# The Illustrator 9 WOW! Book

**Step-by-Step!**

**Tips, Tricks**

**& Techniques**

**Sharon Steuer**
**Steven Gordon**
**Sandra Alves**
with Sand

W / 1 CD

BENJAMIN FRANKLIN AWARD
Publishers Marketing Association

# The Illustrator

## WOW! Book

**Sharon Steuer**
**Steven Gordon**
**Sandra Alves**
**with Sandee Cohen**

**The Illustrator 9 Wow! Book**
Sharon Steuer, Steven Gordon, Sandra Alves

# Important: Read me first!

Illustrator's new features require that you manually set the proper resolution for output of images that include transparency or live effects! For details, see the *Transparency* chapter introduction.

## What's new in Illustrator 9?

If you're upgrading from a previous version of Adobe Illustrator, take a few minutes to look over the "What's new in Illustrator 9?" Preface (following the "How to Use this Book" section). This summary of new features will direct you to specific sections of this book where you'll find more details on each new feature.

## Additional Illustrator training

You can find more than thirty examples of artwork to analyze and experiment with in the Artists folder on the *Wow!* disk. You'll also find detailed lessons in the Training folder, including the *Zen Lessons* (which supplement the *Zen* chapter). These lessons walk you through some basics of working with the Pen tool, Bézier curves, layers and stacking order. If you're new to Illustrator, you may want to begin with a class. Find additional suggested reading in the *Publications* appendix.

This book has been entirely redesigned to help beginning, as well as seasoned, Illustrator users to master the exciting (and sometimes perplexing) new features of Adobe Illustrator 9. You'll find hundreds of new pages of essential production techniques, timesaving tips and beautiful art generously shared by *Illustrator Wow!* artists worldwide. All lessons are deliberately kept short to allow you to squeeze in a lesson or two between clients, and to encourage the use of this book within the confines of a supervised classroom.

In order to keep the content in this book tantalizing to everyone—from novice to expert—I've assumed a reasonable level of competence with basic Mac and Windows concepts, such as opening and saving files, launching applications, copying objects to the clipboard and doing mouse operations. I've also assumed that you've read through "An Overview of Adobe Illustrator" in the beginning of the *User Guide*, and understand the basic functionality of the tools.

I'd love to tell you that you can learn Adobe Illustrator by flipping through the pages of this book, but the reality is that there is no substitute for practice. The good news is, the more you work with Illustrator, the more techniques you'll be able to integrate into your creative process.

Use this book as a reference, a guide for specific techniques or just a source of inspiration. After you've read this book, read it again, and you'll undoubtedly learn something you missed the first time. As I hope you'll discover, the more experienced you become with Adobe Illustrator, the easier it will be to assimilate all the new information and inspiration you'll find in this book.
Happy Illustrating!
Sharon Steuer

# How to use this book...

Before you do anything else, read the *Wow! Glossary* on the pull-out quick reference card at the back of the book. The *Glossary* provides definitions for the terms used throughout *The Illustrator 9 Wow! Book* (for example, ⌘ is the Command key for Mac).

## WELCOME TO *WOW!* FOR WINDOWS AND MAC

If you already use Adobe Photoshop, you'll see many interface similarities to Illustrator 9. Adobe intends this version of Illustrator to create, in part, a common look and feel across Photoshop, InDesign and Illustrator. The change should make the time you spend learning each program much shorter (especially if you're a newcomer to all three products). Your productivity should also increase across the board once you adjust to the new shortcuts and methodologies (see "Shortcuts and keystrokes" following, and the *Illustrator Basics* chapter).

## Shortcuts and keystrokes

Because you can now customize keyboard shortcuts, we're eliminating most of the keystrokes references in the book. We will keep keystroke references when it's so standard that we assume you'll keep the default, or when there is no other way to achieve that function (such as Lock All Unselected objects). We'll always give you Macintosh shortcuts first, then the Windows equivalent (⌘-Z/ Ctrl-Z). For help with customizing keyboard shortcuts, and tool and menu navigation (such as single key tool access and Tab to hide palettes), see the *Basics* chapter.
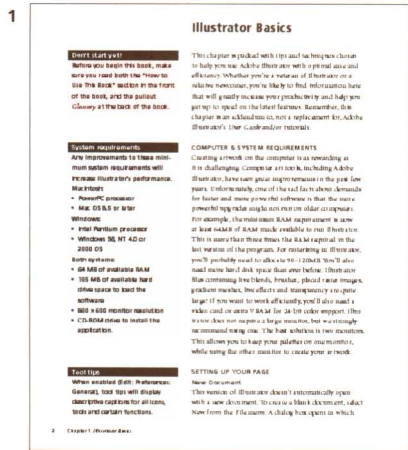
## Setting up your palettes

In terms of following along with the lessons in this book, you'll probably want to disable the "Type Area Select" option (see Tip "One option you may not want" in the *Type* chapter). Next, if you want your palettes to look like our palettes, you'll need to set swatches to be sorted by
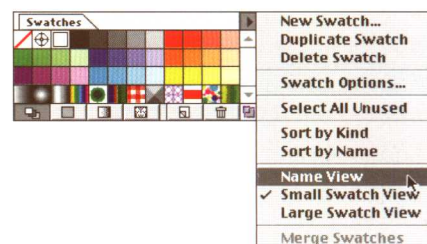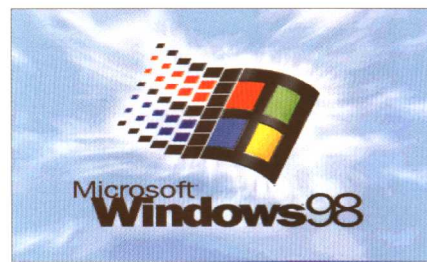






*With the All Swatches icon selected and the Option/Alt key pressed, choosing "Name" from the Swatches pop-up*
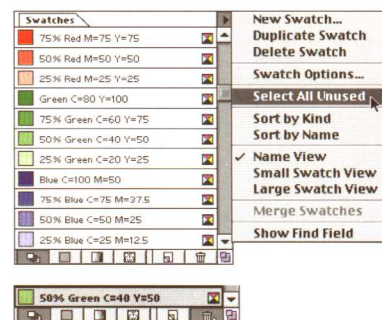


*Choosing Select All Unused from the Swatches pop-up; then immediately clicking the Trash icon to safely remove unused swatches*
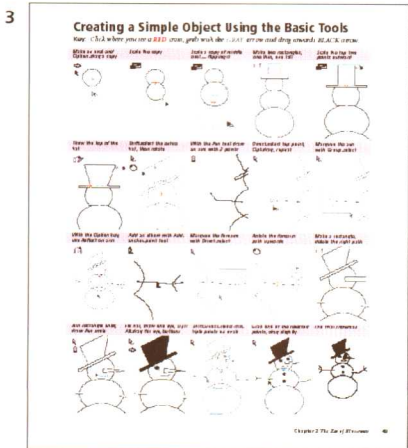
name: hold down Option(Mac) or Alt (Win) and choose "Name" from the Swatches pop-up menu to list all Swatch views by name (see figures on previous page).

By default, Illustrator sometimes has the habit of filling palettes with excess styles; in order to customize the default settings loaded into new documents, see the Tip "Using Startup documents" in the *Basics* chapter. To clear out an existing Swatches palette of unwanted, unused swatches, first click on the All Swatches icon, then choose "Select All Unused" from the Swatches pop-up, and immediately click the Trash icon to remove these unwanted extras.
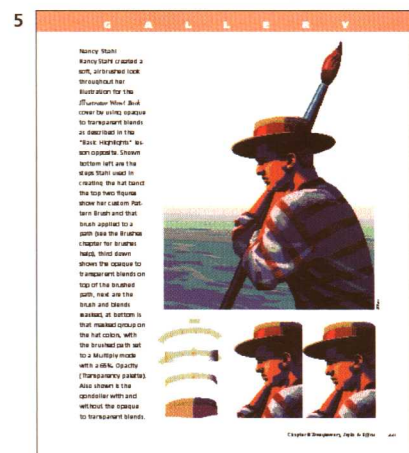
## HOW THIS BOOK IS ORGANIZED...

You'll find six kinds of information woven throughout this book—all of it up-to-date for Illustrator 9: **Basics**, **Tips**, **Exercises**, **Techniques**, **Galleries** and **References**.



The CD icon indicates that related artwork can be found on the Wow! disk

### Tip boxes
Look for these gray boxes to find Tips about Adobe Illustrator.

### Red Tip boxes
The red Tip boxes contain warnings or other essential information.

**1 Basics.** *Illustrator Basics* and *The Zen of Illustrator* qualify as full-blown chapters on basics and are packed with information that distills and supplements your Adobe Illustrator manual and disk. Every chapter starts with a general overview of the basics. Although these sections have been designed so that advanced users of Illustrator can move quickly through them, I strongly suggest that the rest of you read them very carefully. Please keep in mind that this book serves as a supplement to, not a substitute for, your Adobe Illustrator *User Guide*.



**2 Tips.** When you see this icon ⊙, you'll find related artwork in the Artists folder on the Wow! disk. Look to the information in the gray and red boxes for hands-on Tips that can help you work more efficiently. Usually you can find tips alongside related textual information, but if you're in an impatient mood, you might just want to flip through, looking for interesting or relevant tips. The red arrows ➤, red outlines and red text found in tips (and sometimes with artwork) have been added to emphasize or further explain a concept or technique.

**3 Exercises.** (Not for the faint of heart.) I have included step-by-step exercises to help you make the transition to Illustrator technician extraordinaire. *The Zen of Illustrator* chapter and the *Zen Lessons* on the *Wow!* disk are dedicated to helping you master the mechanics (and the soul) of Illustrator. Take these lessons in small doses, in order, and at a relaxed pace. All of the Finger Dances are now customized for Mac and Windows.

**4 Techniques.** In these sections, you'll find step-by-step techniques gathered from almost a hundred *Illustrator Wow!* artists. Most *Wow!* techniques focus on one aspect of how an image was created, though I'll often refer you to different *Wow!* chapters (or to a specific step-by-step technique, Tip or Gallery where a technique is introduced) to give you the opportunity to explore a briefly-covered feature more thoroughly. Feel free to start with almost any chapter, but, since each technique builds on those previously explained, try to follow the techniques within each chapter sequentially. Some chapters conclude with **Advanced Technique** lessons, which assume that you have assimilated all of the techniques found throughout the chapter. *Advanced Techniques* is an entire chapter dedicated to advanced tips, tricks and techniques.

**5 Galleries.** The Gallery pages consist of images related to techniques demonstrated nearby. Each Gallery piece is accompanied by a description of how the artist created that image, and may include steps showing the progression of a technique detailed elsewhere. *Illustrator & Other Programs* consists almost entirely of Gallery pages to give you a sense of Illustrator's flexibility.

**6 References.** *Technical Notes, Resources, Publications* and *Artists* appendixes, *Glossaries* and *General Index* can be found in the back of this book. In addition, we'll occasionally direct you to the *User Guide* when referring to specific information already well-documented in the *Adobe Illustrator User Guide.*

4



5



6

# What's New in Illustrator 9?

*by Sandra Alves*

The extensive list of new features in Adobe Illustrator 9 means that we have a lot to cover in this edition of *The Illustrator Wow! Book*. To orient you, we'll begin with an overview, followed by more in-depth descriptions of each feature. As always, this book is full of great tips on how to become more productive and work more efficiently with Illustrator.

## ADOBE UNDERSTANDS

Adobe has been responding to requests and suggestions from designers. With every version of Illustrator, tasks become easier to perform and the program becomes more tightly integrated with, and focused on, what designers need and want to accomplish.

Whether you are upgrading to a newer version, or using Illustrator for the first time, spend some time with Tool Tips enabled. They not only provide short tool descriptions, they help you learn shortcuts. Tool Tips, on by default, can be *disabled* in Edit: Preferences: General.

## NEW DOCUMENT DIALOG

Right away, you'll notice something different about Illustrator 9. It doesn't automatically open with a blank document. In the New Document dialog (File: New) you need to decide what color mode (or *color space)* to work in, and what size you want the document to be. When you select a color mode, you are also specifying which Startup page will be used when you open your document. There are two Startup documents (application folder: Plug-ins), one for RGB and one for CMYK. The Startup page tells the application what types of filters, swatches, gradients, patterns, styles or brushes will be loaded and available. Once open, the document's color mode is always displayed in the title bar along with the view mode (see the *Illustrator Basics* chapter for more information on setting up new documents).

## KEYBOARD SHORTCUTS

Adobe appears to be committed to making their applications easier to use. The shortcuts for this release, for the most part, are the same as the last version. If you are comfortable with Illustrator 8's keyboard shortcuts, or have been reluctant to upgrade from an older version because you haven't wanted to learn new shortcuts, you don't have to worry. With the introduction of the Keyboard Shortcut editor (Edit: Keyboard Shortcuts) you can remain as efficient as ever. Simply customize Illustrator's shortcuts by assigning the command of your choice to a task (tool or menu item), or load a file that contains the desired predefined set of shortcuts (see the *Basics* chapter). Illustrator ships with an Adobe Illustrator 6 set of shortcuts (application folder: Keyboard Shortcuts). Also see the *Wow!* disk for more custom sets.

## COLOR MANAGEMENT AND SOFT-PROOFING

Have you ever been surprised to find that the on-screen colors in your Illustrator file look completely different when they're printed or viewed on other monitors? Every monitor display is slightly different, as is each platform. Colors will always appear somewhat darker on a PC and lighter on a Mac. Color fidelity also depends on how well the monitors are calibrated and/or how old they are.

Color management and soft-proofing have gotten a great deal of consideration in this release (see the Basics chapter). Define your RGB and CMYK working spaces (see Tip "Enable color management" to the left) and save ICC Color Profiles with your documents. If you give your settings file to your co-workers as well, your files will basically look the same on any computer.

Illustrator can simulate on-screen (soft-proof) what the final printed piece will look like, but it's still not possible to emulate the separation printer (offset press) on the composite printer (desktop printer). You can find the soft-proofing commands in the View menu. First, enable your color settings (Edit: Color Settings), then select your soft-proofing conditions (View: Proof Setup). Once you
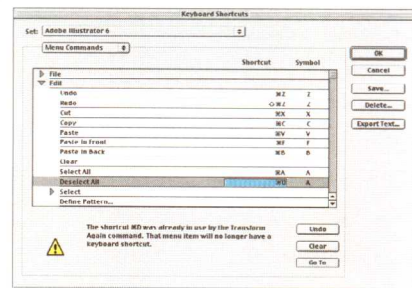


### Calibrate your monitor!

To optimally color manage your files in Illustrator, you must:

- Calibrate your monitor.
- Create a monitor profile.
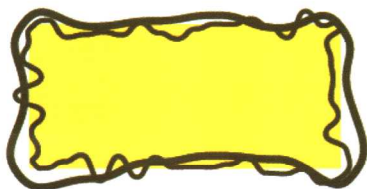- Assign the monitor profile at the OS level.

Adobe Gamma and Apple Color-Sync are examples of software-based monitor calibration. Use one or the other, but not both. You will obtain better results from a system for measuring color temperatures that uses a suction puck attached to the screen.
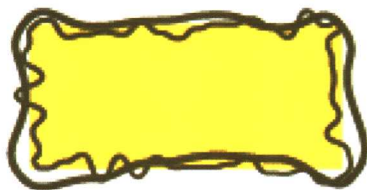
### Enable color management

By default, Illustrator's color management is disabled. To start color managing your files and to enable soft-proofing, select Edit: Color Settings and select a predefined settings file, or make your choices from the pop-up menus (see the *User Guide* for more info). After enabling color management, select a soft-proofing setup by choosing an alternate color mode or a specific device from View: Proof Setup, then enable soft-proofing select View: Proof Colors.

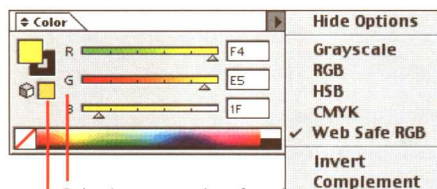*Pixel Preview: Off*
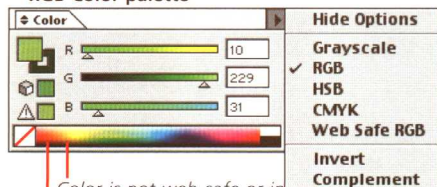


*Pixel Preview: On*

**Web Safe RGB Color palette**



*Color is not a web-safe color*

*Out of gamut warning*

**RGB Color palette**



*Color is not web-safe or in gamut for printing cmyk*

*Out of gamut warnings*

have defined the proof setup, enable or disable soft-proofing by toggling Proof Colors on or off. This feature only enables a *preview* of what the colors would look like if they were converted to the profile selected in the Proof Setup dialog. The colors in your file are never automatically converted. You can change your proof setup at any time without damaging or permanently converting the colors in your file. By enabling Proof Colors, you are only changing how those colors are displayed on the monitor.

With the use of the ICC Color Profiles and Proof Setup, you can experiment with how colors will look when they're converted from one space to another, or if they're printed under different press conditions. If you do decide you need to change the assigned profile of a file (retag the document), select Edit: Assign Profile. You can retag a document or assign a new profile only within the same color space. Retagging the color information does not convert the document colors. To view the document's current color profile, see Tip "Document's color profile" to the right.

When you change your document from one color space to another (File: Document Color Mode), you *are* converting the colors using the working spaces you chose in Color Settings.

### WEB SUPPORT

For those of you designing graphics for the web, this release offers some really great web features. These new web features have been tightly integrated with other applications that support web file formats. For example, there is now vector-based support for web formats such as Flash (SWF), and SVG (Scalable Vector Graphics). Other enhanced formats include optimized GIF and JPEG (supported in the File: Save for Web dialog). If you are familiar with Adobe ImageReady or Photoshop, you will feel right at home with the new Save for Web dialog, where you can compare different optimization settings before saving an image. Other web features include a Pixel Preview, which is a raster preview of your vector

artwork, web-safe color swatches, a web-safe color picker and polygonal image map areas. A new item, Release to Layers (Layers palette pop-up menu) is a quick and simple way to create an animation (see the *Web* chapter).

## Preparing for scalable web art

SVG is a file format that allows you to view scalable vector graphics in your web browser. You must know JavaScript syntax to use this palette. Similar to the Flash plug-in that is required to view Flash files, the SVG plug-in or SVG Viewer must be installed on your computer to view SVG graphics. (See the *Web, Multimedia & Animation* chapter for a full description of this feature.)

### TRANSPARENCY AT LAST!

It's hard to believe it has taken Adobe this long to give us transparency. However, it appears they took this long because they wanted to do it right. They didn't *just* give us the ability to alter the opacity of an object or blend modes, they gave us a mini Photoshop, right inside Illustrator. This feature is so robust, we've devoted an entire chapter to discuss how objects, groups and layers interact with transparency. We really can't do justice to this feature in the overview, so we're only going to mention the highlights. (See the *Transparency* chapter for details.)

The simplest way to apply transparency is to select an object and adjust the opacity slider in the Transparency palette. Move the object on top of another object and you'll see the transparent interaction between the two objects.

Next, just as you can in Photoshop, select an object and change the way it blends with other objects by choosing a blend mode other than Normal. Blending modes behave a little differently depending on the color space (see Tip "Blending modes" on this page).
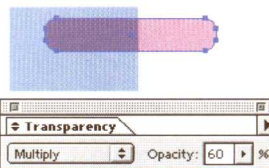
If you really want to explore the more powerful aspects of transparency, expand the palette to show more options via the palette pop-up menu, or click on the double arrows located on the palette tab. In the expanded
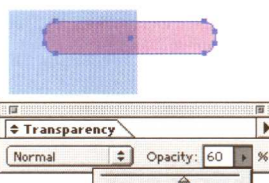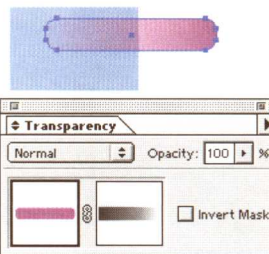
*Adjusting the Opacity slider*


*Adjusting Blending Mode & Opacity slider*


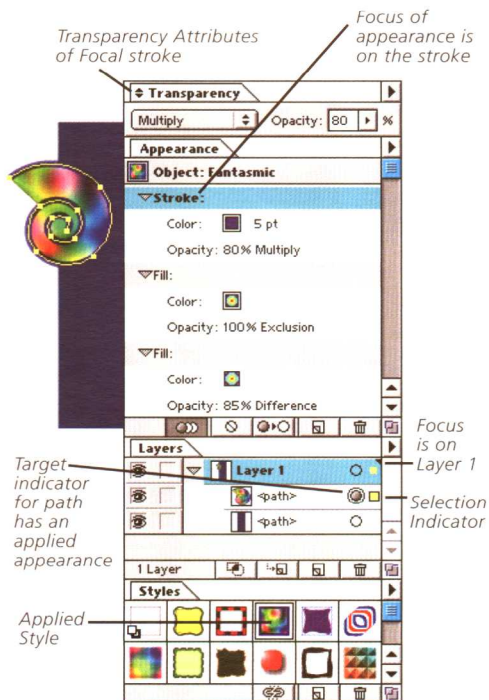*Using an Opacity Mask to fine tune amounts of transparency*
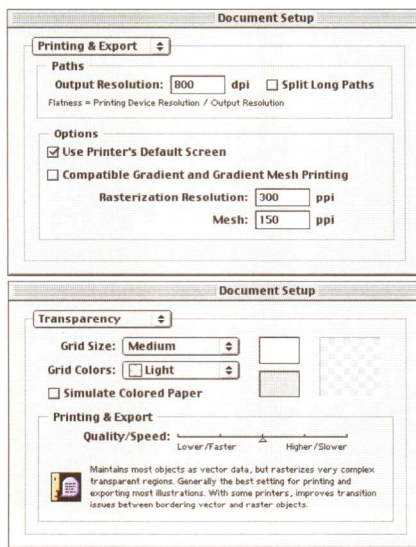
Settings in both the Printing & Export and Transparency panels of File: Document Setup will affect how your document will print if it contains any transparency attributes or effects



Align with Use Preview Bounds "On" or checked



Transparency Attributes of Focal stroke

Focus of appearance is on the stroke

Focus is on Layer 1

Selection Indicator

Target indicator for path has an applied appearance

Applied Style

palette, you can create opacity masks, isolate blending, create knockout groups and/or use some combination of all of these options to create transparency.

**IMPORTANT:** *When you're using transparency (Transparency palette or Effects), you are creating resolution dependent artwork! Do not take this matter lightly. Depending on how overlaying objects and neighboring objects (including text) interact with transparent areas, they too might become resolution dependent. There is a chance these objects will be rasterized when the file is printed. Rasterization depends on your settings in the Document Setup dialog (see the* Transparency *chapter).*

## PALETTES WORK TOGETHER

The Layers, Appearance, Transparency and Styles palettes work best as companions to one another. You can examine how an applied style was constructed by looking at its specific components in the Appearance palette. You can view the Layers palette to see which objects, groups of objects or whole layers have appearances applied to them (a gradient-filled appearance icon is next to the items). Between the Appearance and Layers palettes, there are quite a few new icons to learn.

### Layers palette

The most noticeable change to the Layers palette is the ability to view the layer contents in a thumbnail similar to Photoshop's. In previous versions, you could show or hide the contents of a single layer, but there wasn't a quick way to visually scan each layer's contents. Select Palette Options from the palette pop-up menu to change the size of the thumbnails, or to hide them.

The second change to the Layers palette is the ability to view the hierarchy (stacking order) of individual objects, groups of objects, and images contained on a single layer. By default, the contents of a layer are not fully disclosed. To view the contents within a layer, you need to click on the disclosure triangle located to the left of the layer thumbnail. Once the arrow is pointing down, all the

container layer contents are visible. How you view the contents is also determined in the Palette Options.

Anyone creating inserts will like the new Sublayer feature. Create sublayers within a layer by clicking on the Create New Sublayer button at the bottom of the palette. (For more information, see the *Layers* chapter.)

## Appearance palette

All objects or images have physical characteristics associated with them. The combination of these characteristics gives the objects, group of objects or layers an appearance. The appearance consists of strokes, fills, transparency values and effects. For help with the Appearance palette, see the *Transparency, Styles & Effects* chapter.

## Styles palette

A style is a collection of appearance attributes, defined within the Appearance palette, that can be saved and applied to an object, group of objects or a layer. Styles can contain multiple effects, color fills, strokes and transparency values. The styles are *live*, in that they can be altered and replaced. (You'll find Replace "*Style Name*" in the Appearance palette pop-up menu, not in the Styles palette pop-up menu.) As a result, all artwork using a style will be dynamically updated. The ability to save and apply a style can greatly increase your productivity (see the *Transparency, Styles & Effects* chapter).

## THERE IS NEVER A SHORTAGE OF PALETTES
## Align palette

A new addition to the Align palette is the ability to select the key object. All selected objects are then aligned or distributed based on the position of this object. Clicking (not Shift-clicking) on an object after all the objects have been selected makes that object the key object. Other enhancements to this palette are a specified distribution space (Show Options from the palette pop-up menu) and Use Preview Bounds (palette pop-up menu). With Use Preview Bounds on or checked, the alignments and

ALVES

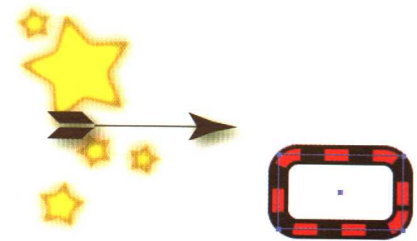*Using a grayscale image as an opacity mask; then applying a style or appearance attributes to the background object*
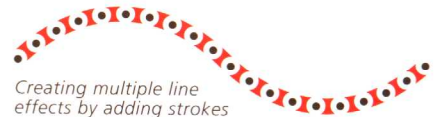
*Creating multiple line effects by adding strokes to an object's appearance*

*Using the effects found in the submenu Stylize to create inner and outer glows, along with drop shadows and soft feathered edges; adding different arrowheads to the start and end of a path; adding rounded corners to a rectangle*
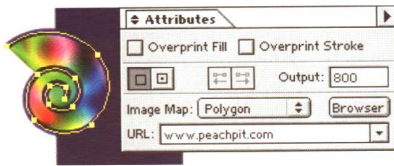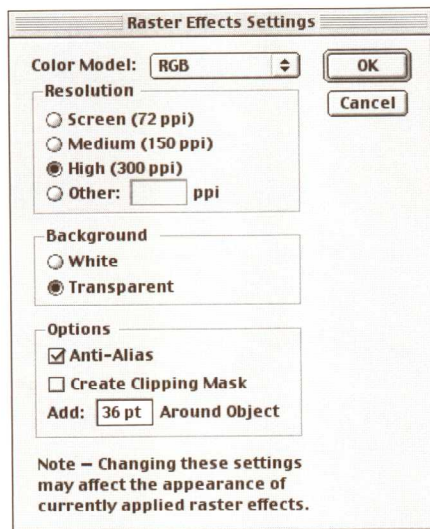
Choosing Polygon for an Image Map area



Convert to Shape text buttons



Using Simplify path to distort the text characters on type that has been converted to outlines



Raster Effects Settings affect the entire document; therefore, changing any of the settings will affect all objects that currently have applied effects. If you want some effects to have different rasterization settings, you'll have to flatten the artwork at one setting before making any changes to this dialog.



distributions will factor in the stroke values and/or effects applied to an object. If it is off or unchecked, your alignment or distribution is calculated using only the path.

## SIMPLIFY PATH

The new Simplify command (Object: Path: Simplify) is a more automated and global version of the Smooth tool. It reduces the number of anchor points on one or more selected paths. In addition, you can make curved line segments into straight lines by checking the Straight Lines option. Best of all, you can view the original unaffected selection at the same time you're viewing the changes by checking Show Original (see *Lines, Fills & Colors* chapter).

## EFFECTS

Not to be confused with the Filter menu, the items under Effects are *dynamic* versions of some of the filters (including the pathfinder filters) along with quite a few new items. Effects are non-destructive and can be applied, changed or removed from an object, group of objects or a layer at any time. Because the effects are dynamic, they can always be edited, adjusted (Effects: Rasterize: Raster Effects Setting) or removed, even after the file has been saved. (For more on effects, see the *Transparency, Styles & Effects* chapter.)

### Converting Shapes

Shapes are considered *dynamic* because they too can be altered at any time. If you have made a rectangle and then decide you need an ellipse, all you have to do is convert the object to the new shape (Effect: Convert to Shape). Buttons can be made effortlessly from any path, including text, and changed at any time. (For more on Convert to Shape, see the *Transparency, Styles & Effects* chapter.)

## LASSO TOOL

The Lasso tools in Illustrator function a bit differently from other Lasso tools you may have encountered. You still make selections by clicking and dragging around an area. However, while the Lasso tool in Photoshop creates

a freeform selection of pixels, the Lasso tools in Illustrator select individual anchor points or objects.

The Direct-select Lasso tool (with the open arrow) in Illustrator selects anchor points by dragging around them without selecting unwanted points or objects. In past versions of Illustrator you could marquee around anchor points to select them, but when you had Use Area Select checked in Preferences you could accidentally select entire objects and move them as you clicked and dragged. Now, with the Lasso tool, you only select the specific points you encircle. This tool is an excellent choice for selecting nodes of a gradient mesh.

If you want to completely select an object or multiple objects, use the Lasso tool (with the solid arrow). Again, you click and drag around anchor points with the tool, but entire objects are selected instead of individual anchor points. Clicking and dragging across an object with the Lasso tool will also select the entire object. These tools are great for selecting text as well.

### EDITABLE TEXT

You can now export your Illustrator file in PSD format and open it in Photoshop. As long as you have Editable Text checked, any *Point*-type created in Illustrator will now be treated as editable text when the file is opened in Photoshop. This feature does have limitations. You cannot *round trip* the file back to Illustrator and continue to edit the text. Once the file has been saved within Photoshop, the text is converted to a rasterized image and is no longer an editable vector object (see the *Type* chapter).

### TOOL OPTIONS

The Eyedropper tool can now copy the formatting of a graphic style, and the Paint-bucket tool can be used to apply the graphic style to an object. To predetermine what appearance attributes the Eyedropper samples and the Paint-bucket applies, double-click either tool to open the Options dialog (see the *Lines, Fills & Colors* chapter).
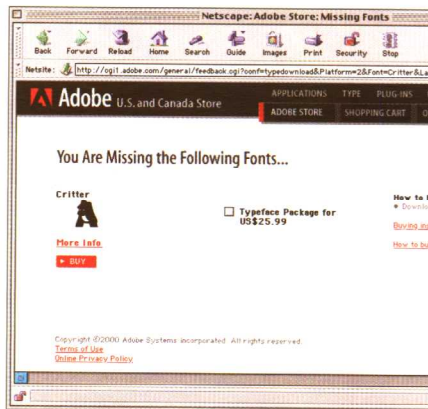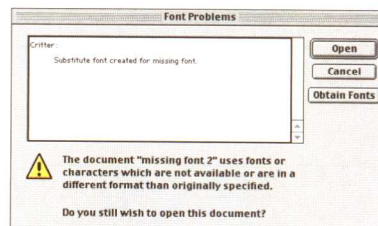


If you are missing fonts when you open a document, click the Obtain Fonts button in the Font Problems dialog. This will launch your Browser and take you directly to the Adobe website where you can purchase the font. Once you have purchased and installed the font, reopen your file.
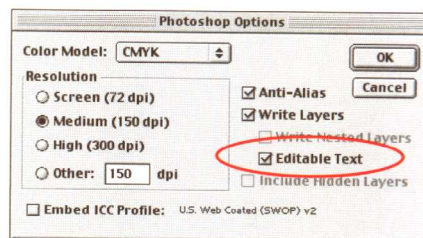


To continue to edit your point-text in Photoshop, make sure you check Editable Text
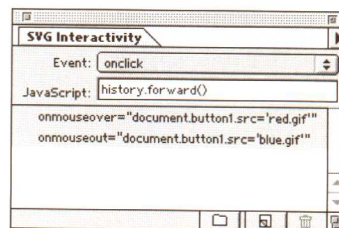


Selecting an object, assigning JavaScript event handlers and then exporting to SVG file format

# Contents

# 3