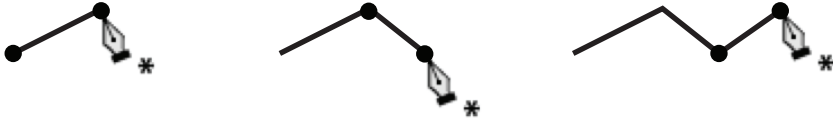


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## CREATING BASIC SHAPES

	Rectangle	Rectangle tool	Click and drag to desired size
	Square	Rectangle tool	Hold down Shift, click, and drag to size
	Rounded rectangle	Rounded rectangle tool	Click and drag to desired size
	Rounded square	Rounded rectangle tool	Hold down Shift, click, and drag to size
		<a href="#">To change corner radius</a>	Click, drag to size, and use up/down arrow keys
	Ellipse	Ellipse tool	Click and drag to desired size
	Circle	Ellipse tool	Hold down Shift, click, and drag to size
	Polygon	Polygon tool	Click and drag to desired size
		<a href="#">To change # of sides</a>	Click, drag to size, and use up/down arrow keys
	Straight line	Line tool	Click and drag to desired size
	Horizontal, vertical, diagonal line	Line tool	Hold down Shift, click, and drag to size
	Arc	Arc tool	Click and drag to size (hold down Shift to force right-angle arcs)
	Straight path	Pen tool	Click from point to point on canvas
	Curved path	Pen tool	Click from point to point on canvas, holding and dragging the mouse at each point
	Text, single line	Type tool	Click on canvas to position and type
	Text, multiple lines	Type tool	Click and drag on canvas to define area, then type

## CREATING PATHS


-  Select the **Pen Tool**
- For straight paths** Click point to point  

- For curved paths** Click and drag point to point  

-  Select the **Selection Tool**  
to finish, or hold down the Control key (PC) or Command key (Mac) and click

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## WORKING WITH APPEARANCES


### Stroke properties




Width




Color




Opacity




Dash array



Brush profile




Cap style




Arrowhead


### Fill properties




Solid color



Opacity



Texture and pattern



Gradient

### Type and paragraph properties

**A** *A* *A* Font face

**A** **A** **A** Size

**A** **A** **A** Scale

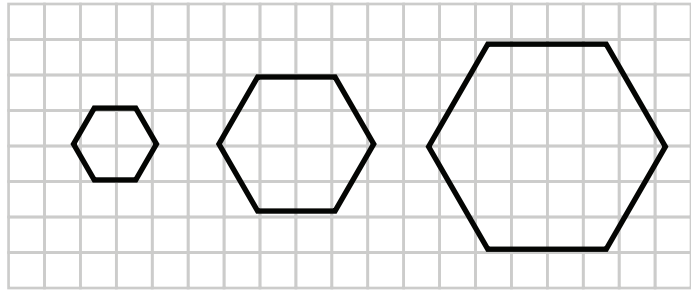
**A** **A** **A** Stroke and fill

..... Justification and alignment

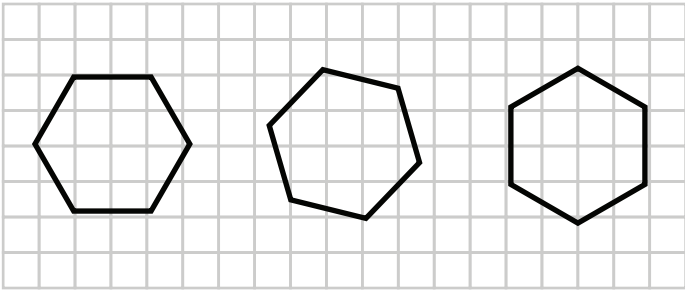
## BASIC TRANSFORMATIONS

Working with vector graphics makes it easy to scale, skew, reflect, and rotate drawings. Here is an overview of basic transformations and their properties.

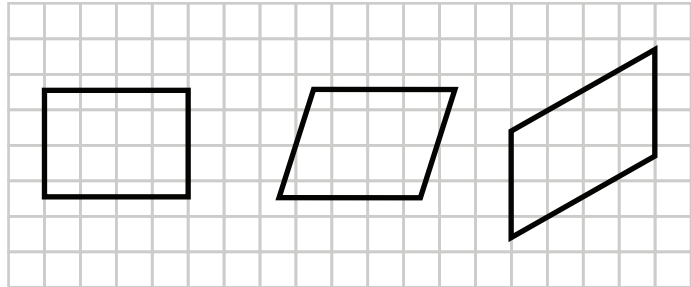
### Scale



### Rotate



### Skew



### Reflect

