

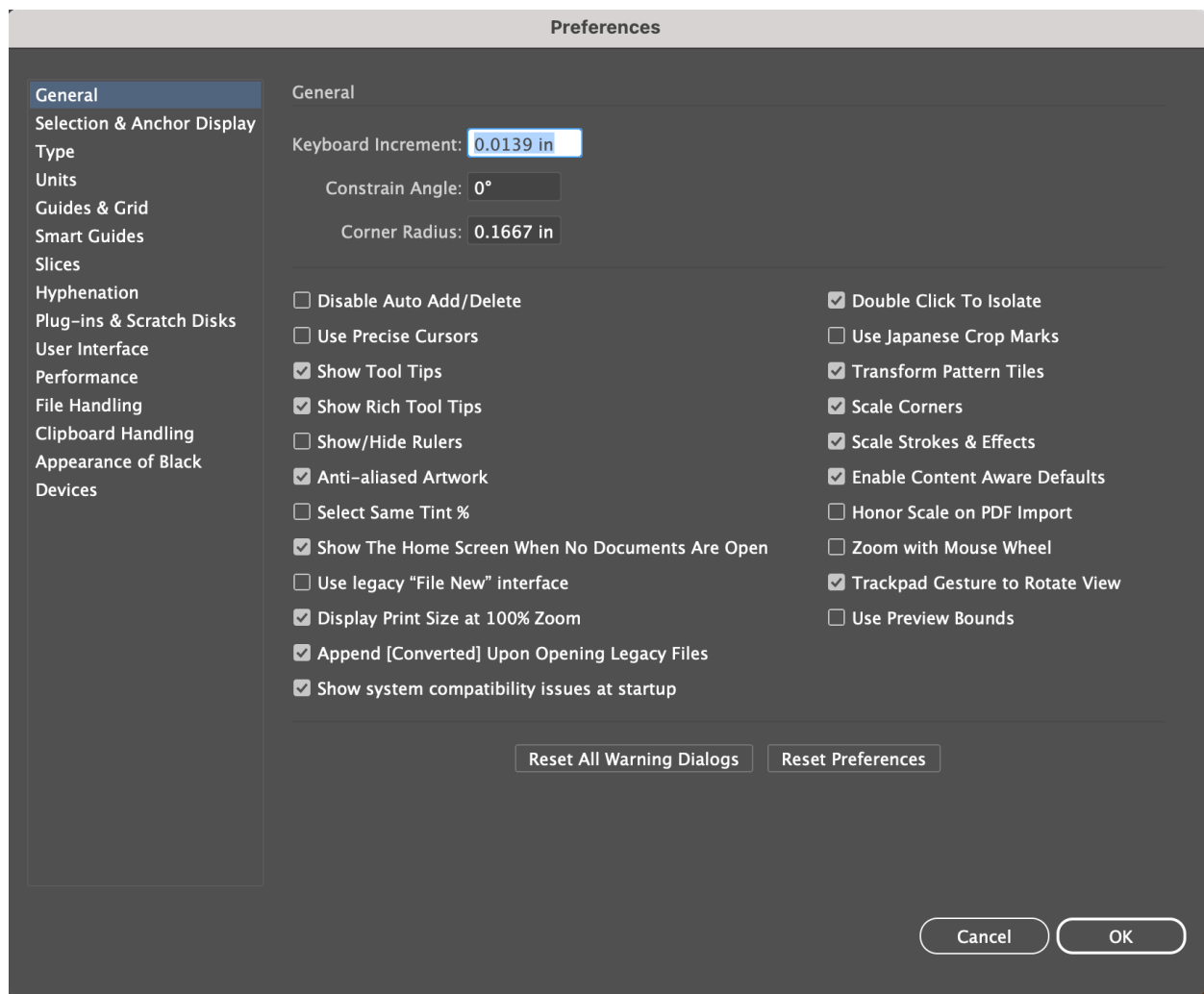
# IMPORTANT PREFERENCES IN ILLUSTRATOR

If you've never opened Illustrator before, or you've newly installed it on your computer, there are a few preferences you should check out before you dive headfirst into the program.

On a Mac, you can find the preferences panel by going to Illustrator > Settings > General. (This will open the preference panel to the first panel and you'll see all the other ones listed once you do.)

On a PC, you can find preferences under the Edit menu (it should say Preferences at the very bottom or something similar.

This is what the panel looks like:



## SCALE (UNDER GENERAL)

Under the General panel, look in the right column for “Scale Corners” and “Scale Strokes & Effects”. Make sure these two items are checked.

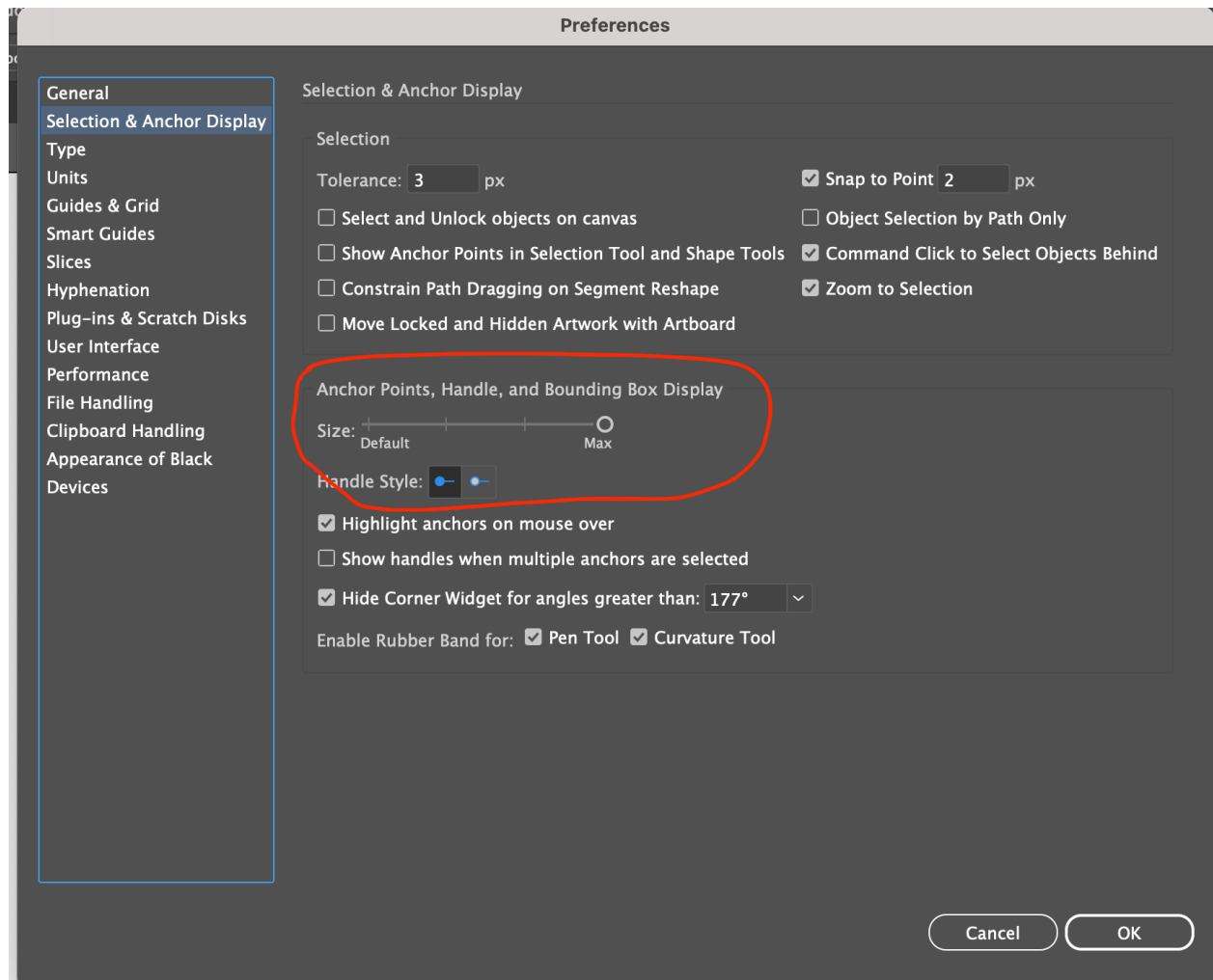
This is helpful in getting certain effects to scale properly, especially strokes if you use them. Sometimes these aren’t checked by default, so it’s a good idea to check off the bat.

These are *global* preferences, meaning they will be on all the time from here on out. You can actually turn off scaling from document to document in the Properties panel if you need to, but it’s more likely you’d rather have it on all the time than off all the time.

## SELECTION AND ANCHOR DISPLAY

The second thing you should change is the appearance of anchor points. By default, Illustrator’s anchor points are annoyingly small and can be difficult to see or grab. You’ll especially be thankful you changed this if you use Illustrator primarily with a trackpad!

Under “Selection & Anchor Display”, look for the Anchor Points section in the middle of the panel:



Move the slider to Max (or whatever size you prefer). But you'll probably want to use Max to make handles easier to see and grab.

## OTHER HELPFUL PREFERENCES

There are a few other preferences you can check out if you like:

- Under "General", you'll see the preferences for the Tool Tips in the left column. You can toggle these on and off if you like. (The tool tips show when you hover over a tool for a little bit.) I personally like these tips but you can turn them off if you find them annoying.
- Under "Units", you can select your preferred units (inches, etc.). You probably want to keep stroke and type at Points, though, as that is industry standard. But if you prefer to work in say, metric, feel free to change your general units. (You should still *always* double check what

unit of measurement you're working in when you create a new document, though.)

- You can turn off the Smart Guides (or adjust them) under "Smart Guides". Some people like to have these on as they work, but they do annoy other people, so feel free to mess around with this panel if you want to. An important one to look at here is "Snapping Tolerance" at the bottom. If you feel like you can't get an object close enough to something else on your canvas, make this tolerance smaller (like 1pt).
- Under "User Interface", you can change whether you're in dark mode or not and whether you want the UI to be at a smaller or larger scale. Helpful if you have vision issues or you feel like anything in the UI is too small.
- Under "Appearance of Black", you can change how black appears on your screen. You might notice that 100K black isn't really *black*. Like, black hole black. It might feel a little more like charcoal. That's because 100K black is 100% K on the CMYK scale with CMY at 0%. But if you're looking for that deep, dark, black hole black, you want to set your preference to rich black, which is all four CMYK colors at 100%. (In real life, this expends a lot of ink, but hey, sometimes that's the color we're going for!)