

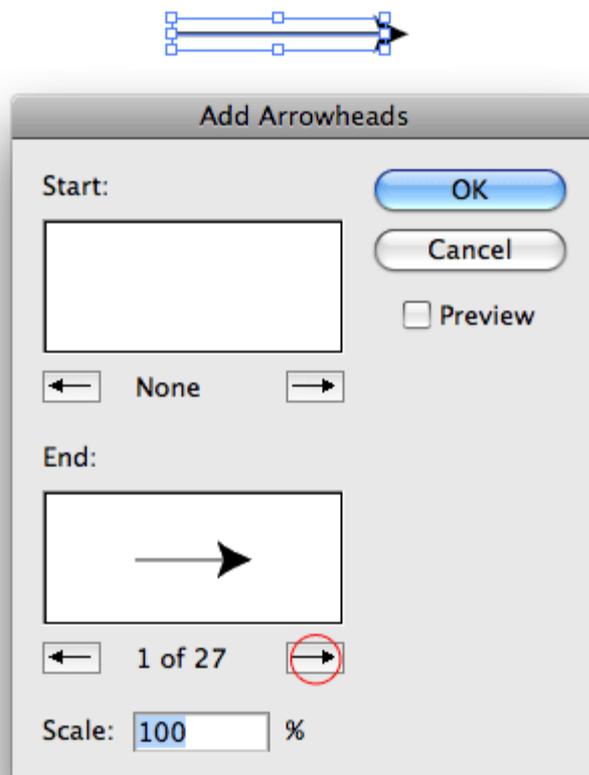
Mastering Illustrator Effects

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Have you been missing out the Illustrator Effects? Did you know it is a powerful tool for creating symmetrical shapes or adding texture to vector paths? For example, with just one simple effect, you can turn a polygon path into a flower shape. You can also make paths look sketchy with the Scribble effect. Read this tutorial to learn how to save time by using Illustrator Effects and work more efficient.

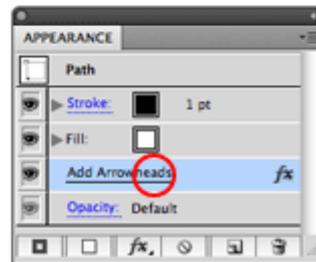
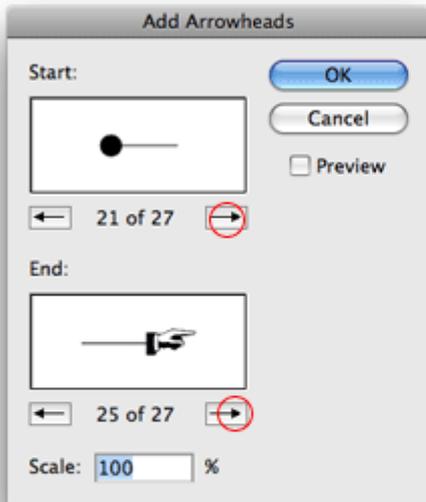
Arrowheads

Let's start with a basic effect, the Add Arrowheads. Use the Pen Tool or Line Segment Tool to draw a straight line. Go to *Effects > Stylize > Add Arrowheads* and choose a style.



Appearance

The great thing about using Illustrator Effect is the ease of changing its appearance. In the Appearance palette, click on the Add Arrowheads layer, now you can easily change the result by selecting different arrow style. This effect is very useful for drawing diagrams.



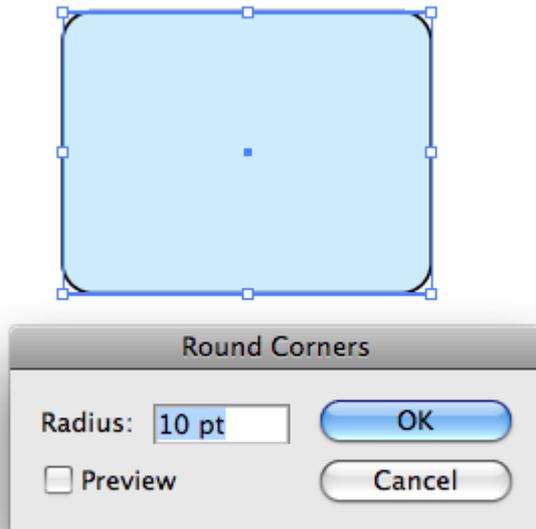
Without The Effect?

Without the effect, the arrow shape will get distorted when the line is stretched. With the effect, I can easily adjust the length of the arrow without distorting it.

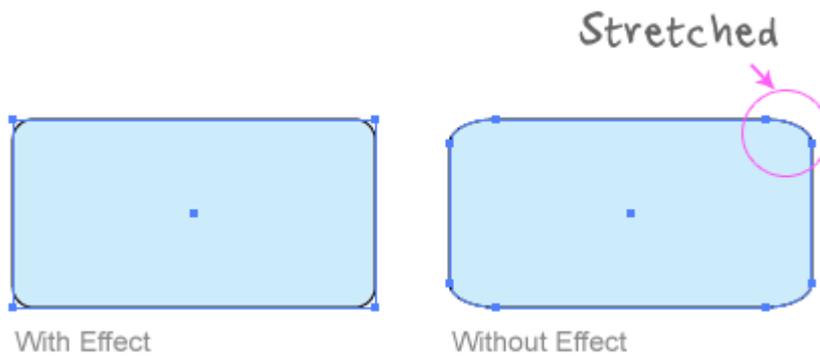


Round Corners

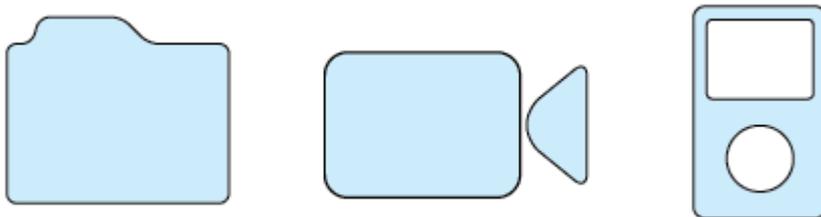
Draw a rectangle shape, go to *Effects > Stylize > Round Corners* and enter a radius value.



Without The Round Corners Effect?

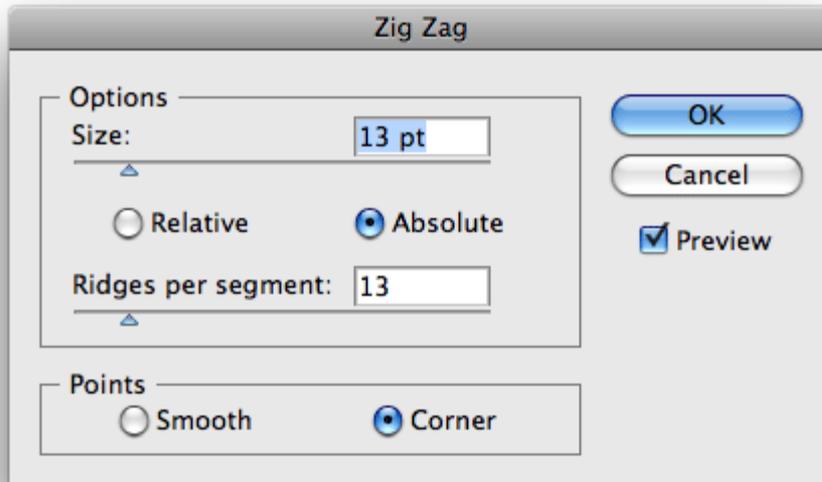
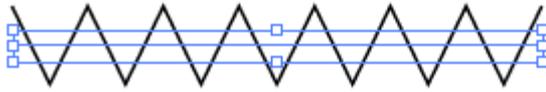


Round Corners is one of my favorite effects. It is my essential tool for designing [icons](#). Not only it can prevent the round corners to be distorted when I stretch the object, it also saves me a lot of time. Could you imagine how long it will take to draw these perfect round corners without the effect?



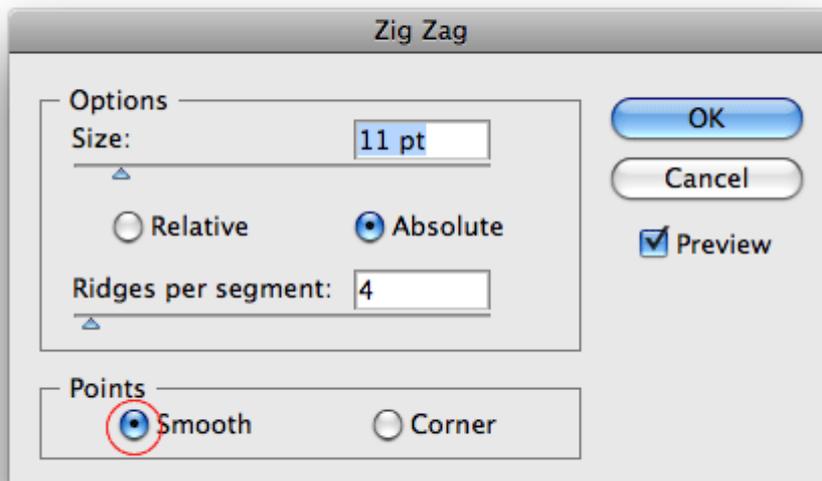
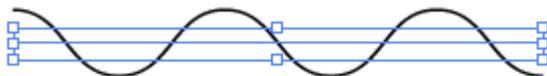
Zig Zag Effect

Draw a straight line, go to *Effects > Distort & Transform > Zig Zag* and enter a value for Size and Ridge Per Segment.



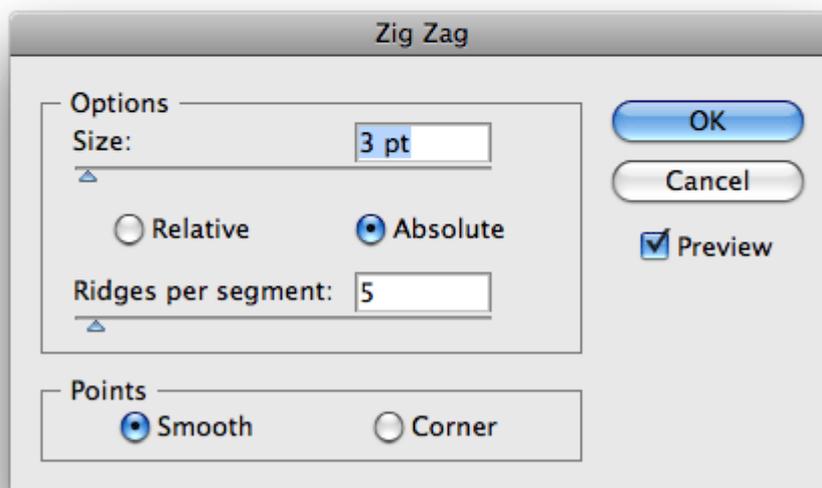
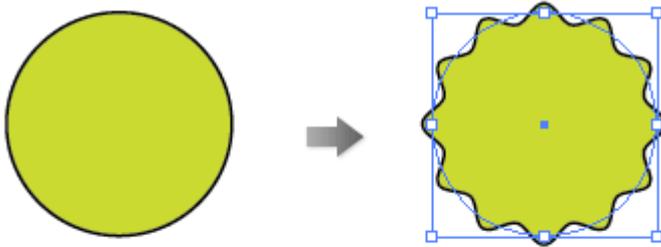
Wavy Line

Draw a straight line, apply the Zig Zag effect, select Smooth Points, and you will get a symmetric wavy line.

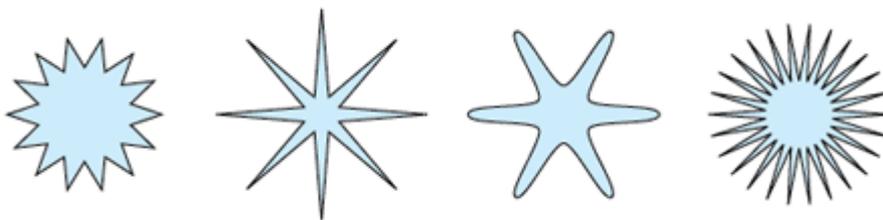


Badges

Draw a circle and apply the Zig Zag effect with the setting as shown and you will get a badge shape.

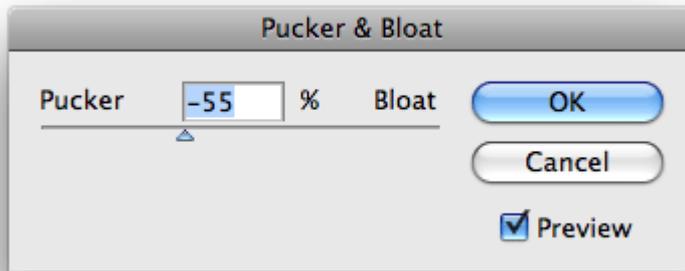
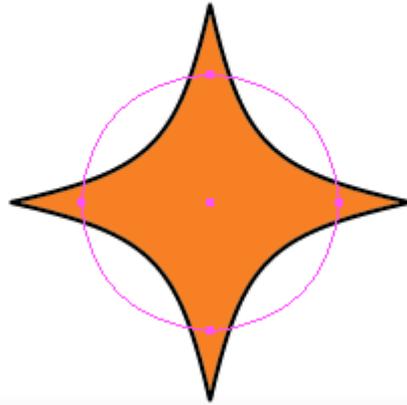


Play around with the Zig Zag options and you may get these shapes:

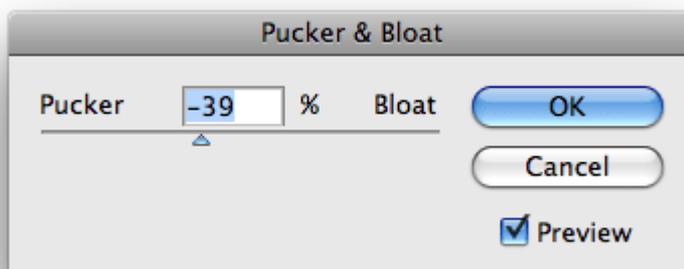
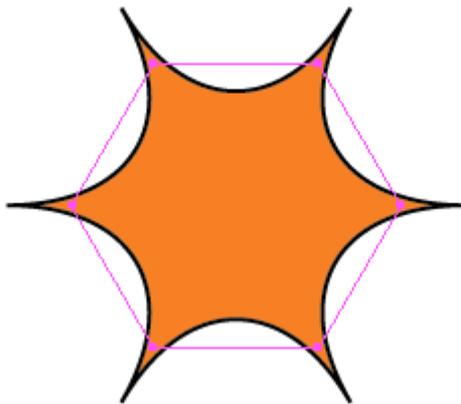


Pucker & Bloat Effect

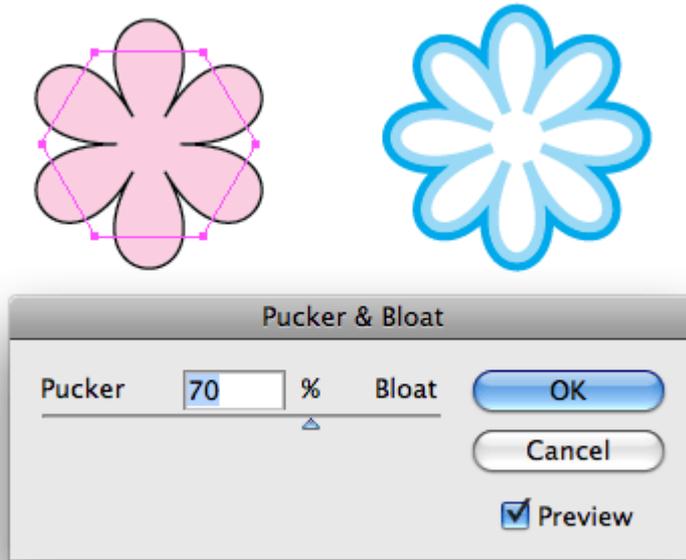
Draw a circle, go to *Effects > Distort & Transform > Pucker & Bloat*, enter -55% (Pucker), and you will get a diamond shape.



Draw a polygon shape, apply the pucker effect, and you will get this shape:

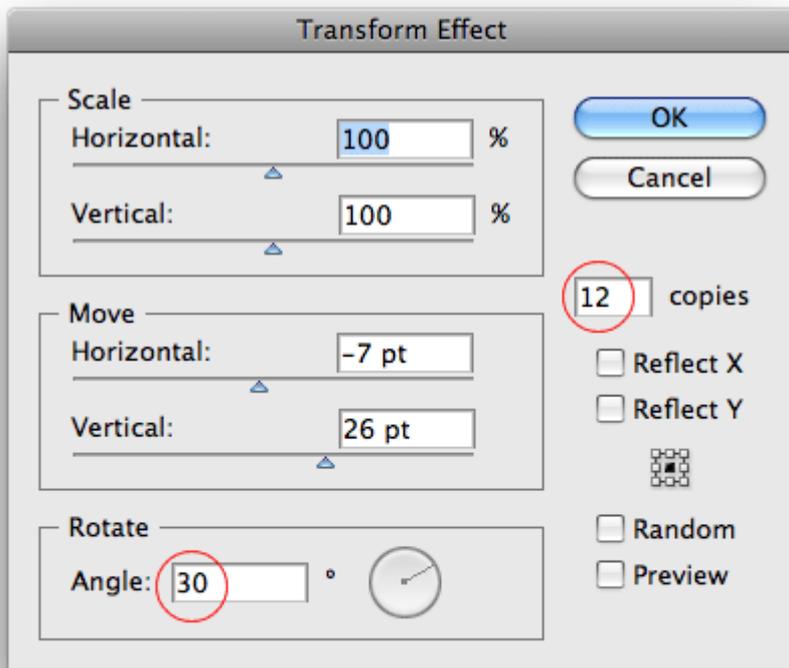
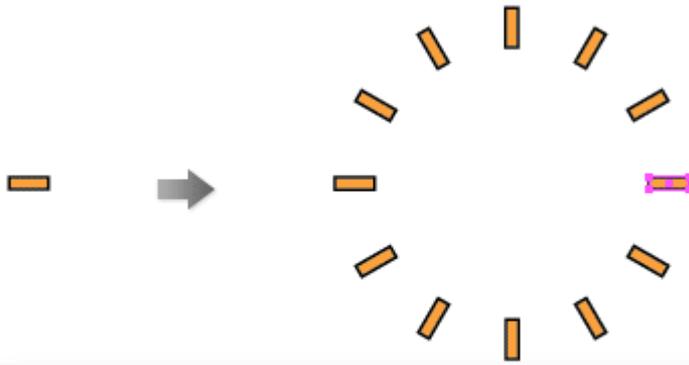


With the same object, change the Pucker & Bloat option to 70%, and you will get a flower shape.



Transform Effect

The example below shows how I can duplicate 12 copies of the object (in increment of 30 degree angle) with the Transform effect.

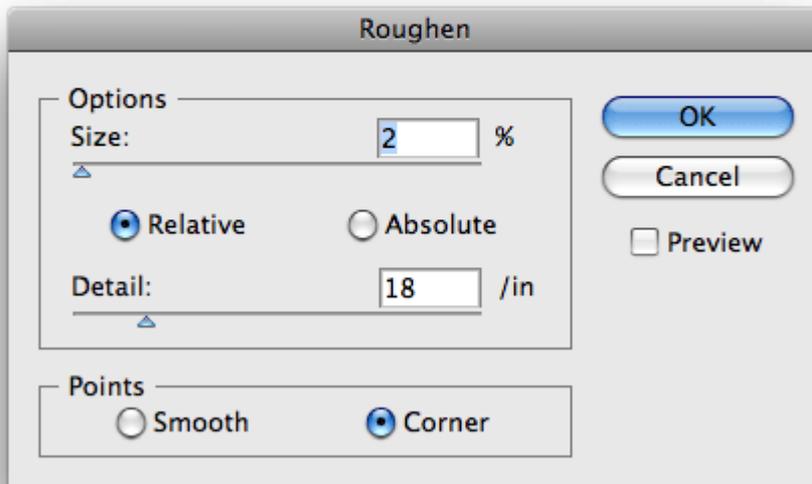
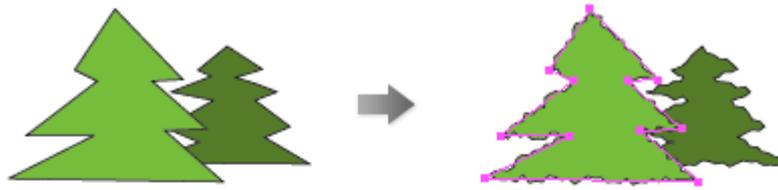


Play around with the shape and Transform setting, you may get the following:



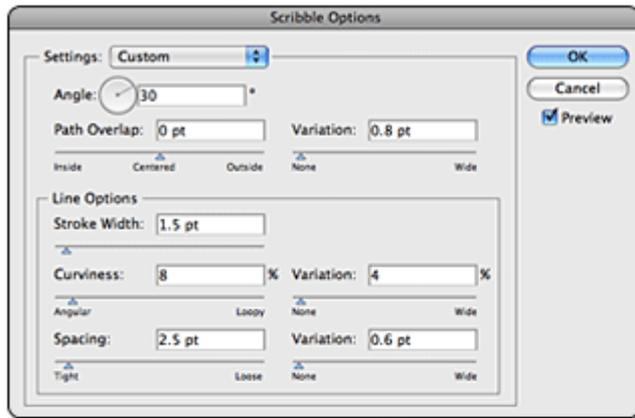
Roughen Effect

With the Roughen Effect, I can make the trees look more realistic.



Scribble Effect

The example below shows how you can create a sketchy effect combining the Scribble and the Roughen effect. First apply the Scribble effect (*Effects > Stylize > Scribble*) and then apply the Roughen effect as shown.



1. Original



2. Scribble



3. Roughen

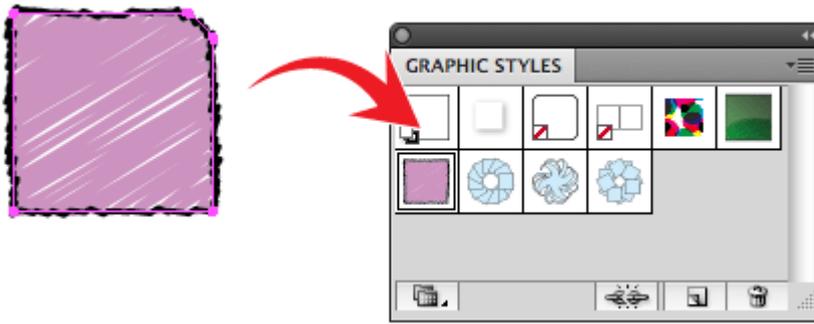


Sketchy Icons

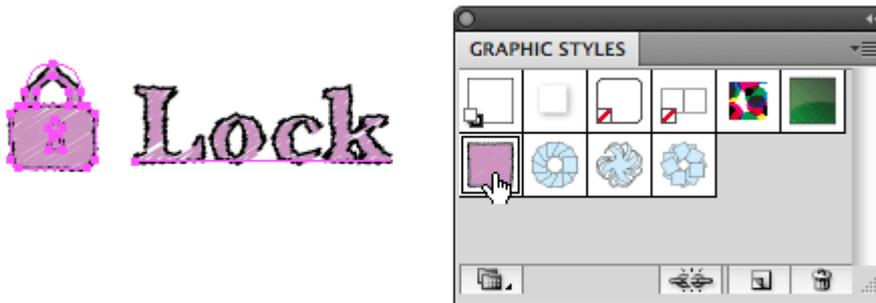
If you are constantly using the same effect, it is wiser to use the Graphic Styles to save time and maintain consistency.



After you've done the initial sketchy style, drag the object to the Graphic Styles palette to create a new Graphic Style.



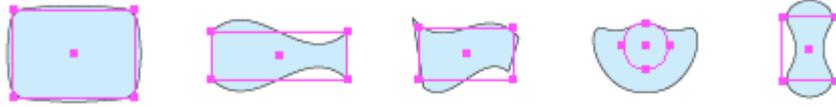
Now, select the object(s) where you want to apply the styles. Then, click on the Graphic Style that you've just created. Change the fill and stroke color if you want. Don't forget you can also apply it to text, which remain editable.



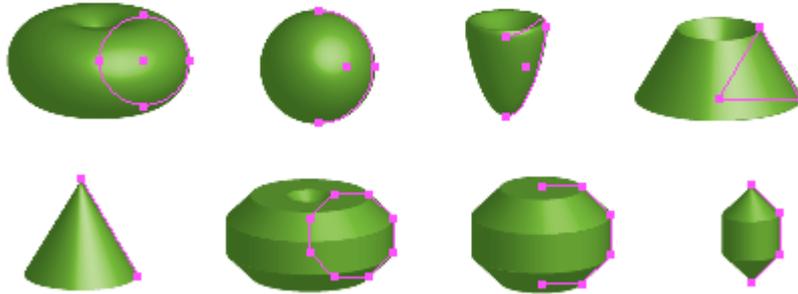
Conclusion (There Are More...)

I've only showed the basic Illustrator effects. There are actually more cool and useful effects. Don't be afraid to explore the effect menu and experiment with the other effects such as the Warp and 3D.

Effect > Warp

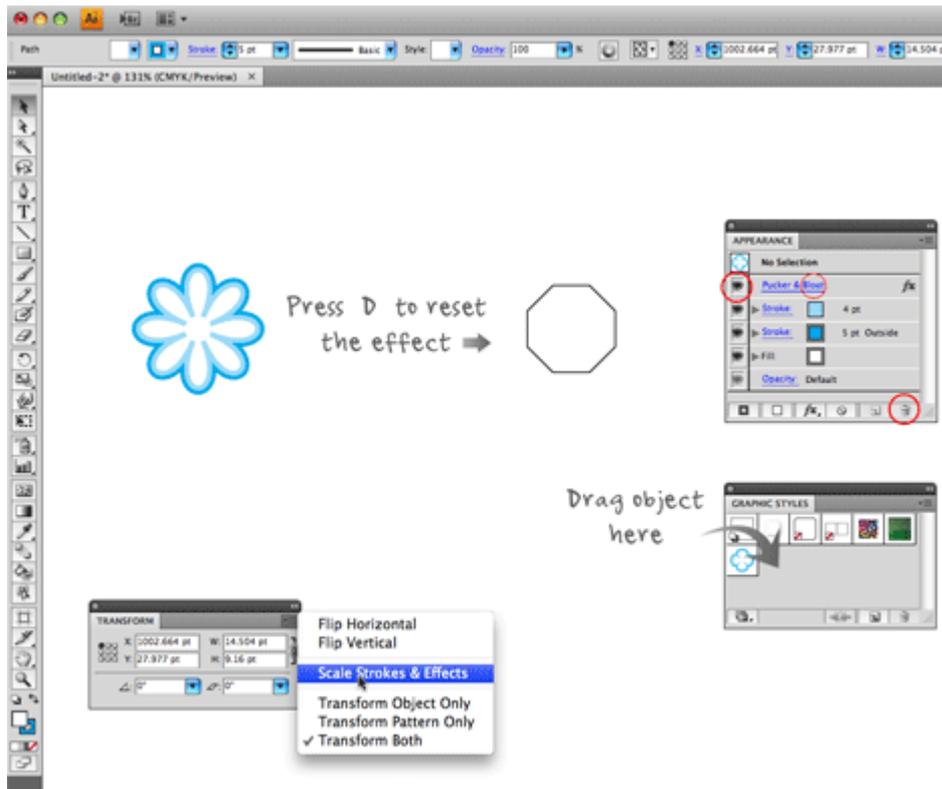


Effect > 3D



Tips For Using Illustrator Effect

- **Graphic Styles** - save time by using Graphic Styles.
- **Scale Strokes and Effects** - you can toggle Scale Strokes and Effects option via the Transform palette.
- **Appearance Palette** - you can turn effect layer on/off or remove it. Double-click on the effect layer to open the option dialog.
- **Press D** to quickly remove all effects.
- **Expand Appearance** - if you want to expand the appearance into paths, go to *Object > Expand Appearance*. Note: once the effect is expanded, it will become ineditable.



[Download The Source File](#)

You may download the [Illustrator file \(CS2\)](#) that is used in this tutorial for your learning purposes.

