



Adobe Certified Professional in Graphic Design & Illustration Using Adobe Illustrator

Exam version: 2025 (v 29.x)

Adobe Certified Professional certifications— delivered by [Certiport](#)—are the official, industry-recognized credentials that validate proficiency in Adobe Creative Cloud applications and foundational knowledge for digital media careers.

The 50-minute *Graphic Design & Illustration Using Adobe Illustrator* exam is comprised of two sections—selected-response items followed by Live-in-the-App tasks in Illustrator—and designed at the level appropriate for the following Target Candidate:

The Target Candidate has approximately 150 hours of instruction and hands-on experience with Illustrator. They are familiar with product features and capabilities as well as relevant career concepts. They are generally self-sufficient and able to apply knowledge of document design and production principles to perform basic or routine tasks involved in their job role with limited assistance from peers, product documentation, or support services. They generally work independently or in collaboration with colleagues, with minimal supervision. Furthermore, they are able to answer most routine conceptual and applied questions about how to use Illustrator and usually do not have to refer basic questions to others. They can speak credibly to other users or clients about what can be done with Illustrator and how to use it effectively.

1. Working in the Design Industry

This objective covers critical concepts related to working with colleagues and clients as well as crucial legal, technical, and design-related terminology and principles.

1.1 Identify terminology and interpret communication relating to the purpose, audience, and audience needs for developing designs.

1.1.a Determine whether content is relevant and has an appropriate design for the purpose, audience, audience needs, and user experience.

i. Key Terms: client goals, target audience, demographics, accessibility

1.1.b Identify requirements based on the intended output and usage of the design.

1.1.c Identify techniques for communicating about design plans with peers and clients.

i. Key Terms: sketches, specifications, design process, wireframes, prototypes, iterations, change orders, drafts, feedback loop, style guide, project brief

1.1.d Define basic project management concepts.

i. Key Terms: project scope, scope creep, online and cloud collaboration, file management, project timeline

1.2 Determine the type of copyright, permissions, and licensing required to use specific content and fonts.

1.2.a Identify legal and ethical considerations for using third-party content.

i. Key Concepts: Usage rights, public domain, copyright, intellectual property, derivative work, commercial use, attribution, work for hire, fair use, fair dealing, stock images and vector graphics, AI-generated content, restricted fonts, model and location releases

1.2.b Check and change copyright information for an Illustrator file.

1.3 Define key terminology related to digital graphics.

1.3.a Define digital graphics terminology.

i. Key Terms: image resolution, image size, file types, pixel, raster, bitmap, vector, path, object, type, rasterizing, rendering, resizing, identifying the difference between raster and vector effects, bleed, trim, live area, units of measurement for print or digital output

1.3.b Explain how color is represented in digital graphics and print.

i. Key Terms: color mode, gamut, CMYK, RGB, HSB, grayscale, hex values, spot, rich black

1.4 Evaluate the application of design principles.

1.4.a Integrate the elements and principles of design to create effective communication.

i. Key Elements: space, line, shape, form, color and color value, texture

ii. Key Principles: emphasis/focal point, unity/harmony, variety, balance, alignment, proximity, repetition, rhythm, scale, movement, negative space, contrast, rule of thirds, foreground, background, framing, aspect ratio

1.4.b Identify how typographic adjustments create hierarchy and enhanced readability.

i. Key Terms: font, size, font style, color, alignment, kerning, tracking, leading, horizontal and vertical scale, line length, baseline shift

2. Document Management

This objective covers managing documents, including creating, saving, and exporting.

2.1 Create documents and modify their settings for the intended output.

2.1.a Set appropriate document settings.

i. Key Concepts: width/height, orientation, artboards and spacing, bleed, raster effects, color mode, units of measurement

2.1.b Create and use document presets for specific project needs.

2.2 Use artboards.

2.2.a Manage and work with artboards.

i. Key Concepts: scaling and moving artwork with artboards; duplicating, resizing, cropping, and arranging artboards; copy/paste art and artboards within and between documents

ii. Key Tool: Artboard

2.3 Manage assets in a project.

2.3.a Place assets in a document.

- i. Key Concepts: embedding, copying and pasting, import options, the difference between opening a file and placing assets in a document*

2.3.b Use the Links panel.

- i. Key Concepts: linking, replacing, Edit Original*

2.4 Save and export documents and assets.

2.4.a Save documents.

- i. Key Concepts: compatibility; save options including Creative Cloud documents; .pdf, .ai, .eps, and .svg; Save as a Template*

2.4.b Export graphics.

- i. Key Concepts: file formats (including vector vs. raster), choosing the color mode, resolution, pixel dimensions, Use Artboards, Asset Export panel*

2.4.c Package a project.

- i. Key Concepts: font and image management and troubleshooting, file packages*

3. Workflow and Interface Customization

This objective covers the interface setup, program settings, layers, and reusable assets that assist in an efficient and effective workflow.

3.1 Navigate and customize the workspace.

3.1.a Identify and manipulate elements of the interface.

- i. Key Concepts: application bar, control panel, menus, panels, toolbars, artboards, contextual taskbar*

3.1.b Organize and customize the workspace.

- i. Key Concepts: using and switching between default workspaces; document tabs; showing, hiding, grouping, and docking panels; customizing, saving, and resetting workspaces*

3.1.c Configure application preferences.

- i. Key Concepts: General, Type, Units, Guides & Grid, User Interface, File Handling, Appearance of Black, Smart Guides*

3.2 Use design aids.

3.2.a Navigate documents.

- i. Key Concepts: pan, zoom, and rotate the artboard; pasteboard*
- ii. Key Tools: Hand, Rotate View, Zoom*

3.2.b Use rulers.

- i. Key Concepts: showing and hiding rulers, adjusting and resetting ruler origin*

3.2.c Use guides and grids.

- i. Key Concepts: adding, removing, and locking/unlocking guides; hiding guides and grids; showing grids; using snap or align options; making guides from objects*

3.2.d Use views and modes to work efficiently with vector graphics.

- i. Key Concepts: Outline, Overprint Preview, Pixel Preview, Trim View, Screen Mode, Presentation Mode*

- 3.2.e Use Drawing modes.
- 3.2.f Use the Dimension Tool.
- 3.2.g Use the Mock Up Tool.

3.3 Manage colors, swatches, and gradients.

- 3.3.a Create, manage, and edit swatches and swatch libraries.
 - i. Key Concepts: color, global color, pattern, and gradient swatches; identifying color swatch type, including Process, Spot, and Global; creating, managing, and loading swatch libraries; Color Guide panel, Swatch Options menu
- 3.3.b Create and modify gradients.
 - i. Key Concepts: Gradient panel, editing color stops and opacity, gradient types, Gradient Mesh

3.4 Manage brushes, symbols, styles, and patterns.

- 3.4.a Open and import brushes, symbols, graphic styles, and patterns from libraries.
- 3.4.b Create, edit, and apply brushes, symbols, graphic styles, and patterns.
 - i. Key Concepts: stroke, fill, brushes, brush types, create a pattern, Generate Patterns, dynamic vs static symbols

3.5 Use layers to manage design elements.

- 3.5.a Use the Layers panel.
 - i. Key Concepts: adding, deleting, hiding/showing, locking/unlocking, duplicating, and renaming layers; layer options; selecting and targeting objects using the Layers panel
- 3.5.b Work with multiple layers.
 - i. Key Concepts: using sublayers, Paste Remembers Layers, hierarchy and stacking order, merge layers, collect in new layer

4. Working with Objects, Paths, and Text

This objective covers the core tools used to create content.

4.1 Create objects and paths.

- 4.1.a Use the Pen tool.
 - i. Adding, manipulating, converting, and deleting points; segments; anchor points; curve an angle
- 4.1.b Use drawing tools.
 - i. Key Tools: Curvature, Pencil, Paintbrush, Blob Brush, Line Segment
 - ii. Key Concepts: When each tool is appropriate and the path types they create
- 4.1.c Use Shape tools.
 - i. Key Tools: Rectangle, Ellipse, Polygon, Star
- 4.1.d Use Image Trace to create vectors from raster images.
 - i. Key Concepts: Trace presets, Ignore Color, Threshold, expanding
- 4.1.e Use AI to create objects and content.
 - i. Key Tool: Generate Vectors
 - ii. Key Concept: writing prompts

4.2 Modify objects and paths.

4.2.a Use path refinement methods.

- i. *Key Tools: Simplify, Smooth, Join, Clean Up, Outline Stroke, Offset Path*

4.2.b Modify objects.

- i. *Key Tools: Eraser, Scissors, Knife, Shape Builder*
- ii. *Key Concepts: live paint, compound paths, Pathfinder*

4.2.c Expand the appearance of objects.

- i. *Key Concepts: expanding transformations, stroke, effects*

4.2.d Use Live Corners to change the appearance of shapes.

4.3 Add text.

4.3.a Use type tools to add typography.

- i. *Key Tools: Type, Area Type, Type on a Path, Vertical Type, Vertical Area Type, Vertical Type on a Path, Check Spelling*
- ii. *Key Concepts: difference between area type, point type, and type on a path; placeholder text; glyphs; change case*

4.3.b Use appropriate character settings.

- i. *Key Settings: font, size, font style, kerning, tracking, leading, horizontal and vertical scale, color, stroke, baseline shift, Character Styles*

4.3.c Use appropriate paragraph settings.

- i. *Key Settings: indentation, alignment, paragraph spacing, bullets and numbering, hyphenation, Paragraph Styles*

4.4 Modify text.

4.4.a Manage text flow.

- i. *Key Concepts: multiple text areas, managing overflow text, threading text, wrapping text*

4.4.b Manage Area Type options.

- i. *Key Concepts: Rows, Columns, Auto-size, Horizontal Alignment, Inset Spacing*

4.4.c Convert text to graphics.

- i. *Key Concepts: converting text to outlines and when to use*

5. Modifying Object Appearance and Position

This objective covers tools that affect the visual appearance of document elements.

5.1 Make, manage, and manipulate selections.

5.1.a Select, modify, group, and refine selections using various methods.

- i. *Key Concepts: selecting multiple objects with selection tools or Layers panel, moving and grouping objects, Isolation Mode, targeting vs selecting, saving selections, selecting based on object attributes (color, stroke, opacity)*
- ii. *Key Tools: Selection, Direct Selection, Lasso, Group Selection*

5.1.b Rotate, flip, and transform individual objects, selections, or groups.

- i. *Key Concepts: scaling, scale options (Scale Strokes, Effects, Corners), transforming, warping, distorting, skewing, using distortion tools or menu options, Repeat objects, bounding box, reference points*

5.2 Modify the appearance of design elements.

5.2.a Adjust the appearance of objects and selections.

- i. *Key Concepts: fill and stroke, Appearance panel, applying swatches, Recolor Artwork, Color Picker, Generative Shape Fill*
- ii. *Key Tools: Eyedropper*

5.2.b Use effects to modify groups, objects, and layers.

- i. *Key Concepts: drop shadows, feathers, and glows; editing applied effects; 3D*

5.2.c Create, edit, and save graphic styles.

- i. *Key Concepts: creating, deleting, and managing graphic styles; breaking links to graphic styles*

5.3 Modify visibility using opacity and masks.

5.3.a Adjust the opacity of an object.

- i. *Key Concepts: Transparency panel and Opacity masks, blending modes*

5.3.b Apply and manipulate clipping masks.

5.4 Position objects.

5.4.a Align and distribute objects.

- i. *Key Tools: Align objects; Distribute objects; Distribute spacing; Align to artboard, selection, or key object*

5.4.b Align objects to a path.

- i. *Key Tool: Objects on path*

NOTE: All key items (Key Terms, Key Tools, Key Concepts, and Key Settings) are examples and not a comprehensive list. Changes in the industry or application may necessitate coverage of items not listed that apply to the Target Candidate description for the Adobe Certified Professional program.