STARTING WITH ILLUSTRATOR CC

CHAPTER 1

INFOCUS

Adobe Illustrator CC is an illustration and drawing program designed specifically for the creation and output of vector graphics. Illustrator is used widely in industries such as graphic design, web design, desktop publishing and illustration; in fact, wherever there is a need to create print-based and digital art.

Whether you're a graphic designer, illustrator, artist, desktop publisher, or just have a keen interest to learn, Illustrator CC offers many tools and features to help you to create professional-looking artwork and documents.

In this chapter you will take a tour of Illustrator CC so that you can become familiar with the Illustrator workspace.

In this session you will:

✓ gain an understanding of vector graphics and bitmap images
✓ learn how to start *Illustrator* in *Windows 10*
✓ gain an understanding of the *Start* workspace
✓ learn how to open an *Illustrator* document
✓ gain an understanding of the *Illustrator* workspace
✓ gain an understanding of the status bar
✓ gain an understanding of artboards
✓ learn how to close a document and exit *Illustrator CC*.

UNDERSTANDING VECTOR GRAPHICS

When you create artwork in Illustrator, you are creating vector art or graphics. Vector graphics are essentially geometric shapes based on mathematical equations. Shapes include lines, curves and points. Unlike bitmap graphics, which are made up of pixels (squares of colour), vector graphics can be resized infinitely without loss of image quality.

What Are Vector Graphics?

Vector graphics are shapes made up of *lines*, *curves* and *points* (called *anchor* points) that are combined to create artwork. Vector graphics are based on mathematical computations to determine their shape, dimension and position. For example, your art will be a certain size on the page (measured as *width* and *height*) and will be located at a specific position on a page (the *x* and *y* coordinates).

One distinct characteristic of vector graphics is that they can be scaled (resized) to any size without compromising the quality of the image (see picture below). This makes vector graphics suitable for any artwork that needs to be resized. For example, you could create a company logo that is *3 cm x 3 cm* and scale that same logo for use on a billboard.

Vector Vs. Bitmap Graphics

Bitmap graphics (or *raster* graphics) are images made up of a rectangular grid of *pixels*. A pixel is a tiny square or dot of colour, mapped to a specific location on the image. A photograph is an example of a bitmap image. A single bitmap graphic could be made up of thousands (or millions) of pixels. File extensions for bitmap images include *.bmp*, *.gif*, *.jpeg* and *.png*.

Because bitmap graphics are based on pixels, they lose sharpness when the size of the graphic is increased. You may have heard the term 'pixelated'. This occurs when the image is scaled upwards so that you can actually see the pixels that make up the image. Pixelated images usually look a little blurry and distorted. Image clarity is compromised when increasing the size of bitmap images (see below).

The original image (above) is sharp, while the scaled image (right) is quite pixelated and has lost clarity and detail

STARTING ILLUSTRATOR IN WINDOWS 10

Before you start to work with Illustrator, you will need to know how to open the application. The first time you use Illustrator you will need to open it from the taskbar *Search…* bar or the *Start*

menu. You can then choose to pin Illustrator to the *Start* menu or the taskbar so that you can access it more quickly and easily the next time you use it.

Try This Yourself:

Before you begin, ensure that your computer is switched on and the desktop is displayed...

1 Click on the *Windows* icon in the taskbar at the bottom of the screen to display the *Start* menu

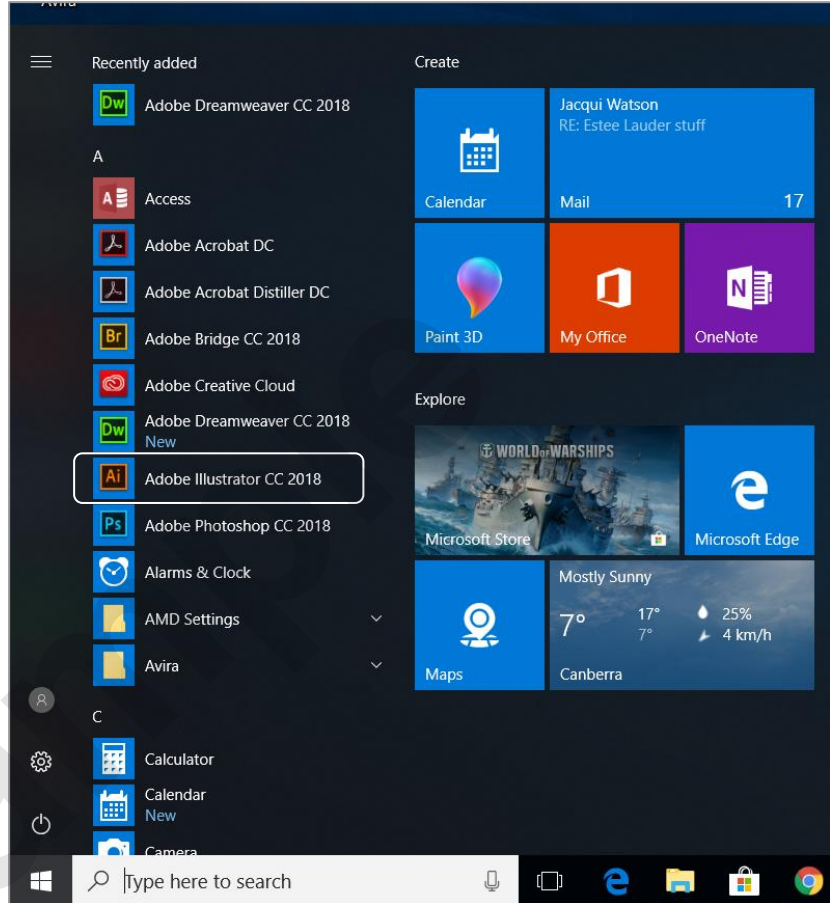**2** If necessary, scroll down the apps list to display the *A* section

Any Adobe apps you have installed will be listed here...

3 Click on *Adobe Illustrator CC 2018* to start Illustrator

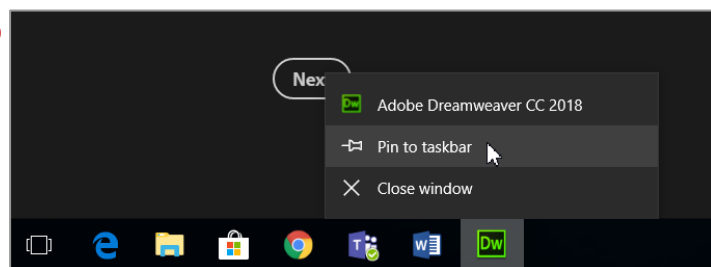*A loading screen will briefly display, and then Illustrator will open with the Welcome screen displayed…*

4 Right-click on the Illustrator icon in the taskbar to display a menu and select **Pin to taskbar**

You can now click on in this icon to open Illustrator from the desktop. This icon will remain in the taskbar unless you remove it

For Your Reference…

To *start Illustrator*:

1. Click on the *Windows* icon in the taskbar to display the *Start* menu
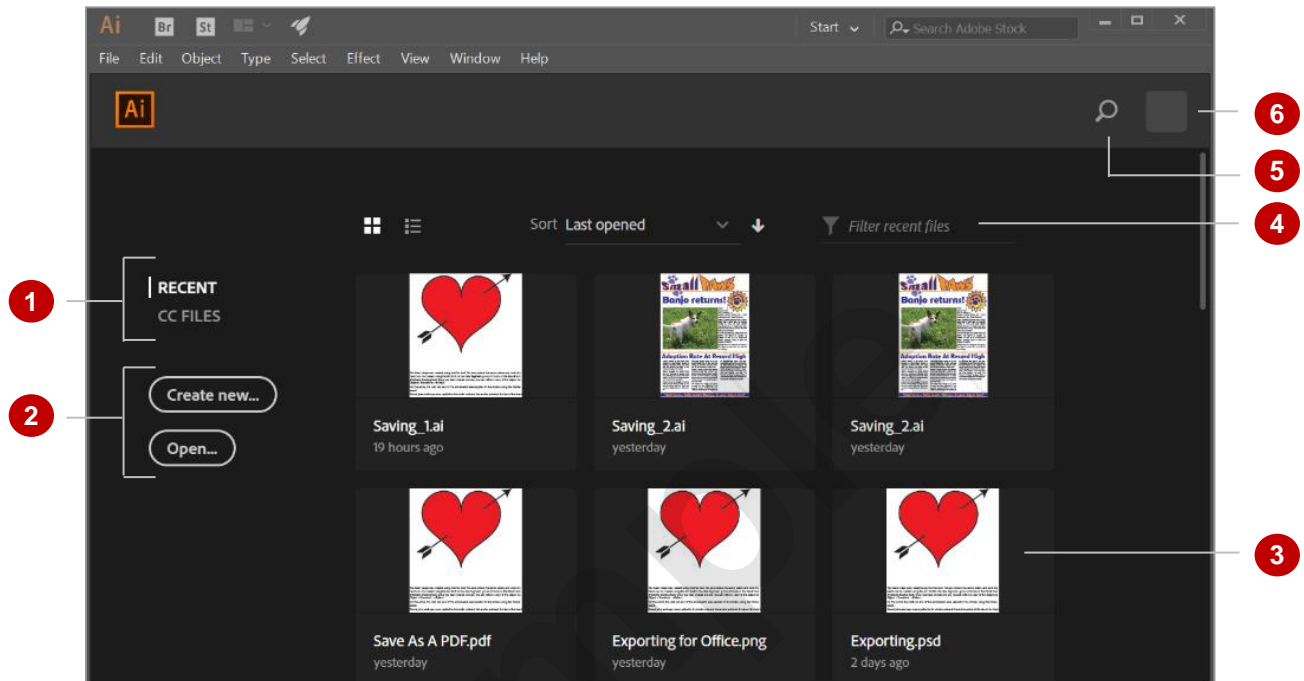2. Click on *Adobe Illustrator CC 2018* in the apps list to start the application

Handy to Know…

- Instead of locating Illustrator in the apps list, you can click in the taskbar *Search* bar and begin typing **Illustrator**, then click on the application name when it appears in the list of search results.

THE START WORKSPACE

When you launch Illustrator, the **Start** workspace is displayed by default. From this workspace you can choose to create something new or open an existing file you have already been working on.

The **Start** workspace will appear differently depending on whether or not you have used Illustrator before.

1 Click on **RECENT** to display files you have recently worked on, or click on **CC FILES** to display files you have saved to your Creative Cloud.

2 Click on **[Create new…]** to create a new Illustrator file, or click on **[Open…]** to open an existing file.

3 The main part of the workspace displays a gallery (or list) of the files you have recently opened, with the most recent at the top left by default. Click on a thumbnail to open that file. If you have not opened any files in Illustrator, this area will prompt you to create a new file.

4 Click on **Thumbnail view** to display your recent files as thumbnails (as shown) or click on **List view** to display them in a list. Click on the drop arrow for **Sort** and select an option to specify the order in which your recent files are displayed. Click in **Filter** and type a keyword (such as the title of a file) to specify which files are displayed.

5 Click on **Search** to display the **Search** screen, where you can search for Illustrator tools and features or help on how to use a specific aspect of Illustrator.

6 Click on the account icon to open a browser window with the **Adobe ID** page displayed. You can sign in using your Adobe account details and view information about your account and the applications that you use.

OPENING AN EXISTING DOCUMENT

One of the first tasks you may complete in Illustrator is to open an existing document in order to review or modify it. There are several methods you can use to do this. Although you will typically open most documents from within Illustrator, you can also open them from File Explorer or by double-clicking on a document icon on the desktop.
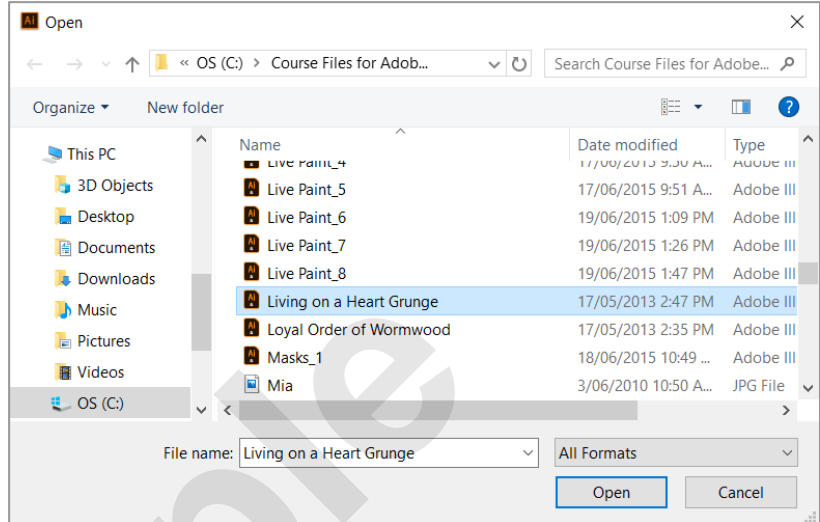
Try This Yourself:

Before starting this exercise ensure that Illustrator has started…

1 Select **File** > **Open** to display the **Open** dialog box

2 Navigate to the **Course Files for Adobe Illustrator CC (2018)** folder, then click on **Living on a Heart Grunge.ai** to select it

3 Click on **[Open]** to open the file

A message may display notifying you that the file contains fonts that are missing. This means that the file was created using fonts that are not included in the current version of Illustrator. We could choose to search for and download these fonts using Typekit but for the purpose of this exercise we will dismiss the message and allow Illustrator to automatically substitute the missing fonts with default fonts…

4 If the **Missing Fonts** message box displays, click on **[Close]**

The artwork is displayed in the Illustrator window with the file name displayed in a tab near the top

1

Note: If this is the first time you have opened a file in Illustrator, a brief tutorial may display when the file opens. You can dismiss this by clicking on [Okay].

Your screen may look a little different to the one shown. For example, the Tools pane on the left side of the screen may appear as one column or two, depending on the size of your computer screen.

4

For Your Reference…

To *open* an *Illustrator document*:

1. Select **File** > **Open**
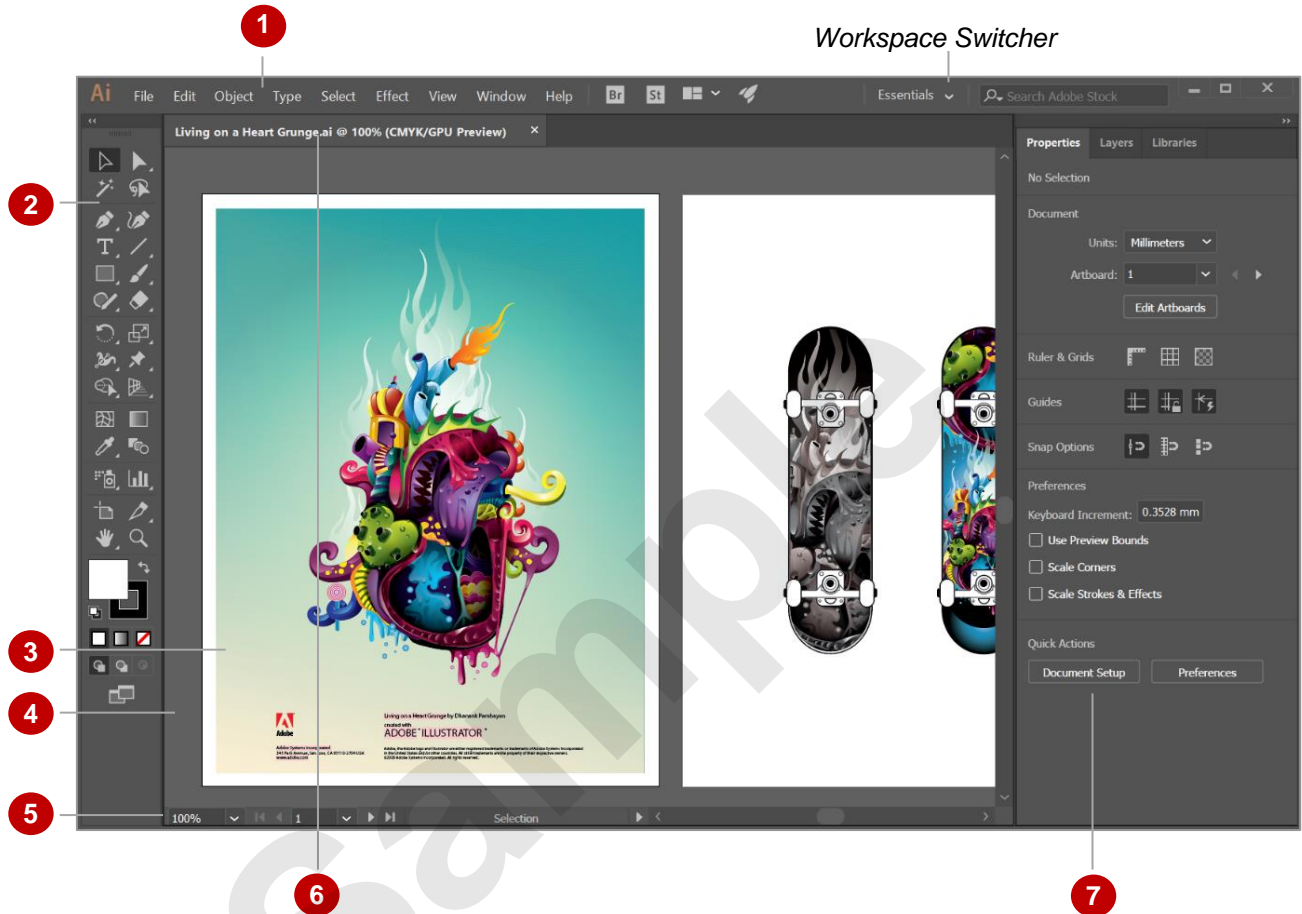2. Navigate to and click on the required document to select it
3. Click on **[Open]**

Handy to Know…

- By default, each document is opened as a tab and you can switch between documents by clicking on each tab. To turn off the tabs and display each document individually, select **Edit** > **Preferences** > **User Interface**, then click on *Open Documents As Tabs* so it appears unticked.

THE ILLUSTRATOR WORKSPACE

If you're familiar with using Adobe products, you will notice that the layout of the Illustrator window is similar to other Adobe programs. However, there are several elements in the Illustrator workspace that you need to become familiar with so that you can use the program effectively. Below is a description of the Illustrator workspace and its various elements.
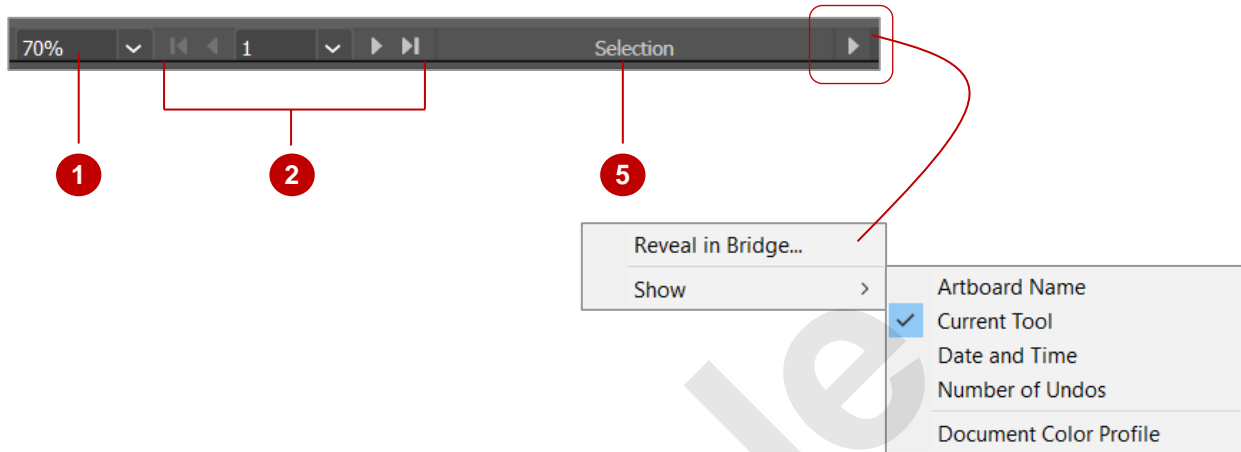
Workspace Switcher

1	**Application bar**	Contains menus and options for arranging documents and accessing **Adobe Bridge** (Adobe image file management). Also contains the **Workspace Switcher**, a tool for selecting and customising a workspace to suit your design needs.
2	**Tools panel**	Contains many of the tools you will need to create artwork and apply effects, such as drawing shapes or freehand drawing. You will learn more about these as you complete this course.
3	**Artboards**	Represent the areas of the canvas that contain printable regions, that is, your finished art. You can set up as many artboards in a document as you need.
4	**Canvas**	This is the area of the document surrounding the artboard(s). Artwork can be created on the canvas until you're ready to place it on your artboard. The canvas that you see is part of the **document window**.
5	**Status bar**	Displays information about the status of the current document, such as the current magnification (zoom) and which page (artboard) you are currently viewing (is active).
6	**Document tabs**	Each tab represents an open document and displays the name of the document (there is only one document open in the picture above). Click on a tab to display that document.
7	**Panel dock**	Panels contain tools for editing objects and object **attributes**. For example, the **Gradient** panel contains options for applying and editing gradients. The panel dock contains a number of default panels and panel groups (defined by the *Workspace Switcher*) but you can add or remove panels via the **Window** menu.

THE STATUS BAR

The ***status bar*** is displayed in the bottom left of the Illustrator window and provides you with a number of useful tools and settings to help you work with various aspects of your Illustrator projects. It also contains useful information about your document, such as its colour profile and the number of undos that are available.

1	***Zoom***	Displays the current level of magnification at which your work is being displayed. You can change the zoom level by clicking on the drop arrow and selecting an option, or by clicking in the box and typing the desired percentage.
2	***Artboard Navigation***	Allows you to navigate between the artboards in a document. The box in the middle tells you which artboard is currently displayed. You can navigate to other artboards by clicking on the drop arrow and selecting which artboard you want to display, or by clicking on the ***First***, ***Previous***, ***Next*** and ***Last*** icons.
3	***Information Bar***	This section of the status bar displays different information depending on which option you choose – the name of the active artboard or tool, the date and time, the number of available undos and redos, or the colour profile of the document. To choose what to display, click on the arrow to the right of the bar, point to **Show**, then select an option. In the above example, the information bar shows that the ***Selection*** tool is currently active.
		If you have Adobe Bridge CC installed, you can click on the arrow and select **Reveal in Bridge** to see the active document in Bridge.

UNDERSTANDING ARTBOARDS

In Illustrator, **Artboards** represent the areas of the document that contain your artwork and what will be printed. You can create as many artboards as you need in a document (up to 1000) for whatever you are working on. For example, if you are designing a letterhead and business card for a client, you might create two artboards – one for the letterhead and one for the business card.

1	*Canvas*	This area is not printed. You can use the canvas to place and edit objects until you are ready to include them in your artwork.
2	*Bleed edge (red)*	**Bleed** is the artwork that extends outside the printable area or document/artboard edge. Bleed is often included as a margin of error: to ensure that the ink will still print to the edge of the page even after trimming.
3	*Artboard border (black/grey)*	Represents the entire area that contains printable artwork and defines the trim size (the non-printable area is only defined by your printer; professional printers can print to the edge of the page). You define the size of the artboard(s) during document setup.
4	*Printable area*	Contains the printable area of your artwork (this takes into account that most printers cannot print to the edge of the page). Any artwork that falls within this area will be printed on your printer.

CLOSING A DOCUMENT AND EXITING ILLUSTRATOR

If you are not working on a document, it is usually best if that document is not open so that you don't inadvertently make changes to it. It is also good practice to close Illustrator when you are

not using it, as it tends to use much of your computer's resources and may slow it down while you are working on other tasks. There are a couple of methods you can use to close a document.

Try This Yourself:

Continue using the previous file with this exercise...

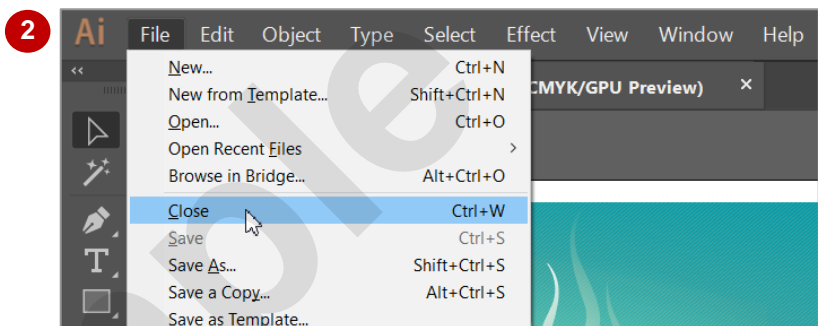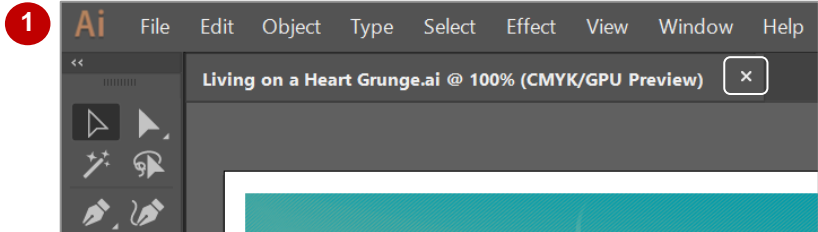**1** Point to the cross in the document tab at the top of the workspace

We could click on this cross to close the document. Let's try a different method…

2 Select **File** > **Close**

If there were unsaved changes in the document we would have been prompted to save. Now let's exit the application…

3 Select **File** > **Exit** to exit Illustrator

You could also click on Close at the top right corner of the Illustrator window

For Your Reference…

To *close* a *document*:
- Click on the cross in the document tab, or Select **File** > **Close**

To *exit Illustrator*:
- Click on *Close* in the top right corner of the Illustrator window, or Select **File** > **Exit**

Handy to Know…

- You can exit Illustrator without closing your documents. If you attempt to exit Illustrator and you have unsaved changes in open documents, Illustrator will ask you whether you want to save those changes.

NOTES:

NAVIGATING ILLUSTRATOR

INFOCUS

The wide range of tools and settings available in Illustrator have been sorted into categories, with each category displayed in its own *panel*. Panels can be displayed or hidden, docked, floated, or moved around the screen, allowing you to always have the required tools in the most convenient location in your workspace.

When working on a project you will need to know how to not only navigate between tools and panels but also different parts of your document. There are several ways to do this, including zooming and using tools and panels. You can also create your own custom views. In this chapter you will learn how to set up your workspace and use the navigation tools and methods.

In this session you will:

✓ gain an understanding of the panel dock, panels and panel groups

✓ learn how to display and hide panels and panel groups

✓ learn how to float and dock panels

✓ gain an overview of the tools on the *Tools* panel

✓ learn how to work with the *Tools* panel

✓ gain an understanding of workspaces

✓ learn how to select and save a workspace

✓ learn how to work with the tools and options on the *Properties* panel

✓ learn how to work with the tools and options on the *Control* panel

✓ learn how to navigate the canvas using the *Hand* tool

✓ learn how to use the *Navigator* panel

✓ learn how to change document views

✓ learn how to use the *Zoom* tool

✓ learn how to create and use custom views.

UNDERSTANDING PANELS

Much of the work you do in Illustrator will involve accessing panels and using panel options to edit your art and to work with objects. The most c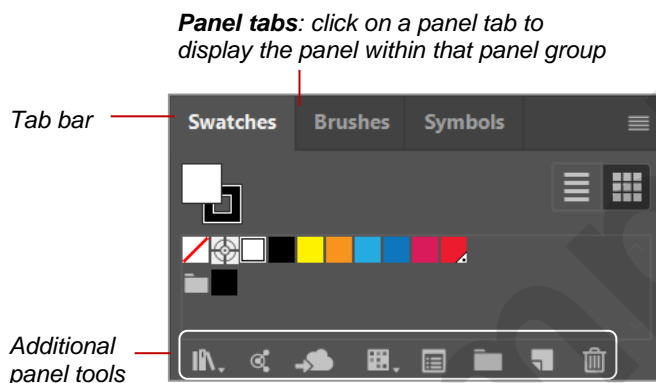ommonly-used panels are accessed via the *panel dock* on the right side of the Illustrator window. However, you can also add and remove panels as required. All panels can be displayed by selecting the panel from the **Window** menu.

The Panel Dock

The *panel dock*, located by default along the right edge of the window, contains some of the most commonly used *panels* and *panel groups*. The panels and panel groups displayed depend on which workspace is currently selected. A panel group is a group of related panels that appear together. For example, if you open the *Swatches* panel (shown below) you will see three *panel tabs* on the *tab bar*: *Swatches*, *Brushes* and *Symbols*. These panels are in the same group on the panel dock.

The panel dock contains the more commonly-used panels and panel groups

Panel group

Panel tabs: click on a panel tab to display the panel within that panel group

Tab bar

Additional panel tools

The Window Menu

If you need to use a panel that is not located in the *panel dock*, you can access it from the **Window** menu. When you select a panel from the **Window** menu, the panel will appear undocked (or 'floating') in your document window.

The Anatomy Of A Panel

Each panel contains a range of options for editing a specific element of your artwork. For example, the *Stroke* panel contains options for modifying and working with *strokes* (outlines).

While the appearance of each panel differs, there are some elements that are common to almost all panels (shown below). You need to be aware of these common elements so that you can work with panels and panel options effectively.

Show/Hide panel

Panel options menu

Resize panel