

chapter

8

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post big-bang type



I recently attended the “Belles Lettres: The Art of Typography” exhibit at San Francisco Museum of Modern Art and saw some wild and crazy stuff with letters. Great show. My only issue with the work there is that, to me, if you’re going to do graphic design with letters, you should be able to read something. Just an opinion – worth about 2 cents.

In this chapter, you do crazy stuff with type, but you produce projects that are readable. You wrap type around a 3D object. You apply opacity masking to type. You learn a couple different techniques for filling and outlining graffiti. And, if after all that you’re still not locked up, I show you how to make it look like your graffiti is spray-painted on a brick wall.

Global Bang!

In Chapter 1, I focused on Illustrator CS2's 3D mapping effects, including the ability to map a symbol onto a 3D object.

In this task, you will return to the concept of using outlined type as a mappable symbol on a 3D effect. By mapping text on a globe, you achieve an extruded effect with more of a spherical look than you could achieve with simple extrusion.

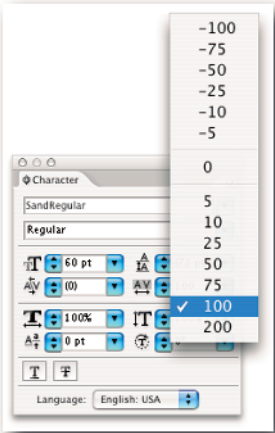
- 1
- Type **BANG!** Apply 60-point type, and choose any sans-serif font. Use a regular font style (not bold or italic).

BANG!

NOTE

Feel free to use any font you wish to start with in this project. If you have SandRegular, that works well. Or, use a font of your choice.

- 2
- Apply 100 kerning to the first letter (B) by selecting that letter (double-click with the Selection tool to change to the Type cursor, and then click and drag to select individual letters). Choose 100 in the Tracking popup in the Type palette. Apply 100 kerning ("tracking") to the second letter (A) as well.

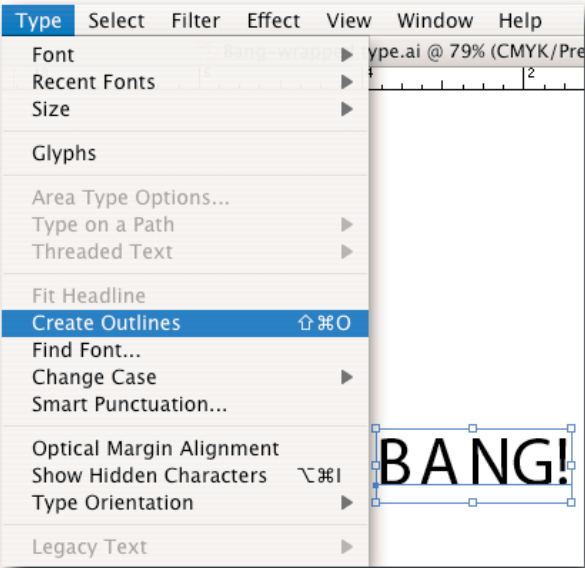


TIP

You have to display Type palette options (available from the Type palette window) to apply kerning. Kerning is adjusting the space between individual characters and tracking is adjusting blocks of text.

Tracking and kerning are both measured in $\frac{1}{1000}$ em. The em unit of measure is often defined as the width of an uppercase M. The value of em is relative to the current type size and font. For example, in a 12-point font, 1 em equals 12 points.

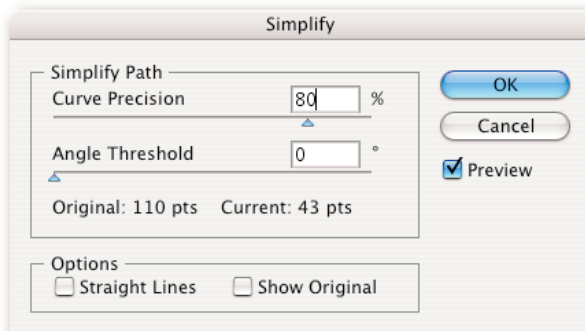
- 3
- Select all the type, and press Shift+Command/Ctrl+O to convert the type to Create Outlines.



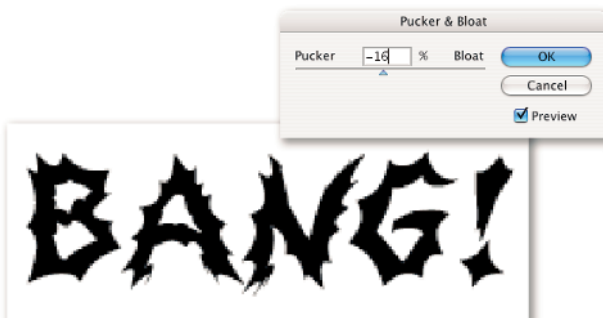
CAUTION

Maybe it's not such a hot idea to use keyboard shortcuts here. They work only if you select the type *with the Selection tool*. I always forget to switch to the Selection key before administering keyboard shortcuts, and end up typing presumed keyboard shortcuts right into a text box as type. It's safer to choose Type ⇨ Convert to Outlines from the menu.

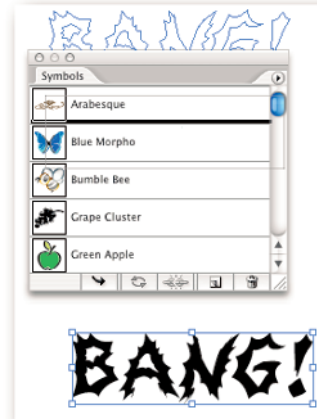
- 4 With the new, outlined path selected, clean up superfluous paths by choosing Object ⇨ Path ⇨ Simplify. In the Simplify dialog box, set the Angle Threshold to 0 (zero), and the Curve Precision slider to 80%. Click OK. The appearance of the generated outline paths does not change much. But the number of anchors is greatly reduced, which makes the paths easier to work with when applying effects. Simplifying the paths pays off even more in the next task, when you map this text on a 3D object.



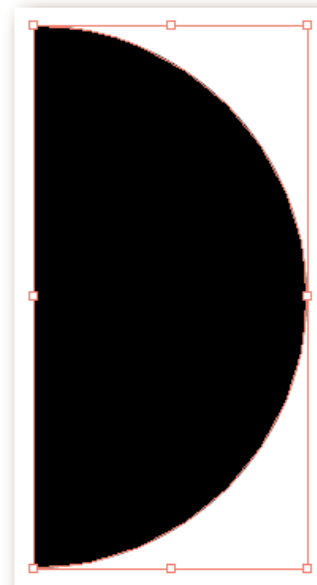
- 5 Select Filter ⇨ Distort ⇨ Pucker & Bloat, and apply a -16% Pucker to the selected paths.



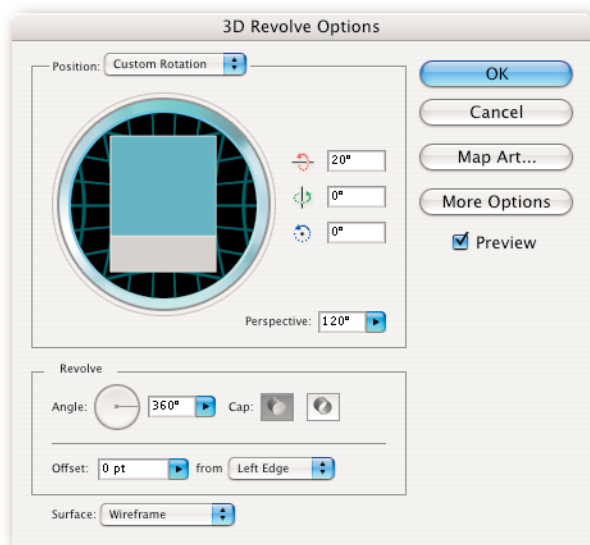
- 6 Drag the BANG! paths into the Symbol palette to save the paths as a symbol for 3D mapping. Name the symbol BANG.



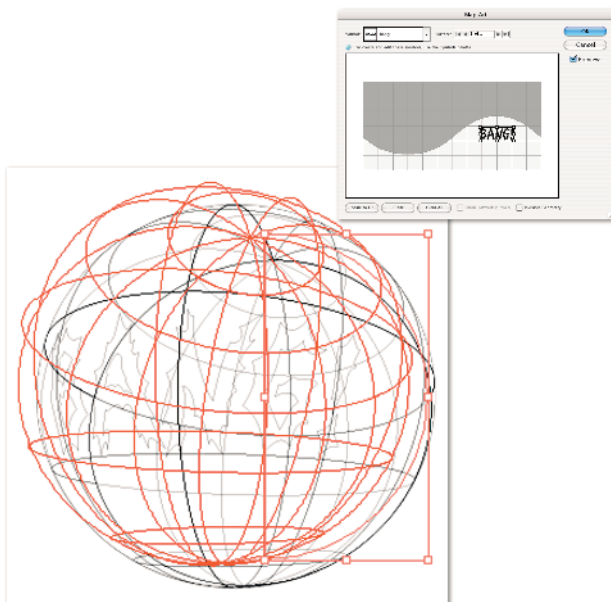
- 7 Draw a semicircle with a diameter of about 2.5 inches. Apply no stroke, and any fill to the semicircle. One quick way is to draw a circle, and use the Direct Selection tool to delete one of the generated four anchors.



8 With the semicircle selected, choose **Effect** ⇨ **3D** ⇨ **Revolve**. Define 20% rotation on the X-axis, and no (zero) rotation on the Y and Z axes. Set Perspective to 120 degrees, and set the Revolve Angle to 360 degrees. Select **Wireframe** from the **Surface** popup.



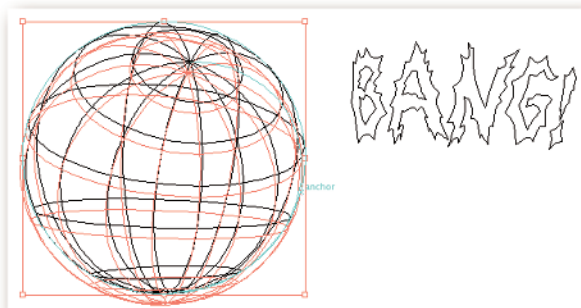
9 Click the **Map Art** button in the 3D Revolve dialog box. Because you generated a globe from a semicircle with no stroke, there will be only one mappable surface. From the **Symbol** popup, choose the **BANG** symbol. Click the **Preview** checkbox, and rely on the preview generated on the artboard to locate the **BANG** symbol. After you locate the symbol, click **OK** twice to generate the 3D mapped text.



TIP

If you find the result of your mapping isn't quite right, view the **Appearance** palette, and with the generated 3D effect selected, double-click the effect in the **Appearance** palette to reopen the 3D Revolve dialog box. Don't try accessing your existing effect from the **Effect** menu; that allows you to add only *another* instance of this (or another) effect.

10 With the 3D effect selected, choose **Object** ⇨ **Expand Appearance**. Clean up the text by deleting the wireframe.

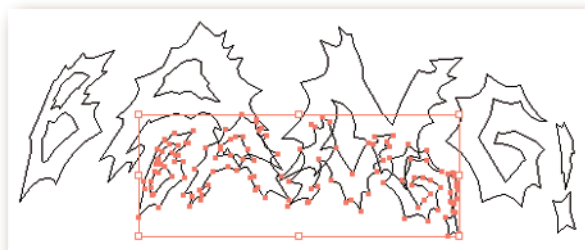


TIP

To facilitate deleting the wireframe, start by performing multiple **ungroups** until the generated paths are completely ungrouped. Use the **Direct Selection** tool (A) to select the paths remaining from the wireframe and delete them.

Another approach is to select the type and the outer circle and lock these paths (**Command/Ctrl+2**). Then delete remaining wireframes all at once.

11 Duplicate the type, and place a scaled copy about half the size of the original behind and slightly below the original so that the original covers about half of the copy.



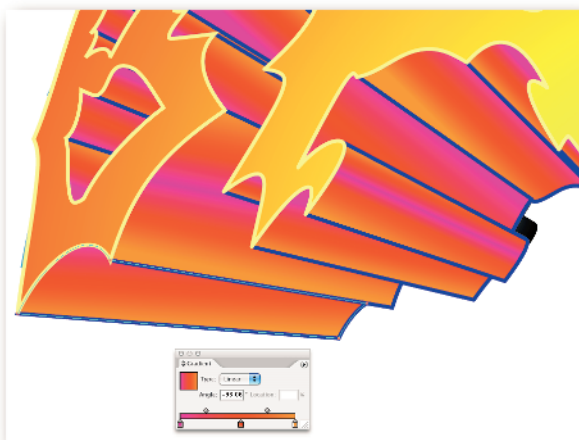
12 Apply different fills and strokes to each character (and be sure to use *different* fills and strokes for the large and small version of each character). Generate smooth blends between the large and small versions of each character. (Generate separate blends between the top and bottom of the exclamation mark; these are two separate paths.) Move objects to the back as necessary.



13 Expand the blend (Object ⇨ Blend ⇨ Expand). Select the faces of the larger characters, and apply radial gradient blends to each one.



14 This next step might be a bit tedious for those of you who have jobs to get to tomorrow, but you can add plenty to the project by using the Pen tool and Pathfinder to draw (and Divide—using the Pathfinder Divide tool) individual paths along the blend lines. Apply linear gradient fills to each of the resulting paths.



15

Finish off the project by applying linear gradient fills to all the paths created from the blend lines, and place the whole project against a dark, contrasting background. Move letters in front of or behind other letters as necessary to complete the illustration.

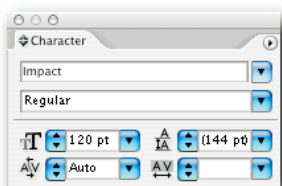


Shanghai Type

Using letters as clipping masks is both old hat, and incredible fun. For this task, you put a new *warp* (literally) into an old trick and create an unusual text clipping mask.

If you want to follow my project exactly, “borrow” the Shanghai.jpg photo at www.illustratorgonewild.com. Or, substitute your own travel photo (and alter my instructions to create text with the name of your locale). If you use Shanghai.jpg, download it now and remember where you saved it.

- 1 Type **SHANGHAI!** (or your own location). Select the type box, and select Impact type face from the Type⇨Font popup menu. Set font size to 120 points (choose Type⇨Size⇨Other to open the Character palette. Enter 120 pt in the Font Size box of the Character palette).

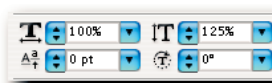


The Magic of Impact

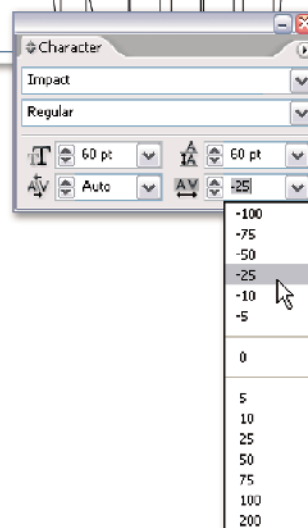
Impact font is a great place to start when creating type that will be converted to outlines. Impact gives you the thickest character paths, and is ready-made for creative, substantial fills. Uppercase letters also work much better for this kind of cut-out project.

- 2 For easier viewing give the text a black stroke and no fill.

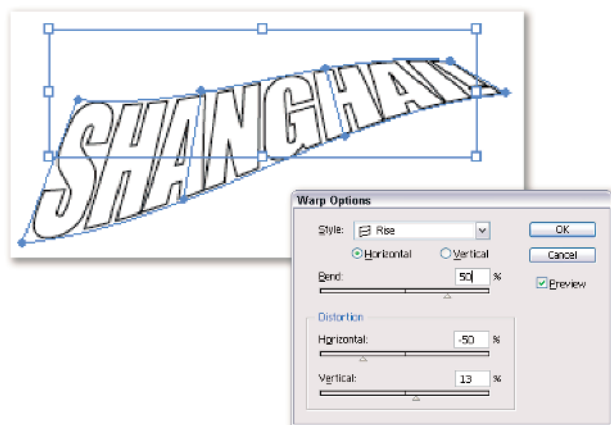
- 3 Use the Character palette to increase the Vertical Scale to 125%.



- 4 Adjust letter spacing one letter at a time using the Tracking spinner in the Character palette to remove space between letters.

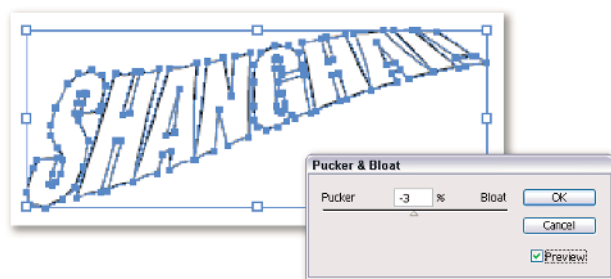


- 5 After tuning up the type tracking, select the whole text box, and choose Object ⇨ Envelope Distort ⇨ Make With Warp. From the Style popup in the Warp Options dialog box, choose Rise. Set Bend to 50, Horizontal to -50, and Vertical to 13. Click OK to apply the warp.



- 6 The warp is an effect. Expand the paths (to transform this into an object, not an effect) by selecting the warped type, and choosing Object ⇨ Expand.

- 7 Make the type a bit weirder by applying a little pucker. With the type selected, choose Filter ⇨ Distort ⇨ Pucker & Bloat. Set the slider in the Pucker & Bloat dialog box to -3 to define a slight pucker.

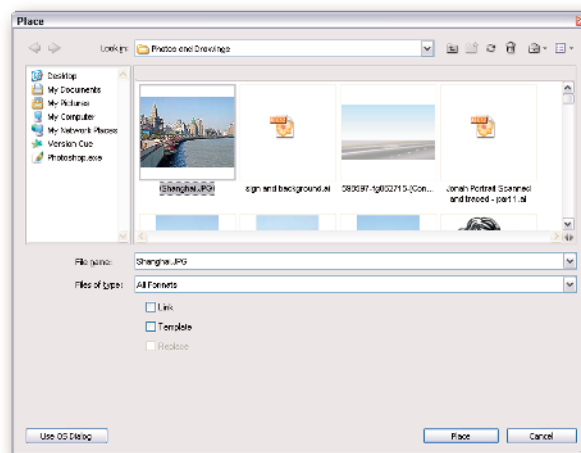


- 8 Use the Delete Anchor Point tool and touch up the outline by deleting unwanted anchors. Pay special attention to cleaning up the S and G in Shanghai, if you used my example.

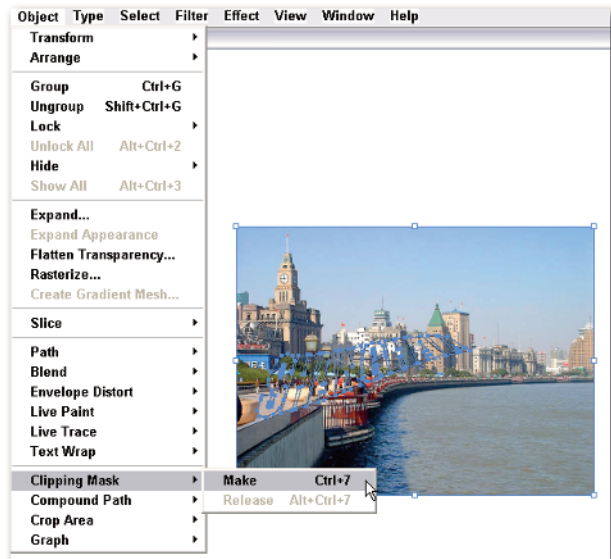
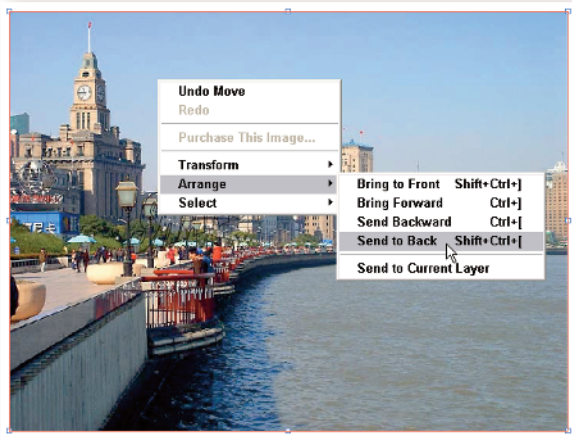


- 9 This step should not really be necessary, but both my PC and Mac versions of Illustrator CS2 require it before I can use the outlined type as a clipping mask. With (all) the type selected, choose Object ⇨ Compound Path ⇨ Make.

- 10 Select File ⇨ Place, and navigate to the Shanghai.jpg photo. Deselect the Link and Template checkboxes, and click OK to place the photo on the artboard.



11 Move the placed photo behind the type.



12 Locate the type over the photo in a place where you think you'll achieve an interesting effect using it as a clipping mask. Feel free to resize or reshape the text outlines. When you're happy with your placement (or ready to experiment), select both the text and the photo, and choose Object → Clipping Mask → Make.

13 Take full advantage of Command/Ctrl+Z to undo your initial attempt(s), and experiment until you get a nice clipped mask of the photo.

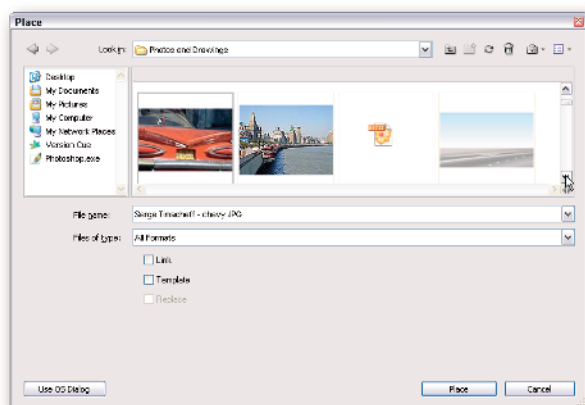


Chevy Type

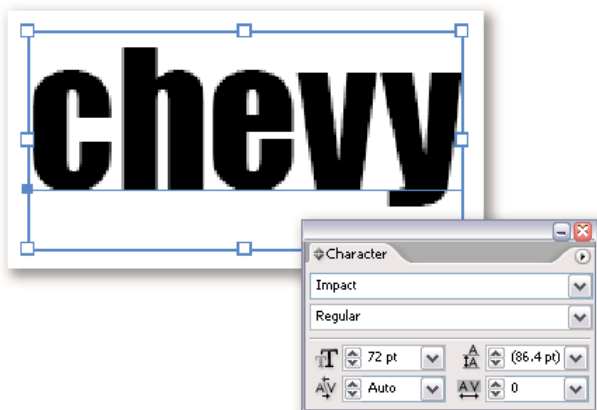
In Task 36, you put a warp on the old text-as-clipping mask routine. In this task, you visit an entirely different way to use type as a clipping mask. This time, you apply gradient fills and drop shadows to the type – which by law you really shouldn't be able to do with a clipping mask. But rather than ruin the surprise, I'll let you follow the steps and see how to integrate effects into a type clipping mask.

For this project, I borrowed a car from Serge Timacheff, with whom I have co-authored a couple of books on digital photography. You can "borrow" Serge's photo from the book web site (www.illustratorgonewild.com).

- 1 Place a car photo – either Serge's or your own. Do not link the photo (or make it a template).



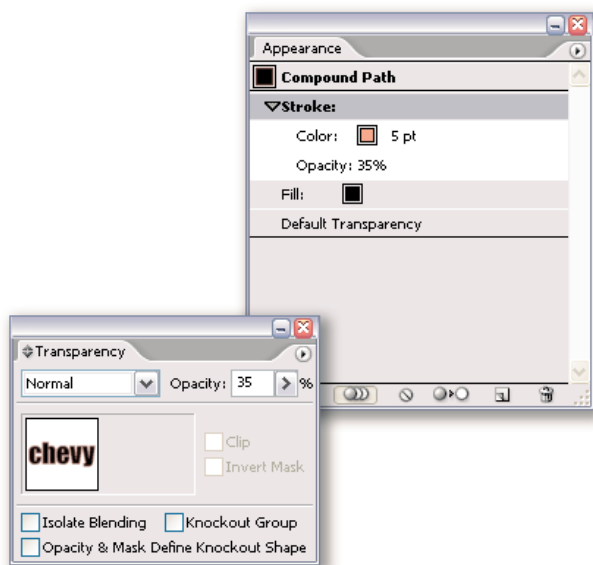
- 2 Type chevy (or substitute your own car brand if you're using your own photo) in 72-point Impact. Use default type settings (for 72-point Impact).



- 3 With the type selected, press Shift+Command/Ctrl+O to convert it to outlines.
- 4 Apply a fill of black and a 5-point stroke of pink (R=243, G=150, B=129). Ungroup the letters while you format the stroke and fill.



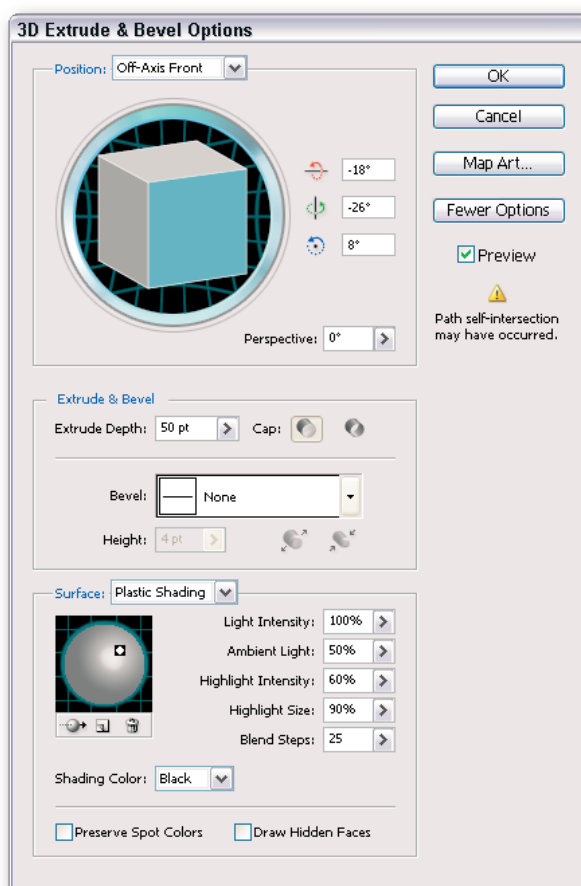
- 5 With the Stroke selected in the Appearance palette, use the Transparency palette to apply 33% opacity to the stroke.



- 6 With all the outlined text selected, group the text. With the shape selected, choose **Effect** ⇨ **3D** ⇨ **Extrude & Bevel**. Set X rotation at -18 degrees, Y rotation at -26 degrees, and Z rotation at 8 degrees. Set Extrude Depth to 50 points. Choose a Plastic Shading surface, and define a single light source in the upper right (this is the default setting).

CAUTION

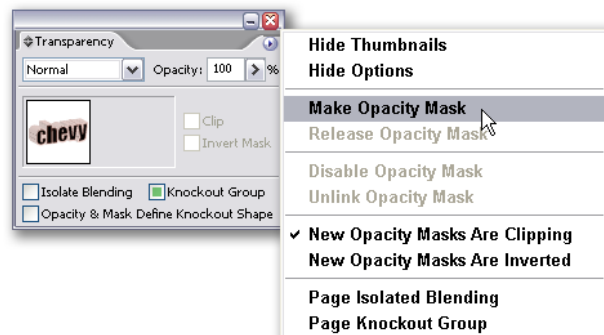
You can get away with enlarging a placed photo *sometimes*. Remember, of course, that placed raster images are *not* scalable (like vector images). If your work is destined for print output, it is necessary to use a high-resolution photo (like 180 dpi or higher), and avoid enlarging it. If your illustration is for digital display, a 72 dpi photo will work fine, and you might get away with a bit of enlargement because after clipping, the details won't be important and some graininess is tolerable. Your vector text, on the other hand, is fully scalable.



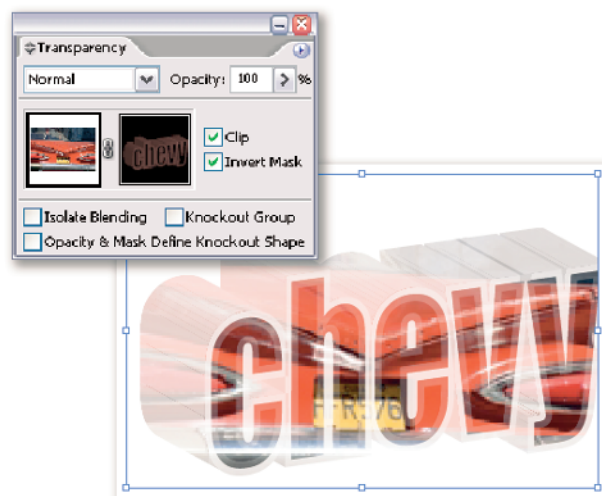
- 7 Place the type on top of your car photo. Resize the type as necessary, and locate it on a good place to create what will be *something like* a clipping mask.



8 Don't get ready to use the type as a clipping mask. If you did that, you'd lose the impact of the gradient fill and the drop shadows, and simply fill the basic text object paths with pieces of the photo. Instead, select both the photo and the outlined text, and choose Make Opacity Mask from the Transparency palette.



9 Select both the Inverse and Clip checkboxes in the Transparency palette.



10 Enhance the illustration with a gradient fill background to finish up the project.



Shanghai II

Another approach to creating the fun travel postcard look is to apply transparency masking to type. Transparency masking can be used with outlined type to create even more intriguing clipping masks. In this exercise, you apply one of the really groovy graphic type styles that ship with Illustrator CS2 and then use that souped-up type as a transparency mask.

1 Place the file Shanghai.jpg (from www.illustratorgonewild.com) in a new file. Embed (don't link), and don't create a template layer as you place the photo.

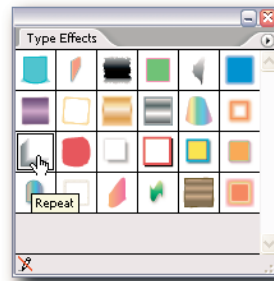
2 Type SHANGHAI right on top of the photo in Impact font. Don't worry about the font size.

3 Stretch the type so that it fills most of the photo. Use the bounding box to stretch the type.



4 Choose Window ⇨ Graphic Style Libraries ⇨ Type Effects to display the preset groups of graphic effects in this palette.

5 With the outlined type selected, click on the Repeat style.



6 Resize the type so it fits on top of the photo.



7 Select both the outlined type and the photo. From the Transparency palette fly-out menu, choose Make Opacity Mask. Check only the Clip checkbox.



8 You can add a background to finalize the project, and rotate the type counterclockwise about 10 degrees for that tacky postcard look.



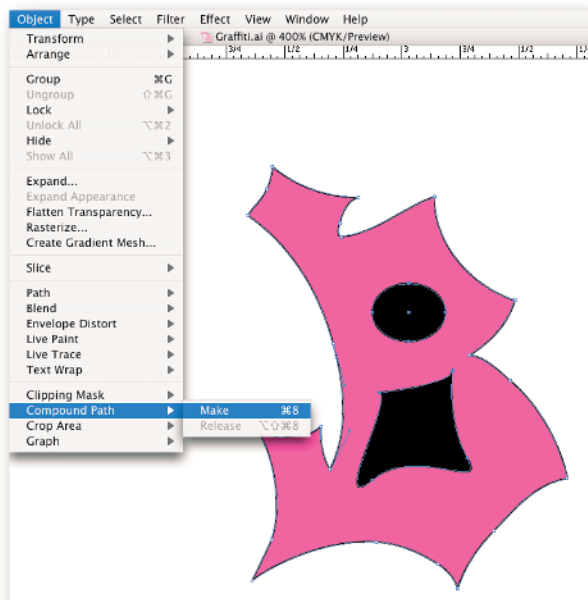
Digital Graffiti I

Illustrator's ability to stack up multiple stroke and fill attributes on a single path is one of the more underrated elements of this Byzantine program. The basic concept is, one stroke, many stroke attributes. One fill, many fill attributes. For instance, you can stack up a thin black line, a thicker red line underneath it, and an even thicker yellow line . . . and they're all attributes of the *same* path.

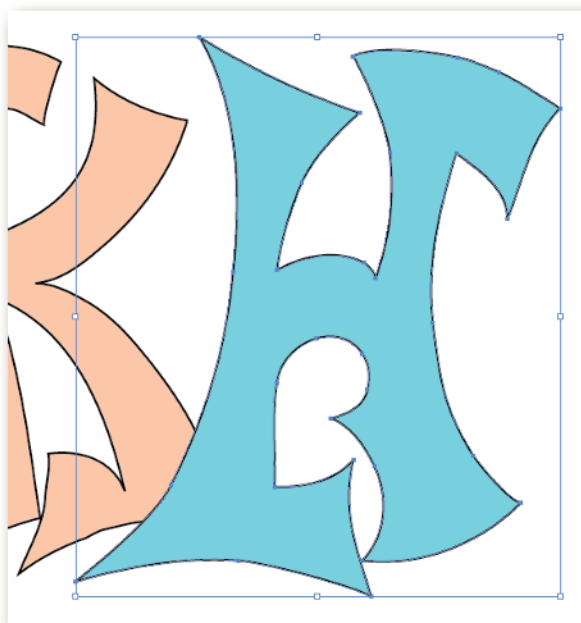
Same thing with fills. You can stack a gradient on top of a color, and stick another gradient on top of the whole pile.

Multiple path attributes are defined in the Appearance palette, where they can be restacked, removed, or dragged over to the Graphic Styles palette for re-use. You'll do all that in this first of two graffiti projects.

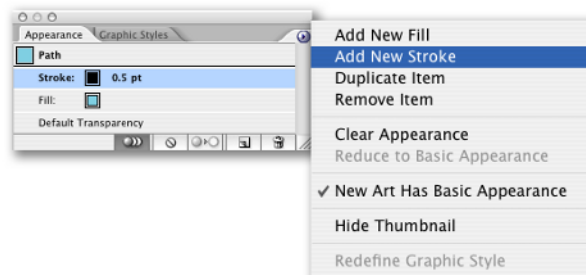
1 Use the Pen (or Pencil) tool to draw your favorite tag art. Draw closed paths. Set stroke width to .5 points, and mix up your fill colors. To create letters with holes, draw the shape and the holes, and then select the whole letter and press Command/Ctrl+8 or choose Object ⇨ Compound Path ⇨ Make.



2 Complete a basic version of your tag, and select the path around one of the letters. (You can enhance the tag later, but stop after you create a basic version to enhance the paths—using the technique I walk you through in the next step.)



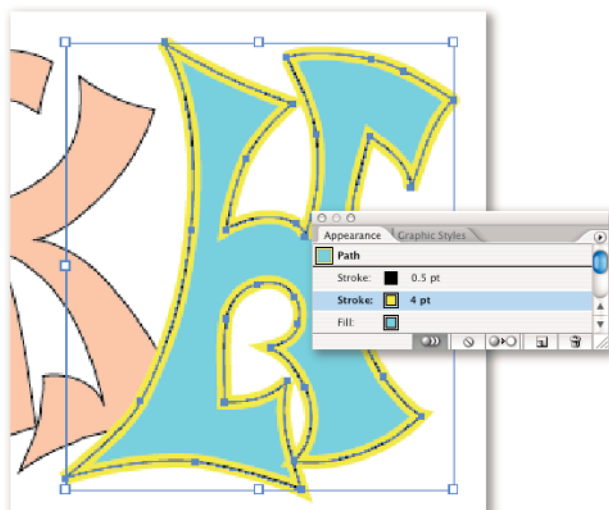
- 3 With the stroke of one of your letters (or tag characters) selected, view the Appearance palette. In the Appearance palette, select the stroke. From the Appearance menu, choose Add New Stroke.



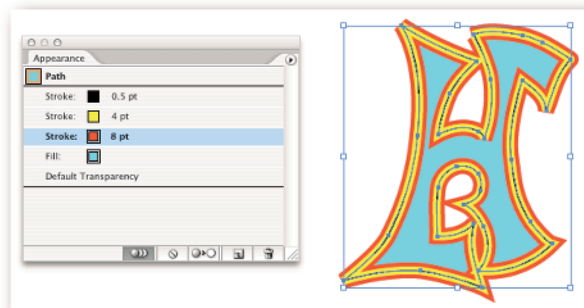
- 4 With the second stroke selected, choose 4 point in the Stroke palette. Assign a yellow stroke color to the selected (second) stroke.

TIP

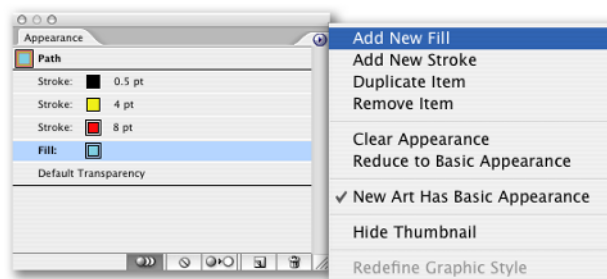
As you can see, you can stack up strokes (and fills) in the Appearance palette. And, as you'll see shortly, you can save the whole set of graphic strokes and apply them as a graphic style.



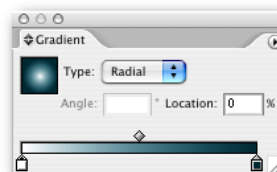
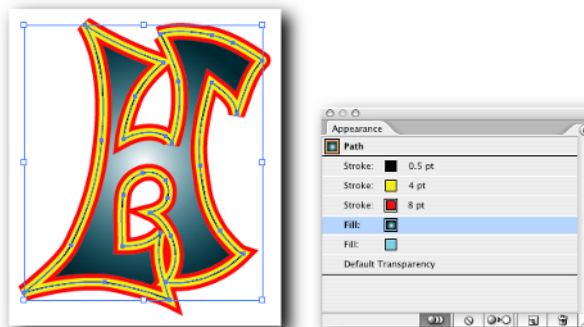
- 5 Add a third, 8-point stroke under the second one in the Appearance palette. Make the third stroke red.



- 6 Select the fill in the Appearance palette for your selected character. Choose Add New Fill from the Appearance palette menu.

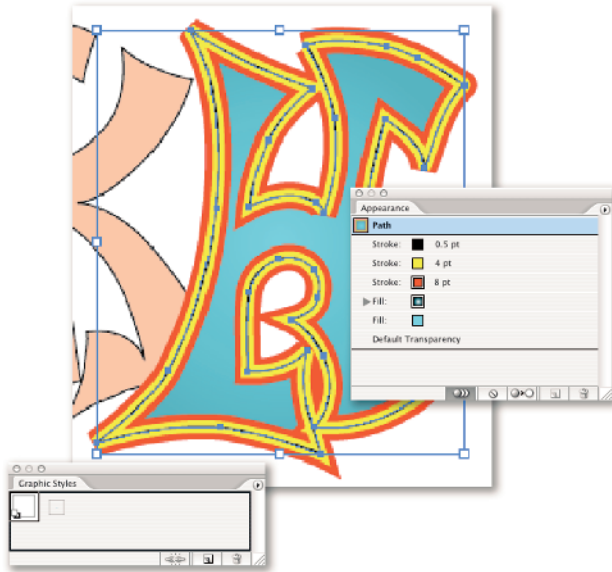


- 7 Select the top fill in the Appearance palette, and apply a radial gradient to that fill by choosing a fill from the Gradient palette (or a Swatch palette) with the fill strip selected in the Appearance palette.

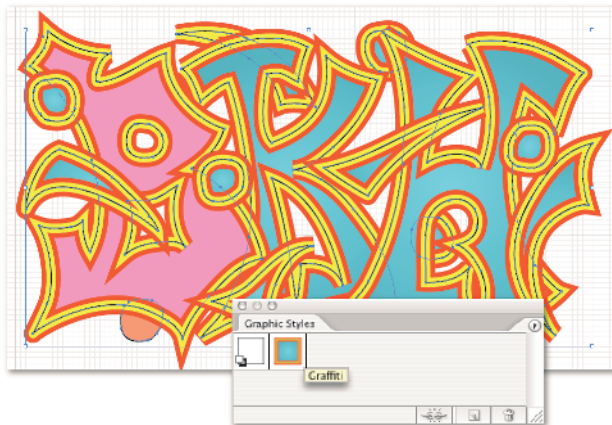


8 Continue to select the top fill in the Appearance palette. With the fill selected there, apply 25% opacity using the Transparency palette, and choose Multiply as the blending mode.

9 Drag the icon in the Appearance palette into the Graphic Style palette. Name the new graphic style Graffiti.



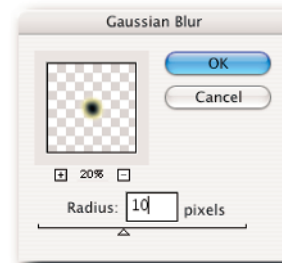
10 Select another letter in your tag. With the letter selected, click the Graffiti graphic style icon in the Graphic Styles palette to apply that style to the path. Apply the graphic style to all the paths in your tag.



11 Select the entire tag. Copy it, and paste it to the back of the existing tag. In the Appearance palette, delete the fills and strokes. Assign a black fill and black stroke to the copied tag. "Why?" you ask. You are creating a backing copy of the tag with a black outline to use for generating a blur. You won't see the outline now, but the black stroke will be useful in defining the color of the blur you create in the next step.



12 With the (hidden, underlying) tag selected, choose Effect → Blur → Gaussian Blur. In the Gaussian Blur dialog box, select a Radius of about 10 pixels.



13 Because the Gaussian Blur is an effect, you can touch it up (make the radius larger or smaller) by double-clicking on the effect in the Appearance palette with the tag selected.



Digital Graffiti II

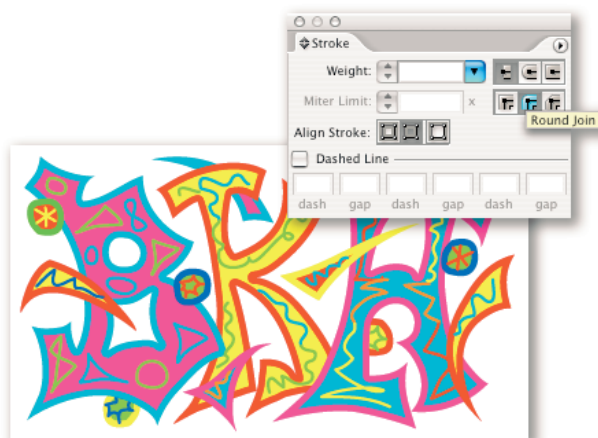
Here's another take on the graffiti that looks great on a wall. I was going to call it Physical Graffiti II, but I already burned my quota of Led Zeppelin disses in the last chapter.

For this version of graffiti type, you will ditch the interesting technique of applying multiple strokes and fills (from Task 39). Instead, you'll use a different approach to defining a fill and stroke for letters that will look better on a wall.

1 As you did with the previous task, start out by using the Pen (or Pencil) tool to draw your favorite tag art with closed paths. As with Task 39, use compound paths for the holes in letters (such as the triangle in the letter A, the two "holes" in the letter B, and so on).



2 Use the Stroke palette to align all strokes to inside and round join all the strokes.



3 Add fill and stroke colors of your choice to each character in your tag.

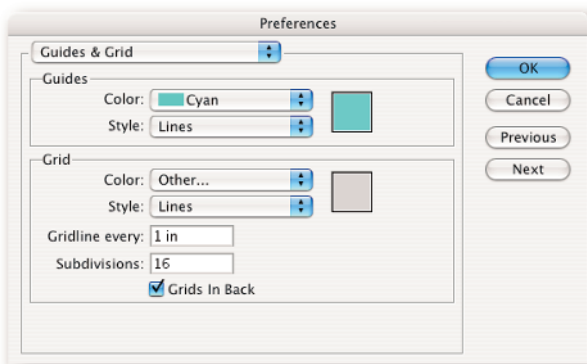
4 Using the Pen or Pencil tool, add decorative colored stroke squiggles.



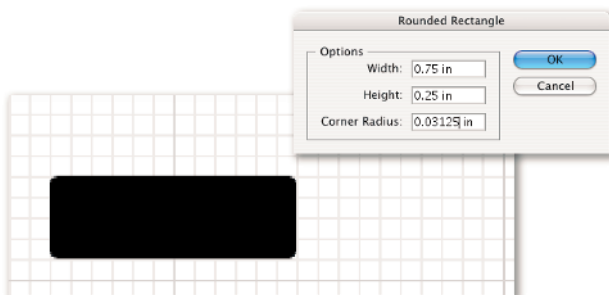
Graffiti Wall

The graffiti you created in Task 40 goes great on a wall. So, here, you create that wall using pattern fill. The twist is that to achieve a real “painted on” look between the wall and your graffiti, you’re going to put a semi-transparent wall *on top of* the lettering.

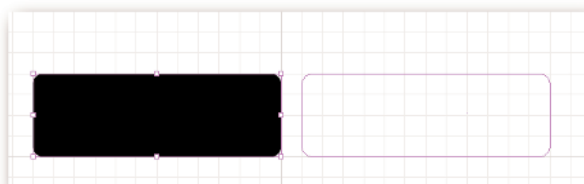
- 1 Set up the artboard for this project by defining grids every $\frac{1}{16}$ of an inch. Choose Illustrator/Edit ⇨ Preferences ⇨ Guides and Grid. Set grid to 16 divisions per inch.



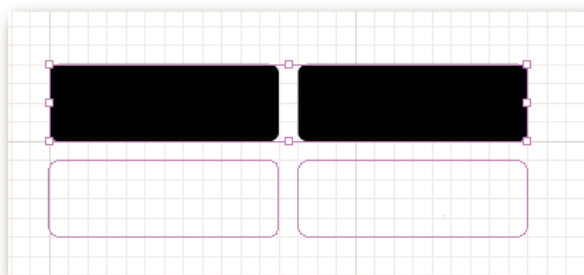
- 2 Select View ⇨ Show Grid to display the grid you defined.
- 3 Turn on Snap to Grid (choose View ⇨ Snap to Grid).
- 4 Use the Rounded Rectangle tool to make a brick. Apply these settings: Width: .75 in, Height: .25 in, Corner Radius: .3125 in).



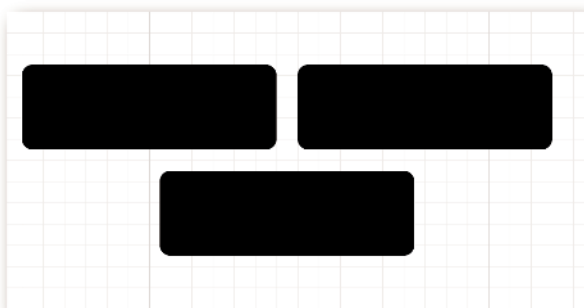
- 5 Hold down the Option/Alt key, and drag the brick horizontally to create a vertically aligned copy located $\frac{1}{16}$ " (one grid segment) to the right of the original.



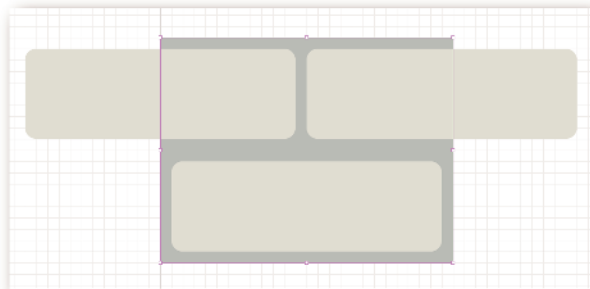
- 6 Select both bricks, and copy them $\frac{1}{16}$ inch (one grid segment) below the existing rounded rectangles.



- 7 Re-arrange the bottom row of bricks so that one of the bricks is centered under the top bricks. Delete the left-over brick, as shown.



8 Use the Rectangle tool (not the Rounded Rectangle tool this time) to draw an unfilled rectangle $\frac{3}{16}$ inch wide and $\frac{10}{16}$ ($\frac{5}{8}$ inch, but the grids make it easier to think of it as $\frac{10}{16}$ inch) high. Align the rectangle *behind* the bricks as shown. Apply a gray fill to the backing rectangle using RGB settings of R=167, G=174, B=179.

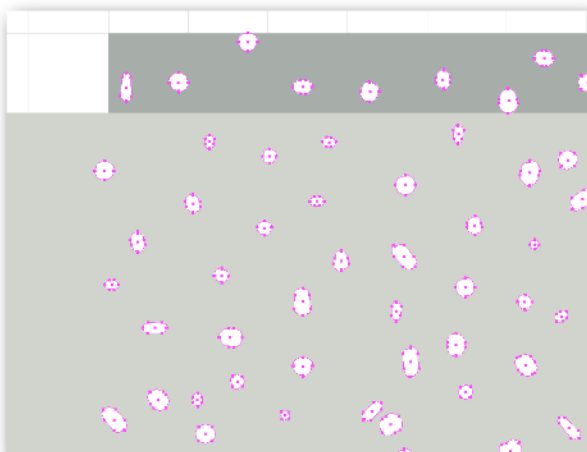
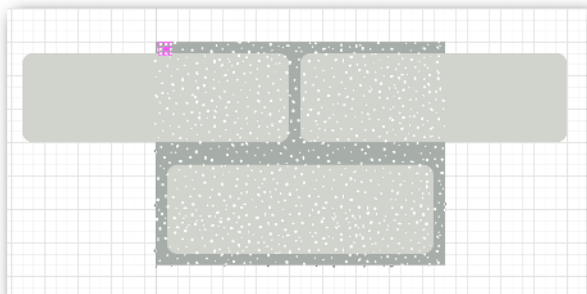


9 Draw a lot of tiny, random white-filled shapes (on top of all the other objects) within the area defined by the bottom rectangle. It's fine (and will create a more realistic texture) if a few of the white texture spots extend a bit beyond the edge of the rectangle.

TIP

For a better understanding of the art of creating non-stereotypical pattern fills (as well as the basic techniques involved), jump back to Chapter 2 and read some of the introductory notes and tips – especially the introduction to the entire Chapter 2.

10 Apply a gray fill to the three bricks using these RGB values: R=209, G=212, B=205. Select all the random little texture bits, and choose Overlay from the Transparency palette.



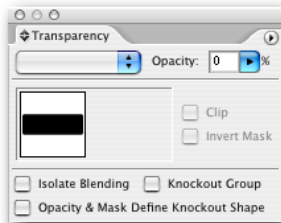
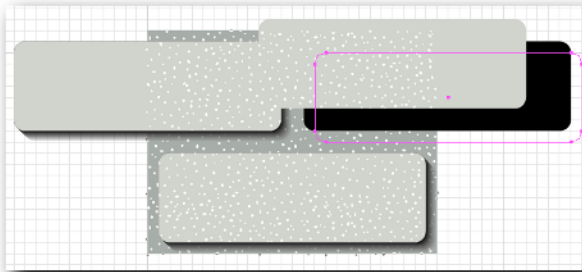
TIP

Select all the random texture bits by selecting one of them, and then choosing Select ⇨ Same ⇨ Fill Color. Because the random texture bits are the only white-filled objects in the file, you can grab them all in a hurry, and not select anything else.

NOTE

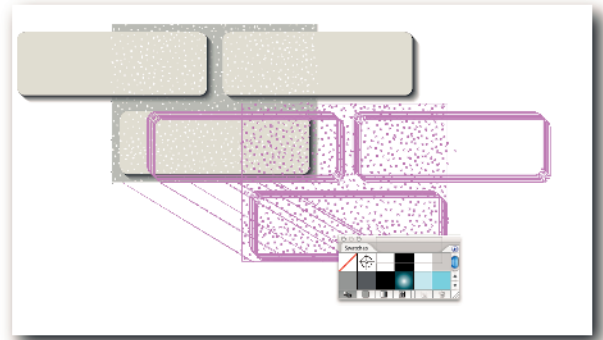
If Step 10 was a bit too intense, look back at Chapter 6. You're using the blend-to-transparent object technique I discussed in detail there. In Chapter 6, you used this technique to create blends that increased in transparency. Here, you're doing a similar trick.

- 11** Apply a drop shadow to the bricks—but not by using the drop shadow effect. Instead, copy the three bricks, and paste them in back. Paste the second copy in back, and offset either copy slightly. Color both back bricks black. Apply 0% opacity to the offset brick, and define a ten-step, step blend between the opaque and the fully transparent black background brick.

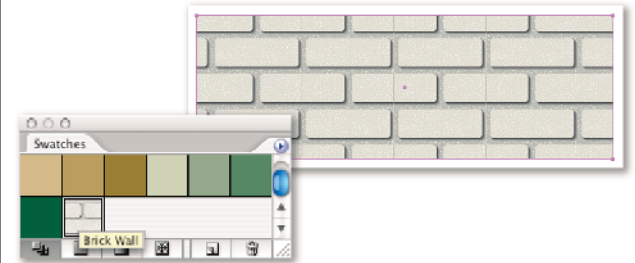


- 12** Select the backing rectangle. Copy that rectangle, and paste it behind everything. Assign no stroke or fill to the copied rectangle.

- 13** Drag everything to the Swatches palette. You'll use the content constrained by the rectangle as a repeating pattern fill.



- 14** Create a background rectangle (to become a wall) for the graffiti art. To do that, use the brick switch you created in Step 13 to fill the rectangle (just click on the switch).



- 15 Place the graffiti from Task 40 on the wall. Move the wall on top of the graffiti (resize as necessary). With the rectangle selected, choose Multiply in the Transparency palette. By placing a transparency-applied wall over the type, you add dimension and texture to the graffiti.

