

11 Using Brushes to Create a Poster

Lesson overview

In this lesson, you'll learn how to do the following:

- Use four brush types: Calligraphic, Art, Bristle, and Pattern.
- Apply brushes to paths.
- Paint and edit paths with the Paintbrush tool.
- Create an Art brush from a raster image.
- Change brush color and adjust brush settings.
- Create new brushes from Adobe Illustrator artwork.
- Work with the Blob Brush tool and the Eraser tool.



This lesson takes approximately 60 minutes to complete. Please log in to your account on peachpit.com to download the lesson files for this chapter, or go to the “Getting Started” section at the beginning of this book and follow the instructions under “Accessing the lesson files and Web Edition.”

Your Account page is also where you'll find any updates to the chapters or to the lesson files. Look on the Lesson & Update Files tab to access the most current content.



The variety of brush types in Adobe Illustrator CC lets you create a myriad of effects simply by painting or drawing using the Paintbrush tool or the drawing tools. You can work with the Blob Brush tool; choose from the Art, Calligraphic, Pattern, Bristle, or Scatter brushes; or create new brushes based on your artwork.

Starting the lesson

In this lesson, you will learn how to work with the different brush types in the Brushes panel and how to change brush options and create your own brushes. Before you begin, you'll restore the default preferences for Adobe Illustrator CC. Then you'll open the finished art file for the lesson to see the finished artwork.

1. To ensure that the tools function and the defaults are set exactly as described in this lesson, delete or deactivate (by renaming) the Adobe Illustrator CC preferences file. See “Restoring default preferences” in the “Getting Started” section at the beginning of the book.

● **Note:** If you have not already downloaded the project files for this lesson to your computer from your Account page, make sure to do so now. See the “Getting Started” section at the beginning of the book.

2. Start Adobe Illustrator CC.



3. Choose File > Open. In the Open dialog box, navigate to the Lessons > Lesson11 folder, and select the L11_end.ai file on your hard disk. Click Open to open the file.
4. If you want, choose View > Zoom Out to make the finished artwork smaller and then adjust the window size and leave the artwork on your screen as you work. (Use the Hand tool [🖱] to move the artwork to where you want it in the Document window.) If you don't want to leave the

artwork open, choose File > Close.

To begin working, you'll open an existing art file.



5. Choose File > Open. In the Open dialog box, navigate to the Lessons > Lesson11 folder, and select the L11_start.ai file on your hard disk. Click Open to open the file.
6. Choose View > Fit Artboard In Window.
7. Choose File > Save As. In the Save As dialog box, name the file **CruisePoster.ai**, and select the Lesson11 folder. Leave the Format option set to Adobe Illustrator (ai) (macOS) or the Save As Type option set to Adobe Illustrator (*.AI) (Windows) and then click Save.
8. In the Illustrator Options dialog box, leave the Illustrator options at their default settings and then click OK.
9. Choose Reset Essentials from the workspace switcher in the Application bar to reset the workspace.

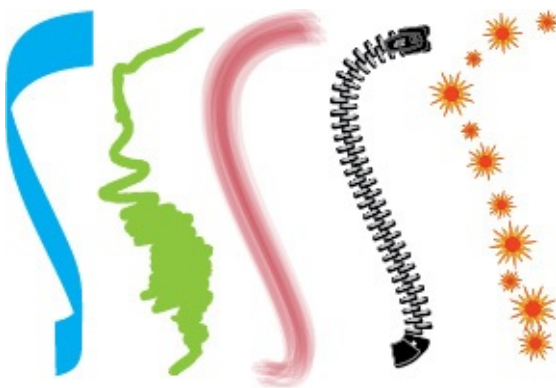
● **Note:** If you don't see Reset Essentials in the workspace switcher menu, choose Window > Workspace > Essentials before choosing Window > Workspace > Reset Essentials.

Working with brushes

Using brushes you can decorate paths with patterns, figures, brush strokes, textures, or angled strokes. You can modify the brushes provided with Illustrator and create your own brushes.

You can apply brush strokes to existing paths, or you can use the Paintbrush tool to draw a path and apply a brush stroke simultaneously. You can change

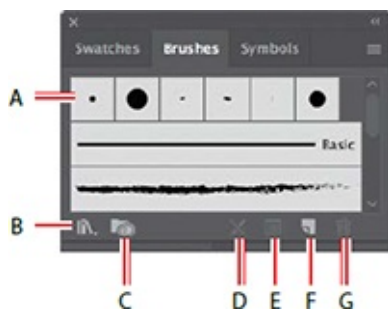
the color, size, and other features of a brush, and you can edit paths after brushes are applied (including adding a fill).



- A. Calligraphic brush
- B. Art brush
- C. Bristle brush
- D. Pattern brush
- E. Scatter brush

► **Tip:** To learn more about Scatter brushes, search for “Scatter brushes” in Illustrator Help (Help > Illustrator Help).

There are five types of brushes that appear in the Brushes panel (Window > Brushes): Calligraphic, Art, Bristle, Pattern, and Scatter. In this lesson, you will discover how to work with all of these except for the Scatter brush.



- A. Brushes
- B. Brush Libraries Menu
- C. Libraries panel
- D. Remove Brush Stroke
- E. Options of selected object
- F. New Brush
- G. Delete Brush

Using Calligraphic brushes

The first type of brush you'll learn about is a Calligraphic brush. Calligraphic brushes resemble strokes drawn with the angled point of a calligraphic pen. Calligraphic brushes are defined by an elliptical shape whose center follows the path, and you can use these brushes to create the appearance of hand-drawn strokes made with a flat, angled pen tip.



Calligraphic brush examples

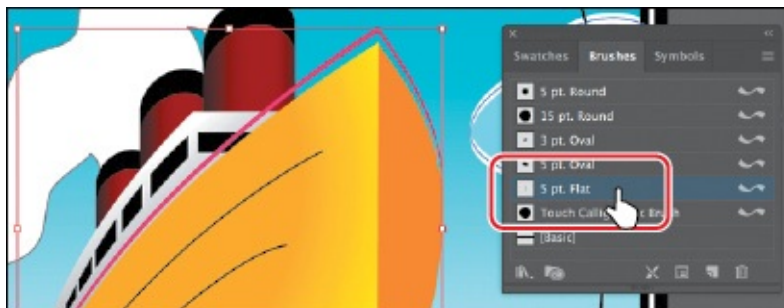
Applying a Calligraphic brush to artwork

To get started, you'll filter the type of brushes shown in the Brushes panel so that it shows only Calligraphic brushes.

1. Choose Window > Brushes to show the Brushes panel. Click the Brushes panel menu icon (☰), and choose List View.
2. Click the Brushes panel menu icon (☰) again, and deselect Show Art Brushes, Show Bristle Brushes, and Show Pattern Brushes, leaving only the Calligraphic brushes visible in the Brushes panel. You can't deselect them all at once, so you'll have to keep clicking the menu icon (☰) to access the menu.

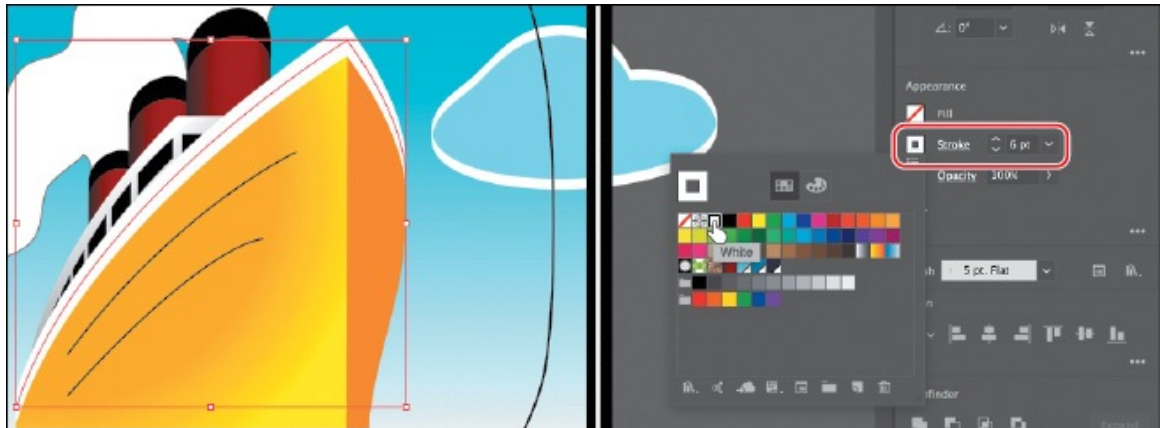
● **Note:** A checkmark next to the brush type in the Brushes panel menu indicates that the brush type is visible in the panel.

3. Select the Selection tool (⬮) in the Tools panel, and Shift-click both of the two curved pink paths above the orange/yellow shape of a ship to select both of them.
4. Select the 5 pt. Flat brush in the Brushes panel to apply it to the pink paths.



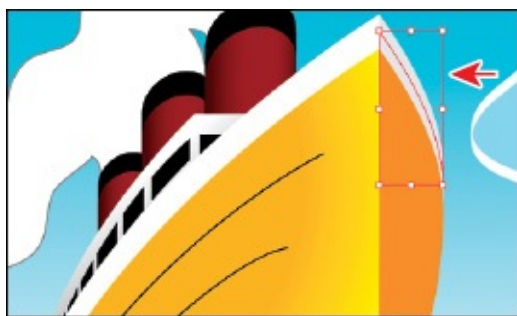
5. Change the Stroke weight to **6 pt** in the Properties panel. Click the Stroke color in the Properties panel, make sure the Swatches option (☑) is

selected, and select White. Press the Escape key to hide the Swatches panel, if necessary.



● **Note:** Like drawing with an actual calligraphic pen, when you apply a Calligraphic brush, such as the 5 pt. Flat brush, the more vertically the path is drawn, the thinner the path's stroke appears.

6. Choose Select > Deselect.
7. With the Selection tool, click the smaller of the white paths (an arrow is pointing to it in the figure) that you just applied the brush to. Change the stroke color to a light gray in the Properties panel (I chose the color with the tooltip value “C=0, M=0, Y=0, K=10”).



8. Choose Select > Deselect and then choose File > Save.


Drawing with the Paintbrush tool

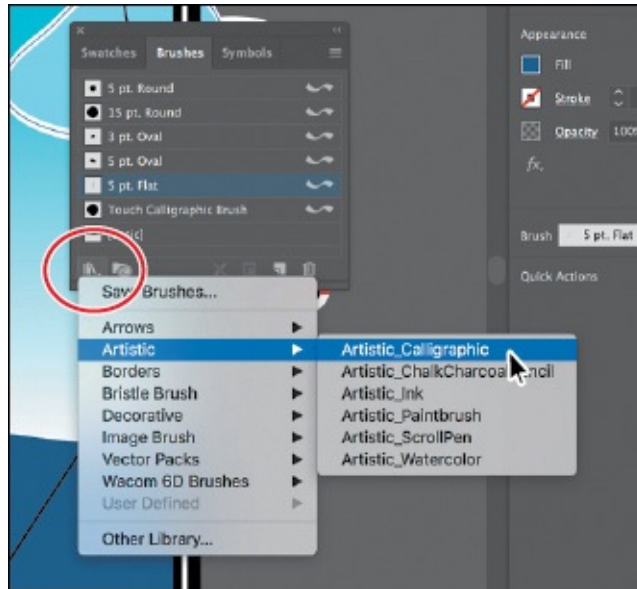
As mentioned earlier, the Paintbrush tool allows you to apply a brush as you paint. Painting with the Paintbrush tool creates vector paths that you can edit with the Paintbrush tool or other drawing tools. Next, you'll use the Paintbrush tool to paint waves in the water with a calligraphic brush from a default brush library. Your waves won't look identical to what you see in the lesson, and that's okay—*just have some fun*.


1. With the Selection tool (▸), click the darker blue water shape below the ship.

2. Choose Select > Deselect.

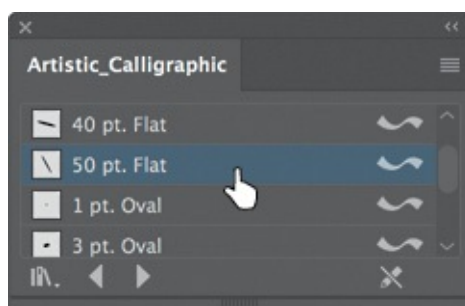
The water shape is on a sublayer behind the ship. Selecting the water shape selects that sublayer in the Layers panel, which means that all of the waves you create will also be on the same sublayer as the water shape.


3. Select the Paintbrush tool () in the Tools panel.




4. Click the Brush Libraries Menu button () at the bottom of the Brushes panel, and choose Artistic > Artistic_Calligraphic. A brush library panel with various brushes appears.

Illustrator comes with a host of brush libraries that you can use in your artwork. Each of the brush types discussed previously has a series of libraries to choose from.




5. Click the Artistic_Calligraphic panel menu icon () and choose List View. Click the brush named “50 pt. Flat” to add it to the Brushes panel.
6. Close the Artistic_Calligraphic brush library.

Selecting a brush from a brush library, such as the Artistic_Calligraphic library, adds that brush to the Brushes panel for the active document only.

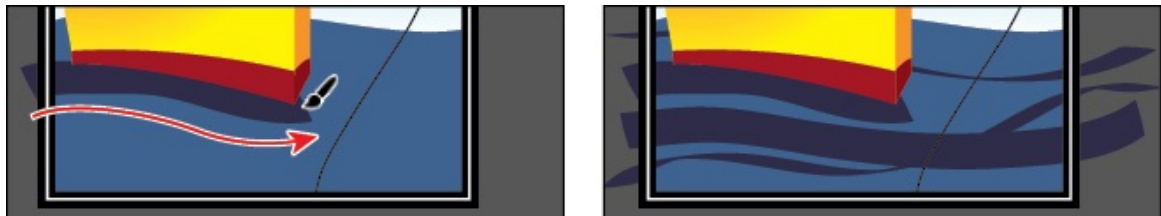
7. Change the fill color to None () , the stroke color to the swatch named

“Dark Blue,” and the stroke weight to **1 pt** (if necessary) in the Properties panel.

Notice that the Paintbrush pointer has an asterisk next to it () , indicating that you are about to paint a new path.

8. Position the pointer off the left side of the artboard, just below the ship. Paint a long, curving path from left to right, stopping about halfway across the water (see the figure). Try creating three more paths, painting from left to right, going all the way across the water. You can see the figure for ideas on how I painted.



● **Note:** This Calligraphic brush creates random angles on the paths, so yours may not look like what you see in the figures, and that’s okay.

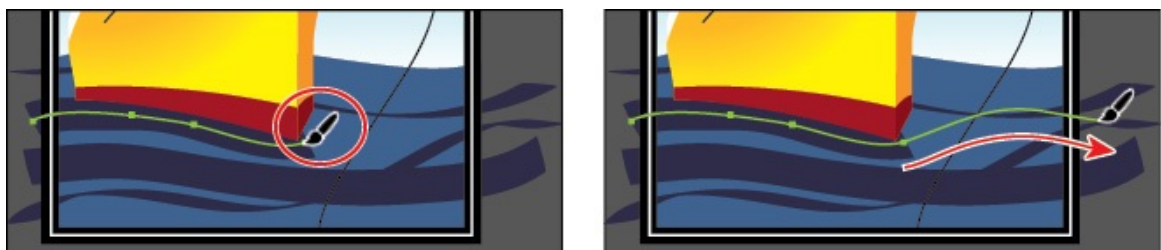





9. Choose Select > Deselect (if necessary) and then choose File > Save.

Editing paths with the Paintbrush tool

Now you’ll use the Paintbrush tool to edit one of the paths you painted.

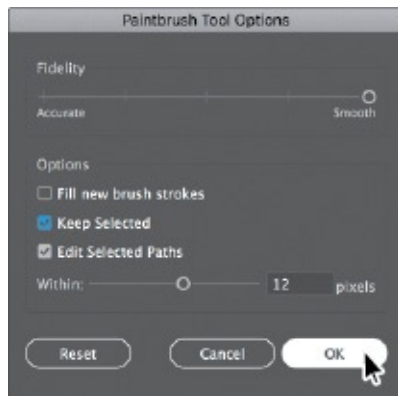
1. Select the Selection tool () in the Tools panel, and click to select the first path you drew on the water (the one that is just below the bottom of the ship).
2. Select the Paintbrush tool () in the Tools panel. Position the pointer near the right end of the selected path. An asterisk *will not* appear next to the pointer when it’s positioned over a selected path. Drag to the right to extend the path all the way to the right edge of the artboard. The selected path is edited from the point where you began drawing.



► **Tip:** You can also edit paths drawn with the Paintbrush tool using the Smooth tool () and the Path Eraser tool () , located under the Pencil tool () in the Tools panel.

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3. Press and hold the Command (macOS) or Ctrl (Windows) key to toggle to the Selection tool, and click to select another curved path you drew with the Paintbrush tool. After clicking, release the key to return to the Paintbrush tool.
 4. With the Paintbrush tool, move the pointer over some part of the selected path. When the asterisk disappears next to the pointer, drag to the right to redraw the path.
 5. Choose Select > Deselect (if necessary) and then choose File > Save.

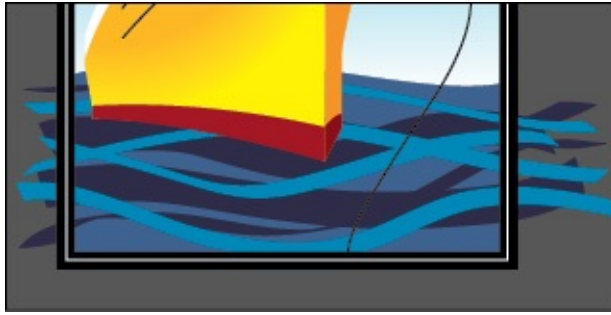
Next, you will edit the Paintbrush tool options.



6. Double-click the Paintbrush tool (🖌️) in the Tools panel to display the Paintbrush Tool Options dialog box, and make the following changes:
 - Fidelity: Drag the slider all the way to Smooth (to the right).
 - Keep Selected: **Selected**.
7. Click OK.

The Paintbrush Tool Options dialog box changes the way the Paintbrush tool functions. For the Fidelity option, the closer to Smooth you drag the slider, the smoother the path will be with fewer points. Also, because you selected Keep Selected, the paths remain selected after you finish drawing them.

8. Change the stroke color to the swatch named “Medium Blue,” and change the stroke weight to **0.5 pt** in the Properties panel.



9. With the Paintbrush tool selected, paint three or four more paths from either left to right or right to left across the water shape below the ship.

Notice that after painting each path, the path is still selected, so you could edit it if you needed. I already deselected in the figure.

0. Double-click the Paintbrush tool in the Tools panel. In the Paintbrush Tool Options dialog box, deselect the Keep Selected option, and then click OK.

Now the paths will *not* remain selected after you finish drawing them, and you can draw overlapping paths without altering previously drawn paths.

● **Note:** When the Keep Selected option is deselected, you can edit a path by selecting it with the Selection tool (⌘) or by selecting a segment or point on the path with the Direct Selection tool (⌘) and then redrawing part of the path with the Paintbrush tool, like you saw previously.

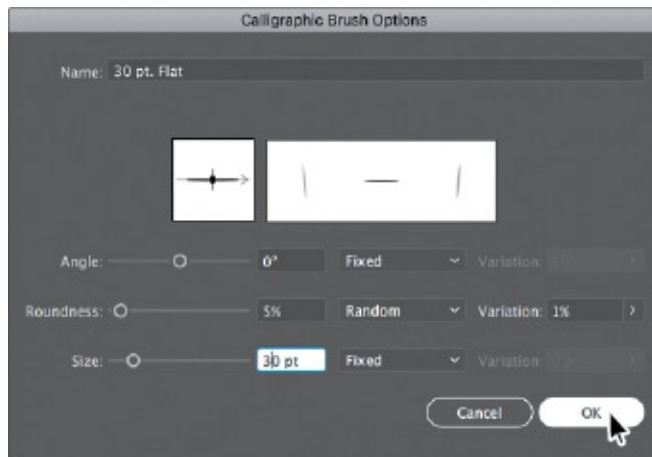
1. Choose Select > Deselect and then choose File > Save.

Editing a brush

To change the options for a brush, you can double-click the brush in the Brushes panel. When you edit a brush, you can also choose whether to change artwork to which the brush has been applied. Next, you'll change the appearance of the 50 pt. Flat brush you've been painting with.

1. In the Brushes panel, double-click the brush thumbnail to the left of the text "50 pt. Flat" or to the right of the name in the Brushes panel to open the Calligraphic Brush Options dialog box.

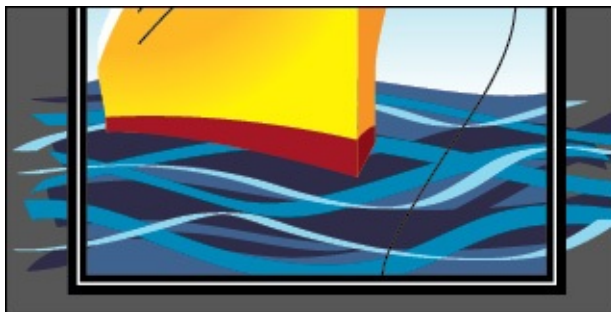
● **Note:** The edits you make will change the brush for this document only.



2. In the dialog box, make the following changes:
 - Name: **30 pt. Flat**
 - Angle: **0°**
 - Choose Fixed from the menu to the right of Angle. (When Random is chosen, a random variation of brush angles is created every time you draw.)
 - Roundness: **5%** (the default setting)
 - Size: **30 pt**

► **Tip:** The Preview window in the dialog box (below the Name field) shows the changes that you make to the brush.

3. Click OK.
4. In the dialog box that appears, click Leave Strokes so as not to apply the brush change to the existing waves that have the brush applied.
5. Change the stroke color to the swatch named “Light Blue,” and change the stroke weight to **1 pt** in the Properties panel.



6. Click the 30 pt. Flat brush in the Brushes panel to ensure that you will paint with it applied. With the Paintbrush tool (🖌) selected, paint three paths across the water to create more waves, overlapping the existing

waves.

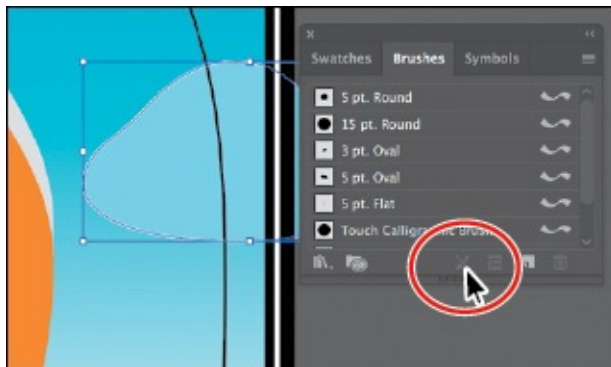
7. Choose **Select > Deselect**, if necessary, and then choose **File > Save**.

● **Note:** The artwork should be deselected already, and, if it is, the **Deselect** command will be dimmed (you can't select it).

Removing a brush stroke

You can easily remove a brush stroke applied to artwork where you don't want it. Now you'll remove the brush stroke on the cloud.

1. Select the **Selection tool** (▢), and click the blue cloud with the white stroke.



2. Click the **Remove Brush Stroke** button (◻) at the bottom of the **Brushes** panel.

Removing a brush stroke doesn't remove the stroke color and weight; it just removes the brush applied.

● **Note:** The figure shows the result of clicking the **Remove Brush Stroke** button.

3. Change the stroke weight to **0 pt** in the **Properties** panel.
4. Choose **Select > Deselect** and then choose **File > Save**.

Using Art brushes

Art brushes stretch artwork or an embedded raster image evenly along the length of a path. As with other brushes, you can edit the brush options to affect how the brush is applied to artwork.