

Day Five: Let's Be Friends - Working with Photoshop & Illustrator

Well, we've covered a lot of topics the past few days. By now you're starting to get familiar with Photoshop and hopefully you've started using it to create. Before this course ends, we want to talk about how to move documents between Photoshop and Illustrator. The two programs are different, but they complement each other.

Depending upon the project, you might want to:

- Scan into Photoshop so you can Image Trace in Illustrator.
- Create an image in Photoshop and put it into Illustrator to use as a custom Brush, as a symbol, or just so you can add text or other objects to it.
- Create an image in Illustrator and use it in Photoshop as a Custom Shape or as part of your new image.

Unless you're new to the Pattern Observer community, you've probably realized that even though I understand Illustrator and use it often, my heart really belongs to Photoshop. Given a choice, I will finish every project in Photoshop even if I start it inside Illustrator. I often start design projects by creating shapes in Illustrator. Then I move them to Photoshop where I fill them with texture, more patterns, painting, or photos. Unless I'm tracing an image, I almost never move things the other way. But, many other designers I know do just the opposite.

Let's take a look at some of these situations.

Start with a Photoshop-based Scan

This is the workflow we started in Lesson Three when I talked about scanning.

Step 1: Fix your image in Photoshop and save it as a PSD file. You can also save as TIF. Please don't save as JPG because of the possible loss of image quality.

When you get to Illustrator, you have two choices.

1. You can simply open the file with the File > Open command. This gives you the image—and nothing else. You get no image assets at all; no colors, no brushes, etc.
2. If that matters to you, another option is to create either a new Web document or a new Print document using the File > New dialog box.
3. You'll want to Choose Print or Web and then your document size. The print or web preset determines the advanced settings you see at the bottom.

4. After you create your new Illustrator file, choose File > Place and locate your Photoshop document.

The steps I have shown you get your image ready for Image Trace. You just need to click the image with the Selection tool and click the Image Trace button. After using Image Trace to trace the image, the original raster image disappears from the file completely.

What if you don't want to Image Trace the image?

When you create an image in Photoshop and put it into Illustrator to use as is the procedure to place the image is the same. However, if you're placing artwork that will remain as artwork – and not a brush or symbol – you'll want to link it. That way, you can edit the artwork if necessary without replacing the image.

After bringing up with Links Panel, if you double-click the name of the image, you'll see the details. It's easy to tell by looking if your object is linked or embedded. Linked objects have an X through them when selected.

If I were I to click on the Pencil icon, the image would open in Photoshop.

Just for fun, I clicked the pencil icon as I was writing this and changed the color in Photoshop. I then saved the Photoshop image. When I got back to Illustrator, I got this message:

I clicked YES to update the image in ai

I can re-edit this image as many times as I want even though it is in the Illustrator document. Even if I edit the image when the file in which the image is embedded is not open in Illustrator, I will still see the image update dialog box when I next open the file in Illustrator.

There's only one problem with using linked images. If you need to print or share this file with someone, you'll need to send the linked files along with the Illustrator file. Then they will need to locate these files on their own computers and re-link when they open your document.

Transparency on Image Transfer

We're often asked how to make the background transparent when moving an object into Illustrator from Photoshop. Here is the easiest way:

1. Save your image as PNG with transparency. However, don't use the Save for Web command. Instead, use the File > Save As command. Save for Web automatically changes images to 72 ppi instead of preserving your original ppi.

So, we've discussed ways of using Photoshop files in Illustrator. Now let's talk about how you can move Illustrator images to Photoshop.

You have the same ways to get your Illustrator documents into Photoshop.

You can:

- Export in a raster format (PSD, TIF, PNG, JPG)
- Copy an Illustrator object or area of the image and paste into Photoshop
- Open the Illustrator document directly using the Photoshop File > Open command
- Place the file into an open Photoshop document using the File > Place command
- Drag and object from Illustrator and drop it into an open Photoshop document

Here's the most popular method:

1. In Illustrator, choose File > Open and open YOUR Illustrator file
2. Choose Edit > Copy.
3. In Photoshop, choose File > New and click OK.
4. Choose Edit > Paste. Here's the dialog box that you see:
5. Select the Smart Object button and click OK. This is the option that lets you continue to edit in Illustrator. It's almost the equivalent of a linked file in Illustrator. You need to double-click the placed image or press the Return/Enter key to accept the placement.
6. Notice the funny symbol on the layer after you place the image.
7. Now double-click the Smart Object icon on the Layers panel (or anywhere else on the thumbnail). Illustrator gets control of your computer and opens this object as a new image.
8. Notice that I still have the original open in Illustrator but that the Smart Object file opens as a new file. It isn't linked to its original file. You can also tell because even though it appears in the same place in the file, the single jewel image isn't there and most of the swatches are missing as well. The only swatches are the ones actually used in the Smart Object.

9. You can make any edits you want in Illustrator. I added a blue background behind the pattern swatch. Then save the file and close it. When you go back into Photoshop, you will see the changes.

So, that's what happens when you choose Smart Object—you can keep editing.

Well, are you impressed by all the ways you can use Photoshop? This is just the beginning. Let me encourage you to continue your love affair with Photoshop by registering for our next great workshop – [Photoshop for Designers](#) with Sherry London. Not only will Sherry help you take your Photoshop skills to the next level, she will share tips and tricks she's discovered over years of working with this great program. The workshop starts soon and I hope you'll join us!

Thank you!