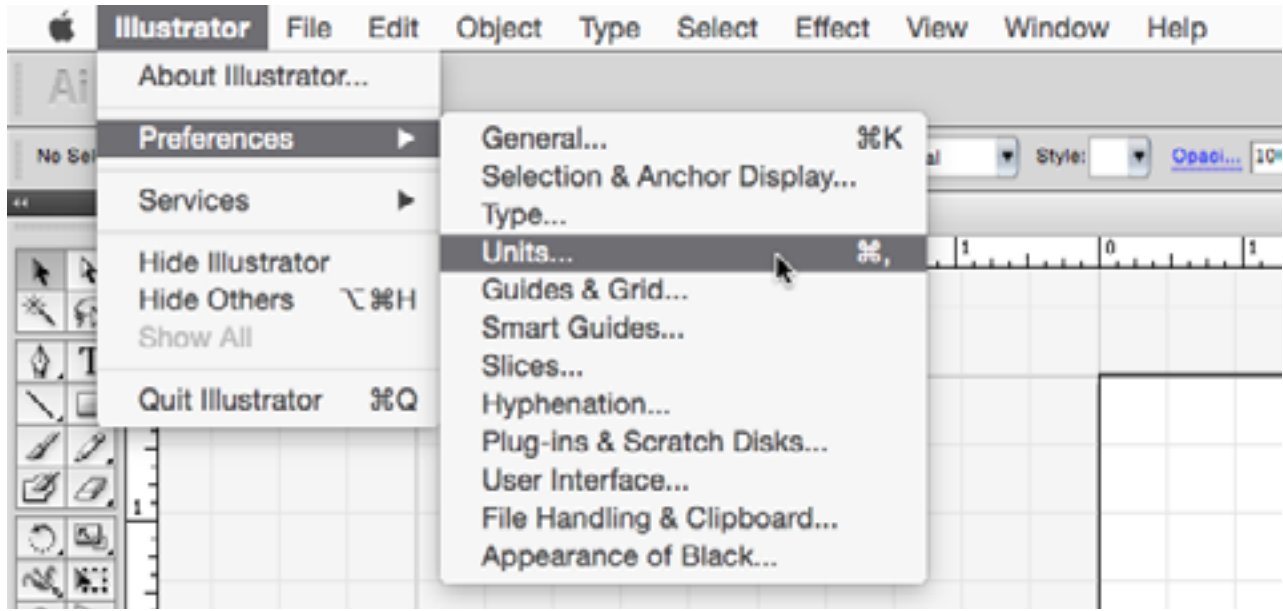


# Adobe Illustrator: Setting Up Your Workspace

## Units

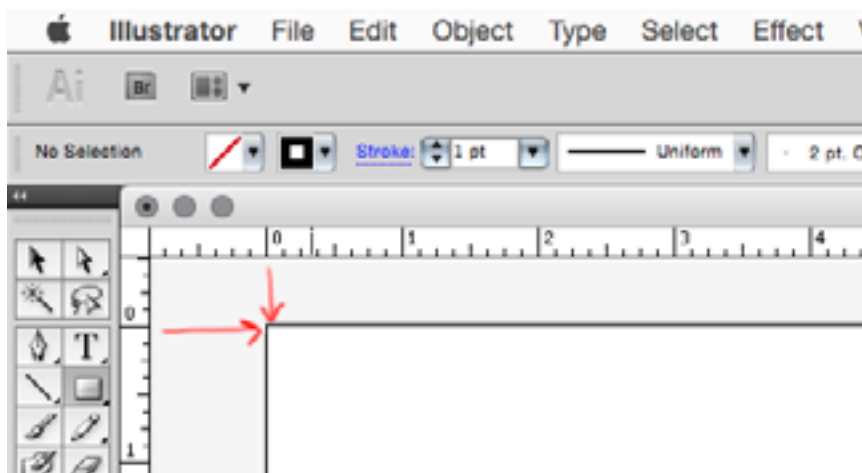
You will find it easier to work in Illustrator, especially if you need to line things up, if you spend a little time to set up your workspace with rulers, grids and guides. The first step is to decide the units you want to work in. This is done in the **Preferences...Units** dialog box.



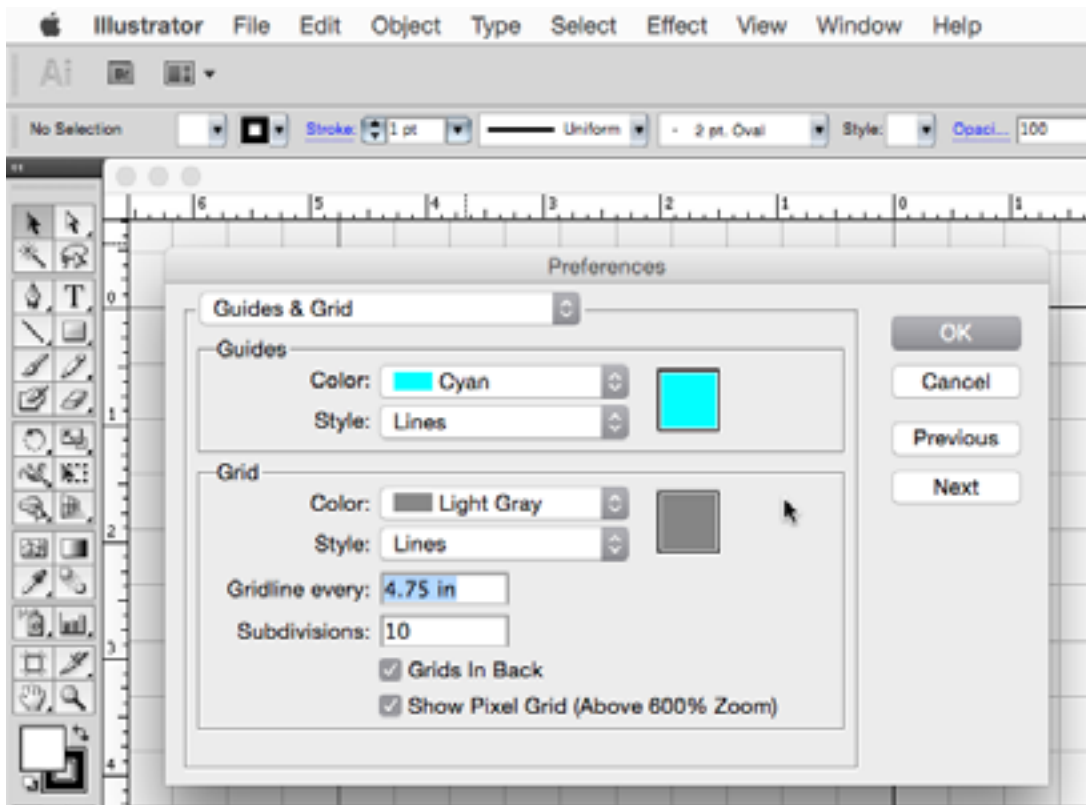
You can choose among the following: Points, Picas, Inches, Millimeters, Centimeters, and Pixels. Whatever you choose will be the units displayed by the rulers, the grid, and measurements shown in info boxes and the like. Illustrator will also convert units for you in dialog boxes; just type the dimensions (e.g., 12mm) and Illustrator will convert it to whatever your display units are (e.g., 0.4724 in).

## Rulers, Grid and Guides

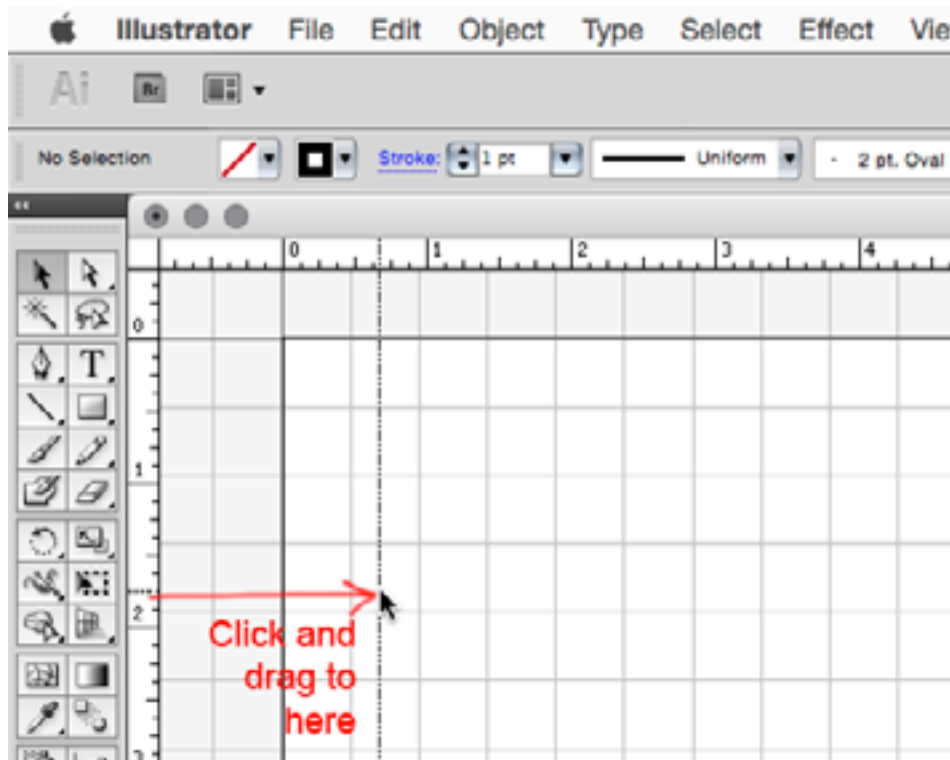
If your document is not already showing rulers, you can display them by selecting **View...Rulers... Show Rulers**; or use the shortcut toggle **Cmd R** (Mac) or **Ctrl R** (Windows). They will display along the top and left-hand edges of the workspace, using the units you have selected in **Preferences**. You can also right click within a ruler to change to different units. Note that the top left corner of your document will correspond to the 0,0 points on the rulers.



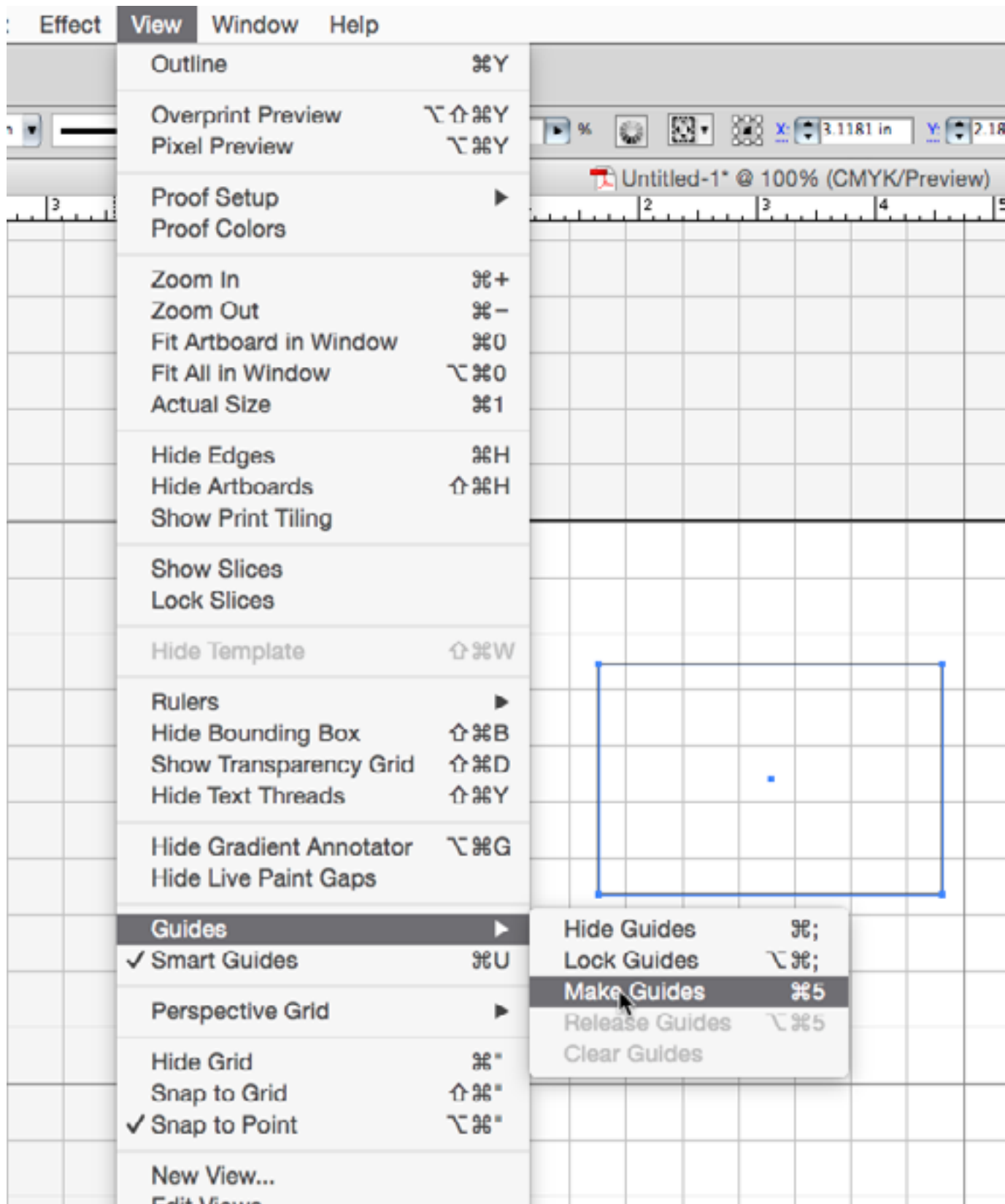
You will also use the **Preferences** panel to set up your Grid and Guide details. Play around with the Guide and Grid settings to suit your work style.



A Guide is a useful feature that allows you to place a line (or shape) anywhere in your workspace for aligning artwork. Vertical and horizontal guides are easy to place by “pulling” them out from vertical and horizontal rulers: just click within the ruler and drag to the workspace. (Hold down the shift key while doing this if you want the guide to snap to a division on your ruler).

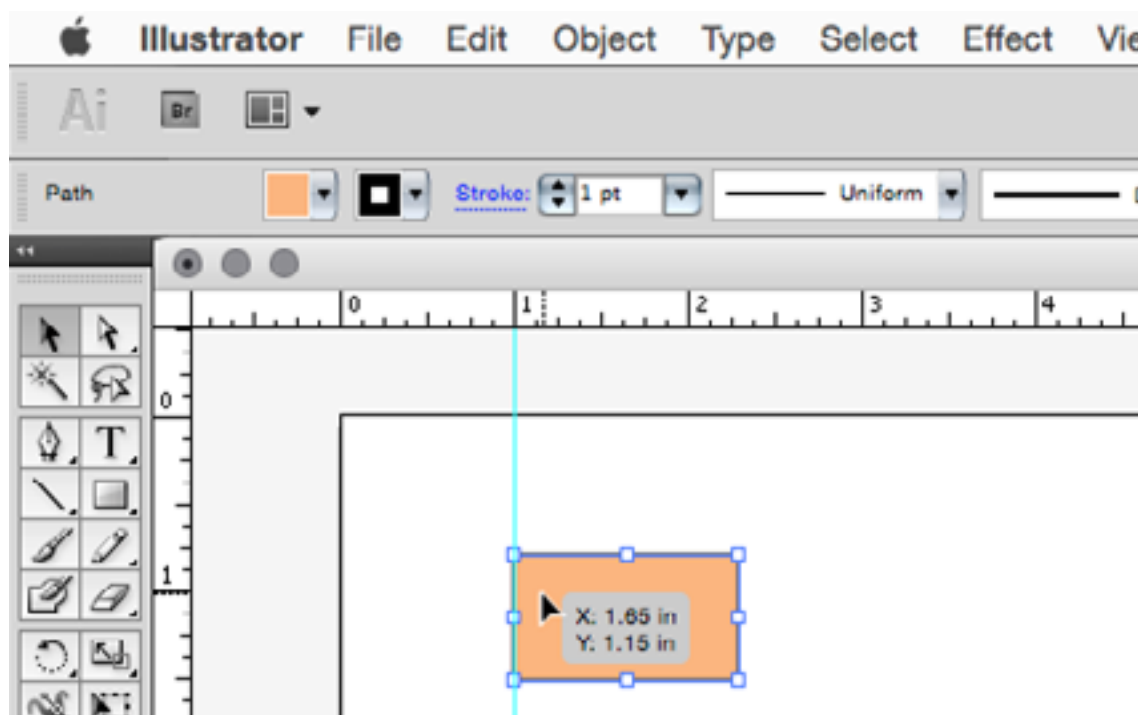


You can also use objects (like a box or ellipse for example) as a guide. Just create the object then while it is selected, choose **View...Guides...Make Guides**.



Guides can be locked (**View...Guides...Lock Guides**) so they won't move as you are positioning objects around or on them.

To use a guide, just drag the object close to the guide, and as it approaches the guide it will snap to it. Clear guides from your workspace by choosing **View...Guides...Clear Guides**.



## Workspaces

The arrangement of the various palettes (which you can show or hide by choosing the appropriate palette from the **Window** menu) is something you might like to customize for the type of work you are doing. You can arrange the palettes to your liking by dragging them (they will lock to one another if you drag the top of one palette to the bottom of another) and placing them in the order you like. Once you are happy with the arrangement, you can save this setup by choosing **Window...Workspace...Save Workspace**. Illustrator comes with a variety of preset workspaces that you can try; they are available in the **Window...Workspace** menu.

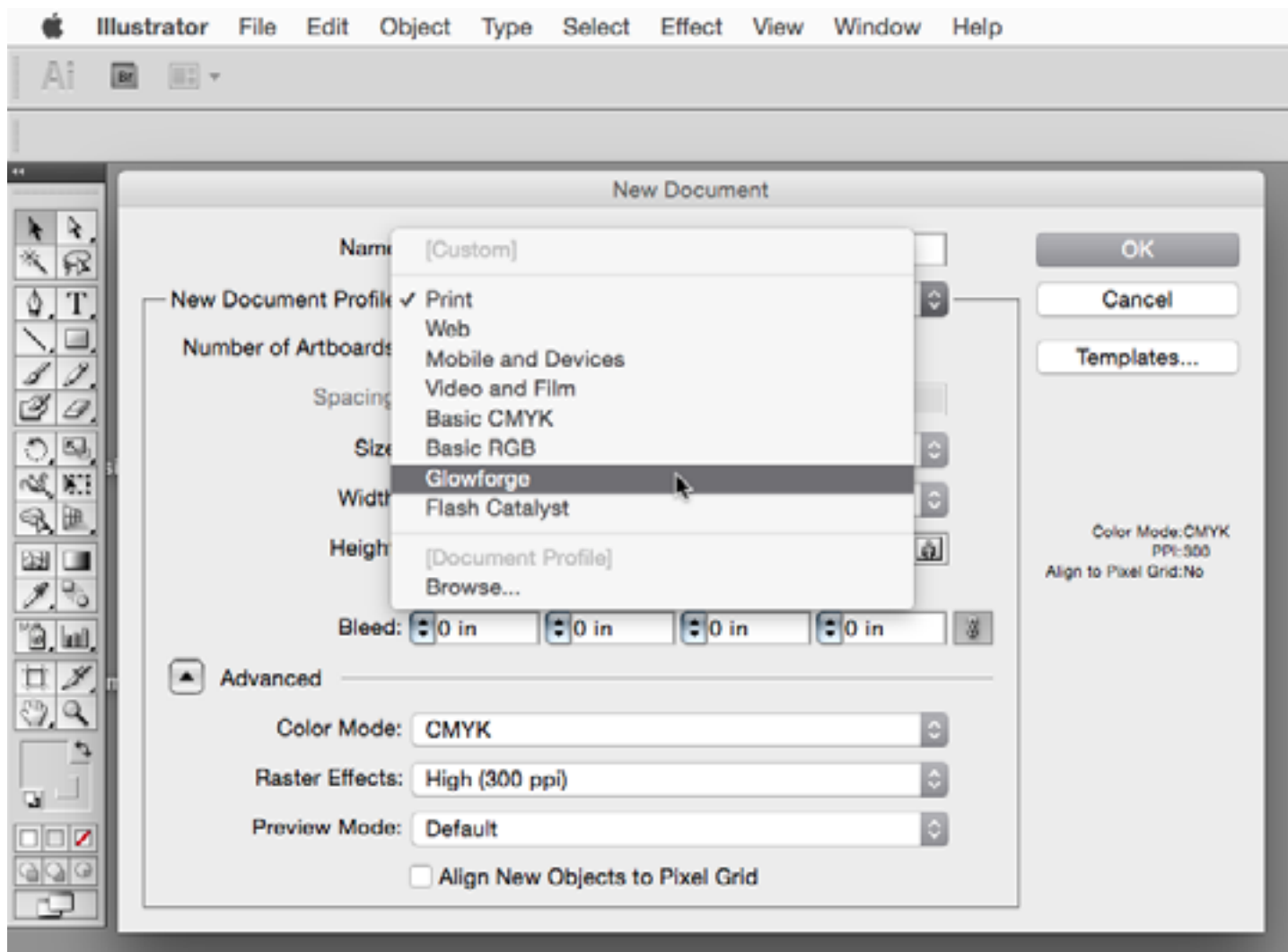
Once you have your document set up the way you like with rulers, workspaces, etc., you can save a custom document profile so that these settings will be set when you create a new document from scratch. Just save the blank document with whatever you want to name the profile (in this example I named the profile Glowforge.ai). Then move it into the folder on your hard drive where document profiles are stored. In the case of Illustrator CS5 that location is:

Mac : {user}:Library:Application Support:Adobe:Adobe Illustrator CS5:{lang}:New Document Profiles

Win : {drive}\Documents and Settings\{user}\Application Data\Adobe\Adobe Illustrator CS5 Settings\{lang}\New Document Profiles

If your version is different, you may need to search for the appropriate save location.

Once saved there, when you create a new document, the new profile will show up in the profiles listing:



For Illustrator CS5, the following are the settings which are saved with the profile: Swatches, Brushes, Symbols, Character Styles, Paragraph Styles, Graphic Styles, Page Size, Units, Orientation, Language, Highlight options, View Settings, Transparency Flattener Settings, Preview vs Pixel vs Overprint preview, Page Tiling, Edges, Guides, Grid, Transparency Grid, Rulers, Smart Guides, Document Raster Settings.