CHEAT SHEETS HERO

Adobe Illustrator Cheatsheet
A comprehensive cheat sheet covering essential Adobe Illustrator tools, shortcuts, and techniques for graphic design.

Selection & Transformation

Selection Tools

Selection Tool (V)	Selects entire objects or groups. Use to move, resize, and rotate.
Direct Selection Tool (A)	Selects individual anchor points or path segments within an object.
Group Selection Tool	Selects objects within groups, one level at a time.
Lasso Tool (Q)	Selects anchor points or path segments by dragging a freeform selection around them.
Magic Wand Tool (Y)	Selects objects with similar attributes (e.g., fill color, stroke weight).

Transforming Objects

Scale Tool (S)	Resizes objects proportionally or non-proportionally.
Rotate Tool (R)	Rotates objects around a specified point.
Reflect Tool (O)	Mirrors objects across a specified axis.
Shear Tool	Skews objects along a specified axis.
Free Transform Tool (E)	Allows for scaling, rotating, skewing, and perspective distortion.
Transform Again (Ctrl/Cmd + D)	Repeats the last transformation.

Arranging Objects

Bring to Front (Ctrl/Cmd + Shift +]) - Moves selected object to the front.
Bring Forward (Ctrl/Cmd +]) - Moves selected object forward one level.
Send Backward (Ctrl/Cmd + [) - Moves selected object backward one level.
Send to Back (Ctrl/Cmd + Shift + [) - Moves selected object to the back.
Group (Ctrl/Cmd + G) - Groups selected objects.
Ungroup (Ctrl/Cmd + Shift + G) - Ungroups selected objects.

Drawing & Paths

Basic Shape Tools

Rectangle Tool (M)	Draws rectangles and squares.
Rounded Rectangle Tool	Draws rectangles with rounded corners.
Ellipse Tool (L)	Draws ellipses and circles.
Polygon Tool	Draws polygons with a specified number of sides.
Star Tool	Draws stars with adjustable points.
Flare Tool	Creates lens flare effects.

Pen Tool

Pen Tool (P)	Draws precise paths with anchor points and handles.
Add Anchor Point Tool (+)	Adds anchor points to existing paths.
Delete Anchor Point Tool (-)	Deletes anchor points from existing paths.
Convert Anchor Point Tool (Shift+C)	Converts between smooth and corner points.
Join (Ctrl/Cmd + J)	Joins two or more open paths.

Path Operations

Pathfinder Panel (Window > Pathfinder) - Used for combining, subtracting, intersecting, and excluding overlapping shapes.
Shape Builder Tool (Shift + M) - Merges or deletes areas of overlapping shapes.
Offset Path (Object > Path > Offset Path) - Creates a new path that is a specified distance from the original.
Outline Stroke (Object > Path > Outline Stroke) - Converts a stroke into a filled path.
Reverse Path Direction (Object > Path > Reverse Path Direction) - Reverses the direction of a path.

Type & Color

Type Tools

Type Tool (T)	Creates horizontal type.
Area Type Tool	Fills an enclosed path with type.
Type on a Path Tool	Creates type that follows a path.
Vertical Type Tool	Creates vertical type.
Touch Type Tool	Individually transform characters.

Color & Swatches

Fill (X)	Applies color to the inside of an object.
Stroke (X)	Applies color to the outline of an object.
Eyedropper Tool (I)	Samples color from an image or object.
Gradient Tool (G)	Creates gradients within objects.
Swatches Panel (Window > Swatches)	Stores and manages colors, gradients, and patterns.

Color Modes

CMYK - Cyan, Magenta, Yellow, Key (Black). Used for print.
RGB - Red, Green, Blue. Used for web and screen.
HSB - Hue, Saturation, Brightness. An alternative color model.
Grayscale - Shades of gray from black to white.

Effects & Export

Effects

Stylize (Effect > Stylize)	Includes effects like Drop Shadow, Feather, and Round Corners.
Distort & Transform (Effect > Distort & Transform)	Offers effects like Free Distort, Pucker & Bloat, and Roughen.
Path (Effect > Path)	Includes effects like Offset Path.
Warp (Effect > Warp)	Includes Arc, Bulge, and Shell effects.
3D (Effect > 3D)	Extrude & Bevel, Revolve, and Rotate.

Appearance Panel

Appearance Panel (Window > Appearance) - Manages the attributes of an object, including fills, strokes, and effects. Allows you to modify and reorder these attributes without altering the underlying object.
Add New Fill/Stroke - Adds additional fills and strokes to an object.
Apply Effects - Applies effects directly to a fill, stroke, or the entire object.

Exporting

Save As (Ctrl/Cmd + Shift + S)	Saves the file in various formats, including AI, PDF, and EPS.
Export (File > Export > Export As)	Exports the artwork in formats like JPEG, PNG, SVG, and TIFF.
Save for Web (File > Export > Save for Web (Legacy))	Optimizes the artwork for web use, allowing control over image quality and file size.
Artboards	Use artboards to export multiple sizes or versions of your design in a single file.