

the ILLUSTRATOR

DEKE
McCLELLAND

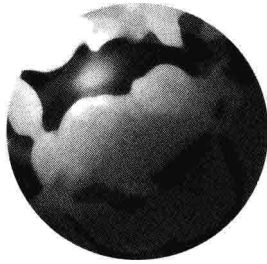
"This book is fantastic!
Deke proves once
again that he's master
of the vector."

—David Pogue,
Macworld magazine

B O O K



THE ILLUSTRATOR 6 BOOK



Deke McClelland



LightSpeed Publishing
Glen Ellen, California



Peachpit Press
Berkeley, California

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DEDICATION

*This book is dedicated to my cool blue Lava Lite,
which captures primordial ooze in perpetual
motion. It says so right here on the box.*

ACKNOWLEDGMENTS

The creation of this book has generally been a modest affair, involving myself and a few friends sniffing processing chemicals as we ground out the pages. But I needed the help of some earnest and capable professionals to wrench the book apart and reassemble the pieces to create this most recent edition. I owe a sincere debt of gratitude to these wonderful folks.

Thanks first to Roslyn Bullas and Ted Nace at Peachpit Press, who gave me the time and support I needed to produce the best book that my finite capabilities will permit. The net result would have been a sprawling mess of gook without the considerable help and talents of the crew at LightSpeed Publishing, including production supervisor Joel Fugazzotto, designer Michele Cuneo, and my most-excellent editor Scott Calamar.

Thanks to the invaluable encouragement and advice of super-agent Matt Wagner. Thanks also to Ron Chan, the singularly gifted artist who created the parts pages. Rarely have I encountered such a pleasant blend of killer aptitude and affable modesty.

Finally, thanks to the folks I conned into quotes, including David Pogue, Sandee Cohen, and newly christened international correspondent Jeanette Borzo. Thanks also to the many readers and user group reviewers who have contributed comments and valuable insights over the years.

Elizabeth Pheasant is in a class all by herself, which is why I married her. Life is a dream, sweetheart.

INTRODUCTION

Although I'm still in my early thirties, a phase that's sadly unlikely to last too much longer, I sometimes feel like a crusty old codger who's witnessed more than anyone cares to hear recounted. For instance, I might venture that where computer graphics are concerned, you are spoiled rotten. Adobe Illustrator is a prime example of a professional-quality application that—despite any problems you may or may not have with it—performs without crashing and prints like a champ. You can get up in the morning, start working in the program, and expect to make substantial progress. The darn thing works.

It's quite a different story than when I was a boy. I don't think I could have endured desktop publishing back in 1986—before Illustrator hit the market—if I hadn't been a kid. When I began working as artistic director for a small service bureau, our world consisted of a laughably inept collection of software and hardware. We had PageMaker 1.2 to lay out pages. Sure, the files corrupted regularly and the program took an extra 15 minutes to print a page with a downloadable font on it, but it was better than facing the customer and admitting that desktop publishing was a cruel joke.

We used a program called FullPaint to create black-and-white bitmapped graphics, because it could rotate a selection (an operation that MacPaint couldn't handle). We scanned images using a ThunderScanner, which boasted photocopier quality when it wasn't stretching and slanting photos as it curled them around its roller. There were less than 100 fonts in all the world, most of which were clumsily executed by folks still learning their trade. For printing, we had a Linotronic 100 imagesetter—the number of which coincidentally corresponded to the thousands of dollars it cost—and a film processor that looked and acted like it had fallen off the back of a truck. And our best computer was a supercharged Macintosh 512Ke with a whopping 2MB of RAM and two 400K floppy drives. There wasn't such a thing as a hard drive.

The following year, we purchased better machines, we upgraded PageMaker, and we continued to pour expensive chemicals into our increasingly frightening processor. But the event that most changed how *I* worked was the arrival of Illustrator 1.0. It was the first drawing program that worked worth a hill of beans. MacDraw was nearly unusable; you couldn't get two lines to properly match up with each other. And though CricketDraw permitted gradations and type along a curve—both missing from Illustrator at the time—it crashed on the hour and absolutely refused to print to our imagesetter. Frankly, that program went a long way toward loosening my fragile grasp on reality.

But Illustrator was an entirely different kind of program, quite unlike anything that I had used before. Although other programs supplied more features, Illustrator provided exactly what I needed, implemented in the most logical fashion I could imagine. But most importantly, I could actually depend on the program. Call me a sentimental fool, but I have no memory of it ever once crashing or failing to print. It always came through.

The new Illustrator is far more capable than its distant ancestor. And though nostalgia may cloud my judgment, it's frequently less logical and less streamlined. But it remains the most reliable application for printing computer-generated graphics that I've ever used. After eight years of writing, designing, and reworking this book, I have yet to conceive of a graphic that I couldn't manage one way or other. I can still open every illustration just as I originally created it, with no line,



shape, or character of text missing or moving on the page. (I'd love to see *any* version of PageMaker do that.) And I know that everything I draw will eventually print, even if it requires some minor modifications. Mind you, I don't like everything about Illustrator—in fact, there are quite a few features I would change—but this is an important program that has *never* been absent from any of my hard drives. Heck, I'd still be using Illustrator 1.0 if Adobe hadn't upgraded the program.

Now, tell me honestly. I sound like I'm at least 86, don't I?

Illustrator and You

Adobe Illustrator 6 is a drawing program that exists only for the Macintosh computer. (The Windows version is currently lagging behind at Version 4.1.) You can draw high-contrast graphics with perfectly smooth edges. You can also edit the outline of any shape long after you create it. You see Illustrator graphics every day in newspapers, magazines, and other print media; they're even turning up in large numbers on the World Wide Web. Artists use Illustrator to create diagrams, info-art, maps, logos, posters, photo-realistic renderings, and all sorts of other illustrations that defy categorization. You can even integrate photographs corrected and enhanced in Adobe Photoshop or a similar application.

Illustrator is a graphics workshop; as expansive, elaborate, and perplexing as any traditional workshop on earth. Like any powerful collection of tools, Illustrator demands your attention and rewards your understanding. That's why this book guides you through every feature of the program as if you've never seen a drawing application in your life. Regardless of your level of experience, you'll find yourself easily graduating into the advanced topics that consume most of the pages in this book. Every section explains not only how to perform a technique, but also provides enough background so you know why you'd want to. And most importantly, there isn't a single detail in any of the several hundreds illustrations that I don't tell you how to create yourself. Though I hope they're pleasing to look at, my figures aren't meant to amaze; they're included to educate. I want you to amaze yourself.

The Long and Painful History of a Bestseller

This book is as old as the hills. It's not the longest running book on Illustrator, but it is the second oldest, originally distributed by a different publisher in 1988. Counting an edition for an early Windows version of the product—which sold abysmally poorly—you are now holding the sixth edition of this book.

This edition's predecessor, *The Illustrator 5.0/5.5 Book*, was the bestselling title on Illustrator. Naturally, I find this fact highly gratifying. But whenever I look at the book, I see only problems. Not the smattering of typos and the occasional factual errors—unpleasant as such mistakes are, they are virtually impossible to avoid. The more significant problem was the quality of the writing, the appearance of the figures, and the general organization. None of these factors measured up to its full potential. (What can I say? I'm older and more experienced than I was back in 1986.)

Over the years, I have consistently upgraded text and figures from previous editions. But while I always added new material, some old stuff continued to linger. The new writing was lively, the old writing was stiff; the new voice was active, the old voice was passive; the new figures were insightful, the old ones inane. Part of the difficulty was that I was trying to do too many jobs at once. In addition to the writing and artwork chores, I had been in charge of design, layout, typesetting, and even overseeing the editing. As a result, I was working inside documents that had their origins in PageMaker 2.0. The fact that most of the files opened year after year without text and figures altogether corrupting qualified as a minor miracle. In this atmosphere, compromise was inevitable.

Predictably, this changes with *The Illustrator 6 Book*. (I wouldn't tell you this story if the punchline were, "Guess what? *The Illustrator 6 Book* is more of the same!") This edition is altogether reorganized, rewritten, and redesigned. I turned over design, layout, editing, and typesetting responsibilities to the capable people at LightSpeed Publishing, leaving me free to concentrate on the text and figures. And concentrate I have. I spent four times as long creating this edition as the last one, and I hope you'll agree, the quality of the results are well worth the effort.

The Structure of This Book

If you're familiar with previous editions of this book, don't expect to find much of anything where it was before. I've pretty much dumped the old book on the floor, sorted out and thrown away 95 percent of it, and reassembled the remaining 5 percent with a tremendous amount of new stuff.

The Illustrator 6 Book contains a total of 18 chapters organized into four distinct parts. Each part explores a simple concept in exhaustive and engaging detail. My hope is that at the end of every part, you feel sufficiently confident with the material that you begin to see the gaps in my explanations. "Oh, sure, you can do *that*, but how about *this*, and *this*, and *this*?" Once you understand the topics, you can invent techniques on your own without the slightest hesitation.



- Part One, Starting: The first part contains three chapters that introduce the fundamental issues in Illustrator 6. I explain how Illustrator differs from other graphics programs. I introduce you to Illustrator's network of tools and palettes. And I tell you everything there is to know about the new file formats included with Illustrator 6. If you're familiar with previous editions of Illustrator, this part will get you up and running in no time at all.
- Part Two, Creating: These five chapters tell you how to create the basic type and graphic elements in Illustrator. I explain all the tricks you need to know to get the most out of the new polygon, star, and spiral tools. I make sense out of the pen tool and Bézier curves. Chapters 6 and 7 devote close to 100 pages to the topic of creating and editing text. And I close the part with a look at one of Illustrator's most overlooked features, charts and graphs.
- Part Three, Changing: In sculpture, a substance like clay is considered "forgiving" by comparison to, say, marble because it permits you to modify your mistakes. By this standard, Illustrator provides the most forgiving environment possible. Nothing in Illustrator is permanent; everything you create is subject to adjustment. In Chapters 9 through 13, I tell you how to cut apart lines and shapes, and how to put them back together again. I spend more pages discussing such essential features as compound paths and Pathfinder filters than any other book. I also make sense of Illustrator's transformation and special effects capabilities. And this book alone spends an entire chapter showing you how to exploit the new relationship between Illustrator 6 and Photoshop.
- Part Four, Coloring: To keep the cover price as low as possible, there is no color in this book. And yet, I devote more than 200 pages showing you how color works, how to use color, and how to print grayscale and color illustrations. If you want to see color, there are books more colorful. But if you want to master and manage color, this book contains everything there is to know. Chapter 14 simplifies the science of color and shows how it applies to Illustrator 6. Later chapters cover gradations, tile patterns, strokes, blends, masks, and the new Ink Pen patterns. I wrap up with printing in Chapter 18. Though you certainly don't need to know everything in this perhaps overly thorough chapter, I can't be accused of leaving anything out.

I've written the chapters so you can read them from beginning to end without finding the information either repetitive or overwhelming. If you prefer to read

when you're stumped, you can look up a confusing topic in the index. Or you can simply browse through the pictures until you come to something that looks interesting. But no matter how you approach the text, I hope that it snags you and teaches you more than you bargained for. If you look up from the book at your watch and think, "Dang, I've got to get back to work!" then I've done my job.

Meet the Margin Icons

Throughout this book, we've designed two kinds of special text elements to attract your attention and convey fast information. The first are the figure captions. A caption is worthless unless it tells you something about the figure that you don't already know. Between the graphic and the caption text, an experienced user should be able to glean enough information to perform a similar effect in Illustrator. If you need to know more, the text contains the full story, including additional hints and details. But you shouldn't *have* to read if you don't want to.

The second special text element is the icon text. If a paragraph contains very important information or an offhand aside that you can feel free to skip, I include an icon next to the paragraph to distinguish it from the surrounding text. If you already know Illustrator, you can get up to speed in Illustrator 6 by just reading these paragraphs.

Here are the four icons that you can expect to jockey for your attention:



This icon points out features that are new to Illustrator 6. Sometimes, the paragraph tells you everything you need to know about the new feature. Other times, the icon introduces several pages of text. Either way, you'll know it's something you didn't have in Illustrator 5.5 or earlier.



It seems like every book offers a tip icon. So I try to steer clear of the boring old tips that every Illustrator user hears a million times, and concentrate on the juicy stuff that most folks don't know. But keep in mind, these are fast tips. For the more involved killer techniques, you have to read the text.



This icon explains an action to avoid. Few operations are hazardous in Illustrator, but many are time wasters. And you can bet that after I tell you what not to do, I include a preferable alternative as well.



I've been using Illustrator and other Macintosh programs for as long as they've been out, so I occasionally feel compelled to share my thoughts on a variety of subjects. Sometimes it's a bit of history, other times it's a thoughtful observation, and every once in a while it's just me complaining. Whatever it is, you can skip it if it gets on your nerves.

Contacting the Guy Who's Responsible for All This Gibberish

I have close to ten books on the market at any one time. These plus my magazine and speaking commitments keep me busier than I care to admit. With one thing and another, I regret that I can't talk to every reader. But I do invite you to submit your comments, questions, and general observations to either one of two electronic mail accounts:

- If you're on America Online, write me at DekeMc. Or if you're on the Internet, try DekeMc@AOL.com.
- My CompuServe address is 70640,670.

I'm not very regular about checking and responding to my e-mail, so you can expect a delay of a week to a month, depending on what the current deadline situation is like. But you have my word. One day, when you least expect it, you'll hear back from me.

CONTENTS AT A GLANCE

Introduction	xxi
PART ONE	STARTING
Chapter 1	Illustrator 6: What It Is 3
Chapter 2	Witness the Splendor That Is Illustrator 13
Chapter 3	Objects, Images, and the File Formats that Love Them 57
PART TWO	CREATING
Chapter 4	Drawing the Simple Stuff 99
Chapter 5	Exact Points and Precision Curves 135
Chapter 6	How to Handle Typical Type 179
Chapter 7	Some of Your Wackier Text Effects 217
Chapter 8	This Is Your Brain on Graphs 273
PART THREE	CHANGING
Chapter 9	Modifying and Combining Paths 327
Chapter 10	Developing a Flair for the Schematic 375
Chapter 11	Traditional Homespun Transformations 415
Chapter 12	Hog-Wild Special Effects 449
Chapter 13	Becoming Master of the Raster 481
PART FOUR	COLORING
Chapter 14	The Slippery Science of Color 515
Chapter 15	Gradations and Other Fab Fills 551
Chapter 16	Stroking Your Curves 597
Chapter 17	Blends, Masks, and Special Inks 641
Chapter 18	Printing Your Illustrations 687
Index 725

TABLE OF CONTENTS

Introduction	xxi
Illustrator and You	xxiii
The Long and Painful History of a Bestseller	xxiii
The Structure of This Book	xxiv
Meet the Margin Icons	xxvi
Contacting the Guy Who's Responsible for All This Gibberish	xxvii



PART ONE **STARTING**

1

Chapter 1

Illustrator 6: What It Is	3
Adobe, the Microsoft of Graphics	4
Where Illustrator Fits in	4
Close, But Not Kin: Illustrator Versus Photoshop	5
Illustrator Does Smooth Lines; Photoshop Does Pixels	5
The Right Tool for the Right Job	6
Flexible Resizing	6
Objects and Pixels Together	7
The Lowdown on Illustrator 6	9



Chapter 2

Witness the Splendor That Is Illustrator 13

Getting Illustrator Up and Running	14
Setting Aside Memory	14
The Splash Screen	15
The Illustrator Desktop	16
Using Tools	20
Recognizing Cursors	25
Using Dialog Boxes	31
Using Palettes	33
Accommodating Your Personal Style	35
General Preferences	36
Color Matching	40
Hyphenation Options	43
Plug-ins	44
The Prefs File	44
The Startup File	45
Shortcuts	46
Menu Commands	47
Activating Tools	50
Creating and Manipulating Type	51
Formatting Type	52
Working with Colors	53
Using Dialog Boxes	54
Entering Graph Data	54

Chapter 3

Objects, Images, and the File Formats that Love Them 57

Preparing a New Illustration	58
The Artboard Versus the Printed Page	59
Setting up the Printed Page	60
Configuring the Artboard	61
Positioning the Pages on the Artboard	64
Hiding the Page Boundaries	65

Adding a Tracing Template	65
Opening and Importing	69
Using the Open Dialog Box	70
Those Crazy, Kooky File Formats	73
Getting Around in Illustrator	82
Fit-in-Window and Actual Sizes	83
Magnifying as the Mood Hits You	85
Dragging the Drawing	87
Changing the Display Mode	88
Creating a View You Can Come Back To	90
Two Windows into the Same Illustration	90
Saving Your Work to Disk	91
Using the Save Dialog Box	91
Selecting a File Format	93
Saving an EPS Illustration	94



PART TWO

CREATING

97

Chapter 4

Drawing the Simple Stuff 99

Everything You Need to Know about Paths	100
Points and Segments	101
Strokes and Fills	102
Seeing What You Draw	102
The Simplest of Simple Shapes	104
Drawing a Rectangle	104
Drawing by the Numbers	106
Rounding off a Rectangle's Corners	107
Drawing an Ellipse	109
Simple Shapes at an Angle	111
Polygons, Stars, and Spirals	112
Drawing a Regular Polygon	112
Drawing a Star	114
Drawing a Spiral	116



Drawing Free-Form Paths	121
Adjusting the Tolerance	121
Using the Command Key	122
Extending and Closing a Path	123
Painting Closed Shapes	124
Changing Thickness and Shape	124
Using the Calligraphic Brush	126
Drawing with a Pressure-Sensitive Tablet	127
Tracing a Black-and-White Template	129
Using the Autotrace Tool	129
Adjusting Autotracing Sensitivity	133
Tracing across Gaps	133
Adding to a Traced Line	133
Yet One Tool Beats Them All	134

Chapter 5

Exact Points and Precision Curves 135

Selecting like a House on Fire	136
The Plain Black Arrow Tool	136
The Hollow Direct Selection Tool	139
The Sad Little Group Selection Tool	141
Selecting Everything	142
Inversing the Selection	142
Hiding the Points and Handles	142
Deselecting Stuff that You Want to Leave As Is	143
Dragging Stuff Around	143
Dragging Points	143
Keeping Your Movements in Line	145
Snapping Point to Point	146
Dragging Segments	148
Nudging Points and Segments	150
Dragging Control Handles	151
Bézier Rules	152
The Great and Powerful Pen Tool	154
Pen Tool Basics	154
Defining Points and Segments	156
Modifying the Closing Point	158