

HOW TO BUILD A COMIC

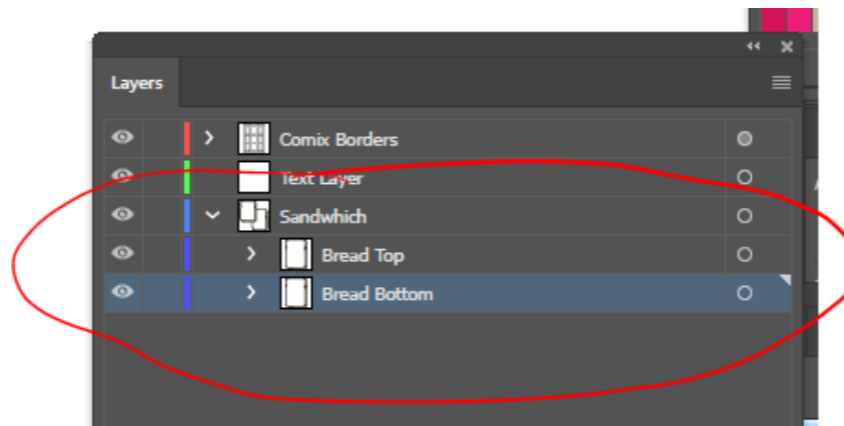
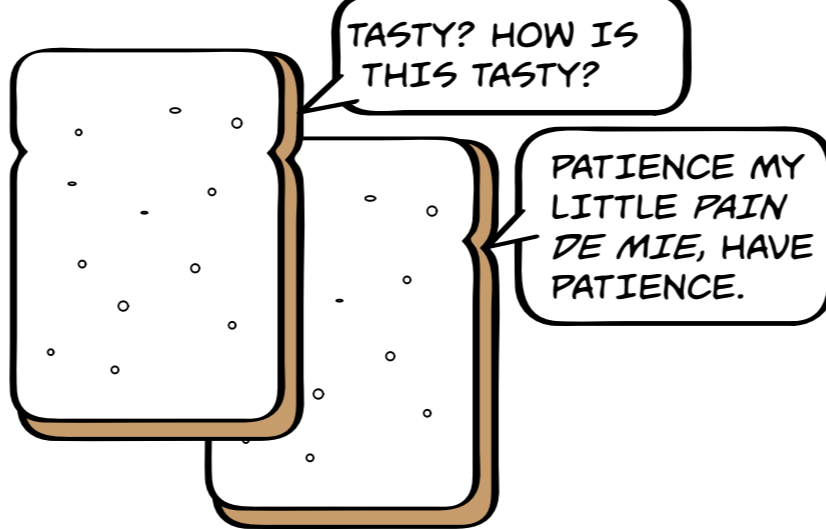
IN ADOBE ILLUSTRATOR

PART ONE

A BRIEF GUIDE TO USING THE SAMPLE TEMPLATES AND CHARACTERS FOR

CMS 308 (BOB), THE VISUAL STORY: GRAPHIC NOVEL, TYPE TO TABLET

I'VE FOUND IT HELPFUL TO THINK OF LAYERS IN ILLUSTRATOR LIKE A SANDWICH MADE UP OF DIFFERENT TASTY LAYERS.

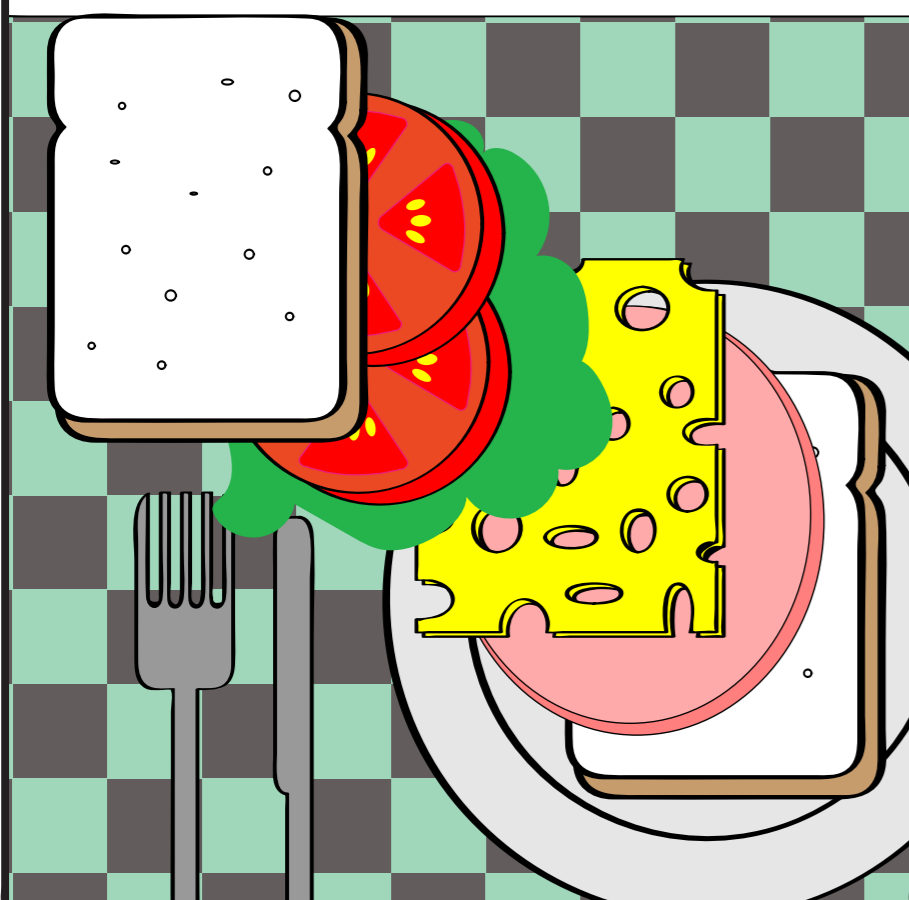


THE STEPS WE'LL BE USING ARE;

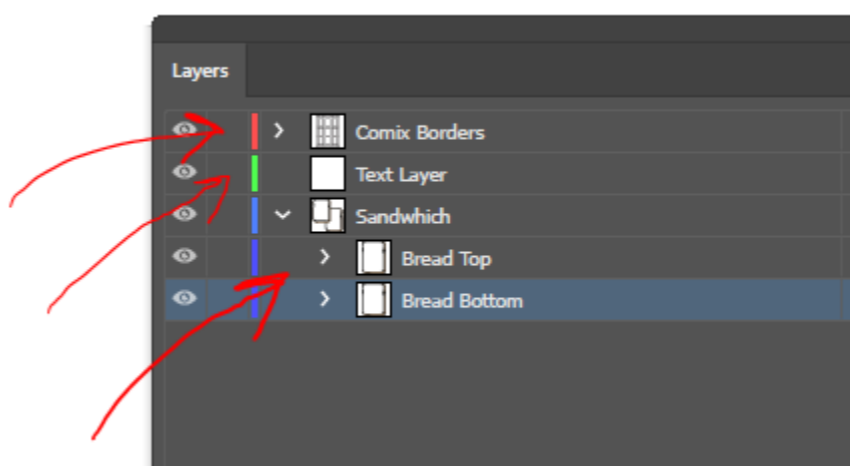
1. BUILD THE SANDWICH (CREATING THE PANEL)
2. TAKE A PICTURE OF THE SANDWICH (EXPORTING THE PANEL)
3. GARNISH THE SANDWICH (OPTIONAL) (ELABORATING THE PANEL IN PHOTOSHOP)
4. WRAP & LABEL THE SANDWICH (POSITIONING THE PANEL ON THE PAGE AND ADDING TEXT)
5. EXPORT THE SANDWICH (EXPORTING THE FINISHED PAGE)

I THINK IT'S WORTH MENTIONING, BUT YOU ALREADY KNOW THIS, SAVE YOUR WORK OFTEN AND MAKE BACKUPS!

WE CAN USE ILLUSTRATOR OR PHOTOSHOP TO BUILD IMAGES UP IN LAYERS, SO THAT YOU CAN REUSE AND MODIFY THE ELEMENTS INSTEAD OF CREATING EACH PANEL FROM SCRATCH, WHICH IS ALSO AN OPTION.

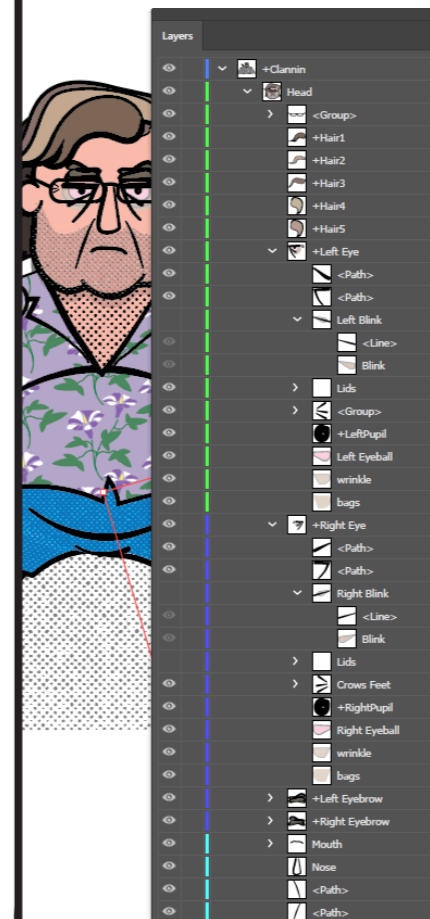


I STRONGLY RECOMMEND USING THE LAYERS PANEL TO BUILD THE CHARACTERS AND THEIR ENVIRONMENTS, THE MORE COMFORTABLE YOU BECOME WITH LAYERS, THE EASIER IT WILL BE TO CREATE YOUR COMIC.



LAYERS WILL ALSO HELP US KEEP TRACK OF THE DIFFERENT ELEMENTS OF OUR COMIC (I.E. BORDERS, TEXT, CHARACTERS ETC.) AND ALLOW US TO KEEP TRACK OF AND EDIT OUR WORK EFFICIENTLY.

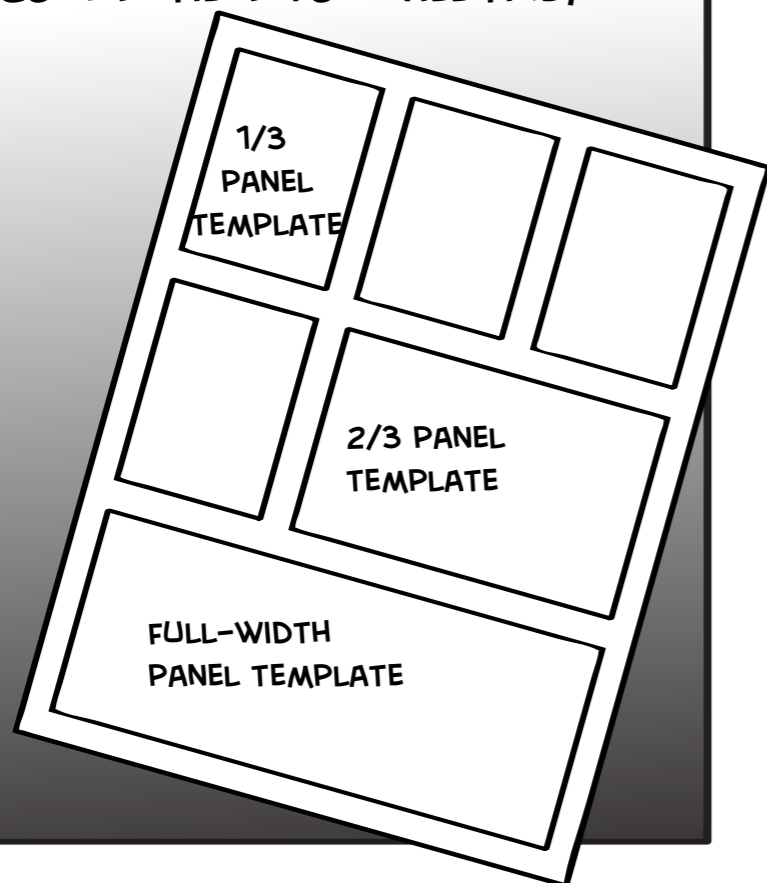
I CREATED THIS CHARACTER WITH OVER 170 LAYERS AT LAST COUNT. DON'T WORRY, YOUR CHARACTERS SHOULDN'T REACH THIS LEVEL OF COMPLEXITY, BUT ILLUSTRATOR ALLOWS YOU THE OPTION.



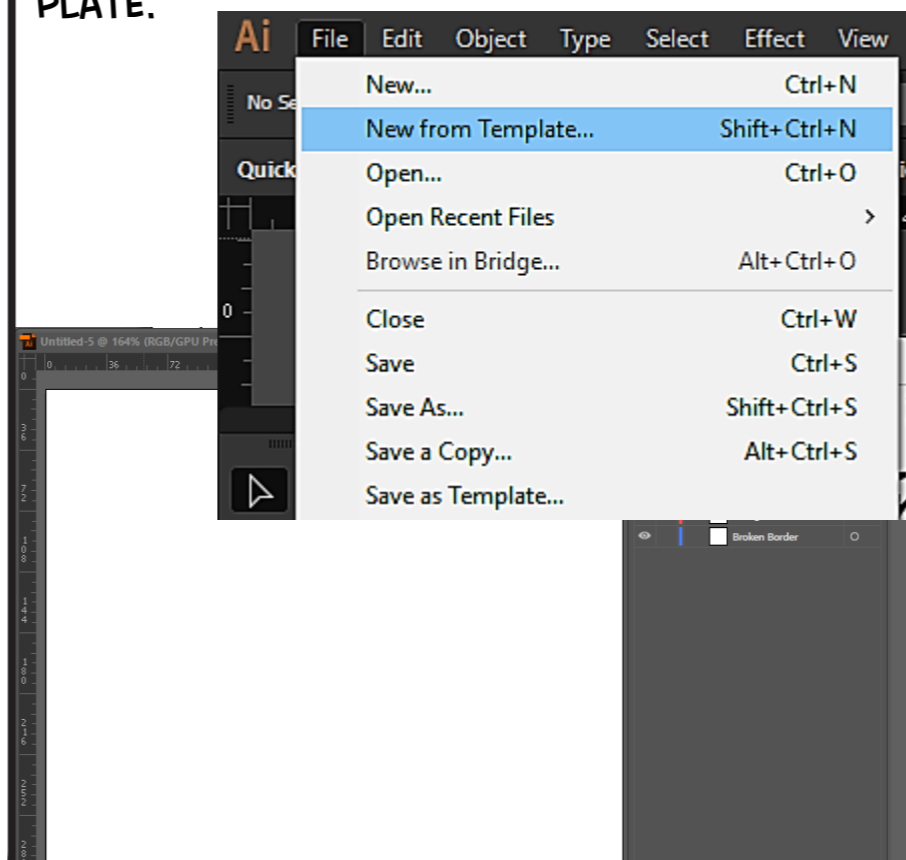
IT'S A GOOD IDEA TO GET IN THE HABIT OF LABELING YOUR LAYERS AS WELL AS GROUPING AND STACKING THEM IN A LOGICAL ORDER SO YOU CAN FOCUS ON BUILDING YOUR COMIC RATHER THAN SEARCHING FOR MISSING LAYERS

AS YOU HAVE SEEN IN THE WORK OF HERRIMAN AND MCCAY, THE COMIC PANEL CAN COME IN A MYRIAD OF SHAPES AND STYLES. FOR SIMPLICITY, I'VE CREATED PANEL TEMPLATES BASED ON THE 9 PANEL PAGE MODEL. FEEL FREE USE THESE OR CREATE YOUR OWN.

IN THE COURSE FILES YOU WILL FIND;

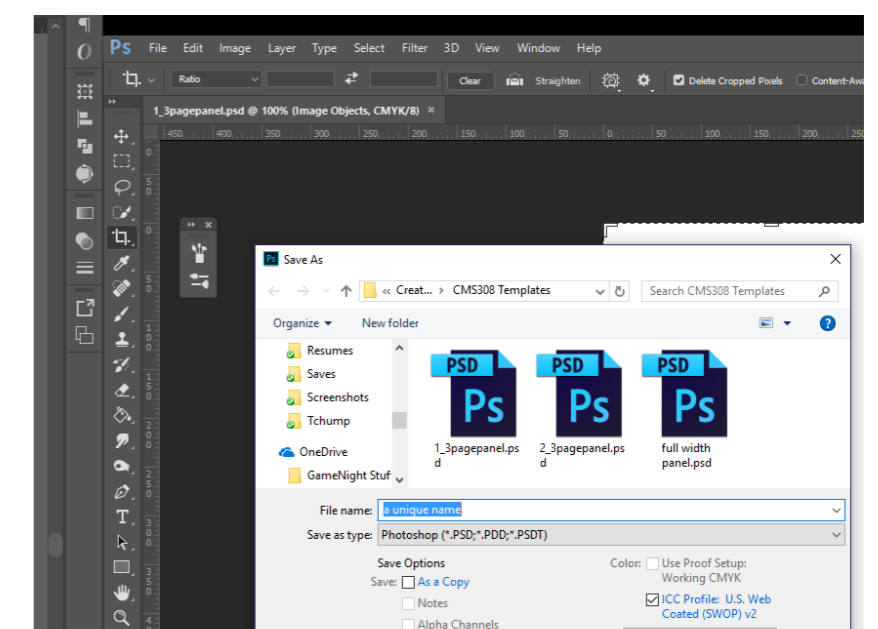


TO GET STARTED WITH A NEW PANEL, IN THE ILLUSTRATOR MENU BAR CLICK ON FILE THEN SELECT "NEW FROM TEMPLATE" AND NAVIGATE TO COURSE FILES FOLDER AND CLICK ON THE 1_3PANEL.AIT AND SELECT NEW. DO NOT CLICK "OPEN" THEN THE .AIT FILE, AS YOU WILL BE MODIFYING THE ORIGINAL TEMPLATE.



PHOTOSHOP WORKS A LITTLE DIFFERENTLY, IF YOU ARE GOING TO USE PHOTOSHOP TO CREATE YOUR IMAGES, OPEN UP THE TEMPLATE PROVIDED AND IMMEDIATELY CHOOSE "SAVE AS" AND GIVE YOUR FILE A UNIQUE NAME BEFORE YOU START WORKING. IT'S ALSO A GOOD IDEA TO SAVE IT IN A DIFFERENT FOLDER.

I DON'T RECOMMEND USING PHOTOSHOP FOR YOUR TEXT AS THE OPTIONS ARE VERY LIMITED. INSTEAD, ADD TEXT IN ILLUSTRATOR WHEN YOU ARE ASSEMBLING YOUR PAGE.



1. BUILD A SANDWICH

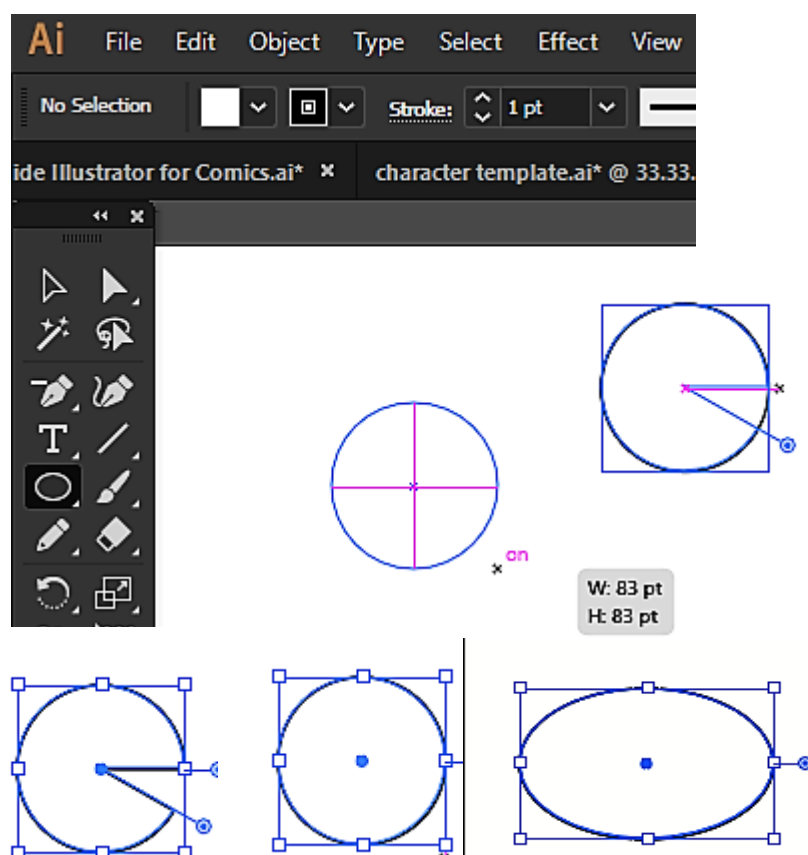
IN THE TOOLS PANEL YOU WILL FIND MOST OF THE BASIC TOOLS YOU WILL NEED. THE MOST BASIC ARE THE SELECTION TOOL (CTRL V) AND THE DIRECT SELECTION TOOL (CTRL A) WHICH HELP YOU MANIPULATE YOUR VECTOR OBJECTS.



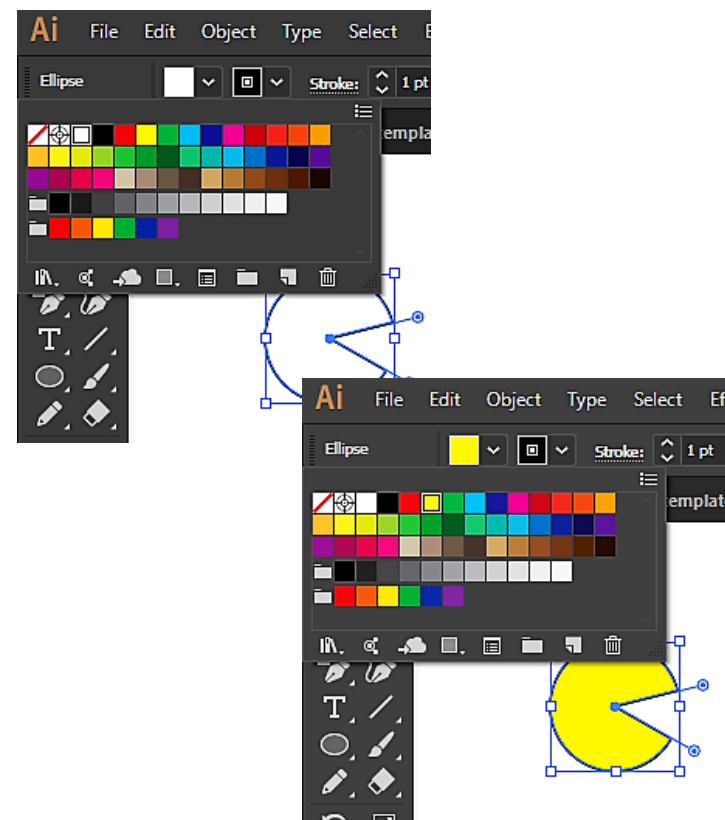
THE BASIC SHAPE TOOLS ARE PRETTY MUCH SELF EXPLANATORY, THEY CREATE ELIPSES, RECTANGLES, ETC. PRETTY STRAIGHTFORWARD. FOR MORE INFO ON THE STAR AND POLYGON TOOL, REFER TO THE ADOBE ONLINE USER'S MANUAL.



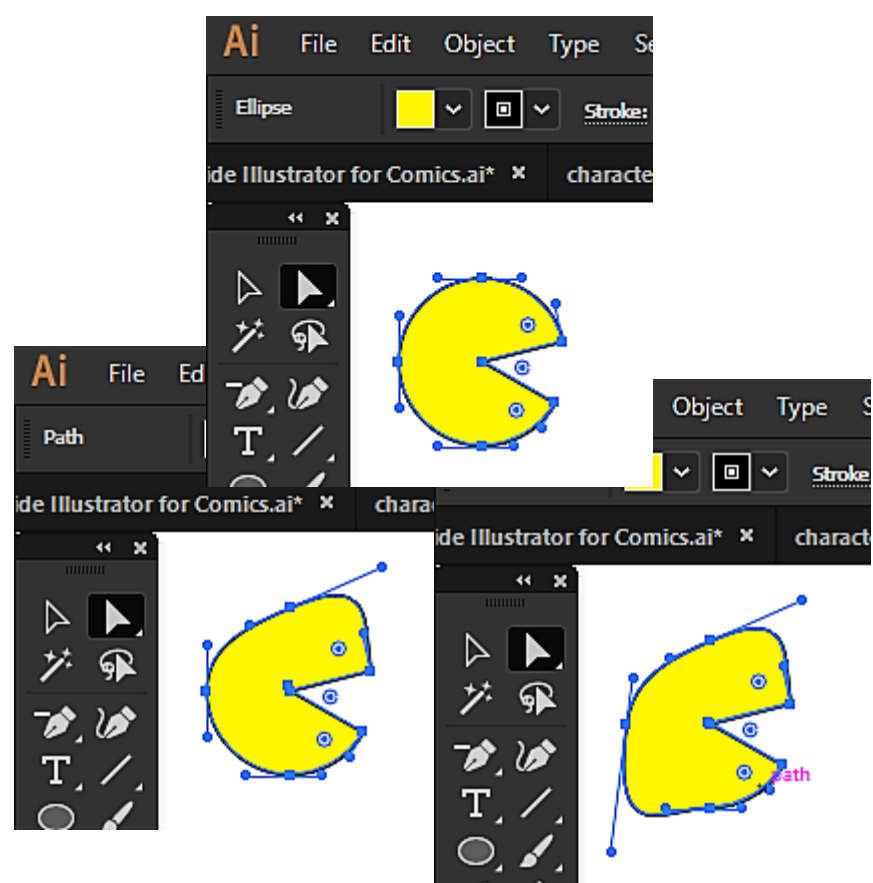
ONCE YOU CREATE A SHAPE, YOU WILL SEE A BLUE "BOUNDING BOX" WHICH ALLOWS YOU TO SCALE, ROTATE AND FURTHER REFINE YOUR SHAPE WITH THE SELECTION TOOL.



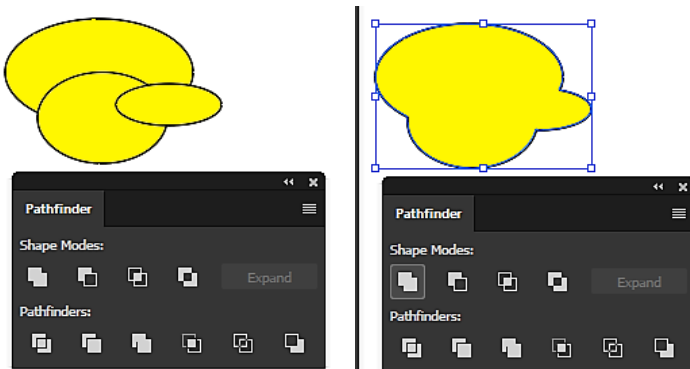
COLORS CAN QUICKLY BE MODIFIED THROUGH THE TOP MENU WHERE YOU CAN SELECT THE FILL AND THE STROKE COLORS AND ALSO MODIFY THE STROKE WIDTH AND OTHER FEATURES.



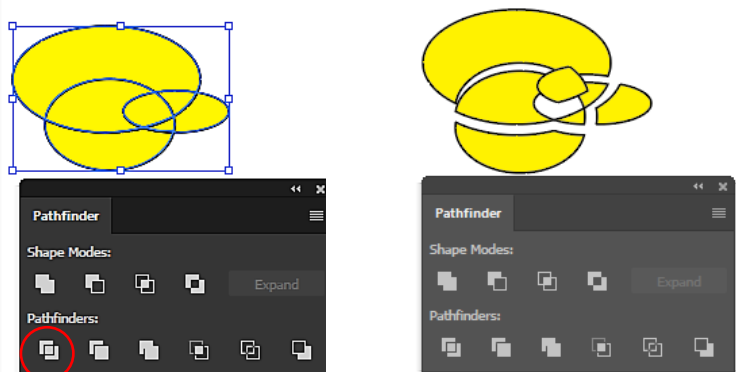
THE DIRECT SELECTION TOOL ALLOWS YOU TO SELECT AND MODIFY "ANCHOR POINTS" AND "HANDLES", WHICH MODIFY THE VECTOR CURVES AND ANGLES.



THE PATHFINDER PANEL ALLOWS YOU TO FUSE TOGETHER MULTIPLE SHAPES



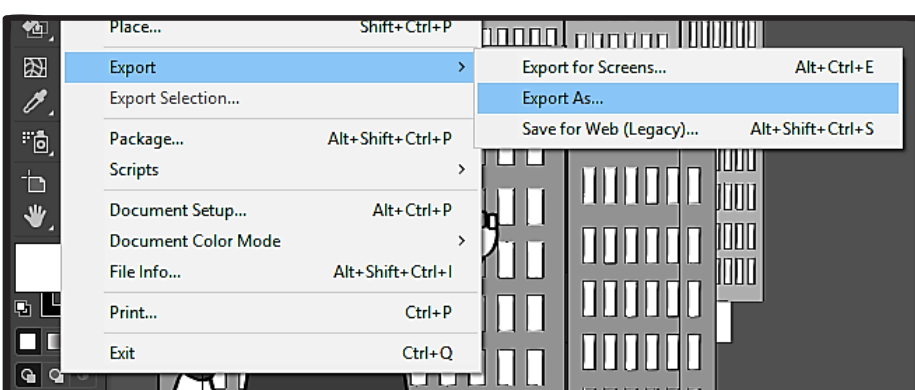
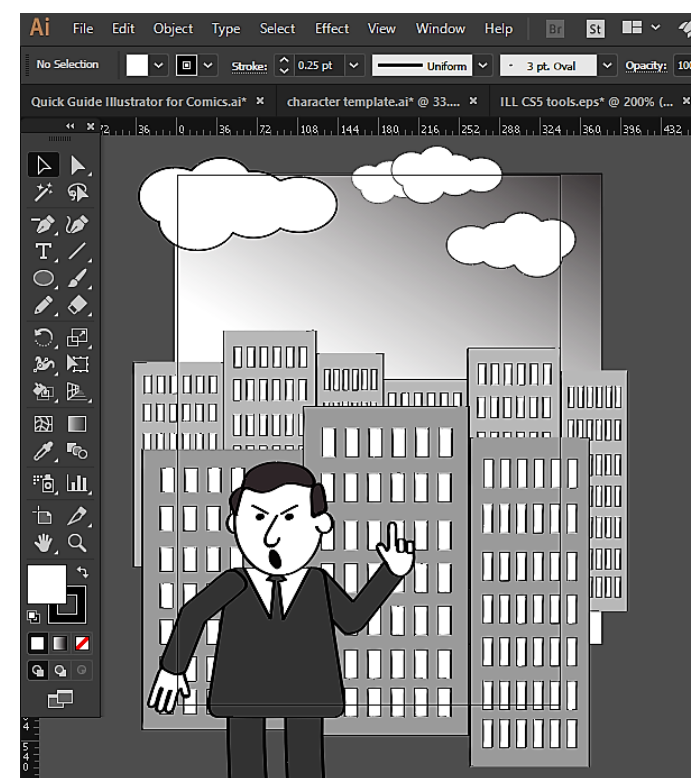
AND TO BREAK THEM APART. ONCE BROKEN, THEY WILL NEED TO BE "UNGROUPED" (CTRL+SHIFT+G) IN ORDER TO BE INDIVIDUALLY MOVED AND MODIFIED.



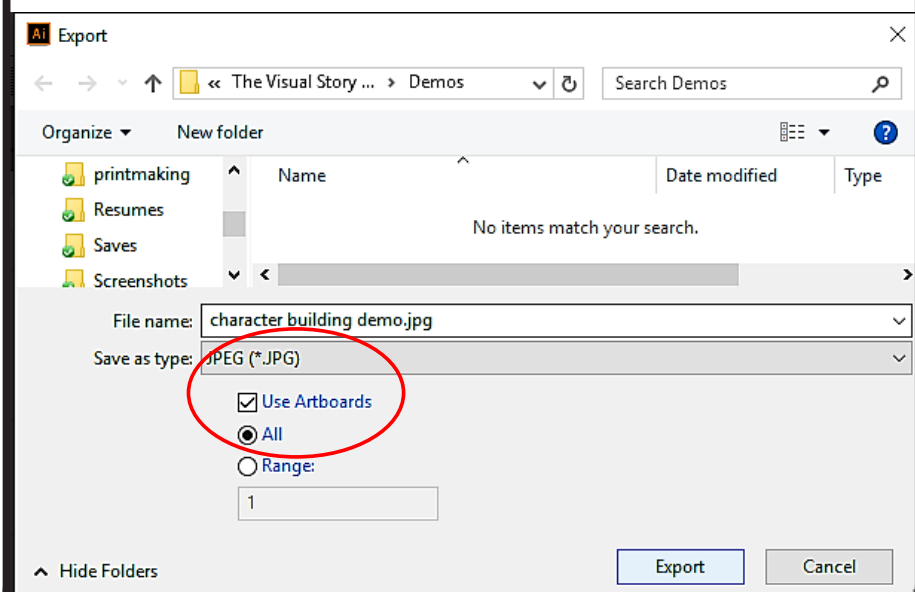
CONSULT THE ADOBE USER'S GUIDES FOR MORE TOOLS AND TIPS.

2. TAKE A PICTURE OF THE SANDWICH

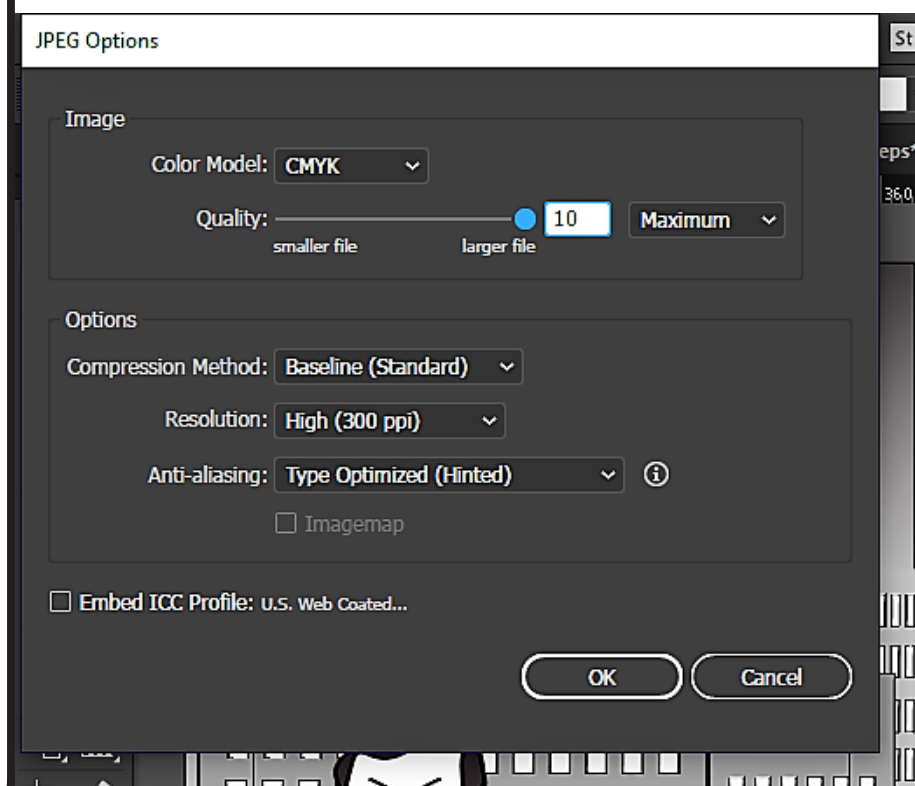
ONCE YOU ARE SATISFIED WITH YOUR PANEL, FIRST, SAVE THE ILLUSTRATOR VERSION, THEN EXPORT IT AS A JPG.



AS YOU CAN SEE IN THE PREVIOUS PANEL, THE ILLUSTRATION EXCEEDS THE IMAGE BORDERS A.K.A. "ARTBOARDS" SO SELECT .JPG AS FILETYPE AND CHECK "USE ARTBOARDS".



ONCE YOU CLICK SAVE, YOU HAVE A FEW OPTIONS, I RECOMMEND USING CMYK, MAXIMUM QUALITY (10) AND A RESOLUTION OF AT LEAST 300 DPI TO INSURE GOOD RESOLUTION WHEN WE ASSEMBLE THE PANELS INTO PAGES.



YOU CAN NOW IMPORT THE FILE INTO PHOTOSHOP IF YOU WANT TO ADD MORE TEXTURE AND EFFECTS. NEXT WEEK WE WILL COVER PAGE LAYOUT, AND THAT IS WHERE YOU WILL ADD TEXT. (YOU'LL BE GLAD YOU SAVED THE ORIGINAL ILLUSTRATOR FILE!) LET'S MOVE ON TO TWO OTHER OPTIONS FOR CRATING IMAGES.





WELCOME TO OUR PARTICIPATORY DEMOCRACY BUCKO!



IT BE TH' RESPONSIBILITY 'O EVERY CITIZEN TO INFORM THEMSELVES 'O TH' CHARACTER 'O EVERY CANDIDATE ON TH' BALLOT BOX. HEED ME NOT AND I'LL SLICE OFF YE VOTIN' FIN'ERS.



I BE NO POLITICIAN NOR SCHOLAR, WHY I BE EXPECTED TO STAY CURRENT WIT' TH' NEWS? I JUST WANT TO SAIL TH' SALTY SEVEN SEAS 'N HIDE ME HEAD IN TH' SAND.



THIS 3 PANEL SWQENCE WAS CREATED IN LITTLE TIME BY USING POWERFUL ILLUSTRATOR FEATURES SUCH AS "IMAGE TRACE", "REFLECT" AND THE "FREE TRANSFORM/PERSPECTIVE DISTORT" TOOLS.

A GLANCE AT THE INTERNET & I FOUND THIS IMAGE THAT WOULD SHIT MY NEEDS FOR THE THREE PANELS. HOWEVER IF YOU WANT TO KEEP CHARACTERS LOOKING CONSISTENT, I WOULD DO A SPECIFIC SEARCH FOR A WELL PHOTOGRAPHED PERSON OR USE MY OWN STOCK OF PHOTOGRAPHY OF FRIENDS AND FAMILY AS WE WILL SEE AFTER THIS.

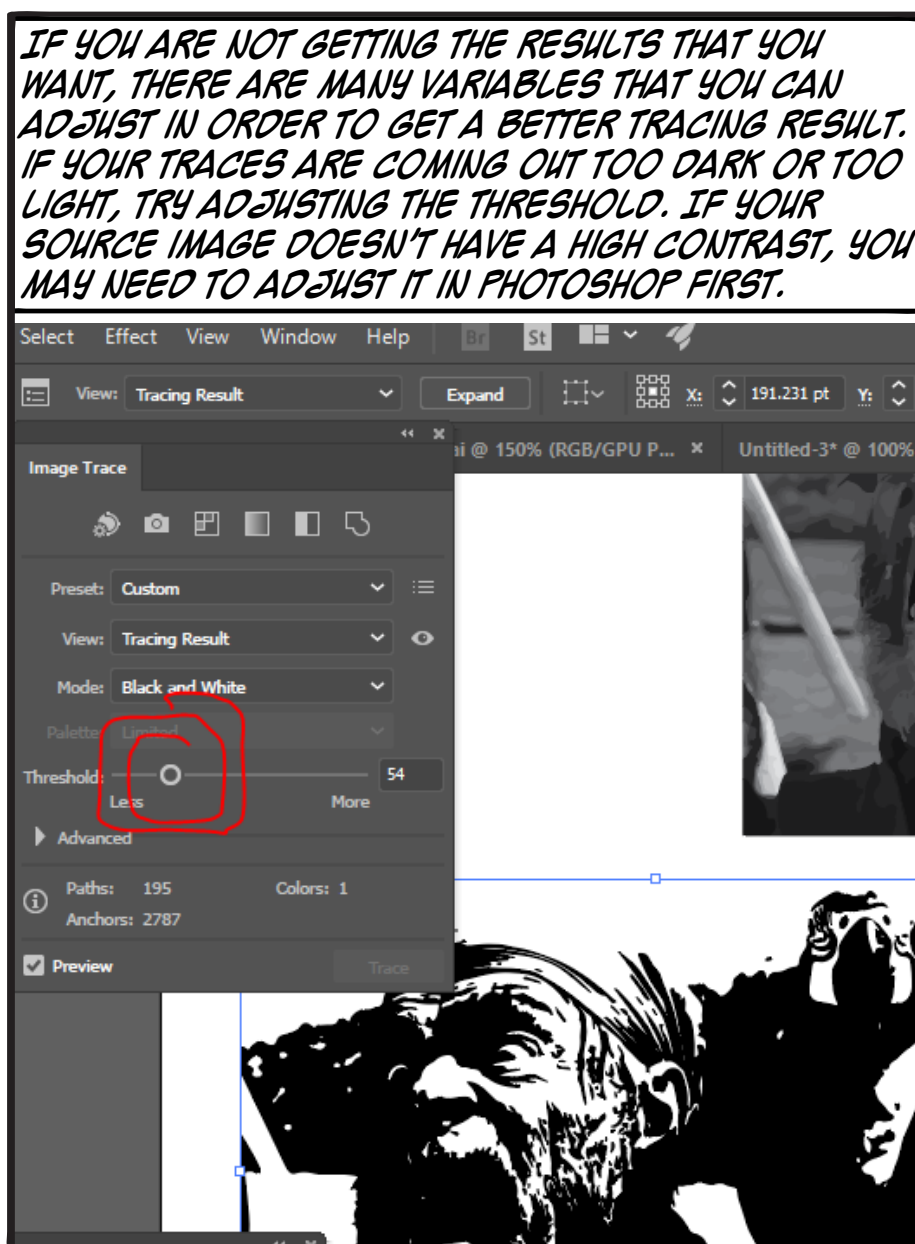
PHOTO CREDIT: FOREVER MEMORIES SD PHOTOGRAPHY/SD UNION TRIBUNE



A FEW TRACING OPTIONS ARE 3 COLOR...

SILHOUETTE

SHADES OF GREY



IF YOU ARE NOT GETTING THE RESULTS THAT YOU WANT, THERE ARE MANY VARIABLES THAT YOU CAN ADJUST IN ORDER TO GET A BETTER TRACING RESULT. IF YOUR TRACES ARE COMING OUT TOO DARK OR TOO LIGHT, TRY ADJUSTING THE THRESHOLD. IF YOUR SOURCE IMAGE DOESN'T HAVE A HIGH CONTRAST, YOU MAY NEED TO ADJUST IT IN PHOTOSHOP FIRST.



TO REITERATE, THIS TECHNIQUE WILL WORK BEST WHEN YOU CAN FIND MANY PHOTOS OF THE SAME SUBJECT IN AN APPROPRIATE SETTING.

IF YOU HAVE A LITTLE MORE TIME TO INVEST AND WOULD LIKE MORE ARTISTIC CONTROL OVER YOUR IMAGES, I'LL DESCRIBE ANOTHER TECHNIQUE FOR CREATING IMAGES FOR YOUR GRAPHIC STORY...

