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21 Illustrator shortcuts to speed up your workflow

By [Aaron Kitney](#) June 20, 2017 [Illustration](#)

These shortcuts for handling layers, selections, text and more are guaranteed to boost your productivity!



Whenever you create [vector art](#) in [Illustrator](#), simple tasks can become a hindrance to your workflow. So instead of becoming frustrated, take a look at our list of Illustrator shortcuts right here. They're guaranteed to speed up your workflow once you get the hang of them.

Whether you want to change the size of your text, deselect a layer or merge a series of layers, we've got it covered! There are also some handy hints for brushes, saving and closing, and viewing options. Introduce the shortcuts slowly into your practice so you're not overwhelmed by the sheer amount to remember.

- [Handy Photoshop shortcuts to speed up your workflow](#)



01. Select all items on layer

Mac: **Option+Click** layer
 Windows: **Alt+Click** layer

Quickly select all the items on one particular layer – including those that are locked and not visible (to select only the visible, unlocked objects, click the select circle in the layers palette).

02. Hand Tool

Mac: **Spacebar**
 Windows: **Spacebar**

Move around your artboard without disturbing the content. This shortcut can't be used while editing typography.

03. Hand Tool (Editing type)

Mac: **Cmd+Spacebar**
 Windows: **Ctrl+Spacebar**

Move around your artboard without disturbing the content. This can be used while editing type, but you have to start moving the cursor around very quickly after releasing the **Cmd/Ctrl** key, otherwise Illustrator will start adding spaces to your text.

04. Activate Zoom In tool

Mac: **Cmd+Spacebar**
 Windows: **Ctrl+Spacebar**

Zoom closer into the artboard.

05. Activate Zoom Out tool

Mac: **Cmd+Option+Spacebar**
 Windows: **Ctrl+Alt+Spacebar**

Zoom out of the artboard.



06. Access Selection or Direction Selection tool

Mac: **Cmd**
 Windows: **Ctrl**

Switch between the Selection or Direction Selection tool – a big time saver.

07. Move Selection 10 pts

Mac: Shift+arrow direction

Windows: Shift+arrow direction

Shift your imagery and/or typography accurately and quickly.

08. Add to a selection

Mac: Shift-click

Windows: Shift-click

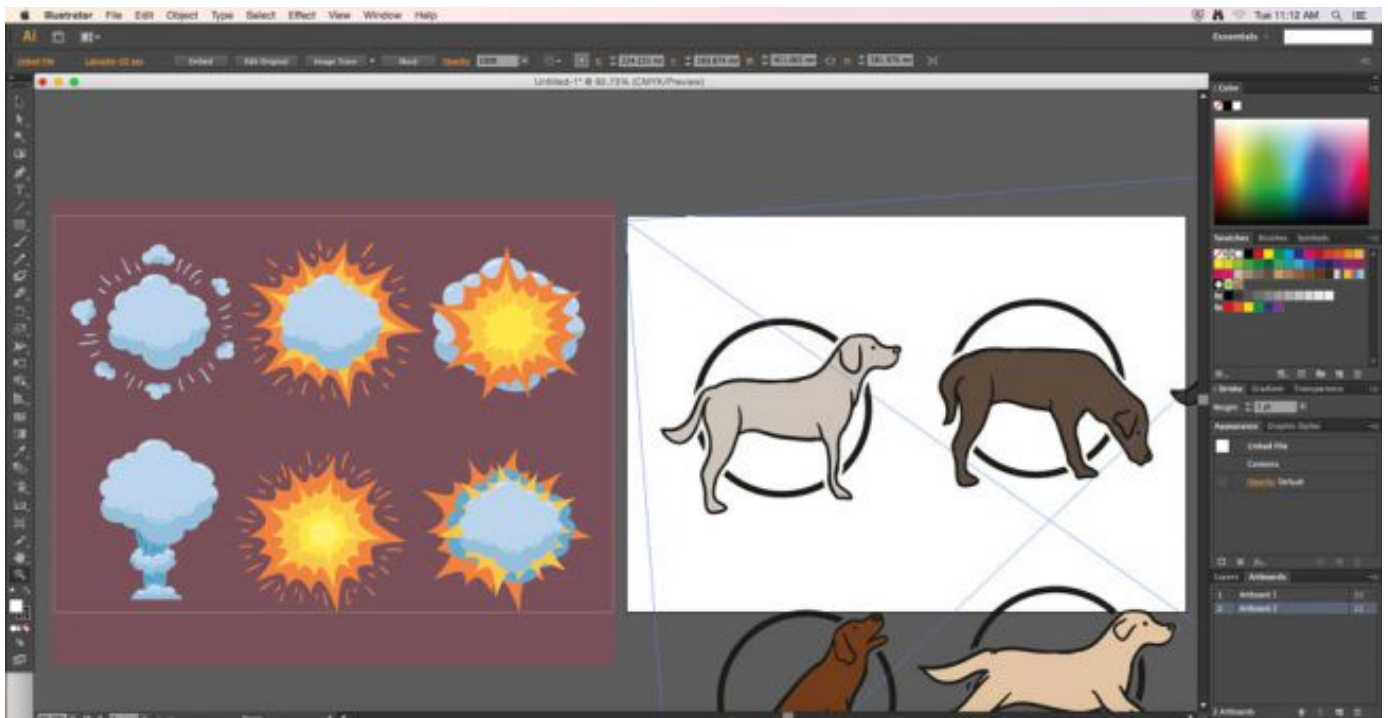
Create multiple selections, with the ability to add more if needed.

09. Lock selected artwork

Mac: Cmd+2

Windows: Ctrl+2

This is a handy way to lock down those layers that keep getting in the way.



10. Unlock all artwork

Mac: Cmd+Option+2

Windows: Ctrl+Alt+2

Unlock previously locked layers all at once.

11. Duplicate

Mac: Option+drag

Windows: Alt+drag

Just drag your selection while holding Option to duplicate the file.

12. Scale proportionally with Selection tool

Mac: **Shift+drag bounding box**

Windows: **Shift+drag bounding box**

Never distort your images again: scale them proportionally with this method.

13. Sample colour

Mac: **I**

Windows: **I**

Sample colour from a vector, gradient or image with the eyedropper tool.

14. Show/hide artboards

Mac: **Cmd+Shift+H**

Windows: **Ctrl+Shift+H**

Each artboard is bound by solid lines that represent the maximum printable area, with a canvas area beyond these boundaries. This shortcut shows/hides the artboard boundaries.

15. Show/hide artboard rulers

Mac: **Cmd+R**

Windows: **Ctrl+R**

Make sure everything lines up by toggling rulers on.

16. View all artboards in window

Mac: **Cmd+Option+O**

Windows: **Ctrl+Alt+O**

Shows you multiple artboards at once.



17. Decrease/increase type size

Mac: **Cmd+Shift+<** or **>**

Windows: **Ctrl+Shift+<** or **>**

An effective way of changing your font size directly in front of your eyes.

18. Decrease/Increase leading

Mac: Option+up/down

Windows: Alt+up/down

Quickly adjust the kerning without having to keep clicking in the character tab.

19. Decrease/Increase kerning or tracking

Mac: Option+arrow L/R

Windows: Alt+arrow L/R

Adjust the space between your text in Illustrator with this handy command.

20. Align text left/centre/right

Mac: Cmd-Shift-L/C/R

Windows: Ctrl+Shift+L/C/R

A great way to experiment with the alignment of your text, this shortcut will enable you to do it quickly.

21. Save for Web and Devices

Mac: Cmd+Shift+Opt+S

Windows: Ctrl+Shift+Alt+S

If you prefer not to drag your mouse around a number of options, use this shortcut.

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- [Review: Adobe Illustrator CC 2017](#)
- [Make a logo in Illustrator](#)
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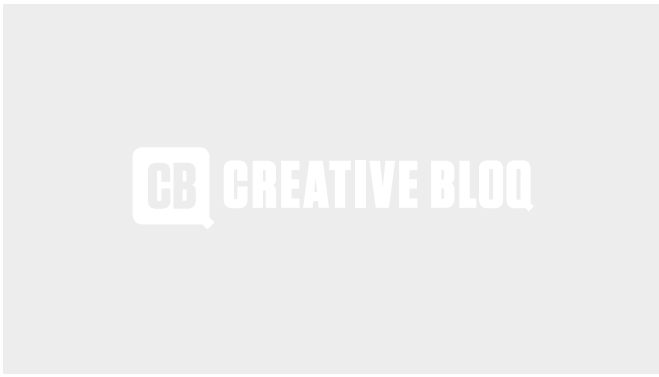
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