

“Should I create my artwork in Illustrator or Photoshop? How can I get the best looking rasterized type? What’s the fastest way to get an image into my Illustrator file?” If you need the answers to these questions and more about how to best use Photoshop and Illustrator together then this chart is for you. Luanne Seymour Cohen, Creative Director at Adobe Systems, reveals the different ways to use these programs together and what the pros and cons are of each method.



Using Adobe Photoshop[®] and Adobe Illustrator[®]

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Getting Illustrator Artwork Into Photoshop

Using Photoshop and Illustrator Together
by Luanne Seymour Cohen

Method	Advantages	Disadvantages	Considerations/Comments
Open	You pick the resolution. You can turn on/off proportional constraints. Rasterizes only vector objects so background will be transparent.	Use <i>SAVE AS</i> , or you will overwrite the Illustrator file when saving. It will rasterize the whole file including hidden layers. File dimensions will be no larger than the bounding box of the Illustrator image.	This will give you a rasterized image only—no paths. You must save the Illustrator file before opening.
Place	You can position it and scale it before it is rasterized. File dimensions can be different than the placed artwork's bounding box.	It will rasterize the whole file including hidden layers.	Resolution will match the file it is being placed into. You must save the Illustrator file before placing. This will give you a rasterized image only—no paths. Command key while scaling turns off proportional restraints.
Copy & paste	Allows you to rasterize OR paste paths. No need to save the Illustrator file first. You can paste pieces and parts of larger files.	You cannot scale it in Photoshop before it is rasterized. Uses clipboard memory (but usually not much).	Scaling should be done in Illustrator before you copy. Ideally you will have enough RAM to have both programs running at the same time. If not, you can copy something from Illustrator, quit the program, start up Photoshop and then paste.
Drag & drop*	Allows you to rasterize OR drag paths. No need to save the Illustrator file first. You can drag pieces and parts of larger files. RAM is not used for this operation.	You cannot scale it in Photoshop before it is rasterized. Works best with both programs running at the same time—this takes more RAM.	Scaling should be done in Illustrator before you drag & drop. If you don't have enough memory to have both programs running at the same time, you can drag something from Illustrator to the desktop. It creates a "picture clipping." Quit the program, start up Photoshop and then drag the picture clipping into the file. Hold the Command key down while dragging to get paths instead of a rasterized image.

*Works with versions Photoshop 3.04 and Illustrator 6.0 or later

Getting Illustrator type into Photoshop

Create your type in Illustrator first so you can use Illustrator's kerning and editing tools.

Drag & drop a type object and Photoshop will rasterize the type.

Open a saved Illustrator file and Photoshop will rasterize the type.

If you rasterize the type in Photoshop, all the kerning will be lost.

To save the kerning and to avoid some ascenders/descenders being clipped, outline the type first in Illustrator. Then bring it into Photoshop by any of the above methods.

Photoshop will not create outlines for type. If this is what you want, do it in Illustrator first and then drag & drop or copy & paste into Photoshop.

Getting Photoshop images into Illustrator

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Method	Advantages	Disadvantages	Considerations/Comments
Note: If you will be separating your final document, convert images to CMYK in Photoshop before bringing them into Illustrator.			
Open/Place non-EPS images	Accepts any file format supported by Photoshop-compatible file format plug-ins. Any changes made to the image in Illustrator will not affect the original Photoshop file.	The image is embedded in the Illustrator file thus increasing its size. Use SAVE AS, or you will overwrite the Illustrator file when saving. Image preview matches the way it looks in Photoshop.	<i>Opening</i> a Photoshop file in Illustrator is best if you want to start with the image and then design around it. <i>Placing</i> is best when adding an image to an existing Illustrator file.
Place EPS images	Files with linked images are smaller than those with embedded images. Option-double clicking on a placed EPS file will launch Photoshop and open that file.	You can't use Photoshop filters on placed EPS images. Image preview is rough PICT preview.	Placing an EPS file will create a link to the file. Don't forget to copy or move the placed EPS images when you are copying or moving the Illustrator file you placed them in. If Illustrator can't find linked files, they won't print.
Drag & Drop*	Any changes made to the image in Illustrator will not affect the original Photoshop file. You can drag just a layer or a selection from Photoshop to Illustrator. RAM is not used for this operation.	You cannot drag and drop paths from Photoshop to Illustrator. Resolution of images dragged from Photoshop to Illustrator will be converted to 72ppi.	The <i>dimensions</i> of an image dragged from Photoshop to Illustrator will not change. To prevent the image <i>resolution</i> from changing, choose Image Size in Photoshop and select Constrain File Size. Then change the resolution to 72ppi. After you drag & drop the image into Illustrator, scale it with the Control Palette by typing in the original dimensions. If you are low on memory, you can drag something from Photoshop to the desktop. It creates a "picture clipping". Then start up Illustrator and drag the picture clipping into the file.

*Works with versions Photoshop 3.04 and Illustrator 6.0 or later

Getting Paths from Photoshop into Illustrator

You can only copy paths from Photoshop and paste them into Illustrator, raster objects do not work this way.

Paths copied and pasted into Illustrator from Photoshop will have no paint value (no stroke, no fill).

Use the Paths to Illustrator export module to get saved paths from Photoshop files into a separate Illustrator file. The paths will have no paint value and will have crop marks indicating the bounding box.

You can save a clipping path with the Photoshop file. When saving a Photoshop image as EPS, select the path name. When you place the EPS file in Illustrator, the path will mask the Photoshop image.

Color matching between the programs for on screen work

Load custom Printing Inks setup file BEFORE you open or place Illustrator file in Photoshop.

See my handout on color translation from Illustrator to Photoshop.