Learning the Illustrator Interface

ot too long ago, commercial artists and illustrators worked by hand, not on computers. It might seem hard to believe, but they spent hours and hours with T-squares, rulers, French curves, and type galleys from their local typesetters.

Now, of course, most artists and artist wannabes spend hours and hours with their computers, mouses (or should that be mice?), monitors, and onscreen type that they set themselves. Some traditional artists are still out there, of course, but more and more make the transition to the digital world every day.

Once that transition is accomplished, computer artists usually come face-to-face with Illustrator, the industry-standard, graphics-creation software for both print and the Web. The following is a typical example of how people get to know Illustrator.

Picasso Meets Illustrator: Getting Started

Illustrator arrives and the enthusiastic artist-to-be — we'll call him Picasso — opens the box, pops in the CD-ROM, and installs the product, while glancing at the quick reference card and thumbing through the manual. A few minutes later Picasso launches Illustrator and is faced with a clean, brand new, empty document. A world of possibilities awaits, only a few mouse clicks away. But Picasso is a little intimidated by all that white space, just as many budding young writers

CHAPTER

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Learning the user interface elements

Navigating around Illustrator

Using the Edit commands

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wince at a new word processing document with the lone insertion point blinking away.

So, Picasso decides he'll "play" with the software before designing anything "for real." He chooses the rectangle tool first, clicks, drags, and voilà! A rectangle appears on the screen! His confidence soars. He may try the other shape tools next, but sooner or later Picasso starts playing with some of the software's other features. Eventually, he eyes the dreaded Pen tool. And thus starts his downward spiral into terror.

Confusion ensues. Hours of staring at an Illustrator document and wondering "Why?" take up the majority of his time. Picasso doesn't really understand fills and strokes, he doesn't understand stacking order and layers, and he certainly doesn't understand Bézier curves.

Even Picasso's painting-factory boss can't help him much with Illustrator; questions result in a knowing nod and the customary tilt and swivel of his head toward the Illustrator manual. Picasso goes through the tutorial three times, but whenever he strays one iota from the set-in-stone printed steps, nothing works. Picasso becomes convinced that the Pen tool is Satan's pitchfork in disguise. Patterns make about as much sense as differential equations. Then he encounters things such as effects that can be edited later (huh?), miter limits for strokes (yeah, right), and the difference between targeting a group or all the objects in that group (huh? again). All are subjects that might as well have been written about in a third-century Chinese dialect, such as the hard-to-find *Chinese Book of Patterns*.

Picasso had never used or seen software as different as Illustrator.

Ah, but you have an advantage over Picasso. You have this book. The following sections in this chapter start with an overview of the user interface and all the different controls that will enable you to do great things. The remaining chapters in this part will focus on the basics of Illustrator, including topics that range from setting up a new document to understanding exactly what paths are and how Illustrator uses them.

Getting started with Illustrator

The first step in getting started is to install the software. Appendix D, "Installing Illustrator," helps you with this process, which is slightly different depending on the type of computer you are using. Once installed, you can launch Illustrator in one of the following ways:

- ♦ Double-click its application icon
- ✤ Double-click an Illustrator document
- ◆ In Windows, choose Start ➪ Programs ➪ Adobe Illustrator

Who's the Model on the Adobe Illustrator Box?

The woman that adorns the Adobe Illustrator box is Venus, goddess of love, from Sandro Bottecelli's *Birth of Venus* painting. A portion of the painting, shown in the following figure, appears as the program is installed, when Illustrator launches, and in the Help \Rightarrow About Illustrator dialog box. It is also included at the top of the Toolbox in case you get lonely.



Sandro Bottecelli's Birth of Venus

Venus has graced each and every Illustrator package since Illustrator 1, released back in 1987. With Illustrator 9 came the introduction of the first all-vector replication of Venus and Illustrator 10's version is even more realistic. Earlier versions of Illustrator included a raster version of Venus. She's the official Illustrator "mascot," gracing not only boxes but user guides, splash screens, and icons as well. A good-sized print of Bottecelli's painting hangs in a hallway in the middle of the Illustrator engineering team's offices at Adobe Systems head-quarters in San Jose, California. Bottecelli would be proud.

Quitting Illustrator

Note

End your Illustrator session at any time by choosing File \Rightarrow Quit (or Exit). This action closes the current document (you'll be prompted to save it if it hasn't been saved) and exits the application. Window users can also close Illustrator by right clicking on the program's task bar icon and choosing Close (or by pressing Alt + F4) from the pop-up menu. Mac OS X users can click and hold (or #+click) on the Illustrator icon in the dock and choose quit from the menu that appears.

For Mac OS X, the Quit menu is under the Illustrator menu.

If you run into a situation in which the Quit function doesn't work, or is unavailable, Mac OS 9 users can press #+Option+Esc, Mac OS X users can hold down the Option key while #+clicking on the dock and selecting the Quit changes to Force Quit (or users choose the Force Quit option from the Application menu and select Illustrator from the Force Quit dialog box) and Windows users can press Ctrl+Alt+Delete to "force" Illustrator to quit. However, doing so may cause you to lose your work and may make your system unstable; if you do this, you'll be better off if you take the time to restart your computer before running Illustrator again (or before opening any other software applications, for that matter). Restarting isn't necessary for Mac OS X users.

Note

One of the most likely reasons that Illustrator becomes unstable is due to a lack of memory. If the computer on which you are running Illustrator doesn't have enough memory, then working on large complex images will cause the interface to respond slowly, and if many other programs are open at the same time, Illustrator may quit responding.

Using the User Interface Elements

Before you can create amazing illustrations using Illustrator, you'll need to learn the tools and controls of Illustrator's user interface. If you've used other Adobe products such as Photoshop or InDesign, the user interface should look familiar. Adobe has made user interface elements consistent across their product line. Adobe's main products, including Illustrator, Photoshop, InDesign, PageMaker, Premiere, Dimensions, and Streamline, all have a fairly consistent interface that includes menus, palettes, and dialog boxes. Adobe listened carefully to its users and has made certain that the Illustrator environment is very similar to that of the other software products its users typically use. This gives Photoshop users a headstart into understanding and using Illustrator and vice versa.

The Illustrator user interface includes many unique elements that hold a lot of power. As you learn to use these elements, you'll discover many shortcuts to accomplish certain tasks. The Illustrator elements, shown in Figure 1-1, include the following:

- ◆ Document Window: The document window consists of the Artboard and the Pasteboard where the actual artwork will be displayed.
- ◆ Toolbox: This palette includes a set of common tools. Each tool is represented by an icon that can be selected by clicking on it.
- ◆ Palettes: These tabbed floating windows can be opened and closed as needed. They contain an assortment of controls and settings.
- Menus: At the top of the window are menus that open to submenus of options and commands.

◆ Status Bar: Along the lower left edge of the window is an area that displays information about the current state of the selected tool.



Figure 1-1: Illustrator includes many different user interface elements.

Working in the Document Window

The document window is where you perform all your work. It contains two main elements: the artboard and the page. The page (sometimes referred to as the pasteboard) is always centered in the artboard, as shown in Figure 1-2 and all the palettes have been closed in order to make the full document window visible. You can move the printable area represented by the dashed lines using the Page tool, which is explained later in this section.



Figure 1-2: The document window contains the page, surrounded by the artboard.

Illustrator windows act like windows in most other programs. You use the title bar at the top of the window to move the window around your screen. On the title bar is the name of the document. If you have not yet saved your document, the name of the document is Untitled-1, with the number changing for each new document you create. (Hint: Save it as soon as you create it!) Next to the title of the document is the current viewing percentage relative to actual size.

The scroll bars on the right side of the window let you see what is above and below the current viewing area (see "Using the scroll bars to view your document," later in this chapter).

In Windows, the upper right corner of the document window includes three buttons — Minimize, Maximize and Close. In OS X, the Close, Minimize and Zoom buttons are on the left and in OS 9 or earlier, the Close button is on the left and the Zoom and Windowshade buttons are on the right. These buttons work exactly the same as the similar buttons on application window. In Windows, the Minimize button will display the document window as an icon along the bottom edge of the application window. Once minimized, a Restore button appears which will return

the document window to its former size and position. In OS X, the document will change to an icon in the dock. In OS 9, the document will rollup until only the title bar is displayed.

The Maximize button in Windows will open the document window to the largest size that will fit in the application window. For Macs, the Zoom button will toggle the between its current size and the screen's maximum size. The Close button will close the window and offer a dialog box where you can save the current file if it hasn't been saved. Multiple document windows can be opened at the same time and the title of each open document window will be displayed at the bottom of the Window menu. A checkmark will appear in the Window menu next to the current active document window.

Although only one document window is active at a time, several document windows can be opened at a time. The Window menu includes a couple of commands that make it easy to see all the opened document windows. Window \Rightarrow Cascade will line up the title bars of all the opened document windows, Window \Rightarrow Tile will tile the opened document windows window \Rightarrow Tile will tile the opened document windows next to one another to fill the application window and Window \Rightarrow Arrange Icons will arrange all the minimized icons into neat rows. Figure 1-3 shows two document windows opened next to each other.

Caution

The Cascade, Tile and Arrange Icons options are only available for Windows computers.

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Figure 1-3: Multiple document windows can be tiled next to one another.

The artboard

The artboard is displayed in Illustrator using solid black lines and identifies the maximum printable area. This area can be different than the actual printed page, which is displayed as dotted lines. For example, you could have the page size set to letter-sized and the artboard set to a smaller section in the center of the page. When printing this document, only the art contained within the artboard will be printed.

The size, units and orientation of the artboard can be set using the Document Setup dialog box, which is opened using the File \Rightarrow Document Setup menu option. Conversely, the printed page size is set using the Page [Print] Setup dialog box also found in the File menu.

You'll typically want to keep the artboard and page size the same. To do this, just enable the Use Print Setup option in the Document Setup dialog box. This will change the artboard size and orientation to match the page setup.

Using the View menu, you can hide the artboard with the View 🕁 Hide Artboard menu option. Once hidden, this menu option changes to View Artboard. Double clicking on the Hand tool will quickly maximize the artboard within the Illustrator window.

If you are taking your Illustrator artwork into another application, such as Photoshop or QuarkXPress, the size of the artboard is irrelevant; your entire illustration appears in most other software applications even if that artwork is larger than the artboard.

The pasteboard

Probably the worst thing that can possibly happen when you are using Illustrator is for you to lose everything you've worked on. "Where'd it all go?" you cry, perhaps adding a few vulgarities. This can happen very easily in Illustrator. Just click a few times on the gray parts of the scroll bars at the bottom of the document window. Each time you click you're moving about half the width (or height) of your window, and three clicks later, your page and everything on it is no longer in front of you. Instead you see the pasteboard, usually a vast expanse of white nothingness.

The pasteboard measures 227.5×227.5 inches, which works out to around 360 square feet of drawing space. At actual size, you see only a very small section of the artboard. A little letter-size document looks extremely tiny on a pasteboard this big. If you get lost on the pasteboard, a quick way back is to choose View Actual Size. This puts your page in the center of the window at 100-percent view, at which time you should be able to see at least part of your drawing. To see the whole page quickly, choose View S Fit in Window, which resizes the view down to where you can see the entire page.

Tip

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This discussion assumes, of course, that you have actually drawn artwork on the defined page. We used to get frantic calls from people who would choose Fit in Window, resulting in the immediate disappearance of all their artwork. It took us a while to figure out that they had drawn their artwork way off on the side of the pasteboard.

The Page tool

The Page tool (found as a flyout to the Hand tool) changes how much of your document will print; it does this by moving the printable area of the document without moving any of the printable objects in the document. Clicking and dragging the lower-left corner of the page relocates the printable area of the page to the place where you release the mouse button.

Double-clicking the Page tool slot resets the printable-area dotted line to its original position on the page.

The Page tool is useful when your document is larger than the biggest image area your printer can print. The tool enables you to tile several pages to create one large page out of several sheets of paper. *Tiling* is the process in which an image is assembled by using several pieces of paper arranged in a grid formation. A portion of the image is printed on each page, and when you fit the pages together you can view the image in its entirety. This is really only good for rough laser prints, as a quarter inch around the edge of each paper will need to be manually trimmed.

Cross-Reference

Tip

Chapter 16, "Understanding Printing, Separations, and Trapping," further addresses issues related to printing and changing page sizes and printing areas.

The toolbox

The toolbox appears on top of your document window, covering up part of your document window in the upper-left corner. The toolbox (see Figure 1-4) has no close box; to close it you must choose Window r Tools. If the Tools menu has a checkmark to its left, the toolbox is visible. If no checkmark exists, then the toolbox is hidden. You can also press the Tab key (which hides *all* palettes, not just the toolbox).

You can show and hide all the palettes *except* the toolbox by pressing Shift+Tab.

To choose a tool, click the tool you want to use in its slot within the toolbox and release the mouse button. The background for the selected tool will be displayed white to highlight it. The selected tool will stay active until you select another tool. You can also choose tools by pressing a key on the keyboard; for instance, pressing P selects the Pen tool.

Tip





Many tools have additional *pop-up tools* called flyouts, which are tools that appear only when you click and hold down the mouse on the default tool. The default tools that have pop-up tools are indicated by a little triangle in the lower-right corner of the tool. To select a pop-up tool, click and hold on a tool with a triangle until the pop-up tools appear; then drag to the pop-up tool you want. The new pop-up tool replaces the default tool in that tool slot. You can also browse through the tools by Option [Alt]+clicking a toolslot; each click displays the next tool. Figure 1-5 shows all the pop-up tools for each toolslot.

Any tool with a pop-up option also has a tearoff tab at the rightmost end of the flyout. If you click on this tearout tab, the flyout tools become a free-floating palette of tools. Figure 1-6 shows the Graph tools as a floating palette.



Figure 1-5: All the flyout tools in Illustrator



Figure 1-6: A free-floating palette of tearout tools

Tooltips

If you ever forget what a specific tool looks like or have trouble finding it, you simply need to stop and think about it for a second and maybe, just maybe, the answer will pop into your mind. Or it will pop onto the screen. Tooltips are pop-up text that appears next to the cursor if you leave it over the top of an interface element. For example, if you hold the mouse cursor over the Selection tool, the tip, "Selection Tool (V)" appears in a yellow box. The letter in parentheses is the keyboard shortcut for selecting this tool. Tooltips are available for all the tools in the toolbox and for all palette controls.

If you find that the tooltips are getting in the way and you are expert enough that you don't need them popping up every time you pause for a second, you can disable them with an option in the General screen of the Preferences dialog box. This dialog box can be opened using the Illustrator [Edit] \Rightarrow Preferences \Rightarrow General menu option.

Palettes

Illustrator has more than two dozen palettes, all of which can remain open while you work on your document (providing you can still see your document through all those palettes!). Technically speaking, a palette is a window. Everything on the Mac and in Windows is a window except the desktop. Movable modeless windows (palettes) are variations on windows.

Note

A modeless window is different than a dialog box in that it doesn't require the window to be closed before other operations can be performed. This lets you work with the settings in the palette without having to close the palette.

Palettes are like regular windows in many ways. They have a title bar that can be clicked and dragged to move the palette. Under the title bar is a tab that contains the name of the palette. A close button usually appears in the upper corner of the palette that you can use to hide the palette. The title bar also includes a button that toggles between Minimize and Maximize for Windows or a Zoom button for the Macintosh OS. This button will toggle between displaying only the palette title tab or the entire palette. You can also toggle between these two states by double-clicking the title tab. Figure 1-7 shows the Navigator palette.



Figure 1-7: The Navigator palette

Occasionally, a manual resize box (which looks like three diagonal lines) appears in the lower-right corner for changing the palette's size. Any palette that has this resize box can be resized by dragging on the palette's edges or corners.

Tip

For some palettes, a double arrow icon appears to the left of the title name. Clicking this icon toggles the palette size among several different sizes.

Unlike windows, palettes are never really active. Instead, the one you are working in is in the front, and if it has editable text fields, one is highlighted, or a blinking text cursor appears. To bring a palette to the forefront — that is, bring it into focus — simply click it anywhere. Palettes seldom have scroll bars, although the Layers palette is an exception.

Tabbing and docking palettes

Palettes can be linked together in different ways called *tabbing* and *docking*. Each palette (except for the toolbox) has a tab on it. Clicking the tab of a palette brings it to the front. Dragging a tab from one palette to another moves that palette into another palette. Dragging a tab out of a palette makes the palette separate from the previous palette. Figure 1-8 includes a "set" of palettes that have been tabbed together.

Note

The default installation of Illustrator includes many palettes that are tabbed together, but you can change them to fit your needs. For example, the Appearance, Navigator and Info palettes are tabbed together by default.

You can dock palettes together by dragging the tab of one palette to the bottom of another palette; when the bottom of the other palette darkens, releasing the mouse button "docks" the moved palette to the bottom of the other one. Then, when the other palette is moved, the docked palette moves with it. Figure 1-9 shows a "set" of palettes that have been docked together. To undock a palette, simple click on its tab and drag it away from the other palettes.



Figure 1-8: Several palettes have been tabbed together

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Figure 1-9: A set of palettes that have been docked together

Showing and hiding palettes

The palettes are only helpful if you can access them and the Windows menu can be used to show or hide all the various palettes available in Illustrator. In addition to the palettes, you can use the Windows menu to show or hide the Toolbox, the library palettes, as well as any documents that are currently open. For all palette commands, the command will read "Show *x* palette" if the palette is hidden, and "Hide *x* palette" if the palette is visible. Many palettes have keyboard shortcuts that can be used to show them. These shortcuts are listed to the right of the palette option in the Windows menu.

ASK TOULOUSE: Moving Palettes

Kramer: When I start Illustrator, these tiny windows are everywhere.

Toulouse: Those are palettes.

Kramer: But I thought palettes are boards with daubs of paint of them.

Toulouse: Some Illustrator palettes hold colors, patterns and even styles.

Kramer: Oh, I've got plenty of style.

Toulouse: I'm sure you do.

Kramer: But, these palettes get in the way of my drawing space.

Toulouse: If you click and drag on the palette you can place it anywhere you want.

Kramer: Great! Now stay palette. Stay!

Toulouse: The palettes are very well behaved. They will stay where you put them even after you close and reopen Illustrator.

Kramer: Hey, that's okay.

The Windows menu will place a checkmark to the left of all the palettes that are currently open.

The various palettes

The content of the various palettes will be covered throughout the remainder of the chapters, but a summary of the available palettes is presented here and the keyboard shortcut, if available, will be listed in parentheses. They are listed as they appear in the Window menu alphabetically.

New Feature Several of these palettes are new to Illustrator 10 including: Document Info, Flattening Preview, Magic Wand, Symbols, Type and Variables.

- ✦ Actions palette: The Actions palette can record a sequence of commands that can be replayed at any time.
- Align palette (Shift + F7): The Align palette provides functions for aligning objects in your document.
- ★ Appearance palette (Shift + F6): The Appearance palette shows various attributes of the current object such as stroke weight and fill color.
- ★ Attributes palette (F11): The Attributes palette contains settings such as Overprint options and a URL.
- ✦ Brushes palette (F5): The Brushes palette can be used to select a unique brush to paint with.
- ◆ Color palette (F6): The Color palette is used to apply color to objects.

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- ◆ Document Info palette: The Document Info palette shows information about the current document such as its name, Color Profile and dimensions.
- ◆ Gradient palette (F9): The Gradient palette is used to modify gradient color and spacing. The Gradient palette also appears automatically when the Gradient tool is double-clicked.
- Info palette (F8): The Info palette shows information about the current selection. The Info palette appears automatically when the Measure tool is used.
- ✦ Layers palette (F7): The Layers palette can be used to organize artwork into independent layers.
- Links palette: The Links palette shows the embedded images that are linked to the current file.
- Magic Wand palette: The Magic Wand palette includes options for the Magic Wand tool.
- Navigator palette: The Navigator palette assists you in moving around your document.
- Pathfinder palette (Shift + F9): Pathfinder functions are used to control how paths interact with each other.
- Stroke palette (F10): The Strokes palette is used to apply and change strokes that are applied to paths.
- Styles palette (Shift + F5): The Styles palette organizes and applies styles to objects.
- ◆ SVG Interactivity palette: The SVG Interactivity palette lets you define interactive events that can be used with the Scalable Vector Graphics (SVG) format.
- ♦ Swatches palette: The Swatches palette contains preformatted gradients, colors, and patterns.
- Symbols palette (Shift + F11): The Symbols palette holds and organizes symbols.
- ◆ Tools palette: This is the toolbox that holds all the tools.
- Transform palette (Shift + F8): The Transform palette is used to make transformations (including move, scale, and rotate) to selected objects.
- Transparency palette (Shift + F10): The Transparency palette lets you set the opacity of the current object.
- ◆ Type ⇒ Character palette (Ctrl + T): The Type ⇒ Character palette sets the font and format for the selected characters.
- ◆ Type ⇒ MM Design palette: The Type ⇒ MM Design palette includes the setting for any Multi Master fonts installed on your system.
- ◆ Type ▷ Paragraph palette (Ctrl + M): The Type ▷ Paragraph palette sets the format for the selected paragraph.

- ◆ Type ⇒ Tab Ruler palette (Ctrl + Shift + T): The Type ⇒ Tab Ruler palette can be used to set tab breaks.
- Variables palette: The Variable palette includes an interface for defining data variables for data driven graphics.

Using Illustrator's menus

Menus are one of the most common interface elements for all software packages. Over time, Adobe has pushed a lot of their functionality to the palettes and other interface elements rather than the menus, but menus are still important and offer another way to work with the program. Some general rules apply to Illustrator menus:

- ★ To select a menu item, pull down the menu, highlight the menu item you want, and release or click the mouse button (Macintosh) or click that item (Windows). If the cursor is not on that item, but it is still highlighted, the command will not take effect.
- ♦ Whenever an ellipsis appears (three little dots that look like this . . .), choosing that menu item brings up a dialog box where you must verify the current information by selecting an OK button, or enter more information and then select OK. If the option has no ellipsis, the action you select takes place right away.
- ♦ When you see a key command listed on the right side of the menu usually the Command (ℜ) symbol and a character for Macintosh or Ctrl plus a character for Windows, but sometimes the ℜ symbol [Ctrl] or another modifier key plus a character — you can type that key command instead of using the mouse to pull down this menu. Using key commands for menu items works just like clicking the menu bar and pulling down to that item.
- ◆ If you see a little triangle next to a menu item, it means the menu has a submenu associated with it. You can choose items in the submenu by pulling over to the menu and then pulling up or down to select the menu item needed. Submenus usually appear on the right side of the menu, but due to space limitations on your monitor, they may appear on the left side for certain menus.

Palette menus

In addition to the main interface menus, many palettes have their own menus. In the upper right corner of many palettes is a round button with an arrow on it. This button will open a fly-away menu of palette options. Figure 1-10 shows the Color palette with its palette menu visible.

Tips for Using Menus Effectively

If you can never remember what is on which menu and you are constantly holding down the mouse button while slowly running along the menu bar, reading every menu item and looking for a certain command, you have a disease. Every year millions of people become afflicted with Menu Bar Scanning Syndrome (MBSS), defined as "the pathological need of users to continually search and hunt for special menu items that they just can't remember the locations of."

MBSS is a disease that can be treated fairly easily, but it wastes valuable production time, costing companies billions of dollars a year. Don't be surprised if the next time you flip to *60 Minutes*, Steve Kroft is doing an inside investigation into the mysteries of MBSS.

MBSS is deadly not only because it wastes time, but because the user is forced to read every single menu and pop-up menu. Sure, in the File menu you *know* that Document Setup is where to go to change the size of the page, but as you work your way over, things begin to get a little fuzzy. By the time you get to the Filter menu, your mind is mush. You see the Distort category and figure that all the submenu items are legal functions. If you can manage to get to the Windows menu, thewordswouldjustruntogether, making no sense whatsoever.

You can help prevent MBSS by doing one of two things:

- Memorize what is in each menu. This is the hardest thing to do, but a few hours spent memorizing each menu item and where it goes will eventually prevent countless MBSS-related searches. Make sentences out of the first letters of each menu item, if it helps. The File menu is either, "New, Open, Open Recent Files, Revert, Close, Save, Save As, Save a Copy, Save for Web, Place, Export, Preview AlterCast in Browser, Manage Workgroup, Scripts, Document Setup, Document Color Mode, File Info, Separation Setup, Print, Exit" or "Nine Old Odd Red Cats See Seven Severely Silly People Eating Purple Mashed Sour Damp Danish Flowered Soggy Pieces of Pruned Eggplant." (Yeah, yeah you're not supposed to eat pruned eggplant when it's damp. That's why these seven people are *silly*.) Of course, having to learn a new crazy sentence like this every time a new version is released becomes more and more difficult as new commands are added.
- ◆ Use the menus as little as possible. Instead, memorize key commands. Most of the menu items have them, so you only need to go up to the menu bar when a menu item doesn't have a key command. If you set your own keyboard commands using the Keyboard Shortcuts command (choose Edit ↔ Keyboard Shortcuts), you can set a keyboard command for *every* menu item in Illustrator.



Figure 1-10: The palette menu offers additional options

Context-sensitive menus

Illustrator provides context-sensitive menus that appear right under your cursor as you're working. Control+click [right-click] with a cursor anywhere in the document window, and a context-sensitive menu appears. These menus contain commands that relate to the type of work you're doing and the specific tool you have. Figure 1-11 shows a context-sensitive menu that appears in a document when a rectangle shape is created and selected. This menu would look different if some other object were selected.



Figure 1-11: A context-sensitive menu appears by right-clicking in the document window.

Typing keyboard commands

Keyboard commands are shortcuts for common activities that you perform in Illustrator. These shortcuts typically use the # [Ctrl] key in combination with other keys.

Many of the Illustrator menu items have keyboard shortcuts listed next to their names. Pressing the key combination does the same thing as choosing that menu item from the menu. Some menu items do not have keyboard commands; usually, you have to choose those items from the menu.

On a Macintosh, common keys that are used with the **#** key are the Option key (located handily next to the **#** key) and the Shift key. The Control key is used only to simulate the right mouse button that Windows users have (OS X also supports a multi-button mouse). By default, no keyboard commands use the Control key, although you can assign them if you wish. You hold down these keys while you press another key or click the mouse to perform a specific function.

On a Windows system, the Ctrl key is used along with the Alt and Shift keys. If you press certain combinations of these keys while pressing another key or clicking the mouse, the related function activates.



In Appendix B, "Shortcuts in Illustrator 10," you can find a complete listing of the default key commands for Macintosh and Windows systems. You can learn how to make your own custom keyboard shortcuts in Chapter 15, "Customizing and Optimizing Illustrator."

Keyboard commands are as important to an Illustrator artist as the mouse is; with a little practice, you can learn them quickly. Besides, many of the default keyboard commands are the same from program to program, which will make you an instant expert in software that you haven't used yet! Good examples of this are the Cut/ Copy/Paste set of commands (\mathbf{\mathbf{\mathbf{k}}+X, C, V [Ctrl+X, C, V]), Select All (\mathbf{\mathbf{\mathbf{k}}+A [Ctrl+A]), and Save (\mathbf{\mathbf{\mathbf{k}}+S [Ctrl+S]).

Using the status bar

In the lower-left corner is the status bar, which includes a Zoom drop-down list and a button that displays all sorts of neat information you just can't get anywhere else. The default is usually set to display the name of the current tool, but if you click on the status bar, you can select from the following options:

- ◆ **Current Tool:** Displays the name of the selected tool.
- ◆ Date and Time: Displays the current date and time.
- ♦ Free Memory: Displays a percentage and the amount of RAM that is free and available.
- ◆ Number of Undos: Displays the number of undos and redos that are queued.
- ◆ Document Color Profile: Displays the current Color Profile.

Mousing Around in Illustrator

Illustrator requires the use of a mouse for selecting items, pulling down menus, moving objects, and clicking buttons. Learning to use the mouse efficiently requires patience, practice, and persistence. In most programs, you can master using the mouse quickly, but using the mouse with Illustrator's Pen tool can be difficult at first. If you're unfamiliar with using a mouse, a fun way to get used to working with one is by playing a mouse-driven game. After several hours of play (providing you don't get fired by your employer or kicked out of the house by your irritated spouse), you'll become Master of Your Mousepad, King of Your Klicker, and so on.

The mouse is used to perform five basic functions in Illustrator:

- Pointing, which is moving the cursor around the screen by moving the mouse around your mousepad.
- Clicking, which is pressing and releasing the mouse button in one step. Clicking is used to select points, paths, and objects, and to make windows active. (Windows users: "Clicking" means clicking with the *left* mouse button, unless you've reconfigured your mouse.)
- Dragging, which is pressing the mouse button and keeping it pressed while you move the mouse. You drag the cursor to choose items from menus, select contiguous characters of text, move objects, and create marquees.
- Double-clicking, which is quickly pressing and releasing the mouse button twice in the same location. Double-clicking is used to select a word of text, select a text field with a value in it, access a dialog box for a tool, and run Illustrator (by doubleclicking its icon).
- Control+clicking [right-clicking], which displays a context-sensitive menu when you press Control and click on the Mac (Windows users only need to press the right mouse button).

The cursor is the little icon (usually an arrow) that moves in the same direction as the mouse. (If the cursor seems to be moving in the opposite direction from the mouse, check that the mouse isn't upside down, or, heaven forbid, that you aren't upside down yourself.) In Illustrator, the cursor often takes the form of a tool that you are using. When the computer is busy doing whatever a computer does when it is busy, an ugly little watch or a multicolored spinning circle (Macintosh) or hourglass (Windows) takes its place.

Navigating Around Your Document

Being able to move through a document easily is a key skill in Illustrator. Rarely can you fit an entire illustration in the document window at a sufficient magnification to see much of the image's detail. Usually you are zooming in, zooming out, or moving off to the side, above, or below to focus in on certain areas of the document.

Who's zoomin' who?

The most basic navigational concept in Illustrator is the ability to zoom to different magnification levels. Illustrator's magnification levels work like a magnifying glass. In the real world, you use a magnifying glass to see details that aren't readily visible without it. In the Illustrator world, you use the different magnification levels to see details that aren't readily visible at the 100-percent view.

Changing the magnification levels of Illustrator does not affect the illustration itself. If you zoom in to 200 percent and print, the illustration will still print at the same size as it would if the view were 100 percent. It will *not* print twice as large. Figure 1-12 shows the same Illustrator document at 100 and 200 percent magnification.



Figure 1-12: An Illustrator document at 100 percent (left) and 200 percent (right) magnifications

In Illustrator, 100 percent magnification means that the artwork you see on the screen has the same physical dimensions it will have when it prints. If you were to put a printout next to the onscreen image at 100 percent magnification, it would appear to be exactly the same size, depending on your monitor resolution (the higher the resolution, the smaller the document will look onscreen). If you're

designing for the Web, 100 percent works correctly (the result will be at 100 percent as well), because the Save for Web feature automatically converts images to 72 ppi (the "standard" screen resolution for cross-platform viewing).

In Photoshop, 100-percent view is different from Illustrator. In Photoshop, each pixel onscreen is equal to one pixel in the image. Unless the pixels per inch (ppi) of the image match those of the screen (and they would if Web graphics were being designed), the 100-percent view tends to be larger than the printed dimensions of the image.

Using the Zoom tool

Perhaps the easiest way to control the magnification of your artwork is with the Zoom tool. This tool (which looks like a magnifying glass and is located in the right column of the Toolbox) can magnify a certain area of artwork and then return to the standard view.

To use the Zoom tool to magnify an area, select it in the toolbox by clicking it once. The Zoom cursor takes the place of the Arrow cursor (or whatever tool was previously selected). It looks like a magnifying glass with a plus sign in it. Clicking any spot in the illustration enlarges the illustration to the next magnification level, with the place you clicked centered on your screen. The highest magnification level is 6,400 percent — which, as all you math aficionados know, is 64 times (not 6,400 times!) bigger than the original.

Where you click with the Zoom tool is very important. Clicking the center of the window enlarges the illustration to the next magnification level, but the edges (top, bottom, left, and right) of the document (and possibly some or all of your artwork) will disappear as the magnification increases. Clicking the upper-right corner hides mostly the lower-left edges, and so forth. If you are interested in seeing a particular part of the document close up, click that part at each magnification level to ensure that it remains in the window.

If you zoom in too far, you can use the Zoom tool to zoom out again. To zoom out, press the Option [Alt] key when you have the Zoom tool active (releasing the Option [Alt] key restores the Zoom In tool). Clicking with the Zoom Out tool reduces the magnification level to the next lowest level. You can zoom out to 3.13 percent (1/32 actual size). When you hold down the Option [Alt] key the Zoom cursor displays a minus sign within the magnifying glass.

When you use the Zoom tool, you magnify everything in the document, not just the illustration. You magnify all paths, objects, the artboard, and the Page Setup boundaries equally. However, the way certain objects appear (the thickness of path selections, points, handles, gridlines, guides, and Illustrator user interface (UI) components such as palettes and windows) does not change when you zoom in. If you need to zoom in to see a specific area in the document window, use the Zoom tool to draw a marquee (by clicking and dragging diagonally) around the objects that you want to magnify. The area thus will magnify as much as possible so that everything inside the box just fits in the window that you have open, as shown in Figure 1-13. Dragging a box while holding down the Option [Alt] key to zoom out does nothing special; it works the same as if you had just clicked to zoom out.



Figure 1-13: Zooming in to a certain area in the original image (left) results in the magnification and placement of the image as shown on the right.

To move a zoom marquee around while you're drawing it, press and hold the spacebar after you've begun drawing the marquee but before you release the mouse button. When you release the spacebar, you can continue to change the size of the marquee by dragging.

Other zooming techniques

You also can zoom in and out by using commands in the View menu. Choose View rZoom In (r cmd[Ctrl]++) to zoom in one level at a time until the magnification level is 6,400 percent. The Zoom In menu item zooms from the center out. Choose View rZoom Out (r cmd[Ctrl]+-) to zoom out one level at a time until the magnification level is 3.13 percent.

Tip

Even though Illustrator can zoom to any level, 17 default zoom levels are used when the Zoom tool is clicked, or when the Zoom In and Zoom Out menu items (or their respective keyboard commands) are accessed. Table 1-1 lists each of the default Zoom In and Zoom Out default levels.

Table 1-1 Zoom In and Zoom Out Default Levels					
Zoom Out	Ratio	Zoom In	Ratio		
100%	1:1	100%	1:1		
66.67%	2:3	150%	3:2		
50%	1:2	200%	2:1		
33.33%	1:3	300%	3:1		
25%	1:4	400%	4:1		
16.67%	1:6	600%	6:1		
12.5%	1:8	800%	8:1		
8.33%	1:12	1,200%	12:1		
6.25%	1:16	1,600%	16:1		
4.17%	1:24	2,400%	24:1		
3.13%	1:32	3,200%	32:1		
		4,800%	48:1		
		6,400%	64:1		

Zooming to Actual Size

You can use several different methods to automatically zoom to 100-percent view. The first method is to double-click the Zoom tool slot in the toolbox. This action changes the view to 100 percent instantly. Selecting 100% from the Zoom drop-down list in the lower left corner of the interface will also size the document to 100 percent. But perhaps the best way to zoom to 100-percent magnification is to choose View ⇔ Actual Size (ℜ[Ctrl]+1), which not only changes the image size to 100 percent but also centers the page in the document window.

Zooming to Fit in Window size

You can choose from two different methods to change the document view to the Fit in Window size. Fit in Window instantly changes the magnification level of the document so that the entire artboard (not necessarily the artwork, if it isn't located on the page) fits in the window and is centered in it. One way to automatically change to the Fit in Window view is to choose View \Rightarrow Fit in Window (\Rightarrow cmd[Ctrl]+0). Another way is to double-click the Hand tool slot.

Tip

You can quickly go to 3.13 percent by Command [Ctrl]+double-clicking the Zoom tool slot in the toolbox.

Zooming to a specific magnification

If you'd like to view a document at a specific zoom level, double-click the view area at the bottom-left corner of Illustrator's window (shown in Figure 1-14), type the magnification you wish to zoom to and press Enter or Return.



Figure 1-14: Enter the exact zoom level you wish to zoom to in the field at the lower-left corner of the document window.

You can never undo any type of magnification level change because zooming only changes the view of the document, it doesn't change the actual document in any way. Choosing Edit \Rightarrow Undo after zooming undoes the last change you made to the document before you changed the magnification level, *not* the magnification level change.

Zooming with the Navigator palette

Of course, being able to zoom in very closely to your artwork does have a pitfall: The more you zoom in on an illustration, the less of that illustration you see at one time. The Navigator palette (shown in Figure 1-15) helps you out by letting you see the entire illustration as well as the portion you're zoomed into (indicated by a red viewing rectangle). You can stay zoomed in and move easily to another section by dragging the red rectangle within the Navigator palette to another area. Access the Navigator palette by choosing Window \Rightarrow Show Navigator.



Enter zoom amount

Figure 1-15: The Navigator palette

You can zoom in and out a preset amount (using the same amounts used by the Zoom In and Zoom Out tools and menu items) by pressing the Zoom In or Zoom Out button. Another way to zoom in and out is to drag the slider to the left or right. You can also type in an exact magnification level in the box in the lower-left corner of the Navigator palette.

The Navigator palette's fly-away menu includes a View Artboard Only option. This option sets the thumbnail in the Navigator palette to show only the extent of the artboard. If this option isn't set, then the thumbnail shows all objects included in the document.

Caution

The Navigator palette can slow down Illustrator if your artwork contains many patterns, gradients, and gradient mesh objects. To avoid this slowdown, you can close the Navigator palette using the Window rachter Hide Navigator option.

Using the scroll bars to view your document

Sometimes, after you zoom in to a high magnification, part of the drawing that you want to see is outside the window area. Instead of zooming in and out repeatedly,

you can use one of two different scrolling techniques to move around inside the document.

The scroll bar on the right side of the document window controls where you are *vertically* in the document. Clicking the up arrow displays what is above the window's boundaries by pushing everything in the window *down* in little increments. Clicking the down arrow displays what is below the window's boundaries by pushing the document *up* in little increments.

Dragging the thumb (sometimes called an *elevator box*) up displays what is above the window's boundaries proportionately by whatever distance you drag it. (Be careful not to drag too far or you will be previewing beyond the top of the artboard.) Dragging the thumb down displays what is below the window's boundaries proportionately by whatever distance you drag it. Clicking the gray bar above the thumb and between the arrows displays what is above the window's boundaries in big chunks. Clicking the gray bar below thumb, between the arrows, displays what is below the window's boundaries in big chunks.

Note

For Mac OS X systems, you can set in the System Preferences, the amount of scrolling that happens when you click within the scrollbar.

The gray area of the right scroll bar is proportionate to the vertical size of the *pasteboard* (the space around the artboard). If the little elevator box is at the top of the scroll bar, then you are viewing the top edge of the pasteboard. If it is centered, you are viewing the vertical center of the pasteboard.

The scroll bar on the bottom of the document window controls where you are *horizontally* in the document. Clicking the left arrow displays what is to the left of the window's boundaries by pushing everything in the window to the *right* in little increments. Clicking the right arrow displays what is to the right of the window's boundaries by pushing the document to the *left* in little increments. Dragging the thumb to the left displays what is to the left of the window's boundaries proportionately by whatever distance you drag it. Dragging the thumb to the right displays what is to the right of the window boundaries proportionally by whatever distance you drag it. Clicking the gray bar, between the arrows, that is to the left of the thumb displays what is to the left of the window's boundaries in big chunks. Clicking the gray bar, between the arrows, that is to the right of the window's boundaries in the right of the window's boundaries in big chunks.

Scrolling with the Hand tool

The Hand tool, which looks like a hand (surprise, surprise), improves on the scroll bars. Instead of being limited to horizontal and vertical movement only, you can use the Hand tool to scroll in any direction, including diagonally. It is especially useful for finding your way around a document when you're viewing it at a high magnification level. The higher the magnification level, the more you're likely to use the Hand tool.

To use the Hand tool, select it from the Hand tool slot in the toolbox.

To quickly access the Hand tool, press H, or press and hold the spacebar. Clicking and dragging the page moves the document around inside the document window while the spacebar is held down. If you release the spacebar, then you return to the previous tool. This works for all tools, but the Type tool works a little differently. If you're currently using the Type tool in a text area, press \Re +spacebar [Ctrl+spacebar] to access the Zoom tool, and release \Re [Ctrl] while keeping the spacebar pressed to gain access to the Hand tool.

When you click in the document, be sure to click the side that you want to see. Clicking at the top of the document and dragging down enables you to scroll down through almost an entire document at a height of one window. Clicking in the center and dragging enables you to scroll through only half a window's size at a time. If the window of the document does not take up the entire screen space, you can continue to drag right off the window into the empty screen space. Just be sure to click first within the document that you want to scroll.

Be warned that Illustrator doesn't include support for a scrolling mouse except in Mac OS X. A scrolling mouse includes a wheel button in between the two buttons (if it's a two-button mouse typical with Windows) that you can use to quickly scroll around a page. The scrolling wheel has no effect on an Illustrator document. We can hope that Adobe will support this type of mouse in the future. Mac OS X includes support for the scrolling mouse as part of the operating system.

The best thing about the Hand tool is that it works live. As you drag, the document moves under "your Hand." If you don't like where it is going you can drag it back, still live. The second best thing is that accessing it requires only one keystroke, a press of the spacebar.

Note

Note

You cannot use Undo to reverse scrolling that you have done with the scroll bars and the Hand tool.

Scrolling with the Navigator palette

Use the red viewing rectangle in the Navigator palette to scroll quickly to another location within a document. Clicking and dragging within the red rectangle moves the viewing area around "live," whereas clicking outside the rectangle "snaps" the view to a new location.



The red rectangle can be changed to another color by choosing the Palette Options in the Navigator palette pop-up menu.

Tip

Opening a new window

So now you've learned how to zoom and pan around the document window, so you probably have many different sections of your artwork that you want to focus on. Illustrator will let you create a number of windows for the current artwork using the Window r New Window option.

This option will create a new window that is the same size as the current window. You can then zoom and pan within this new window while maintaining the previous window. These windows can then be placed side by side to see the artwork from two unique perspectives. Each new window will be given a different reference number that appears in the title bar.

Working in Outline mode versus Preview mode

In the old days, everyone worked in Outline mode (previously called Artwork mode). In Outline mode you see only the "guts" of the artwork — the paths without the fills and strokes applied. To see what the illustration looked like with the fills and strokes applied, you had to switch to Preview mode. Usually the preview was not quite what you had in mind, but to make changes, you had to switch back to Outline, and then to Preview again to check, and so forth. Many users of Illustrator from that time refer to it as the golden age, with not a little trace of sarcasm.

Today, Illustrator 10 enables you to edit your work in both Outline and Preview modes, each shown in Figure 1-16. You can print a document from either mode. Saving the document while you are in Outline mode does not affect anything in the document, but the next time you open it, it will display in Outline mode. The same thing applies to Preview mode: Whatever mode you are in is saved with the artwork.

You cannot undo a Preview or Outline mode change (going from Preview to Outline, for example). If you make a Preview or Outline mode change and then close your document, Illustrator asks you if you want to save changes, which in this case would refer only to the view change.

The current view mode is always displayed in the title bar next to the document name.



Figure 1-16: Artwork shown in both Outline mode (left) and Preview mode (right)

Outline mode

To change the current document to Outline mode, choose View r Outline. If you are already in Outline mode, the view menu contains only an option to change to Preview mode. In Outline mode, the illustration disappears and is replaced onscreen by outlines of all the filled and stroked paths. Text that has yet to be converted into outlines looks fine, although it is always black. Depending on your choice in the Document Setup dialog box (choose File r Document Setup), a placed image is displayed as a box (if Show Placed Images option is not checked) or as a black-and-white-only image surrounded by a box (if Show Placed Images option is checked).

Working with a drawing in Outline mode can be significantly faster than working with it in Preview mode. In more complex drawings, the difference between Outline mode and Preview mode is significant; on very slow computers, working in Preview mode is next to impossible.

Outline mode enables you to see every path that isn't directly overlapping another path; in Preview mode, many paths can be hidden. In addition, invisible masks are normally visible as paths in Outline mode. Outline mode is much closer to what the printer sees — paths that define the edges of the objects you are working with.

Placed artwork is displayed in black and white only, and templates are grayer than before. The main advantage to working in Outline mode is the speed increase over Preview mode when you're working with a complex image. The speed that you gain is even greater when the artwork contains gradients, patterns, placed artwork, and blends. In addition, you can select paths that were hidden by the fills of other objects.

Outline mode can take some getting used to. To select paths in Outline mode, you must click the paths directly or draw a marquee across them.

Outline mode can be better than Preview because it's faster, and also because your brain can learn to know what the drawing looks like from seeing just the outlines, which show *all* of the paths.

Preview mode

Choosing View \Rightarrow Preview changes the view to Preview mode. If you are already in Preview mode, then the View menu contains only a menu option to change to Outline mode. In Preview mode, the document looks just the way it will look when you print it.

Note

In Preview mode, the color you see on the screen only marginally represents what the actual output will be because of the differences between the way computer monitors work (red, green, and blue colors – the more of each color, the brighter each pixel appears) and the way printing works (cyan, magenta, yellow, and black colors – the more of each color, the darker each area appears). Monitor manufacturers make a number of calibration tools that decrease the difference between what you see on the monitor and the actual output. You can also use software solutions. One solution, CIE calibration, is built into Adobe Illustrator (choose Edit color Settings). Mac users can use ColorSync, which is part of the OS.

In Preview mode, you can see which objects overlap, which objects are in front and in back, where gradations begin and end, and how patterns are set up.

Instead of selecting a path by clicking it, you can select entire paths by clicking the insides of those paths in a filled area. It becomes a little more difficult to select certain points on paths, because the strokes on those paths are also visible. Sometimes so much stuff appears on your screen in Preview mode that you don't know what to click. The option that enables you to select an entire path by clicking in a filled area is called Area Select, which is activated by a checkbox (turned on by default) in the General Preferences dialog box, which you can access by choosing Edit rrow Preferences rrow General.

You can stop screen redraw by pressing \Re +Y [Ctrl+Y] at any time. This is useful if you would like to make a small change and would have to wait too long for the redraw. Of course, pressing \Re +Y [Ctrl+Y] dumps you into Outline mode, but the redraw happens pretty much instantaneously.

Overprint Preview mode

When producing color separations, you can specify overprinting features using the Attributes palette. When colors are overlapped, the top color typically covers or knocks out the colors underneath. However, when you use the Overprint feature, the ink for the top color is printed on top of the lower colors. This process is easier and mostly cheaper for printers to produce, but it can affect the overall color of the objects. To view the results of specifying an overprint, you can use the Overprint Preview option by selecting the View r Overprint Preview option.

Cross-Reference You can learn more about overprinting in Chapter 6, "Working with Color," and in Chapter 16, "Understanding Printing, Separations, and Trapping."

Pixel Preview mode

Illustrator 10 includes many features to help designers create graphics for Web pages. Web page graphics are typically pixel-based images. To help designers view their pixel-based images before saving them to a Web graphics format, Illustrator 10 includes a Pixel Preview mode.



You can find more information about creating Web graphics in Chapter 17, "Using Illustrator to Generate Web Graphics."

You can enable the Pixel Preview option using the View menu. This option is toggled on or off every time it is selected. If it is enabled, a checkmark appears next to the menu option. When the Pixel Preview option is enabled, the current document is displayed as a raster image (see Figure 1-17).



Figure 1-17: This document is displayed in normal Preview mode (left) and using Pixel Preview mode (right).

Combining Outline and Preview modes

Using the Layers palette, you can easily combine Outline mode with either Preview or Preview Selection mode. You can force individual layers to display in Preview mode while other layers remain in Outline mode. This feature can be useful when you have a layer with a placed image, gradients, or patterns (or all three) that would normally slow down screen redraw, and your workflow. You can place those images on their own layer and set that layer to Outline mode.



To learn more about using layers, check out Chapter 7, "Organizing Artwork."

Using custom views

Illustrator has a special feature called custom views that enables you to save special views of an illustration. Custom views contain view information, including magnification, location, and whether the illustration is in Outline or Preview mode. If you have various layers or layer sets in Preview mode and others in Outline mode,

custom views can also save that information. Custom views, however, do not record whether templates, rulers, page tiling, edges, or guides are shown or hidden.

To create a new view, set up the document in the way that you would like to save the view. Then choose View \Rightarrow New View and name the view in the New View dialog box, shown in Figure 1-18. Each new view name appears at the bottom of the View menu. No default keyboard shortcuts exist for these views, but you can create your own shortcuts using the Keyboard Shortcuts dialog box, available under the Edit menu. You can create up to 25 custom views. Custom views are saved with a document as long as you save it using the Illustrator format.

New View	
Name: New View 1	OK
	Cancel

Figure 1-18: This simple dialog box lets you name the new view.

If you find yourself continually going to a certain part of a document, zooming in or out, and changing back and forth between Preview and Outline mode, that document is a prime candidate for creating custom views. Custom views are helpful for showing clients artwork that you created in Illustrator. Instead of fumbling around in the client's presence, you can, for example, show the detail in a logo instantly if you have preset the zoom factor and position, and have saved the image in a custom view.

Once views are created, you can edit the view name or delete them using the View \Rightarrow Edit Views option. This will open the Edit Views dialog box, shown in Figure 1-19. To rename the view, select it and type the new name in the Name field. To delete a view, select it and press the Delete button.

Edit Views		
Head View Dody View	<u> </u>	OK
Tail View		[
Tall VIEW		Cancer
		Delete
	T	
Name: Head View		
- ,		

Figure 1-19: The Edit Views dialog box can be used to rename or delete custom views.

Using screen modes

So you've been working on an illustration for an important client (actually they all are important) and they scheduled an appointment to see your progress, but the best part of the work is hidden behind the palettes and the Toolbox. These can be easily turned off using the Window menu or you could use the F keyboard shortcut to switch between the different screen modes.

Illustrator uses three different screen modes represented by the three icon buttons at the bottom of the Toolbox. They are Standard Screen Mode, Full Screen Mode with Menu Bar and Full Screen Mode. You can toggle between these modes using the F keyboard shortcut. Figure 1-20 shows Nichiro Newt in Full Screen Mode with Menu Bar.



Figure 1-20: Full Screen Mode with Menu Bar maximizes the document window to fill the entire screen eliminating all interface elements except for the menu bar.

Using the Edit Commands

In most software, including Illustrator, many of the most basic functions of the Edit menu work the same way. If you've used the Edit menu in Photoshop or Microsoft

Word, for example, you should have no trouble using the same functions in Illustrator, because the menu options are located in the same place in each program.

Using the Clear command

The most simplistic Edit command is Clear, which in Illustrator works almost exactly like the Delete [Backspace] key on the keyboard. When something is selected, choosing Clear deletes, or gets rid of, what is selected.

You're probably asking yourself, "If the Delete [Backspace] key does the same thing, why do we need Clear?" or "Why didn't they just call the Clear command Delete [Backspace]?" Ah, the makers of Illustrator are a step ahead of you in this respect. Note that we said "almost" the same way; there actually is a subtle yet important difference in what the Clear command does and what the Delete [Backspace] key does, due to Illustrator's abundant use of palettes.

If you are working on a palette and have just typed a value in an editable text field, the Delete [Backspace] key deletes the last character typed. If you tabbed down or up to an editable text field, highlighting text, or dragged across text in an editable text field, highlighting text, then the Delete [Backspace] key deletes the highlighted characters. In all three situations, the Clear command deletes anything that is selected in the document.

Cutting, copying, and pasting

The Cut, Copy, and Paste commands in Illustrator are very handy. Copying and cutting selected objects places them on the clipboard, which is a temporary holding place for objects that have been cut or copied. After an object is on the clipboard, it may be pasted into the center of the same document, the same location as the cut or copied object, or another document in Illustrator, InDesign, Photoshop, Dimensions, or Streamline.

Choosing Cut from the Edit menu deletes the selected objects and copies them to the clipboard, where they are stored until another object is cut or copied or the computer is shut down or restarted. Quitting Illustrator does not remove objects from the clipboard. Cut is not available when no object is selected.

Choosing Copy from the Edit menu works like Cut, but it doesn't delete the selected objects. Instead, it just copies them to the clipboard, at which time you can choose Paste and slap another copy onto your document.

Choosing Paste from the Edit menu places any objects on the clipboard into the center of the document window. If type is selected with the Type tool, or copied from another application to the pasteboard, either a Rectangle type, Area type, Path

Note

type, or point type area must be selected with the Type tool. Paste is not available if nothing is in the clipboard.

Illustrator also includes Paste in Front (%/Ctrl+F) and Paste in Back (%/Ctrl+B) options that can be used to control the position of the object being pasted relative to the other objects.

Now, the really cool part: Just because you've pasted the object somewhere doesn't mean it isn't in the clipboard anymore. It is! You can paste again and again, and keep on pasting until you get bored, or until your page is an indecipherable mess, whichever comes first. The most important rule to remember about Cut, Copy, and Paste is that whatever is currently in the clipboard will be replaced by anything that subsequently gets cut or copied to the clipboard.

Cut, Copy, and Paste also work with text that you type in a document. Using the Type tools, you can select type, cut or copy it, and then paste it. When you're pasting type, it will go wherever your blinking text cursor is located. If you have type selected (highlighted) and you choose Paste, the type that was selected is replaced by whatever you had on the clipboard.

You can cut or copy as much or as little of an illustration as you choose; you are only limited by your hard disk space (which is only used if you run out of RAM). A good rule of thumb is that, if you ever get a message saying you can't cut or copy because you are out of hard disk space, it's time to start throwing out stuff on your hard drive that you don't need. Or, simply get a bigger hard drive.

Thanks to the Adobe PostScript capability on the clipboard, Illustrator can copy paths to other Adobe software, including InDesign, Dimensions, Streamline, and Photoshop. Paths created in those packages (with the exception of InDesign) can be pasted into Illustrator. With Photoshop, you have the option of pasting your clipboard contents as rasterized pixels instead of as paths.

You have the ability to drag Illustrator artwork from an Illustrator document right into a Photoshop document. In addition, because Adobe lets you move things in both directions, you can drag a Photoshop selection from any Photoshop document right into an Illustrator document.

Undoing and redoing

You can keep undoing in Illustrator until you run out of either computer memory or patience. After you undo, you can redo by choosing Redo, which is found right below Undo in the Edit menu. And, guess what — you can redo everything you've undone.

Choosing Undo from the Edit menu undoes the last activity that was performed on the document. Successive undos undo more and more activities, until the document is at the point where it was opened or created or you have run out of memory.

The default minimum number of remembered undos is five. To change the minimum number of undos, go to the Units and Undo Preferences dialog box (Illustrator [Edit] \Rightarrow Preferences \Rightarrow Units and Undo) and type in the minimum number of undos that you want. You *can* set the minimum undo levels to zero, but we wouldn't recommend it; this might disallow any undo or redo operations in certain situations and is like tightrope walking without a safety net.

Choosing Redo from the Edit menu redoes the last undo. You can continue to redo undos until you are back to the point where you started undoing or you perform another activity, at which time you can no longer redo any previous undos.

If you undo a couple of times and then *do* something, you won't be able to redo. You have to undo the last thing you did and then actually do everything again. In other words, all the steps that you undid are gone. It's fine to use the Undo feature to go back and check out what you did, but after you have used multiple undos, don't do anything if you want to redo back to where you started undoing from. Got that?

Summary

In this chapter, you learned

- Illustrator may seem difficult to learn at first, but with this book and a bit of dedication, you can master it.
- Many of the user interface elements that are found in Illustrator are common among Adobe products.
- Common user interface elements include the document window, the toolbox, palettes, menus, and the status bar.
- You can view Illustrator documents at virtually any magnification level without actually changing them.
- ◆ The Hand tool is used to pan the document window.
- ◆ Illustrator's Outline mode lets you see paths without their strokes and fills.
- The Edit menu commands can be used to undo and redo commands, as well as cutting, copying, and pasting objects.
- ✦ Illustrator provides virtually unlimited undos and redos.

