ILLUSTRATOR

You will;

1. Learn Basic Navigation.
2. Learn about Paths.
3. Learn about the Line Tools.
4. Learn about the Shape Tools.
5. Learn about Strokes and Fills.
7. Learn about Scaling.
8. Learn about Rotating.
INTRODUCTION

Why use Illustrator?
Like any good tool, it makes your work easier. Like any tool, you have to learn how to use it before its true value is obvious. Illustrator is designed to make many burdensome tasks much easier, which frees up your time and creative instincts.

What is Illustrator?
It is the industry leading software for creating vectorized graphics. While you can incorporate existing artwork, both scanned drawings and photographs, into Illustrator, for the most part you will be using the program itself to create artwork.

So, why do many people think Illustrator is difficult?
One reason is that, unlike a program like Photoshop where you begin with an image and then make adjustments, with Illustrator you often begin with nothing but a blank screen.

Good Illustrator work is a combination of
1. Knowing what you want to do.
2. Knowing how to do it.
ILLUSTRATOR TOOLS

You can select a Tool by clicking on its icon in the Toolbox. A triangle, (△), at the lower right of a Tool icon indicates hidden Tools. Positioning the pointer over a Tool displays a Tool tip with the Tool's name and keyboard shortcut.

**TIP:** You can also select a Tool by pressing the appropriate shortcut key. For example, to select the Pen Tool, press ‘P’; to select the Paintbrush Tool, press ‘B’; or select the Zoom Tool by pressing ‘Z’.

A. Active tool  
B. Hidden Tool triangle  
C. Hidden Tools  
D. Tool shortcuts
IMAGE > ADJUSTMENTS

To describe how to find an item on a drop-down menu, standard practice is to:

1. Specify the heading, then;
2. Use a > symbol to describe something that is found in its drop-down menu, then;
3. Continue with repeated > symbols, until you get to where you need to be.

Here’s an example...
Effect > Distort & Transform > Pucker & Bloat
To begin, we’ll create a new, blank document.
1. File > New. (Ctrl+N)

You are faced with decisions straight away!
Obviously, you should already know what will be required of your artwork.
Is it for the web? Will it be a printed document? Sometimes, pixels are the appropriate measuring unit, for other situations it’s points (1 point is 1/72 inch).
As is now obvious, Illustrator has been set up to assume that you are working on a project, with a clear workflow in mind. Once you strike a balance between thinking creatively, and interacting with Illustrator in a mechanical, logical fashion, you’ll progress rapidly.
For now, look for “Profile”, select “Web”, and click on OK.

Let’s begin with one of the Path Tools.
A Path is nothing by itself. If you draw a Path, but then don’t apply a Stroke or Fill attribute, you have essentially done nothing (yet)! However, you have created a Path that you can do something with.

We’ll begin with the simplest Path tool, the Line Segment Tool (Shortcut key is \\).
1. Select the Line Segment Tool.
2. Click once on your blank page, and you’ll get another dialog box.
3. Alternatively, you can click and drag, placing your Line Segment by eye.
4. After placing your Line Segment, apply a Stroke attribute of 5 pixels.

Now reveal the hidden Tools, (under the Line Segment Tool), such as the Arc, Spiral and Grid Tools, and we will manipulate them using the same controls and these additional controls.
1. While drawing, hold Shift for either vertical, horizontal or 45 degrees.
2. Hold Alt to draw from the centre.
3. Before releasing the mouse button, hold down the spacebar to move the shape about.

The Arc Tool
1. Using the Arc Tool, click and drag until you have the shape you want.
2. Click and drag again, but this time, before releasing the mouse button, tap “C” to “Close” the arc.
3. Click and drag again, but this time, before releasing the mouse button, tap “F” to “Flip” the arc.

The Spiral Tool
1. Using the Spiral Tool, click and drag until you have the shape you want.
2. Hold Ctrl while moving the mouse to control the decay of the Spiral.
Introduction to Adobe Illustrator

The Rectangular Grid Tool
1. Using the Rectangular Grid Tool, click and drag until you have the shape you want.
2. Click and drag again, but this time, before releasing the mouse button, tap either the “Up” or “Down” Arrow to adjust the Grid.
3. Click and drag again, but this time, before releasing the mouse button, tap either the “Left” or “Right” Arrow to adjust the Grid.

The Polar Grid Tool
1. Using the Polar Grid Tool, click and drag until you have the shape you want.
2. Click and drag again, but this time, before releasing the mouse button, tap either the “Up” or “Down” Arrow to adjust the Grid.
3. Click and drag again, but this time, before releasing the mouse button, tap either the “Left” or “Right” Arrow to adjust the Grid.

Now, move to the right and select the hidden Star Tool (M).

1. Repeat the above steps with the Star Tool.
What effect does holding Ctrl have on the star?

Congratulations. You can now draw shapes.
It’ll be more impressive when we apply these skills to create some artwork.

GUIDES

Remember that, before you open up Adobe Illustrator, (except when experimenting or learning new techniques), you must have a clear idea of what size, shape and style your illustration will be. Guides help you to bring order and structure to your work.

View > Rulers > Show Rulers
View > Guides > Show Guides

1. Drag and drop from the Ruler itself onto your page. Done.
2. Press ALT (before releasing the mouse button) to quickly change from vertical to horizontal.
3. Hold SHIFT to “Snap” from one increment to the next.

You can also draw any shape you want, and then make that shape a guide!

Draw any shape, and then either...
1. Right click on the shape, and select “Make Guides”.
2. or View > Guides > Make Guides.
3. or Press Ctrl+5.
LAYERS

Layers also help with structure.

1. Open a new document. Notice that the Layer is colour-coded.
2. Create a new Layer, by clicking on the “Create New Layer” icon at the bottom of the Layer Palette.
3. You can also duplicate a Layer by dragging it onto the same icon, or delete a Layer by dragging it to the Delete Selection bin.
4. Double click on the Layer to bring up the Layer Options dialog box. Change anything you want to change and then click on OK.
5. The colour-coding will become more and more relevant as your illustrations become more complex.
6. Notice what happens as you draw multiple shapes. Where are they stored?

OPEN “01_CIRCLES_WITHIN_CIRCLES.AI”

Here we have a document with three concentric circles. Yes, it looks like there are only two circles.

1. Click on the arrow just to the left of the title “Layer 1”.
2. It “twirls open” the Layer to display the three circles.
3. Do you know why you can only see two of them?
4. Click on the circular shape that will “target” the Yellow circle.

(When you are in the correct spot, a Tool Tip will display the following “Click to target, drag to move appearance”)

5. We want the yellow circle to become visible. Make that happen.

Now to test your own abilities!

OPEN “02_COPY_ME.AI”

After opening this file, copy it as best you can, using the new skills you have learned.
STROKES & FILLS

1. File > New.
2. To draw a circle, you draw an ellipse (L).
3. Then, hold Shift to constrain the ellipse to a circle.
4. Hold Alt to draw it from its center.

After adjusting the Stroke weight;
1. Zoom In to at least 2400%.
   Can you work out how to do so?
2. After Zooming In, change the Stroke weight to see what effect it has.

Just above the title of your document, you have the colour swatches for Stroke and Fill.
1. Click on them, and observe what happens.

Now to test your own abilities, again!

OPEN “03_COPY_ME_AGAIN.AI”

After opening this file, copy it as best you can, using the new skills you have learned.
SCALE & ROTATE

Applying simple Scaling and Rotating Tools can help you create very complex patterns.

OPEN “04_PROJECT_LACEMAKING.AI”

Here, we have a 3 Layer Illustrator file.

We are going to recreate the ‘Final Pattern’ using the ‘Just 3 Circles’ Layer.

Normally, when we scale an object, we just change its size, while Illustrator keeps in mind the positional restraints we place on it, such as “constrain to circle”, or “scale from this point”.

But here, we going to twist and turn the basic circle shapes into more complex and interesting shapes.

1. Select the innermost circle (it’s called ‘inner circle’).
2. If you don’t see blue control handles, press Ctrl + H.
3. Copy this circle. Rename it ‘inner circle 2’.

To see what you are trying to copy more clearly, you can enter the ‘Final Pattern’ Layer and make ‘inner circle 2’ the only visible layer.

To twist and turn, we must Scale the circle segments, **without** moving the Anchor Points.

4. Select > Object > Direction Handles.
5. Activate the Scale Tool (S).
6. Move to just outside the circle, about 45 degrees in direction.
7. Holding Shift, click and drag away from the centre, to match the Final Pattern template.

The reason the circle distorted the way it did was because of the position of the Direction Handles, and the angle that you dragged from. To get a different distortion, you have to change the position of the Direction Handles.

1. Select the middle circle.
2. Copy it. Rename it ‘middle circle 2’
3. Double-click on the Rotate Tool (R).
4. Change the angle to 45 degrees.
   This rotates the Handles.
5. Select > Object > Direction Handles (Control Handles).
6. Activate the Scale Tool.
7. Holding Shift, click and drag away from the centre to match the Final Pattern template.

Let’s create the more complex parts of this lace pattern.

1. Select the original middle circle.
2. **Object>Path>Add Anchor Points.** This doubles your number of Anchor Points.
3. Select > Object > Direction Handles (Control Handles).
4. Activate the Scale Tool.
5. Click and, holding Shift, (from the usual starting position), drag in toward and then past the center, out through the other side.
6. Holding Shift, click and drag to match the Final Pattern template.

Finally, let’s create the scalloped edges.
1. Select the outer circle.
2. Object>Path>Add Anchor Points.
3. Object>Path>Add Anchor Points (again).
4. Effect>Distor & Transform>Pucker & Bloat...
5. Apply the effect with an appropriate value.

CONCLUSION

Now that you understand how to interact with the program, using simple lines and shapes, you can move on to creating more complex designs. Transform, Scale and Rotate can help you to produce amazing designs. Experiment to see where it takes you, and then move onto the much harder task of copying pre-existing patterns. The difficulty with replicating a design is that you must be able to discern the underlying simple shapes that make up the complex final design. Once you have discerned what that shape is, you’re most of the way there.