

Illustrator Basics Part 2

In this lecture we will explore more of the basics of the adobe illustrator interface. Mastering your work area is very important, there are tons of little things that can be learned to make you better equipped to make you more efficient at using Illustrator (as with any program). The bottom line is being able to do what you love better, faster and with more confidence. Confidence is key. It will lead you to better projects, better jobs and more offers.

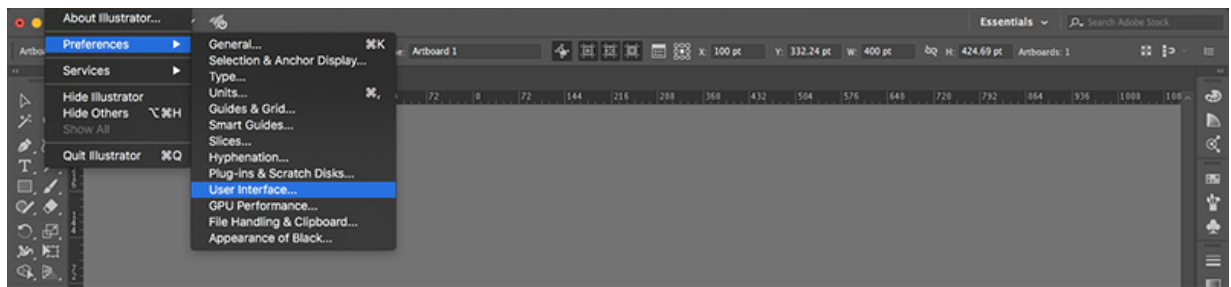
Last week in our first class we looked at the bare bones basics of Illustrator, this week we will go a little more in depth.

Features of illustrator workspace

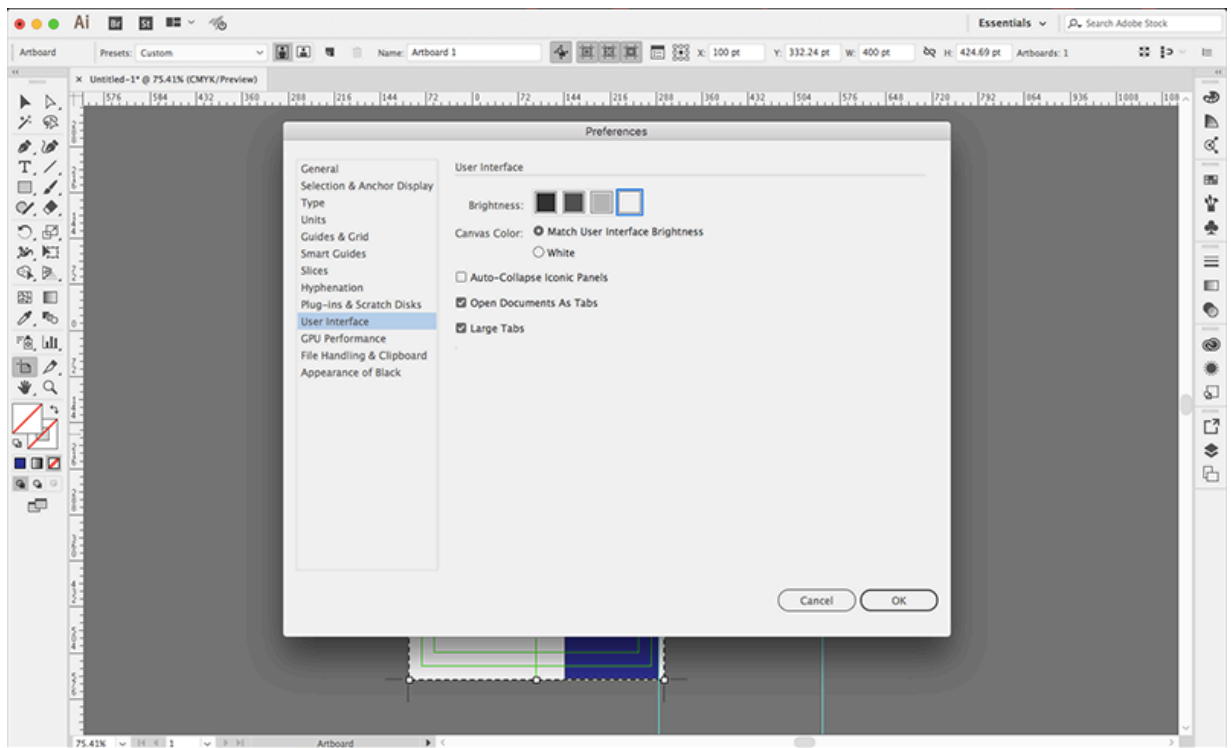
User Interface

For some users, changing your workspace may be important to you. Some people prefer the lighter workspace while some prefer the dark work space. If you work a lot at night you may prefer the darker option. Heres how you can change it to your preference.

Go to: Illustrator > Preferences > User Interface



Here you will be able to change interface preferences. You can also change the default of opening documents in tabs or as individual documents here.

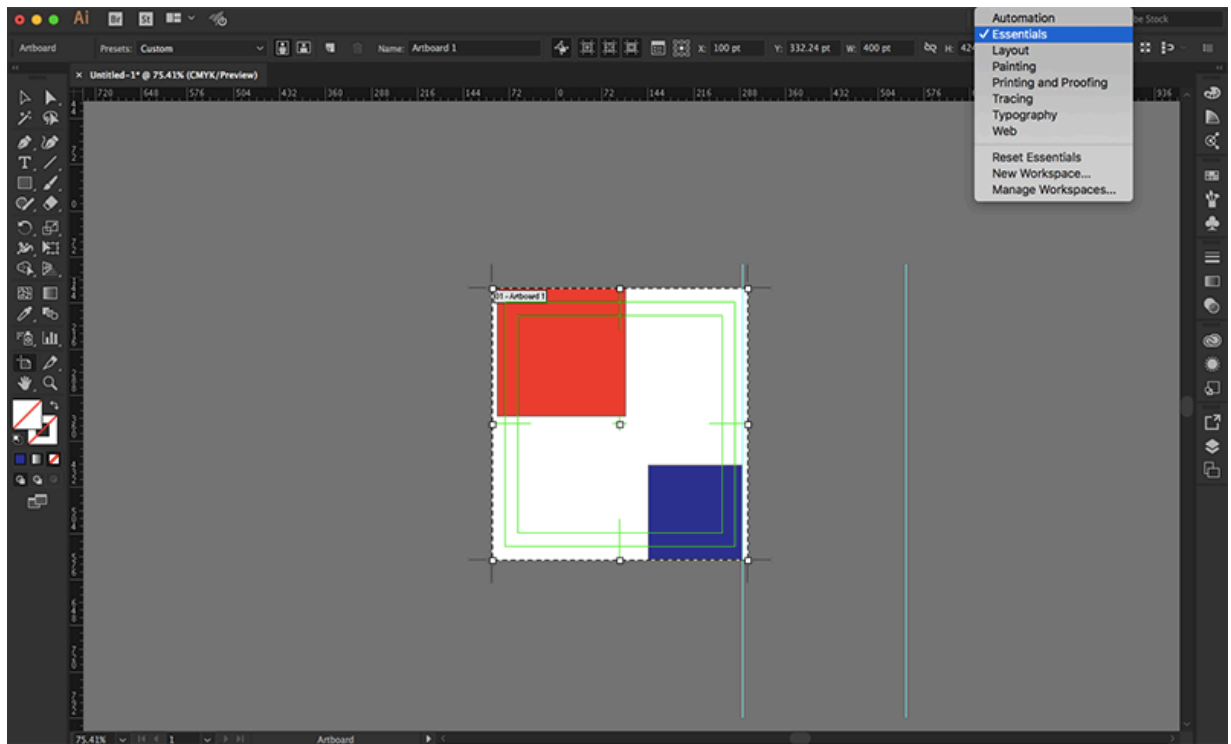


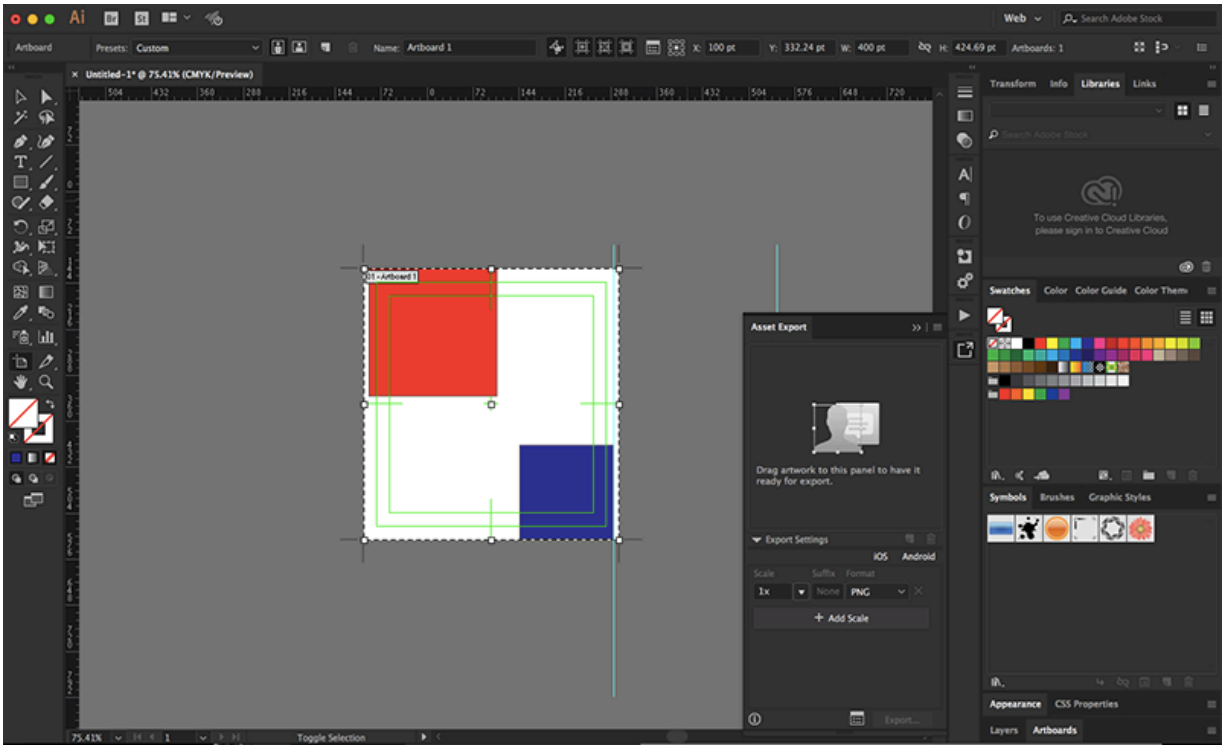
Workspaces

Remember last week we briefly touched on the workspace tab when we made sure we had the "essentials" option clicked. Well lets take a closer look at that.

The options in here provide quick ways to change our workspace to give us the tools we will need depending on what we are working on.

Notice in the screen shot below when we are working in the essentials works space the bar on the right. If we change this to "web" for examples it changes the side bar...





Keep in mind that all the items that are placed into these workspaces are accessible in the "Window" tab in the top menu. You can also create custom workspaces by selecting "New workspace..." in the workspaces tab and naming your new work space. At this point you could select items in the window tab and drag them to the side bar where they can be docked.

Swatches

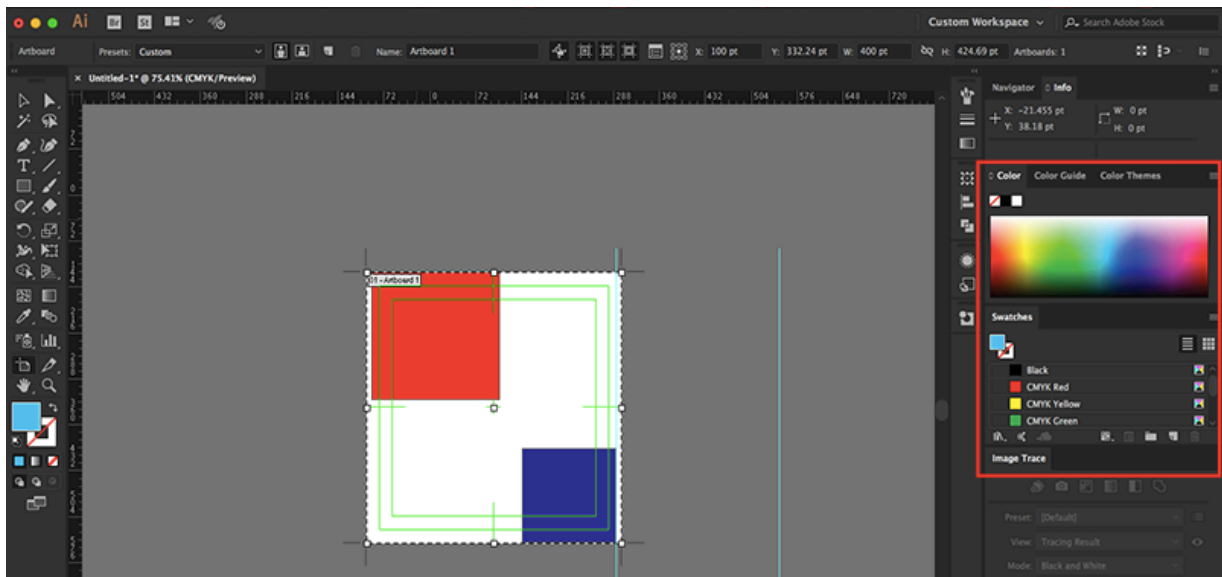
Lets take a closer look at our colour swatches.

As you may know already, on the left side of the screen there are 2 colour pickers. The solid one is

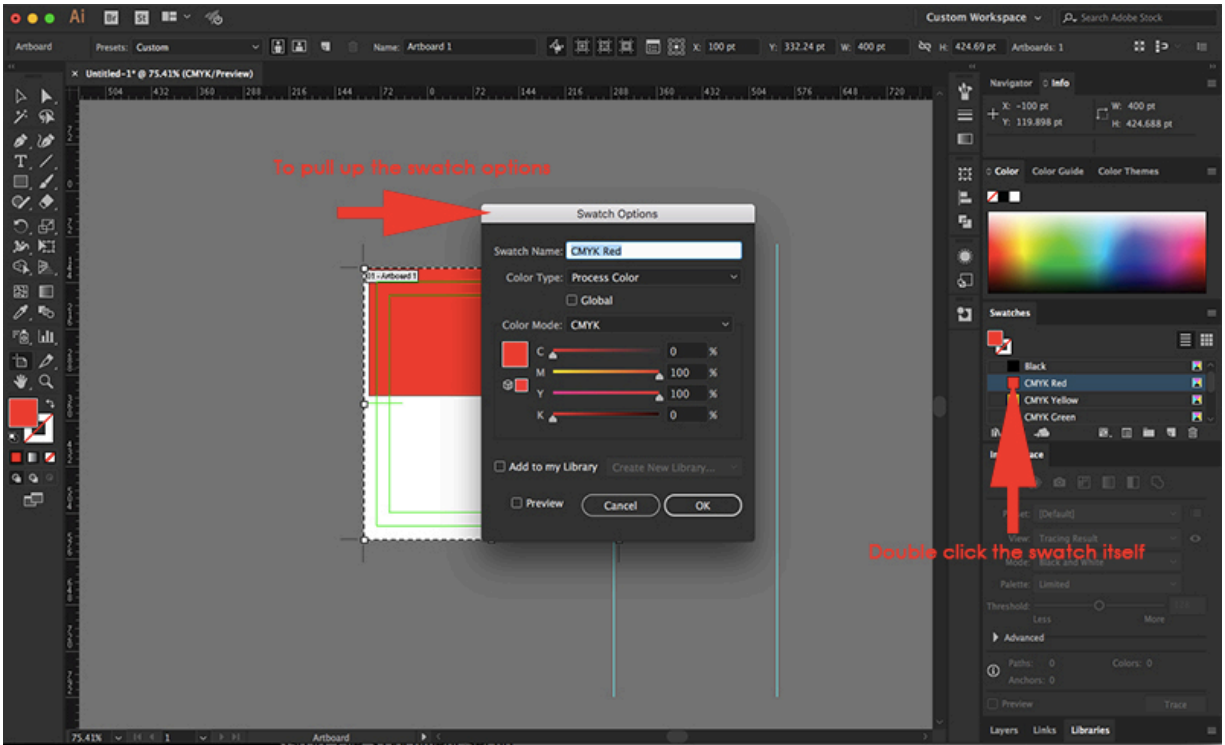
for fill colours and the one with the hollow centre is for borders/outlines.



We can also use the colour and swatches tabs to choose colours. Choosing colours in the colour tab will automatically update the picker. Remember these tabs can be open by clicking the "Window" button in the top menu.



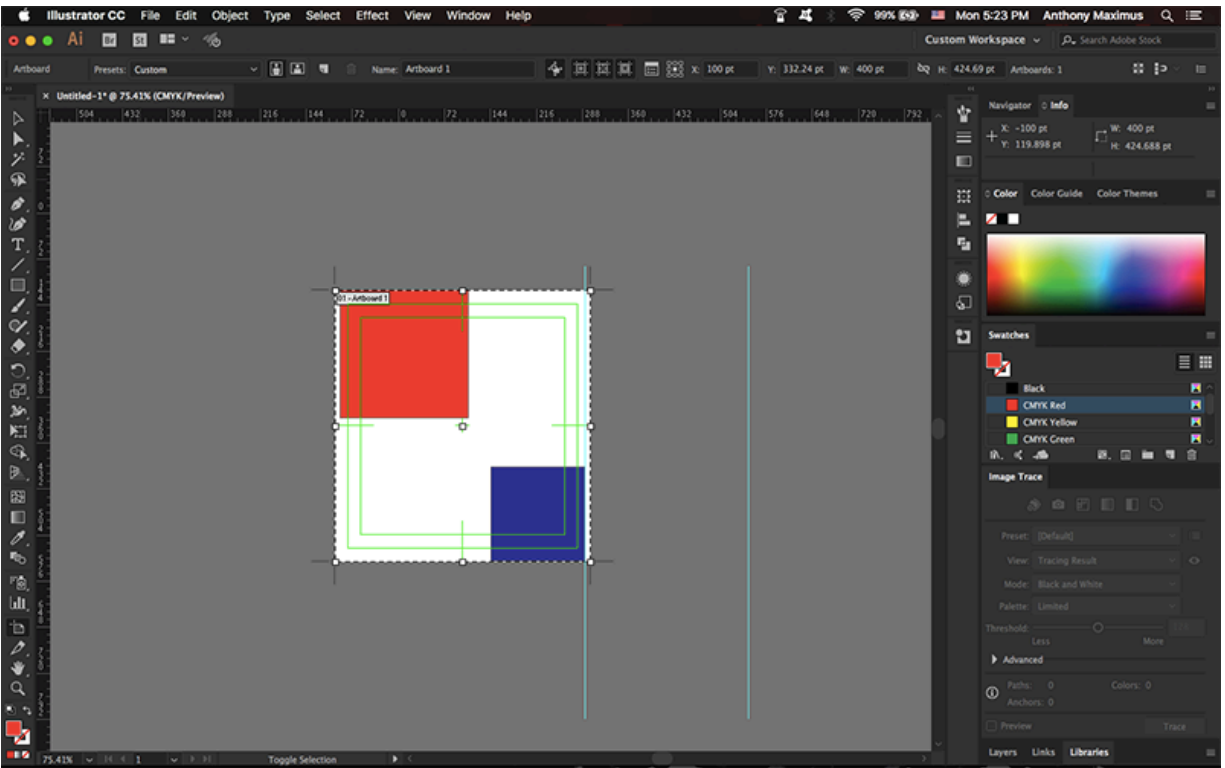
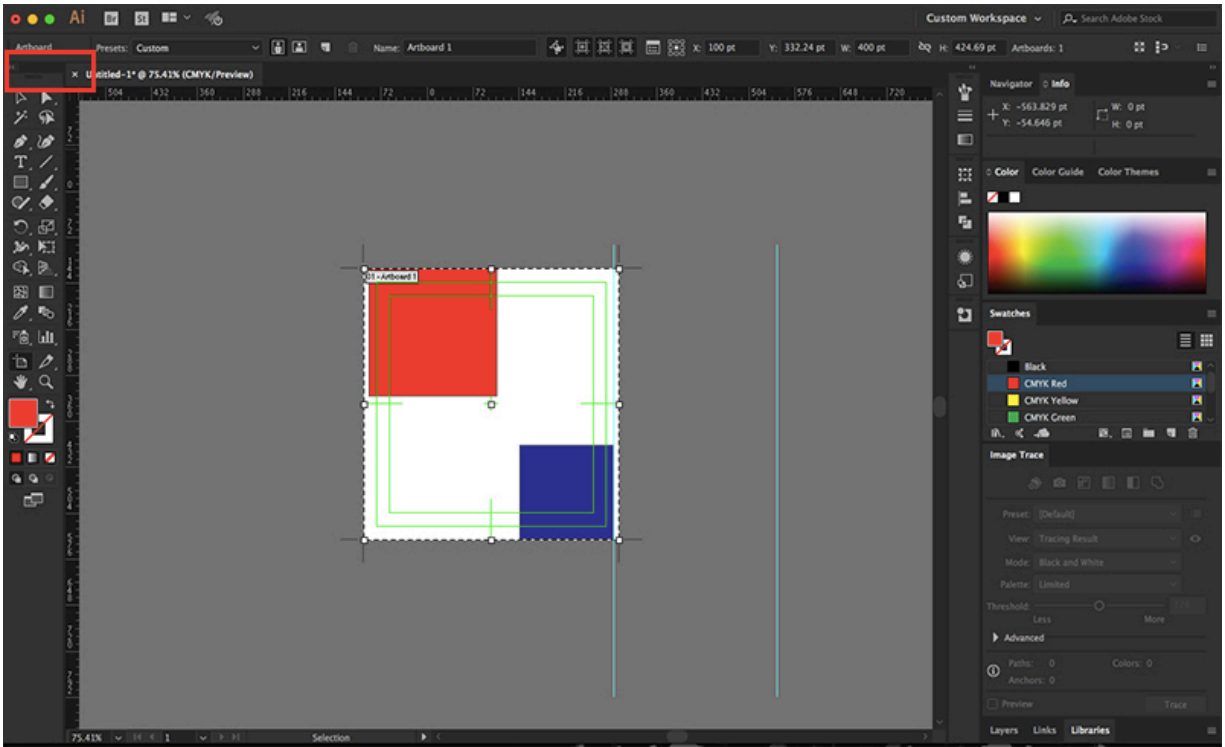
You can also click on a colour in the swatches tab and tweak the colour to your need.

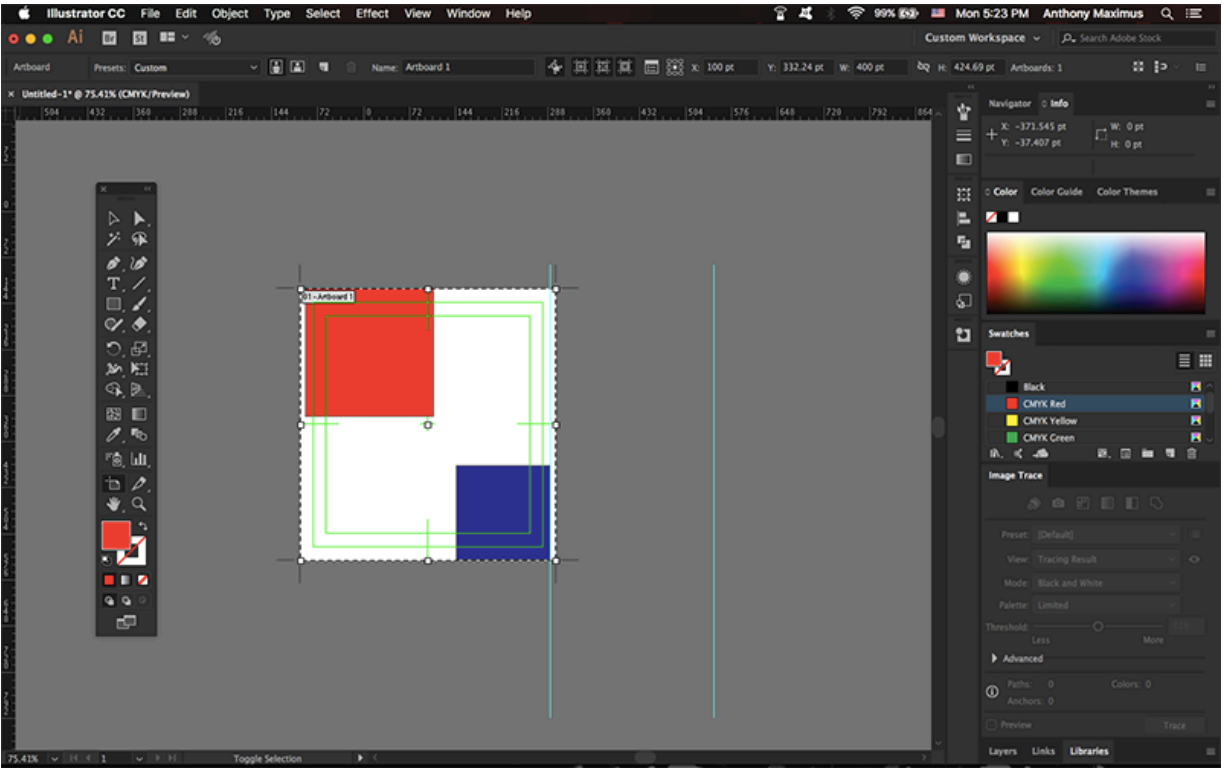


Left Tool Panel

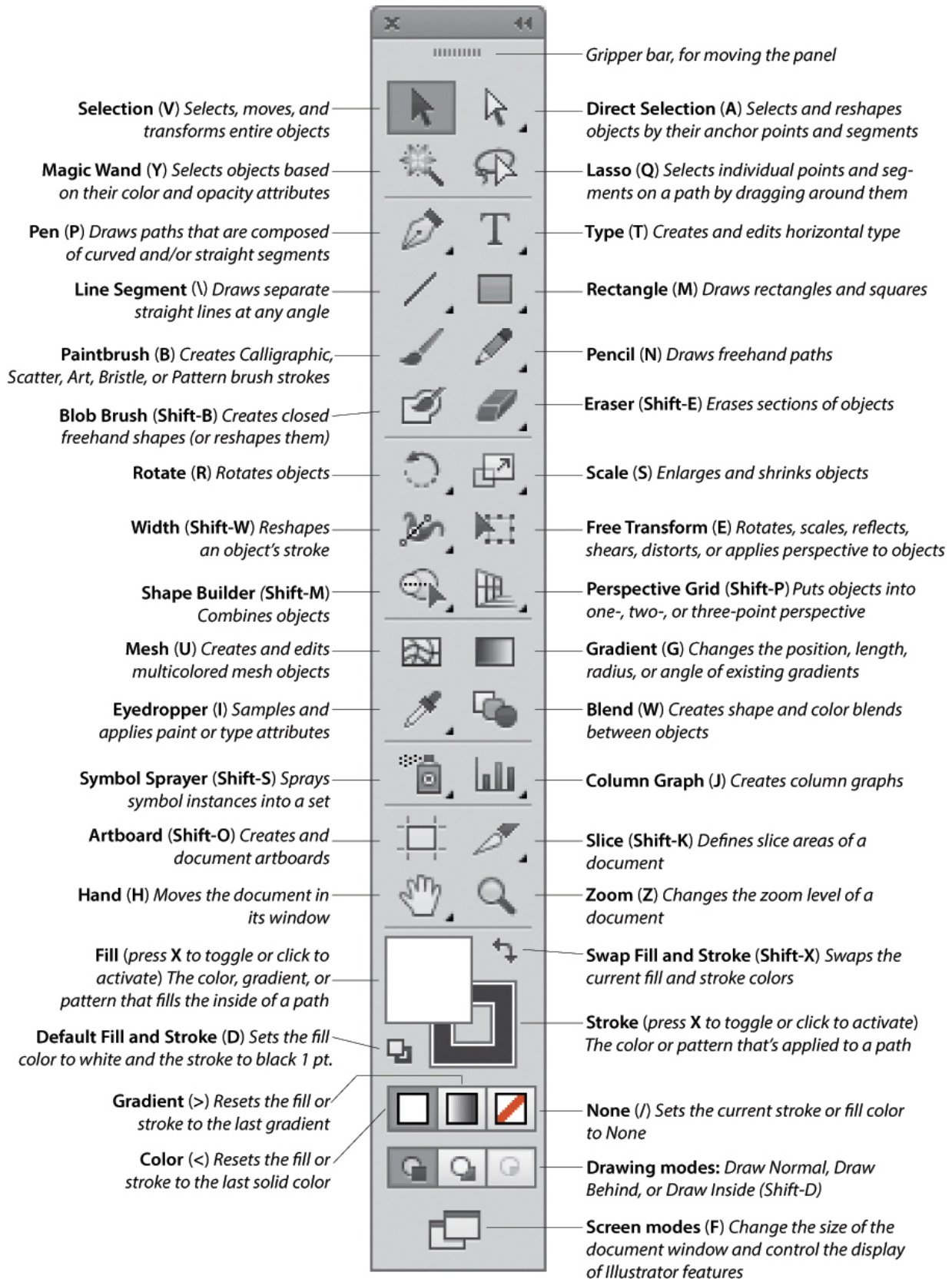
We can also configure the left tool panel as well.

Notice the small arrows on the top of the bar, we can condense the tool bar to save space, we can also undock the tool bar as well by clicking and dragging on the top bar.





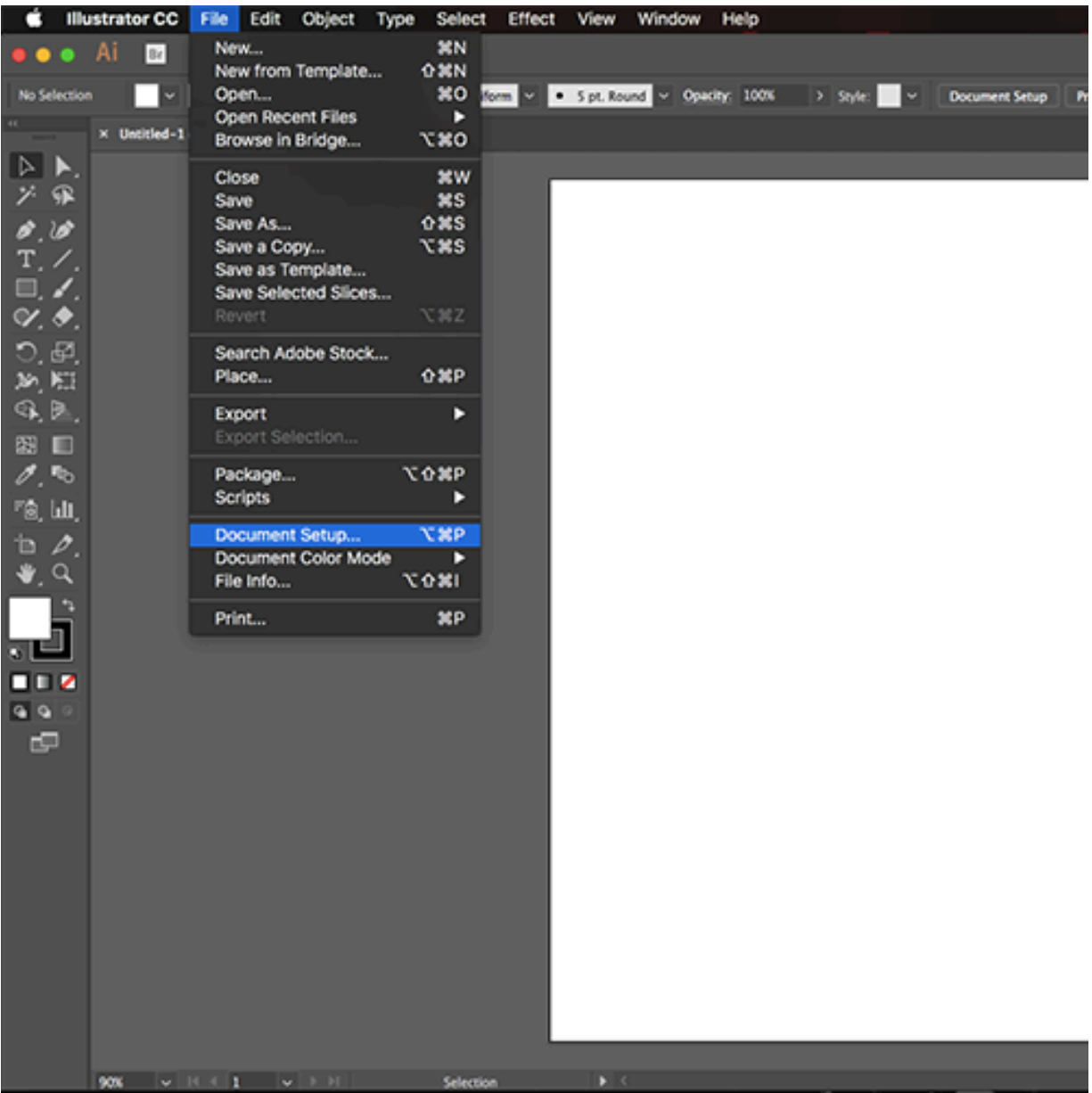
A more in-depth look at our tools:

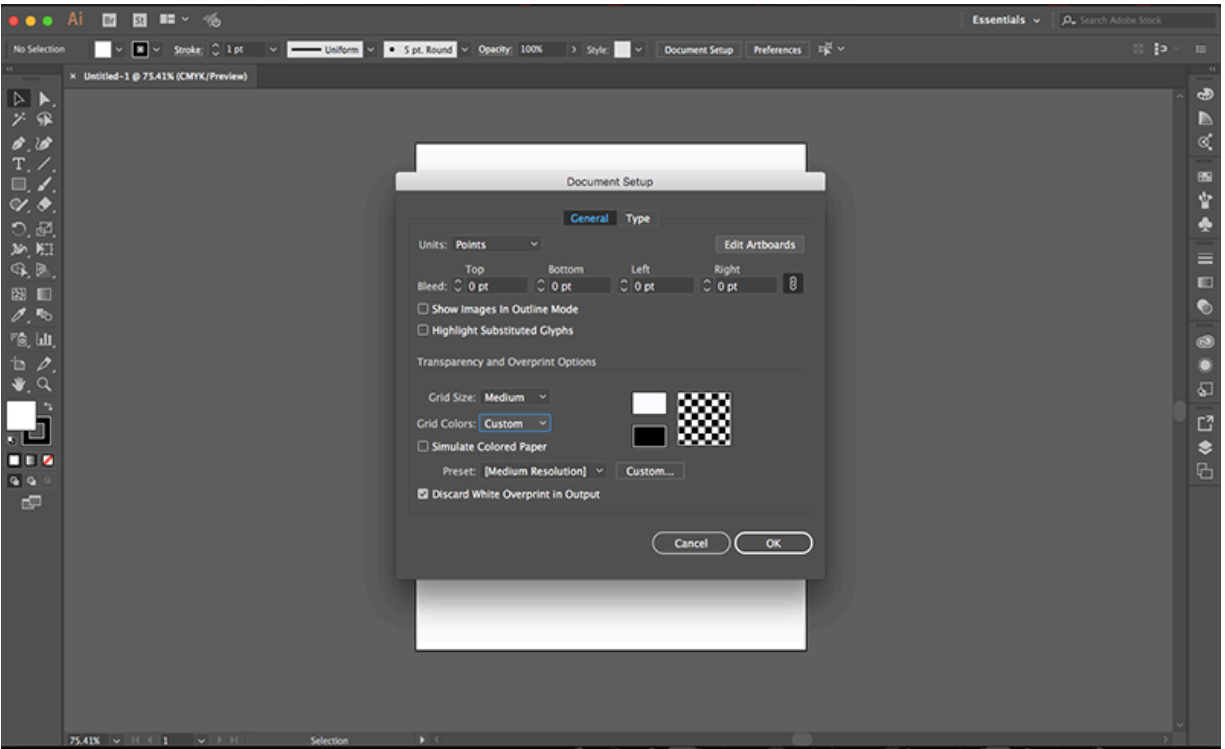


Art boards

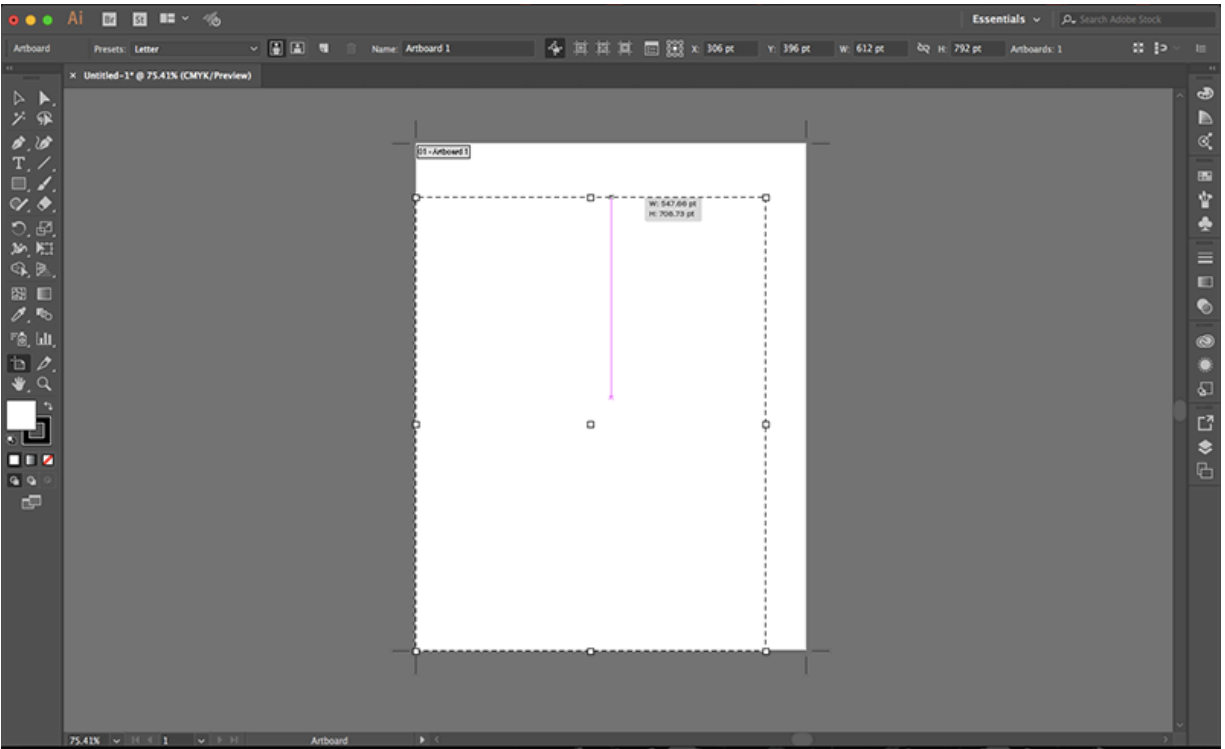
Lets look at the art board more in depth. First off, if you create a new document and than later figure out that you need to change the size of the art board, you can do so without having to create a new document.

Go to: File > Document Set up

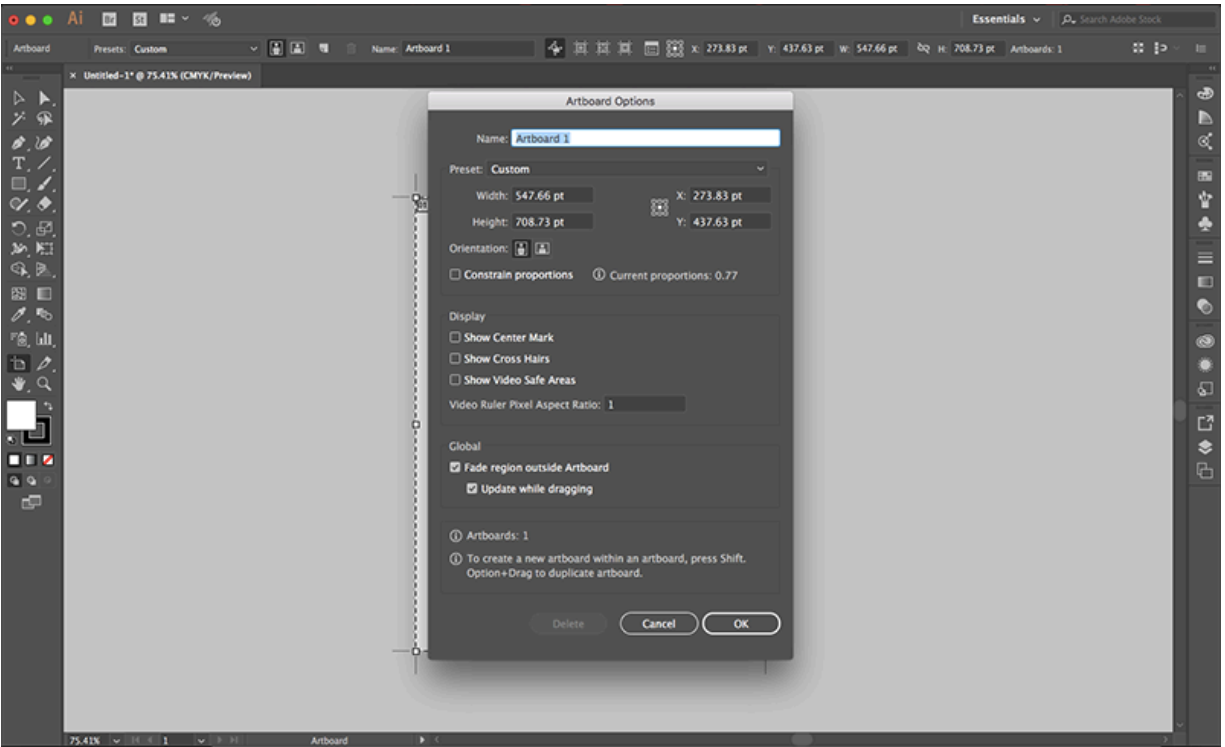




Here you can resize the art board and change settings

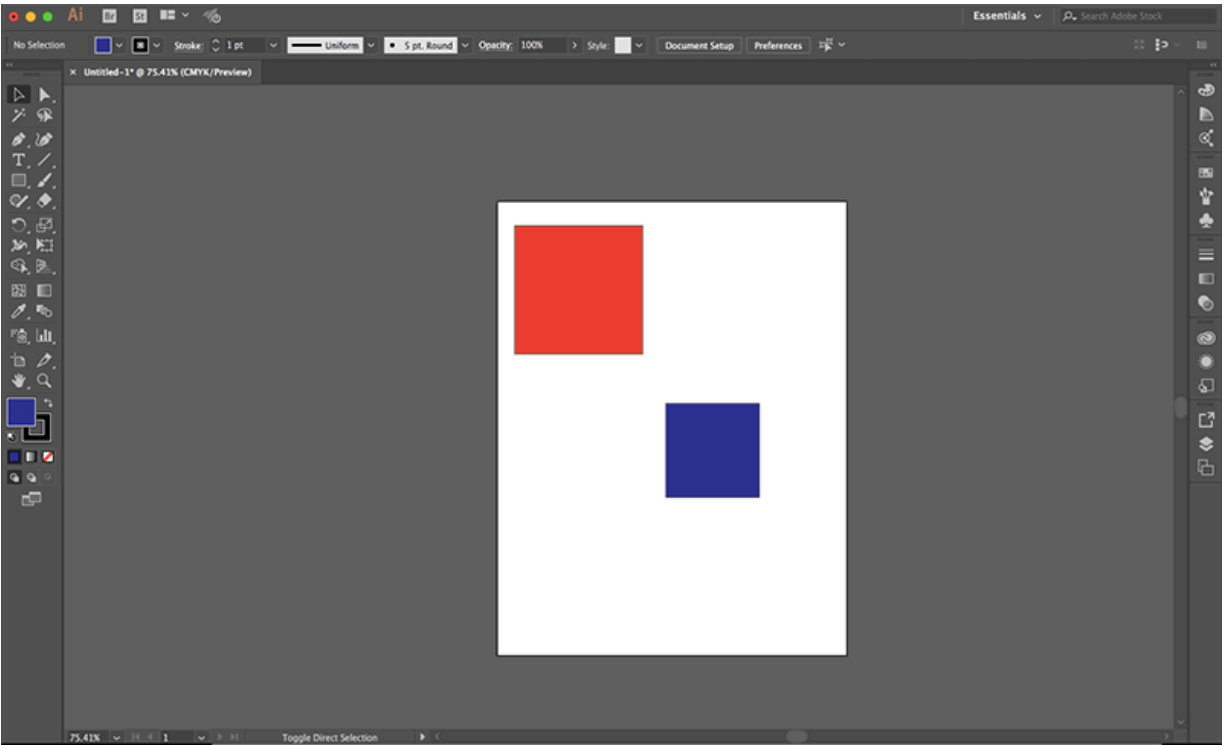


Here you can resize your art board. You can also press the enter key and an art board options box will pop up...

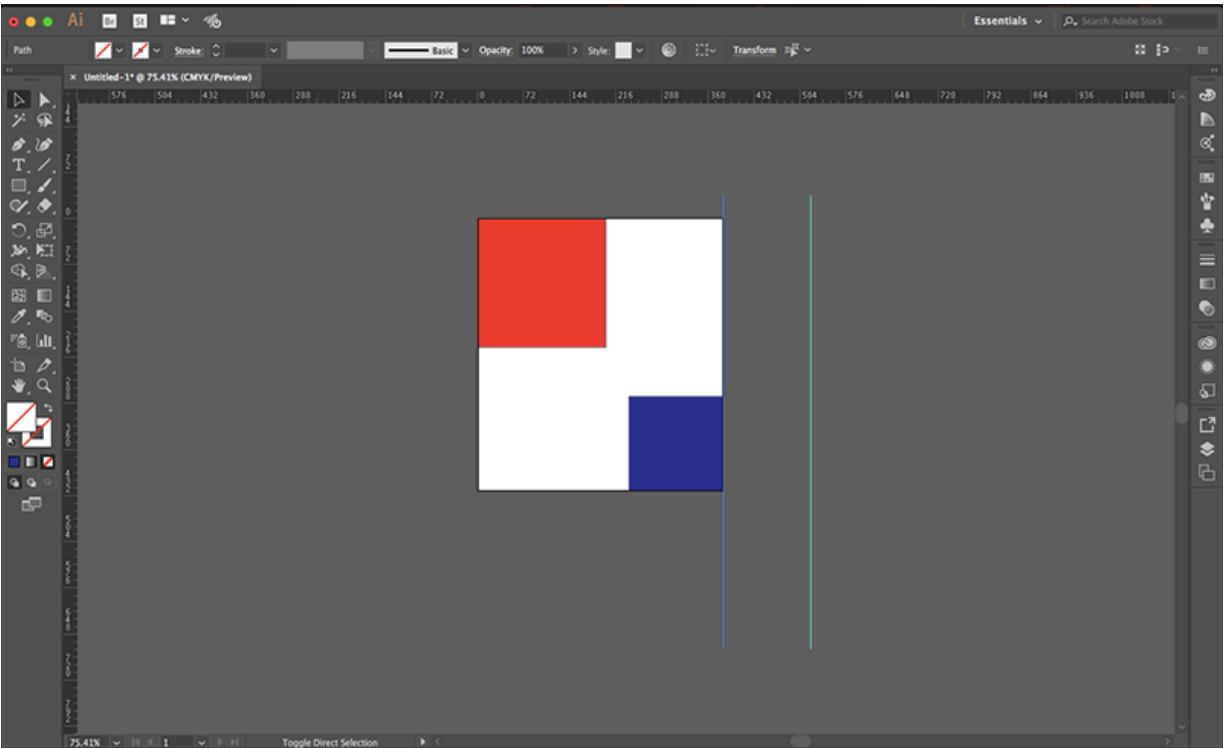
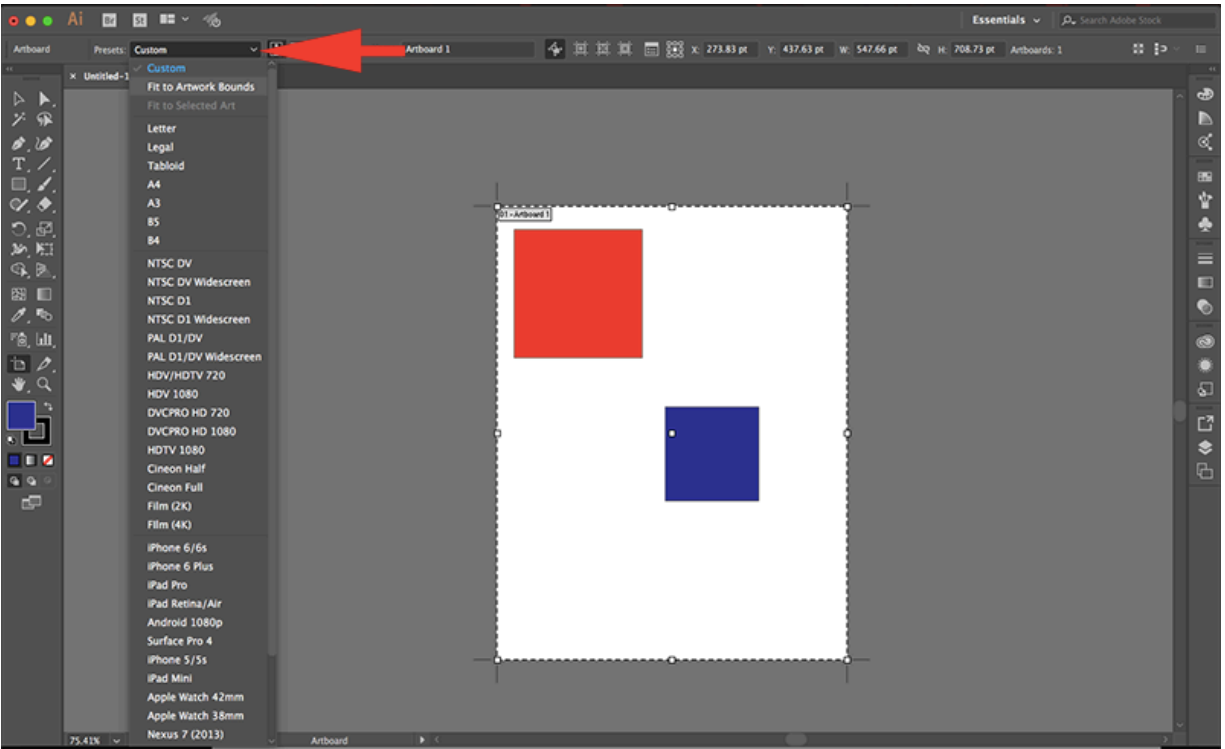


In here you can edit the art board with number values.

You can also use presets, These presets give you many options. You can for example fit your art board to the content.



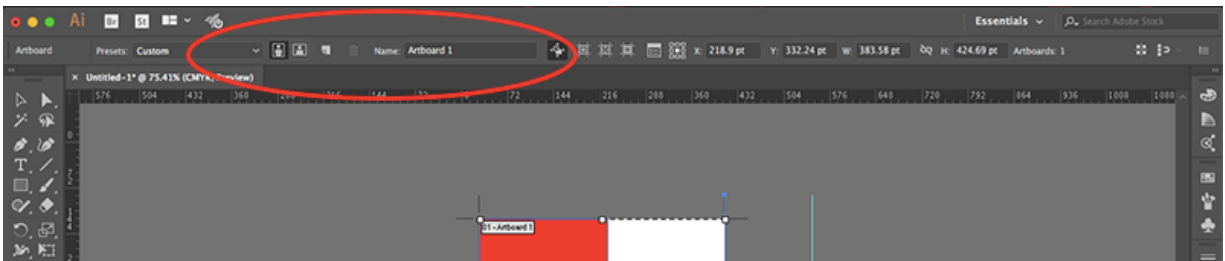
We can go back to the Document set up > Edit art boards and then click the Presets bar on the upper left...



In the case above we select the "Fit to Artwork

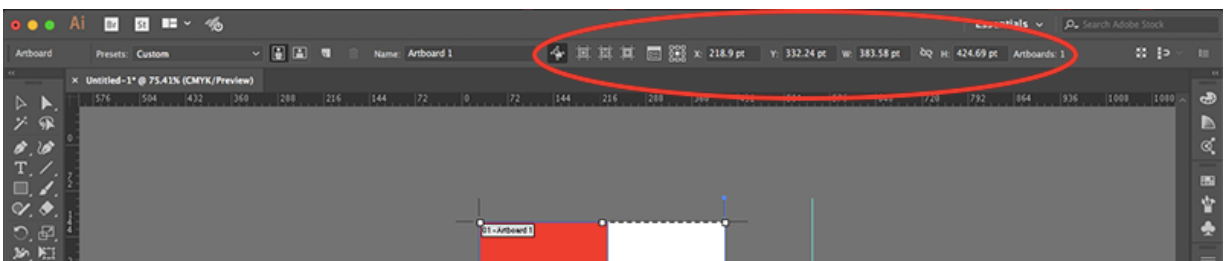
Bounds" option and it will fit the art board to your work.

We can also change the orientation of our art board as well if we look just to the right of the presets selection box...



In here we can change to landscape, portrait or add a new art board, delete art board as well as rename the art board.

If we look even further in the art board options to the right, we have some added buttons.



From the left the buttons are as follows:

Move Copy - Allows you to move your art board

around whilst also moving the artwork that is drawn on the art board as well.

Show Centre Mark - Shows the centre of the art board.

Show Crosshairs - Shows cross hairs on the art board.

Show Video Safe Areas - Shows a video safe area, used in creation of artwork for videos.

We also have boxes with values in them:

The X and Y values are used to move the art board on the screen. The X Value is Horizontal and the Y is vertical.

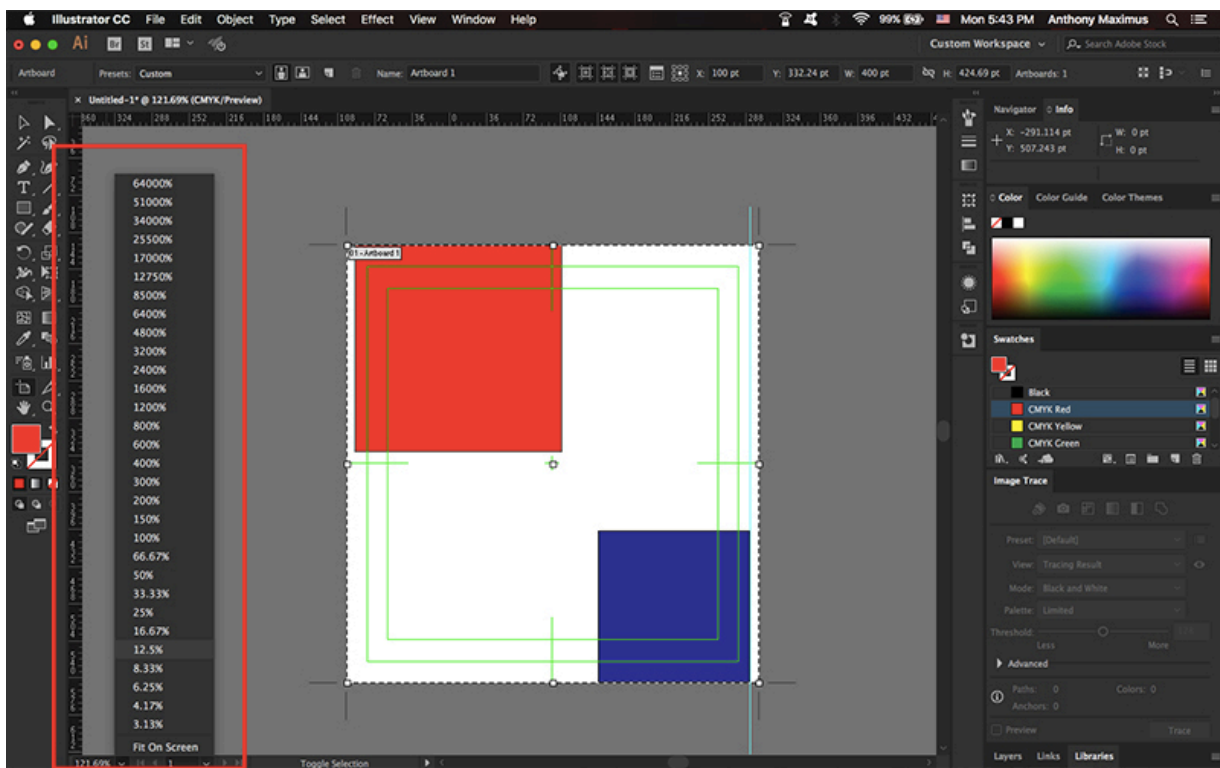
Another way you can move around your art board. Hold space bar and move around the art board by clicking and holding on the art board.

The Width and height values will change the size of the art board.

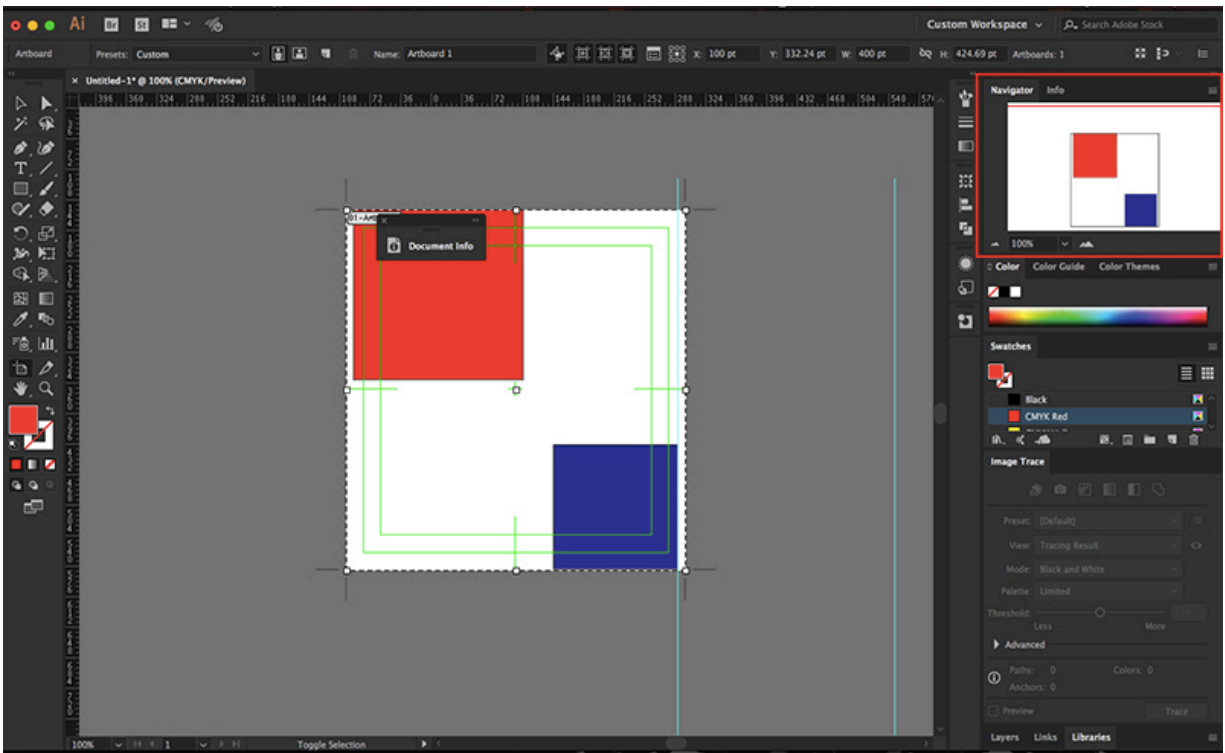
Zoom

Finally, we must take a closer look at zooming options, this will be important in your workflow. If you are using a multi touch computer like a macbook. You can simply use 2 fingers and pinch to zoom in or out.

If you are not using such a device, you will notice on the bottom left of the UI, a numbered box. This is another way we can zoom in or out on our document.



Another way we can do is by using the navigator. Remember, if the navigator is not loaded you can bring it up by clicking: Window > Navigator.



Using this you can move the art board and zoom in or out by clicking on the hill icons.