

Comic Art: Useful Features in Illustrator and Photoshop

Illustrator

To create a more graphic look for a raster-based image:

File>Place or File>Open

Object> rasterize

In pop-up menu, choose: *screen (72ppi)*

With image selected in Control Panel: click: *Image Trace* and then: *Live Paint* to create regular paths

In order to control the Image Trace options: *Window>Image Trace*

Or

File>Place or File>Open

Object>Live Trace>Tracing Options

Or

File>Place or File>Open

With image selected, choose the options in the *Live Trace* box in the control panel and then click: *Expand* to create regular paths

To create structures in linear perspective:

Click: Perspective Grid Tool

Or

Shift P (keyboard shortcut)

To get rid of the grid:

View>perspective Grid> Hide Perspective Grid

To choose whether you want 1-, 2-, 3-point perspective:

View>Perspective Grid> One point Perspective...

Perspective Grid Controls (Manage by Using the Perspective Selection Tool):

- Top central anchor point controls the height
- The top extreme right and left anchor points control the horizon line (viewing line)
- The bottom extreme right and left anchor points allow you to place the perspective grid anywhere on the screen
- The bottom central anchor point allows you to control the floor/ground level of grid
- You can control the perspective by swinging perspective anchor point to the right and left of the bottom central anchor point

To apply artwork to a specific dimension, make sure that you correctly activate the corresponding dimension of the cube icon on top left hand side of screen (or press numbers 1, 2, or 3)

In order to move static artwork onto the three dimensional plane, you have to use the *Perspective Selection Tool*, which is hidden under the *Perspective Grid Tool*. Raster images have to be converted to vector images to work in this mode.

Archive your comic book characters as a symbol library:

Window>Symbols

Symbols save on file size, are easy to update, and you can create a portable library that you can move between different computer networks.

Create your character and then drag and drop it into the symbols palette. A pop-up menu will open that will allow you to define the symbol (*Type: graphic*). Name the symbol as you want the character to be known.

Or

Select your character and go to the symbol palette and click on the *Contextual Menu>New symbol (Type: graphic)*. Name the symbol as you want the character to be known.

As you start creating these symbols, it would be a good idea to create a symbol library for this set of characters.

1. Select the symbols you are not using and delete them (either click on garbage or in the contextual menu, click delete symbol).
2. Go to *Contextual menu>Save Symbol Library* (Save to default symbol library)
3. To open the symbol library after it has closed, Go to bottom left hand side of symbol panel and click on *User Defined* (alongside which the defined name should pop up)
4. To create variations of symbols, you can go to the bottom of the symbol palette and click: *Break link to symbol*
5. To change the original symbol: Go to *Contextual Menu>Redefine symbol*

Photoshop

Various ways of turning photographic images into looking like hand drawn or hand painted imagery (Be careful of using these as they have a “photoshoppie look”):

Art History Brush in the tool menu

Filter> Filter Gallery

Image>Adjustments> Posterize

Image>Adjustments>Threshold

Batch Processing: If you would like to duplicate a certain procedure repeatedly, use the actions palette:

Record the Action

Window> Actions

Click new action (make sure to name it)

Click record on the actions panel

Apply the desired sequence of actions to a selected image

Hit stop on the actions panel

Apply the Recorded Action

Open up a new image

Select your named action (in the *Actions Palette*)

Select play

Apply the Recorded Action to a Series of Images

File>scripts>image processor

In pop-up menu: Select your images you want to process, and select where the processed images should be deposited. Click desired file types. Select “Run Action” and the specifically named action you wish to impose on the images. Hit: Run.

Color Dots Associated with Traditional Printed Comic Books:

Halftone Dots

A. Simple: Filter>Pixelate>Color Halftone

Some suggestions for the parameters that you have to set:

Radius: 8 (smaller dots) to 15 (larger dots)

25

50

75

75 or 85 or 100

There is a 25° angle between each color to prevent the moiré effect

B. Complex:

1. Choose your image

2. Duplicate the image

3. Hit “D” key to reset the colors to black and white

4. Hit “X” key to invert the colors, so that white is in the foreground and black is in the background

5. Filter>sketch>halftone pattern

6. (Default)

halftone pattern size: 1

contrast: 5

pattern type: dot

hit "OK"

7. Invert the image: image>adjustments>invert

This completes the task for black and white halftone dots. If you want color, then proceed further:

8. Go to the layers panel and choose the blend mode: linear light

9. Adjust the opacity to the comic book layer

Brush Dynamics:

Open up the brush palette: window>brush

You can then alter the brush tip shape, roundness, hardness, angle, spacing, and flip

Creating a Custom Brush

Create your design and then select it. Go to: edit>define brush preset.

You can import brush libraries and create your own brush libraries:

Brush presets>(go to contextual menu)>load brushes/ or /save brushes