

Illustrator Tool Box Part 2

Last week we covered more in depth the pen tools. This week we will cover a variety of other crucial tools that will help you through your workflow.

The selection tools are more versatile than you may think. We can use them for more than just selecting items or anchor points on our artboard. We can modify shapes with them as well. As you may know by now, a big part of Illustrator is taking one shape and modifying it to be what you need. We can use these tools to do this without having to use the pen tools.

Lets start with the selection tool.

Selection Tool

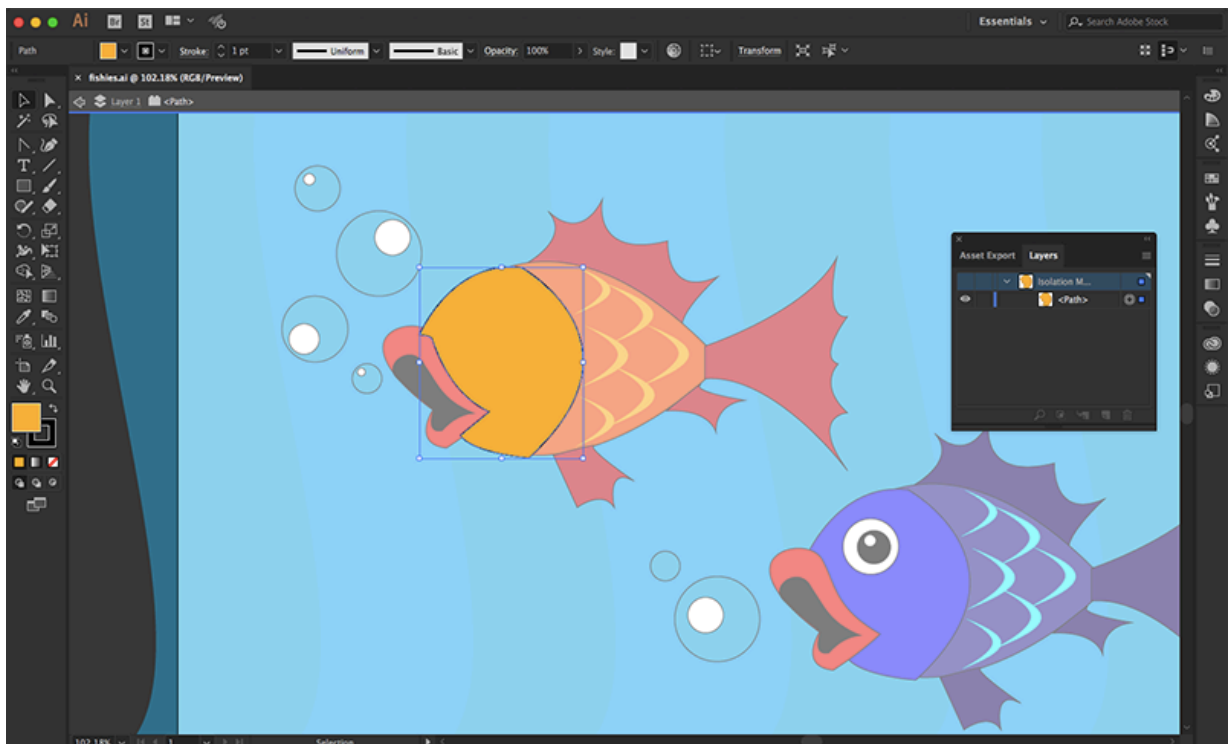
As you know, this tool is used to select objects on the art board. Once selected you can move an object, resize it or rotate it. If you hold the shift key as you do any of these things it will change the behaviour. Resizing holding the shift key will constrain proportion whilst scaling, rotating whilst holding shift will rotate to perfect angles and moving the object holding shift will move the object in perfect

angel to itself.

There are more tricks up our sleeve though using this tool...

1 - If you double click an object it will put it into isolation mode.

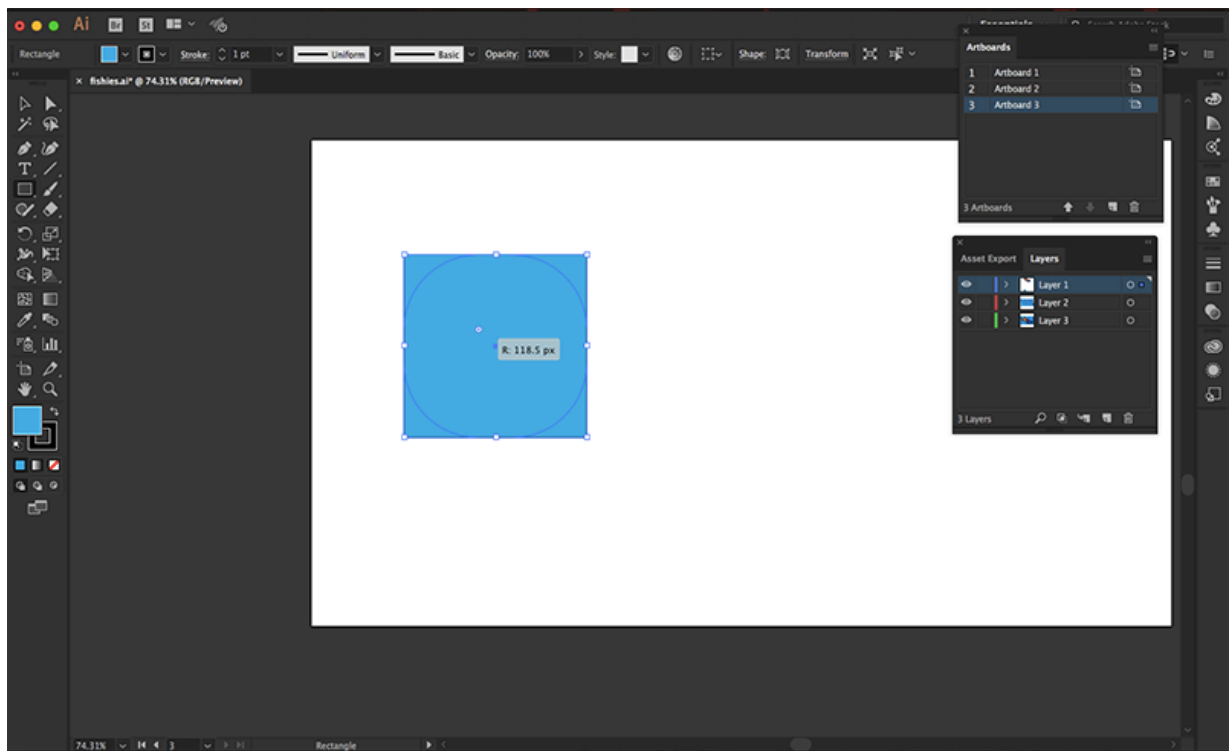
Isolation mode is an Illustrator mode in which you can select and edit individual components or sub-layers of a grouped object.



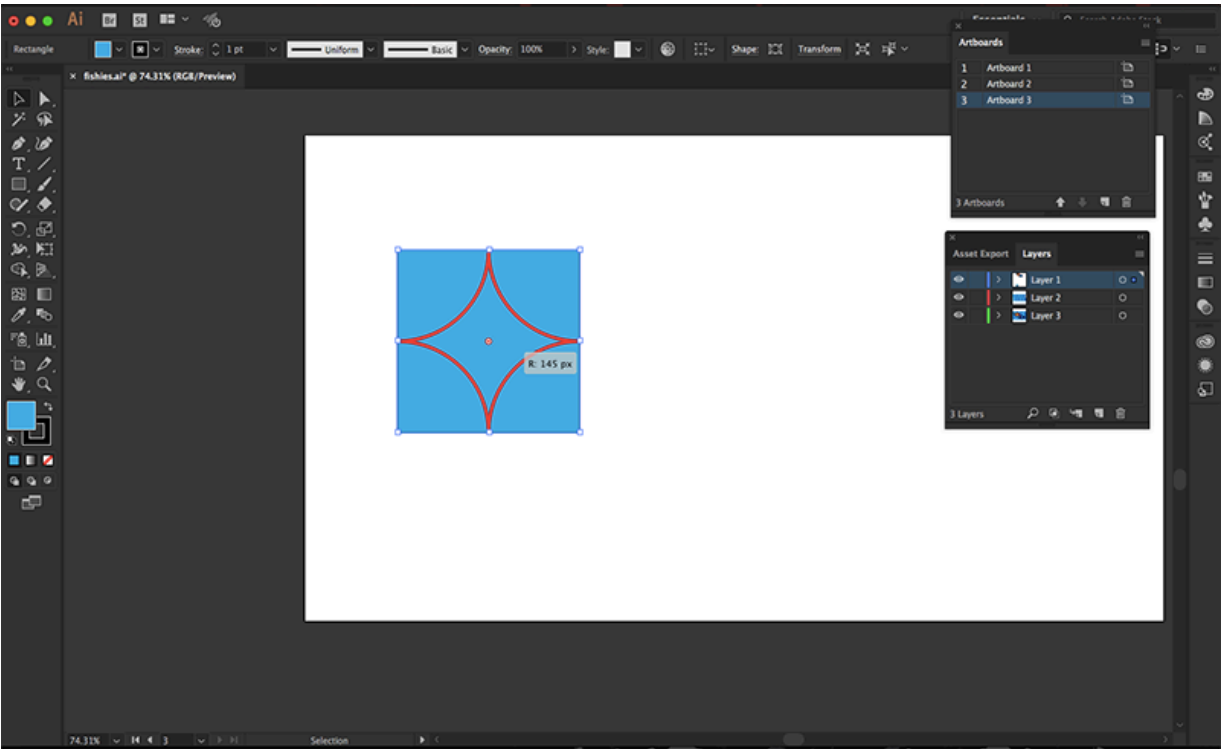
Note the top bar under the file tab where it says "Layer 1" and "<Rectangle>". This shows you that

you are in isolation mode and the breadcrumb to where you are. In this mode you can edit the single object without worrying about touching anything else on the art board.

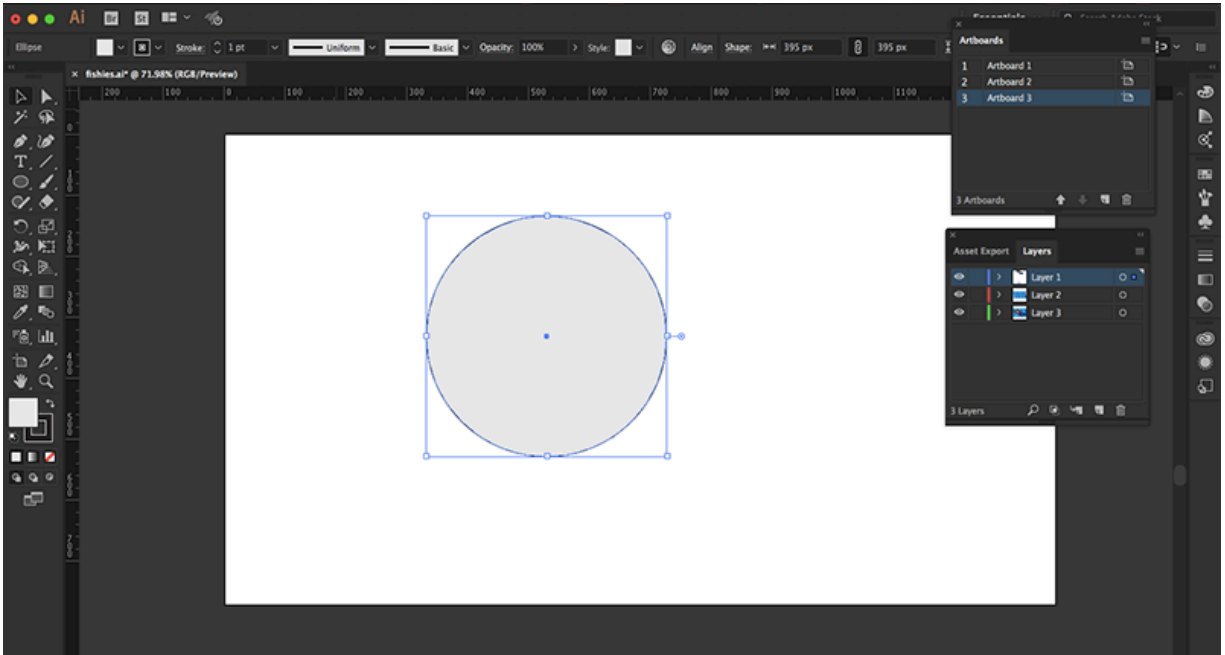
2 - Another thing we can do is modify shapes, notice this square. When we use the selection tool, there will be 4 circles within the shape. If you click the circle and drag you can round the corners until it becomes a circle.

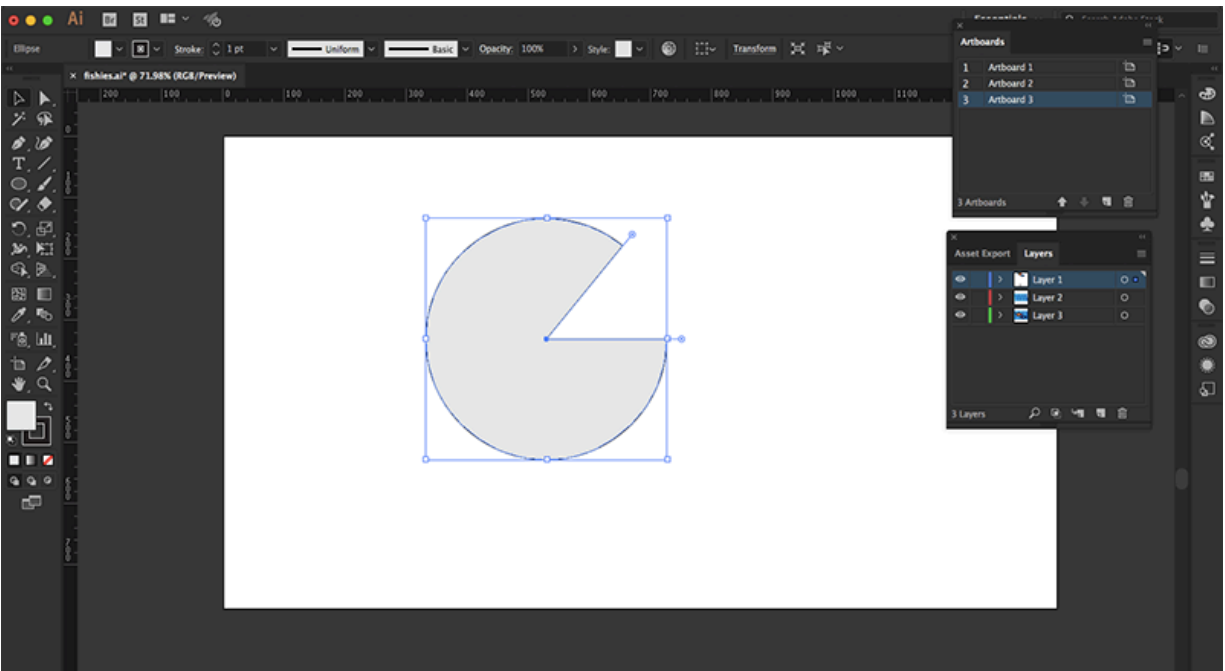


You can also use the arrow keys to change the orientation of the curves...



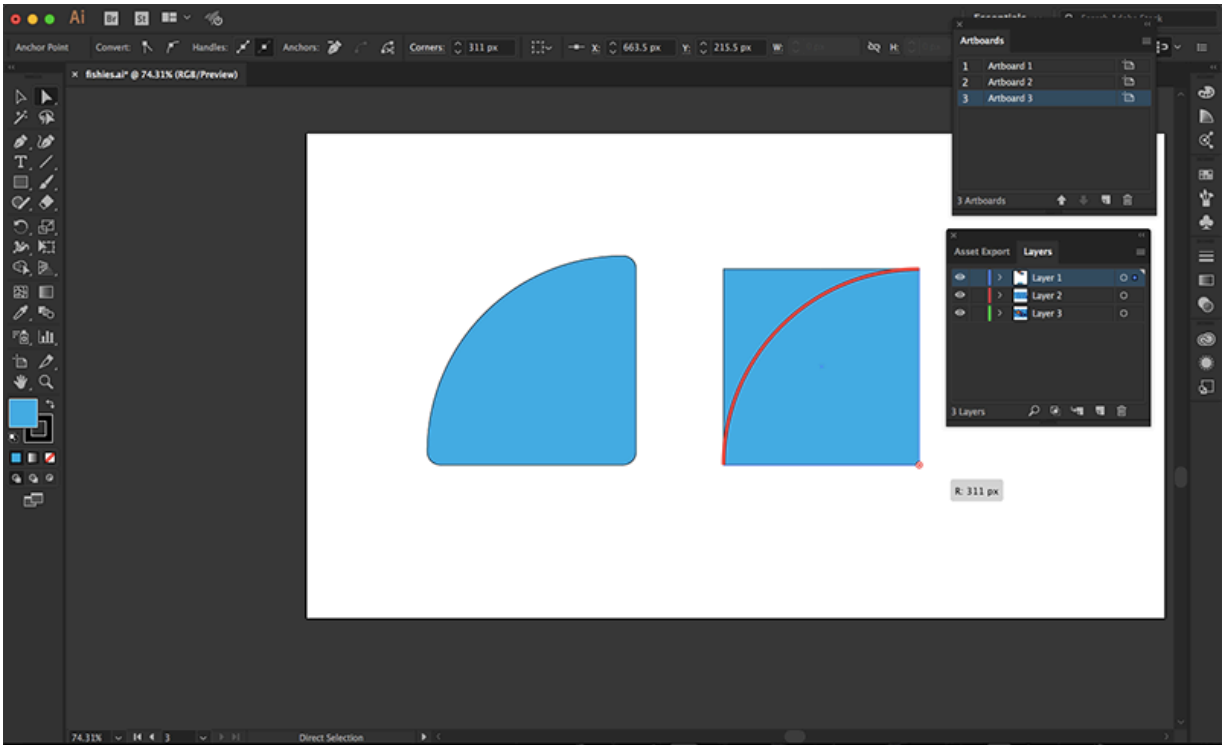
3 - If you make a circle, you will notice a protruding circle on the side. Using this you can modify the circle with the selection tool...





Direct Selection Tool

We can also do the above but isolate it to one specific side if we use the direct selection tool. To do so, you must first click the anchor point you wish to modify. Click a specific anchor point and then click the circle within and drag.

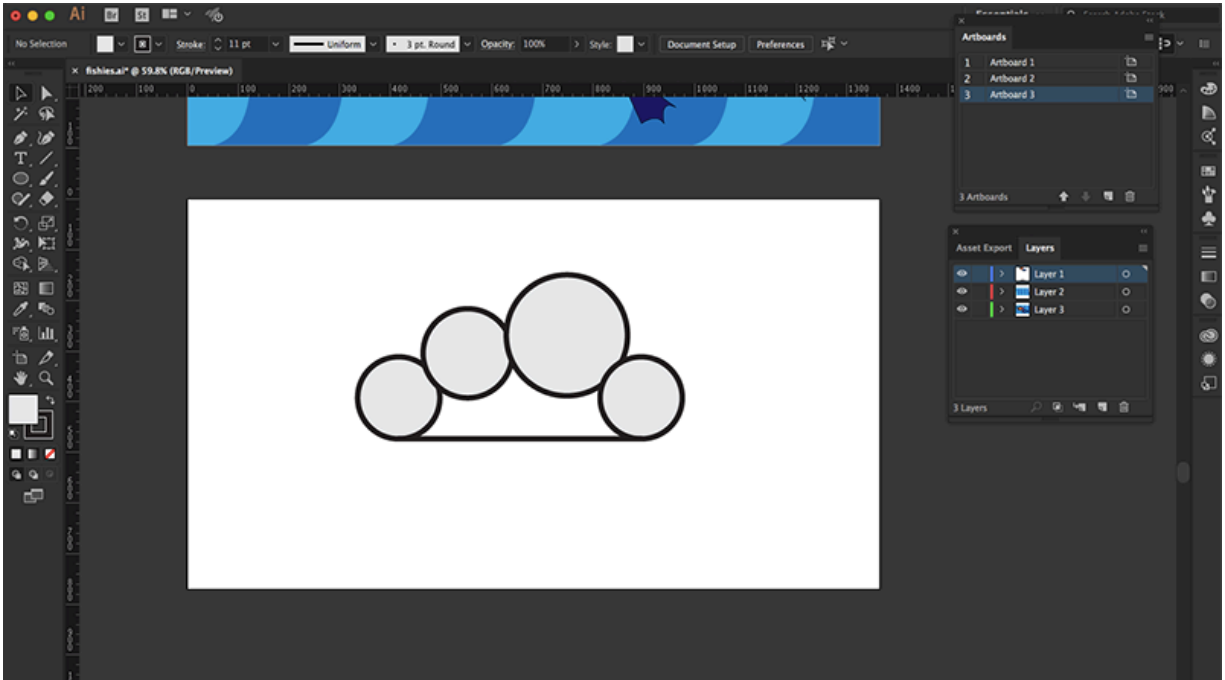


Building more Complex shapes

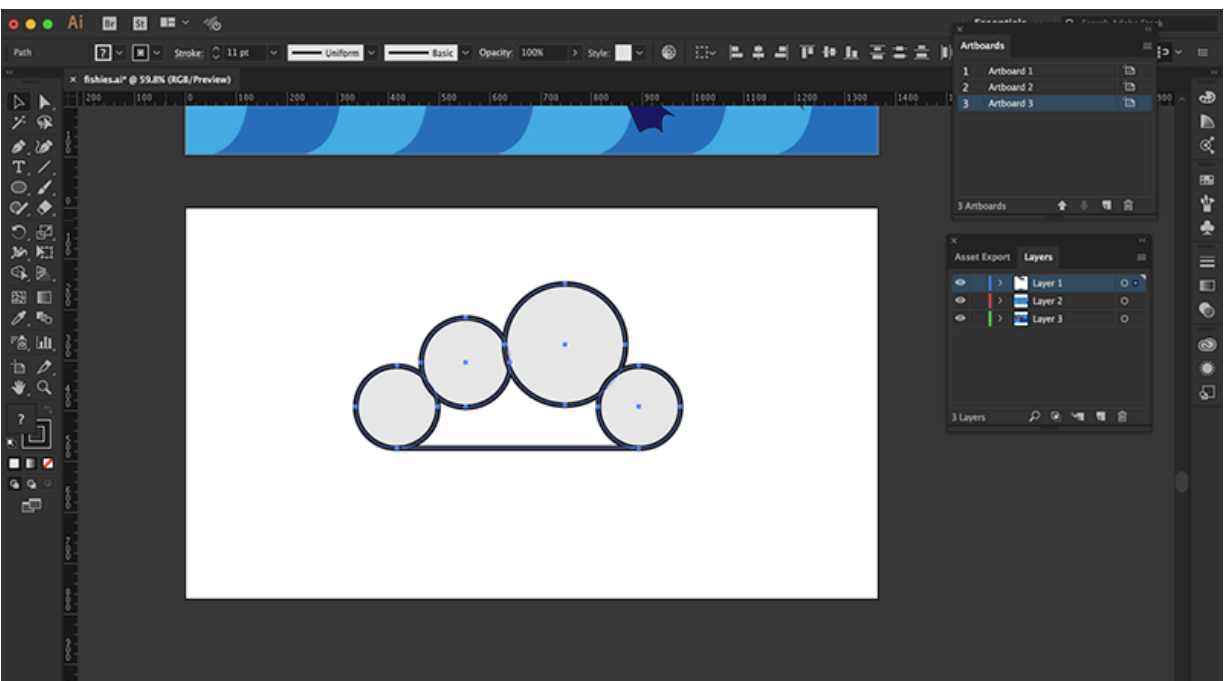
So far we have learned a good bit of the basics. There are tools we can use to build more complex shapes faster and easier. One of these is the shape builder tool.

Shape Builder Tool 

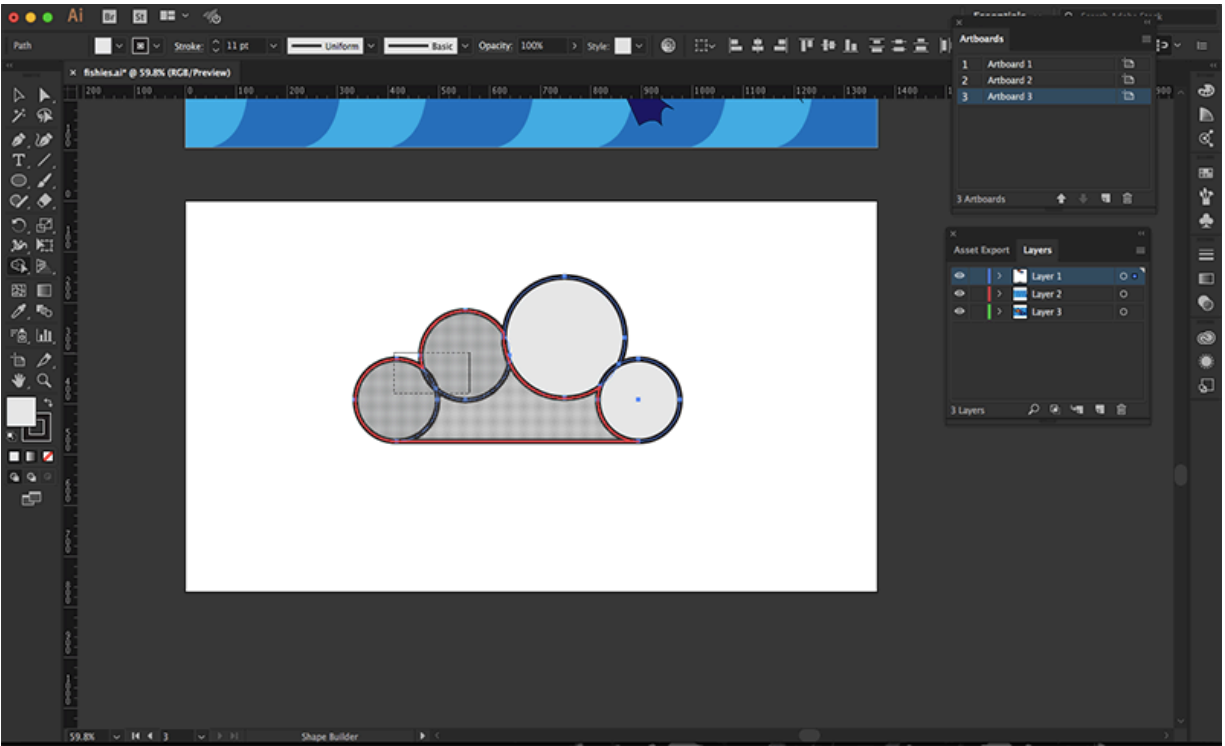
To use this tool, there is a process. To start lets make a line and some circles...

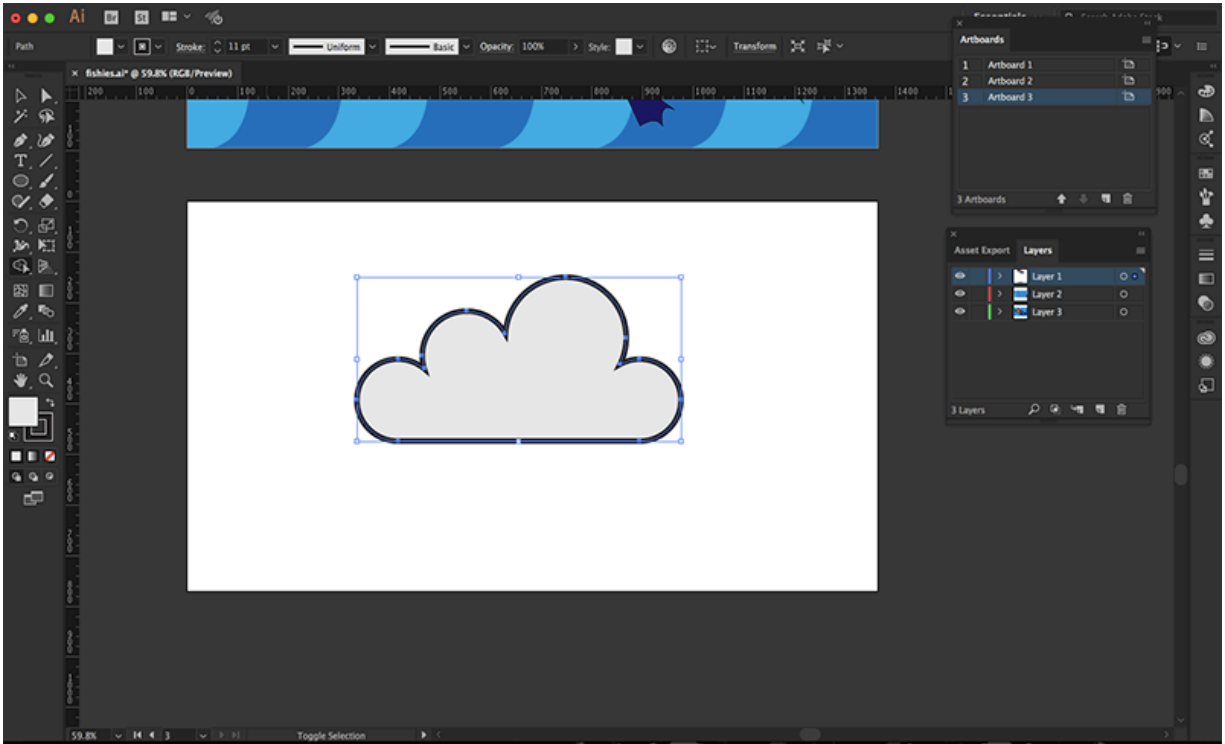
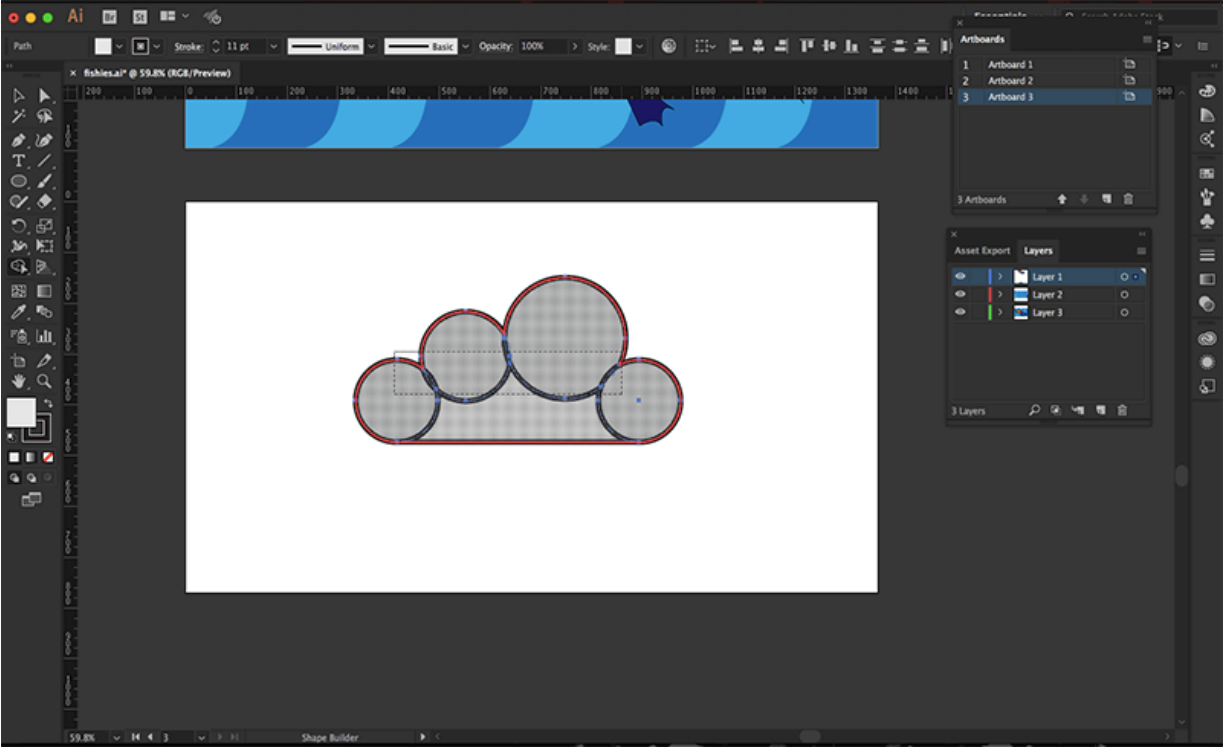


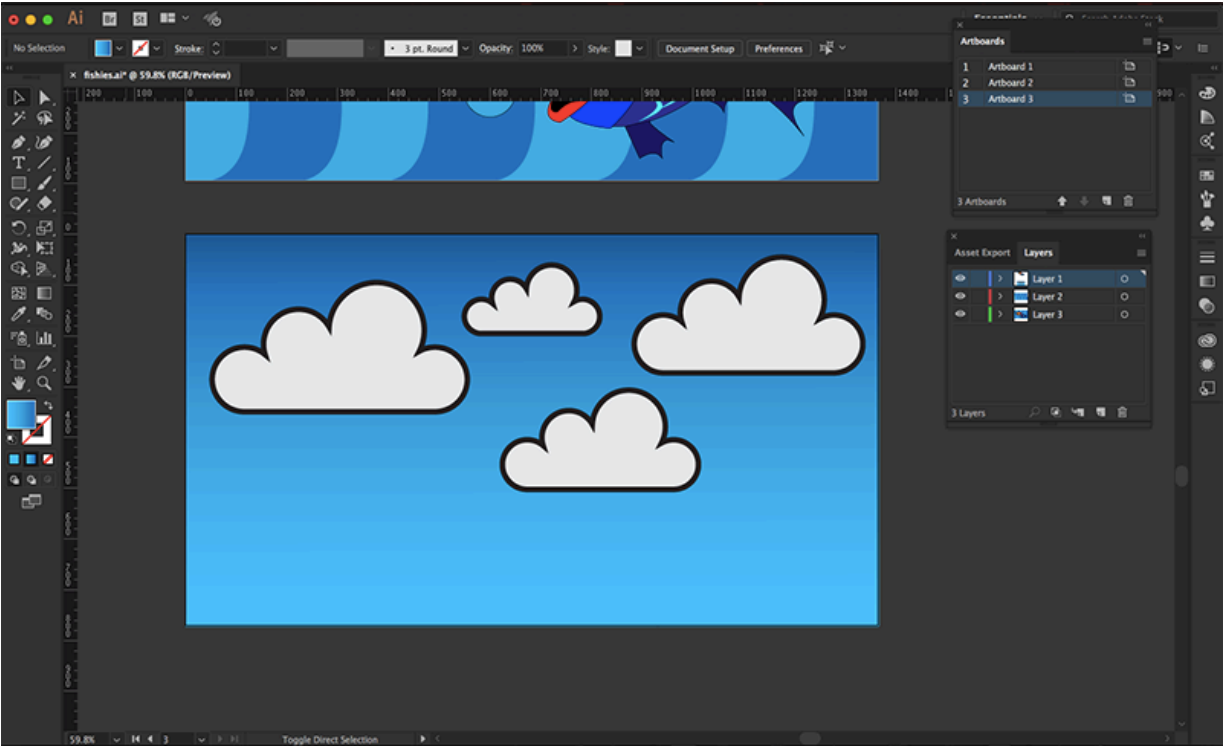
After that lasts use the selection tool to select all the shapes...



At this point we can now use the shape builder tool. Select the shape builder tool and then click drag a line through all the shapes until they all highlight in red outlines.







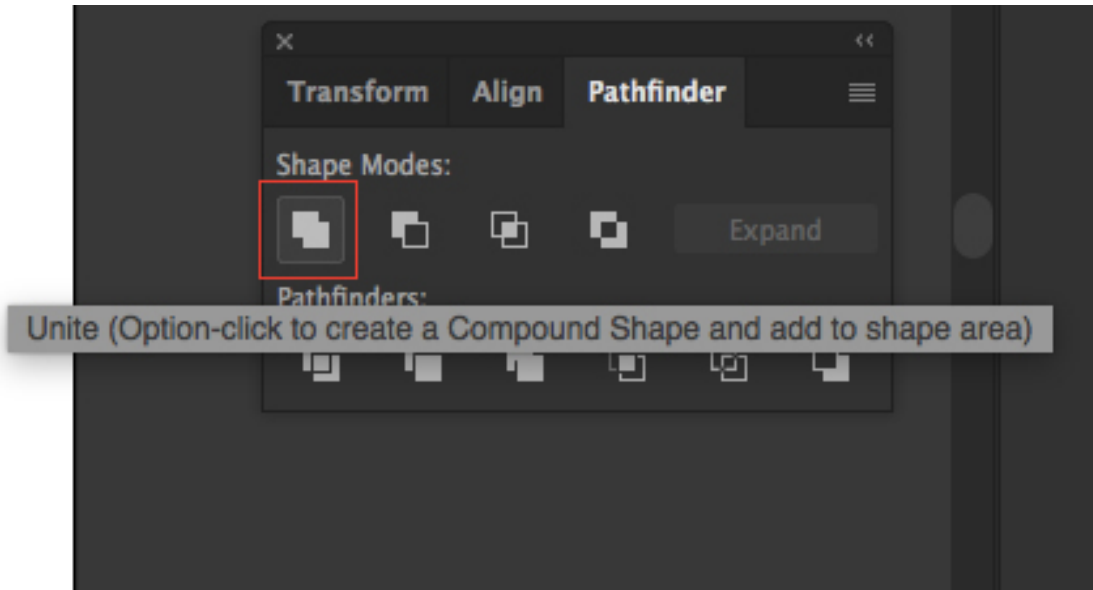
Using the pathfinder

In an earlier lesson we briefly talked about one of the functions of the pathfinder. Today we will look at it more in depth.

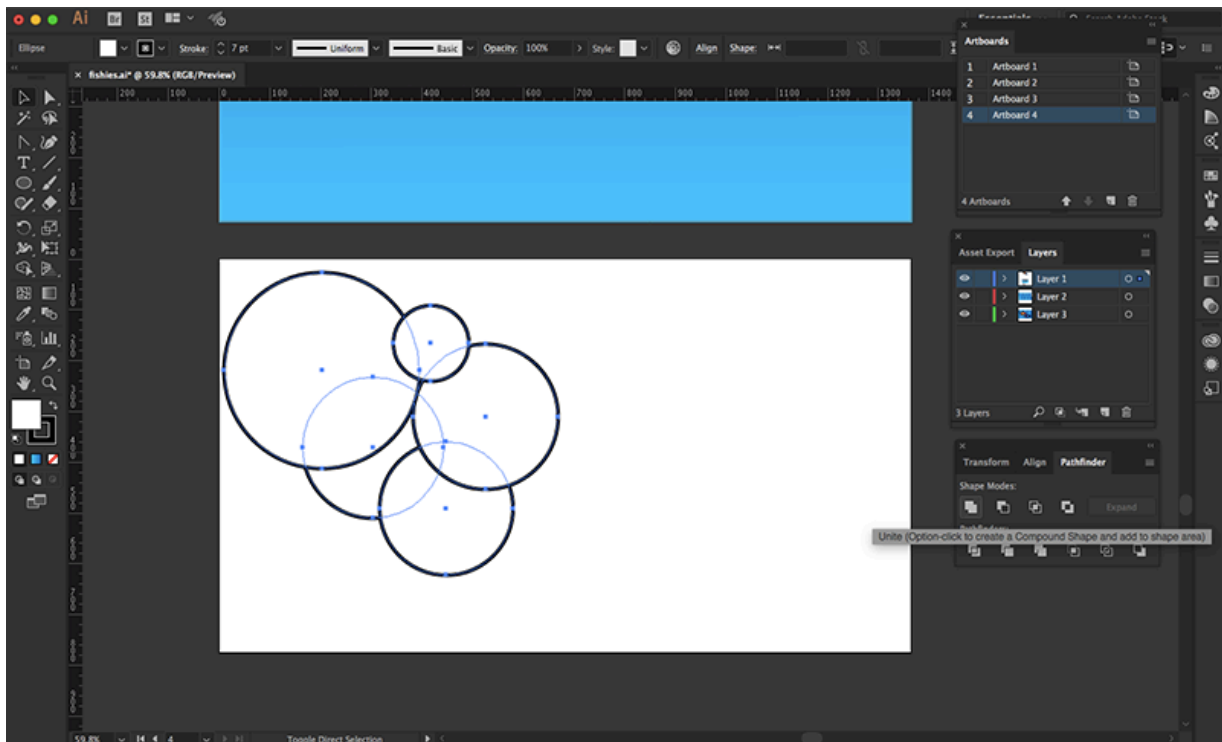
Remember to have the pathfinder selected in the window section of the main tool bar at the top!

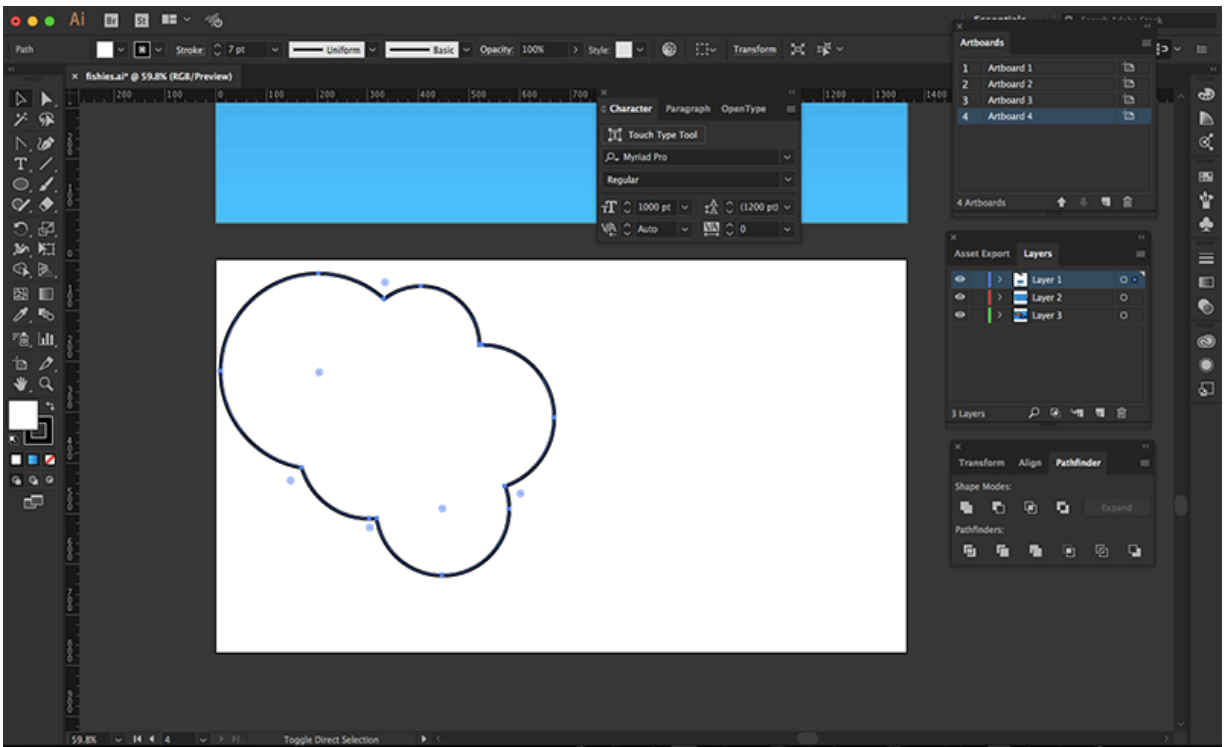
Now that we have it up. Lets go through them all.

Unite

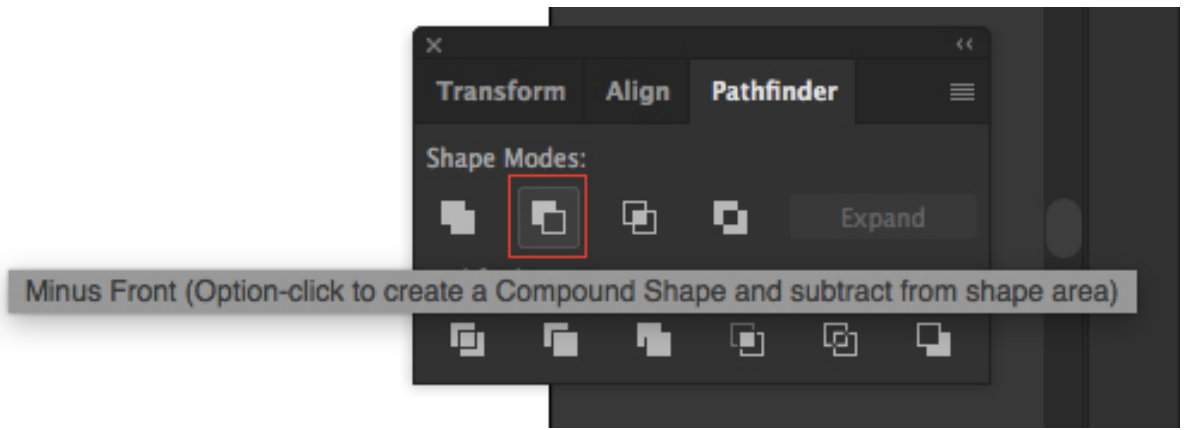


This is the one we looked at in our earlier class, it allows us to unite shapes together quick and easy, select some shapes that are overlapping and click the unite button.

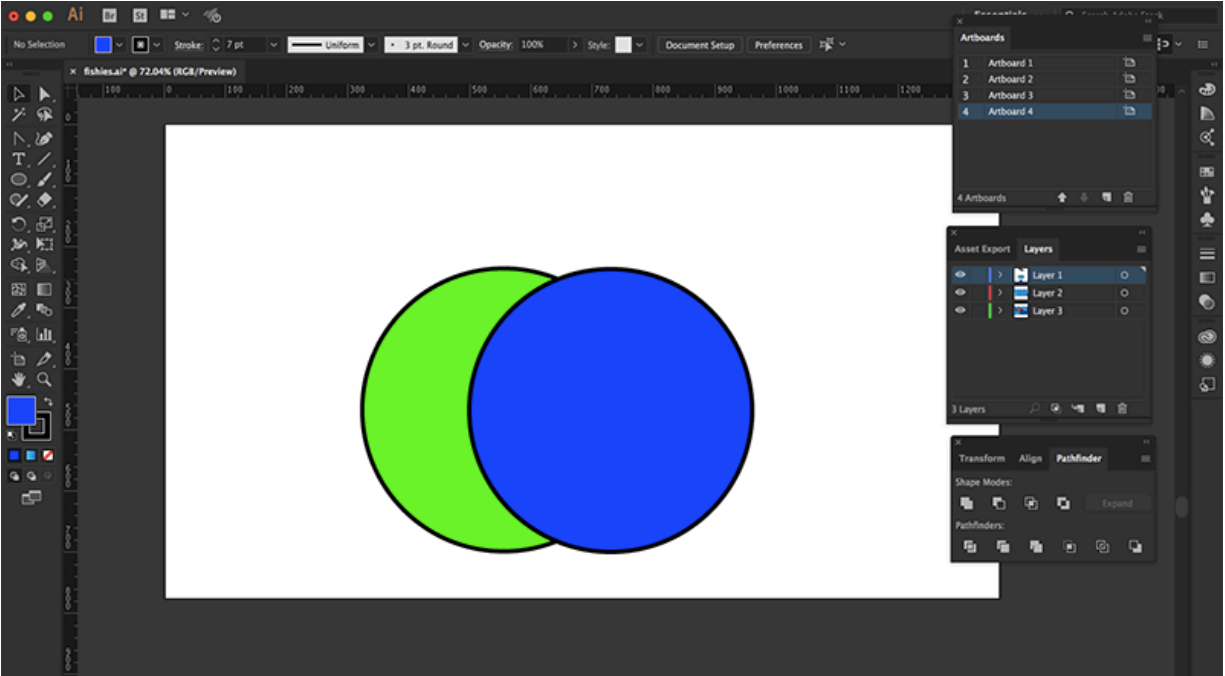




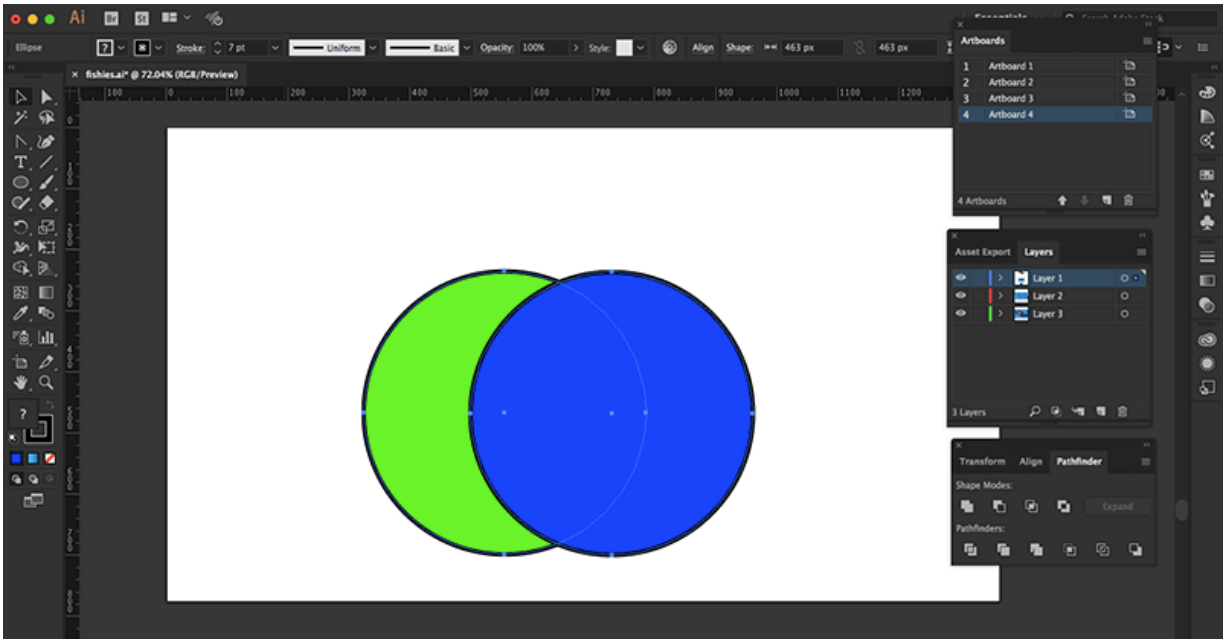
Minus Front

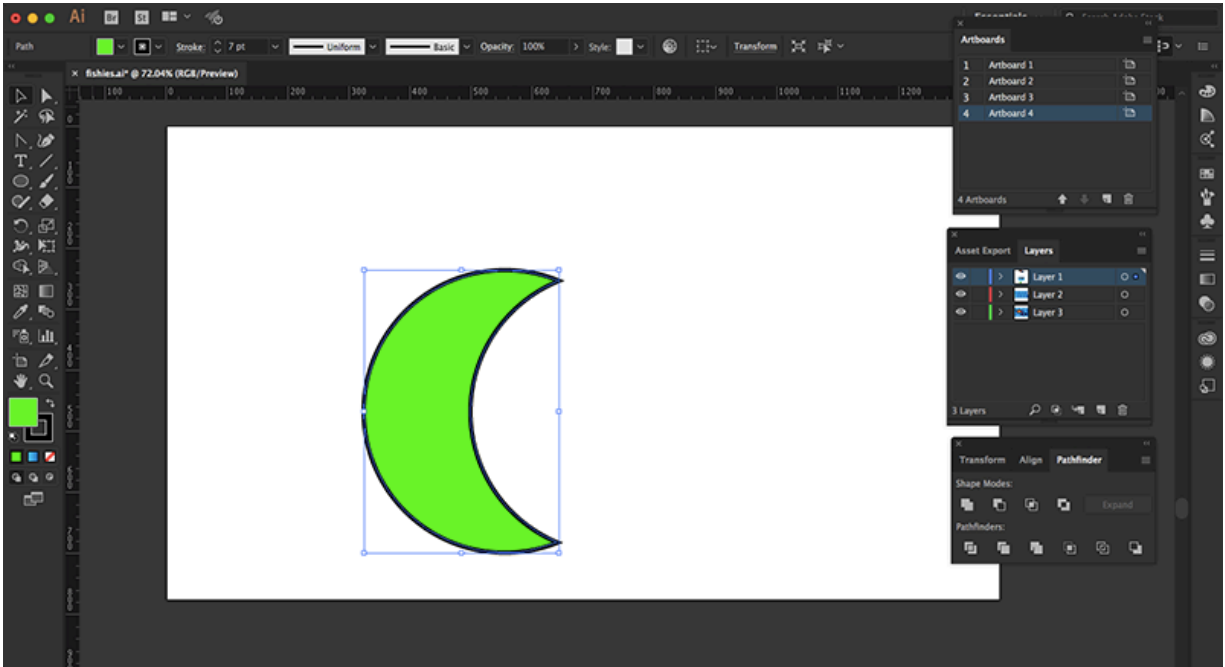


Using this tool we can minus out using 2 shapes to make one.

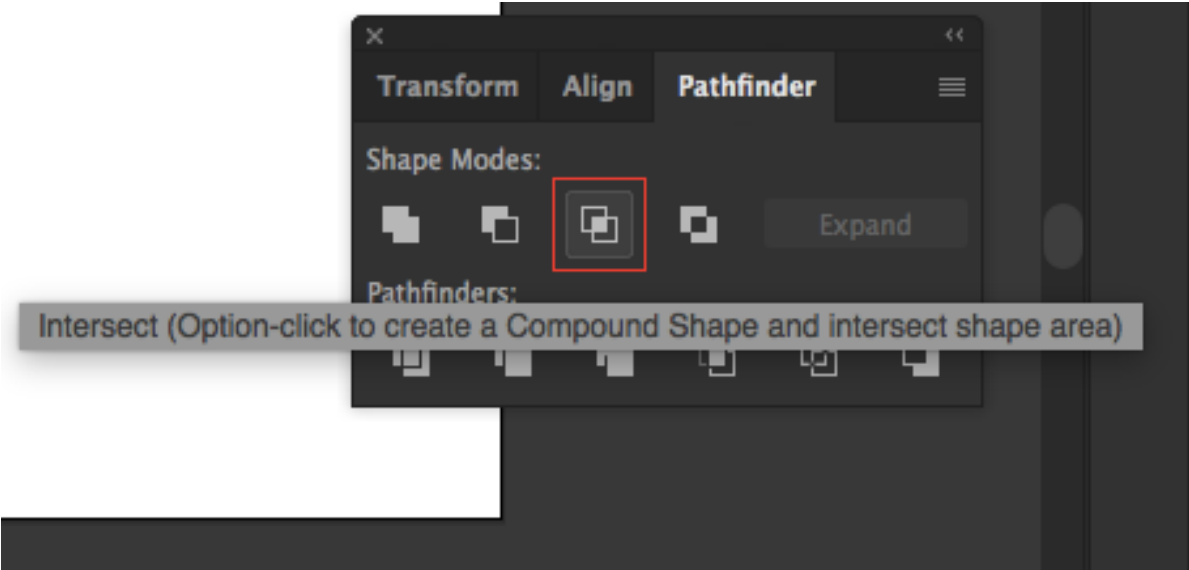


Make sure to highlight both using the selection tool...



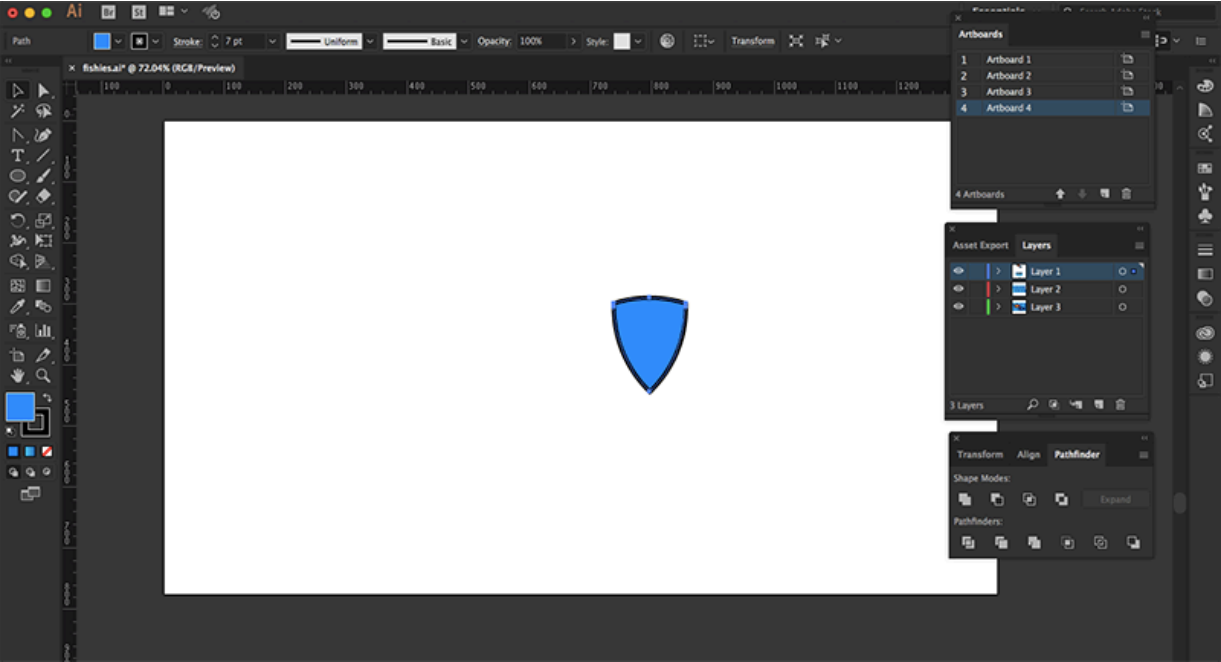
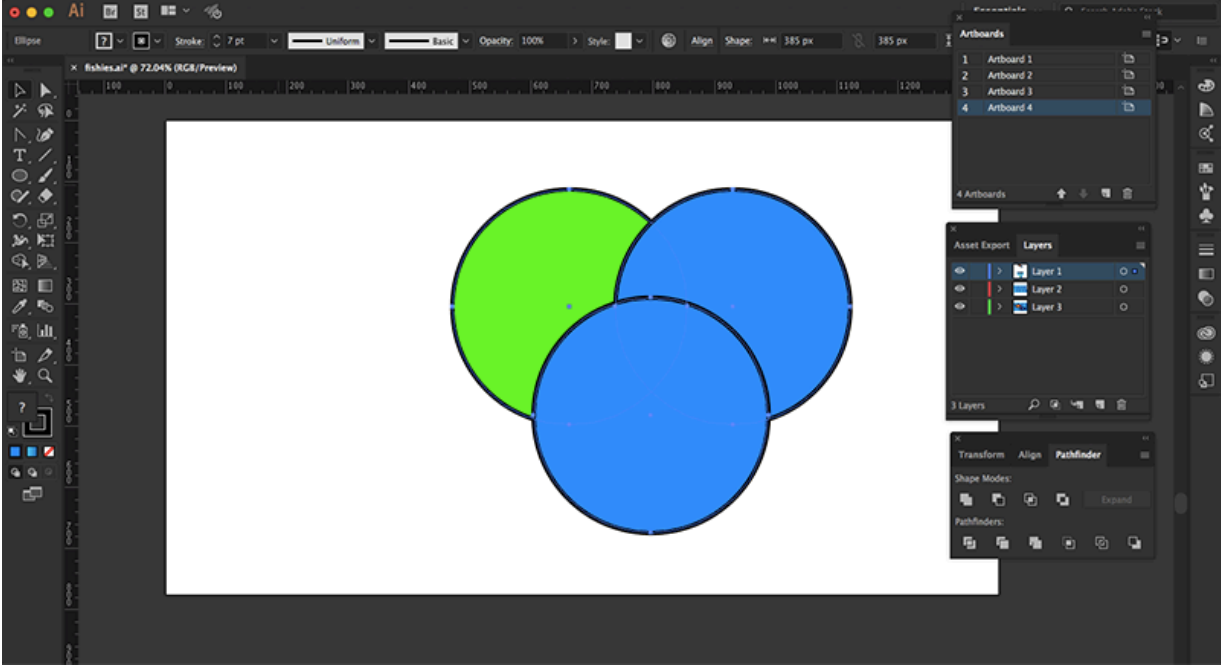


Intersect

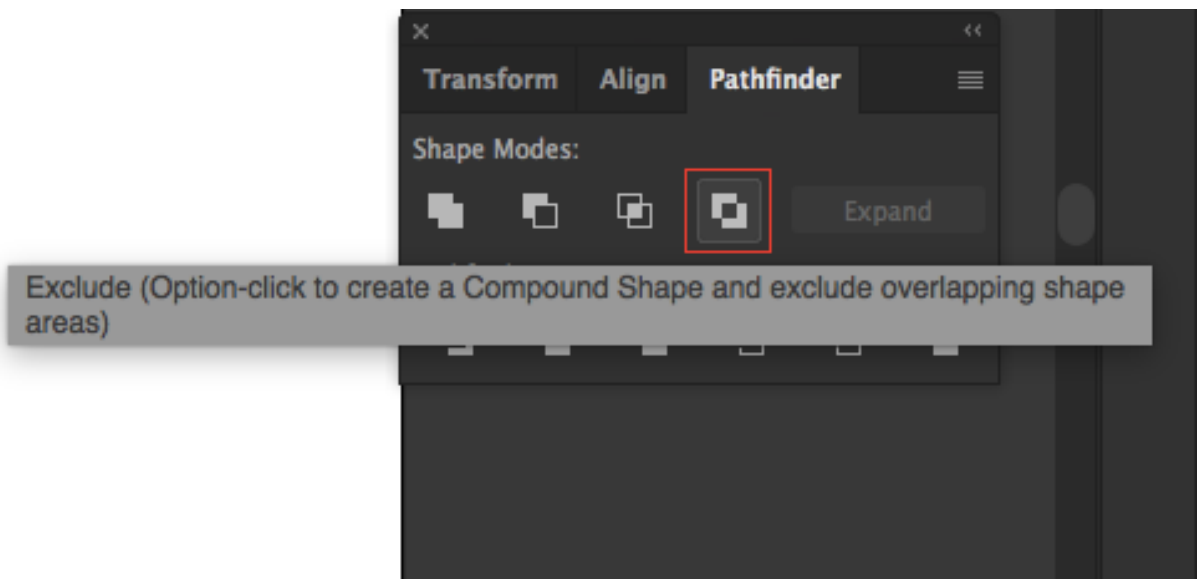


With this tool, taking multiple shapes, the intersect

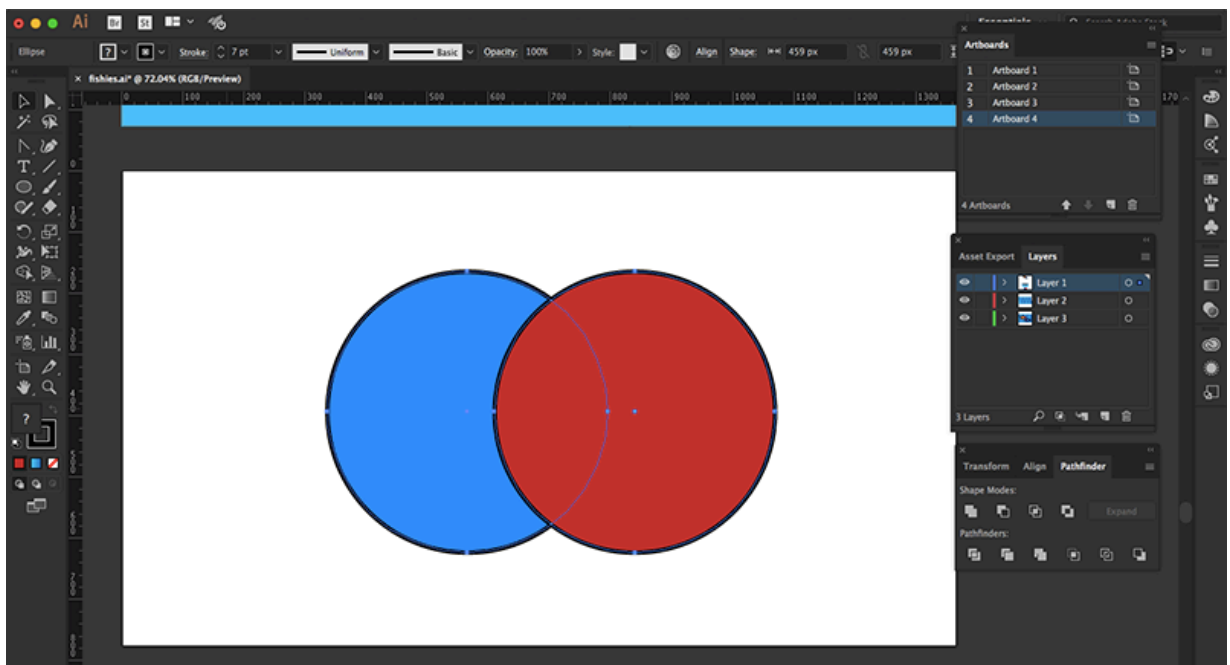
tool will only keep the intersecting parts and discard the rest. Again remember to have all the shapes selected.

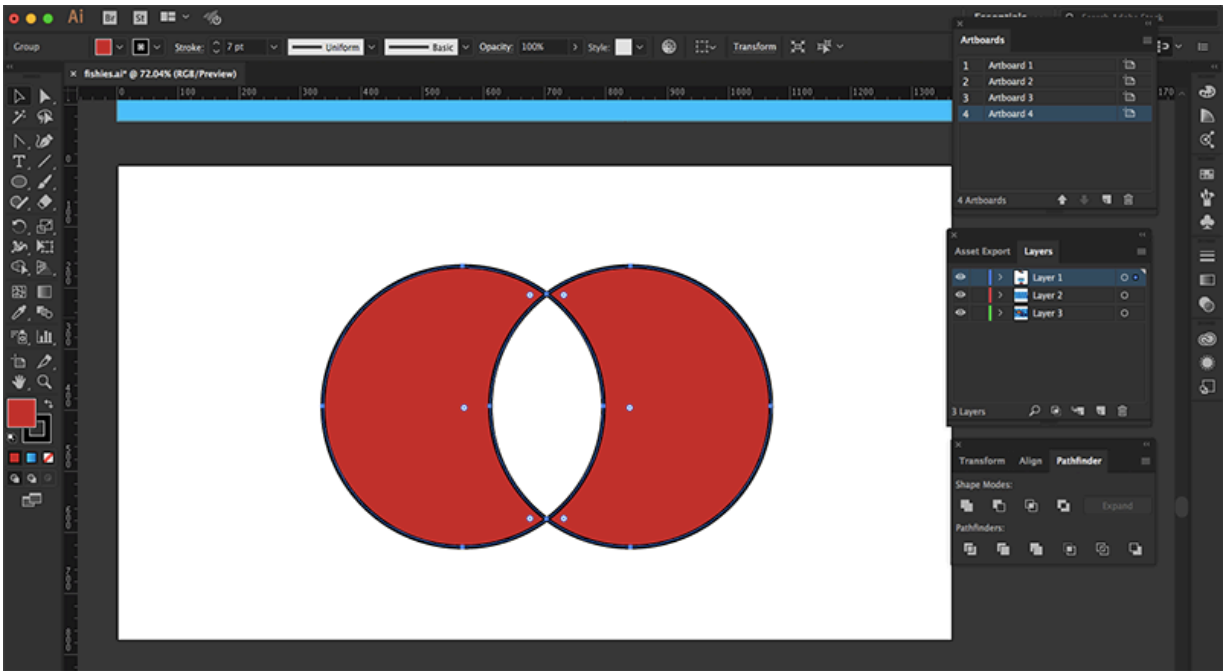


Exclude

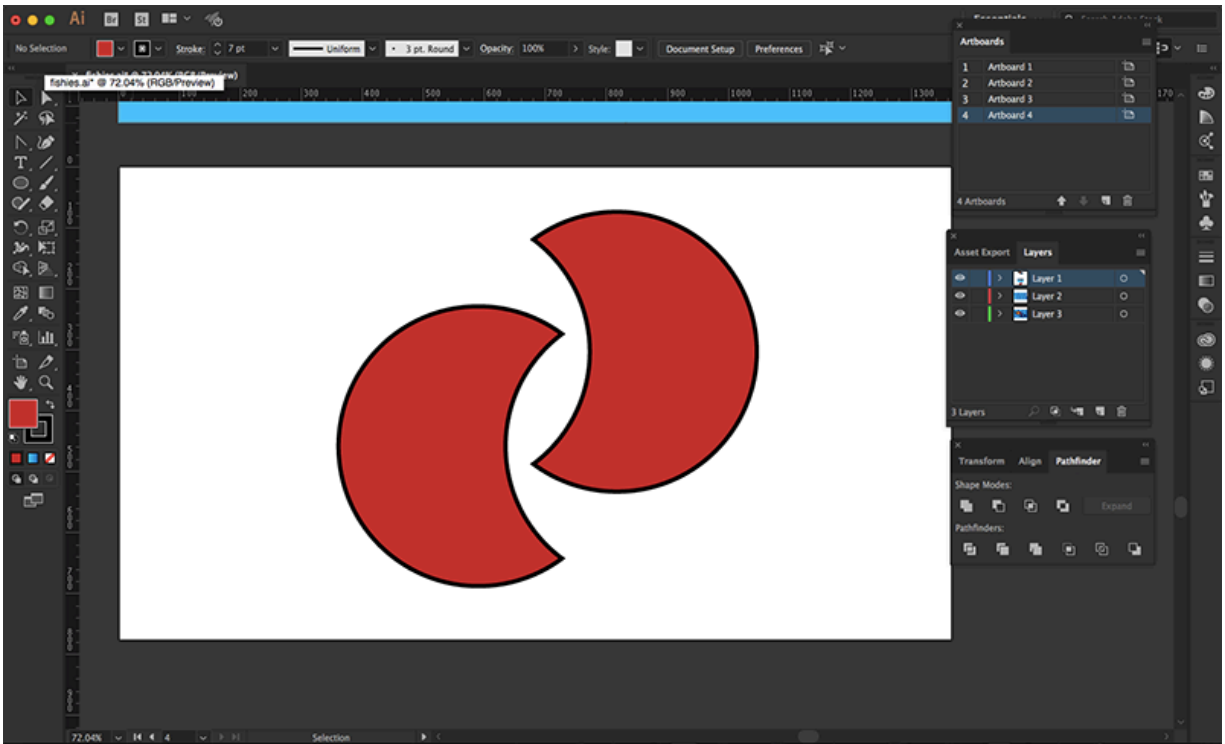
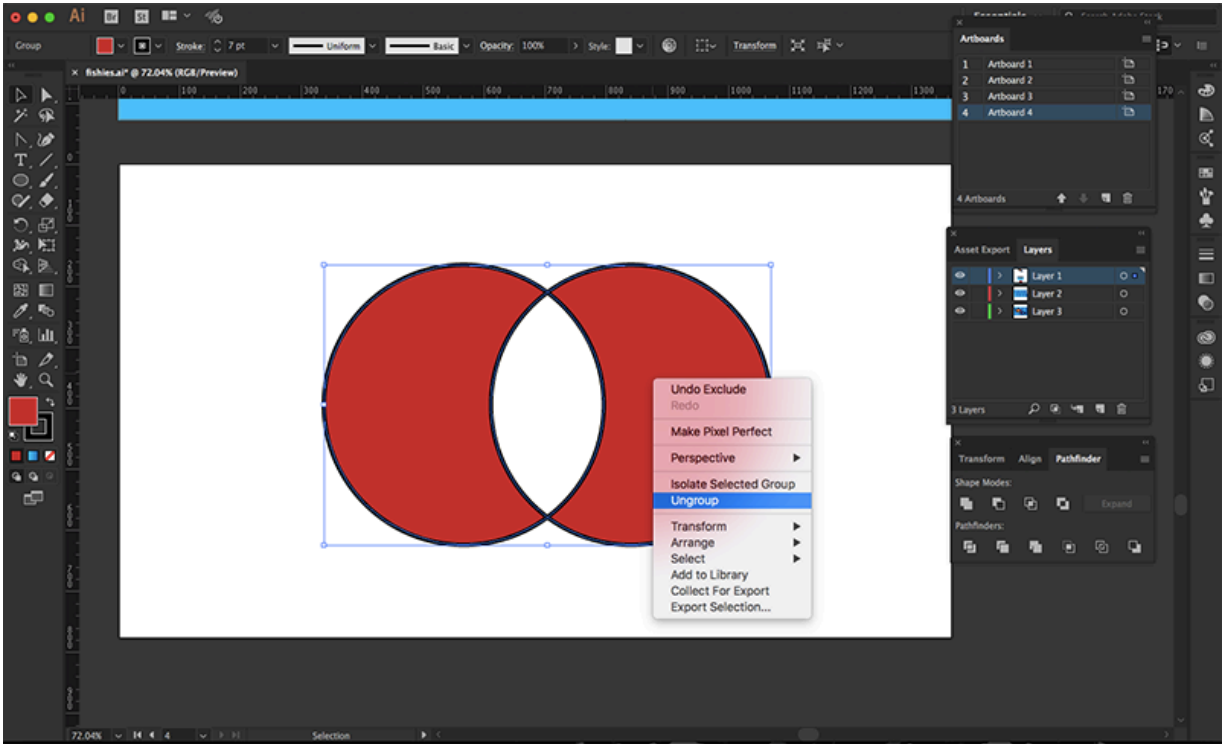


The exclude tool will exclude the intersecting parts of shapes and keep the parts that are not intersecting...

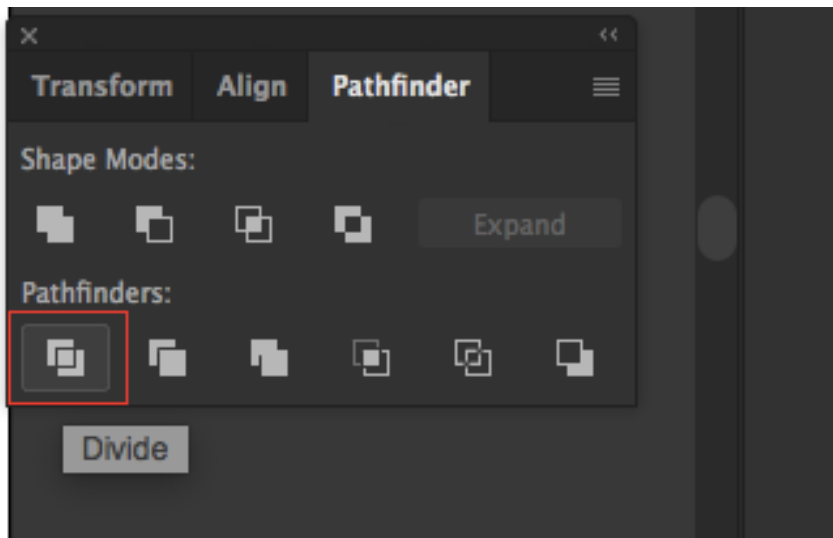




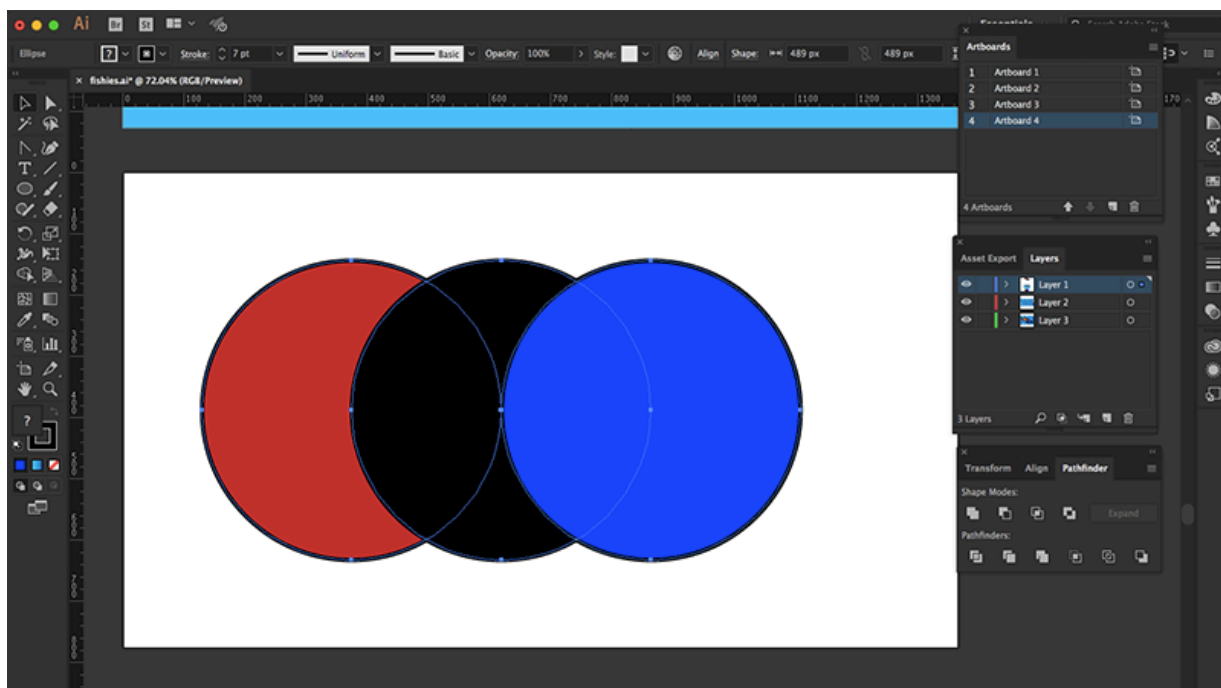
Remember when we use these tools the shapes become grouped, we can right click and ungroup them to make them single again.



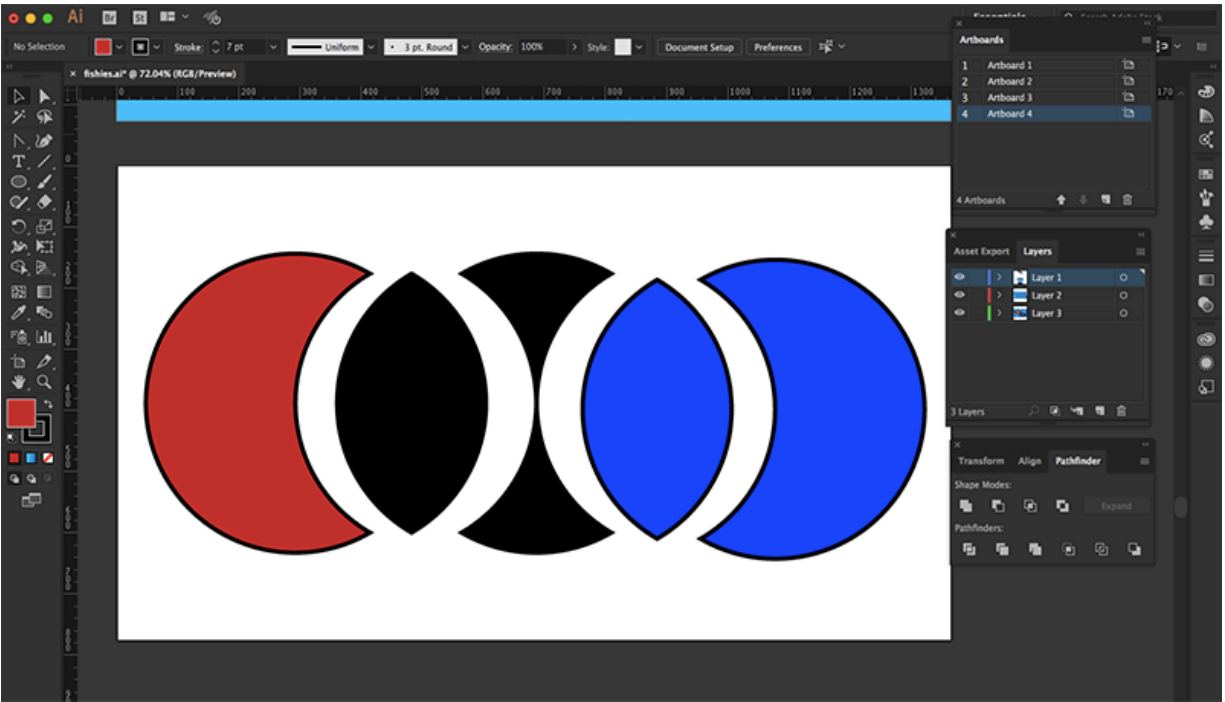
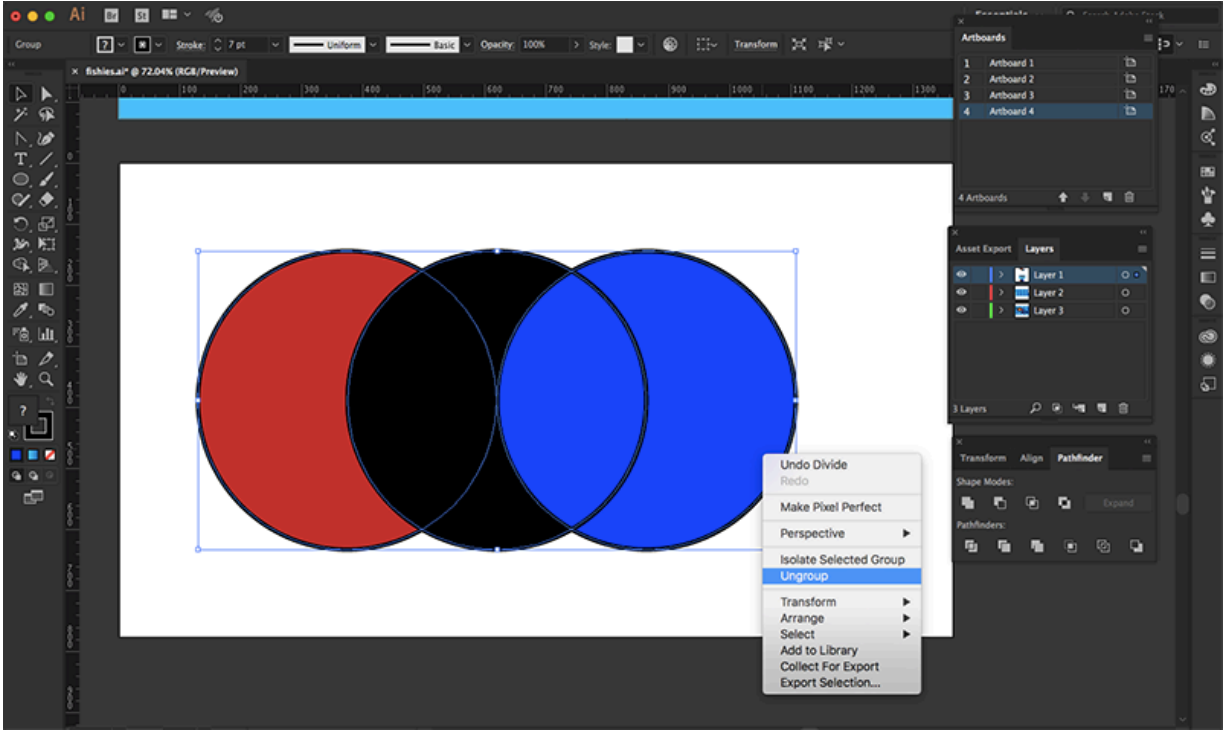
Divide



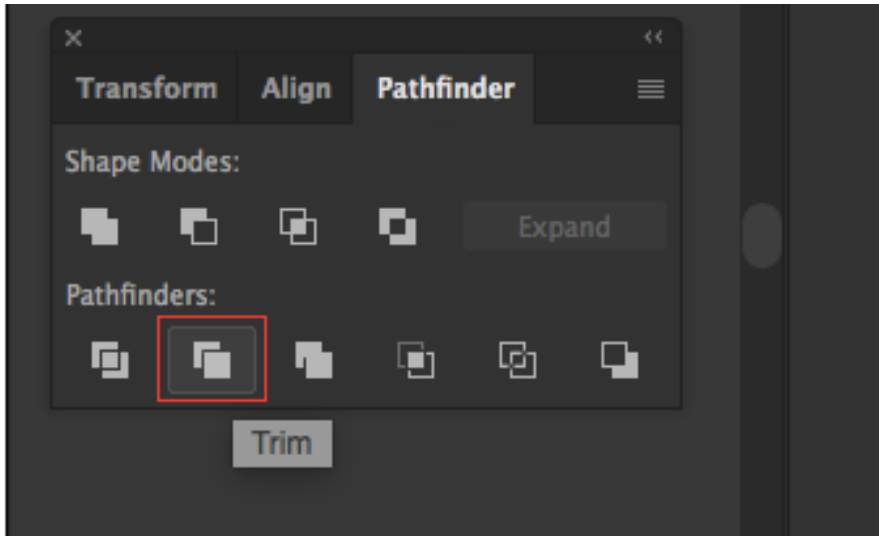
Using this tool we can slice overlapping shapes at the intersecting lines.



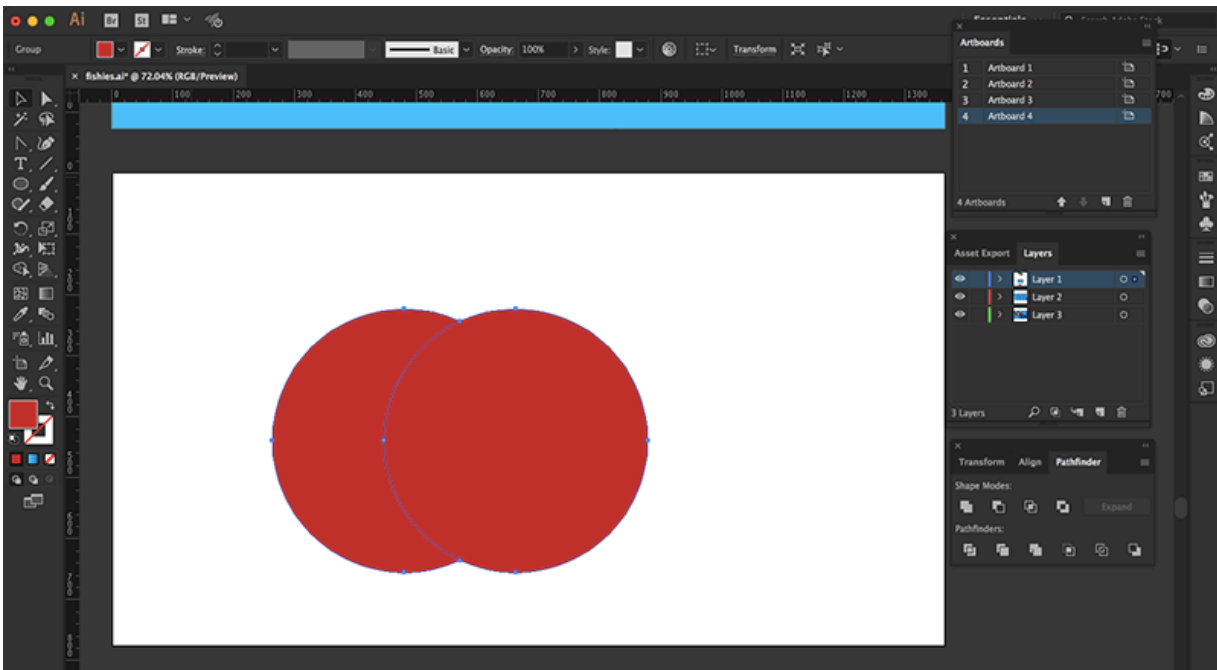
Once they are selected and you press the divide button, right click them and click ungroup.

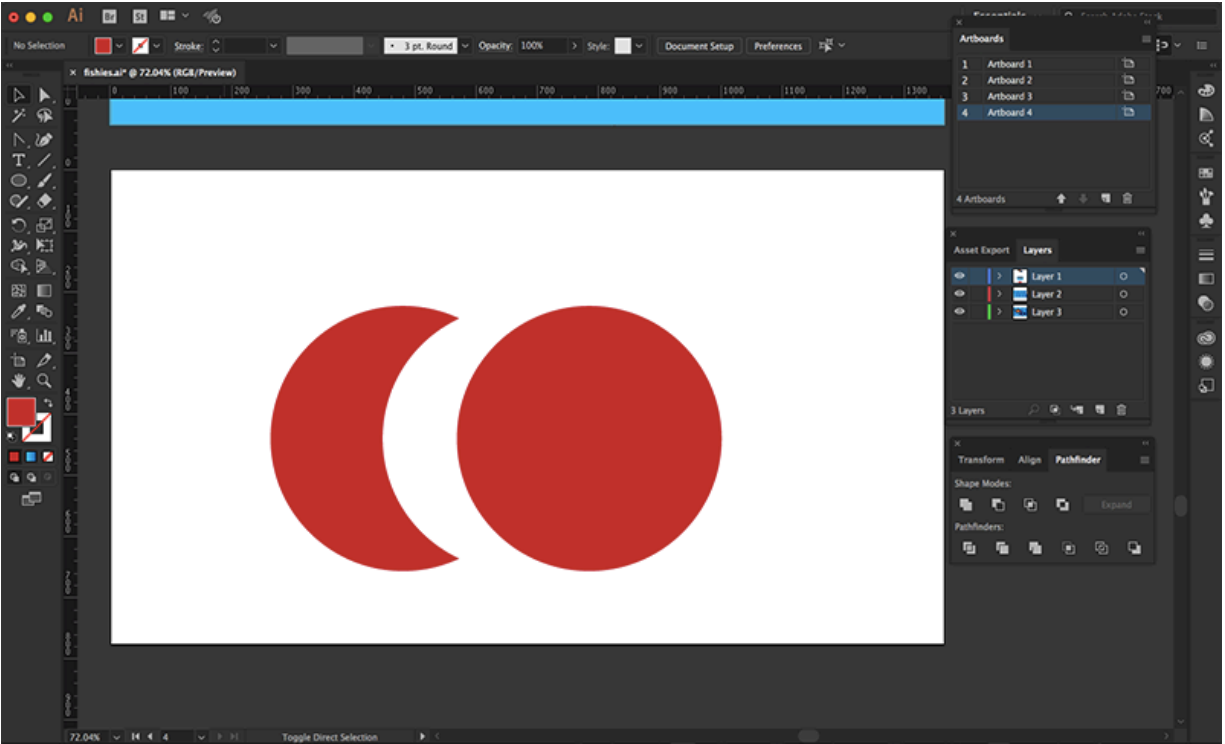


Trim

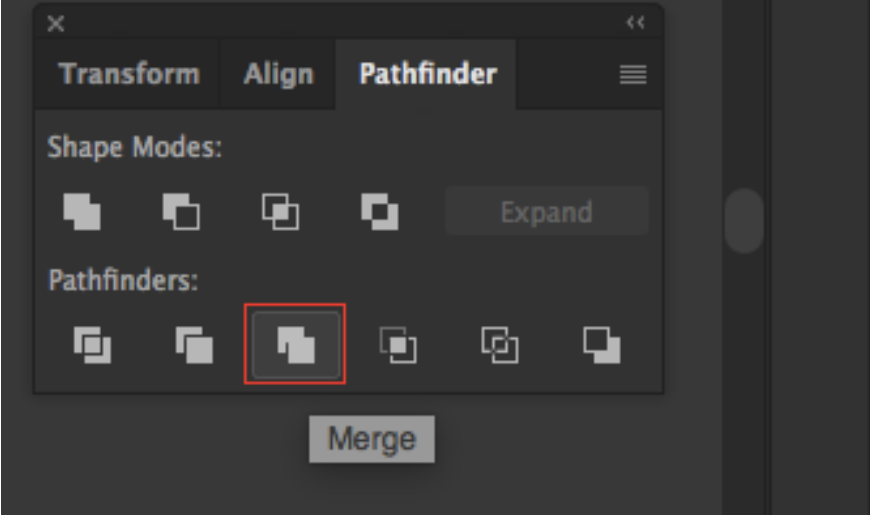


Trim will take shapes and just trim them at intersecting lines, the one on top will remain whole but the bottom one will be sliced. Remember to ungroup.

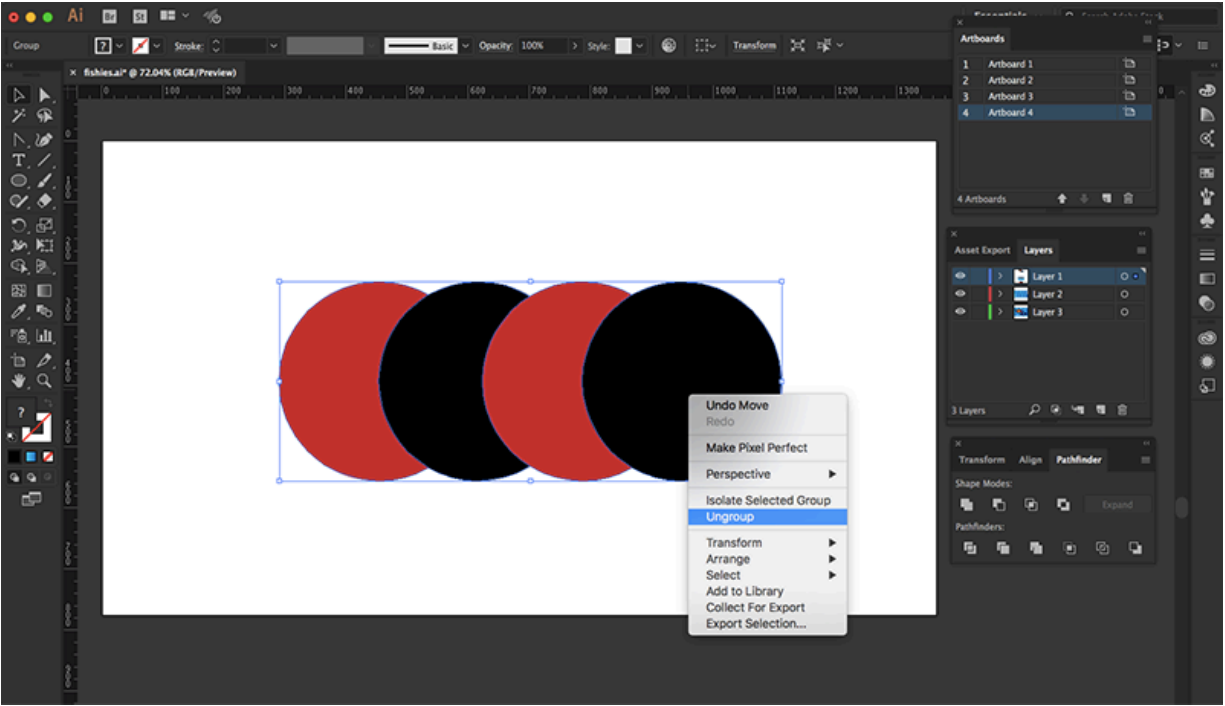
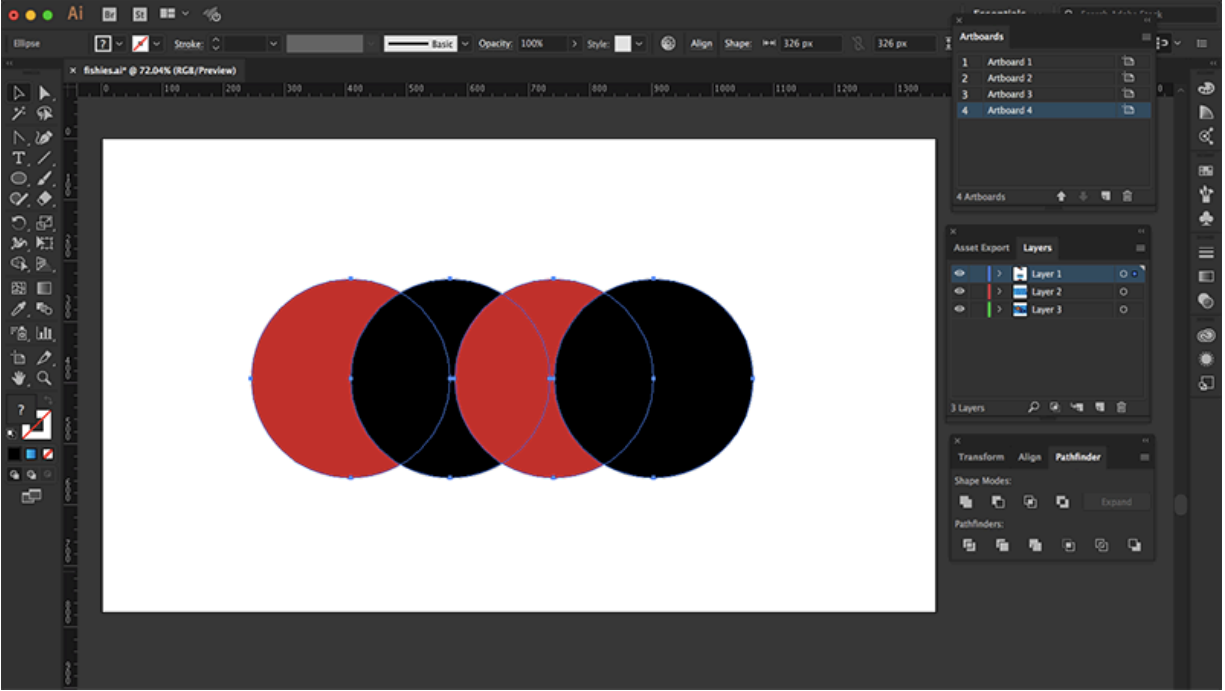


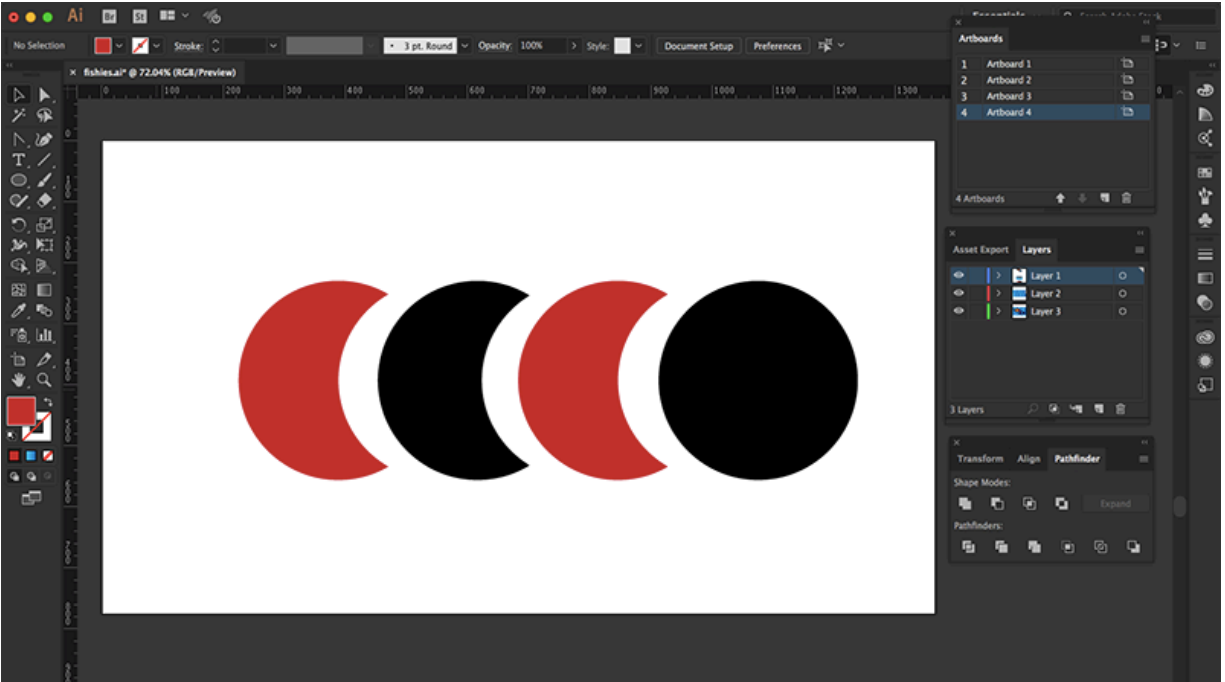


Merge

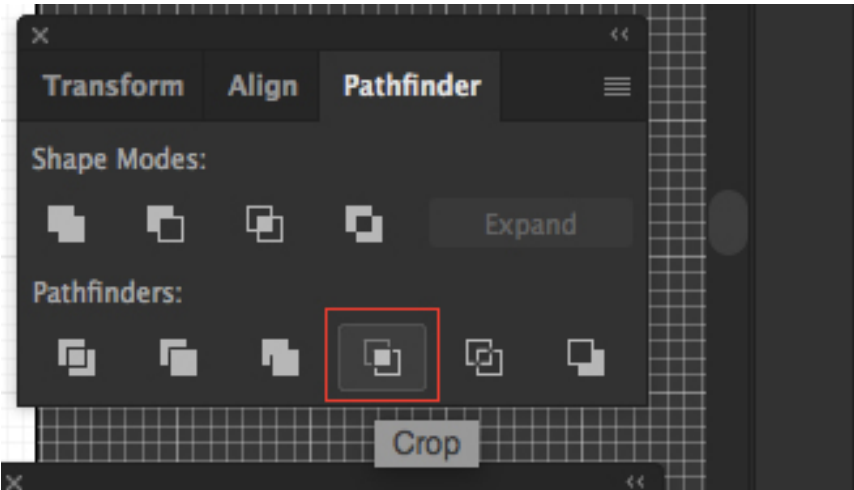


Remove strokes and merge shapes

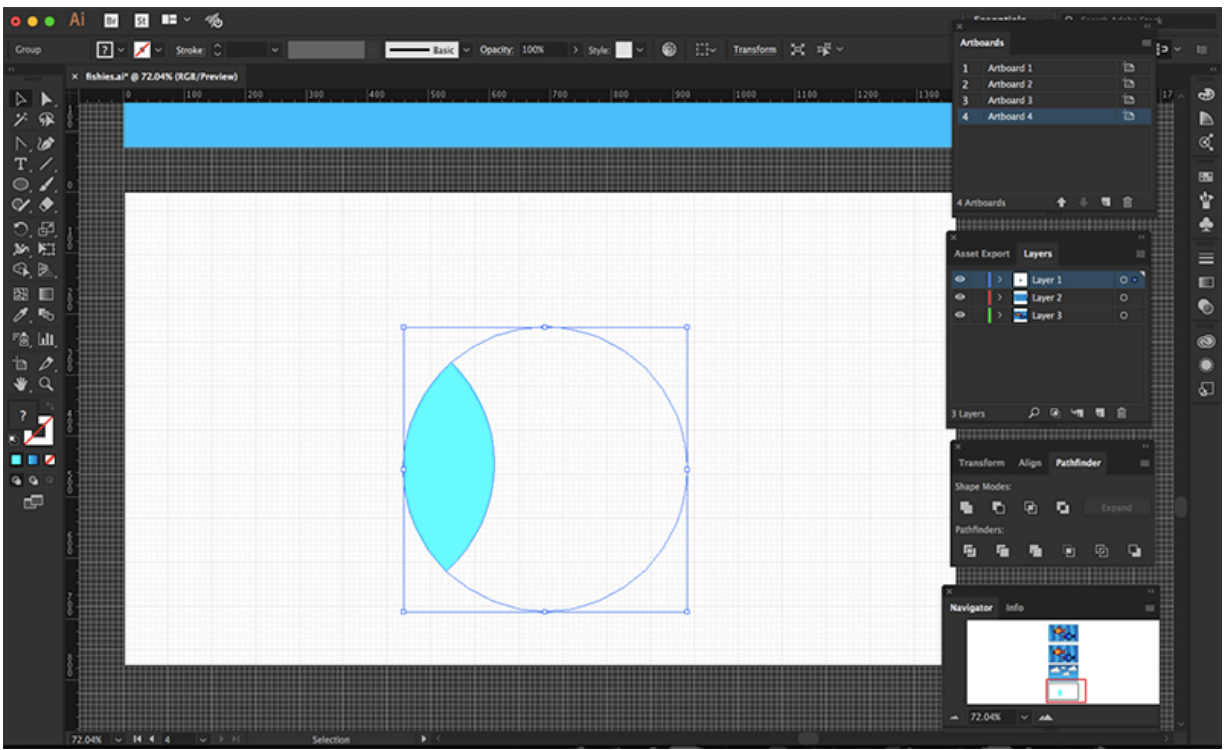
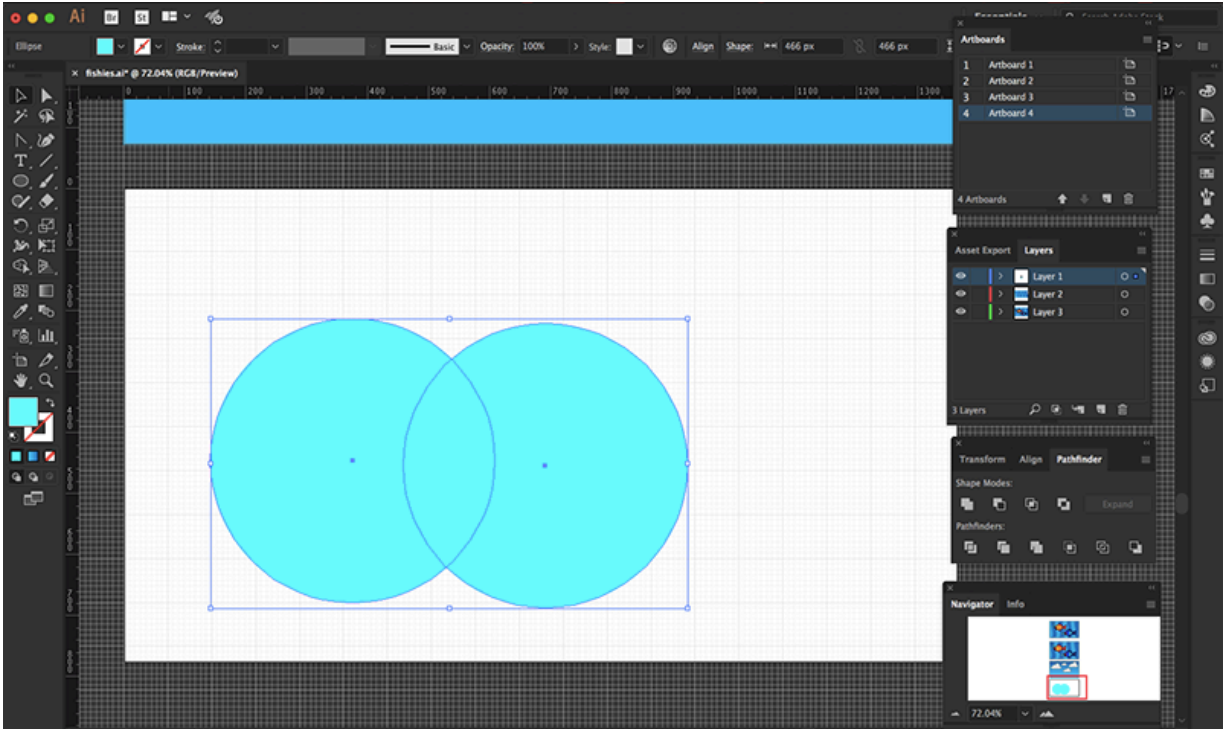




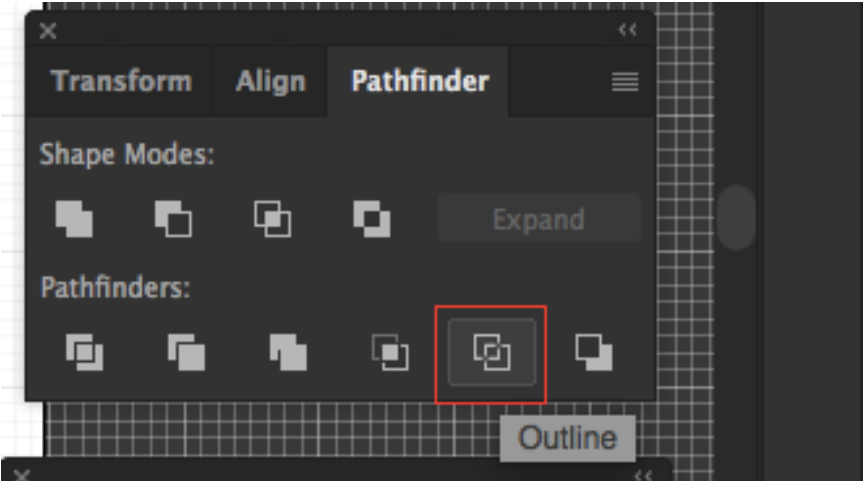
Crop



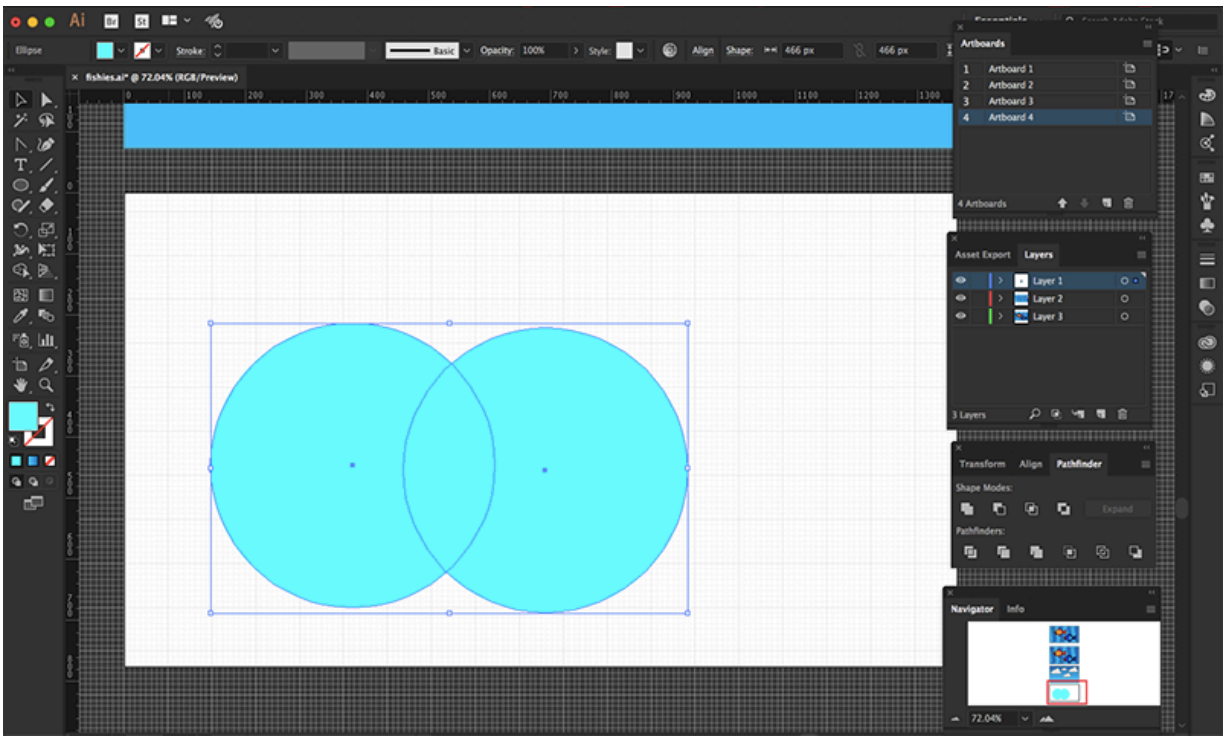
Crop will slice shapes at the intersecting lines and turn the other parts of the remaining shape into lines.

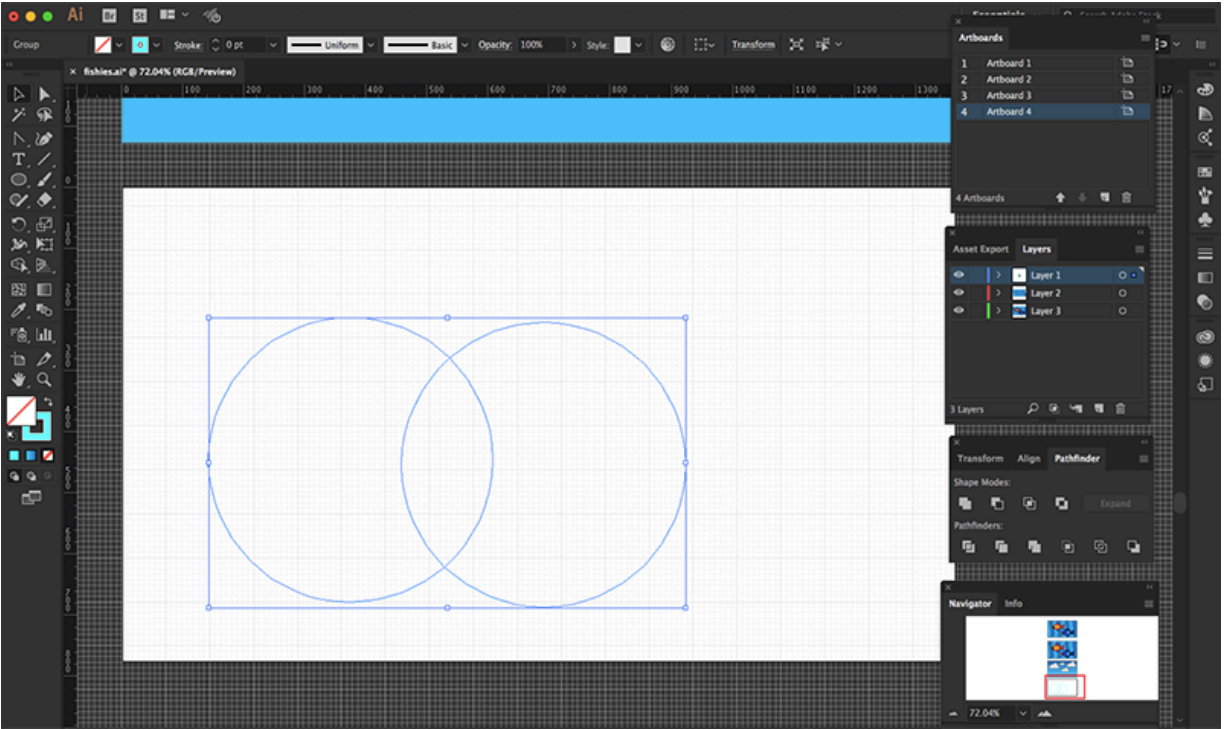


Outline

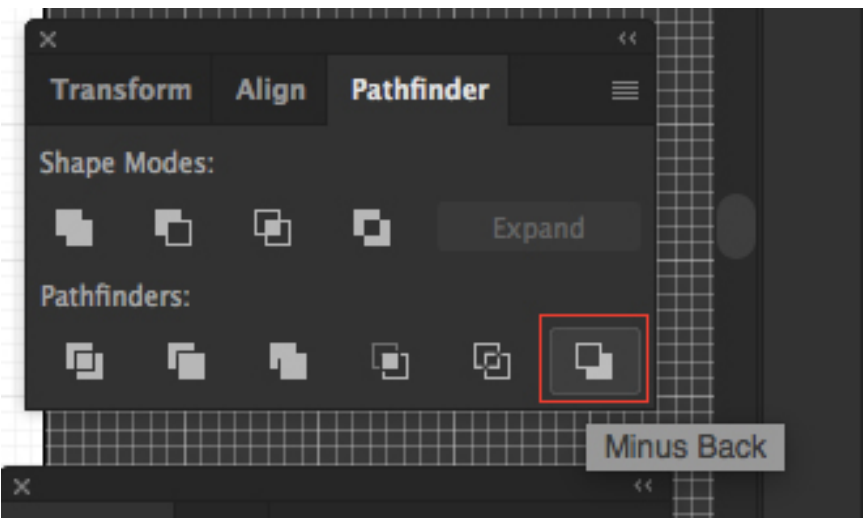


Outline will turn all shapes into lines





Minus Back

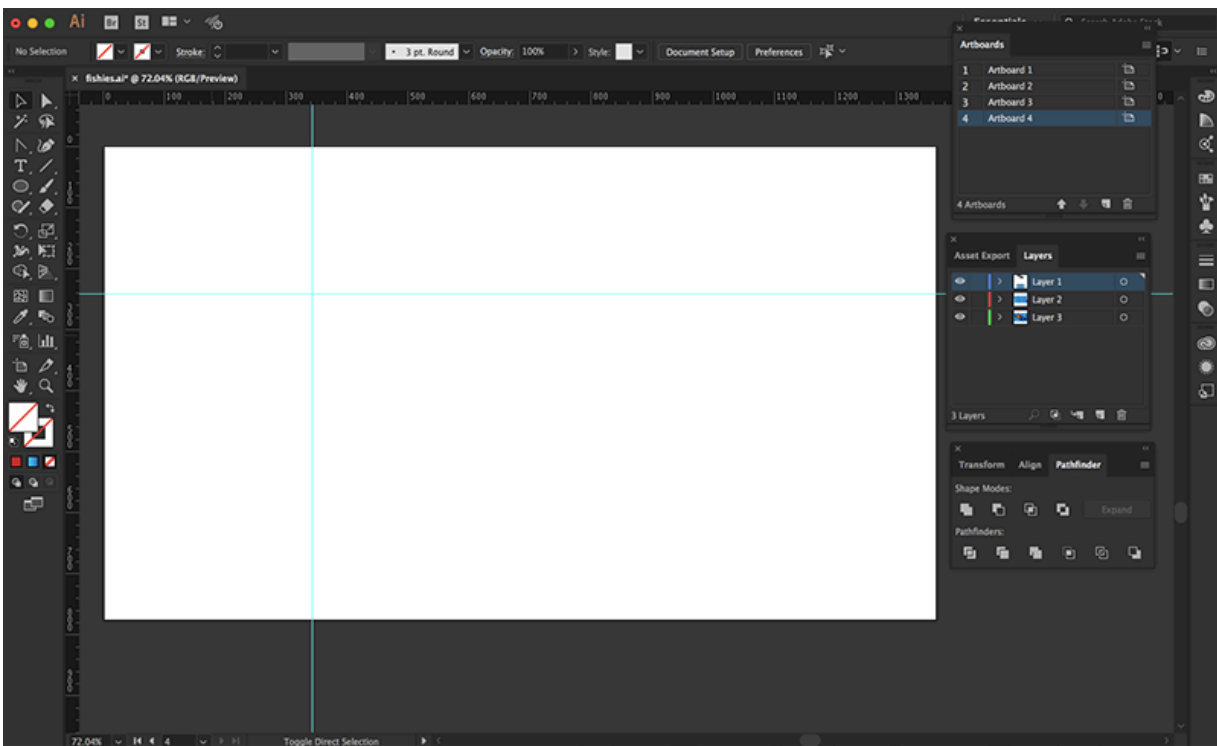


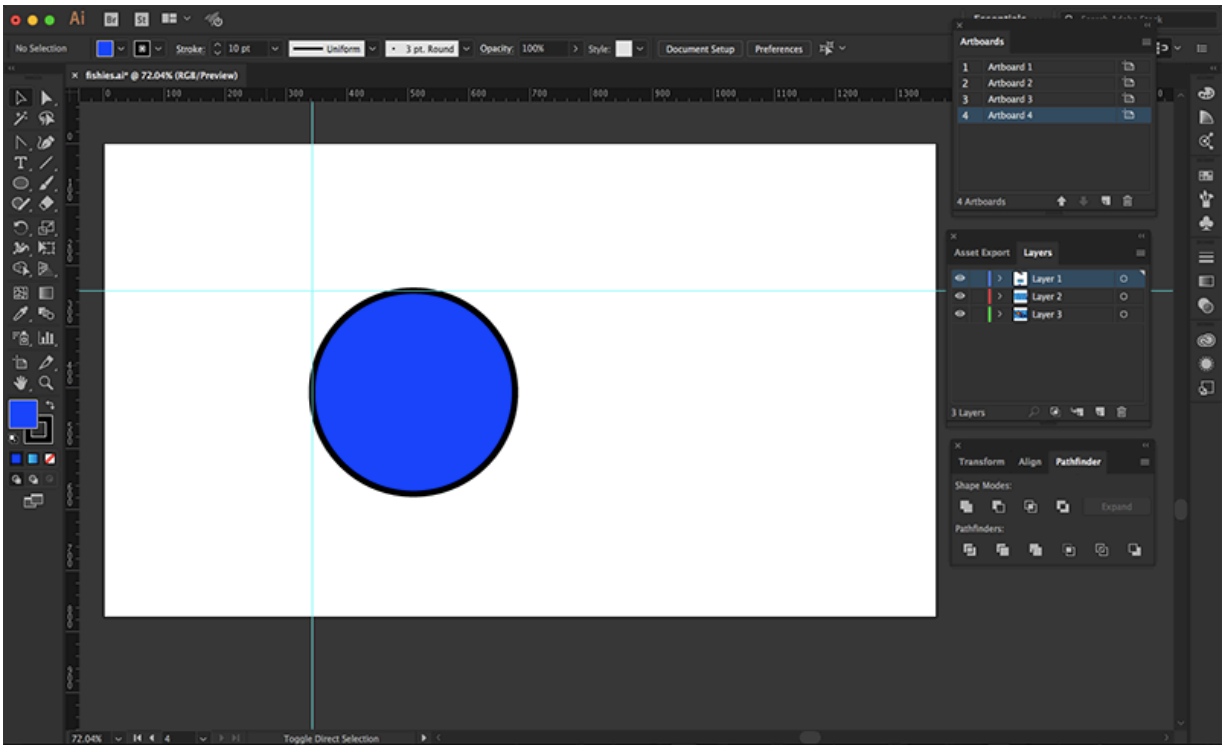
Lastly, minus back will subtract the objects in the back from the front object

Using Rulers

To toggle rulers press CMD + R

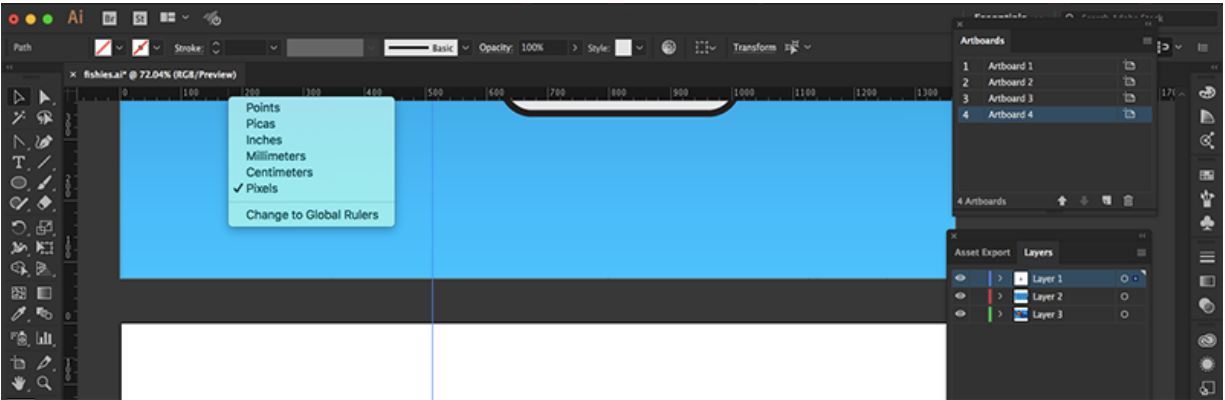
Once this is pulled up you can click drag ruler lines out from the rulers onto the art board and then use those lines to snap items to it...





To remove them, right click the line and select release guides. You can also hide/show guides and lock them if you right click the guide line.

You can right click on the ruler itself and change the ruler measurements.



We can also turn on a grid for visual reference. Click View>Show Grid.

