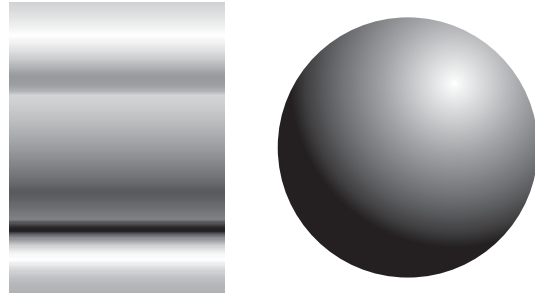
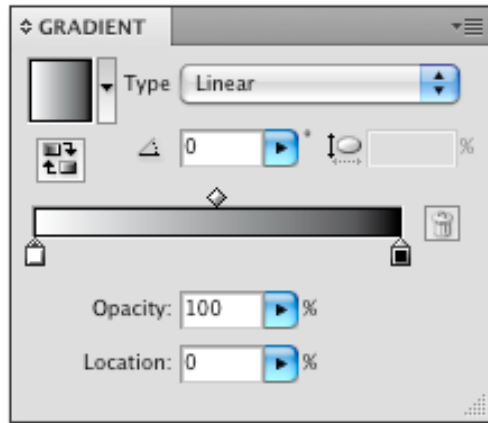


Illustrator: Gradients, Blends, and Meshes...

Gradients:



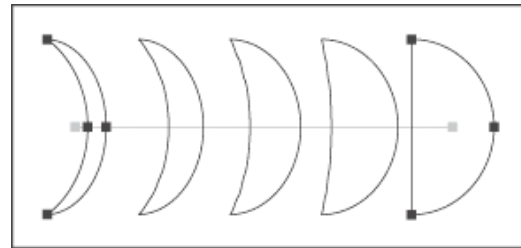
- **Gradient panel:** *linear* and *radial* (click on the gradient preview to edit/create a gradient).
- Create a custom gradient by adding colors & stops (pointers)
- Save a custom gradient in the Swatches panel by dragging
- **Object > Path > Outline Stroke** to put a gradient on an outline (instead of a fill)
- Reset gradient by selecting an object and pressing the “/” key, to fill with *none*

Blends:

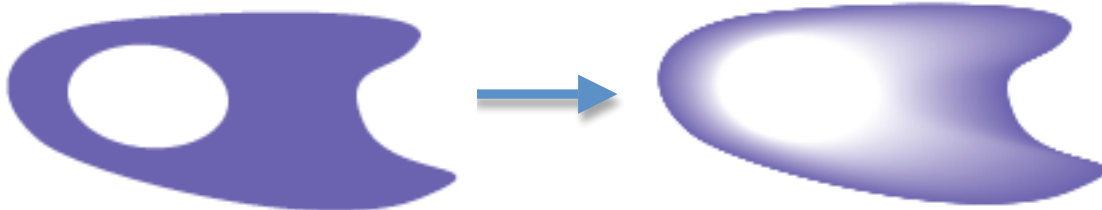
One of the simplest uses for **Blending** is to create and distribute shapes evenly between two objects. For example, you can create a series of evenly spaced or morphed shapes using the Blend Tool or the **Make Blend** command.



Two objects selected using the blend tool



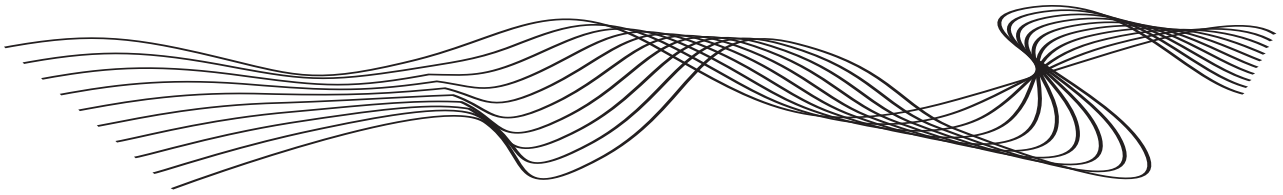
Blending distributes shapes evenly



Two overlapping objects can be blended smoothly—both in *shape* and *color*

- Blend Options: *Smooth Color*, *Specified Steps*, *Specified Distance*.
- Use **Blend Release**, to start over again.

You can also **blend between two open paths** to create a smooth transition between objects.



- **Fully-overlapping shapes won't create a blend path (spine)**
- **Transparency** can be adjusted for a *key object*
- Try : Filter > Distort to a key shape for wild results
 - Select two (or more) shapes and blend
 - Edit the blend path (*spine*). Remember: add handles using the Convert Anchor Point Tool.
 - Edit the colors in the blend, at key objects
 - Add points along the blend path
 - Insert object into a blend: direct select key shape, & Option-drag to make a copy

The following rules apply to blending shapes and their associated colors:

- * You can blend between an unlimited number of objects, colors, opacities, or gradients.
- * The Adobe Illustrator program automatically calculates the number of steps in a blend, unless you select *Specify Steps* in the Blend Options dialog box.
- * **Blends can be directly edited** with tools such as the selection tools, the rotate tool, or the scale tool.
- * A **straight path** is created between blended objects when the blend is first applied. **You can edit the blend path** by dragging anchor points and path segments.
- * If you blend between objects with multiple appearance attributes (effects, fills, or strokes), Illustrator attempts to blend the options.

Gradient Mesh:

- A Mesh object is always a mesh object (**TIP: work with a copy**).
- Object > Create Gradient Mesh... to create a mesh object.
- For a Gradient filled object, use Object > Expand, and enable the Gradient Mesh option.
- **You cannot blend between mesh objects.**

