

# Graphic Design

## Illustrator CS6 Intro

---

### **BASICS**

Illustrator is a VECTOR drawing program. That means that, unlike images you make in Photoshop (which are RASTER, or pixel-based), the work you create in Illustrator is infinitely scalable. You can make it as large or as small as you want without losing any resolution or detail. This is why it is particularly ideal for things like logos, which often need to be used at a variety of different sizes. Illustrator can create images for virtually any platform: mobile, print, web, etc. Though it may seem awkward to use at first, you can leverage its tools to translate your analog drawing skills into a digital format.

The pen tool, blob brush tool, and live trace/paint are all great options for creating (or converting) original drawings in Illustrator. These notes are just to get you started with some of the things we have learned in class so far. Please post questions as they arise. I'll add more notes and video links as we go. Some of this info was covered in class on Thursday, Jan. 26, and some of it is additional info that we didn't have time to cover in class, but I thought would be helpful for you to know.

---

### **KEYBOARD SHORTCUTS**

under "File" menu:  
CMD+N = new document  
CMD+S = saves (do this often while working!)  
CMD+P = print

---

### **GET A LIST OF KEYBOARD SHORTCUTS**

under "Edit" menu:  
CMD+SHIFT+OPT+K = brings up a list of keyboard shortcuts for Illustrator; you can export these as a text document, print it out, and highlight the ones you need most (or check them off as you learn them).

---

### **FINDING HELP**

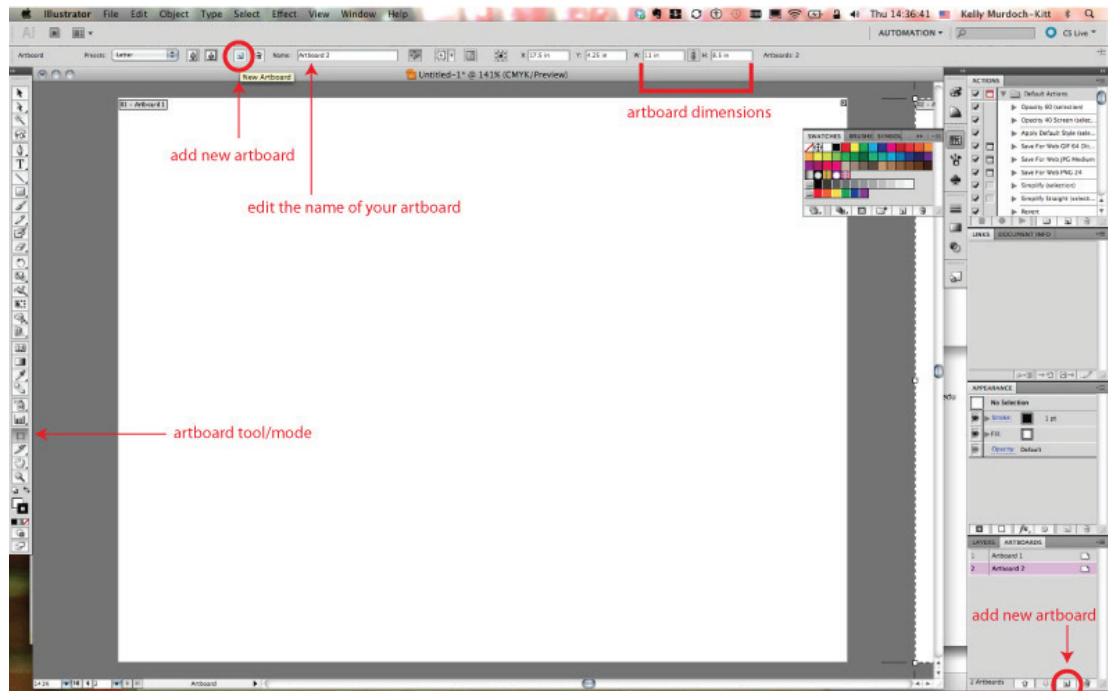
Top menu > Help: type a keyword here (try "outline" as an example) and scroll through the responses. Illustrator will often point out where the tool or command you need is hiding within its many menus!  
Also, Illustrator-specific web-based help is available anytime; summon it by hitting F1 (or go to Help > Illustrator Help)

---

# Graphic Design

## Illustrator CS6 Intro

### ARTBOARDS



In Illustrator, the creation space is called the ARTBOARD. Since CS4, it is possible to create a document containing multiple artboards. Each artboard can be a different size. This is advantageous when designing multiple pieces for a single client or campaign. For our first exercise, though, we are using four artboards measuring 4x4”.

To access the artboard editing mode, use SHIFT+o.

To open the artboards palette, go to Window > Artboards.

Add new artboards from the page icon in the top left area of your screen or from the same page icon on the bottom left corner of the artboards palette (see screenshot on previous page).

### MEASUREMENTS, RULERS & GUIDES

To change the unit of measurement in Illustrator (overall), use CMD+K to open your general preferences (or Illustrator > Preferences > General Preferences). Use the drop-down menu at the top to select “UNITS,” then change your units of measurement as you wish. I like to set my general measurement to Inches (because we’re designing for print in this class), and keep Stroke and Type set to points.

To activate your RULERS, use CMD+R (this is a good shortcut to learn, as rulers are buried under View > Rulers > Show Rulers).

CTRL+Click on the rulers to toggle quickly between units of measurement. With your black arrow selection tool (V), click and drag from a horizontal or vertical ruler onto your artboard to create a GUIDE. Hold SHIFT as you drag to make the guides precise (they will “snap to” every 1/8” mark on your ruler).

Guides are useful for aligning images, objects, type, or elements of different compositions or groups with each other. They’re also useful in creating white space and establishing grids, depending on the type of composition you’re creating.

# Graphic Design

## Illustrator CS6 Intro

### SHAPE TOOL

A good way to get started in Illustrator is by exploring what you can do just with basic shapes.

“L” is the shortcut for the Ellipse tool (circles, ovals, etc)

“M” is the shortcut for the Rectangular tool

SHIFT locks the proportion as you click and drag to create perfect circles or squares

Click and hold on the circle or square icon on the toolbar to view other shape options.

Once your shape tool is selected, you can also click once on the artboard to bring up a measurements panel, which allows you to enter the size of the object with precision, if you wish.

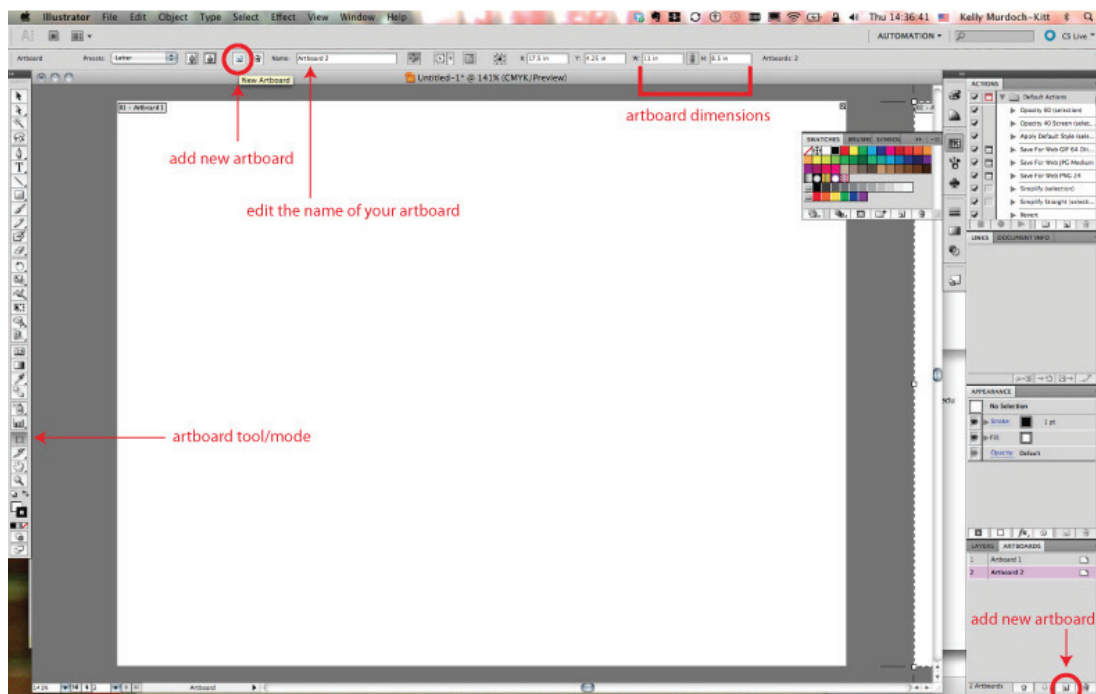
The object’s dimensions and position can also be changed using the width/height options and X/Y coordinates in the top right control panel area.

Alternatively, click and drag to create freehand shapes using these tools

### FILL & STROKE

Each object you draw has a FILL (the interior color) and a STROKE (the outline). You can control the fill and stroke in a number of ways (see screenshot on next page). At the bottom of your toolbar, you will notice a white square and a black outline square. These are the default fill and stroke settings.

Use “X” to toggle between fill and stroke (also works when an object is selected and you want to modify its colors) You will see a white square with a red diagonal slash through it: That means “none.” Apply it when you want to remove either the fill or the stroke (or remove both fill and stroke if you want to make your object into a guide).



# Graphic Design

## Illustrator CS6 Intro

---

### SELECTION

“V” is the shortcut for the black arrow selection tool; you’ll use this constantly!

“A” is the shortcut for the anchor point selection tool; you’ll use this occasionally when editing images/shapes

Ways to select: with the black arrow selected, you can click and drag to select several objects, SHIFT+click to select specific objects (and keep holding SHIFT and re-click to deselect an object from a particular selection).

CMD+A = select all

CMD+OPT+A = select all on a specific artboard

The below commands live under the “Edit” drop-down in the top menu:

CMD+C copies a selection to your clipboard

CMD+V pastes a selection

In Illustrator, CMD+SHIFT+V pastes an object in place (i.e. on top of its original copy).

CMD+OPT+SHIFT+V pastes an object to the exact position on all artboards within a document

CMD+Z = undo

CMD+SHIFT+Z = redo

(you will use both of these often, too; best memorize them!)

---

### GROUPING

Sometimes, you will need/want to group smaller items together to behave as one unit.

To do that:

- select all of the items you want to group (use one of the options listed in the previous section)
- CMD+G = groups selected items

To ungroup, select the group, then

CMD+SHIFT+G = ungroups the selection

Sometimes, items are automatically grouped together after performing a particular action.

For example, when using the Pathfinder palette, objects will be grouped together by default

after the transformation. Additionally, when outlining typography, the letters will be grouped together by default after you apply the outline to them.

# Graphic Design

## Illustrator CS6 Intro

---

### PATHFINDER

If it's already in your palettes, the Pathfinder icon looks like two black squares overlapping at one corner. Otherwise, go to Window > Pathfinder or CMD+SHIFT+F9

If you mouse over the different options on the Pathfinder palette, there should be a small description that pops up over each one.

'Divide' option (far left corner) cuts overlapping pieces of a shape out from each other.

To work with the newly cut shapes, there are a couple options:

- Use your direct selection tool (A) to click on different shapes to change their fills, delete objects, etc.
- Double click on one of the objects to go into Isolation Mode, and from there change fills, etc. (Double-click on the artboard (not on an object) to leave Isolation Mode.)
- OR, if you'd like to move items in the group away from each other and work with them all independently, you can UNGROUP them (CMD+SHIFT+G) and proceed with all of them as separate objects.

I encourage you to try out all of the different features and functions of the Pathfinder palette that we don't have time to discuss in class. It's a powerful tool that can be really helpful—and fun!

---

### MASKS

MASKS can tidy up the edges of our artboards (e.g. drawing a 4" square over your entire composition...) Anyway, the cool thing about masks is that ANY OBJECT IN ILLUSTRATOR CAN BE A MASK! It's a pretty amazing tool. Here are the basic steps:

- Create an object ON TOP OF the objects you want to mask (but within the same layer)
- Select all of the objects that you want to be included in the mask (click+drag with the "V" selection tool, or SHIFT+click, depending on the precision you need)
- Once all of the necessary objects are selected, hit CMD+7 (this is also under Object > Clipping Mask > Make)
- To release the mask, CMD+OPT+7 (also under Object > Clipping Mask > Release)
- Tip: When items are within a clipping mask, you can still edit, move, and delete them using your "A" direct selection tool, or by double-clicking on a specific object within the mask and then working in Isolation Mode to move the objects around or change them as you need. Double-click on the artboard (not on an object) to leave Isolation Mode.