



→ PHOTOSHOP • ILLUSTRATOR

PATTERN-BASED IMAGES

It's easy to speed up your workflow using simple images and motifs created in *Illustrator*. McFaul uses *Photoshop* to create swatches and patterns to fill a desired space and demonstrates what can be done with a little imagination

DOWNLOAD

DOWNLOAD
Click here to download the files you need to complete this tutorial

TIME NEEDED

1 hour

INFO

McFaul's seaside studio has brought dazzling

visual fervour to clients including Virgin Atlantic, Nike, Casio, Vodafone, Orange, IBM and Kinder. The work, both self-initiated and client based, is gaining an ever-increasing global audience, with admirers and collectors all over the world. Find out more at www.mcfaul.net.

→ This thing we call process is a difficult entity to describe. It's integral to the way you work and something that must be honed to perfection over the years, each time incorporating something a little different to enhance your workflow. Here I will introduce you to a little something I do as a matter of course – something I do several times a day that has become second nature, and which you may find useful in your process if you're not already doing it.

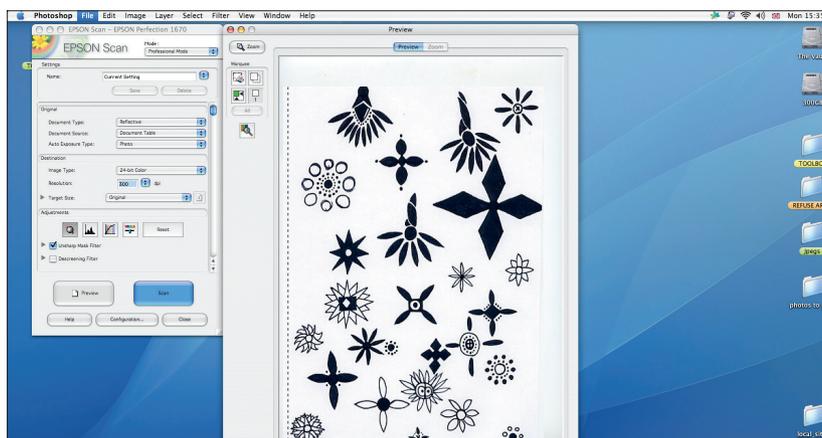
Through its creative software, Adobe provides a great range of shapes to work with. Circles, squares and so on – they're all there, albeit pretty basic. But did you know you can create other shapes from these shapes? And that these shapes can multiply like rabbits given half a chance (and a quick read through this tutorial)? With a little refrain and some considerable imagination, these shapes can be transformed into amazing patterns.

Sketchbooks are a great resource for artists; they harbour some of our deepest ideas but we don't necessarily always transfer these ideas into software. The books nestle snugly with our laptops and sweeties and come out on trains. They are regular kit, just like our computers. So here's a technique I use on a regular basis which utilises all these tools – something I'm sure you'll all think about shoehorning into your own workflow. A simple doodle on your sketchbook will become a vector file on your computer, which will then become a swatch that fills a space and eventually become a pattern to embellish a findeously cool image. It's as simple as that.

Tutorial and illustration by McFaul
www.mcfaul.net

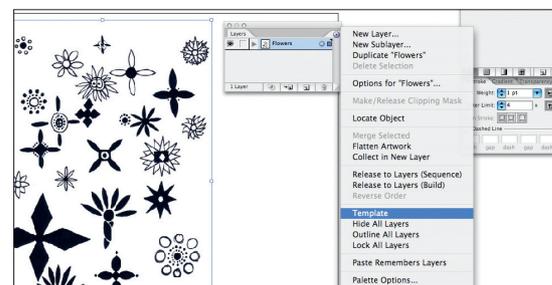


1 Start by roughing up a range of drawings of flowers that are based around geometric shapes. These don't have to be overly detailed – bold, linear shapes will work well. Alternatively, use the sketches (Mcdoodle.tif) I have provided on this issue's CD.



2 Once you are happy with the range of flower shapes you have created, scan them into *Photoshop* and save the resulting image as scan.tif.

3 Open a new CMYK document in *Illustrator* and place (File→Place) your scan.tif image into it. Make this layer a template layer (found in the Layer Palette options). Now double-click on the layer and name it Flowers, create a new layer above your Flowers layer and name it Trace. →

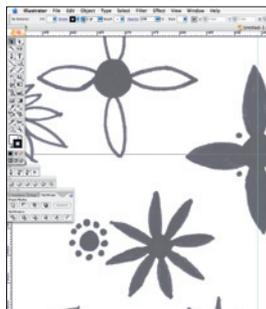




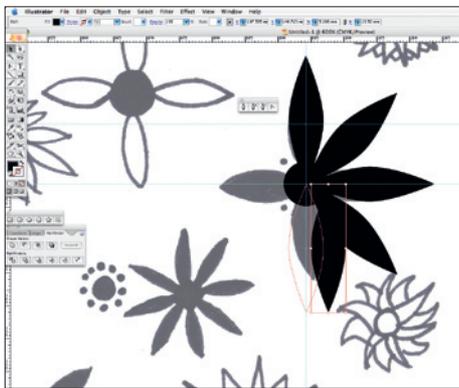
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TOP TIPS

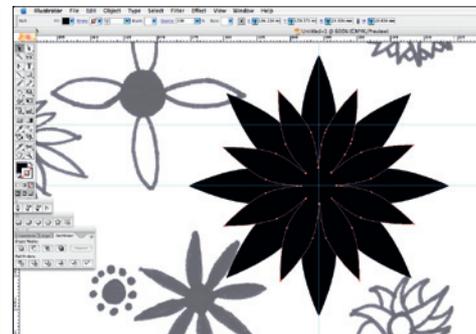
When creating your vectorised flower patterns (or any other geometric pattern) it is a good idea to use the Shift and Alt keys when scaling objects. These keep things centred and in proportion. Use the Pen tool when creating free-flowing flowers or patterns – holding the space bar once your item is clicked will allow you to position your points to get things spot on.



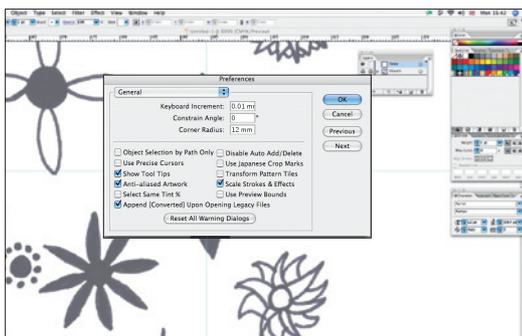
4 Select which of your flower drawings from the selection you would like to trace, and drag a horizontal and vertical ruler to the centre of that shape.



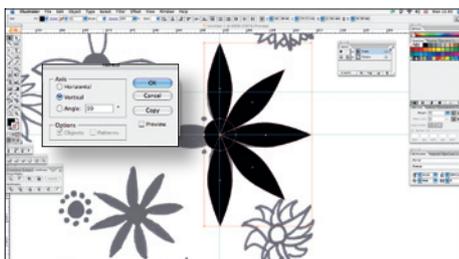
7 Once you have created your first petal shape, duplicate it using Copy and Paste, or by holding the Alt key, clicking on your shape, dragging it to either side and releasing. Once you have a second petal, hold Shift while rotating the object 45 degrees and position it against your flower's centre. Repeat until you have created half of the petals.



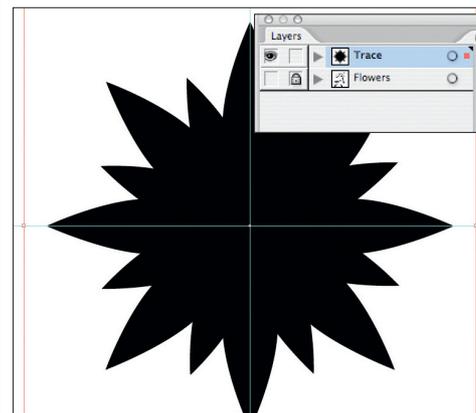
10 Now's the time to add further details to your flower if you wish. Here, I copied the flower shape and pasted it in front (Option+F), rotated it, then scaled it down to double the number of petals.



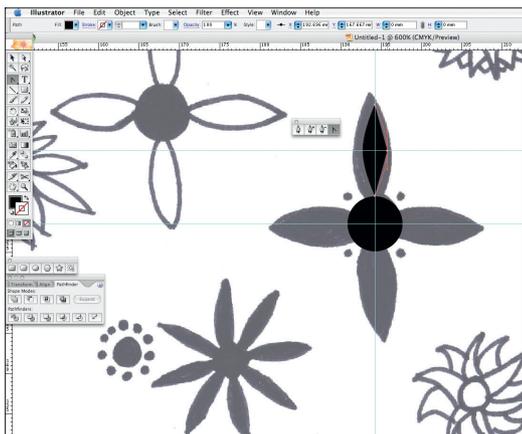
5 You can now use the Shape tools to create the basis of your flower shape using the rulers you created as a centre point. It is a good idea to set your keyboard increment to a very low setting (Illustrator→Preferences→General). Something like 0.01 will allow you to nudge your shape objects really accurately.



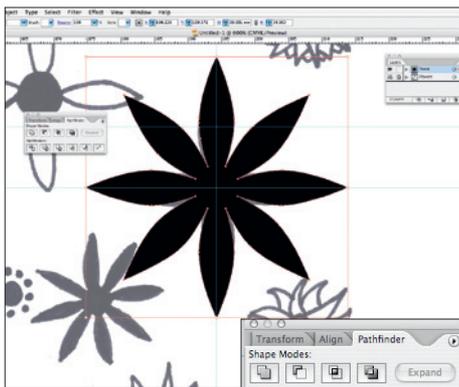
8 Now select all the objects by Click-dragging around them. Press Option+C to copy the objects, then press Option+F to Paste in Front. Now go to Object→Transform→Reflect, make sure the Vertical option is highlighted and click OK. Reposition the flower centres so that they are all aligned.



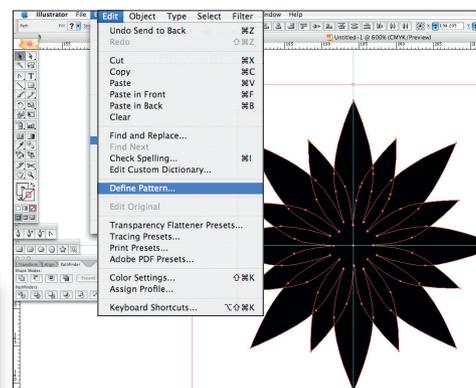
11 Once you are happy with your flower, turn off the Flowers template layer. With your rulers on, draw a square from the centre point of the flower. Position your cursor over the centre point, hold down Shift+Alt and click-drag outwards from the centre point to create a centred square shape. Make sure your square has no fill and no stroke.



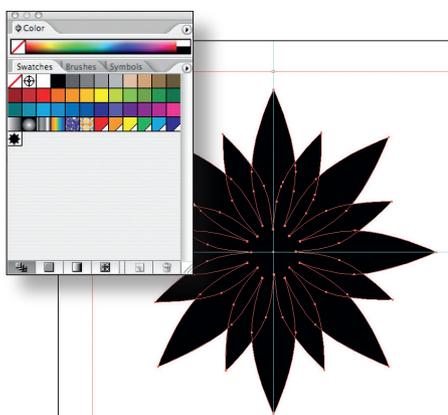
6 Start by creating the centre of the flower using the Circle tool, then start to draw petals. It is quite easy to create petal-like shapes by first drawing a rectangle and then using the Pen tool, and + and - keys to add and remove points. You can then use the Convert Anchor Points tool to add curves to the petal.



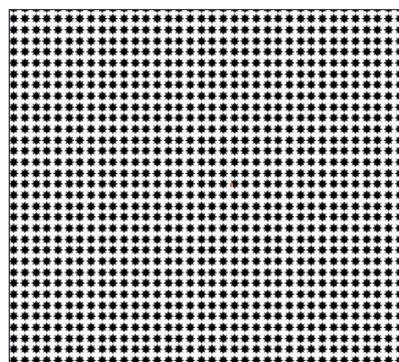
9 Select all the objects and open your Pathfinder palette (Window→Pathfinder). Once the palette is open, click the Add To Shape Area button and then click Expand. This will merge all of your shapes together into one shape. You should now have created your basic flower shape.



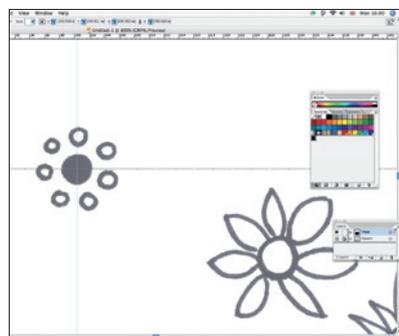
12 Send the square object to the back Object→Arrange→SendToBack. Now select all of the objects by hitting Option+A and go to Edit→Define Pattern. Name your pattern Flower Pattern 1 and then click OK.



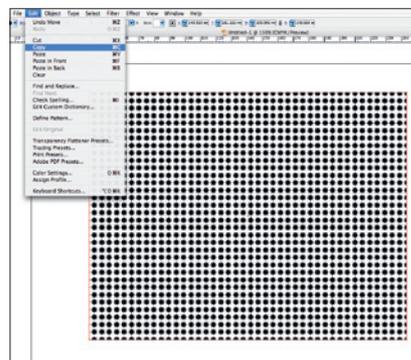
13 Open your Swatches palette (Window→Swatches) and you will notice that your flower pattern appears as a swatch. You can now draw any shape and use the swatch as a fill or a stroke. Here you'll need to use the swatch to fill a large area so that it can be pasted into *Photoshop* and used as a texture.



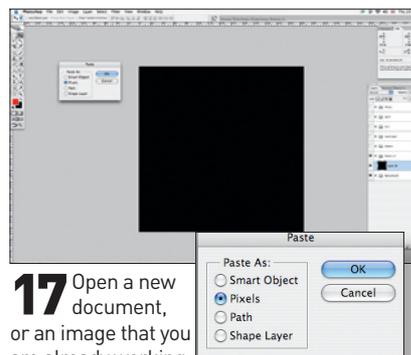
14 Draw a large rectangle and click on the Fill box in the main Tools palette. Now, back in the Swatches palette, click on your flower swatch. The fill area will now be tiled with your flower icon.



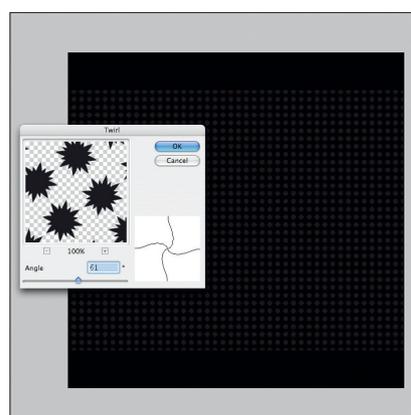
15 You can now start to experiment a little, repeating steps 4-14 using a different flower shape. You'll end up with a range of different tiling textures that you can use in your illustration.



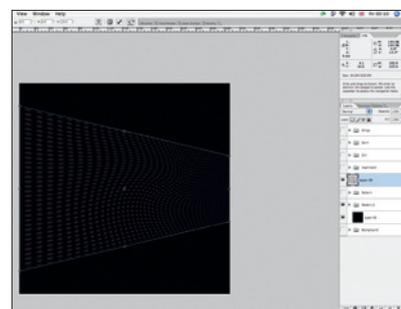
16 This pattern can now be used in *Photoshop* to add texture to your final artwork. Select your tiled rectangle, press Option+C and switch back to *Photoshop*.



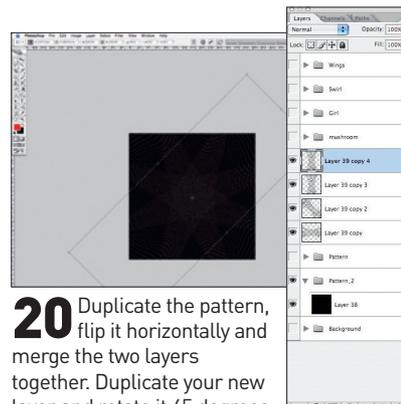
17 Open a new document, or an image that you are already working on. Now press Option+V to paste your tiled texture into it, then select Pixels from the Option dialog box and click OK. Hit Return to place the object.



18 Next, select Filter→Distort→Twirl and have a play around with the settings as shown in the screengrab above. For this tutorial I used a setting of 61 degrees.

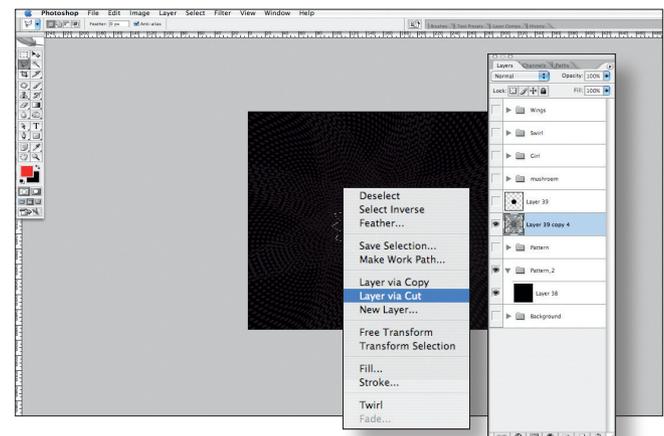


19 Now go to Edit→Transform→Perspective. Experiment with the perspective a little until the pattern starts to get closer together at one end and further away at the other.



20 Duplicate the pattern, flip it horizontally and merge the two layers together. Duplicate your new layer and rotate it 45 degrees. Continue this process until your pattern covers 360 degrees. Once you have finished, merge all of the pattern layers.

21 As a finishing touch, add another flower shape on top of the pattern and use it to cut away the centre of the pattern. Select the flower, click on the pattern layer, select New Layer via Cut or Paste and alter the transparency. You are now ready to add your pattern graphic to your main illustration. **arts**



MULTIPLE FLOWERS

It is well worth creating two or three flower shapes and combining them in *Photoshop* to see how they could work together. There is no reason why your swatch should only contain one flower shape – you could put together as many elements as you wish. Just make sure that when you come to define them as a swatch you have drawn the square so that it contains all of your elements.

EXPERIMENT WITH FILTERS

Once you have created your swatch and pasted your pattern into *Photoshop*, try experimenting with the various filters found in the Filters→Distort menu and the options found in Edit→Transform. Rotate and reflect your distorted pattern in many different combinations. Experiment with the Layer Blending Modes once you are happy with your pattern. Duplicate your pattern's layer and try adjusting the Brightness/Contrast to see what happens.