CHEATSHEETSHERO

Affinity Designer Cheat Sheet

A comprehensive cheat sheet for Affinity Designer, covering essential tools, shortcuts, and techniques to enhance your workflow and design capabilities.

Interface & Navigation

Workspace Basics

Studio Panels	Dockable panels for tools, layers, color, etc. Accessed via `Window` menu.
Toolbar	Located on the left, contains essential tools for drawing, selecting, and editing.
Context Toolbar	Changes based on the selected tool. Offers specific settings and options.
Document Tabs	Manage multiple open documents. Drag to rearrange or create new windows.
Presets	Save and load presets from a range of settings like export, fonts, styles and more.
Preferences	Adjust settings, keyboard shortcuts and more via `Affinity Designer > Preferences`.

Navigation Shortcuts

Zoom In	`Ctrl + +` (Windows) / `Cmd + +` (Mac)
Zoom Out	`Ctrl + -` (Windows) / `Cmd + -` (Mac)
Zoom to Fit	`Ctrl + 0` (Windows) / `Cmd + 0` (Mac)
Hand Tool (Pan)	`H` or hold `Spacebar`
Rotate View	`Ctrl + Shift + Scroll` (Windows) / `Cmd + Shift + Scroll` (Mac)
Undo / Redo	`Ctrl + Z` / `Ctrl + Shift + Z` (Windows) `Cmd + Z` / `Cmd + Shift + Z` (Mac)

Basic Tools & Functions

Selection & Transformation

Move Tool (V)	Select and move objects. Hold `Shift` to constrain proportions while resizing.
Node Tool (A)	Edit vector paths by manipulating nodes and handles.
Transform Panel	Precisely control object size, position, rotation, and shear. Found in Studio panels.
Snapping	Enable snapping to precisely align objects. Toggle snapping options in the toolbar.
Duplicate	`Ctrl+J` (Windows) / `Cmd+J` (Mac) Duplicates the selected object.

Vector Drawing

Pen Tool (P)	Create precise vector paths with bezier curves.
Pencil Tool (N)	Draw freehand vector paths.
Shape Tools	Rectangle, Ellipse, Triangle, etc. Create basic shapes quickly. Hold shift to constrain to perfect shape.
Boolean Operations	Combine shapes using Add, Subtract, Intersect, and Xor operations. Located in the toolbar when multiple shapes are selected.
Convert to Curves	`Ctrl + Enter` (Windows) / `Cmd + Enter` (Mac) Converts a shape into editable curves
Corner Tool	Rounds corners of vector shapes.

Color & Appearance

Color Panel	Choose colors for fills and strokes. Supports various color models (RGB, CMYK, HSL).
Gradient Tool (G)	Apply linear, radial, and other gradient types to objects.
Effects Panel	Add effects like shadows, glows, and bevels to objects. Located in Studio panels.
Swatches Panel	Save and organize frequently used colors. Create color palettes.
Transparency Tool (M)	Apply transparency gradients or solid transparency to objects.

Layers & Effects

Layer Management

Layers Panel	Organize and manage objects using layers. Create groups, rename layers, and adjust visibility.
Grouping Layers	`Ctrl + G` (Windows) / `Cmd + G` (Mac) Group selected layers for easier manipulation.
Locking Layers	Prevent accidental modification of layers.
Clipping Masks	Use a shape to mask the visibility of another layer. Drag a layer onto another in the layers panel to create a clipping mask.
Blend Modes	Change how layers interact with each other (e.g., Multiply, Screen, Overlay). Located in the Layers panel.
Layer Visibility	Toggle layers on and off to help isolate content.

Effects & Adjustments

Live Filters	Non-destructive filters that can be applied to layers (e.g., Blur, Sharpen, Distort). Accessed via `Layer > New Live Filter Layer`.
Adjustment Layers	Apply color and tonal adjustments non-destructively (e.g., Brightness/Contrast, HSL, Curves). Accessed via `Layer > New Adjustment Layer`.
Layer Effects	Add effects like shadows, glows, and outlines directly to layers. Accessed via the `fx` icon in the Layers panel.
Gradients	Gradients can be added as fills or strokes, and they are fully editable via the gradient tool.
Layer Opacity	Adjust the overall transparency of a layer via the layers panel.

Typography & Text

Text Tools

Text Tool (T)	Create artistic text (for headlines) or frame text (for paragraphs).
Text Styles	Save and apply consistent text formatting across your document. Accessed via the `Text Styles` panel.
Character Panel	Adjust font, size, kerning, tracking, and other character properties. Located in Studio panels.
Paragraph Panel	Control paragraph alignment, indentation, and spacing. Located in Studio panels.
Convert to Curves	`Layer > Convert to Curves`. Useful for creating custom shapes from text.
Glyph Browser	View and insert special characters and glyphs from your fonts. Accessed via `Text > Show Glyphs`.

Working with Text

Importing Text	Import text from external files (e.g., .txt, .rtf) into frame text boxes.
Text on a Path	Create text that follows a vector path. Draw a path, then use the Text tool near the path until the cursor changes.
Spell Check	`Edit > Spelling > Check Spelling` to find and correct errors.
Find and Replace	`Edit > Find and Replace` to locate and modify specific text throughout your document.
Dynamic Fields	Insert dynamic fields (e.g. Date, Page Number) into text frames via `Text > Insert > Fields`.