

Adobe Illustrator Beginner's Guide

Introduction

In this guide, you will learn some basics of Adobe Illustrator, including navigating the workspace, creating shapes, using the Pen tool, adding text, and saving/exporting your work. Illustrator is a vector-based software, meaning it creates scalable graphics that retain quality at any size, unlike raster graphics, which are made up of pixels and can lose quality when resized.

For game design, it is recommended to work in **RGB color mode**, as it is optimized for digital screens and game engines.

Getting Started with Adobe Illustrator

Opening a New File

1. Open Adobe Illustrator.
2. Click **File > New** or press **Ctrl + N** (Windows) / **Cmd + N** (Mac).
3. Select **RGB Color Mode** for game design projects.
4. Choose your desired artboard size and click **Create**.

Navigating the Artboard

For Mouse Users

- **Pan View:** Hold **Spacebar** and drag with the left mouse button.
- **Zoom In/Out:** Hold **Alt + Scroll Wheel** (Windows) / **Option + Scroll Wheel** (Mac).

For Trackpad Users

- **Pan View:** Use two fingers to drag.
- **Zoom In/Out:** Pinch in or out with two fingers.

Creating Basic Shapes

1. Select the **Rectangle Tool (M)** or **Ellipse Tool (L)** from the toolbar.
2. Click and drag on the artboard to draw a shape.
3. Hold **Shift** while dragging to create a perfect square or circle.
4. Use the **Selection Tool (V)** to move and resize the shape.

Creating Custom Shapes with the Pen Tool

1. Select the **Pen Tool (P)** from the toolbar.
2. Click on the artboard to create anchor points.
3. Click and drag to create curves.

4. Complete the shape by connecting back to the first anchor point.

Selecting and Editing Shapes

- **Selection Tool (V)**: Moves entire objects.
- **Direct Selection Tool (A)**: Edits anchor points and paths.
- To edit points, select a shape and use the **Direct Selection Tool (A)** to adjust anchor points.

Adding Text

1. Select the **Type Tool (T)**.
2. Click on the artboard and start typing.
3. Use the **Character Panel** (Window > Type > Character) to adjust font, size, and spacing.

Copy, Paste, and Duplicate

- **Copy**: Press **Ctrl + C** (Windows) / **Cmd + C** (Mac).
- **Paste**: Press **Ctrl + V** (Windows) / **Cmd + V** (Mac).
- **Duplicate**: Hold **Alt + Drag** (Windows) / **Option + Drag** (Mac).

Undo & Redo

- **Undo**: Press **Ctrl + Z** (Windows) / **Cmd + Z** (Mac).
- **Redo**: Press **Ctrl + Shift + Z** (Windows) / **Cmd + Shift + Z** (Mac).

Saving Your File

1. Go to **File > Save As**.
2. Select **Adobe Illustrator (.ai)** to preserve all layers and editing capabilities.

Exporting Your Work

1. **JPG** - For general image use.
2. **PNG** - For images with transparency.
3. **PDF** - To preserve vector quality for sharing.
4. **SVG** – Useful for importing into Blender and creating high quality custom 3D objects.

For taking vectors into a 3D environment, refer to the guide titled **Exporting Custom Pen Tool Shapes for Use in Blender**, available at the game club website under **Resources > Guides**.

This guide provides the essential tools to start working in Adobe Illustrator. Keep practicing, and have fun designing!