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Adobe Illustrator and Registration Marks

Registration Marks are important. Poorly made marks will slow down your press registration.

The CorelDraw software manual may not give the industry specific instructions a screen-printer needs to prepare a graphics file for spot color creation, separation, and output BUT the great news is the program has everything you need to get the job done easily and accurately.

Easily make your own registration marks in Adobe Illustrator and color them properly so they appear on each color's film positive when printing your separations. You can make them as large and as thick as you need them. The standard program registration marks that Adobe provides at output (separation) will be too thin for a screen-printer's needs. Turn to the next page for instructions on creating custom registration marks.
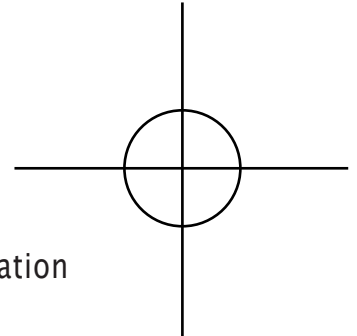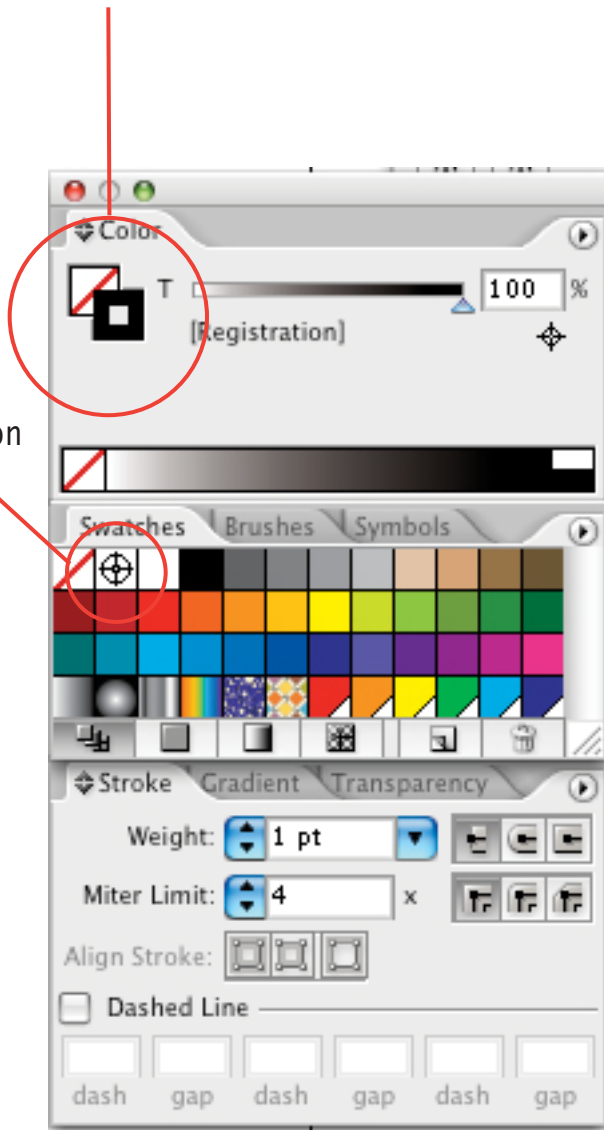
Newsletter for Screen Printers

PURPOSE:

1. To create custom registration marks that make registering screens onpress easier.
2. Create registration marks that print on each film positive automatically.
3. Create a custom symbol to use over and over again.

HOW TO:

1. Open a new page in Adobe Illustrator.
2. Make a circle with a horizonal and a vertical intersecting line.
3. Choose a line (stroke) weight of .75 to 1 pt. (not too think or too thin). Go to the Swatch Palette and choose Registration Color. Never tint or change the opacity to less than 100% or else the registration mark will halftone. (see example below).

Note: Stroke the lines.
Do not use color fill.
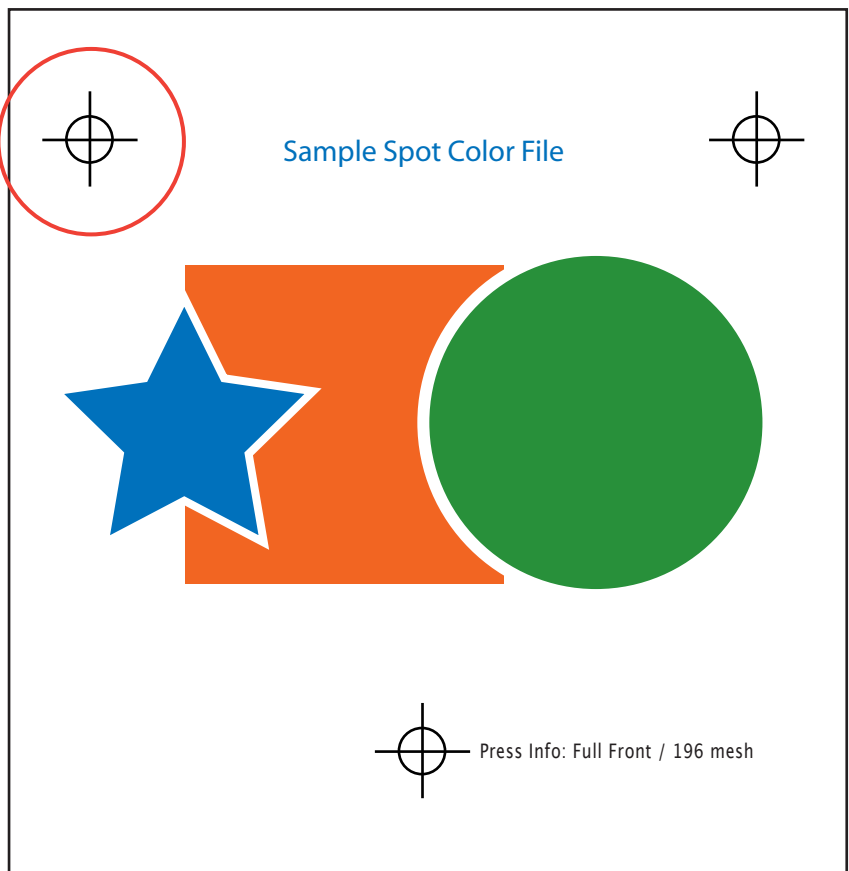
Registration
Swatch
Color

Position your custom made and colored registration marks directly ON THE ARTBOARD.

Tip: you can also create a custom symbol for all your pre-press marks so you can easily access them time and time again.
A big time saver! Refer to your Adobe documentation for more info or the Illustrator HELP Menu.

Tip: Registration Color also is useful for plate labeling when you want information to appear on each film.

Whether you are printing spot colors with Illustrator Spot Color Swatches (i.e Pantone) or printing cmyk, your custom registration marks and/or any type or object colored with Registration Color will appear on EVERY film. It's easy to do and saves a lot of time!

Sample Spot Color File

Press Info: Full Front / 196 mesh

In the example above, each colored element will print on its own film along with the registration marks and plate labeling. Below is an example of the film postive for the greeen spot color.

Press Info: Full Front / 196 mesh