



Corporate Flow



Illustration



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Canvas Tips and Techniques



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Creative Department**

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Creating Shadows and Reflections

Learn how to use Canvas to add natural shading and reflections to your Canvas illustrations.

In the following tutorial, we will take a look at some steps you could take to add dimension to your vector illustrations through the use of shading, shadows, and reflections.

We start this exercise by opening an illustration of a green apple (see right). As you could see, the illustration is composed of two simple objects, an apple and a stem.

This particular green apple was created using Canvas' drawing tools; however, these same procedures could be used on a wide variety of vector objects, including clip art.

To learn more about Canvas' drawing tools, see our tutorial on [Curves](#).



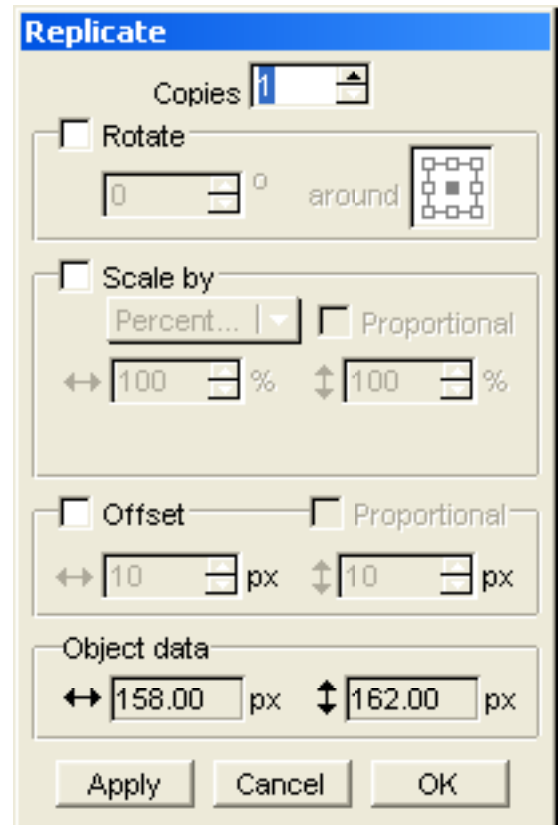
Step 1

Replicating the Object

We'll first give our apple some shading. This technique will give the apple a more realistic, rounded appearance.

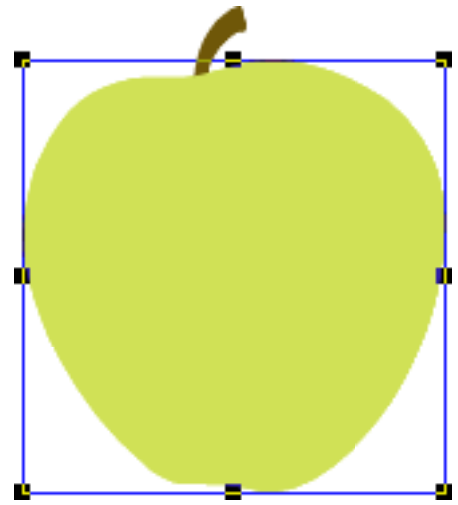
To shade the apple, we must first replicate the main apple object. To do this, click on the apple to select it. Then, choose Edit > Replicate. When the Replicate dialog box appears, enter 1 as the number of copies and ensure to deselect the Rotate, Scale by, and Offset checkboxes. Press OK when you have made your choices.

With these Replicate settings, Canvas will create an exact copy of the selected object precisely over the original. This is important since this effect will only work properly if the objects are perfectly aligned.



Creating Shadows and Reflections (Continued)

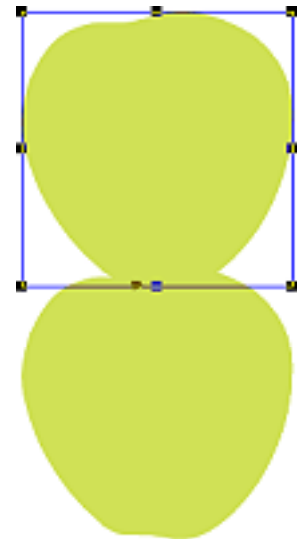
The new apple object will appear directly over the original. You can tell that the new object is at the top of the stacking order by the way it partially obstructs the view of the stem object.



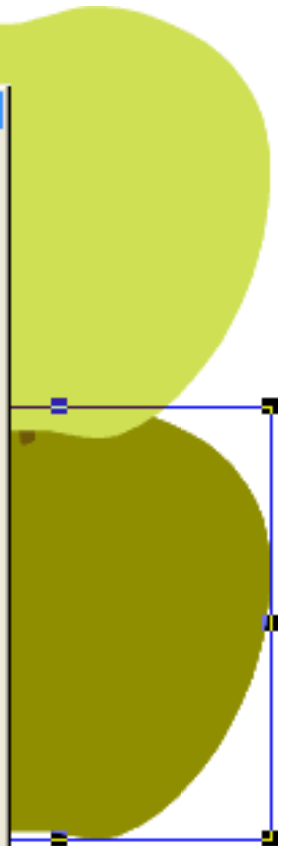
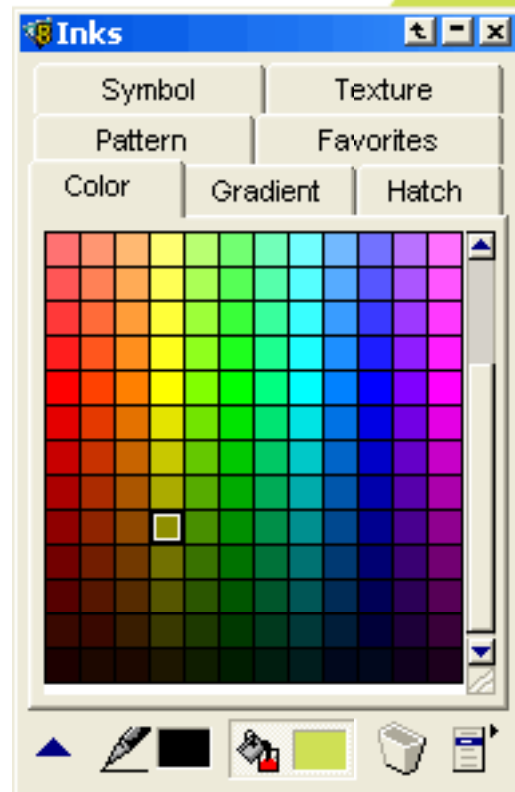
Before we start shading the apple, we need to change the color of the original apple object to a darker hue that will represent its shaded areas.

This is easier to do if we temporarily move the replicated object out of the way to give yourself access to the original apple object.

One easy way to do this is to select the new apple object (if it is not already selected) and press Ctrl + Up Arrow key (Windows) or Command + Up Arrow key (Mac) about three times. By default, this key combination will move your selected objects (or images) 50 pixels per click in the direction of the arrow key. This will reveal the original apple object below.

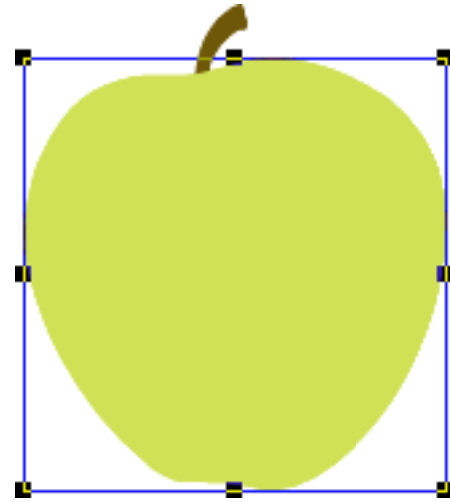


Next, select the original apple object and use the Inks palette to change its color to a darker shade of green.



Creating Shadows and Reflections (Continued)

Now, click on the light green apple object (the replicated apple object) and press Ctrl + Down Arrow key (Windows) or Command + Down Arrow key (Mac) to move the apple back into position directly over the original. If you have followed the instructions properly up to this point, your illustration should look like our example.

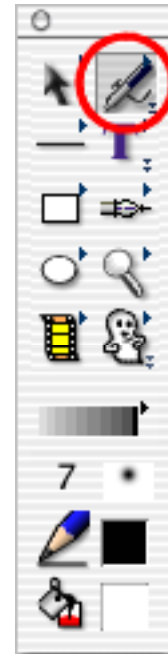


Step 2

Shading an Object

Now we are ready to shade our illustration. Using the Sprite tool we'll make some sections of our light green apple object transparent, thus revealing the darker apple object.

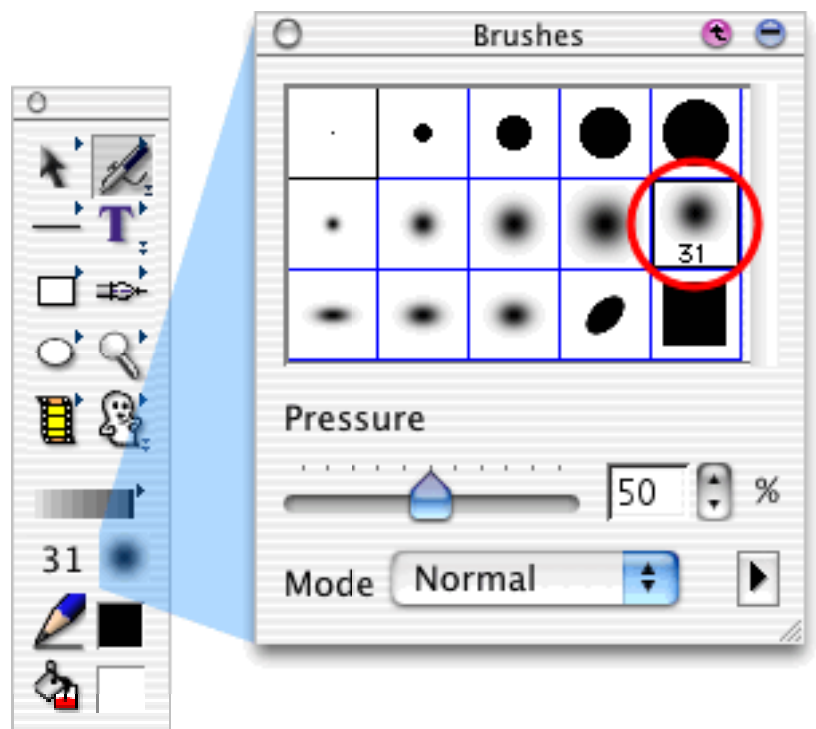
Before we use the Sprite tool, we are going to prepare our Painting tool and brush. To do this, select the Airbrush tool from the Toolbox.



Next, with the Airbrush tool still selected, we'll choose a big, wide brush from the Brushes palette located in the Toolbox. Make sure the brush is on Normal mode and set to a low pressure.

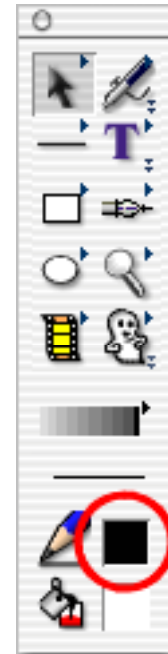


Note: To access the pressure and mode options you must drag the Brushes palette away from the Toolbox.



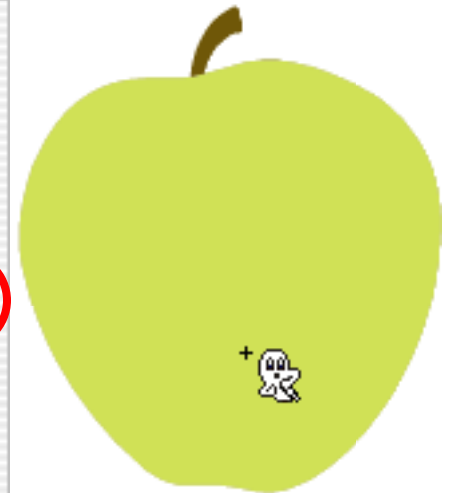
Creating Shadows and Reflections (Continued)

You also need to set the Pen Ink to black for this step to work properly.



Now we are ready to use the Sprite tool. First, decide which area you want to shade. Since an apple is a round object, we are going to work the outer edges of the apple to give it a round appearance.

Begin by clicking on the apple with the Sprite tool. Canvas will immediately switch to the previously selected Painting tool (the Airbrush tool) and use the brush setting we selected previously (size 31 brush with a pressure of 3).

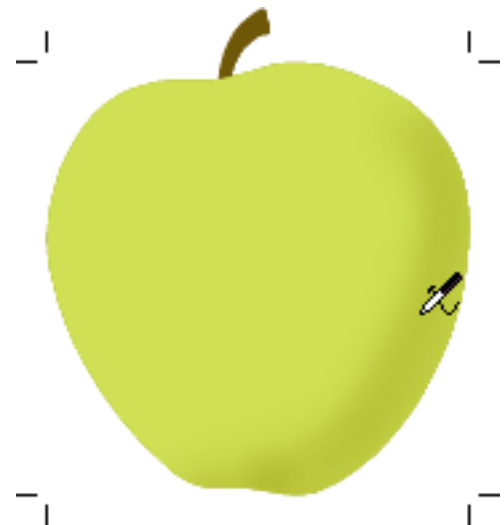


Using the Airbrush tool, begin by slowly working the outer edges of the apple to give the apple a 3-D appearance.

When using the Sprite tool, you create a Channel mask. With a Channel mask, when you paint an object black it becomes invisible. By the same token, painting an object white will restore the visibility to that section. This is useful if you make a mistake.

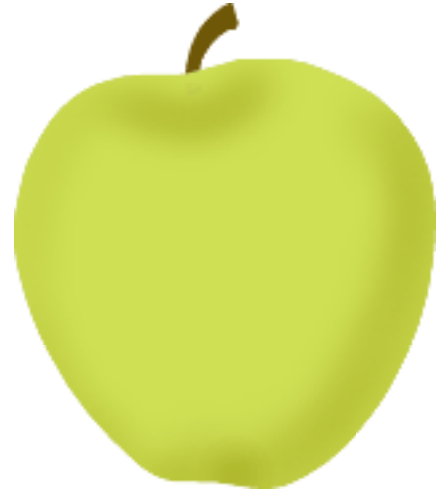
Experiment with different pressure settings and brush shapes to get the results you want.

When you're done, press Esc to leave edit mode and deselect the object.

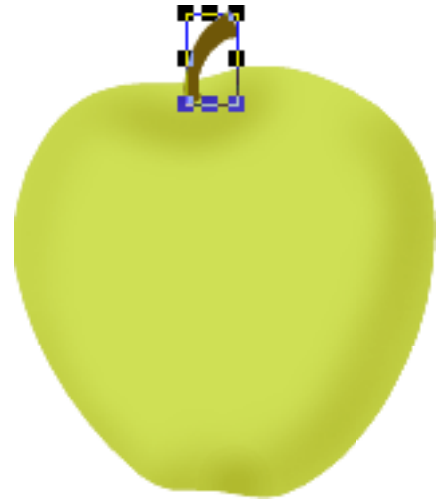


Creating Shadows and Reflections (Continued)

On the right is the apple with the shading complete.



To move the stem to the top of the stacking order, select the stem then press Ctrl + F (Windows) or Command + F (Mac).



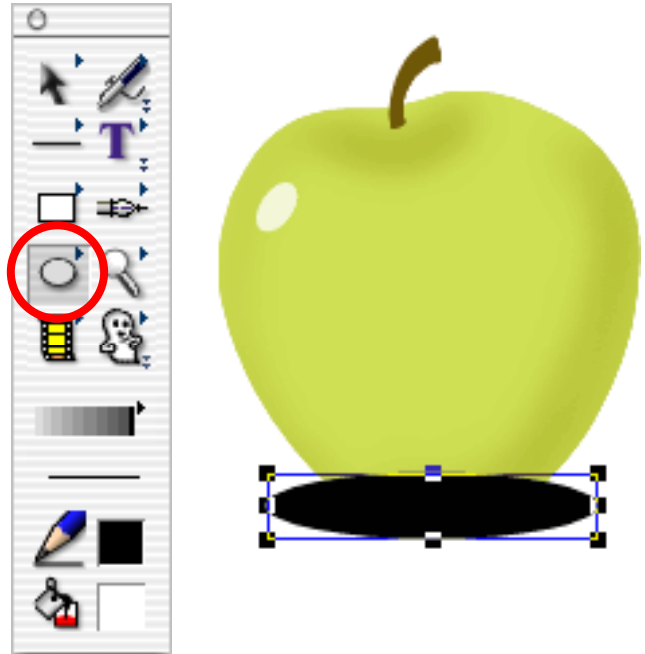
For an even more realistic appearance, we created a shine using the Oval tool to create a white circular object.



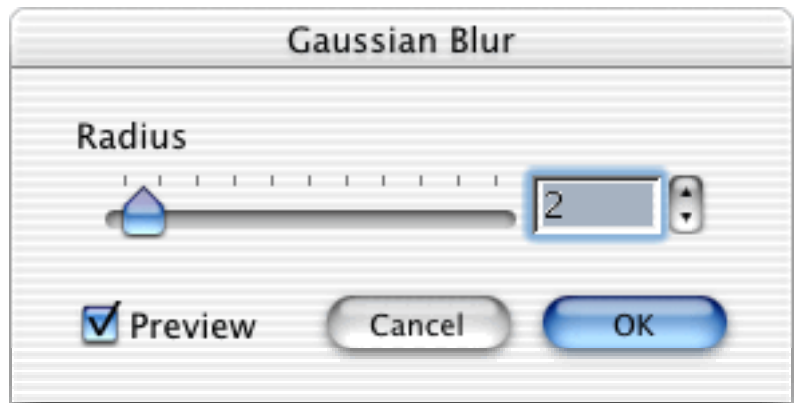
Step 3

Creating a Shadow

Next, we'll create a shadow for our apple. We do this by using the Oval tool and drawing a small, flat, black oval just below the apple.



Now with the shadow object still selected go to Objects > SpriteEffects > Add Effect > Blur > Gaussian Blur. When the Gaussian Blur dialog box appears, enter a radius for the blur and press OK.

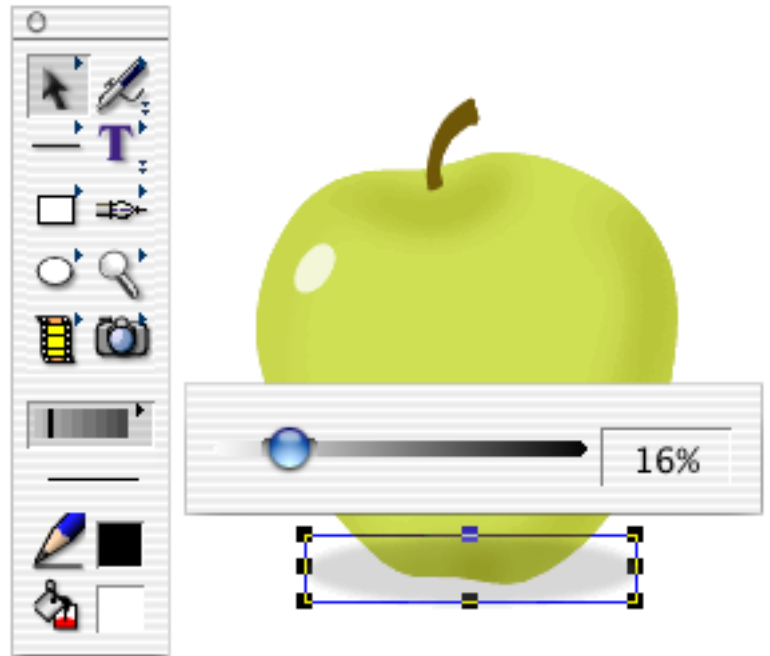


Your shadow will look like the example on the right.



Creating Shadows and Reflections (Continued)

Now we'll use the Opacity slider, located in the Toolbox, to lower the object's transparency down to about 16%.



Finish the illustration by sending the shadow object to the bottom of the stacking order. An easy way to do this is to use the shortcut key commands Ctrl + B (Windows) or Command + J (Mac).



Step 4

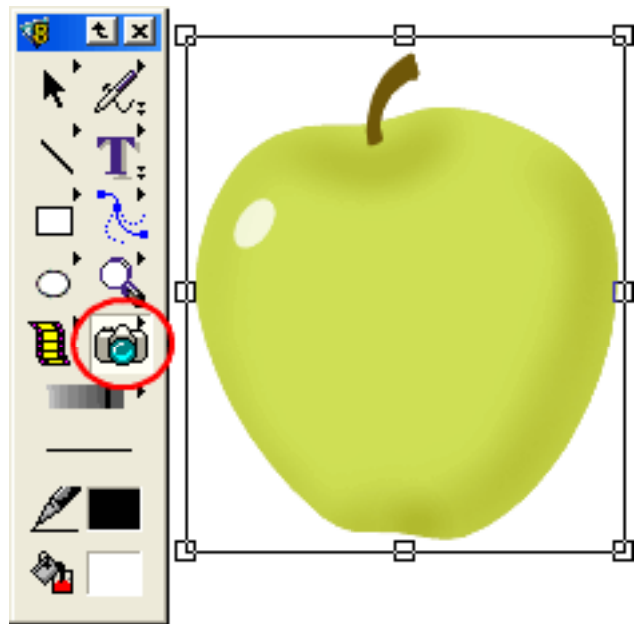
Creating a Reflection

Another cool effect is to use a reflection for an illustration instead of a shadow, as though the object were resting on a piece of smooth glass. In this step, we'll use the shaded apple and add a reflection to it.



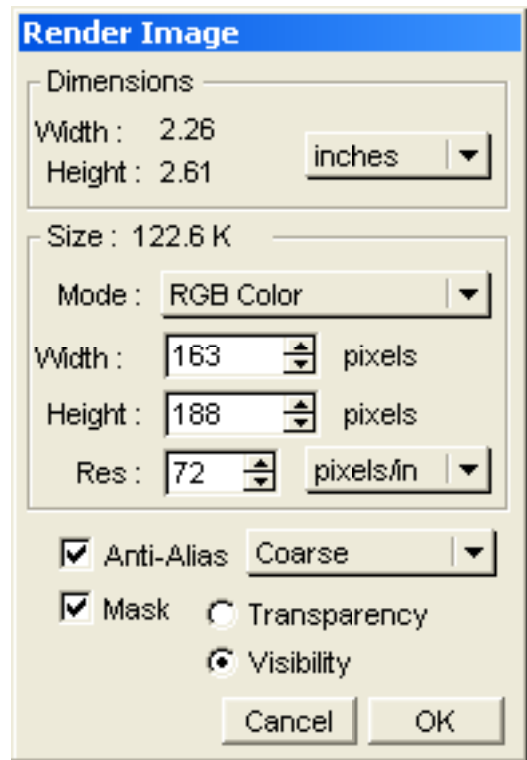
Creating Shadows and Reflections (Continued)

We start by using the Camera tool to take a snapshot of the completed apple. Select the Camera tool and drag it diagonally to frame the apple.



When you are satisfied with the selection, click inside the selected area to accept the image and open the Render Image dialog box.

In this dialog box, select the resolution, Anti-Alias option, and, most important, the Mask. Select Visibility as the mask type. When you have made your selection, press OK.



Note: Anti-Aliasing is a technique that keeps your images smooth.

You will now have a rendered duplicate of the illustrated apple. Click on the rendered apple image and drag it down a bit to avoid mixing them up.



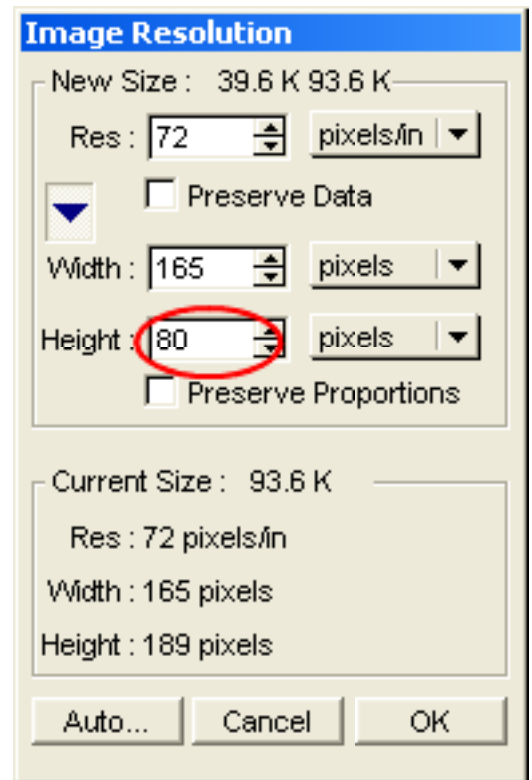
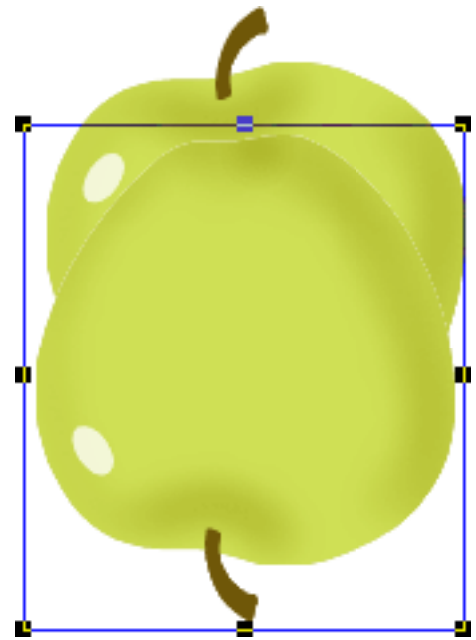
Creating Shadows and Reflections (Continued)

Now we are going to flip the rendered apple image upside down. Select the rendered apple, then choose Effects > Flip > Vertical.

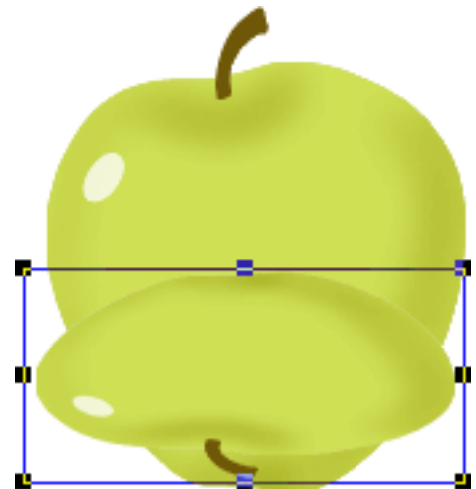
With the image still selected, let's open the Image Resolution dialog box (Image > Area > Resolution) and change the image's height from 189 pixels to 80. This setting will make our image look compressed.



Note: Make sure you deselect the Preserve Proportion checkbox when changing the height. Selecting this checkbox will cause both the Width and Height to change in proportion to each other.

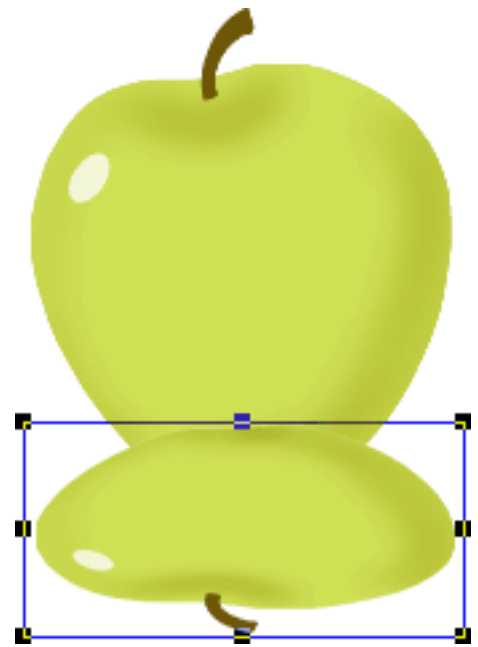


Here is a view of our flipped and resized apple.



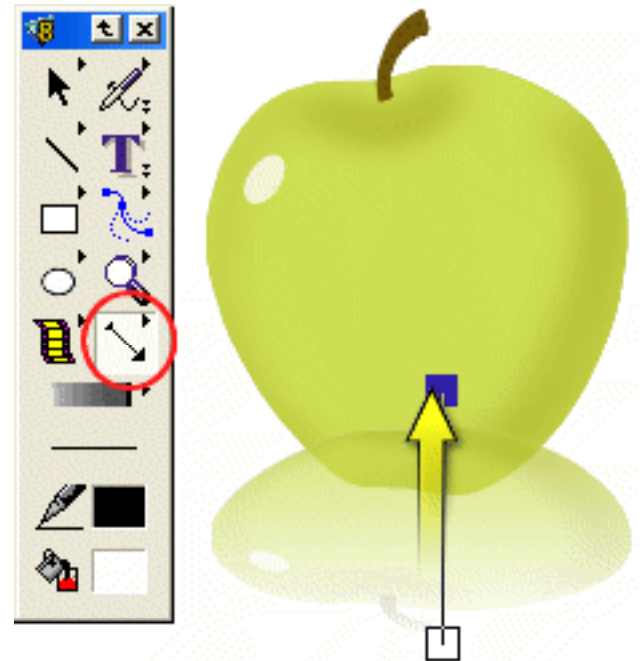
Creating Shadows and Reflections (Continued)

Next we are going to click on the rendered apple and place it in such a way that only the bottom parts of the apples are overlapping.



Using the Directional Transparency tool, click on the bottom of the flipped, rendered apple and drag upward to create a soft fade.

Remember the Directional Transparency tool applies a gradient transparency effect that goes transparent to solid. The area that you first click on with the tool becomes transparent, and the area where you release will be solid.



To complete the illusion, press the key commands Ctrl + B (Windows) or Command + J (Mac) to send the reflection behind the solid apple.



Step 5

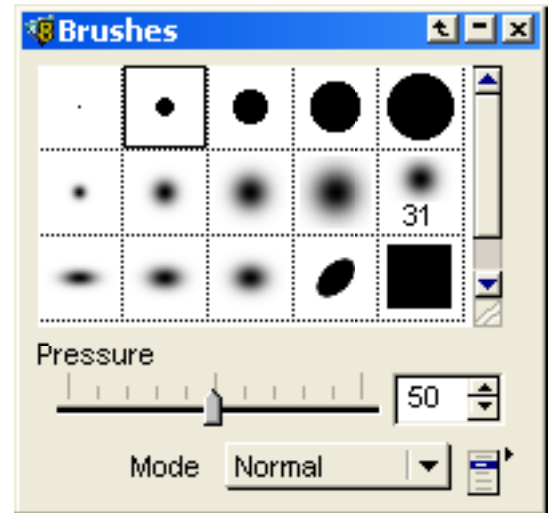
Creating a Wavy Reflection (optional)

Another variation to the reflection we created in Step 4 is to use the Smudge tool on the reflection to give it a wavy look. This technique will make your illustration look as though it is sitting in a puddle of water.

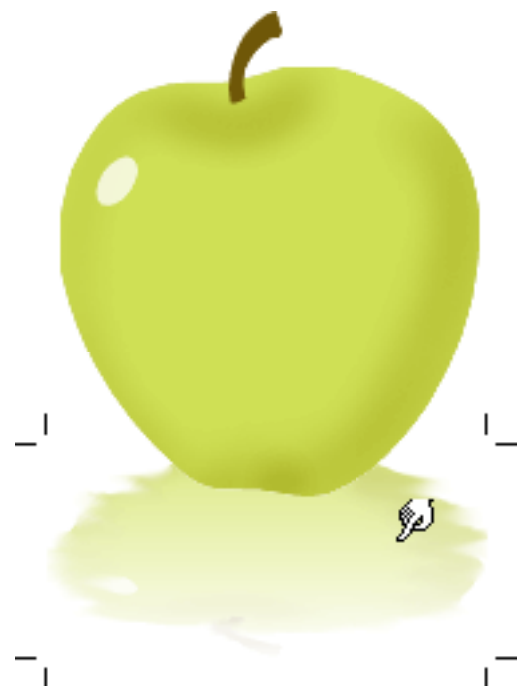
To do this, select the Smudge tool from the Toolbox.



Next, choose a medium size brush from the Brushes palette with a pressure of about 50%.



Now, move the Smudge tool back and forth across the apple's reflection to give it a wavy appearance.



Creating Shadows and Reflections (Continued)

Here is the completed apple with the watery reflection.

You should experiment with these techniques to discover new variations and uses. Using the steps learned in this tutorial, you can bring new life into old flat vector illustrations you may have lying around.

[Click here to download the green apple Canvas file.](#)

