

MAKING A POSTER IN ADOBE ILLUSTRATOR.

General Poster Dogma

- Plan Ahead! Prepare your text and other materials in advance using appropriate software. Assembling the poster in Illustrator or PowerPoint is the easy part.
- Sketch a rough layout or design. Consult conference guidelines, if applicable, for dimensions and formats.
- Keep everything together! Make a Folder on your workstation of choice and place all poster files inside. Back it up!
- No universal colored backgrounds! Ink is pricy!
- Image is worth a thousand words –give or take. Try to keep text to a minimum. Use an image or graph to illustrate your point. Text on a poster should only be there to describe or label what the images or data are demonstrating.
- Keep main goal in mind: to have an aesthetic printable poster when finished.

Getting started in Illustrator...

Setting your Artboard or work space

- From the menubar use File/Document Setup to set your poster size. Example: Landscape, 60" wide x 34" high, gives a 5-foot wide poster on our 36" paper rolls with 1" margin top and bottom. (Alternative: set art board to 9" x 12"; print later at 400% scale.)
- Important topics/tools: Placing, Grouping, Align palette, Character palette, Stroke, Fill, Page Tool/print window, Scale Tool, etc...

Text

- Use the Type Tool for main text. Select and copy text from source (e.g., Word). Choose the Type Tool and drag a text box to desired size. Next, paste in text (flashing cursor). Resize box as necessary.
- Alternatively, draw a text box using the Rectangle Tool or any of the other shape tools. Choose the Type Tool or Area Type Tool and click on the edge of the rectangle. Paste in text from another file.
- Type text directly into Illustrator. Good for figure captions, section labeling, etc...
- Which font to use? Be kind to your audience. Recommend any Helvetic font.
- What font size is best? Titles, Headers 72-100pt; Body text 18-24+. Again, be nice to your audience. Prevent eye-strain and squinting.

Bitmap Images

- Edit the image as needed in Photoshop or other image editing software. From the menubar go to Image/Image Size to adjust the size and resolution (pixels per inch) of your photo.
- Save the image into the same folder as your poster. .psd, .tiff, and .jpg work nicely, but what is best? Best resolution? Color management? File handling? Depends on what you started with.
- Use the **Place** command to insert images. File/Place menu. DO NOT CUT AND PASTE! **Place** the image in you poster. Be sure to check the **Link to File** box to keep your Illustrator file (poster) small.

DO NOT DRAW OR PLACE ANYTHING on your images once placed in your poster.

Charts, Graphs, Excel Tables, IgPet output, Genetic etc.

- To place and edit the output from any program in your poster, you must create a PDF or postscript file by choosing File as the Destination in the Print Dialog Box. Depends on software and OS.
- Select Save as File from the options list in the Print Dialog Box, and choose PDF, Postscript, or EPS Mac Standard Preview as the Format. Again depends on OS.
- Include all fonts if asked.
- While in Illustrator, choose File/Open and select the .pdf or .eps file you just created. This should open up in a new Illustrator window. Edit your graph, table, etc. as needed in this window. Then select all, group it, copy it, and paste it into the poster window.
- Alternatively, if your graph is perfect and it needs no editing you can directly File/Place it into your poster.
- Tip: Excel graphs default font is Geneva; change to Helvetica. Screen font vs. print font issue.

- Finally, just CUT and PASTE?? Possible if you only have a couple of “simple” graphs.

Printing

- Need to fill out Printing Request Form (see website)
- Recommend first printing a test copy on a laser printer (8.5x11; 11x17); color optional. To do this return to the menubar under File/Document Setup; check the “Use Page Setup” box then click on the page setup button and pick a printer and appropriate page size. A new print window appears in center of screen. If set to 36 x 60 need to Select All and use Scale Tool to shrink everything down to fit inside (e.g., 8.5x11) print window. Remember DO NOT SAVE CHANGES or to Save As file_small.ai.
- When all seems to be done and all corrections made – ready to print do a Save As and choose
- Deliver finalized files to departmental poster printing liason.

Quick notes for PowerPoint

Maximum page size is 56 x 56 – set using File/Page Setup

Create poster anyway you like then choose File>Pack and Go (PC)

“Pack and Go” is a wizard that creates one compacted file. Remember to include linked files and fonts.

Give “Pack and Go” file to departmental printing liason.

For detailed instructions on how to make a poster using PowerPoint see:

http://www.science.smith.edu/resources/poster_printing/forms.html