

GRAFFITI

TUTORIAL

by FAERIEDREAMER

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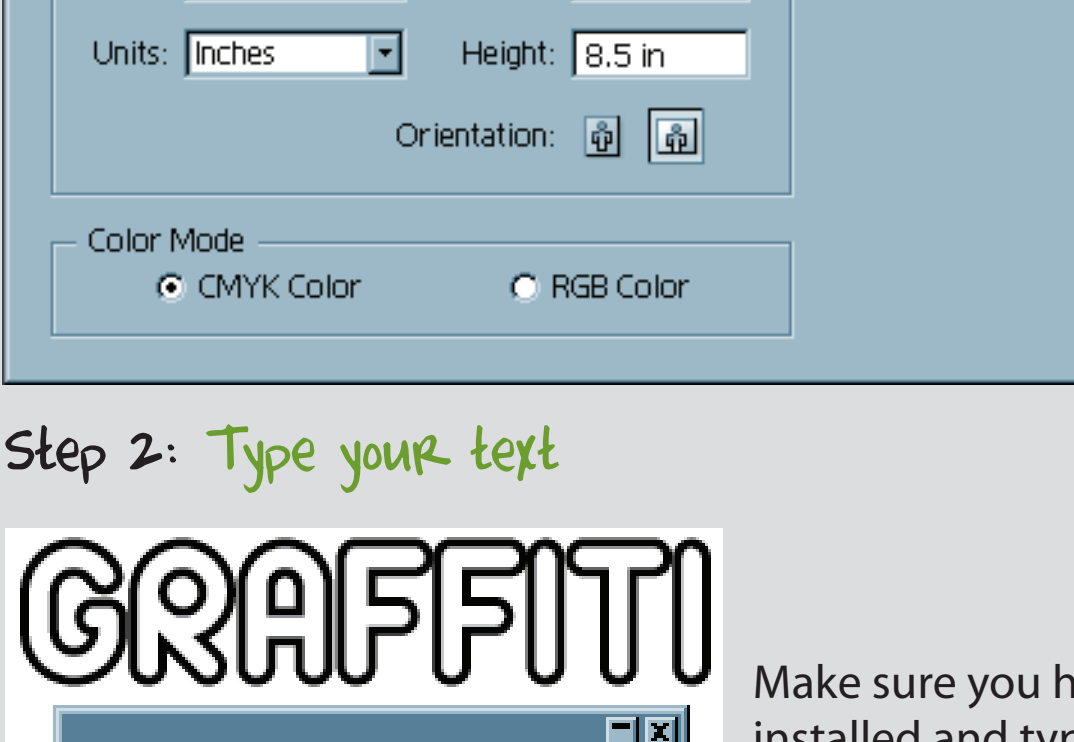
How to make trendy Graffiti text in Illustrator as shown above.

Program: Adobe Illustrator CS+

Skill Level: Intermediate

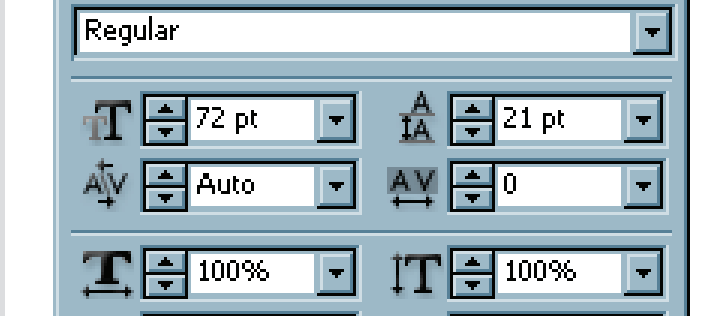
Font used: Arista from www.dafont.com

Step 1: New Document



Open a new document. Make it any size you like and choose a color profile. Use CMYK for print and RGB for the web.

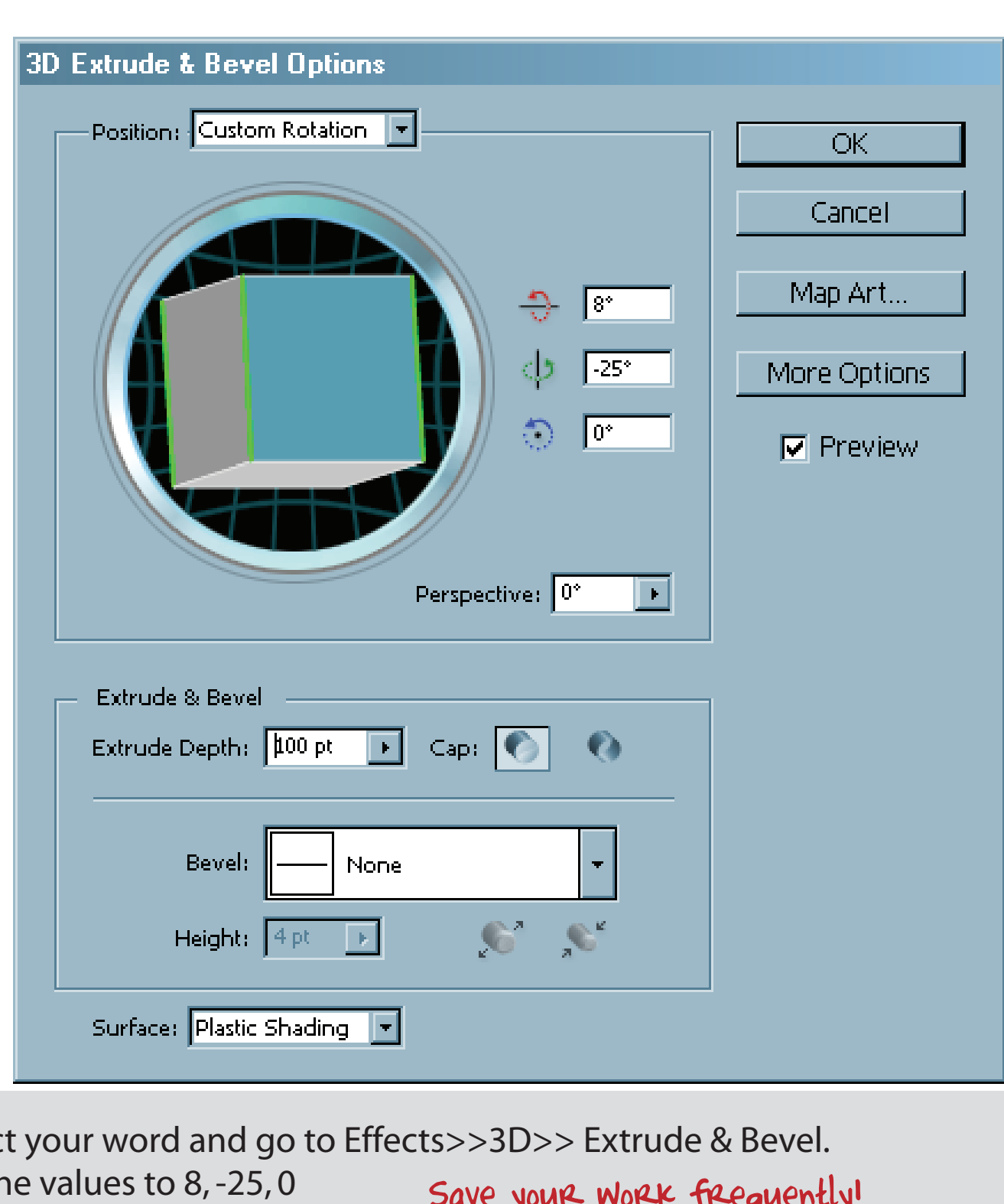
Step 2: Type your text



Make sure you have the Arista font installed and type out your text in UPPERCASE. Single words look better than long phrases.

I used 72 pt with a black outline and white fill. Change the stroke thickness to 3 pt.

Right click on your text and select "Create Outlines" from the drop down menu.



Select your word and go to Effects>>3D>> Extrude & Bevel.

Set the values to 8, -25, 0

Perspective 0

Extrude Depth 100 pt

Bevel none

& Cap on

Save your work frequently! You never know when Illustrator will crash. Even the fastest and best computers crash from time to time! Be prepared for the worst!

If you would like to see what the effect will be; turn on preview.

These values are an approximation and for that you may want to tweak the numbers until you achieve something that you like. If you want your word facing the opposite direction, reverse the values (-8, 25, 0).

Please note that the last value must always be 0.

You want your text to lie flat and not be rotated.

Try to avoid awkward spaces in the text. Make sure the black shape in the background is nice and thick with a comfortable amount of space around your white text

When you are happy with it, click "OK".

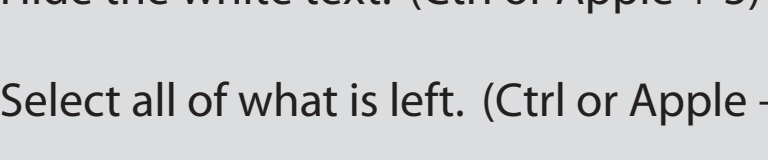
Step 4: Clean up your shapes

Select your text and expand the appearance. (Object >> Expand Appearance)

Now comes the tricky part. Your text is now made up of little broken parts. In the next few steps we will be merging them together and deleting what is unnecessary. At the end we will have one black shape and the white text.

Select your text, right click and ungroup it. (You might have to do this a few times)

Using the Group Selection Tool (white arrow with the +), select the white text only. Hold down the shift key at the same time to select more than one shape at once. Be sure you are selecting the white text only, if you don't you'll wind up with missing letters later on.

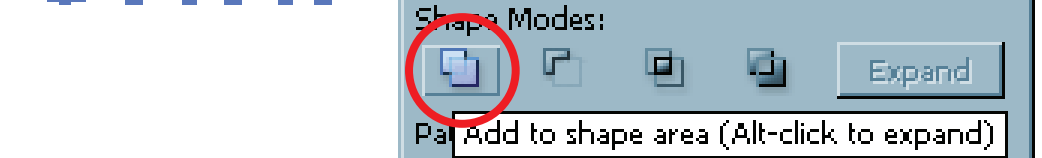


Did you save your work again?

Hide the white text. (Ctrl or Apple + 3)

Select all of what is left. (Ctrl or Apple + A)

In your pathfinder pallet (Window >> Pathfinder) press the Add to Shape Area Button. Click "Expand". You should now have a single black shape that makes up your background.



Using your Group Selection Tool, select only your black shape. Hide it. (Ctrl or Apple + 3). If you have shapes left over, delete them. (Delete button on a PC, Backspace on a Mac).

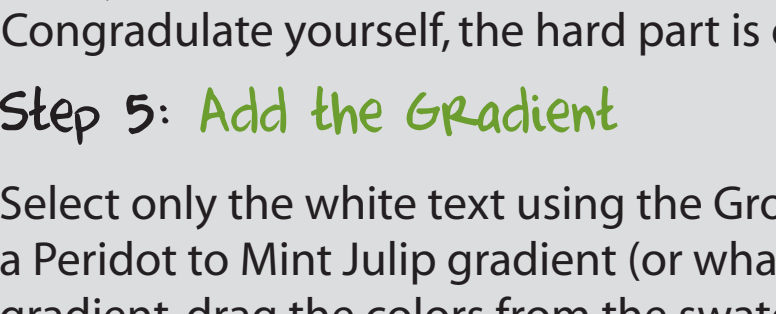
Select your work area even if you don't see anything. Sometimes there are stray points or shapes so small, they can't be seen.

Unhide everything. (Ctrl or Apple + Alt + 3). Now you should have your white text overlapping your black shape.

Sometimes your black shape will appear in front of your text. If this happens, using your Group Selection Tool, select only the black shape, right click and select Arrange>>send to back.

If the problem persists, select the black shape and copy it (Ctrl or Apple + C). Delete the black shape. Paste it behind your white text (Ctrl or Apple + B).

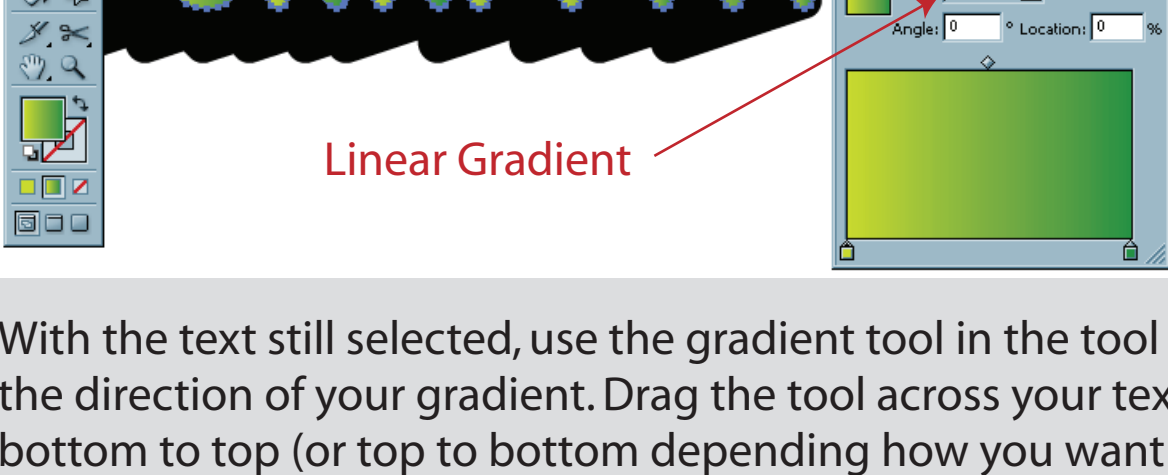
Sometimes Illustrator's layers get a bit confused. Copying and pasting behind is the fool proof way of getting shapes where you want them to be.



Now you should have white text and a single black shape. Congradulate yourself, the hard part is over!

Step 5: Add the Gradient

Select only the white text using the Group Selection Tool. Fill the letters with a Peridot to Mint Julip gradient (or whatever colors you like). To make the gradient, drag the colors from the swatch pallet into the Gradient pallet.



Note how the gradient is not going the right way.

Linear Gradient

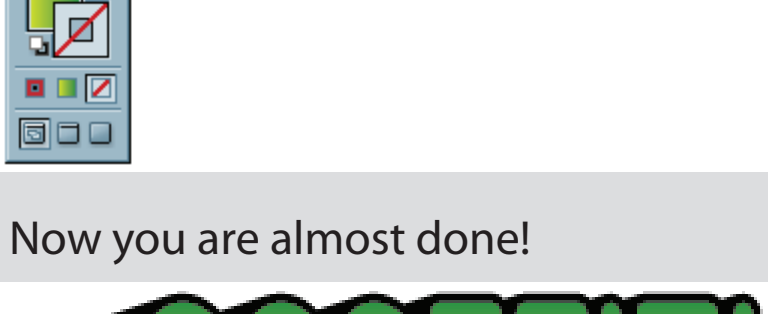
SAVE!!

With the text still selected, use the gradient tool in the tool bar to choose the direction of your gradient. Drag the tool across your text from bottom to top (or top to bottom depending how you want your gradient to look). Hold the shift key to restrain the tool to a straight line.



Drag the gradient tool like the arrow.

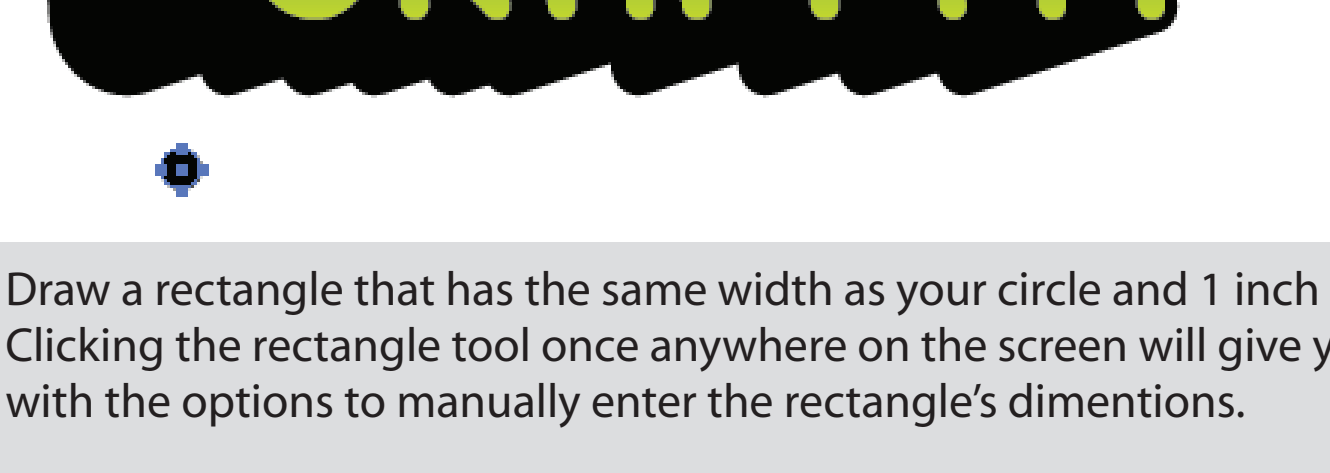
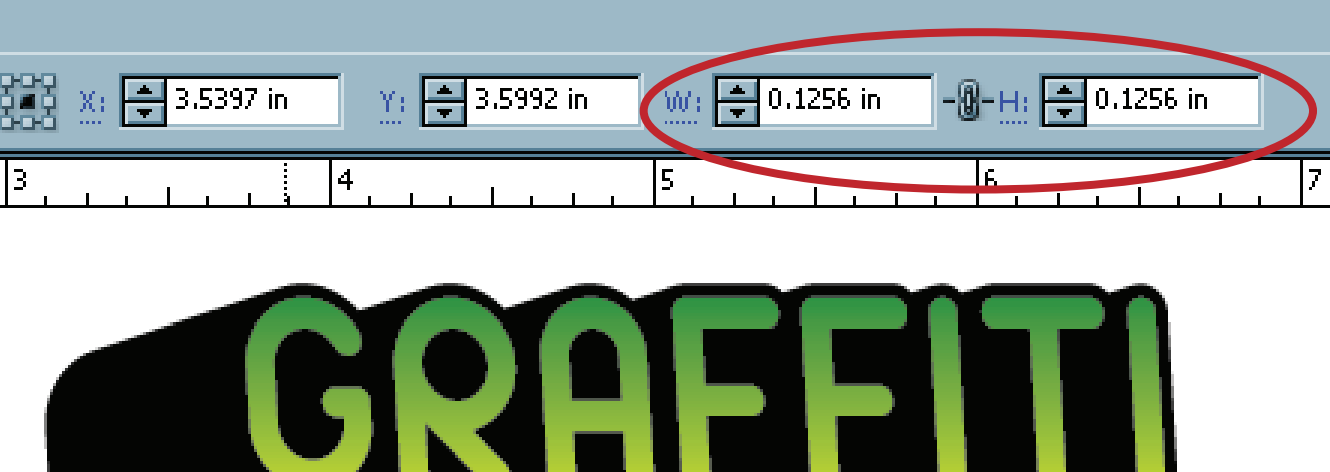
Now you are almost done!



Save again! It's a good habit to get into! (You'll thank me later)

Step 6: Add the drips

With the ellipse tool draw a circle. To draw a perfect circle, hold the shift key at the same time. Fill it with black and no stroke. Click on the circle. Note its dimentions. You can find the information in the tool bar at the top of Illustrator. The information will only be available if you have your rulers visible. (Ctrl or Apple + R to show/hide the rulers.) In my case the circle was 0.1256" wide.



Draw a rectangle that has the same width as your circle and 1 inch high. Clicking the rectangle tool once anywhere on the screen will give you a box with the options to manually enter the rectangle's dimentions.

Make sure you have "snap to point" turned on. (View>>Snap to point)

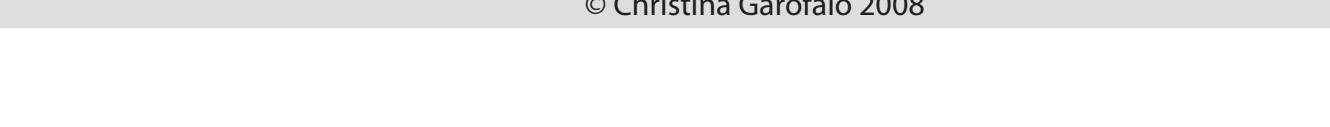
Line up the right bottom corner of the rectangle with the right anchor point of the circle as shown below. If you grab the rectangle by the anchor point, and match it to the circle's anchor point, your cursor will turn white, letting you know that your anchor points are perfectly aligned. Group the rectangle and the circle together (Ctrl or Apple + G) and send the shape to the back. (right click >> Arrange >> Send to back.)

Save? >>

Make several copies of your drip. You can do this by copy/pasting or by duplicating your drip. To duplicate your shape select it with the black selection tool. Drag the shape as if you were moving it. As you are moving the drip hold down the Alt key. Your cursor will become double arrows. When you see them let go of the mouse button but NOT the Alt key. You should have a copy of your shape. It's a tricky technique because you have to get the timing right, but when you figure it out, it's such a time saver!

Place your drips where ever you like. Be sure that the rectangle isn't poking out the top and that you have no white spaces at the bottom. Stager the length of your drips. An odd number of drips tends to look best. Avoid symmetry.

For the finishing touch add some drops. Using the Group Selection Tool, select a circle at the end of one of your drips. Using the duplicate technique, drag the circle down, hold the Alt key and the shift key. Holding the Shift key will ensure that your drop is directly under your drip. Repeat a few times on the other drips.



Select all (Ctrl or Apple + A) and group (Ctrl or Apple + G) your graffiti.

You are done! Go ahead and add a background or other shapes!

SAVE!!!

Thanks for reading all comments and questions are appreciated!