



*Adobe Illustrator CS
Hands-On Training*
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0-321-20303-8

Design Faster, Smarter With H.O.T. Illustrator CS Tips

Heat up your design with “hot” time-saving tips and techniques from *Adobe Illustrator CS Hands-On Training* co-author Jeff Van West. In these brief excerpts from his project-based guide to learning Illustrator CS, Jeff shares some of his favorite keyboard shortcuts, a visual guide to the Pathfinder palette, precision editing advice, and more.

Crucial Keyboard Shortcuts in Illustrator CS

Why take the long way around Illustrator, when you can take a shortcut? Here are a few keyboard shortcuts you’re sure to use so often a week from now you won’t remember how you got by without them..

Command	Windows	Mac
Show/Hide all palettes	Tab	Tab
Show/Hide all palettes except tools	Shift+Tab	Shift+Tab
Fit to page	Ctrl+0	Cmd+0
Zoom in	Ctrl++	Cmd++
Zoom out	Ctrl+- (minus sign)	Cmd+- (minus sign)
Selection tool	V	V
Direct Selection tool	A	A
Temporary Selection tool*	Ctrl	Cmd
Temporary Zoom In tool	Ctrl+spacebar	Cmd+spacebar
Temporary Zoom Out tool	Alt+Ctrl+spacebar	Option+Cmd+spacebar
Temporary Hand tool	Spacebar	Spacebar
Constrain tool motion	Shift+drag	Shift+drag
Duplicate a selection with a Selection tool	Alt+drag	Option+drag
Toggle selection and direct selection	Ctrl+Tab	No default setting
Toggle fill or stroke on top	X	X
Set fill or stroke to none	/	/
Average and Join selected points	Alt+Ctrl+Shift +J	Cmd+Option+Shift+J
Boost effect of Arrow Keys**	Shift+arrow	Shift+arrow

* The Selection tool that appears—normal, direct, or group—is whichever one you had chosen most recently.

**Boost is by 10 times—10 or 4 units—depending on what you are editing or moving.

Precision Editing: What’s the Point?

The default Keyboard increment—the amount a selection moves if you use the keyboard arrow keys to move it—is 1 point, or about 1/72 of an inch. This is actually a rather large motion for detailed editing. Try reducing the increment to 0.1 point. This gives you more accurate control and you can always use the Shift + Arrow keys for 10x motion, which gives you the original 1 point. To change the default Keyboard increment, choose Edit > Preferences > General (Windows) or Illustrator > Preferences > General (Mac). Enter a new value in the Keyboard Increment field and click OK.

Get Into Shape Fast

When you drag to create a shape with the Rounded Rectangle, Polygon, or Star tools, use the up and down arrow keys to change vertices on the fly; use the Spacebar to drag the shapes around.

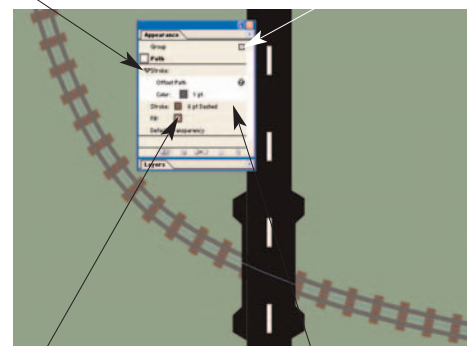
Use Your Appearance Palette!

One of your best friends in Illustrator is the Appearance Palette. Here’s why:

1. It shows whether your selection is a path, group, layer, or set of characters.
2. It shows you if paint (colors, gradients) and effects have been applied both to the object you selected and the objects it contains.
3. It shows the order in which paint and effects are applied and lets you edit them.

This stroke has an effect applied and is on top of all other strokes and fills.

The selected path is part of a group and the group has partial opacity.



There is no fill.

This stroke is a 6 pt dashed line and is brown.

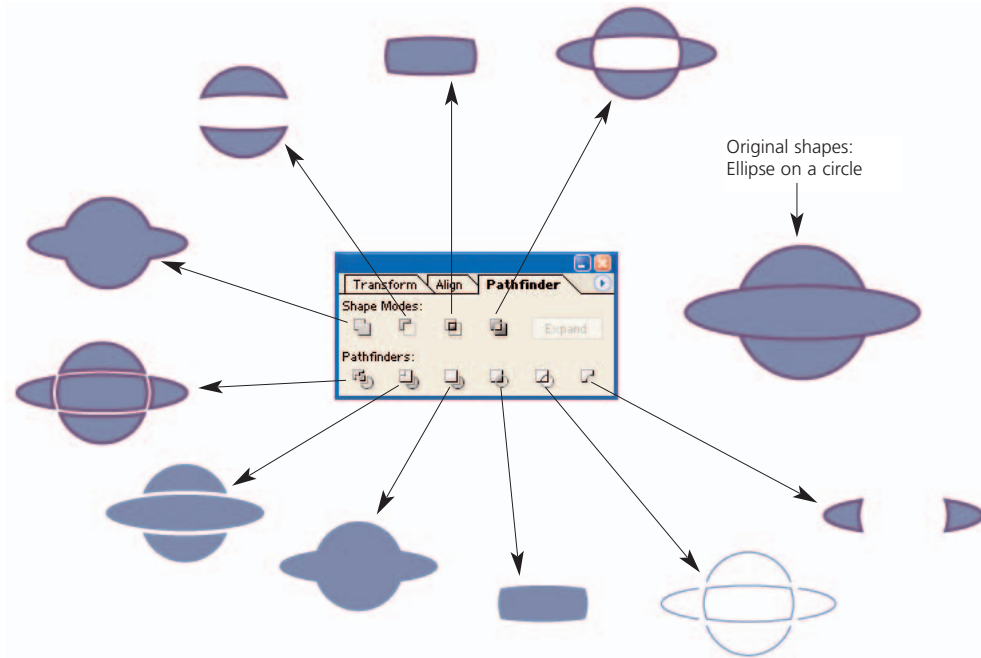
How Many Points?

One of the challenges of the Pen tool is that you must select how many points to place and where to place them. Try placing points every place the line changes direction abruptly, makes an S-curve, or curves more than 90 degrees. If adjusting one part of a curve consistently messes up another part, you probably don’t have enough points.



Visualizing Pathfinders and Shape Modes

The Pathfinder palette (Window > Pathfinder) is a great tool for building complex shapes from simple ones. Although the Add and Subtract pathfinders are easy to visualize, others are a bit tougher. You can use this chart to remember what they all do—especially what happens to the stroke and fill. Keep in mind that exact results vary depending on the stroke and fill of the selected objects and some situations create stray paths with no stroke and no fill visible.



Cursor Clues

For precise editing, keep an eye on your cursor. Many of Illustrator's tools can be used to create more than one effect; a quick glance at the lower right of your cursor clues you in to the kind of effect that will be created when you click the tool with your mouse. The Direct selection tool, for example, shows a filled square to the right of the cursor when clicking the tool would select all the points on a path. An unfilled square appears in that spot when clicking would select only one point on a path.



Select all points



Select this point

Other tools to watch include the Pen tool, which shows symbols for adding a point (+), removing a point (-), closing a path (o), and more. The Type tool displays different symbols for adding type to a point, path, or area and the Pencil tool indicates if it will start a new path, edit an existing one, or close a path.

>> Do you learn best by doing? Do manuals leave you frustrated and craving real-world examples and advice? Do you want concrete training that goes beyond theory and reference materials? If so, the Hands-On Training (H.O.T.) series is for you.

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