DIGITIZE YOUR DESIGNS

COURSE BOOK

Amanda Arneill

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THE LEGAL STUFF

SAVING YOUR DESIGNS

Before we even get started, I want to talk about saving your designs. On your desktop or in your document folder, you should create subfolders for your digitized lettering. One folder should be for stock photos (background photos that you can put your lettering into), another should be for scans, another for digitized lettering and one final file for lettering backgrounds (or purchased clip art). You can also create very specific folders for different purposes such as scans, Instagram photos, portfolio photos, shop photos and designs. I have all of these and, now that I have hundreds of digitized lettering files, they help keep me organized (and sane). When I need to find a product photo for my online shop, I know exactly where I'll find it. If I want to email myself a pic to share on Instagram, I know where my digitized files for Instagram are. Easy peasy!

When I save files, I also use a descriptor at the beginning to group file types.

For instance:
Print (P)
Mug (M)
Card (C)
Instagram Share (IG)
Shirt (S)
Vector (V)
Edited Scan (0A)

After adding the appropriate prefix, I name my file based on what the lettering in the piece says.

When you make variations of any file, use "Save As" instead of Save. Save overwrites, while Save As creates a new file.

Save As also allows you to save your PSD file as another file type like JPEG (for a photo) or PNG (for a website).

Photoshop is like a coloring page - the components aren't as easy to edit because it works with individual pixels, whereas Illustrator is like a collage - each item is its own individual piece all placed together on an artboard. With a coloring page, it can be hard to make changes without affecting the area around it. With a collage, you can easily pick a piece up, alter it and place it back down. This is a simple explanation of why Illustrator is my go to for most of what I do.

GENERAL

KEYBOARD SHORTCUTS

KEYBOARD SHORTCUTS

Digitize YOUR DESIGNS

ACTION	SHORTCUT
CUT	COMMAND X
COPY	COMMAND C
PASTE	COMMAND V
PASTE IN FRONT	COMMAND F
SELECT ALL	COMMAND A
ZOOM IN	COMMAND +
ZOOM OUT	COMMAND -
GROUP	COMMAND G
UNGROUP	SHIFT COMMAND G
UNDO	COMMAND Z
REDO	SHIFT COMMAND Z
SAVE	COMMAND S
PRINT	COMMAND P

NOTE** If you are on a PC, use Control instead of Command for shortcuts.

KEYBOARD SHORTCUTS

FOR PHOTOSHOP

PHOTOSHOP TOOLS

LEFT TOOLBAR

MOVE TOOL

LASSO TOOL

■ Quick Selection Tool   W
★ Magic Wand Tool   W   MAGIC WAND TOOL

CROP TOOL

EYE DROPPER TOOL

BRUSH TOOL

PAINT BUCKET

■ Gradient Tool   G
Paint Bucket Tool   G
3D Material Drop Tool   G

■ Eraser Tool   E   ERASER TOOL
✂ Background Eraser Tool   E
★ Magic Eraser Tool   E   MAGIC ERASER

HAND (MOVE) TOOL
ZOOM TOOL

FILL
STROKE

PHOTOSHOP TOOLS

KEYBOARD SHORTCUTS

		SHORTCUT
MOVE TOOL		V
LASSO TOOL		L
MAGIC WAND TOOL		W
EYE DROPPER TOOL		I
BRUSH TOOL		B
PAINT BUCKET		G
ERASER TOOL		E
MAGIC ERASER TOOL		E
HAND (MOVE) TOOL		H
ZOOM TOOL		Z
FILL		
STROKE		
SWAP STROKE AND FILL		SHIFT X
TRANSPARENT		/

NOTE** If you are on a PC, use Control instead of Command.

SCAN VS CAMERA

WHAT SHOULD YOU USE?

START

DO YOU WANT YOUR DIGITIZATION TO LOOK EXACTLY THE SAME AS YOUR PAPER COPY?

NOPE →

USE YOUR CAMERA TO CHANGE THE ANGLE OF YOUR LETTERS

CAMERA SETTINGS

- medium to high setting
- consider using the Camera+ app
- shoot straight down onto your lettering (unless you are trying to warp or scale)
- save lettering photos into a specific folder

YES ↓

ARE YOU WORRIED ABOUT LIGHTING?

YES →

DID YOU USE COLOUR IN YOUR PIECE?

NOPE →

TURN ON THAT SCANNER!

NOPE ↓   YES ↓

FEEL FREE TO USE YOUR CAMERA OR YOUR SCANNER!

SCANNER SETTINGS

- select only the lettered area to be scanned
- scan at 600dpi
- use colour setting
- save scans into a designated folder for easy deletion

PHOTOSHOP

PHOTOSHOP

Open your scan by choosing Open from the main menu or File —→ Open.

Zoom in (shortcut is Z or Command +) to see the small errors that need to be corrected.

WHAT TO TOUCH UP IN PHOTOSHOP:
Wiggling lines
Extra ink splats
Spaces that need to be filled in

Here are some super important tools that you will use.
All. The. Time.

SPACE BAR – Holding down the space bar and clicking on your workspace will allow you to move your view

COMMAND + – Zoom into your canvas

**COMMAND -** – Zoom out of your canvas

USING THE ADJUSTMENTS

The best adjustment to use for lettering is your curves. Make the curve more of an S shape than a straight line. This makes your whites whiter and your blacks blacker.

HISTORY TOOL

The History tool is up in the righthand upper corner of your workspace. This is a list of all of the things that you have done to your piece. If you want to undo more than one thing that you've done, use the History and go back by selecting the step that you want to start from again.

Command Z (Control Z on a PC) – Undo last step
History – Can undo multiple steps

LAYERS TOOL
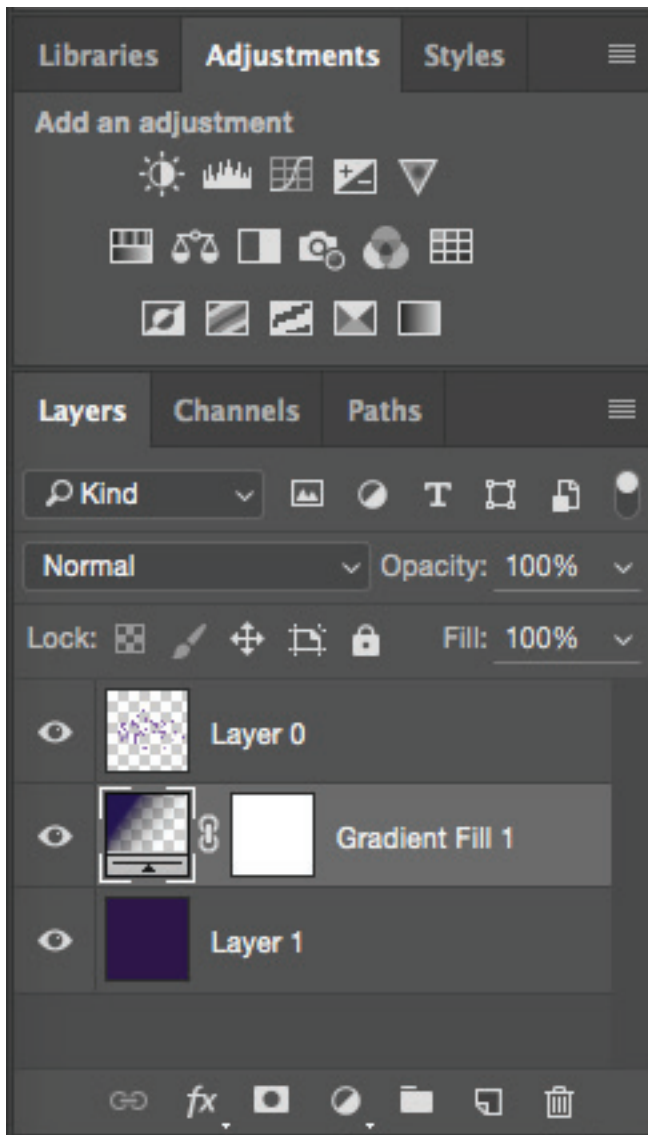
The Layers palette in Photoshop is found on the bottom right corner of your screen below your Adjustments. There you can see and access all of the layers that you have in your document. To edit a layer, click on that layer in the Layers palette and then you will be able to make adjustments, edits or changes to the elements in that layer.

To add a new blank layer, click the "New Layer" symbol on the bottom of the Layers palette area.

You can also adjust the opacity of a layer by using the Opacity percentage within the palette. The other thing that you will want to experiment with is the blending mode which is the dropdown that defaults to "Normal." You can change this to create different blending effects between layers.

In the Layers palette, there is also the "New Fill Layer" tool at the bottom. This is something that you can use to quickly change colors in your piece or add a gradient.

NEW LAYER
NEW FILL LAYER

Every time that you add a change in Photoshop (like an adjustment or adding in some artwork) it will be placed onto a new layer. Each of these layers is independent of one another. One tricky thing about Photoshop is that you need to select the layer that you want to work on in order to make any changes to it. If you're trying to get something to happen on a layer and it's not working, look over to the right at your layers palette and, chances are, that layer isn't selected.

MERGE LAYERS

For simplicity, it can often be beneficial to merge some of your layers together. This is expecially useful for layers where you have made an adjustment like the curves adjustment. If you don't merge the layers and you shift any of the layers around, your curves adjustment won't necessarily apply to your lettering anymore.

To merge your layers, select the layers that you want to merge by holding down Shift and clicking on the layers (if you need to be more specific with the layers that you want to select, hold down Command to select only specific ones that may not be beside each other). Right click on your mouse to get your menu and select Merge Layers.

ERASE TOOL

There are some things that can be adjusted on the erase tool. To adjust the size of the eraser, use your bracket keys.

[= smaller eraser   ] = bigger eraser

OPACITY

You can choose how solid your eraser is by adjusting the opacity. 100% opacity means that everything under your eraser will disappear.

BRUSH EDGE

When you're using your eraser or your brush tool, you can vary how solid the edges of your brush are. To change the settings, click on the arrow beside the brush size on the top toolbar menu. That will give you a dropdown menu (shown beside). The hardness slider adjusts the edge of the eraser or brush. 100% hardness means that the edge is a solid line. 0% hardness means that the edge of the eraser is totally soft. When I'm erasing, I typically have it set to 100% hardness or close to it. This allows me to be very precise with my tool.
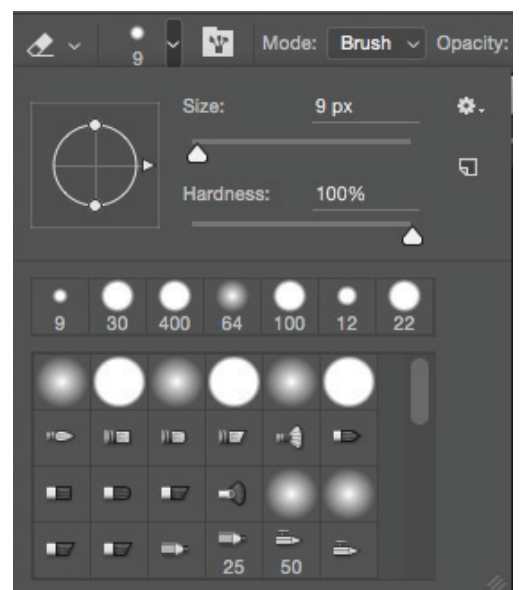
ADDING MORE COLOR WITH THE BRUSH TOOL

Sometimes you will need to fill in areas and this is where the Brush tool will come in. Use the Eyedropper tool (I) to take a sample of the color next to where you want to fill in. Take your Brush tool (B) and color in the areas that need more color.

The Brush tool can be adjusted in the same way as the Eraser tool.

To adjust the size, use your bracket keys. [= smaller paintbrush] = bigger paintbrush

OPACITY

You can choose how solid your paintbrush is by adjusting the opacity. 100% opacity means you will be painting in a solid color. Decreasing the opacity can allow for a softer, more natural color addition.

MAGIC ERASE TOOL

The Magic Erase tool is nested underneath your Eraser tool. Get to it by clicking and holding on the Erase tool and a pull out menu will appear where you will find the Magic Erase tool.

You can click on any color and the Magic Eraser
will erase everything that is that color.

SETTINGS FOR MAGIC ERASER

CONTIGUOUS – If contiguous is checked, then the tool will only look for, and erase, pixels of the same color that are touching one another. Areas within a loop or in the middle of a letter won't be erased.

If contiguous is unchecked, the Magic Eraser will apply to any areas with that same pixilation regardless of what they are touching. This way, it will look through the entire piece for pixels to erase.

Changing the tolerance of the Magic Erase tool will also adjust the edges of your lettering. If the tolerance is set to 0, it will only erase pixels of that exact same color. 32 seems to be a happy medium. As you increase the tolerance, it will take out more pixels (including the pixels that were grey). This can give you a cleaner edge but ...

... watch out for setting your tolerance too high because it can cut out parts of your letter.

THE PAINT BUCKET TOOL

The Paint Bucket tool is a fantastic way to recolor things in your piece (like your letters perhaps!). If you have similar colors in your lettering (probably mostly black) you can use the paint bucket to replace the black with another color. *This works best if you have removed the background with the magic eraser already.*

In your top menu, after you've selected the paint bucket, ensure that your settings look like this:
Mode: Normal
Opacity: 100%
Tolerance: 250 (this can be adjusted to suit)
Anti-alias: Checked
Contiguous: Unchecked

Select your color from the color menu in the top right corner of the screen and click the Paint Bucket onto your lettering to replace the letters with the paint bucket color.

THE MAGIC WAND TOOL

Select your letters with the Magic Wand tool (with a high tolerance and contiguous unchecked). Then you can apply menu options from the bottom of the layers palette to the selected area.

ADD A WHITE OR COLORED BACKGROUND

From the Apply menu options at the bottom of the Layers palette click "New Layer." While the new layer is selected in your layers palette, use the Paint Bucket to fill the layer with one color.

You can move the layer down to place it underneath your lettering by selecting the layer in your layers palette and clicking and dragging it lower in your palette so that it is beneath your lettering layer.

MAKE A GRADIENT

Use the Magic Wand tool to select your lettering. From the layer menu options at the bottom of the Layers palette go to New Fill Layer → Gradient.

To adjust your gradient, click in the gradient box where you can see the color. This brings you into the Gradient Editor box. You can click on the colored arrows below the gradient type to change the colors used in the gradient. To add even more colors into a gradient, just double click on the color bar to add an arrow and choose a different color to add. In between each of the gradient arrows, there is also a slider that can be adjusted to alter the position of the gradient shift in your piece.

SAVING YOUR GRADIENT

If you find a gradient that you love, or maybe one that works perfectly with your brand colors, you can save that gradient to quickly apply it again in the future.

Adjust one of the existing gradients to make it perfect for you and then (still within the Gradient Editor), give it a new name. Now, all you need to do to save that as a gradient is click "New." You will see your custom gradient show up in the Gradient Editor Preset display right away.

CUSTOMIZING YOUR GRADIENT EDITOR

I would suggest taking some time to go through and right click → Delete any and all of the gradients that you won't use. Once you have gotten rid of the ugly gradients (and there are some ugly ones!) and added gradients that you love, save your gradient library by clicking Save in your Gradient Editor. Now you can save your whole gradient

collection. Give it a clear name and select OK. If something ever happens or your defaults come back on, giving you the hideous gradient options again, you can simply head into your Gradient Editor, click Load, and get all of your gorgeous new gradients right back. Phew!

ADDING A BACKGROUND PHOTO

Create a new layer in the layers palette and drag this new layer behind (below) your lettering. With that new layer selected, from the top menu, choose File → Place Linked. Make sure that you are linking to a copy of a photo that will remain where it is. If you worry that you may move the photo (and lose your link), then choose Place Embedded. Placing a photo will bring up a box for you to find the file that you would like to place. Select your photo and then choose Place. In order to set your photo, you will need to hit Return (or Enter). This places the photo into the layer.

REMEMBER... if you can't see your lettering once you add a new layer, you can always reorder them by clicking and dragging them up or down in your Layers palette.

RESIZE

If you want to resize or move an element, select the layer that it is on and choose the Move tool. You will see a bounding box around the element (that's a fancy way of saying, there will be a light box and squares in the corners and on the sides). Select one of the corners and hold the mouse down while you pull the corner in or out.

To maintain the ratio of the element, hold down Shift as you resize. This will stop it from getting taller or wider than it should be.

MOVING AN ELEMENT

If you click and drag on the corners, you will resize an element. To keep an object's original ratio as you resize it, hold down Shift. If you click and drag from the middle of an object, you will move it.

TO TRIM A CANVAS

Sometimes the canvas size that you're working with doesn't perfectly fit the elements that you have inside. To remove the extra canvas space, select Image → Trim. This is often the easiest option. If it doesn't work for you, you can always crop your image using the Crop tool.

CROP TOOL

By clicking on the crop tool, you'll be given bounding boxes around the edge of your canvas. You can drag those in to where you want your crop to happen and then hit Return (or Enter).

If you find that you can't freely adjust your crop (for example, you want to make it narrower, but it is also becoming shorter as well), before throwing a shoe at your computer, go up to the Crop toolbar at the top of your workspace and click "Clear." The reason that it is scaling like that for you is because the computer has put in a scale ratio. If you clear that, you will be able to move the crop lines unrestrained. Again, hit Return (Enter) when you get your crop the way you want it.

OOPSIES TIP HERE: I would make sure that the "Delete Cropped Pixels" in the top crop toolbar is **unchecked**. I've learned about this one the hard way. If they are deleted, they are removed from the file and you can't suddenly crop out again to recapture more space. Sadness.

SAVING YOUR PHOTOSHOP FILES

When you select "Save As," Photoshop gives you the option of changing the format of your file type. This option can be found in the Format dropdown bar towards the bottom of your Save As window.

When Photoshop creates a file (or you edit an existing file), it will want to create a PSD file. This is a Photoshop file. It retains all of your layers so that you can go back and edit individual items or layers.

To share an image on social media or have it printed for your use, save it as a JPEG. I

always save it with the highest quality possible. Lower quality will have a smaller file size, but will also become more pixelated as the quality decreases.

PNG files are ideal for use on the web. They have smaller file sizes and they don't get as pixelated as JPEG. (A file with a smaller file size allows a webpage to load faster, which is ideal!)

PDF files are files that will be able to open in multiple ways and are often the way that I save files that I want to have printed. These files remove the layers and esssentially create a copy of what you have on your screen so that anyone can open or view it (great for the printer!).

PHEW!

Now onto Illustrator!

QUICK CHECK:

Have you done all of your Photoshop Homework yet?

Share your work with us on our DYD Facebook group!

Not signed up?
Head to amandaarneill.com/groups and get on there!

KEYBOARD SHORTCUTS

FOR ILLUSTRATOR

ILLUSTRATOR TOOLS

LEFT TOOLBAR

SELECTION TOOL

DIRECT SELECTION TOOL

MAGIC WAND TOOL

LASSO TOOL

PEN TOOL

TEXT TOOL

LINE TOOL

SHAPE TOOL

PAINTBRUSH TOOL

PENCIL TOOL

ERASER TOOL

LIVE PAINT BUCKET
(NESTED)

EYEDROPPER TOOL

ARTBOARD TOOL
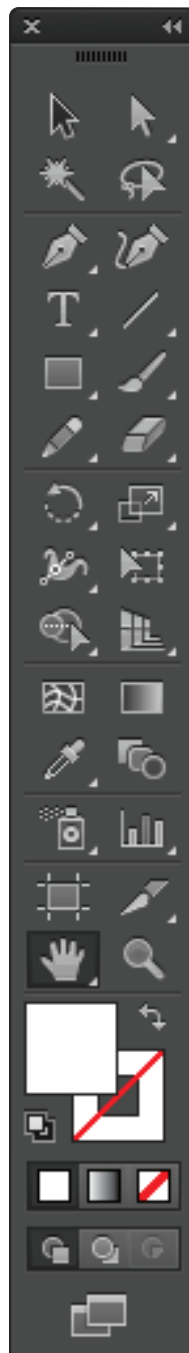
HAND (MOVE) TOOL

ZOOM TOOL

SWAP STROKE AND FILL

FILL

STROKE

TRANSPARENT

ILLUSTRATOR TOOLS

KEYBOARD SHORTCUTS

		SHORTCUT
SELECTION TOOL		V
DIRECT SELECTION TOOL		A
MAGIC WAND TOOL		Y
LASSO TOOL		Q
PEN TOOL		P
ADD ANCHOR POINT TOOL		+
DELETE ANCHOR POINT TOOL		-
ANCHOR POINT TOOL		SHIFT C
TEXT TOOL		T
LINE TOOL		\
SHAPE TOOL		M OR L
PAINTBRUSH TOOL		B
BLOB BRUSH TOOL		SHIFT B
PENCIL TOOL		N
SMOOTH TOOL		S
ERASER TOOL		SHIFT E
EYEDROPPER TOOL		I
HAND (MOVE) TOOL		SPACE BAR
ZOOM TOOL		Z
FILL		X
STROKE		X
SWAP STROKE AND FILL		SHIFT X
TRANSPARENT		/

ILLUSTRATOR TOOLS

NESTED TOOLS

Pen Tool	(P)
Add Anchor Point Tool	(+)
Delete Anchor Point Tool	(−)
Anchor Point Tool	(Shift+C)

Paintbrush Tool	(B)
Blob Brush Tool	(Shift+B)

Pencil Tool	(N)
Smooth Tool	(S)
Path Eraser Tool	
Join Tool	
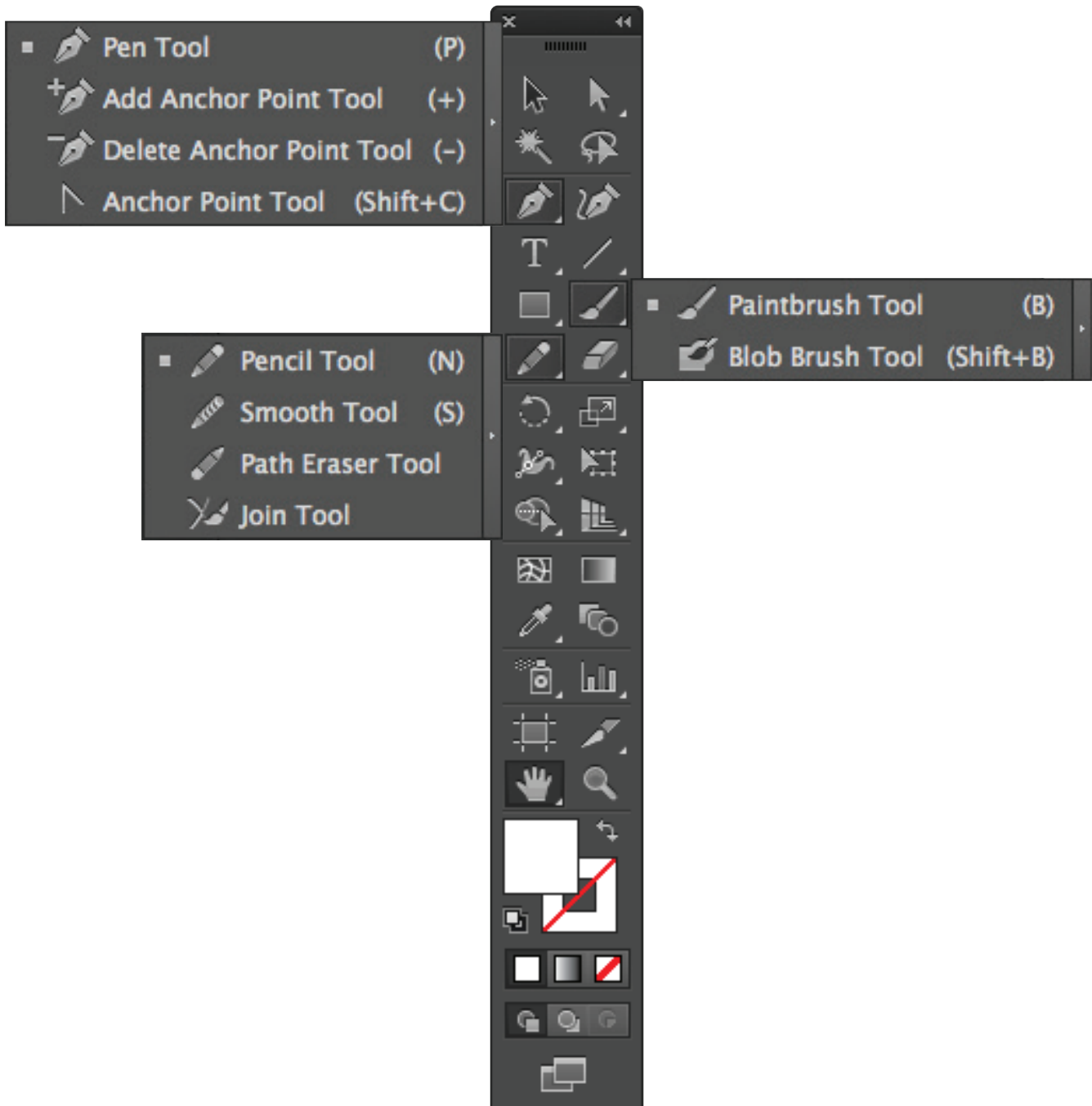
ILLUSTRATOR

ILLUSTRATOR
SETTING UP YOUR WORKSPACE

From the top menu, select Window and choose Workspace. In the Workspace pull out menu, choose Essentials.

On the dock on the right hand screen, you want to add some items to the dock. These are a very quick and easy way to access different tools that you use frequently. All of these tools (and more) can be found in the Window menu. From the top menu bar, choose Window, and then select the following palettes one at a time:

Layers
Transform
Image Trace

As you select them, they will pop up on your screen and to place them into the right hand dock, click on the tool bar header and, holding down the mouse button, pull the menu into the right toolbar until it collapses into the right dock.

Anything in your right dock can be moved around to create an easy workspace for you. You will see how I like to have mine set up but if you prefer to order them differently, that's cool too!

ADDING AN IMAGE

In the top menu tool choose File → Place. Select the file that you want in the pop up window and choose Place. If the photo or file that you placed is too large or small, use the corners of the bounding box to resize it.

Remember to hold down Shift as you drag corners
of your bounding box to maintain the size ratio.

If you can't see the corners of the image, zoom out with Command until you can see the corners. Then click on one of those pesky corners and drag it in (while holding down Shift, of course).

LAYERS

The layer palette is docked in the right toolbar. (If it's not there, go to Window → Layers and dock the palette on the right.)

In Illustrator, it is very helpful to group different elements on different layers. Illustrator allows you to lock layers so that you can isolate elements that you want to change and not touch those that you want to remain the same. To lock a layer, click in the box beside the colored stripe to the left of the layer title and a small lock will appear. This layer will be stuck where it is until you release the lock by clicking on it again.

Add new layers by clicking "Create New Layer" at the bottom of the layers menu.

You can easily move elements between layers. Simply select the image or element in your artboard that you want to move between layers and you will see a small colored box appear on the right of the layer that the element is currently on. To quickly switch the element onto another layer, click and drag the small colored box onto it.

THE PEN TOOL (P)

A Pen tool doesn't write like a regular pen, instead it essentially creates a connect-the-dots type of situation. The Pen tool creates **ANCHORS** (like the dots in a kid's funbook) and connects them with lines. It defaults to create straight lines but we can adjust those lines by pulling out **HANDLES** off of each of the anchor points. This will end up giving curved lines.

> To know if a shape will close, watch for the floating circle at the bottom of your pen tool when you are near the starting anchor point.

If you're dropping anchor points on a curved shape, you need to pull out handles right away as you drop each anchor point. Handles come out by clicking to drop an anchor point but not releasing your mouse. Instead (holding your click), pull your mouse out to create handles to cause the line to curve.

Make sure that even on your last point, when you're connecting to your initial anchor point, you click and drag out your handles.

ANCHOR POINTS

If possible, put your first anchor point at a point that doesn't have a curve to it (where there is a straight line or a sharp corner). On curves, your anchor points should be dropped at the outermost or innermost edges of a curve. This will allow for the smoothest lines possible.

An anchor point is placed every time you click your mouse.

To move an anchor point as you place it, keep your mouse clicked, press down the space bar and the anchor point will move freely until you release the space bar.

HANDLES

Your handles act as a magnet for the line that you're creating with your pen tool and anchor point. A handle will pull the line towards itself. You never want to have handles that overlap or handles that extend past another anchor point because these don't allow for smooth lines.

To remove a handle as you're creating an anchor point, click on the anchor point itself. This will remove the handle on the continuing side of the line.

For long lines, pull out nice long handles. This will ensure that you have gorgeous, smooth lines.

TO ADJUST HANDLES

Choose the direct selection tool (A) and then click on the shape to edit. Once you identify the point that you want to change, click on the point so that it becomes a small filled in square (selected points are filled in, unselected points are white on the inside). Once it is selected, you can click to pick up and move the actual anchor point or click on the end of a handle to move or extend it.

CHANGE THE STROKE AND FILL

You can use the menu at the top to control the color and weight of the shapes that you create with the pen tool.

CUTTING OUT THE MIDDLE OF THE SHAPE

The first step is to create the inner and outer shape lines. Using the select tool (V), hold down Shift and select both the inner and outer shapes. Open up your Pathfinder tool from the right dock and select the overlapping squares with the cut out area in the center.

MERGING TWO SHAPES

Once you've created the lines for the shapes that you want to join together, hold down the Shift key and select all of the shapes to join. In the Pathfinder tool, click on the shape mode with the two squares that have become one. This will join the two shapes and give them the attributes of whatever shape was on top.

CHANGING THE TRANSPARENCY OF AN ITEM

This is great for tracing over a dark image or shape. Place the shape or image onto a new layer and select it with the Selection tool (V). In the top toolbar, you will see "Opacity." This defaults to 100%. That means 100% opaque or visible. If I'm tracing over top of something, I like to drop the opacity to around 50% – 60%. Once the opacity has been dropped, lock the layer and, in a new layer, you can begin to trace over your shape.

BLOB AND ERASER TOOLS

These tools allow you to add to or remove from a shape.

To make your blob (or eraser) smaller, use the shortcut [
To make your blob (or eraser) larger, use the shortcut]

CHANGE THE ORDER OF YOUR SHAPES

Select the shape that you want to move and right click on the shape. This will bring up your shape menu with Arrange. Within Arrange, you can choose to send things to the front or the back as needed.

IMAGE TRACE

Place or open your scanned lettering. Don't reduce the size of your scanned piece before you do your Image Trace.

Using the Selection tool, click on the item that you want traced. In the top menu bar, there is now a button that says "Image Trace." This will give you a simple outline of your shape. Always take the next step of going into your Image Trace Panel (located on the top menu bar to the left of View: Tracing Result) and making adjustments to your trace.

Make sure that you have Preview checked so that you can see changes as you make them.

If your "Advanced" area is not showing, click on the arrow to the left of Advanced to see your tracing options.

ADJUST YOUR SLIDERS

To help you decide on your setting adjustments, zoom (Z) into an area of your lettering.

THRESHOLD
If your piece has hairlines or light lines, increase your threshold.
> If there isn't enough definition and it looks too heavy, decrease your threshold. This is the most important slider to adjust properly before you expand your image trace.

PATHS
Paths adjusts how many anchor points you are given.
> A low path number can create a more jagged letter.
> A very high path number will give you quite a few anchor points.

CORNERS
Corners changes the number of curves that you have between anchor points.
> Lower corner numbers mean that fewer anchor points are corners.
> Higher corner numbers mean that you will have more in and out between anchor points.

NOISE
Noise often has the least impact on your tracing result.
> Lower noise means that it won't look for little areas off the side of your letters.
> Higher noise means that those areas may be captured in your trace.
> This is a good slider to keep near the middle most of the time.

Ensure that your Method is set to the box on the left: the cookie cutter style path. This will remove the centers of your letters rather than just keeping them as a white overlay.

When a vector is created, it creates black areas but it also creates white areas. To easily get rid of the white (since we only want to have the black there to work with), make sure that Ignore White is checked.

Once you have your settings the way that you want them, select Expand from the top horizontal Image Tracing menu bar. This creates your rough vector!! Yay!!!

After you Expand your image, you need to ungroup your trace. Do this by clicking on your trace and hit the ungroup shortcut of Shift Command G (or right click and select Ungroup).

If you need to remove a white area from a trace, select the Magic Wand tool, click in an area that has a white piece of the design. This will select all of the white in your document. Then you can simply click Delete to remove all of the white.

KEEP IN MIND: If you're tracing a shape with lots of flourishing, Live Trace will have the most difficulty with curved lines that pass over one another. These will need more editing from you.

SMOOTH TOOL

This will be your second best friend (your first best friend is either me or the pen tool).

RELATED TOOLS
Anchor point tool (Shift C)
Add Anchor point tool (+)
Remove Anchor Point tool (-)

SET YOUR SMOOTH TOOL KEYBOARD SHORTCUT

In the main menu bar, go to Edit → Keyboard Shortcuts.

Here you can change any of the tool shortcuts or add shortcuts to tools that don't have shortcuts... like the Smooth tool. Scroll down to the smooth tool and click on the empty

space under Shortcut. I use S for the Smooth tool because it is close to the other shortcuts that I frequently use with the smooth tool (the Selection tool (V), Direct Selection tool (A), Anchor Point tool (Shift C) and the shortcuts for copy, paste and undo). This way, I can access the majority of my shortcuts with one hand on my keyboard while the other hand works my mouse.

You can name your new set of shortcuts by writing in a new name in the Set bar at the top of the Keyboard Shortcuts pop up. Once you've set your shortcuts up the way that you want, click OK.

USING THE SMOOTH TOOL

To use the Smooth tool, first zoom in (Z) on your area to smooth. With the selection tool (V), click on the line that you would like to smooth. Switch to your smooth tool (use your new S shortcut) and click and drag over areas that you want to smooth. If your line is smoothed in a way that you don't like, just hit Command Z to undo it.

Try to smooth out bumpy lines or any areas where there are too many anchor points close together.

If the smooth tool doesn't take away the anchor points that you need removed, use the Delete Anchor Point tool. It's fastest to use the keyboard shortcut (-) for this tool. Simply hit your (-) on your keyboard and then click on the anchor point that you want to remove... and it's gone!

> Try to do long strokes with your Smooth tool.
> This will result in the smoothest lines possible.

TRICKY QUICK SMOOTH TOOL

Sometimes, you can quickly apply the Smooth tool to an entire element (a letter or a word). This typically works best on single letters and letters that do not have too many curves. To quickly smooth, you can select the letter by clicking on it with the Selection tool (V). Switch over to the Smooth tool (S) and click on the side of the letter. This will apply a smooth tool to the entire letter. I typically try to use this tool... but watch it closely! Sometimes it takes away important points, especially in the corners of your letters.

CHANGING SMOOTH TOOL SETTINGS

In the left toolbar, you can double click on the smooth tool to change its settings. For calligraphy letters, move the smooth tool slider more to the accurate side if you want to try to use the quick smooth tool trick instead of manually running the smooth tool along your lines with your mouse. *Note* For calligraphy or flourishes, I usually choose to manually smooth my lines.

CORNERS IN LETTERS

Corners should only have one anchor point in them. Use the Delete Anchor Point Tool (-) to remove the extra anchor points in a corner.

RULE OF THUMB: Curves using Live Trace have more anchor points than straight lines. Try to only have one or two anchor points for long straight or gently curved areas.

CIRCLES NEAR HARSH ANCHOR POINTS

Some jagged anchor points come with an easy fix. When you click on these anchor points, sometimes you are given a circle just to the outer side of the point. This is there to easily give you a way to smooth out the sharp point. Click on the circle and pull it out until you get the curve that you like.

ANCHOR POINT TOOL

If you aren't given a circle in an anchor point that needs to be changed – use the Anchor Point Tool!

This is an incredibly powerful tool.
The shortcut is Shift C.

Once you have accessed the tool, click on a harsh corner point or a point that needs new handles and, holding your click down, pull out to one side to create even handles on either side of your anchor point. When you are in this tool, you can also click on the end point of a handle and move it independent of the other handle (that one will stay fixed). This is especially important when you need to fix corners or areas where flourishes or lines cross one another.

ADD ANCHOR POINT TOOL (+)

Sometimes you need an anchor point on the line but there isn't one there. For this, use the Add Anchor Point tool (+). Simply select the tool and then click on the line where you would like an anchor point to be added.

EDITING YOUR LETTERS

Before you edit anything, add ruler guidelines to your workspace. The shortcut is Command R (or in the top menu bar → View → Rulers → Show Rulers). This gives ruler lines on the top and left side of your workspace. Click and drag from the ruler bar down into your design to place guidelines into your piece. The best part is, while you can see the guidelines on your screen, these lines are not something that will show up in a print!

USE THE LASSO TOOL (Q)

The Lasso Tool allows you to select specific anchor points in a portion of your piece. Once you have selected certain anchor points, you can pick them up to move them or use your arrow keys to move them.

SELECTION TOOL – can move an entire letter
DIRECT SELECTION TOOL – can move a specific anchor point on a letter
LASSO TOOL – can move a specific group of anchor points on a letter

If you use the Lasso tool to move points, you will most likely have to go in with your Smooth tool after to re-smooth your line.... But it's totally worth it!

Make sure, as you edit your work, that the widths of all of your letters stay consistent! Don't widen a letter or word so that you get wider downstrokes than you have in the rest of the piece. Consistency rules!!

TO ROTATE LETTERS OR WORDS

While holding down Shift, click on the letters or words that you want to angle or rotate (use the Selection tool (V) to select the items to rotate). Once the selected letters have an outer bounding box, if you hover your mouse just outside of one of the corners of the bounding box, you will see that the regular arrow changes to a little side to side arrow (super technical term there). While the side to side arrow is visible, click and drag your mouse to a side. This will tilt the entire selection the same way. Release your mouse click when you have the letters angled as you want them.

MANUALLY CREATING A VECTOR

This is what you should do if you are creating a logo or lettering that needs to be **perfect**!

Place your lettering into Illustrator. Drag rulers down onto your work to give you a guideline for your manual vector creation.

Click on your lettering image and use the top image menu bar to decrease the opacity of your lettering to between 40% - 60%.

Open up your layers palette and add a new layer to create your vector on. You want to click and drag this layer so that it is on top of your lettering layer. Once this is done, lock your lettering layer so that it can't be affected by what you do on the vector layer. (The lock is just to the right of the creepy eyeball in the layers palette.) Click on the vector layer and begin to create your vector.

Zoom in nice and close to one of your letters. Select the Pen tool (P) and trace around your letter. Remember to start in a corner if possible. As you create your vector, you can go through and make changes to your letters as you add anchor points and handles.

Work through the letters one at a time. Add anchors to points that are on the outer or inner edges of your curves.

If you have a letter with a center area that need to be removed (a cookie cutter cut out in the center), select both of the shapes and choose your Pathfinder palette to apply your cookie cutter tool (super technical term again there).

After you've finished a letter, double check all of the anchor points and handles.

If you want to adjust an area of a letter, keep in mind that you can use your trusty Lasso tool (Q) to select a specific area to move.

The goal of doing your vector manually
is to have as few anchor points as possible.

Just like when you use Live Trace, after vectorization, go in and adjust your letter angle, the spacing between letters and the width and/or height of your letters.

TO CREATE A SHADOW EFFECT

Select the vector items that you want to duplicate and group them (Command G). Hit Command C to copy and Command F to paste in front. Without deselecting anything, bump your letters slightly to the side with the arrow keys.

Another way to do this is to select all of your vectors to shadow and move them while holding down the Alt key. This is a quick and easy way to make a copy of anything!

To create the shadow effect, select the object that is in the back and give it a slightly darker color.

If you feel like your lettering isn't really popping (expecially if you have it layered over a photo or design), using a shadow is a super quick and easy tip to try.

ADDING DESIGN!

Designs can be added to your letters to make them pop! Think about placing your lettering over photos, using your scanned artwork, clip art that you've purchased or digital items that you create in Photoshop or Illustrator.

Any design that you add should be placed on its own layer. Click on the layer title and change it to have a descriptive title.

DESIGNS WITH ILLUSTRATOR TOOLS

You can use the pen tool or blob tools to create images, shapes or other artwork to enhance your piece. Remember when we traced that boot earlier in the course? Well, you can totally find a picture off of the internet, trace the outline with the pen tool, make it your own by adding details, colors, etc. and then using your digital design that to embellish your lettering.

PHOTO PLACEMENT

Placing a stock photo, a photo of your own painting, drawing or art, or one of your own camera photos behind a design (just like we did in Photoshop) is a fantastic way to add a design element to your piece. Use File → Place to choose the photo that you would like to place.

Remember to put it on its own layer in behind your lettering layer.

CLIP ART PLACEMENT

You can purchase amazing clip art off of Etsy or creativemarket.com (those are my two faves) and put those into your piece just like you put a photo in. I typically select many different elements and cluster them on the side of my artboard. If you hold down Alt while you drag a clip art piece onto your artboard, it will put down a copy of that image and you will still have the original clip art available on the side.

To make the design look natural, resize and rotate your elements (especially if you use multiple copies of one image in a piece. This will stop them from all just looking like copies of each other).

One other thing that you may want to consider is the order of the different clip art pieces that you place.When you put a piece down, it is going to be below anything else that you place after that. If you need to move something up so that it is on top, select the clip art to move with the Selection tool (V), right click on your mouse and choose Arrange → Bring Forward (this brings it one step forward) or Bring to Front (this brings it right to the top). You can also select and send elements backwards as well.

SAVING YOUR WORK

Now you've got your final piece ready to go! (*Insert loud cheer here!*) We need to quickly look at your saving options. Of course you've been saving your work at different steps with clear file titles (obviously).

Like in Photoshop, the way that you save your file depends on how you want to use it. Illustrator isn't as straightforward for creating different file types, but they are all possible.

Saving as an AI file will maintain your vector. If you are sending the file for someone else to use or print from, you will want to save your file as an Adobe CC file but also as an Adobe CS5 file. Adobe CS5 is an older version of Illustrator and not everyone has upgraded to Adobe CC. If you send a CS5 file, chances are, they will be able to open it. Keep in mind that sending AI files mean that the recipient will be able to edit them.

In the regular Save As popup window, you can change the format (on the bottom) to save it as a PDF. If I'm sending something to the printer, I always save it as a PDF. This is also the format that I save things to if I'm going to share them online as a download because I know that everyone will be able to open it, even if they don't have Illustrator. Unlike an AI file, a PDF can be set so that it cannot be further edited.

If you want to create a JPG or a PNG file, you will need to use File → Save for Web. Here you can choose the file type (in the Preset area) and the size (under Image Size). After you have these set the way that you want them, click Save, name your file in the new popup window and click Save again.

HOMEWORK

Homework

Digitize Your Designs

TO DO:

MODULE 2 LESSON 1

- ◯ Create one free write design of one to three words only.
- ◯ Create one photo overlay lettering piece to digitize and place on top of a photo (one to three words only).

TO DO:

MODULE 2 LESSON 2

- ◯ Sign up for Adobe suite
- ◯ Install Adobe Bridge
- ◯ Install Adobe Photoshop
- ◯ Install Adobe Illustrator

- ◯ Scan or photograph 10 lettering pieces into your "Scans" folder.
- ◯ Use Adobe Bridge to label the 5 best pieces
- ◯ Use Camera Raw to edit the images
- ◯ "Save As" with the prefix 0A in the same folder

Homework

MODULE 3 LESSON 1

TO DO:

- ◯ In Photoshop, use the Eraser tool to erase any flyaway bits on your letters.
- ◯ Use the Eyedropper and Brush tools to add to any missed areas.
- ◯ Use the Magic Eraser tool to remove the white background.
- ◯ Save your piece with a descriptive title as a psd file.

MODULE 3 LESSON 2

TO DO:

- ◯ Add a new layer to the piece from the last lesson (behind the lettering layer).
- ◯ Change the color of your lettering.
- ◯ Fill the background layer with a colour using the Paint Bucket.
- ◯ Save the file using "Save As" with a new file title.
- ◯ Open the original piece from Module 3 Lesson 1 again (or your photo overlay lettering).
- ◯ Delete the background fill layer and add a new empty layer behind the lettering.
- ◯ Place an embedded image into the empty background layer.
- ◯ Save the file using "Save As" with a new file title.

Homework

Digitize YOUR DESIGNS

MODULE 4 LESSON 1

TO DO:

- ○ Put the Essentials on your workspace.
- ○ Add the layers palette, transform palette and image trace palette to your dock (on the right).

MODULE 4 LESSON 2

TO DO:

- ○ Place the Pen Tool Practice file on a locked layer.
- ○ On a new layer, use the Pen tool to trace around the shapes.
- ○ Find a simple picture online (or use the bird practice file) and trace around the shape with the Pen tool.
- ○ Apply a colored fill and stroke to each of your shapes.

MODULE 4 LESSON 3

TO DO:

- ○ Use the Blob tool to join the letters of the same colour in the "Lonely Letters" file.
- ○ In the last line, move the pieces into place and join them with the pathfinder tool.
- ○ Recolor the piece and save it with a new name.
- ○ Use the anchor point tool to create perfect curves in the new joints.

Homework

DIGITIZE YOUR DESIGNS

MODULE 5 LESSON 1

TO DO:

- ◯ Place one of your lettering pieces onto your artboard.
- ◯ Run a Live Trace of your letters, adjust the tracing options and ignore the white.
- ◯ Expand your trace.
- ◯ Save your file as an AI file (vector).

MODULE 5 LESSON 2

TO DO:

- ◯ Smooth the live trace from the last lesson with either the quick smooth or manual smooth techniques.
- ◯ Manually remove extra anchor points (-).
- ◯ Add any needed anchor points (+).
- ◯ Pull out all handles to create only smooth lines.
- ◯ Save your work.

MODULE 5 LESSON 3

TO DO:

- ◯ Pull rulers onto your workspace.
- ◯ Use the Selection tool to isolate letters and/or words that need to be straightened.
- ◯ Stretch or shrink any letters and/or words that need to be adjusted (using either the selection tool or the lasso tool).

MODULE 6 LESSON 1

TO DO:

- ◯ Open a high priority (but short!) lettering image.
- ◯ Place the image, decrease the transparency and lock the layer.
- ◯ One a new layer, use the pen tool to trace the shape.
- ◯ Cut out interior lines with the pathfinder tool.
- ◯ Give your letter shapes a fill (no stroke).
- ◯ Save your lettering with a descriptive file name.

MODULE 7 LESSON 1

TO DO:

- ◯ Open your favorite vectorized lettering file.
- ◯ Use the AI tools introduced to create at least two different designs to compliment your gorgeous lettering.

AND MORE

TO DO:

- ◯ Add your new designs to your online shop!
- ◯ Continue to share your work and your victories on our DYD Facebook group.