

How to

Create Patterns



Creating basic patterns



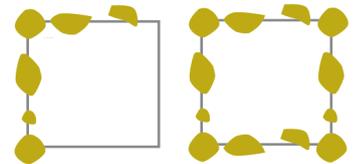
You can create your own repeating patterns in Illustrator. Just create the artwork for the pattern and then add to your Swatches palette...



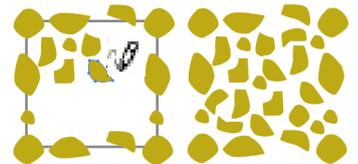
Creating Patterns

When Illustrator tiles a pattern, it repeats the pattern in rows until it fills the space. You want to be sure your pattern tiles will line up seamlessly, so plan ahead for this when creating your patterns. Let's look at a simplified giraffe pattern so you can see how we designed the animal prints to line up properly.

- 1** Create the Bounding box. First draw a square to create a bounding box. Specify the size of the Bounding box and make a note of it. Then set the keyboard increment in Preferences>General>Keyboard increments to be the same width as your box.
- 2** Create a pattern along the left edge and the bottom edge of the box. Don't worry if part of the pattern goes outside the box; Illustrator tiles using only the objects inside the box.



The bounding box and pattern pieces



Adding the centre pieces and a background fill

- 3** Now copy your pattern to the other edges. Select the pattern objects on the left edge, and press Alt (Windows) or Option (Mac OS) and the right arrow key. Illustrator copies your selection and places the copy one keyboard increment over to the right edge of the box. The distance being the increment you set in the Preferences. ►►

tip If you want your pattern to scale as you resize your object, go to **Preferences>General>Scale Pattern Tiles**



4 Select the objects along the bottom of the box, and press Alt/Option and the up arrow key to copy the pattern to the top of the box.

5 Fill in the box with the rest of your pattern, adding colours as desired.

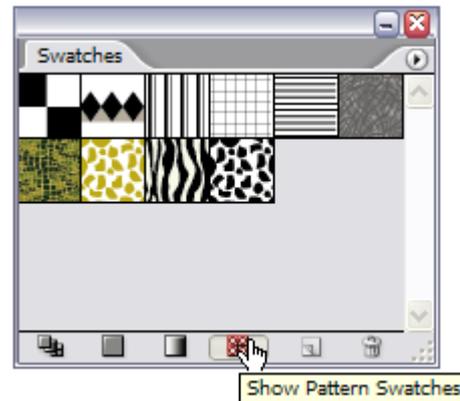
Completing the Pattern

1 Make sure the box is the backmost object, and give it a stroke and fill of None.

2 Select the box and the pieces of the pattern, and drag them to the Swatches palette or use Edit > Define Pattern to add it to the palette.

Filling an object with your pattern

1 Use the Selection tool to select the object you want to apply the pattern to, make sure that the Fill colour swatch is at the front of the Tools palette, and click on your pattern swatch in the pattern swatches palette.



Creating intricate and more complex patterns is covered on the Illustrator Advanced course.