

Intro to Illustrator - Fill & Stroke -Colours

Using the Swatches Panel

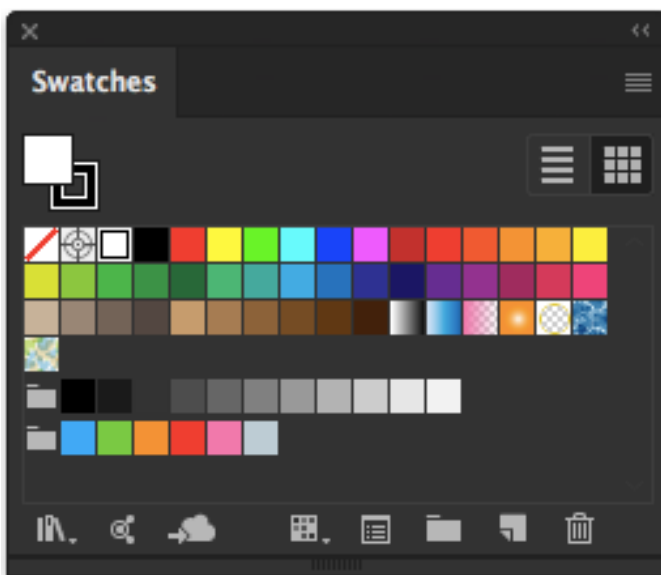
As we briefly looked at in a previous class, the colour panel in Illustrator is the go to tool to use to add colours to your project. There are many features that we can use to enhance our work flow. In this lesson we will cover these aspects of Adobe Illustrator.

Remember, all the tools are located in the "window" menu in the top bar.

First lets take a look at the swatches panel.

[Window>Swatches](#)

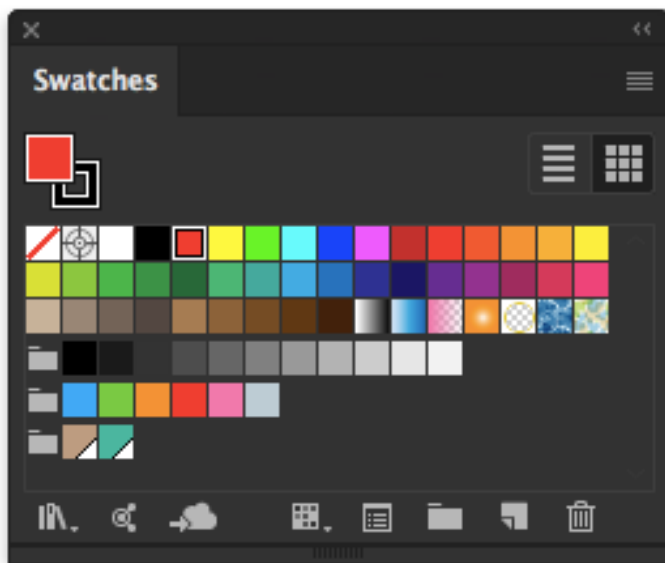
At first glance we see this:



From here we can select colours from the default swatches for the fill and stroke which can be toggled in the top left. However, there is a lot more we can do here.

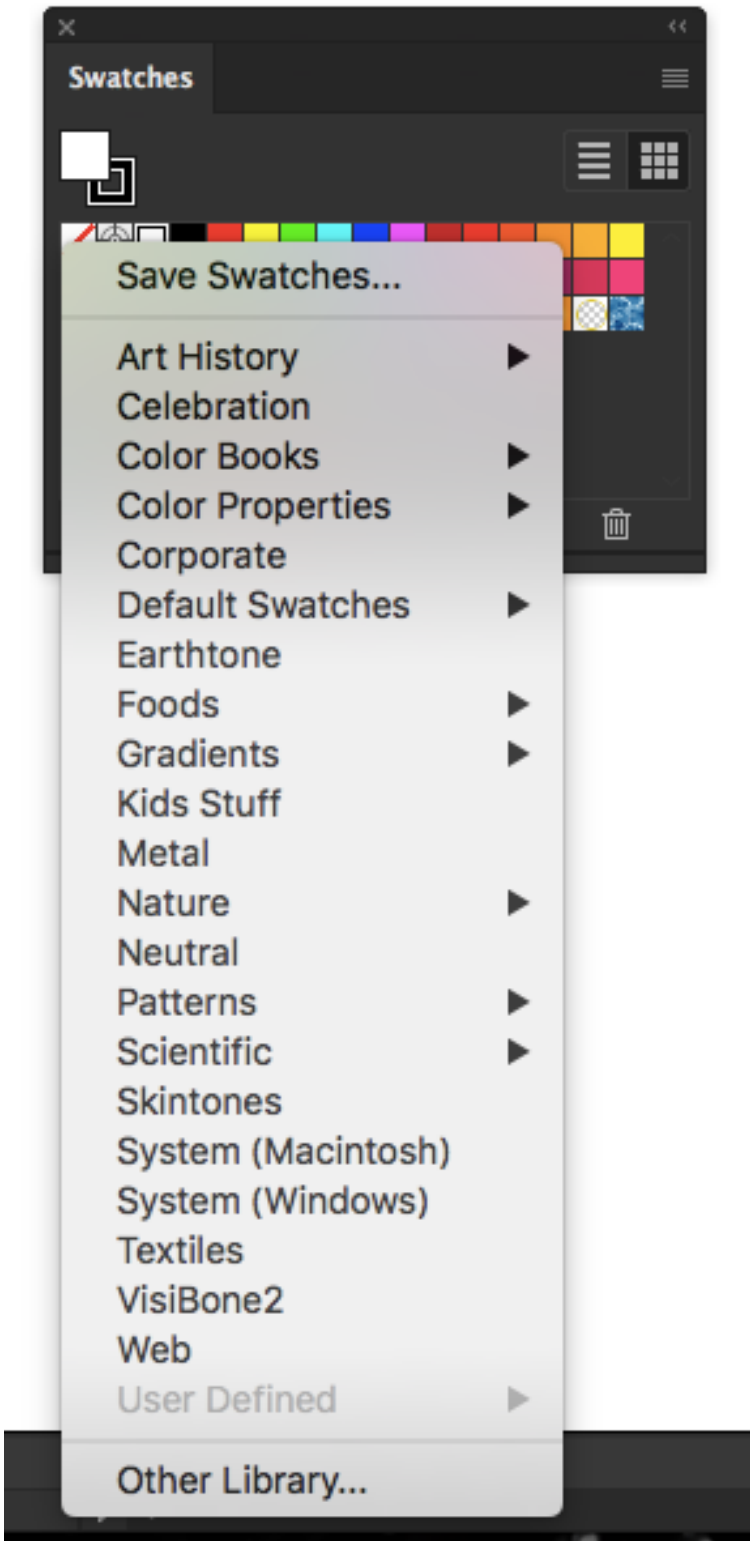
Along the bottom of the panel there are some icons, lets go through those...

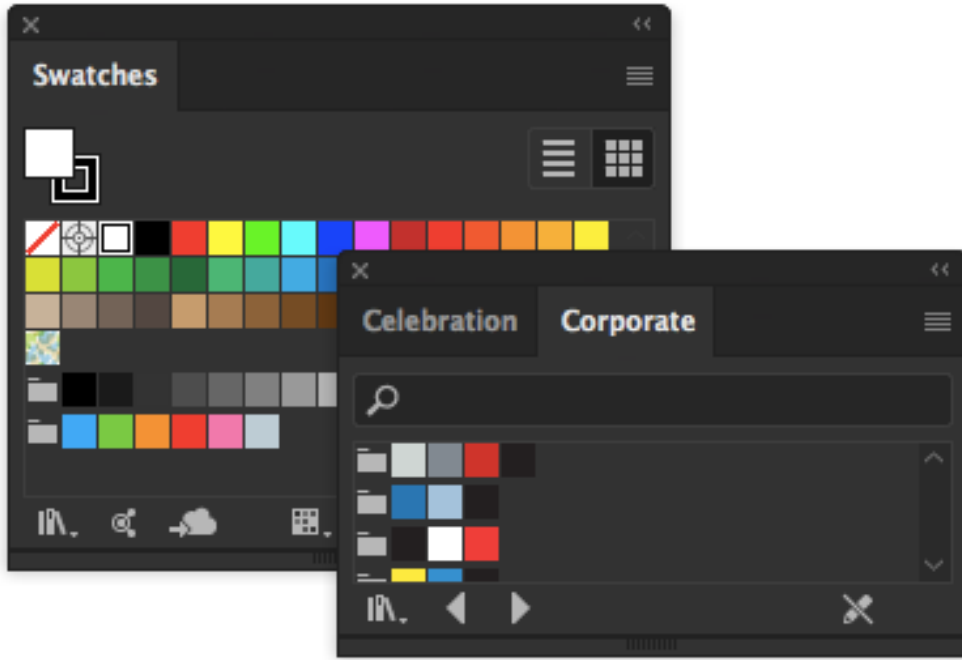
Swatches Libraries Menu:



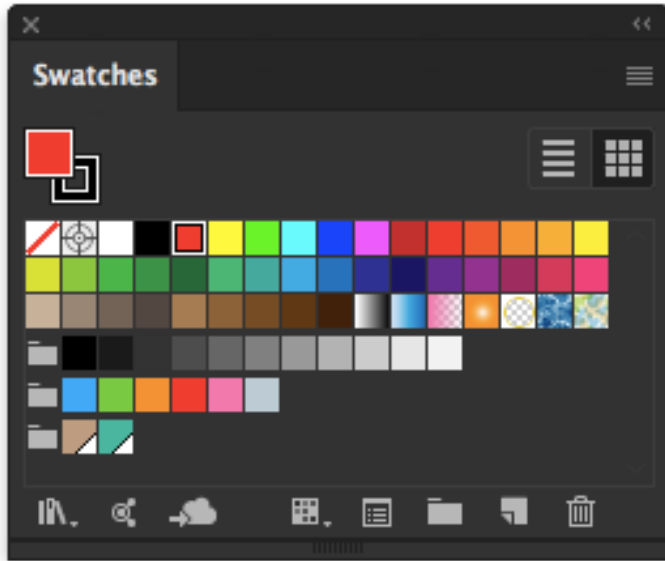
In here we can choose from various swatch libraries. Once you select one a new pop up will appear with

the desired library...

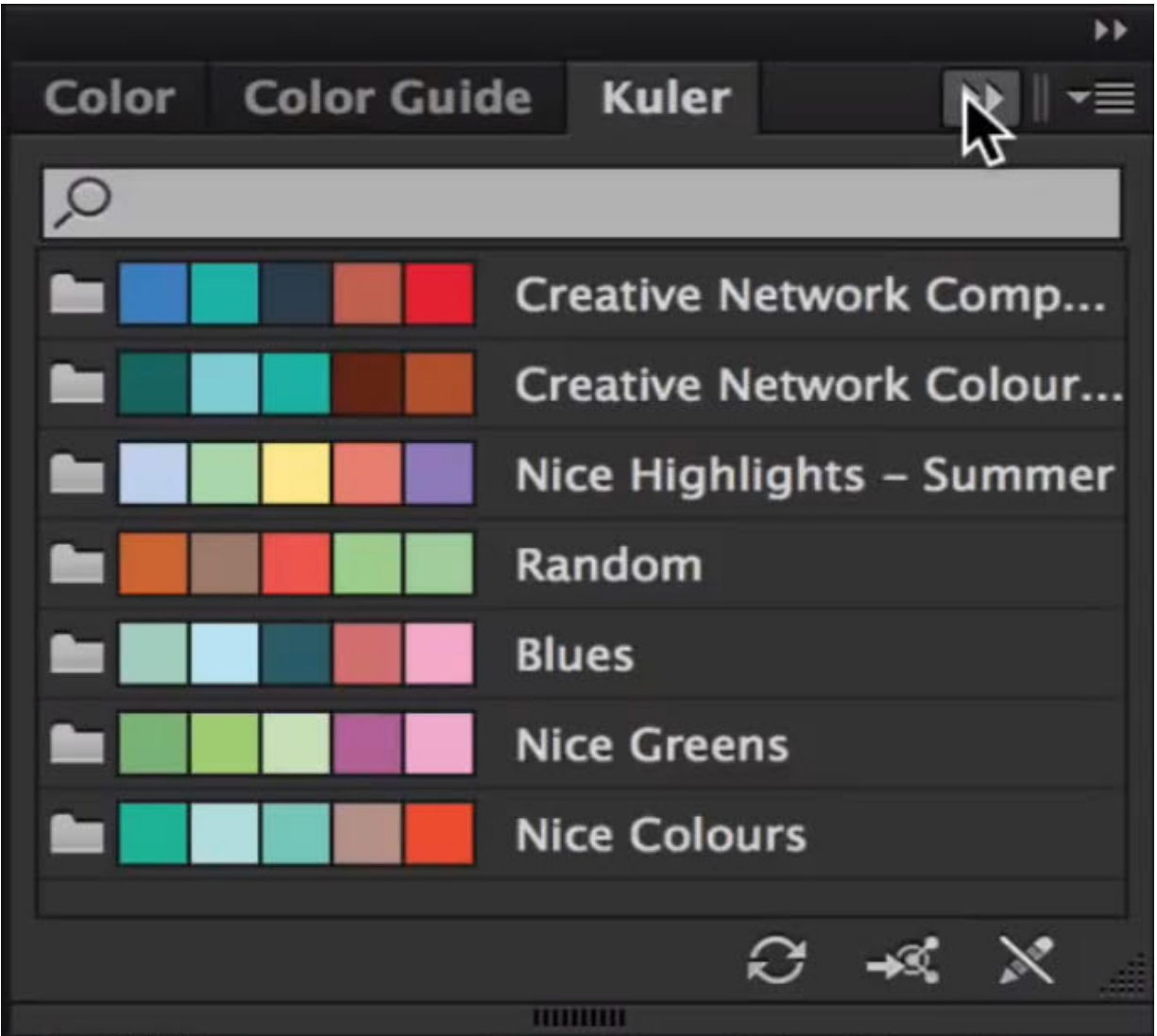




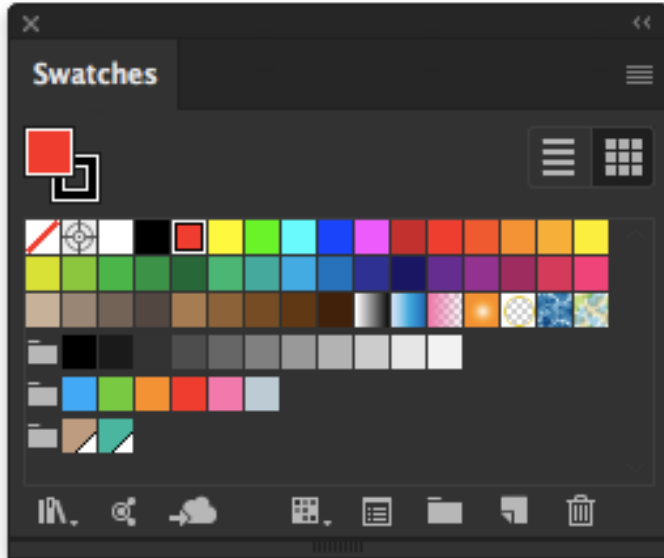
Colour Themes Panel:



This panel provides Adobe Kuler swatches. These swatches are provided via the web by Adobe and can be downloaded to be used in your project.



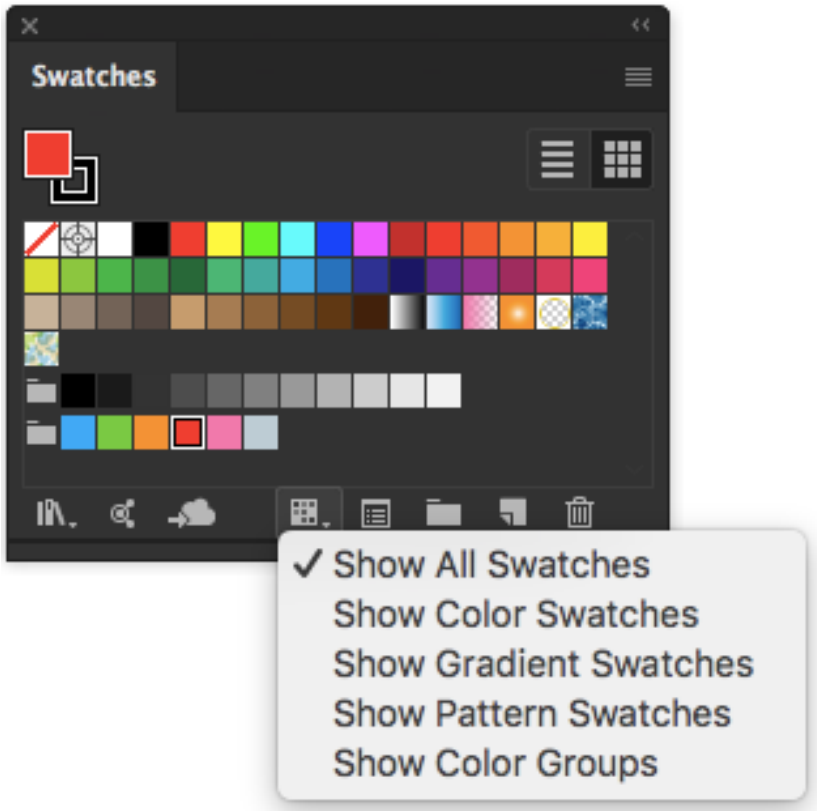
Add selected colour groups and swatches to library:



Here you can select multiple colours to your cloud library

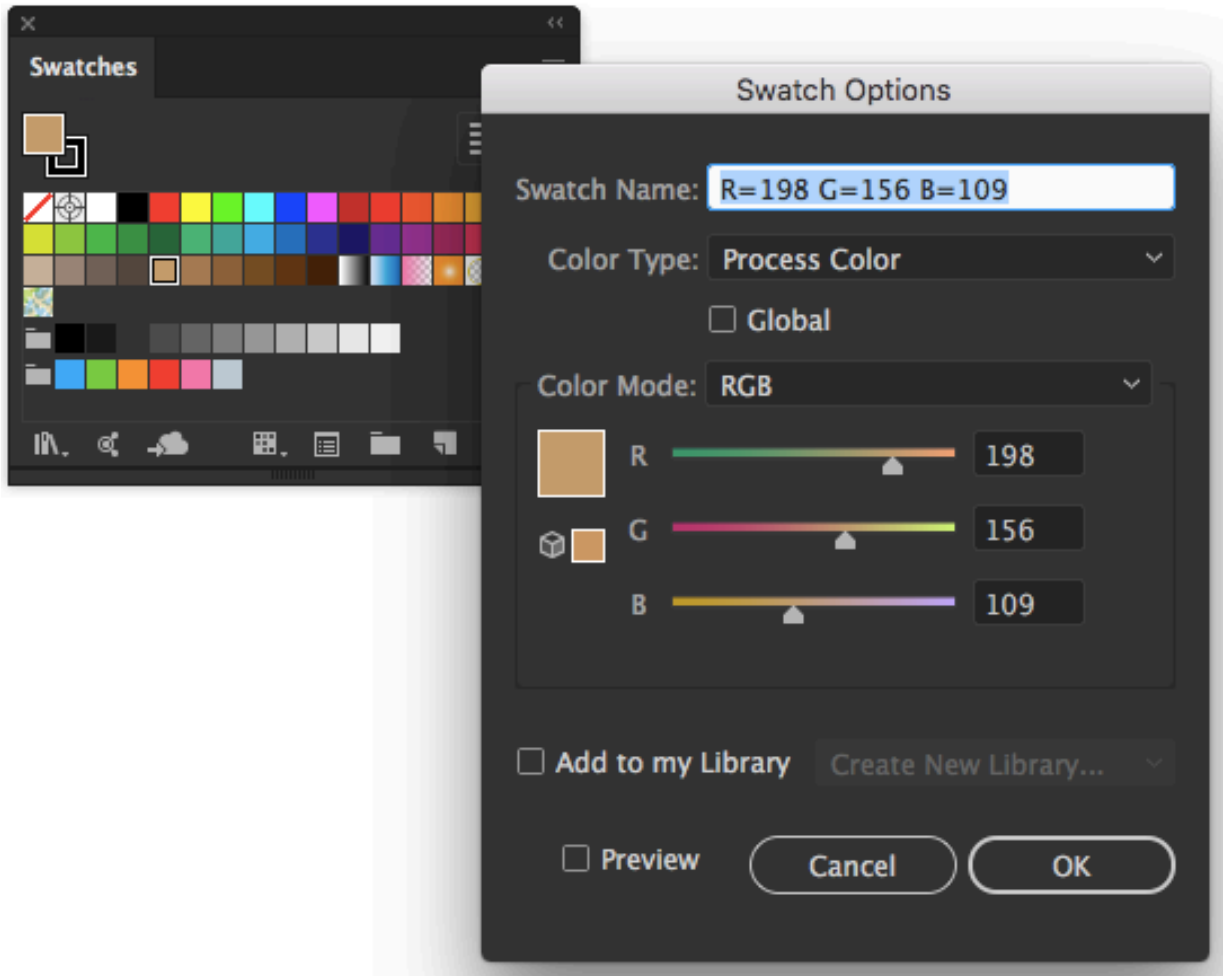
Swatch Kinds Menu:

This option allows you to cycle through the swatch types. Here you can search through all swatches, solid colours, gradient swatch types, pattern swatches or colour groups.



Swatch Options:

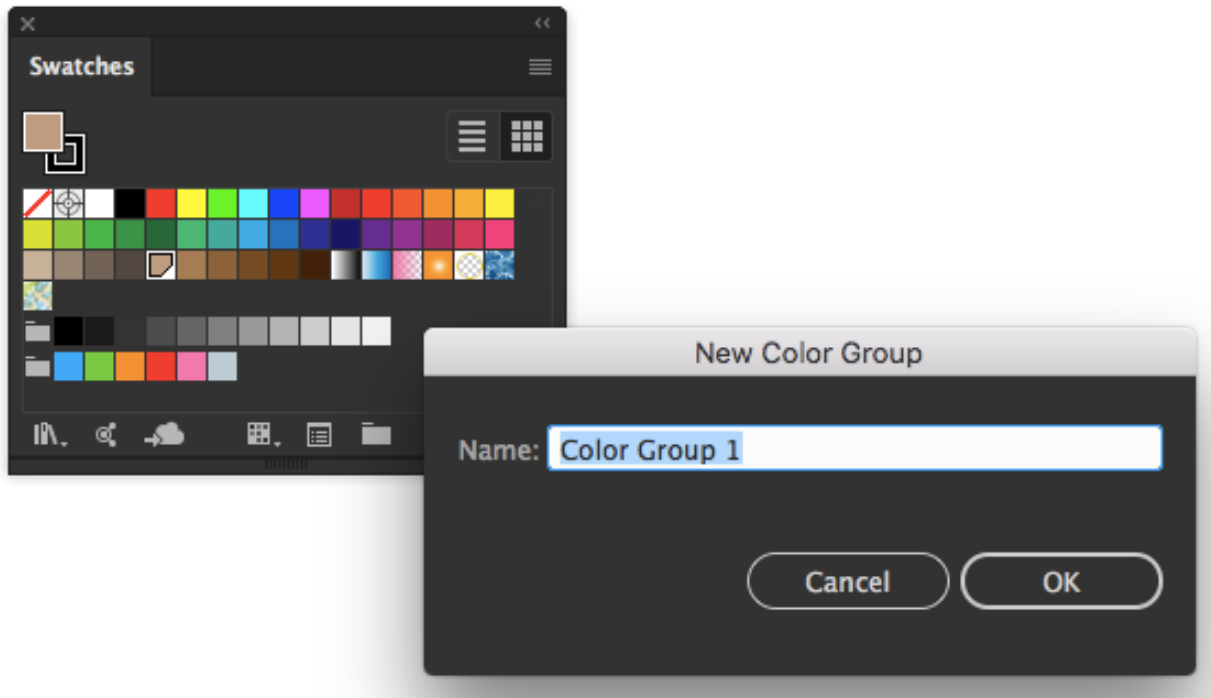
This option will bring up a new window that will allow you to edit a solid colour swatch. Here you can change the swatch name, change colour type, change colour mode, change the colour itself and save that colour to your own personalized library.



You can use the horizontal bars to change the colour in its colour mode. When done you can click "Add to my library" and either select "Create New Library" or select a previously made library and then press "OK" The swatch will be then saved to the cloud in your Creative Cloud account (You must be logged in to use this feature.)

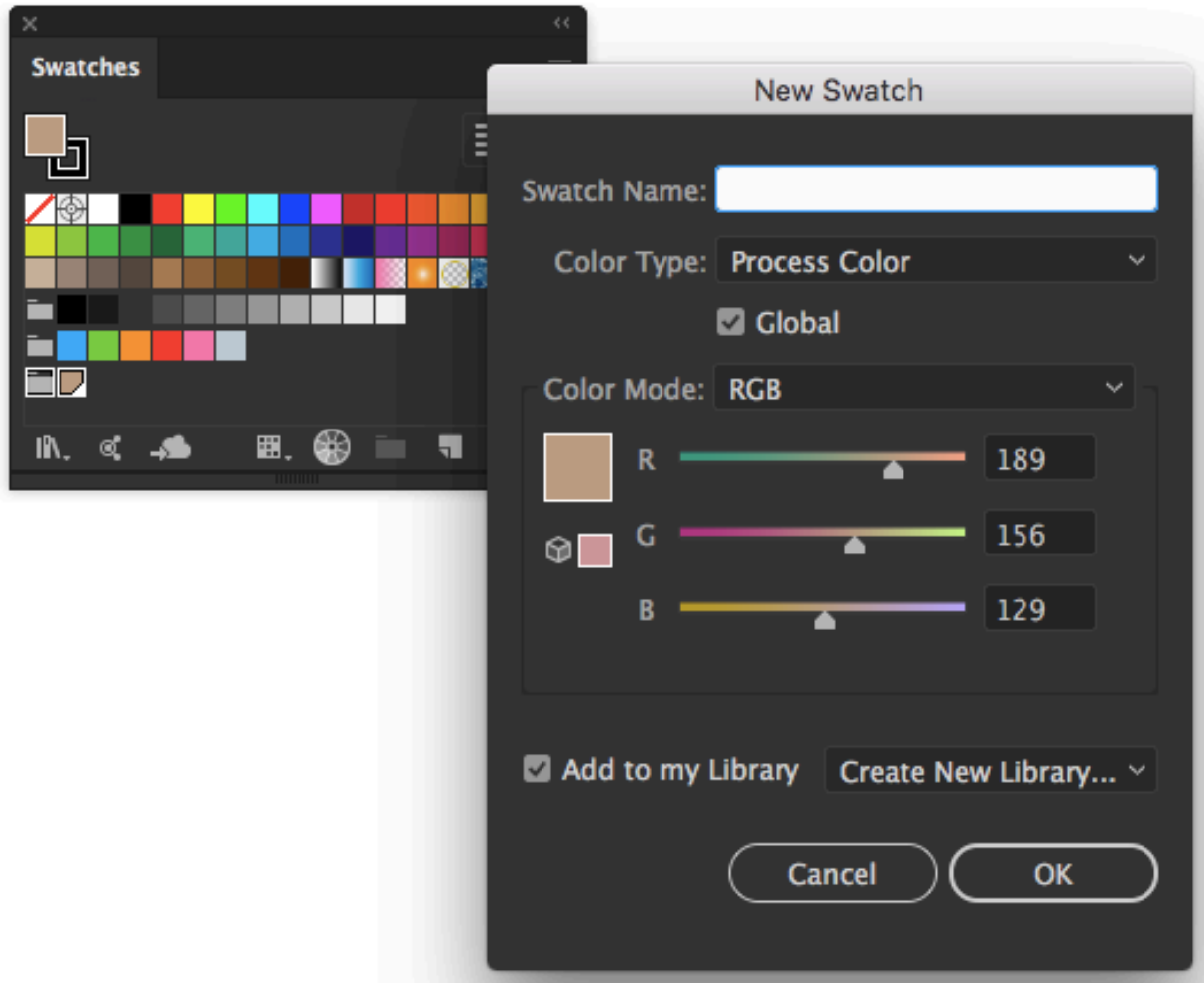
Create New Swatch Group:

If you prefer to save colours on your local machine, you can use this feature to do so. Create a new swatch colour group. Name the group and press "OK".



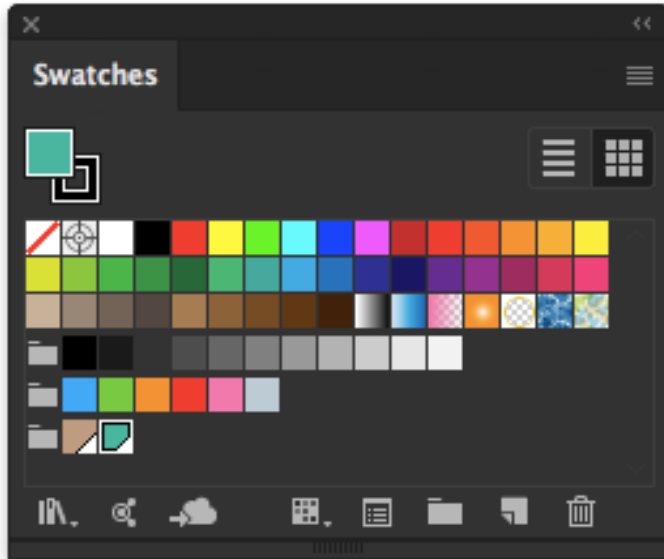
From there you will notice that there is a new section within your swatches panel under the default colours. You can add as many groups you need. You can also add as many colours to groups as you need too. Next we can add a new swatch with the next option.

Add new swatch:



This will bring up the same window from before. We can add a new swatch with a new name and desired colour.

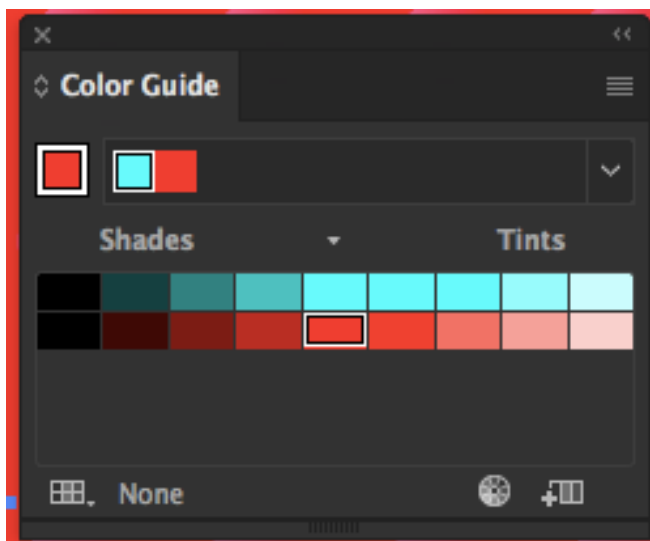
Once added it will show up in the swatches



Using The Colour Guide Panel

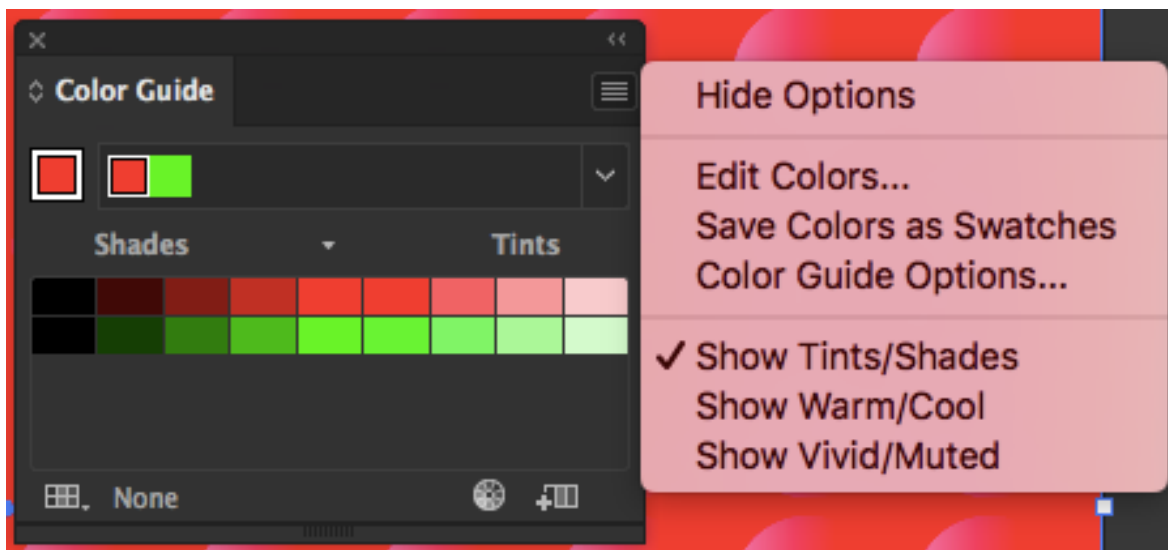
The colour guide panel allows you to tweak colours in various ways. We can tweak the shade or warm/cool colours, as well as other options. Lets break them down.

In [window>colour guide](#) we can bring up the panel:

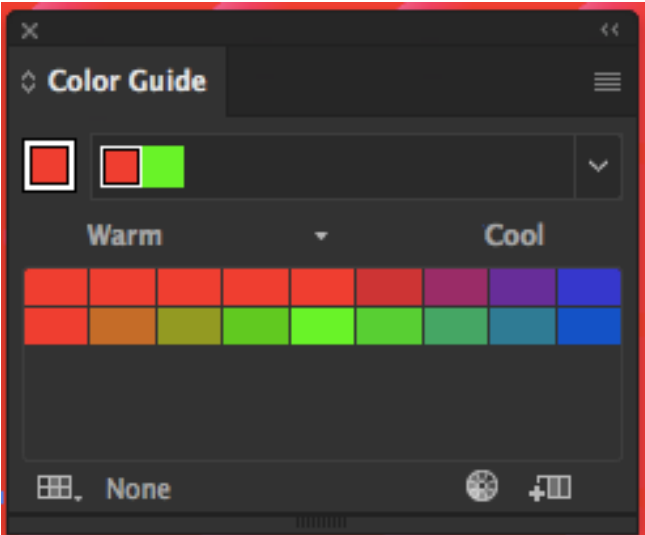


When we select a colour swatch, it will automatically change in here. The middle colour here is the selected colour and to the left and right, the darker and lighter shades will be presented, We can easily tweak the colour shade here to get the right one we need.

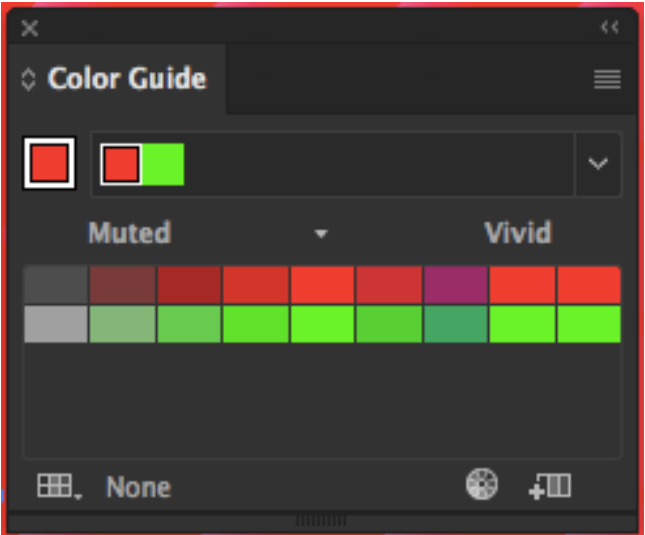
We can click the hamburger menu button in the top right (Under the 2 left facing arrows) to bring up more options.



Lets try warm/cool with the same colour:



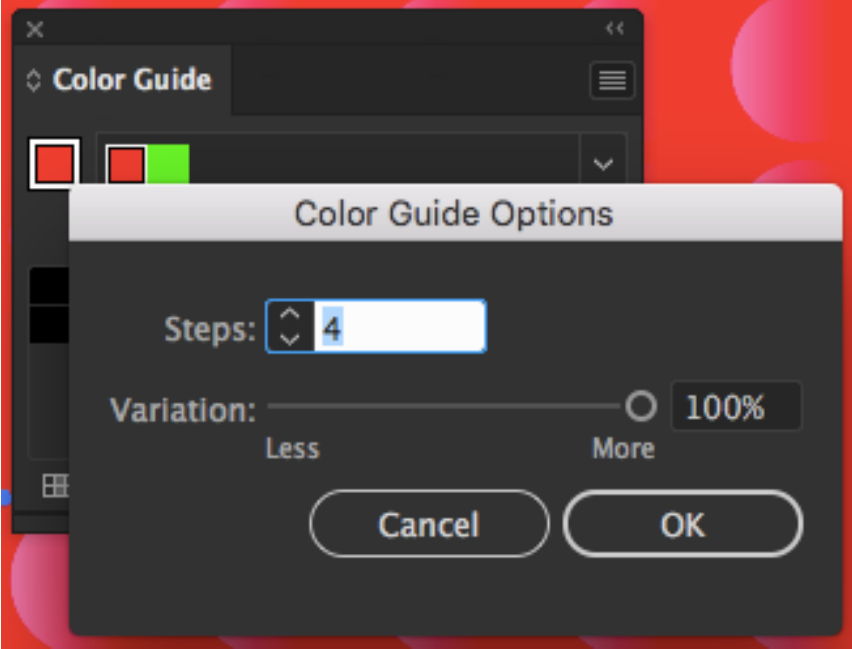
Now we can select from warmer colours on the left, to cooler ones to the right. Then there is the next option for vivid/muted.



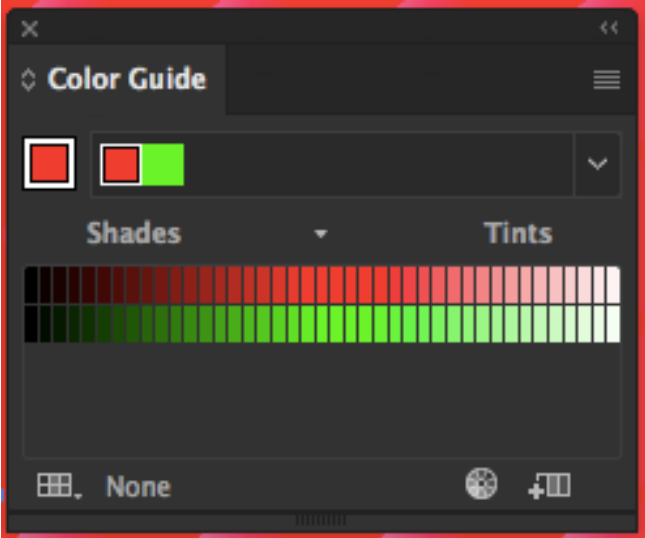
With vivid/muted we get muted colours to the left and more vivid colours to the right.

If we click colour guide options we will get a popup

that will allow us to edit this. We can make more steps in the colours that will be to the left and right to the original.

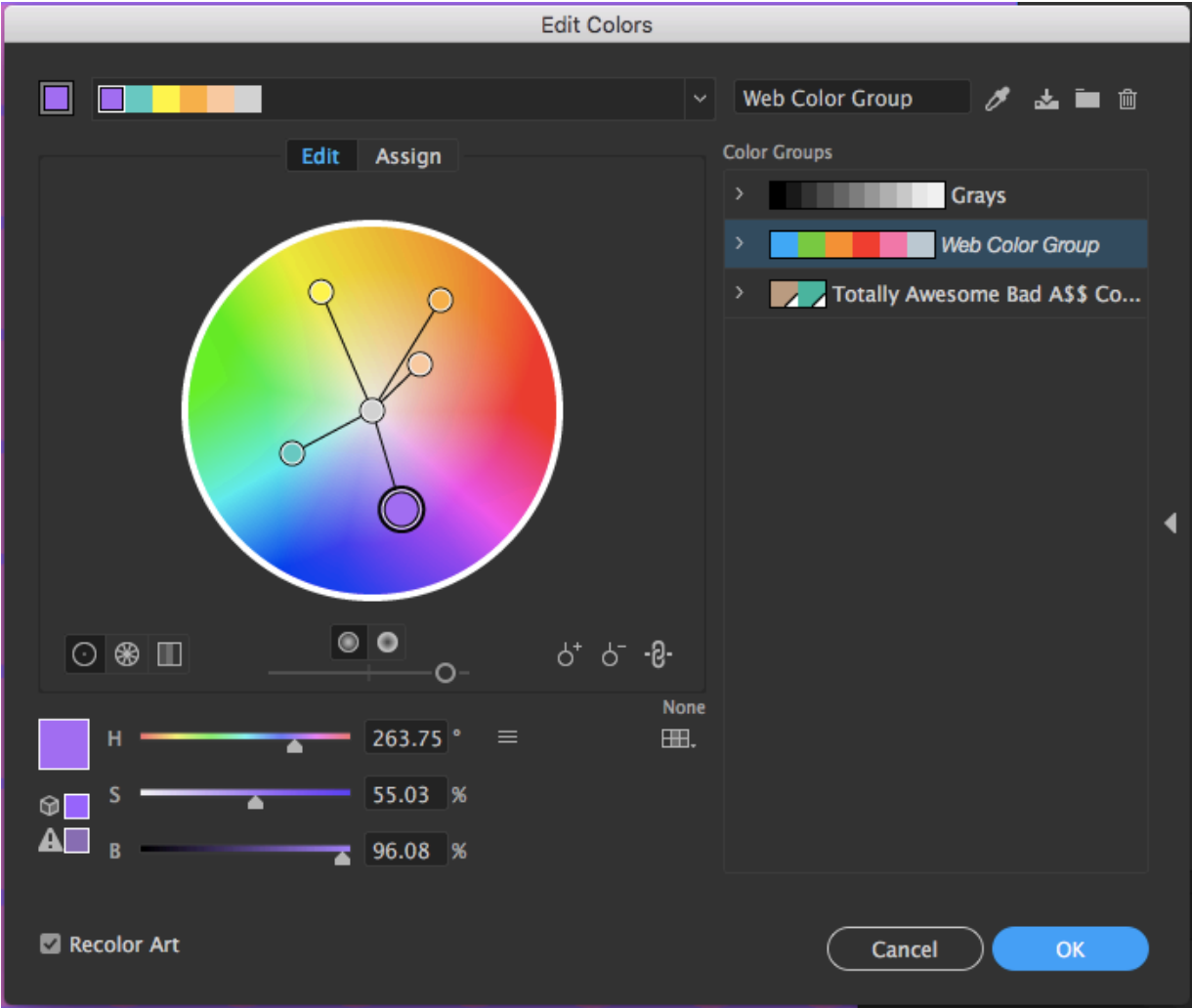


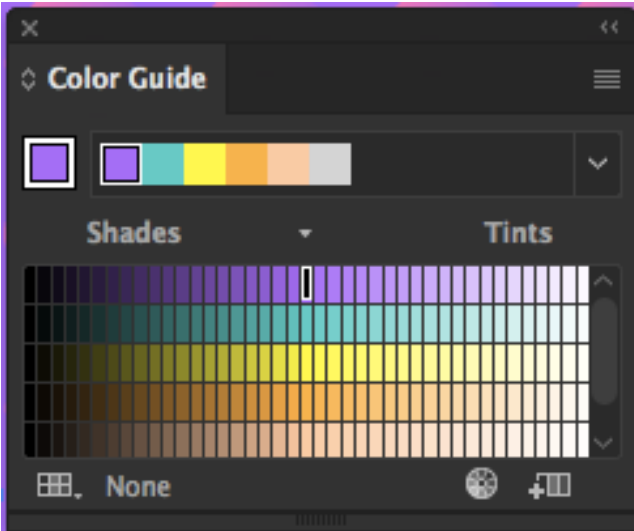
If we add more steps...



We get more variation between the 2 extremes.

We can also use the edit colours tool to use a interface to change the colours we are working with.




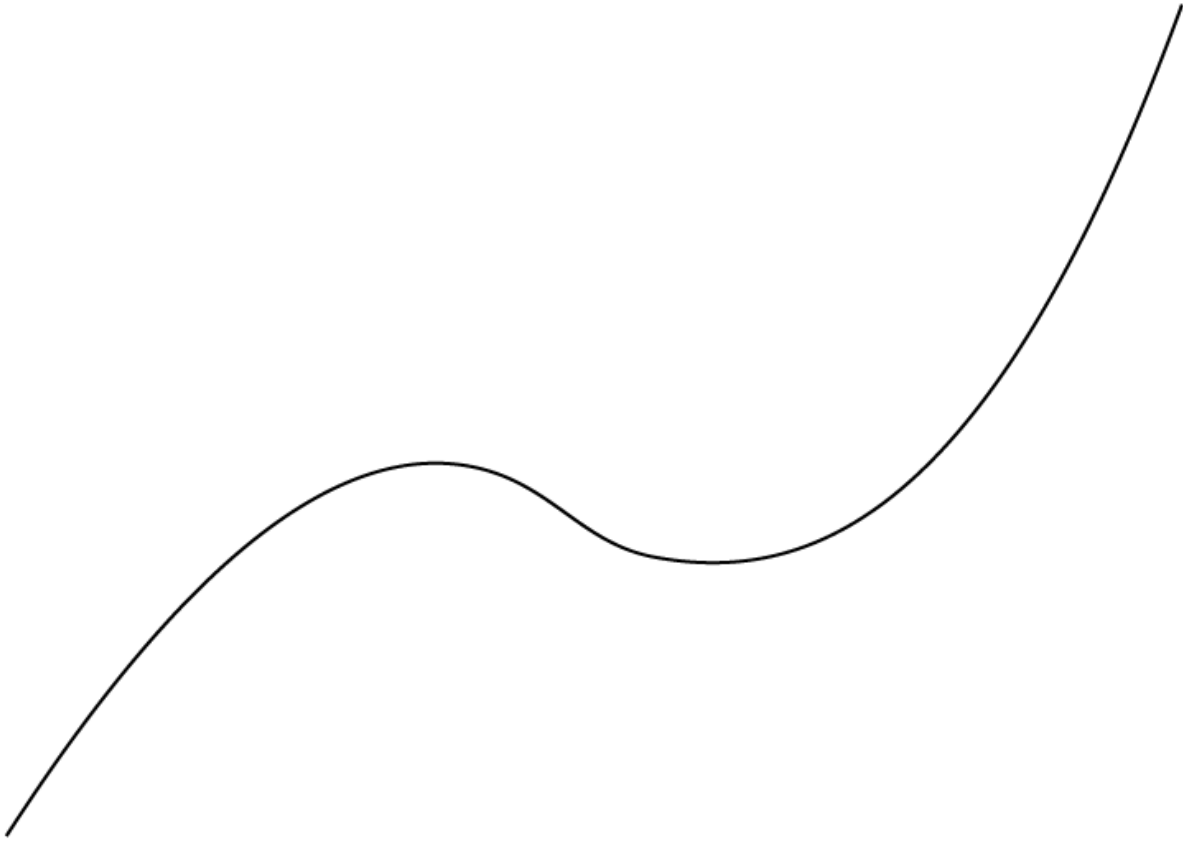


Changing stroke weight

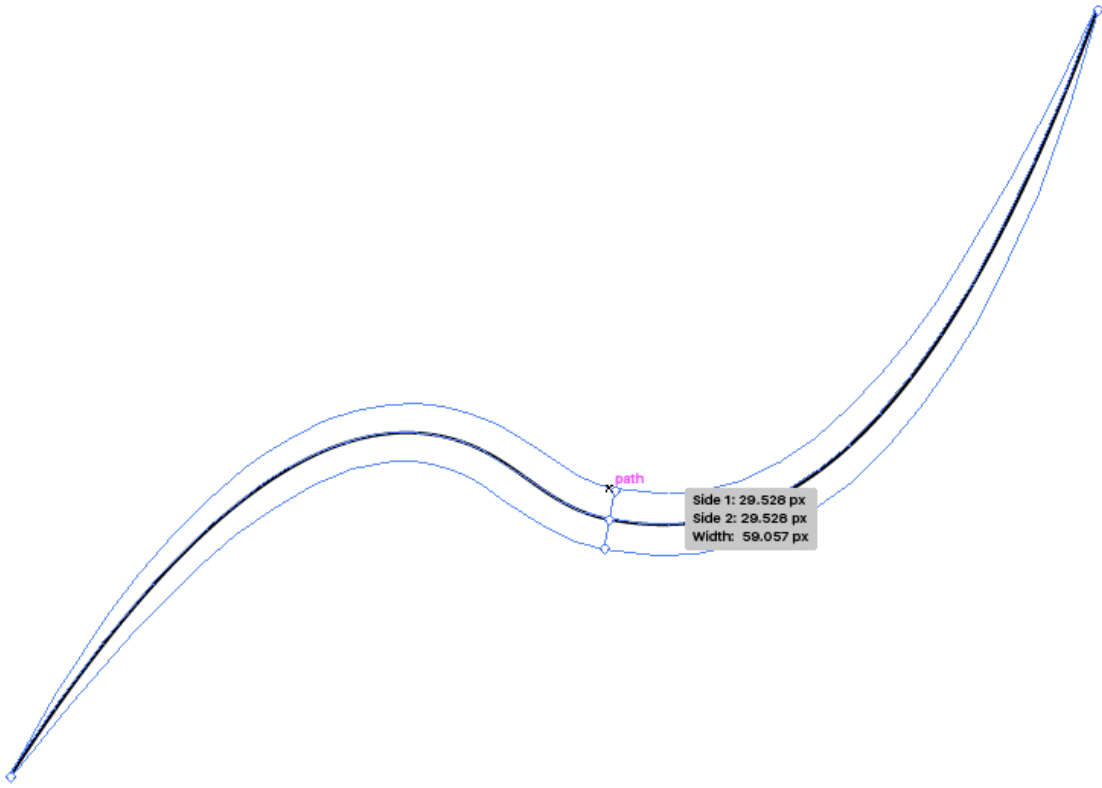
So far we have learned basic on adding a stroke to an object. However, there are some more tricks we can deploy.

By default, paths are set to uniform. There are tools we can use to change and modify this.

Lets take a look at the width tool:  Using this we can take any path and modify it manually on the art board.

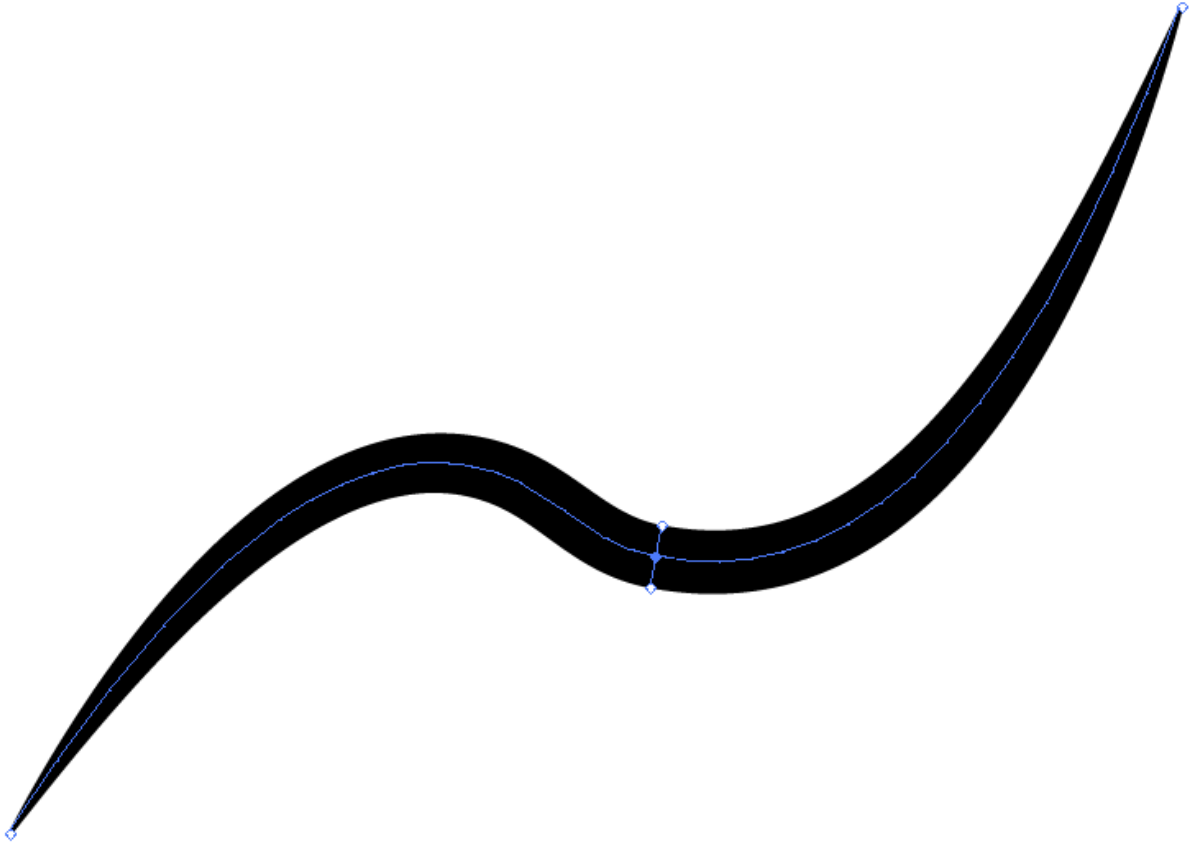


Take the width tool and mouse over the stroke on the art board, click and drag...



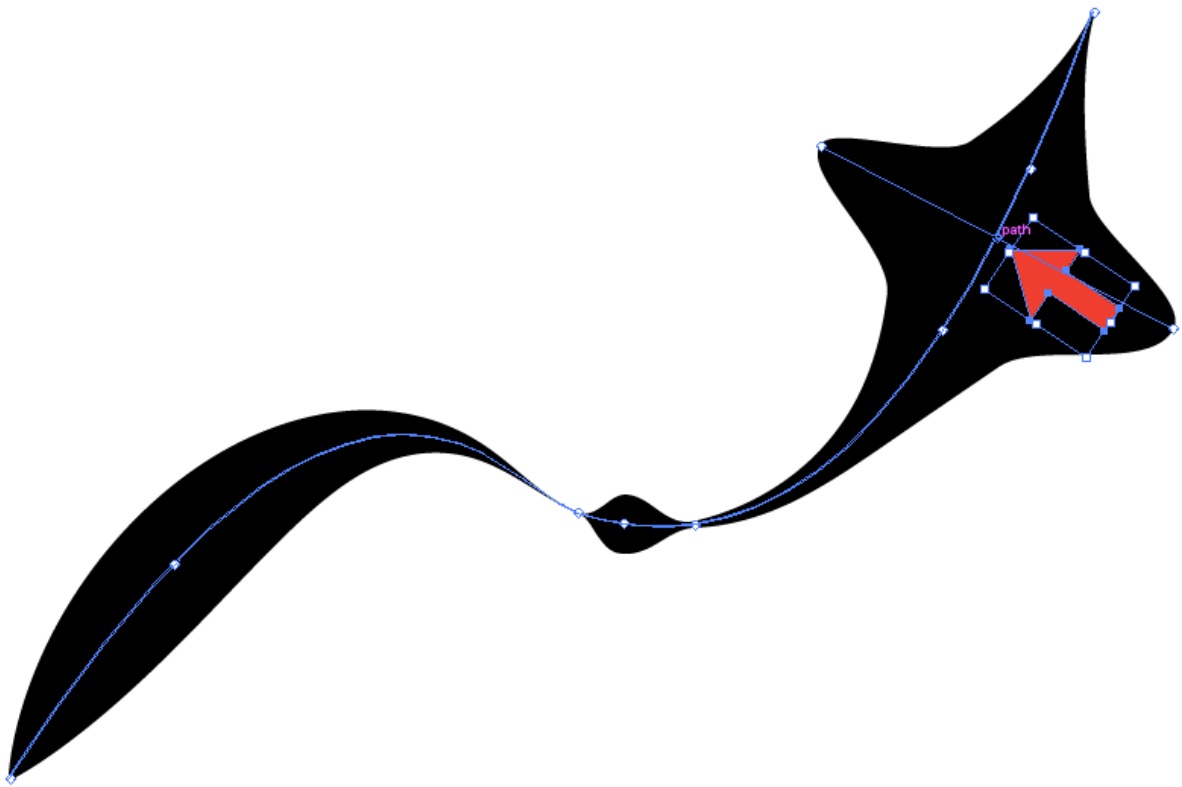
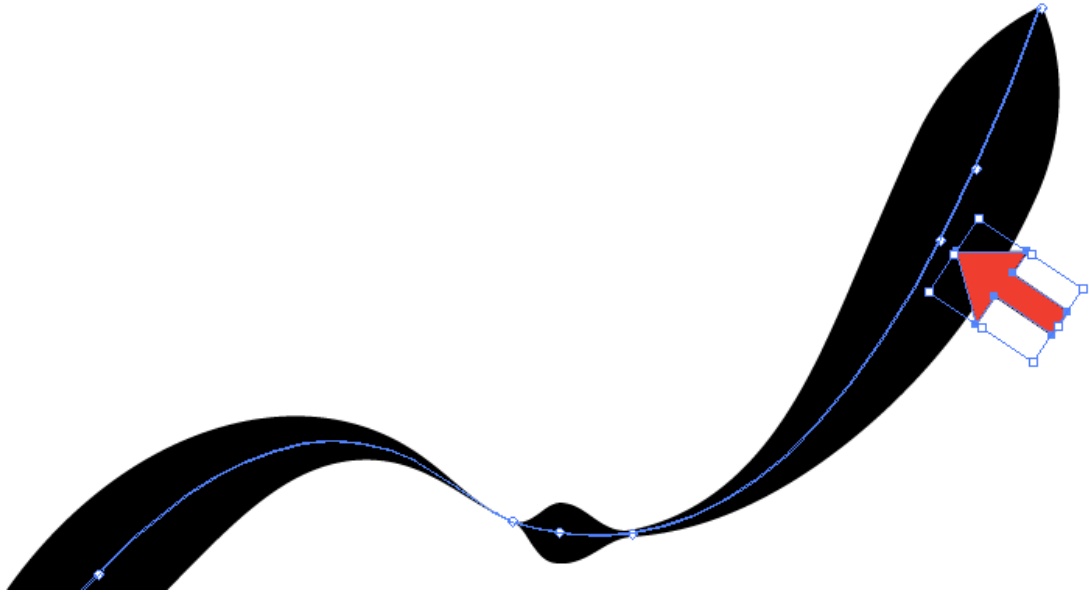
Side 1: 29.528 px
Side 2: 29.528 px
Width: 59.057 px





We can get even more surgical with this tool as well. We can drop more points onto our path and edit the width of those.

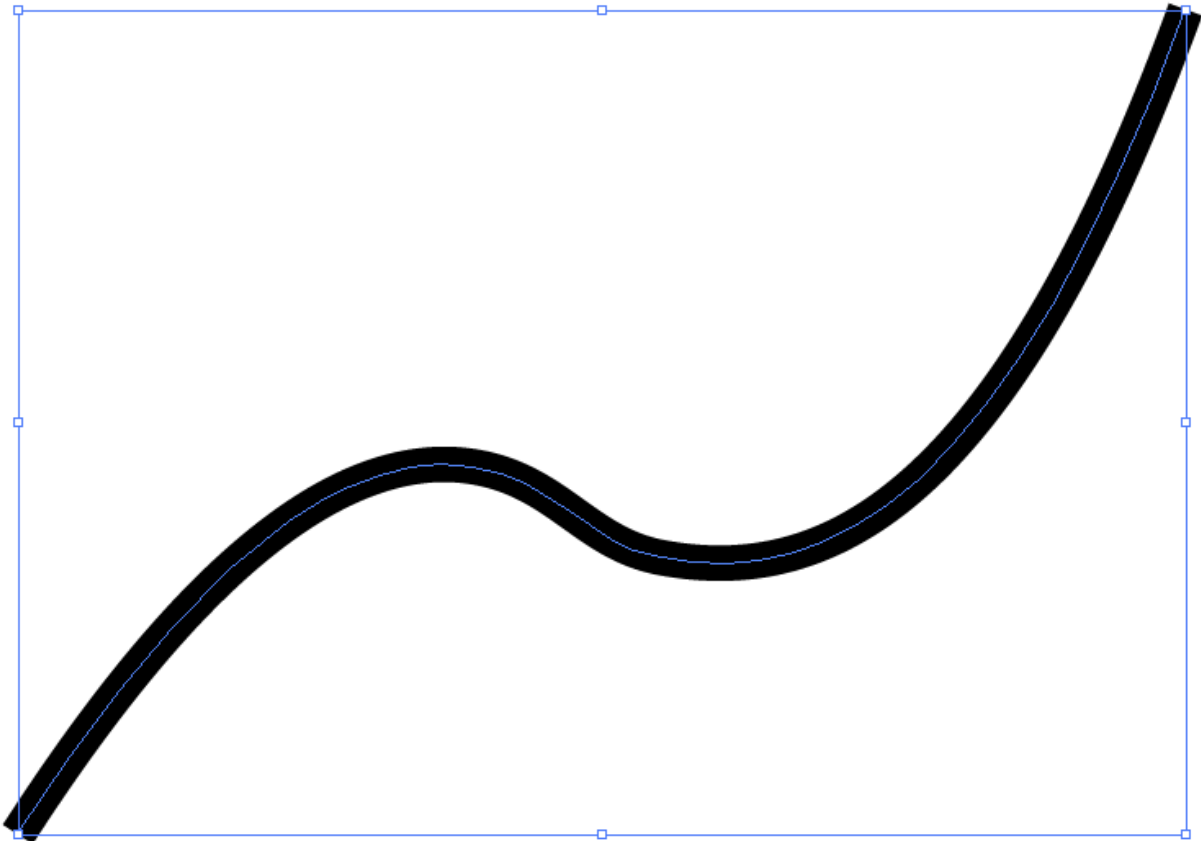
Notice when I mouse over the path with the width tool there will be a little ball point on the path, once I click it will add a point there which it will use as a point of reference for editing the width.



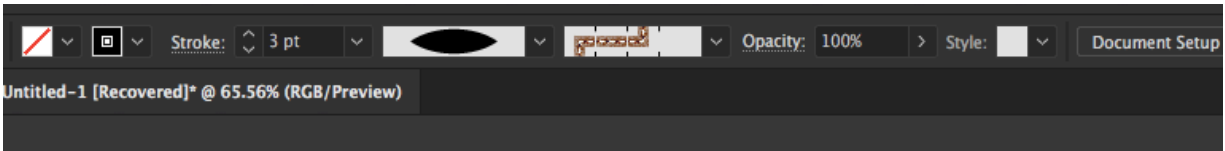
We can also edit paths using the stroke tools at the top



Using the same example above. We can add some stroke, (set to 33 in this case)

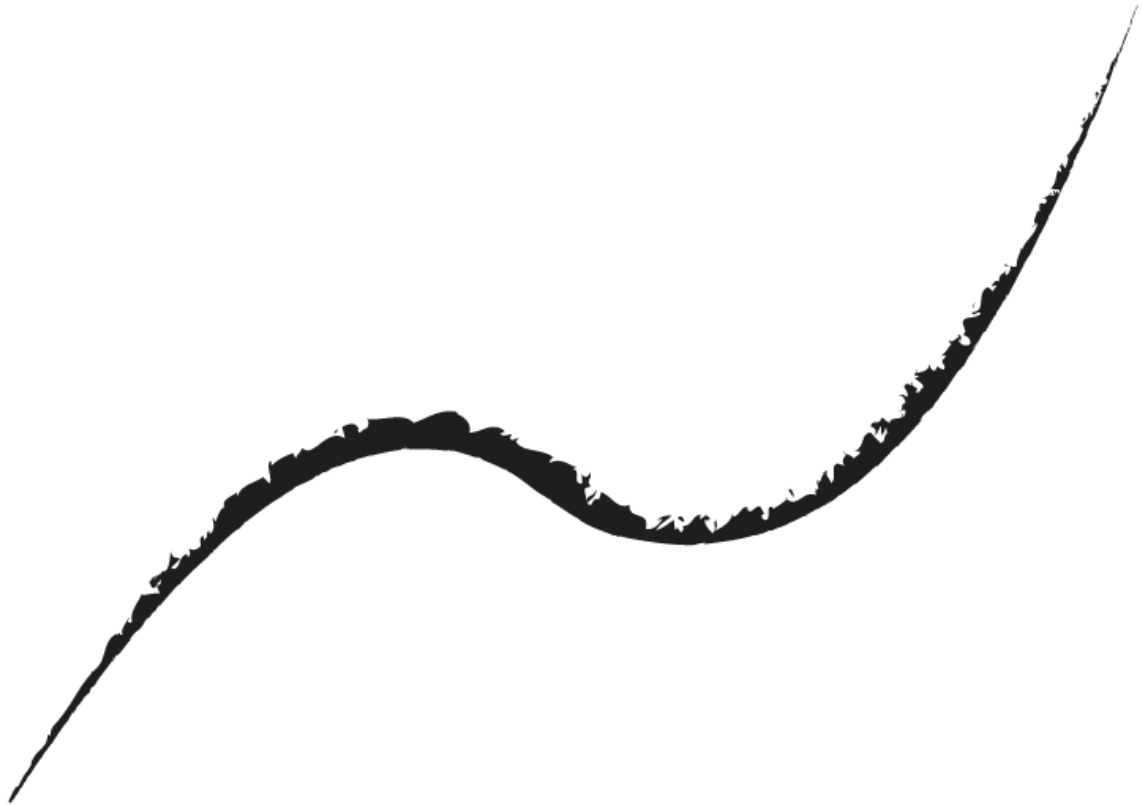
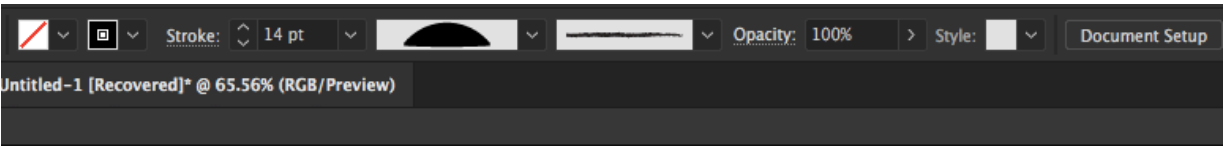


And while it is selected we can click the bar that says "uniform" and toggle through different presets... To the right of the stroke presets we can also add texture.




Untitled-1 [Recovered]* @ 65.56% (RGB/Preview)





Eyedropper tool

The eye dropper:  tool is an easy way to deploy colour onto objects. Think of this tool almost like a real eye dropper, It sucks up any colour, and drops it onto any selected object. You can access it with the hot key: I

If we select an object:



AWESOME FONT

AWESOME FONT

AWESOME FONT

In this case the second line that says "awesome font", and then we select the eye dropper tool, now any other object we click on with a colour will copy that colour over to the pre selected object...



AWESOME FONT



AWESOME FONT

We can also use this to copy font faces as well...

Lets say we have 3 fonts, if we select one using the select tool, than use the eye dropper tool to drop it onto another...

Awesome Font

Awesome Font

AWESOME FONT

Awesome Font

Awesome Font

AWESOME FONT

Bottom one is selected

Awesome Font

Awesome Font

Awesome Font

Middle one is eye dropped

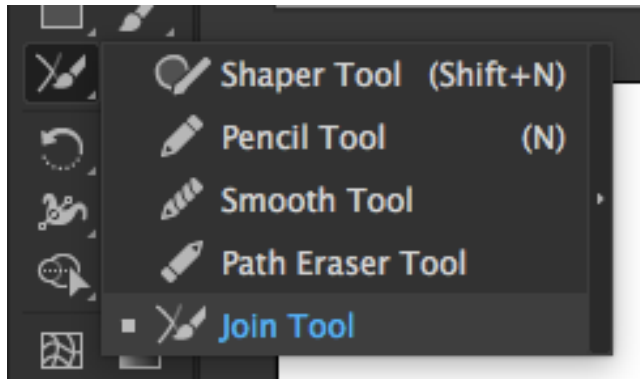
If you hold the [alt] key you will notice the dropper changes... This allows us to use preselected colours from the colour pallet or swatches, while the [alt] key is held down it will apply the selected colour from the pallet or swatch.



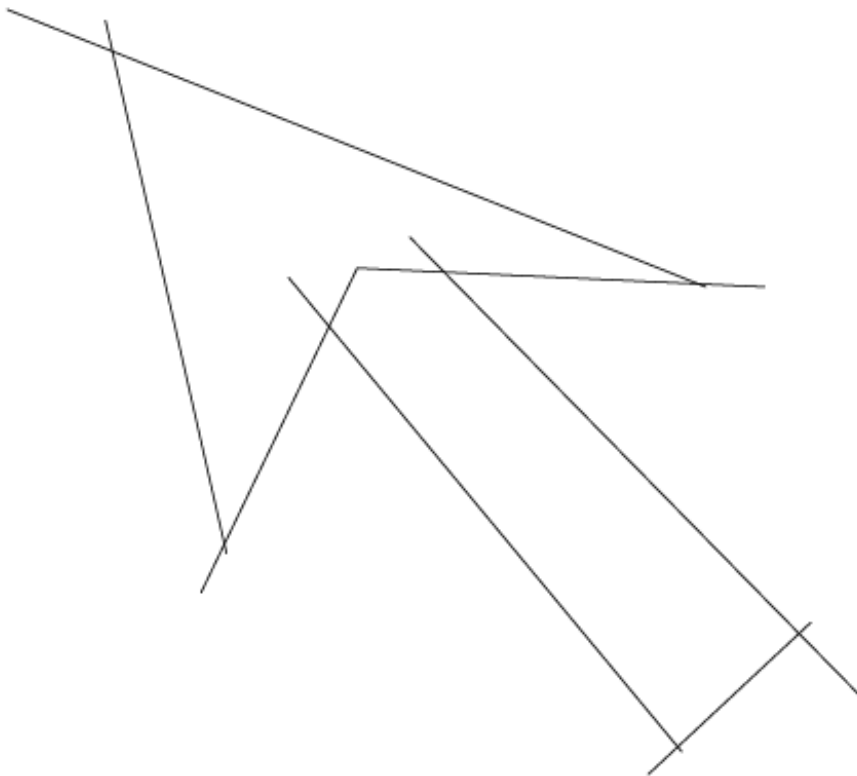
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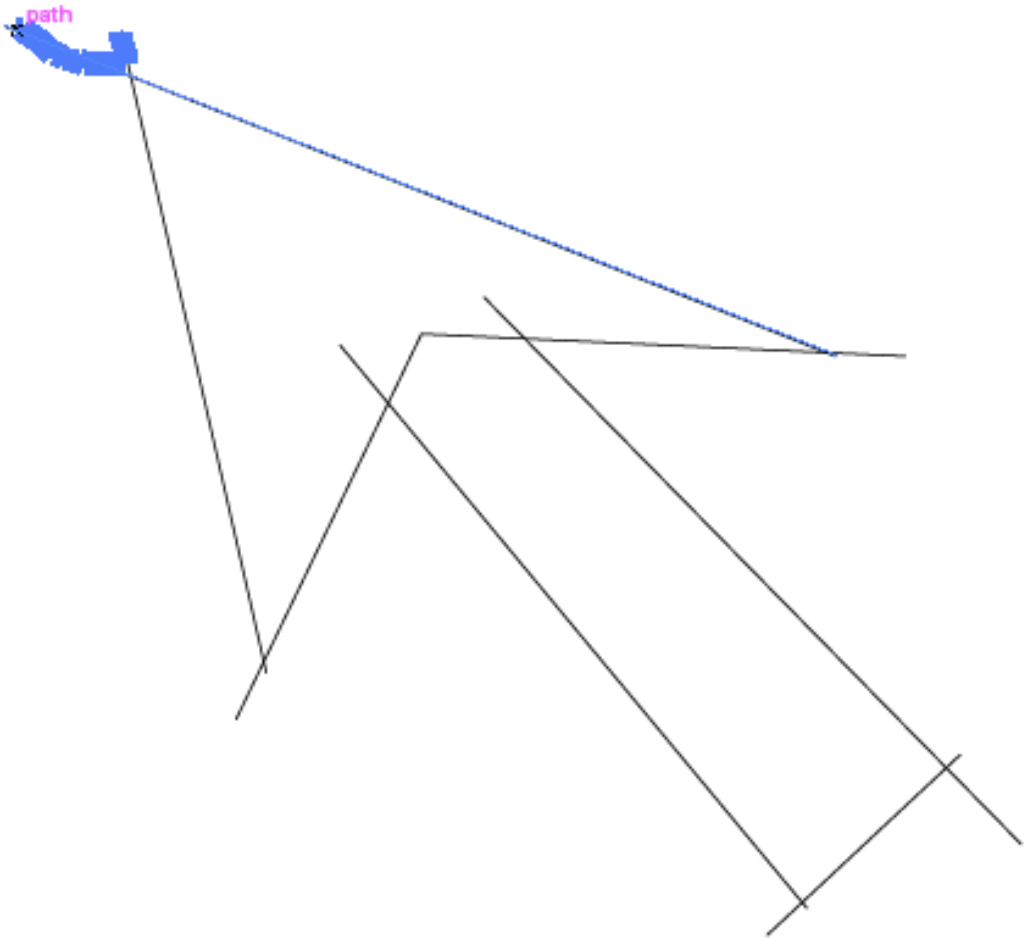
Join Tool

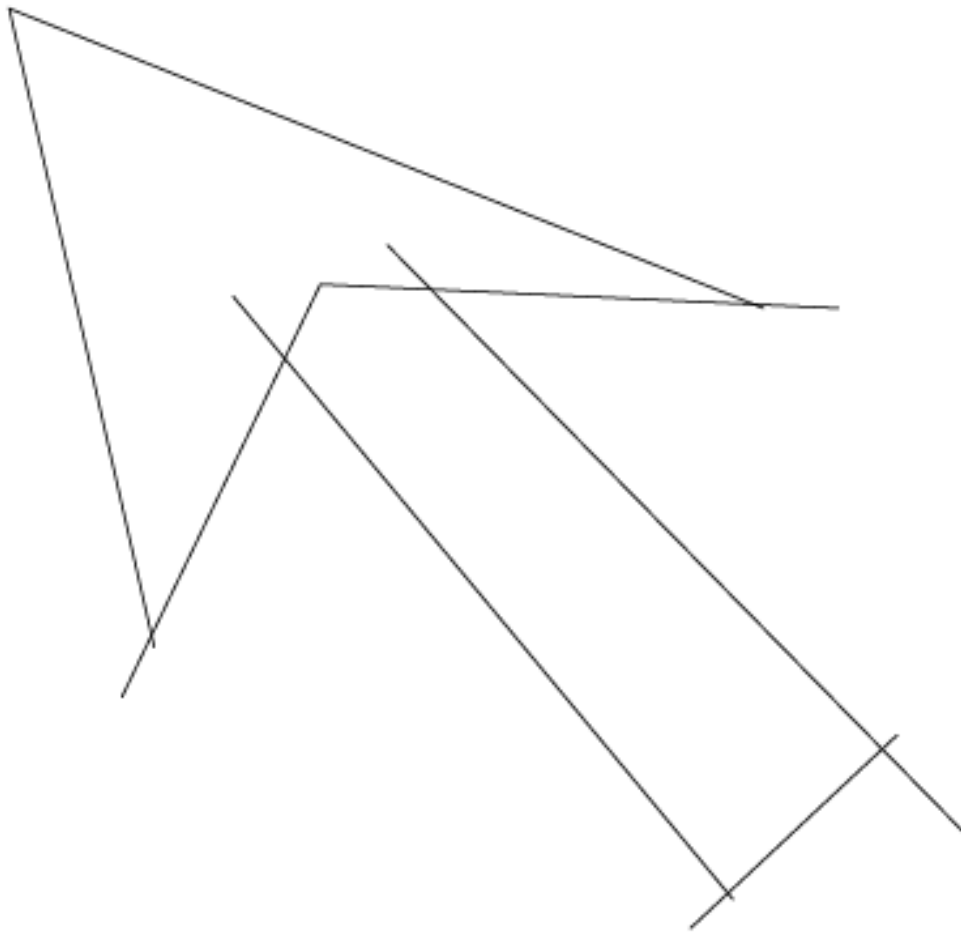


This tool is very useful to join paths to make a solid object and clean things up. Imagine this image:

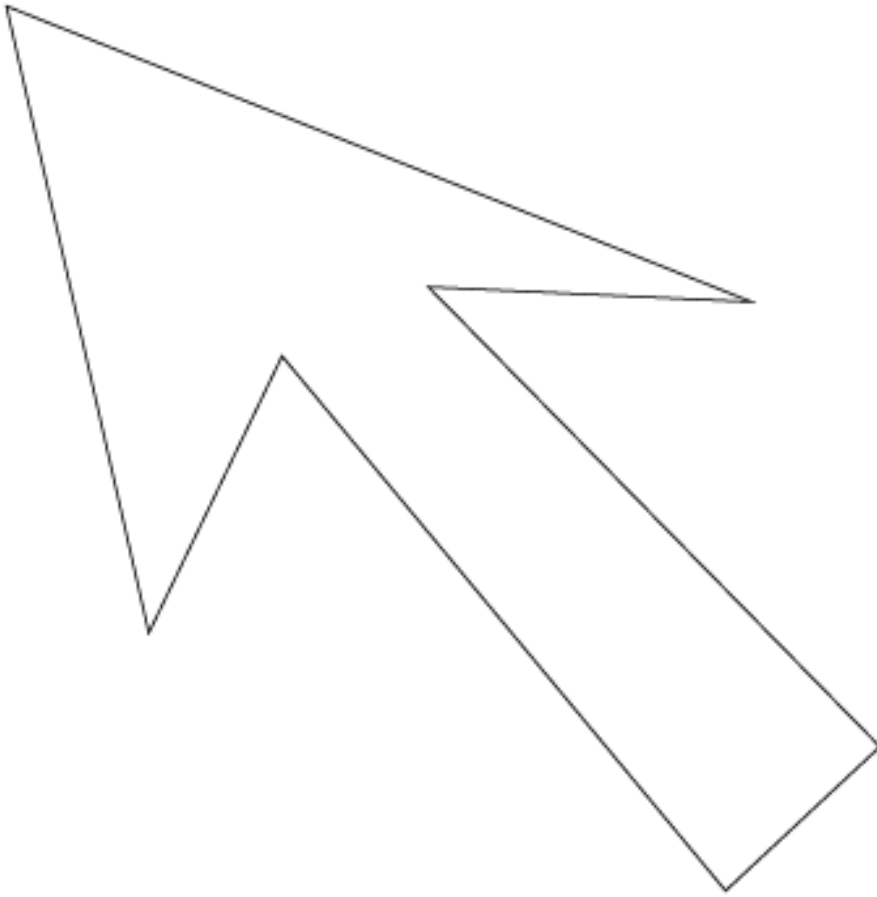


Clearly we are trying to make an arrow. But it need a lot of cleaning up. But we can easily do this with the join tool. Select the join tool and use it to draw over the run-off lines.



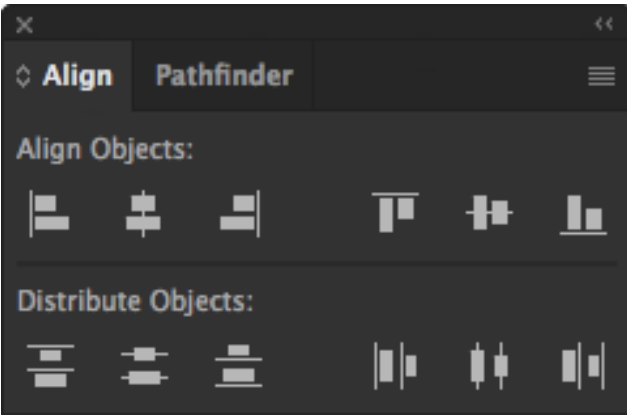


We can continue this process over all the lines we need to clean up:



Alignment

There is a useful tool we can use to align objects.
[Window>align](#) which will bring up this window:

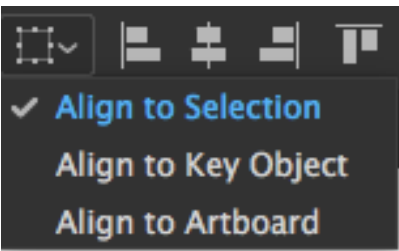


There is also another menu we can use to define alignment reference points

Align to selection will align to the selected object

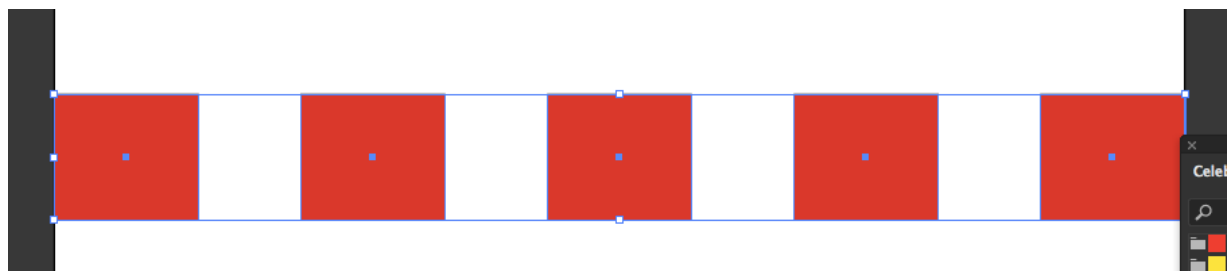
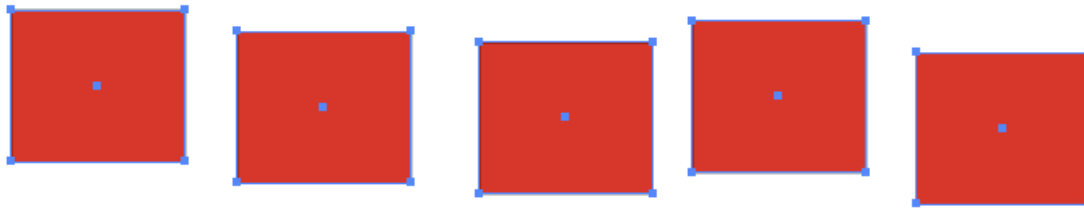
Align to Key object will align to the up-most object
(The object that is pasted in front of everything or on the highest layer)

Align to art board will align items to the dartboard itself



Lets set this onto Aligh to Artboard

From here we can select objects on the art board and Align or distribute them on the art board using the Align panel:



There are a good bit of options with this tool:



Horizontal Align left - Will align items to the left



Horizontal Align Centre - Will align items to the centre



Horizontal Align Right - Will align items to the right



Vertical Align Top - Will align the items on the top



Vertical Align Centre - Will align items to the centre



Vertical Align Bottom - Will align the items at the bottom

We can also use distribution methods so we can spread the items out aligned where we want them.



Vertical Distribute Top - Even distribution of items across from the top to the bottom



Vertical Distribute Centre - Even distribution of items across from the centre both up and down



Vertical Distribute Bottom - Even distribution of items across from the bottom up

Note these will only effect the space between the items in its distribution it may not align them straight in a row depending on formation of items



Horizontal Distribute Left - Even distribution of items horizontally from the left to right



Horizontal Distribute Centre - Even distribution of items horizontally from the centre



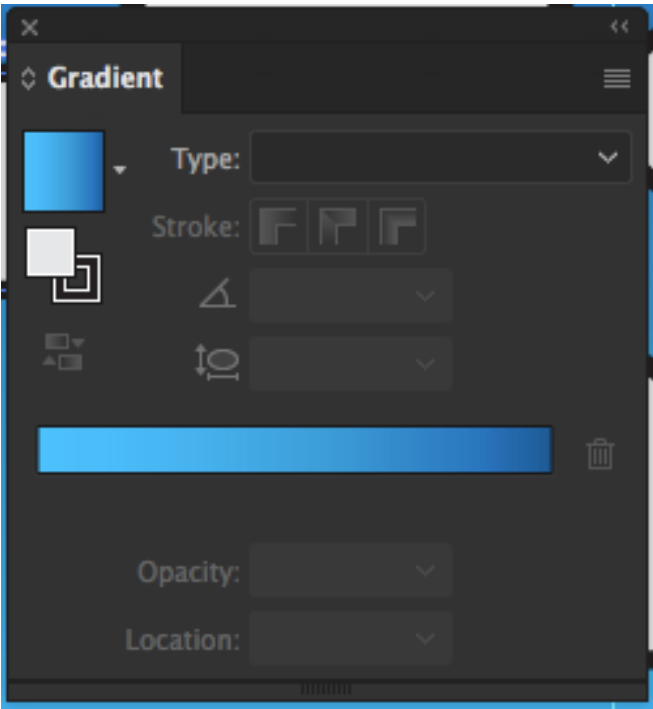
Horizontal Distribute Right - Even distribution of items horizontally from the right to the left

Gradients

Gradients are a much needed tool in Illustrator. We can use the gradient tool to add more depth to our drawings. Gradients can be applied to anything we create in Illustrator.

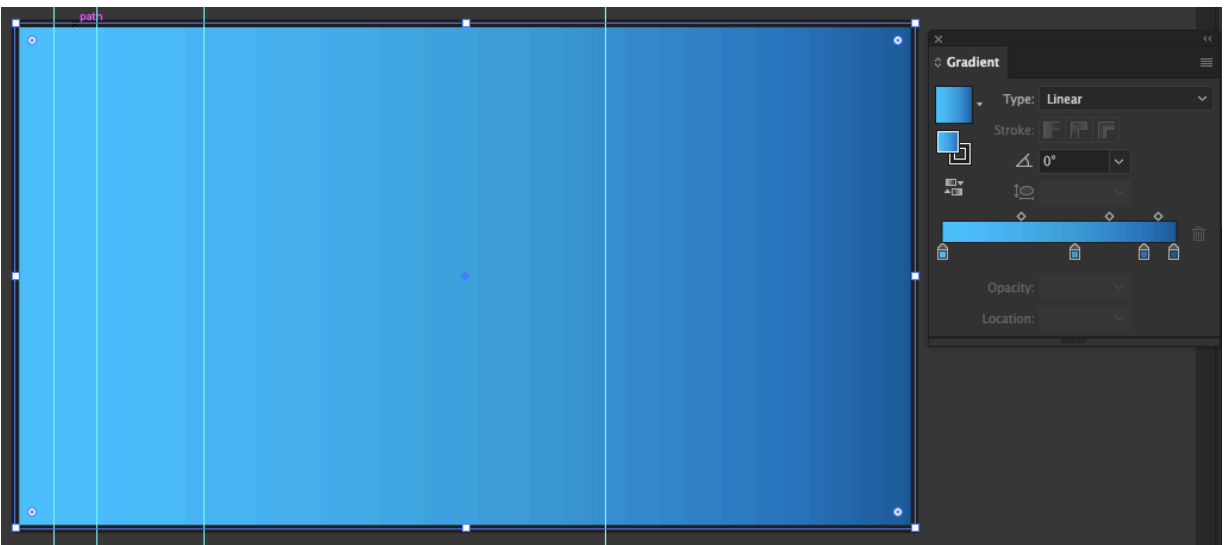
Lets look at a basic example first lets bring up the tool [Window>Gradient](#)

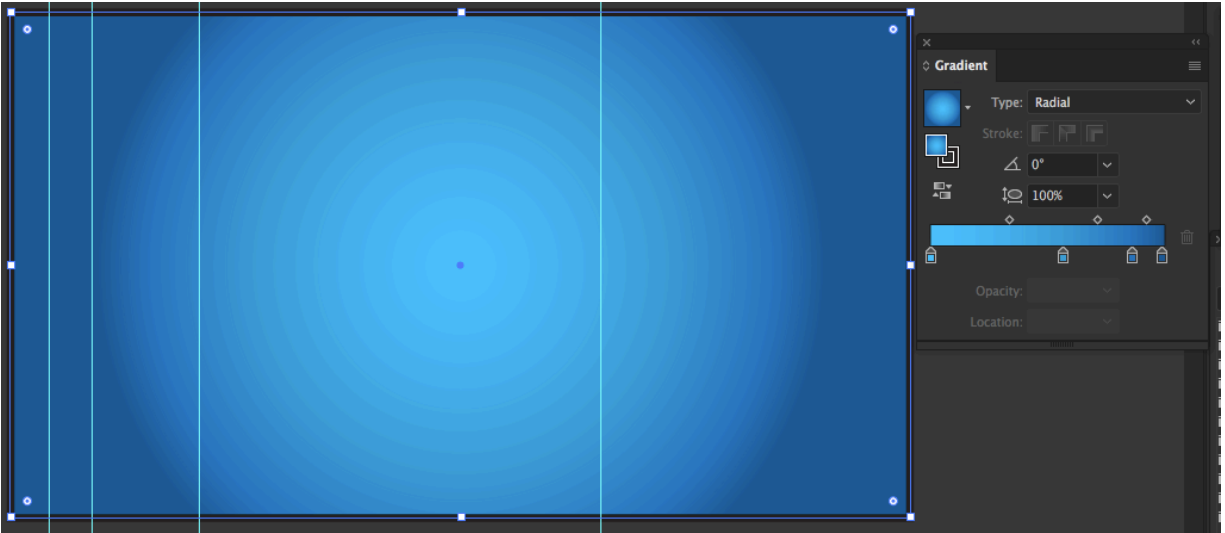
We will see this:



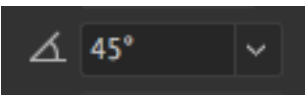
In here we can do an array of things:

Type: Here we can define linear or radial gradients

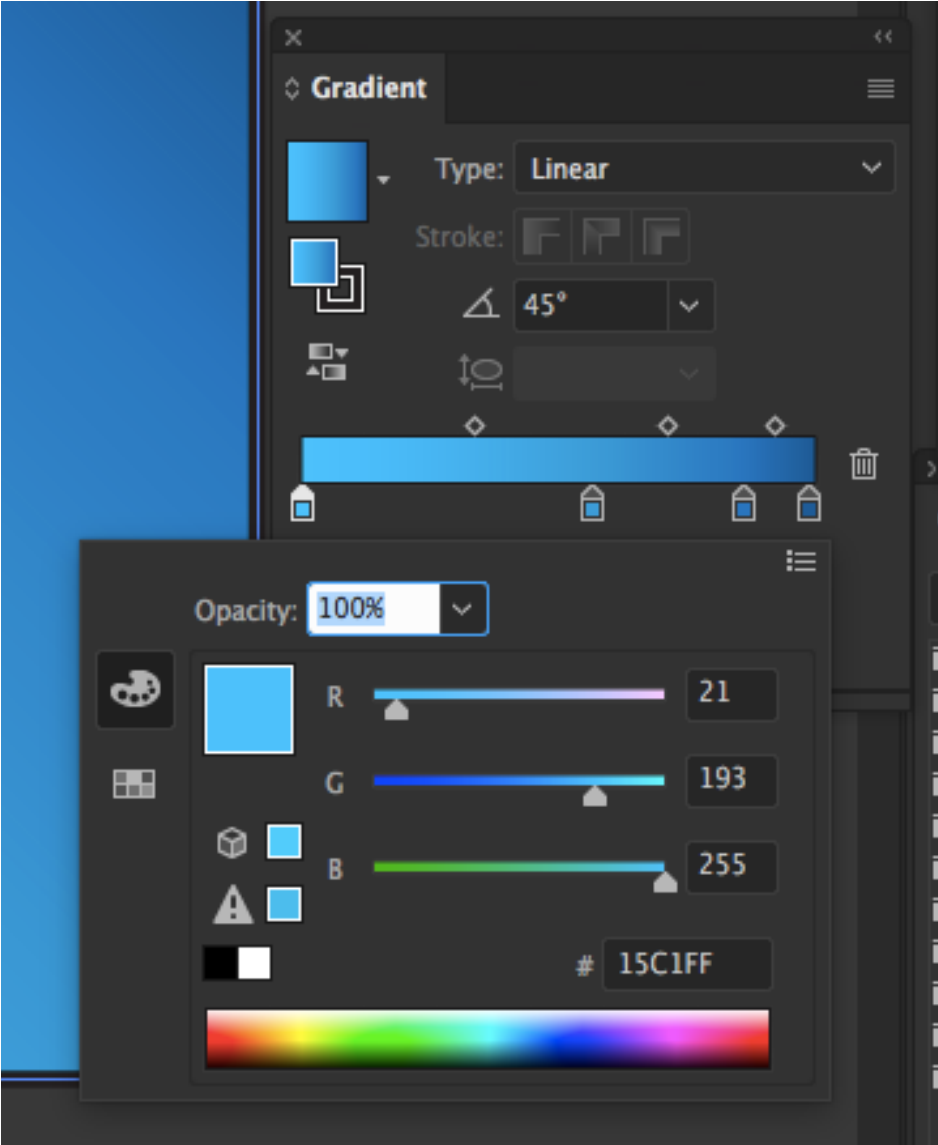


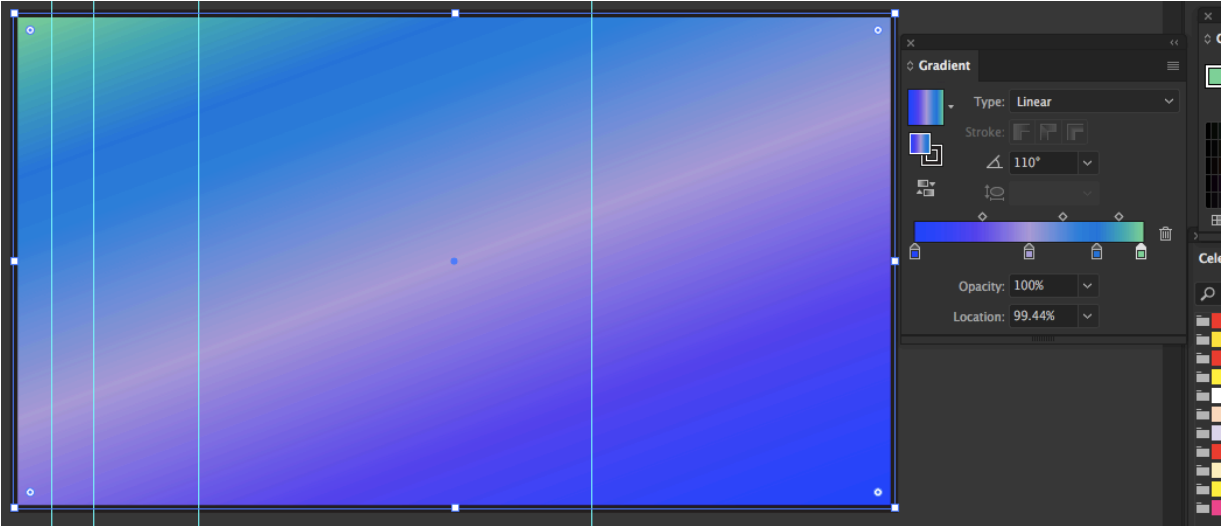


We can also edit the angle of the gradient as well by changing the default 0degree to a different value.

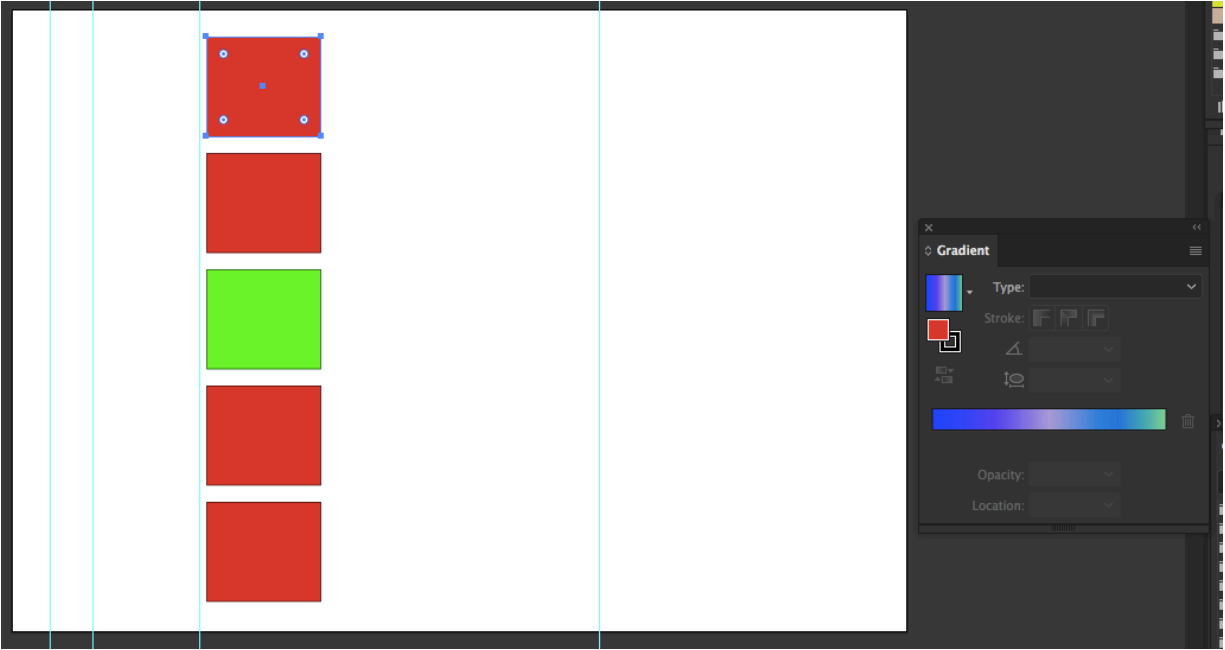


In the gradient bar we can edit the gradient itself... We double click the tab and it will allow us to edit the colour and we can also slide those tabs to the left and right to change the location of the colour.



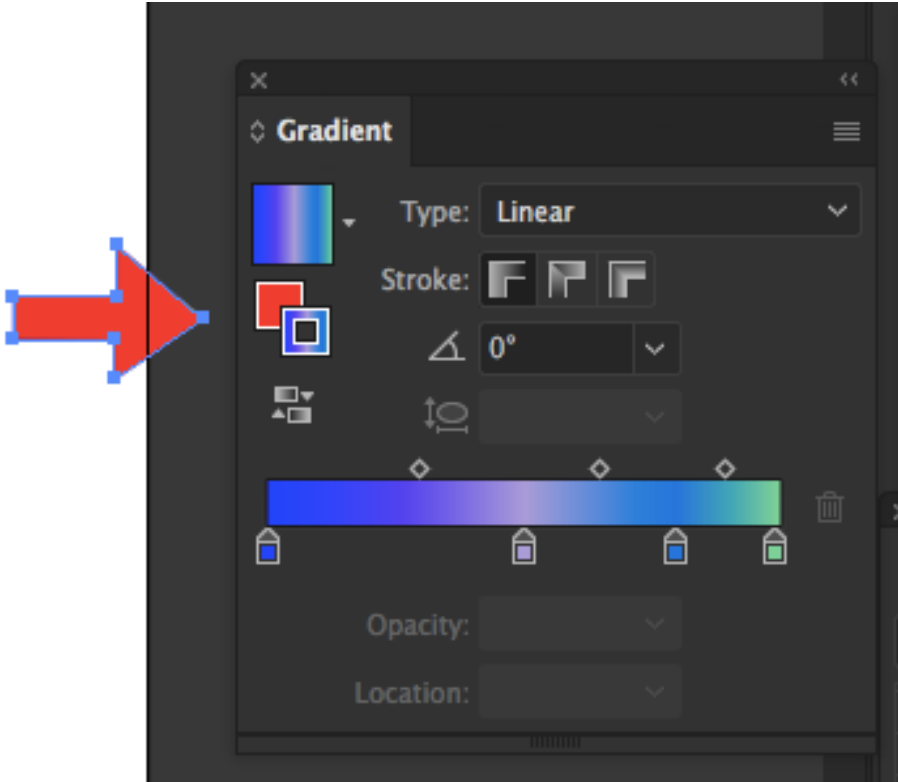


We can apply this new gradient to anything by selecting that object and then clicking the square gradient in the gradient tool top left corner...

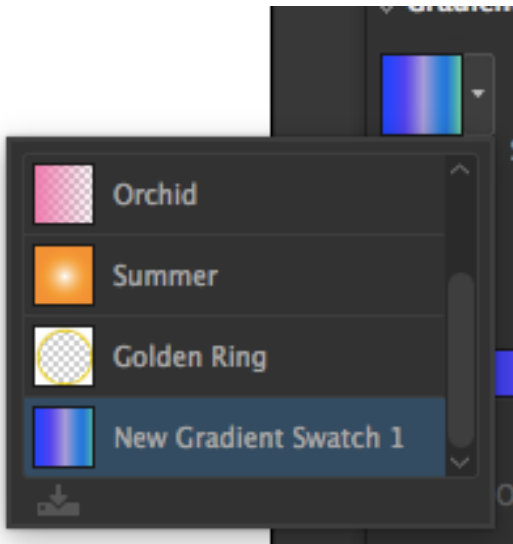




We can also toggle the fill and stroke if we want to apply gradients to the stroke instead of the fill colour. Click on the Stroke box here to make it prominent.

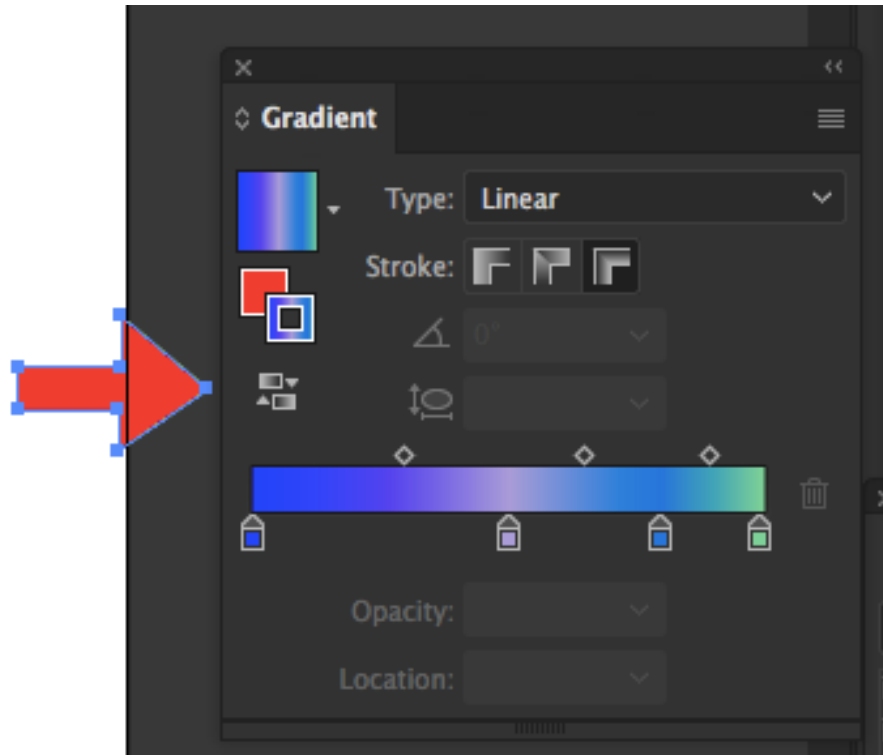


To save your new gradient click the down arrow beside the gradient preview box in the top left and a pop up will appear...



Then at the bottom of this you will see a down arrow, click than and your new gradient swatch will be saved.

You can easily reverse your gradient flow here...



You can also alter the orientation of the stroke (if its a gradient) using the Stroke: options here...



And that covers the basics of the gradient tool! Play around with it and get to know the interface, Remember to save your favourite gradients so you don't have to recreate them again.