

# What's New in Illustrator CS5?

It's always exciting to see what's new in new versions of your favorite software. Longtime Adobe Illustrator fans certainly have a great interest in learning about the changes in Illustrator CS5, but those changes aren't of interest only to people who've used Illustrator extensively in the past. New users and people who currently use other products also want to know if this new version adds must-have functionality.

In this chapter, I introduce all the enhancements and fixes as well as the single new feature that has been added to Illustrator CS5. Fortunately, Illustrator CS5 maintains a strong connection with the past so that you don't have to relearn much at all. Most of these changes are minor enhancements to existing functionality, and the Perspective Grid feature is very specialized.

## Enhanced Strokes and Brushes

In the past, strokes were always the limited functionality add-on to fills: Want to surround an object with a frame? Use a stroke. Need to outline text? Use a stroke. But strokes have always had limitations, the most common being that they were a constant width; if you wanted a stroke to taper from one size to another along its length, you needed to use a brush, a very different beast (though in fairness, you could always apply a brush to a stroke, essentially replacing it). Although most users have learned to live with these limitations, Version CS5 makes strokes vastly more powerful by allowing the width of the stroke to be modified with a new tool: the Width tool, which is shown manipulating the width of a stroke in Figure 1.1.

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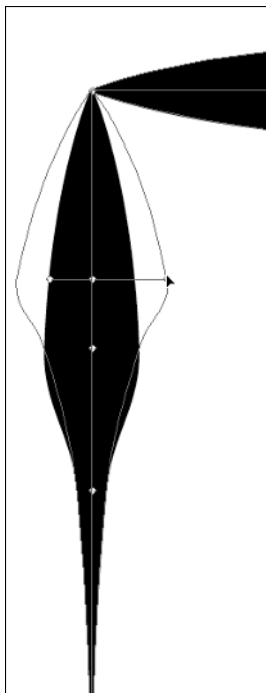
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**FIGURE 1.1**

The new Width tool is used to adjust the width of standard strokes.



When the width of a stroke is adjusted, it can be viewed at the bottom of the Stroke panel in the new Profile section.

### **Cross-Reference**

**For more on the Width tool, see Chapter 4.**

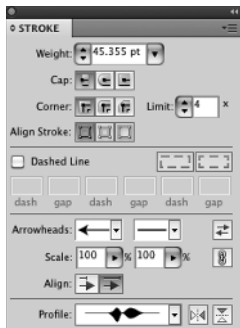
Another welcome enhancement to strokes is the ability to add arrowheads to the ends of strokes directly from the Stroke panel, shown in Figure 1.2.

Art brushes can now have nonstretchable sections by using the new Segmented Art Brush feature, which is discussed in detail in Chapter 4.

Finally, a new brush type has been added that simulates natural media: the Bristle brush. Figure 1.3 shows a pretzel with a Bristle brush applied to it.

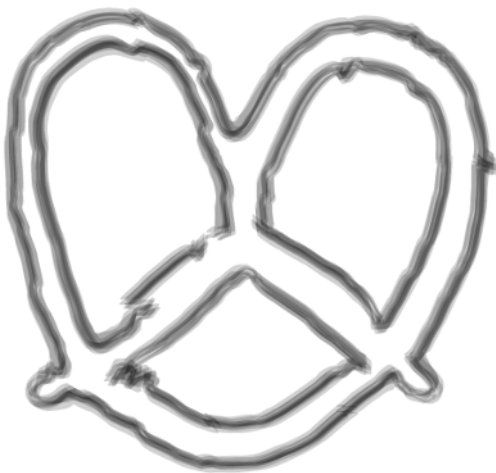
**FIGURE 1.2**

The Stroke panel now contains a section for arrowheads and width profile.



**FIGURE 1.3**

This simple drawing of a pretzel has the Bristle brush applied to it.



## Path Join Enhancement

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If you've ever chosen Object ⇨ Path ⇨ Join and had that horrible dialog box appear stating essentially that you can't join the selected objects because it wasn't the third Thursday of May, or for some other seemingly arbitrary reason, you'll love how Join works now: Simply select any number of open paths and choose Object ⇨ Path ⇨ Join, and Illustrator joins those paths, typically just how you'd expect it to work. Figure 1.4 shows paths before and after being joined automatically using this feature, which in many ways is really a bug fix that was really hard for Adobe to do.

**FIGURE 1.4**

The paths on the left are selected and then joined (shown on the right) using the new Join enhancement.



## Select Behind Downgrade

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If you've ever been irritated by how InDesign's Select Behind feature works, where  $\text{⌘}+\text{clicking}/\text{Ctrl}+\text{clicking}$  on an object when using another tool (like the Type tool) selects the object behind the one you just clicked, then you'll be just as irritated, and probably even more so by Adobe's poorly conceived decision to make Illustrator act the same way. Now when you press  $\text{⌘}/\text{Ctrl}$ , you'll select behind the topmost object (if the edge of the next object is under your cursor), with subsequent clicks taking you deeper into the stack of objects. Get used to pressing V to change your tool to the regular selection tool instead of holding the  $\text{⌘}/\text{Ctrl}$  key ... unless you're using the Type tool and are editing text, in which case you'll need to manually choose a Selection tool first.

You can avoid this new feature by ensuring that you don't click anywhere where an edge of an open object appears below your cursor.

## Drawing Modes

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Masking objects has always been a confusing area of Illustrator. The new Drawing modes in Illustrator (shown in Figure 1.5) allow you to easily draw inside selected objects, and even allow you to draw behind something. It's not exactly a fix for masking woes, but it does provide new functionality that had been tedious to re-create in the past.

**FIGURE 1.5**

The three Drawing modes in Illustrator CS5 from left to right: Draw Normal (selected), Draw Behind, and Draw Inside



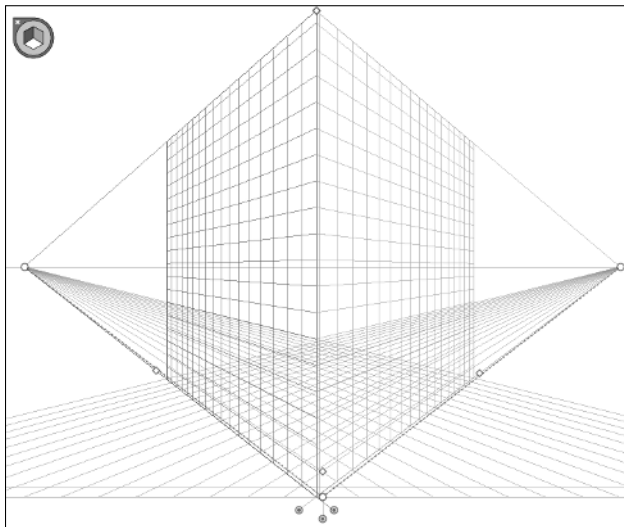
# Perspective Grid

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Illustrator has always treated you like a 2-D artist/designer. With Perspective Grids, you can simulate depth in addition to location. This is a very powerful new feature that solves an outstanding need, but most Illustrator users probably won't take advantage of the new tool, as it requires a significant investment in time and effort to understand and use the new functionality. Figure 1.6 shows the Perspective Grid as created by the new Perspective Grid tool.

**FIGURE 1.6**

A Perspective Grid created by the new Perspective Grid tool.



## Cross-Reference

For more on Perspective Grids, see Chapter 8.

# The Artboards Panel

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Multiple artboards, introduced in Illustrator CS4, now have their own panel (shown in Figure 1.7) to help you quickly locate and organize your artboards. This seems like a feature that should have been included with the previous version of Illustrator when the feature was introduced, but I'm thrilled to see it in the application nonetheless.

**FIGURE 1.7**

The Artboards panel shows all of your artboards and allows you to quickly get to any artboard by double-clicking it.



## Artboard Rulers

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Each Artboard now has its own ruler, in addition to a global document ruler, which allows for adjustments based on the active artboard (selected in the Artboards panel).

## Gradient Mesh Point Transparency

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Individual points in a gradient mesh can now have opacity settings, just like their regular gradient counterparts. This is a huge enhancement to gradient mesh, which previously had limited functionality and required significant workarounds to achieve similar results.

## Shape Builder Tool

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The Shape Builder tool is Live Paint designed to be more user friendly for coloring portions of overlapping paths. While Live Paint required you to jump through hoops to achieve the desired effects, the Shape Builder tool provides a much more straightforward click method to quickly colorize or erase areas.

### Cross-Reference

For more on the Shape Builder tool, see Chapter 5.

## Symbol Enhancements

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Symbols have had various enhancements in order to make them more useable and also to make them easier to use with Adobe Flash. New enhancements include better snapping, a built-in registration point, layer support within symbols, and nine-slice scaling.

### Cross-Reference

For more on the new symbol enhancements, see Chapter 5.

## Flash XML Graphics

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Illustrator now supports filters, text, gradients, and blend elements for FXG, allowing files to be more easily interchanged among Flash, Illustrator, Fireworks, and Photoshop.

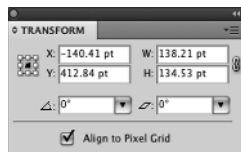
## Align to Pixel Grid

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While Illustrator has had the ability to view the pixel version of the current document for several versions, it was a manual and time-consuming process to adjust artwork and text to avoid unwanted jaggies and blurred edges. This new feature, shown as a check box at the bottom of the Transform panel in Figure 1.8, automatically aligns artwork so that both jaggies and blurred edges are minimized.

**FIGURE 1.8**

The Align to Pixel Grid check box in the Transform panel protects your art against the jaggies and blurries.



## Resolution-Independent Effects

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In another fix more than an enhancement, Illustrator now keeps the appearance of raster effects on artwork when you change the Document Raster Effects settings. In the past, for example, Drop Shadows would change size when the Document Raster Effects Settings resolution was changed. Now Illustrator does the math for you and keeps the appearance consistent regardless of the resolution setting.

## Summary

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Illustrator CS5 has several small enhancements and fixes to existing features and a single new feature: Perspective Grids. You learned that:

## Part I: Illustrator Basics

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- The changes to Illustrator CS5 are primarily minor enhancements to existing functionality.
- Strokes can have variable widths assigned to them, and arrowheads can be easily placed on each end directly from the Stroke panel.
- Illustrator now does the right thing when you attempt to join paths.
- Pressing the **⌘**/Ctrl key often (but not always) selects behind the object you clicked on. Use with caution!
- The new Perspective Grid is the sole new feature in this release of Illustrator.
- Artboard functionality has been enhanced with a new Artboards panel and artboard rulers.
- Gradient mesh points can now have opacity applied directly to them.
- The Shape Builder tool makes filling overlapping path sections easier than ever before.
- Symbols have been enhanced, including the ability to have built-in registration points.
- Illustrator now supports FXG for easier interchange among Fireworks, Illustrator, Flash, and Photoshop.
- The new Align to Pixel Grid function keeps the jaggies and blurries to a minimum.
- Raster-based effects now work properly when document effects resolution is changed.