Intro to Adobe Illustrator - IMAG 133

Welcome to IMAG 133! As you know we will be covering Adobe illustrator in this course. Over the semester we will be covering a multitude of things regarding Illustrator. Some of which will be:

- Digital Illustration / Object Oriented Environment
- Selections and Shapes
- Drawing With The Pen Tool
- Fill & Stroke
- Working With Layers
- Working With Type
- Lessons Review and Quiz

Illustrator is a powerful tool that can be used to create various graphics across many use cases. Print of all sizes, Digital graphics of all uses including UX and UI. Learning Illustrator is very lucrative and advantageous, and will continue to be so going forward. It may also lead to other career

opportunities in other branches in multimedia. Such as we development and so on. As far as the job field goes, there are many places where Graphic Design is in demand. Both as a freelancer and as an employee. You may even be able to gain residence to other countries willing to import new talent that is in demand by learning this skill.

In this course we will be covering the basics, learning the key core concepts of Illustrator. Learning how to use the drawing tools, pen tool, anchor points, direction points, control colours and when to use RGB, CKMY and much more.

Starting off

Difference between raster and vector? To put it simply:

A Raster Image: Is comprised of pixels, Millions of tiny dots (Pixels) on a grid that make up the bigger image.

A Vector Image: Uses math to draw shapes using points, lines and curves.

Examples:

Figure1

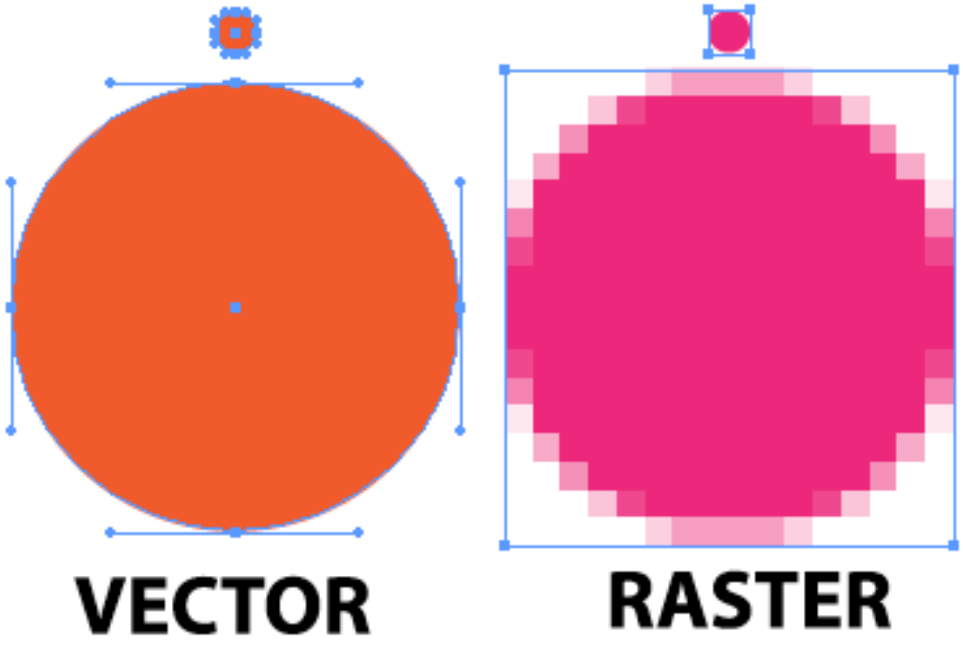


Figure 2

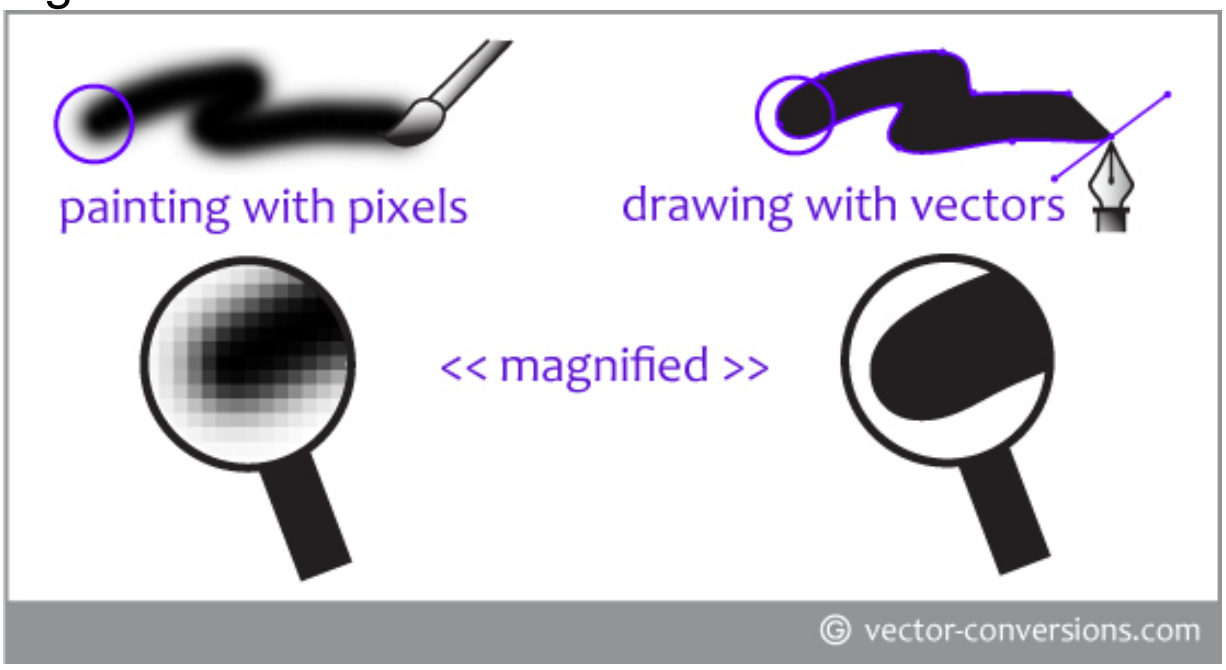


Figure 3

Logo at Actual Size

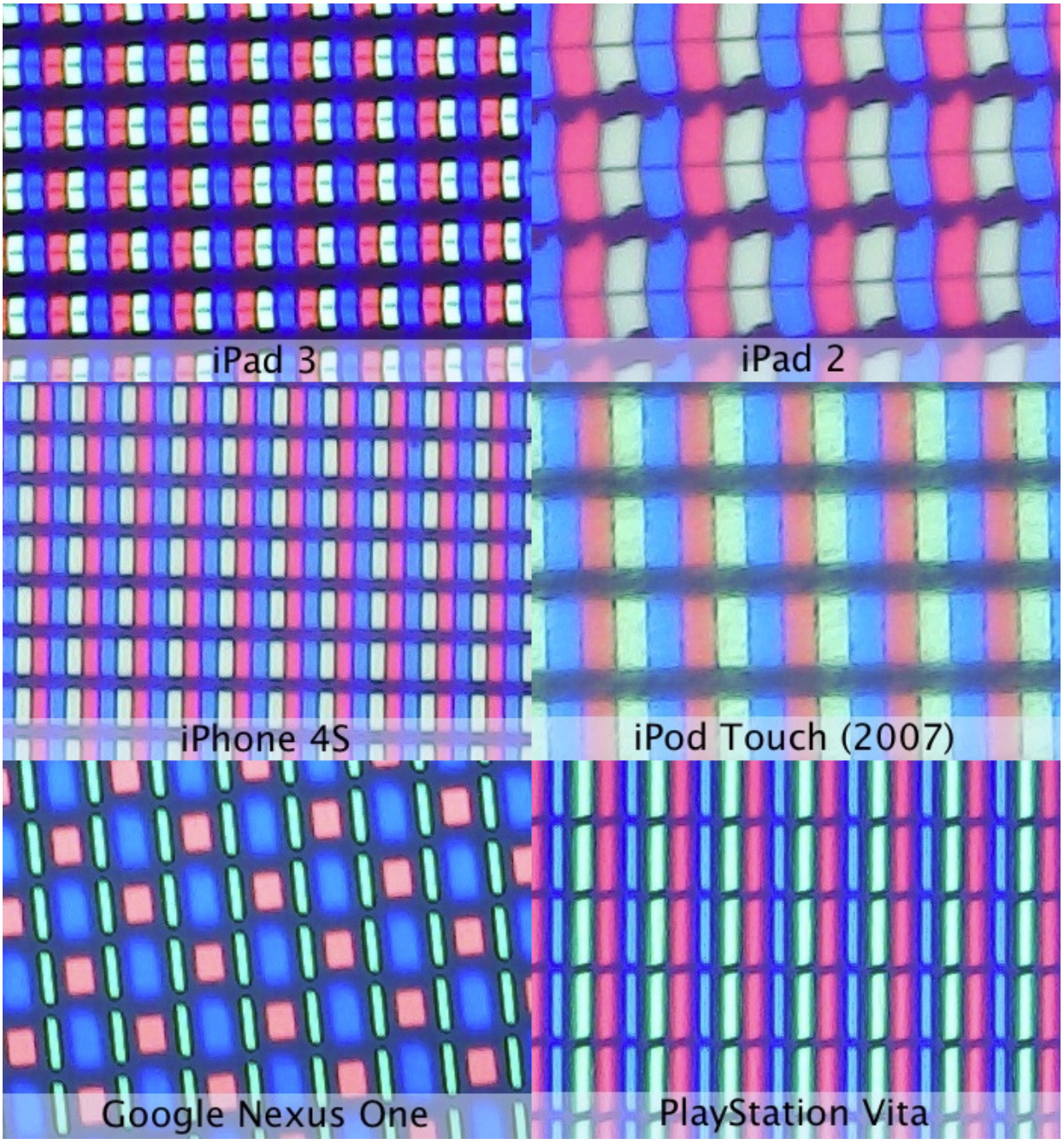
Raster Art at 400%

Vector Art at 400%

As you can see. There is a big difference between the 2 when you look closely. The raster files up close become pixelated and the vector images do not. They stay nice and sharp at all times. Pretty sweet huh? Lets dive deeper into it.

Raster

A photograph is a raster image. All screens as they are now use this same concept in a way too. Using tiny RGB cells to create a bigger image:



When you use Photoshop, you are working with raster files. You can even zoom in to the max in Photoshop and see/edit an image pixel by pixel.

Raster files will have a DPI (Dots Per Inch) Typical DPI for print is 300 DPI

If your file as the extension of: .jpg .jpeg .png .tif its a raster file.

Pros and Cons of raster images

Pros

Rich Detail

Precise editing.

Cons

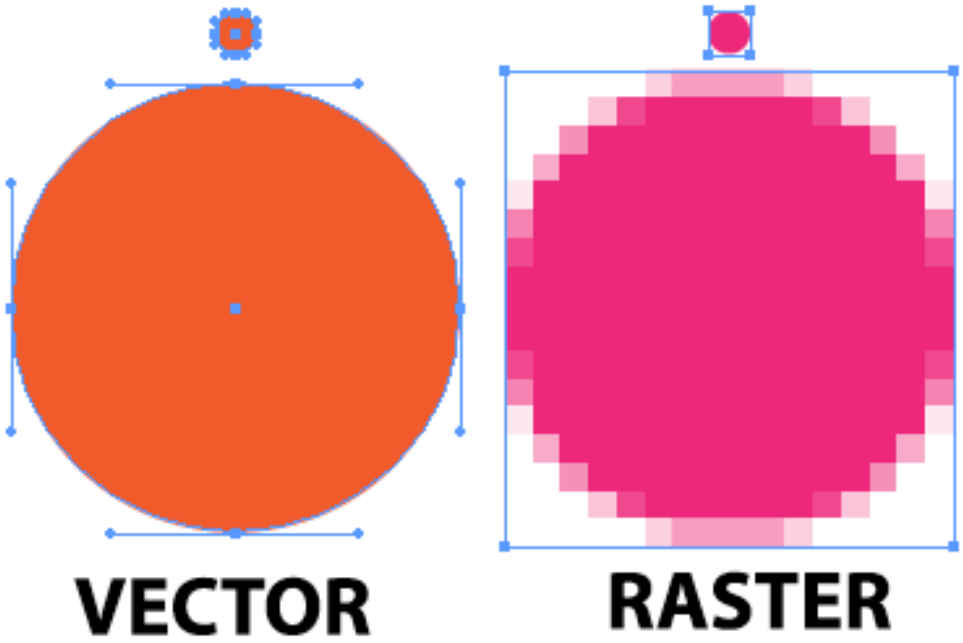
Blurry when zoomed in or poor quality

Can be large in file size.

Vector

Ok so we got the raster part. So we already understand that a raster image is an image that is full of pixels, and in those pixels there are colours that will make up the over all picture. But what about a vector?

A vector does not work the same way. Instead of tons of pixels, it uses points and paths as we discussed earlier. Lets take another closer look at figure 1.



As we see the raster is all pixels making up a ball,

the vector image has 4 points, top bottom and side to side, with a curve. The computer is doing all the work behind the scenes calculating the path of the curve and making the object look like a ball and than fill in the colour.

This is why we use Illustrator rather than photoshop, Illustrator is better suited for working with vector graphics.

Vector graphics are uses in various use cases. Fonts, physical print of all kinds including magazines, flyers, brochures, business cards, club/ event flyers, billboards, on clothes, signs, embroidery, general graphic design, animations.

Pros and Cons of vector images

Pros

Infinitely scalable. Can be zoomed in on and will always look crisp

Smaller file size as it uses less data points

Edibility because there is no need to flatten your image.

Cons

Limited detail because the way vectors work with math and simple points

Limited effects because of the same

Conclusion

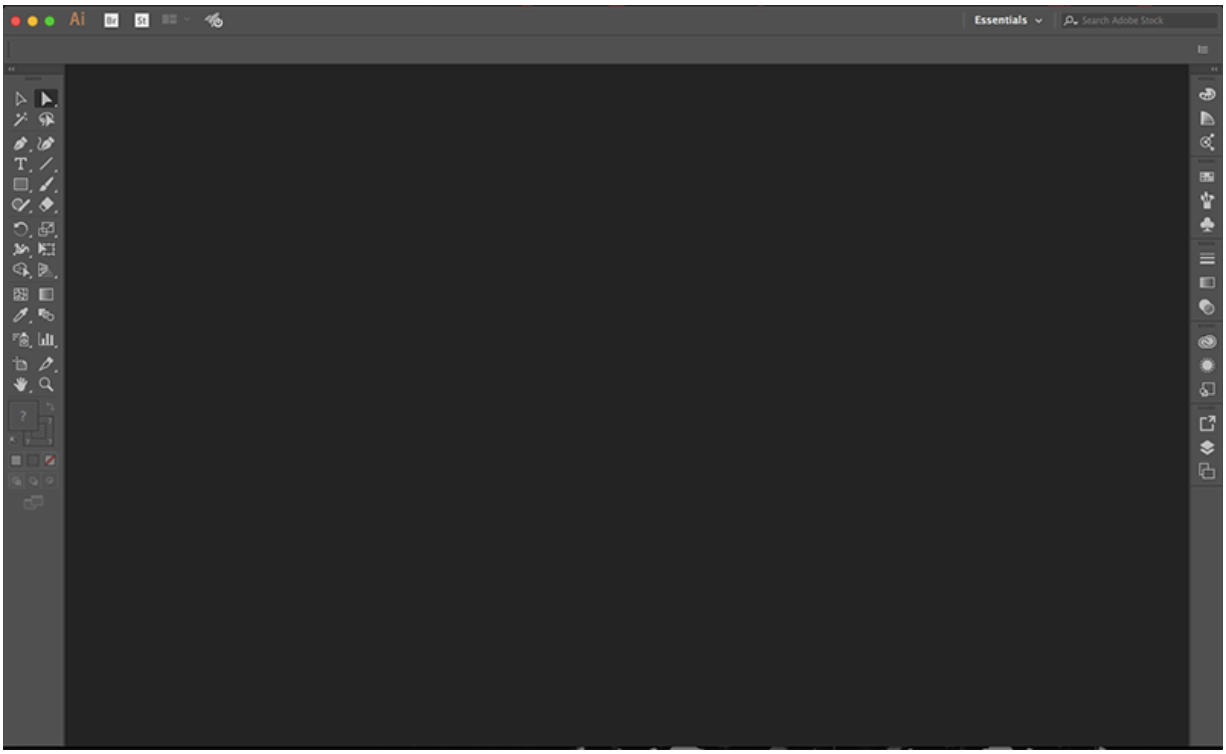
Raster images are better for high detail images but lack the preciseness of a vector when it comes to scalability.
Vector is better for less detail images but are much better for scaling both up or down. They have no intrinsic resolution either.

Illustrator basics - Interface

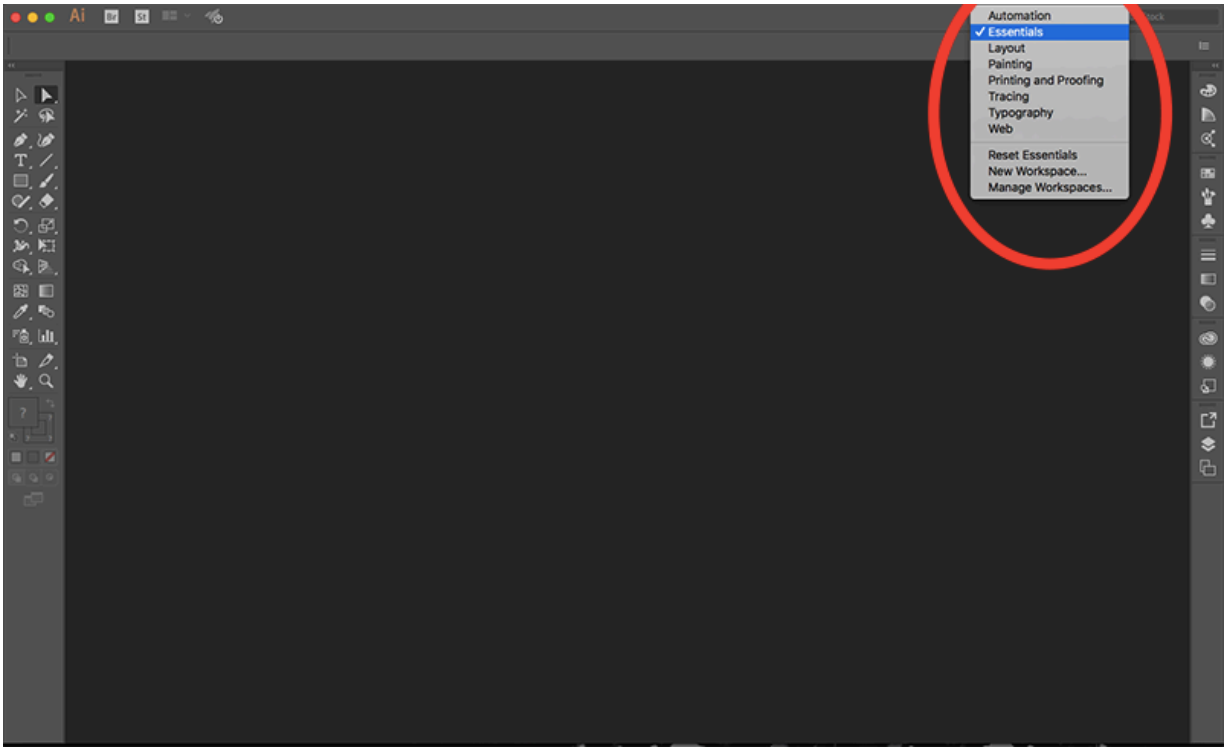
Ok so we got the reasons we want to use illustrator down, because we want to create wicked vector graphics!

Lets dive in and start learning the basics of the program so that we can than move on to the real work.

When you open Illustrator you will be greeted with a blank UI. From here you will see tools on the left and right.



If your interface does not look like this you can reset it by clicking on the tab on the top right and making sure "Essentials" is selected.



So now we need to create a document! We can do so by either using the hot keys (CMD + N) or selecting File > New. Which will bring up a prompt, and from here we can choose depending on what we need to accomplish. There are a good bit of presets in here for mobile, web, print and film. For now lets cover some basics.

Width & Height

Depending on what we are tasked to do, we may have a width and height in mind. For example, if we are making graphics for web and we know the size of the image we are making we can do that here.

This is also true if we are tasked to make graphics that will be used in physical print. Post cards, business cards, flyers, posters, whatever the case. Sometimes we may just want to draw something in practice and it wont really matter what the size is as long as we have enough room to work.

Units of measure

We can choose what units of measure we would like to use. Default is Points but I tend to use inches, CM or pixels.

Orientation

Like taking a picture with your phone upright or sideways.

Art boards

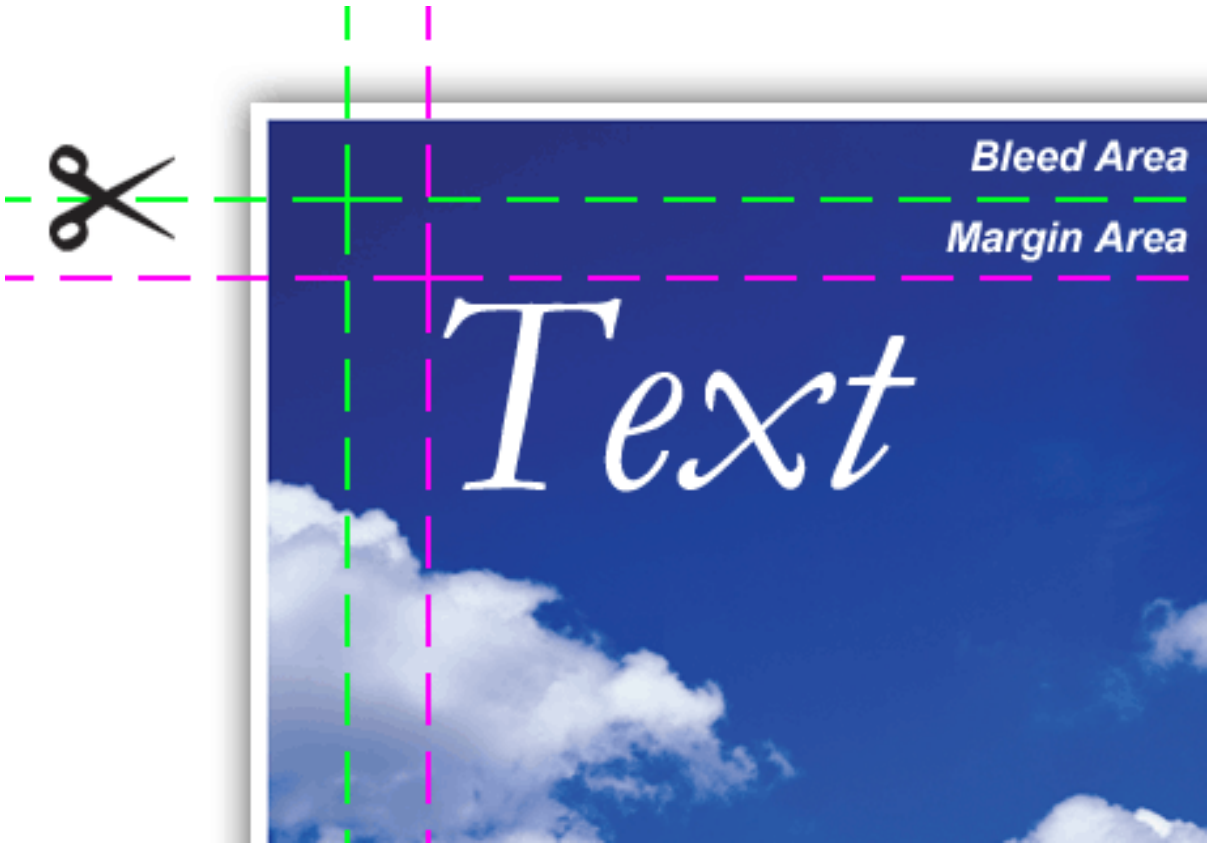
Like having more than 1 piece of paper to draw on.

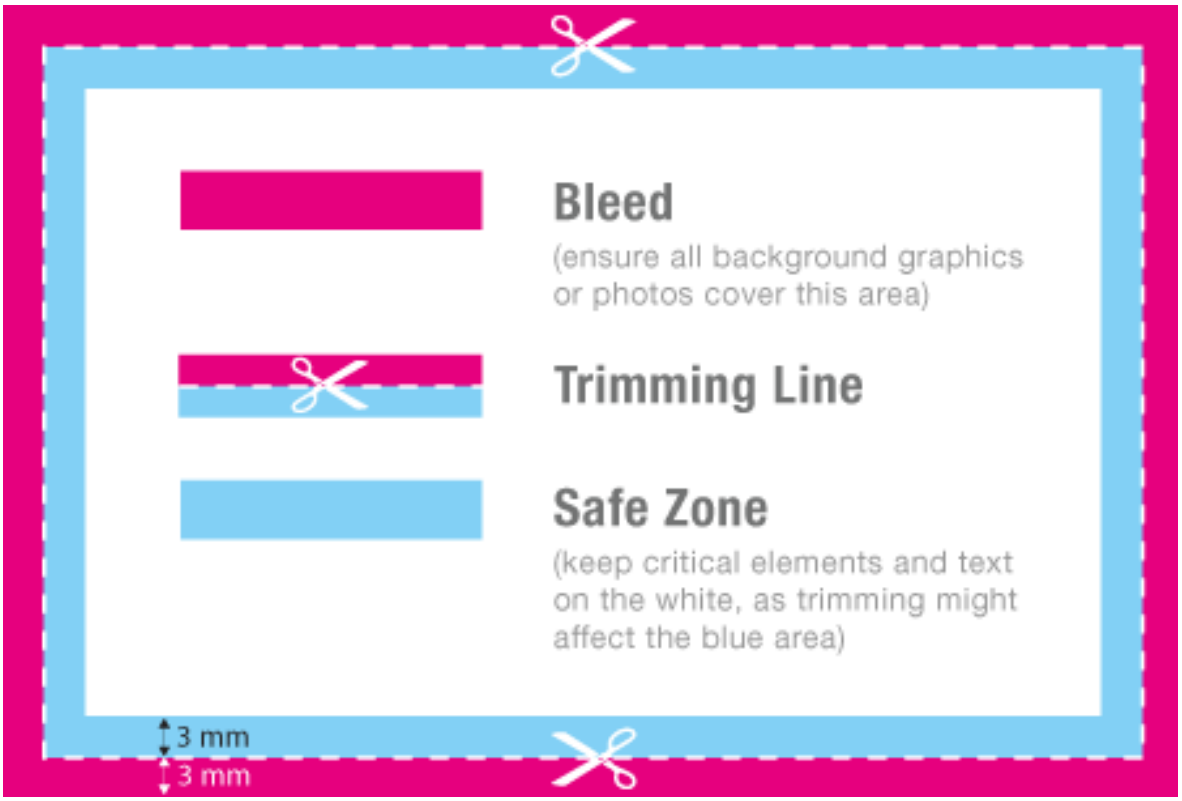
Bleed

Some things we will be tasked to do for print will need a bleed. Why's that? And what the hell is a bleed!?

When it comes to print graphics, lets say a flyer. There will be a safe zone, than there will be a trim line and a bleed zone. I mean, we DO have to cut the print right? 😜

So when it comes to what we do as the designer. We have to keep this in mind. Now lets say we are using a background colour or image. That BG or image should be as big as the bleed than the important stuff will be in the safe zone.





Colour Mode

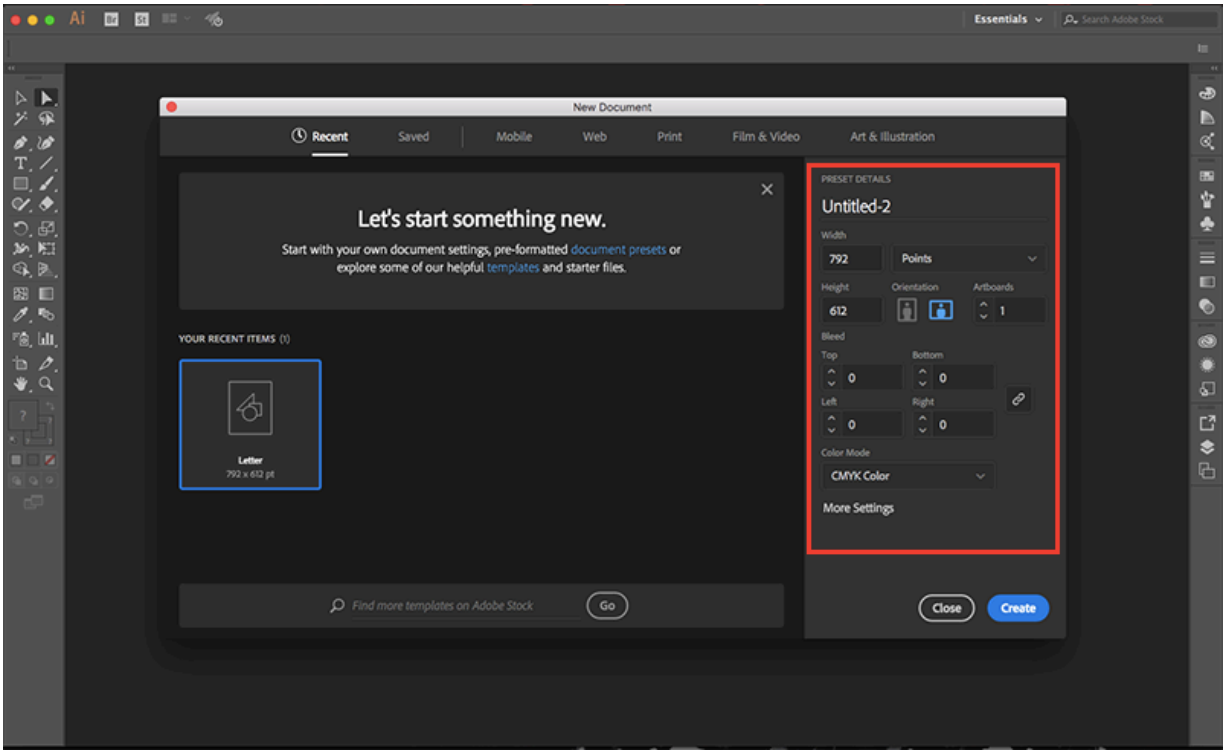
There are 2 options:

RGB & CKMY

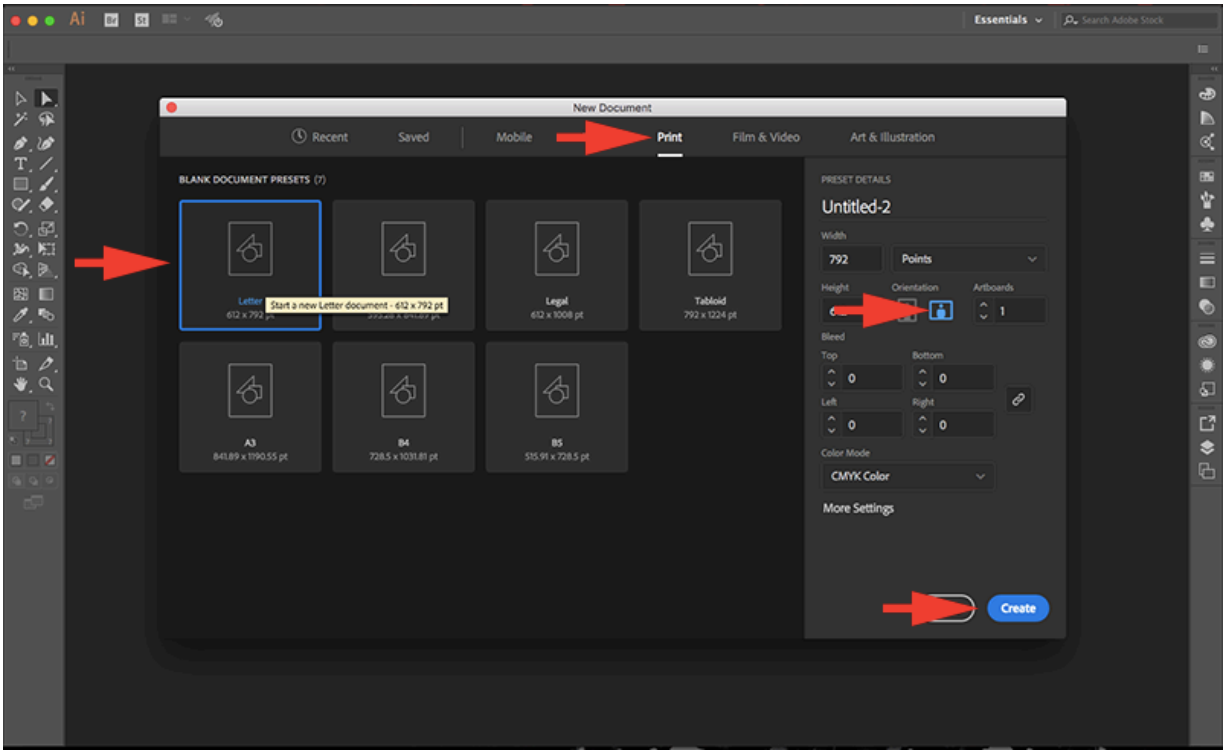
Simply:

RGB (Red Green Blue) is used for graphics you will create for a screen.

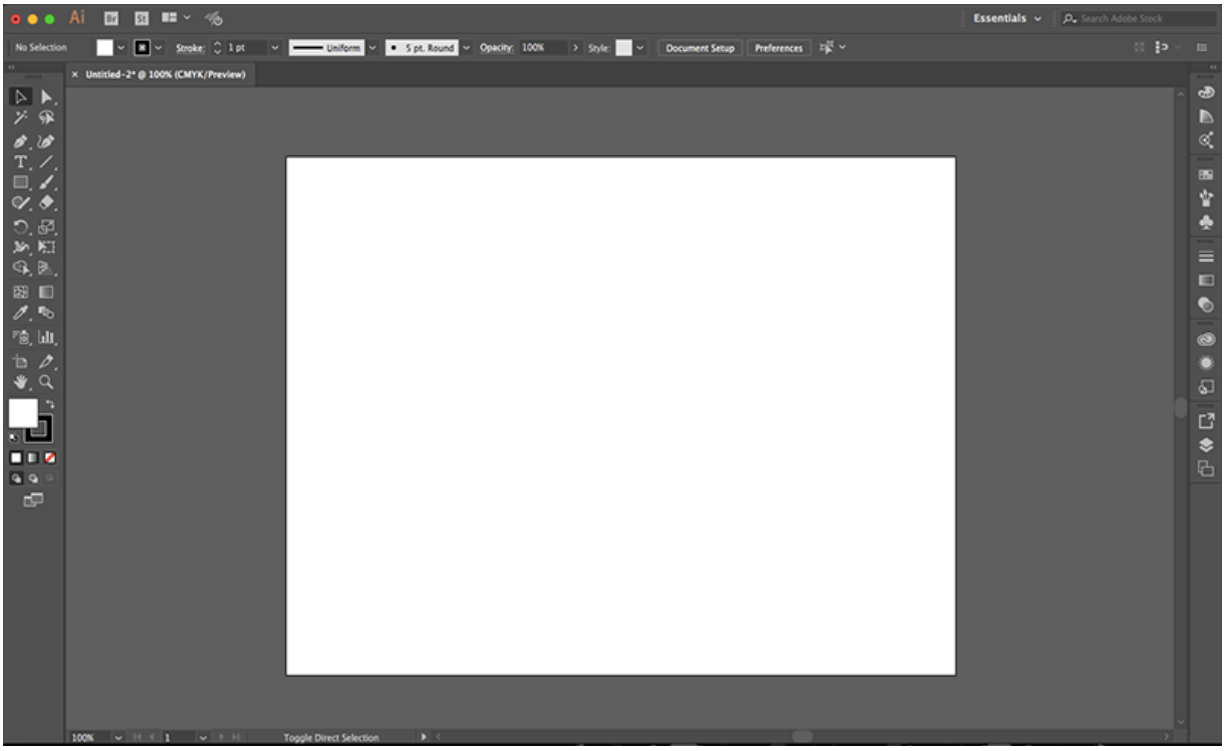
CKMY (Cyan Magenta Yellow Key) is used for graphics you will create for print.



For now lets create a letter sized document in CKMY with a landscape orientation.



From here we will have a blank document to practice on…



Let the games begin! But first!

Hot Keys

• Shortcuts	• Windows	• macOS
• Undo	• Ctrl + Z	• Command + Z
• Redo	• Shift + Ctrl + Z	• Shift + Command + Z
• Cut	• Ctrl + X	• Command + X
• Copy	• Ctrl + C	• Command + C
• Paste	• Ctrl + V	• Command + V
• Paste in front	• Ctrl + F	• Command + F
• Paste at back	• Ctrl + B	• Command + B
• Paste in place	• Shift + Ctrl + B	• Shift + Command + B

• Paste on all artboards	• Alt + Shift + Ctrl + B	• Option + Shift + Command + B
• Check spelling	• Ctrl + I	• Command + I
• Open the Colour Settings dialog box	• Shift + Ctrl + K	• Shift + Command + K
• Open the Keyboard Shortcuts dialog box	• Alt + Shift + Ctrl + K	• Option + Shift + Command + K
• Open the Preferences dialog box	• Ctrl + K	• Command + K

Basic Shapes

On the left panel you will notice these icons:

 This icon is the shape tool. It allows you to draw shapes such as squares, circles, polygons, flares. Mouse over and click-hold for more options. When Drawing hold the [shift] key to make a perfect shape.

 This icon is the line tool. Click hold for more options. Hold [shift] while drawing for perfect angles.

 This is the text tool. It allows you to enter text onto your art board. Click hold for more options.

 This is the free draw brush. Click hold for more options. Hold [shift] for perfect angles.

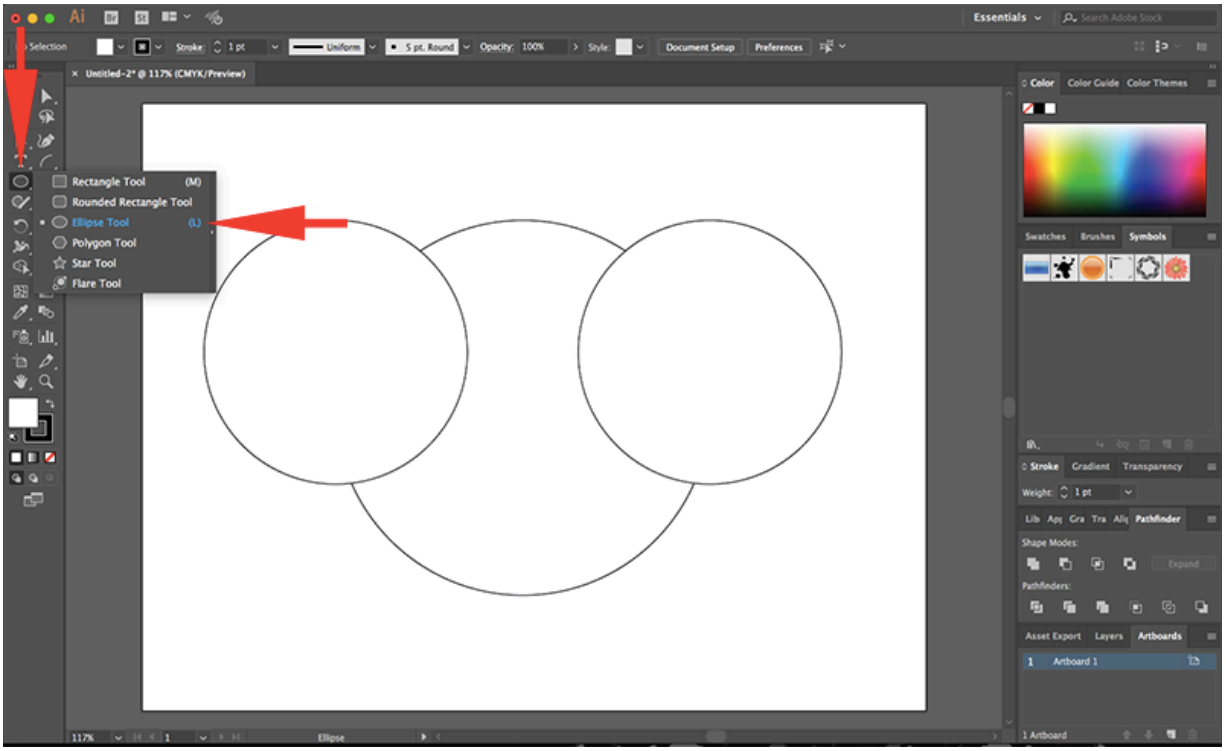
 This is the selection tool. It will grab whole items on your art board.

 This is the direct selection tool. It will grab paths of items. Click hold for more options.

Note* You may want to open the pathfinder window.
Top main menu > Window > Pathfinder

Lets draw some basic shapes.

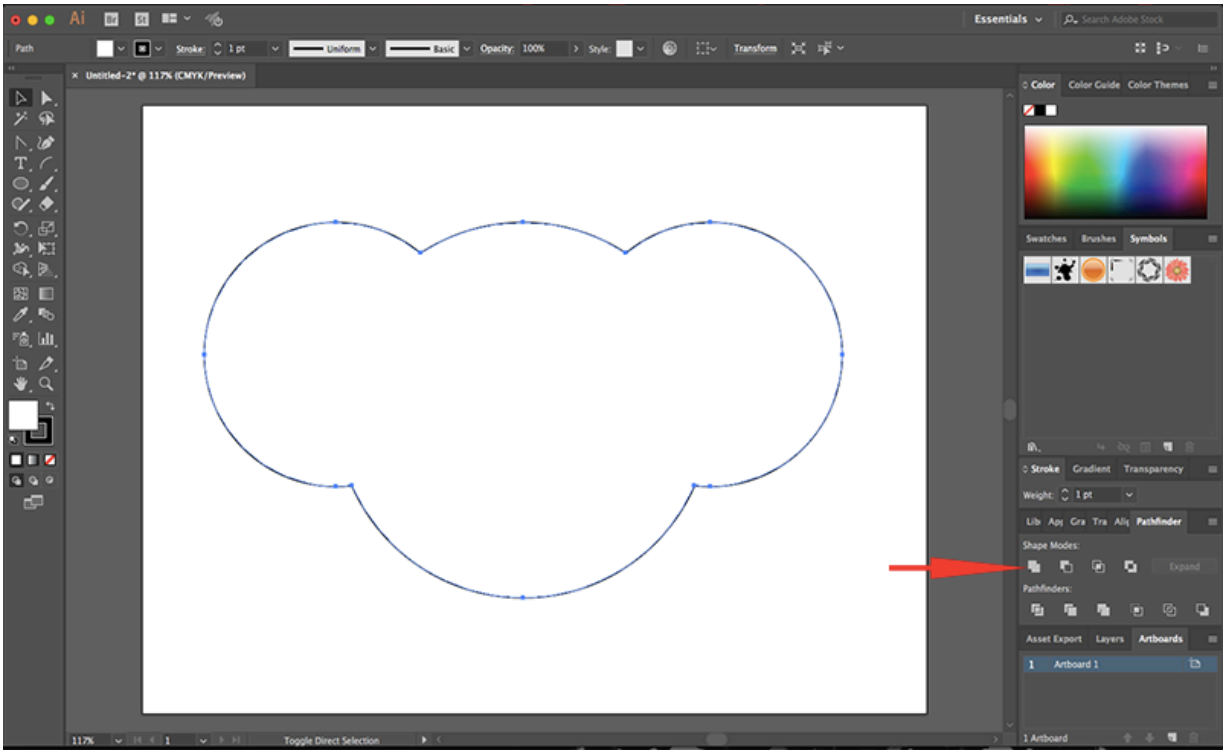
Using the eclipse tool we can draw some circles.
Lets make some circles.



Now we can do things like add colour for the BG and/or the stroke, Merge the shapes together and more. Lets merge them first.

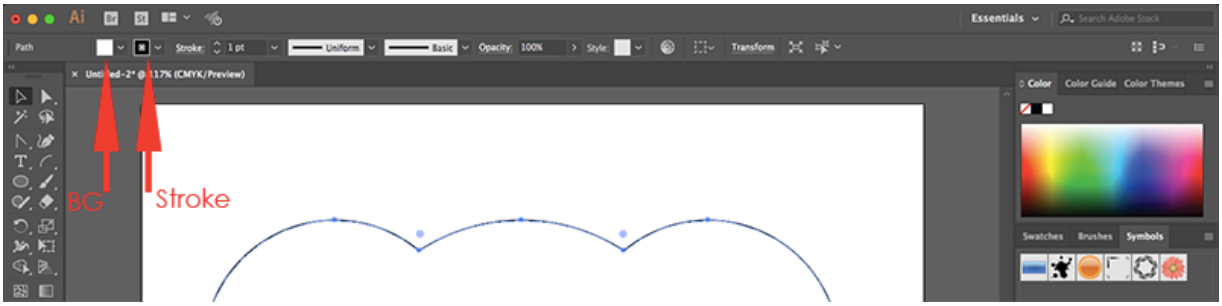
In the Pathfinder panel click the "Unite" button while the shapes are selected. To select them click them while holding [shift] Alternatively you can use the selection tool and drag over all shapes.

You should end up with this.



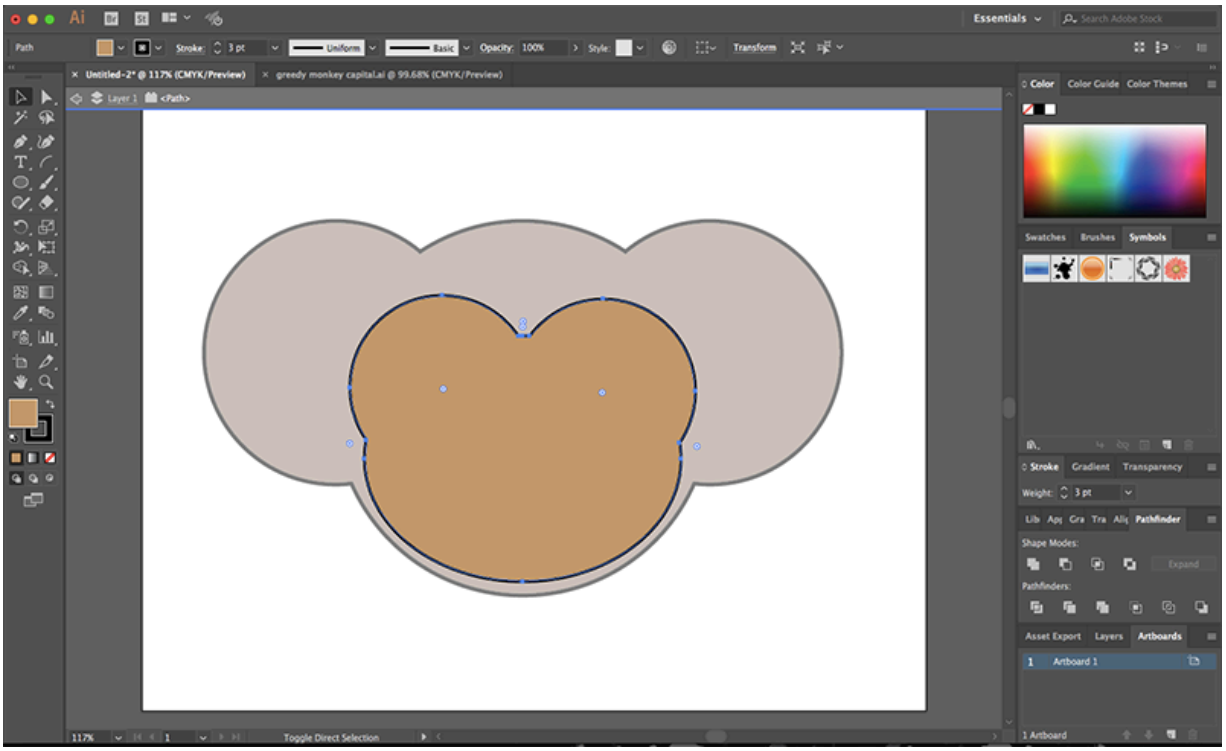
Now we can add some colour.

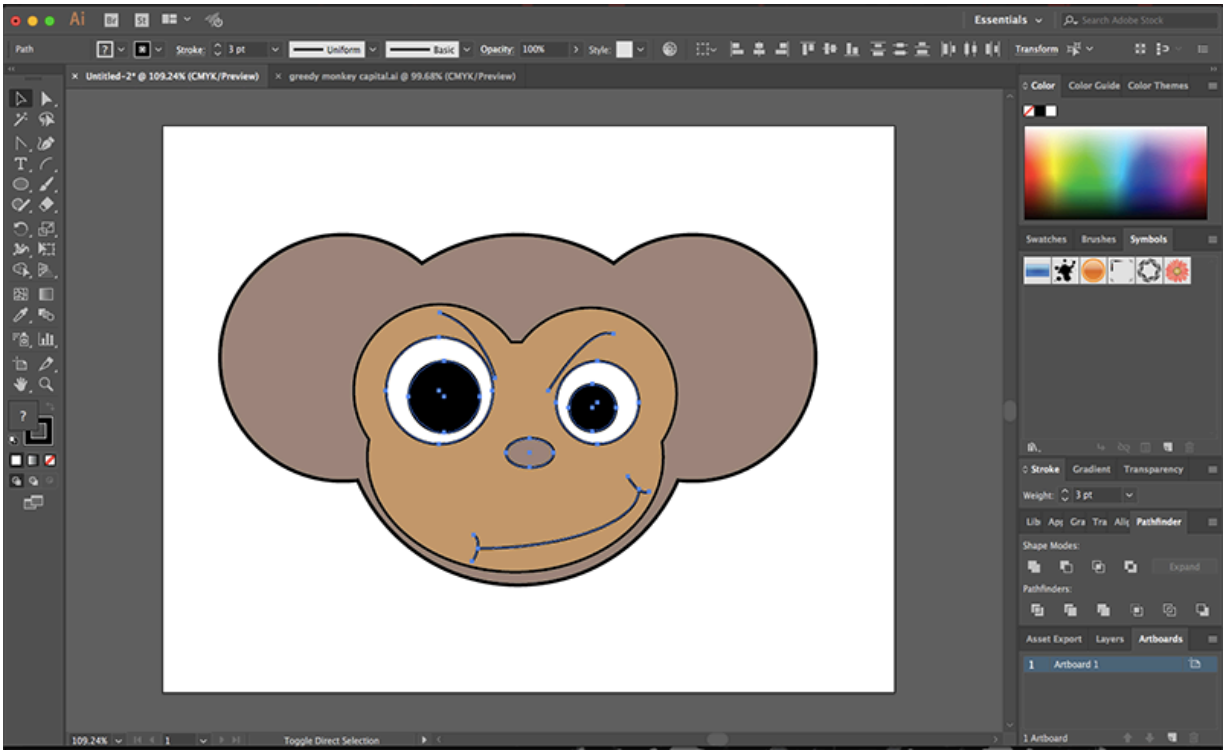
See these?



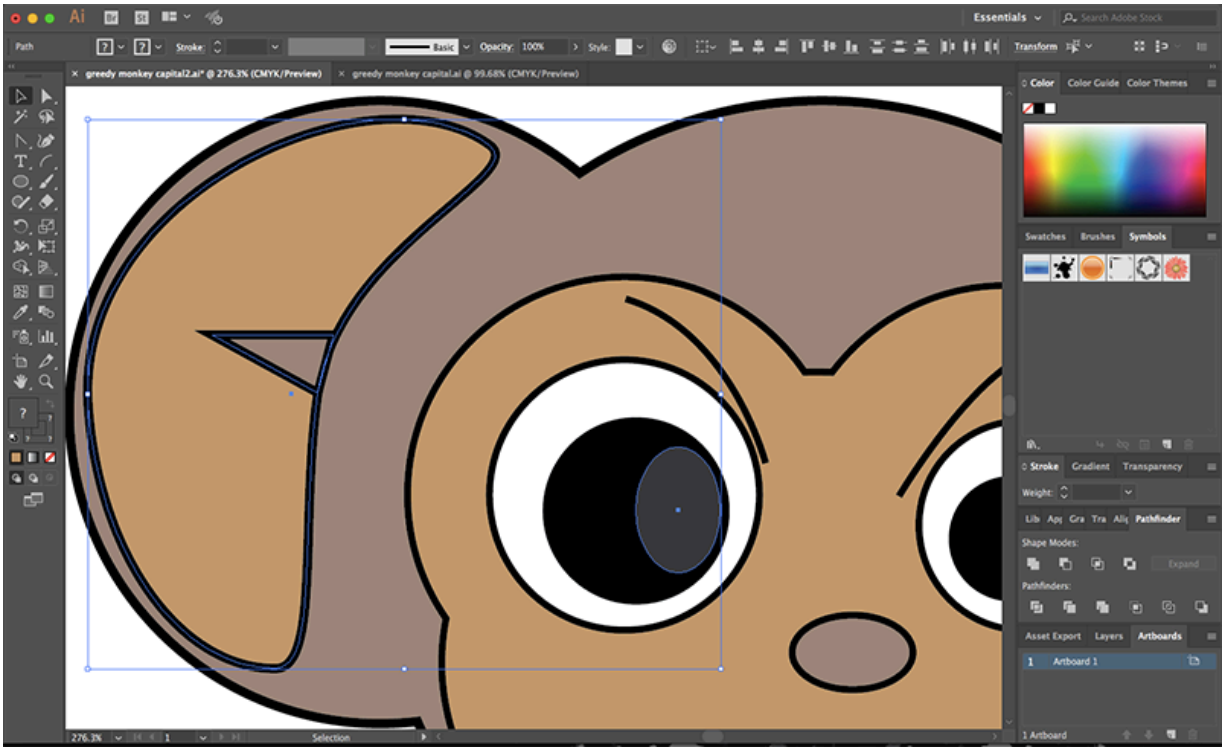
Those 2 swatches control colour of background colour (on the left) and stroke colour (on the right). We can also change the size of the stroke and the shape of the stroke in the options to the right.

With the colour selected, we can keep building on top of this. Adding more shapes to it for the face, eyes and so on. We can merge shapes the same way we did earlier when needed…

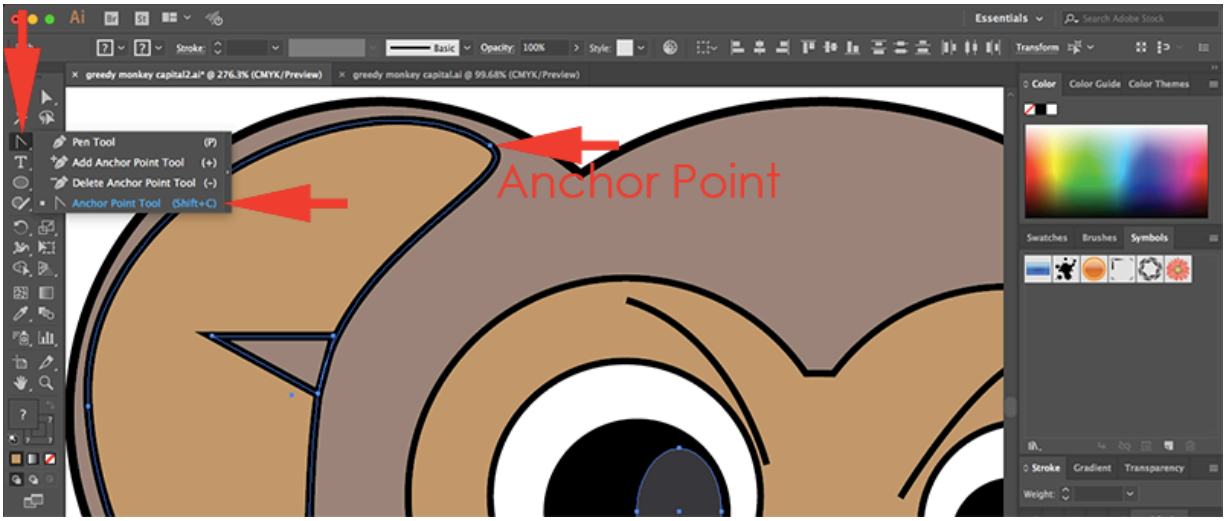




We can add a bit of detail to the eyes and the ears…



How did we get those ears to look like that!? For that we use the Anchor point tool. In this lesson we wont go too much into it as we will in a future lesson. But the Anchor point tool allows you to manipulate anchor points, so if you make a circle for example, you can warp it to a different shape.



Now its your turn! Play around with what we learned so far! Try and make a simple logo to start, It does not have to be perfect for now but you can use it as a starting point for your logo assignment!