RESIZING YOUR CANVAS

Sometimes you start a project and then realize your file is the wrong size! Instead of throwing your hands up and starting over again, you can just resize your canvas in your project! You may have to resize or rearrange your artwork that's already there but at least you don't have to start all over again (and your artwork and layers will stay where they were so you don't have to re-import anything).

RESIZING IN ILLUSTRATOR

In Illustrator, you can resize your canvas using the Artboard tool, which looks like this:

Click the artboard tool and you'll notice your current canvas will have handles on it. But don't use the handles to resize your artboard. In the contextual bar at the top you'll see this line of tools when you have the artboard tool selected:
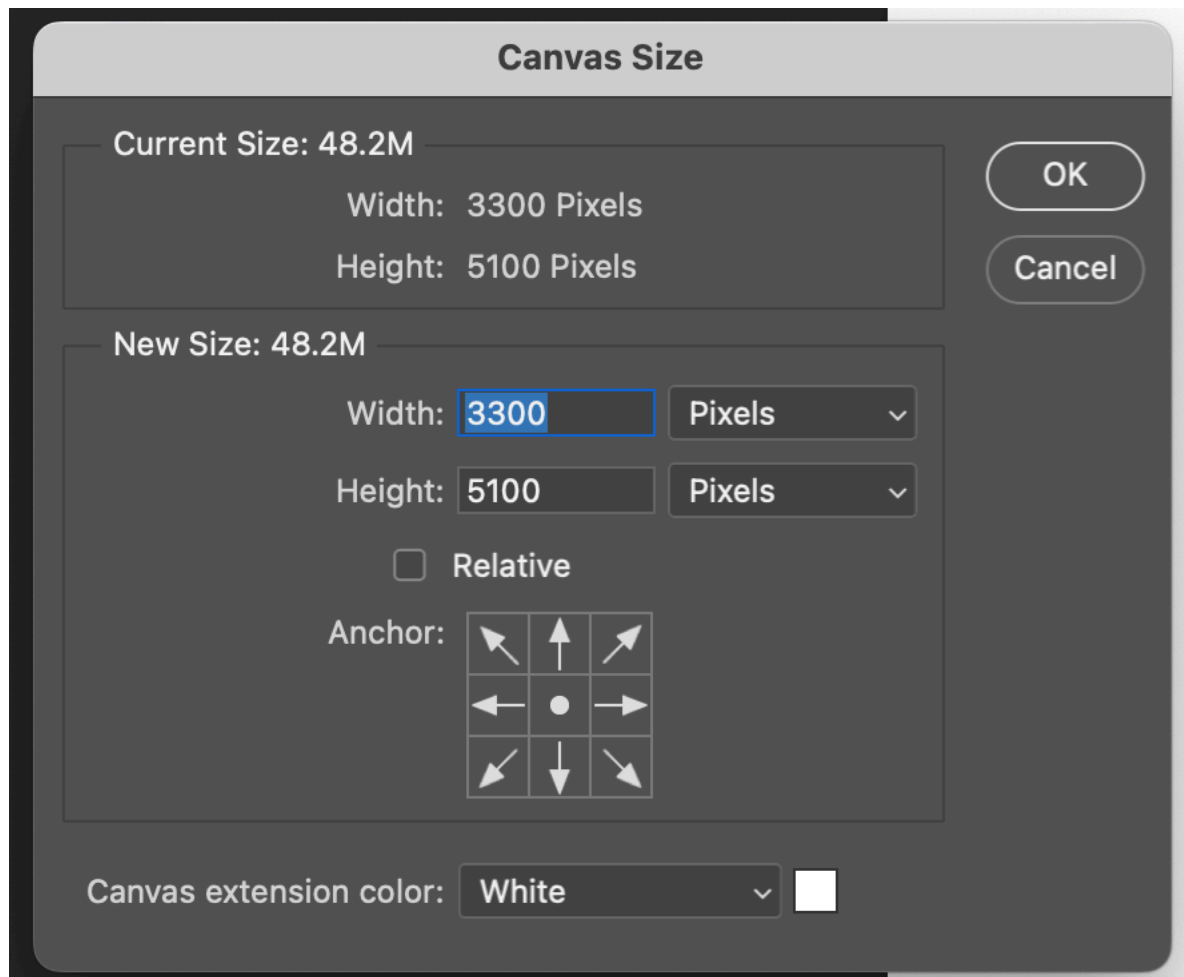

The dropdown has some standard paper sizes listed. Next to it, you can change the orientation of your canvas, which is handy if you've changed your mind and need to go from portrait to landscape. You can ignore X and Y.

The important part is at the very end though, where you see W and H and some measurements in those boxes. That is your canvas size. Input the correct size that you need and your canvas should change. Just select a

different tool to get out of the artboard mode and continue with your design as usual.

RESIZING IN PHOTOSHOP

To resize a canvas in Photoshop, go to Image > Canvas Size. You'll see this dialog box pop up:
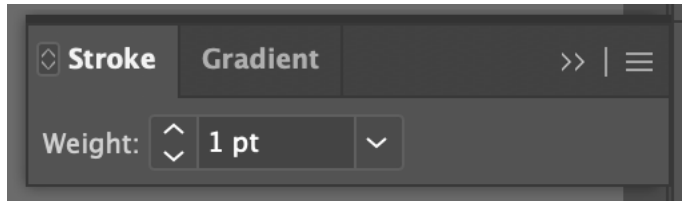

In the middle is where you can change your canvas size. Change to whatever unit of measure works best for you (inches is likely what you're going to use).

VERY IMPORTANT: Make sure "Relative" is *unchecked.* Otherwise, you're going to add that height and width you just added all around your current document, which is not correct.
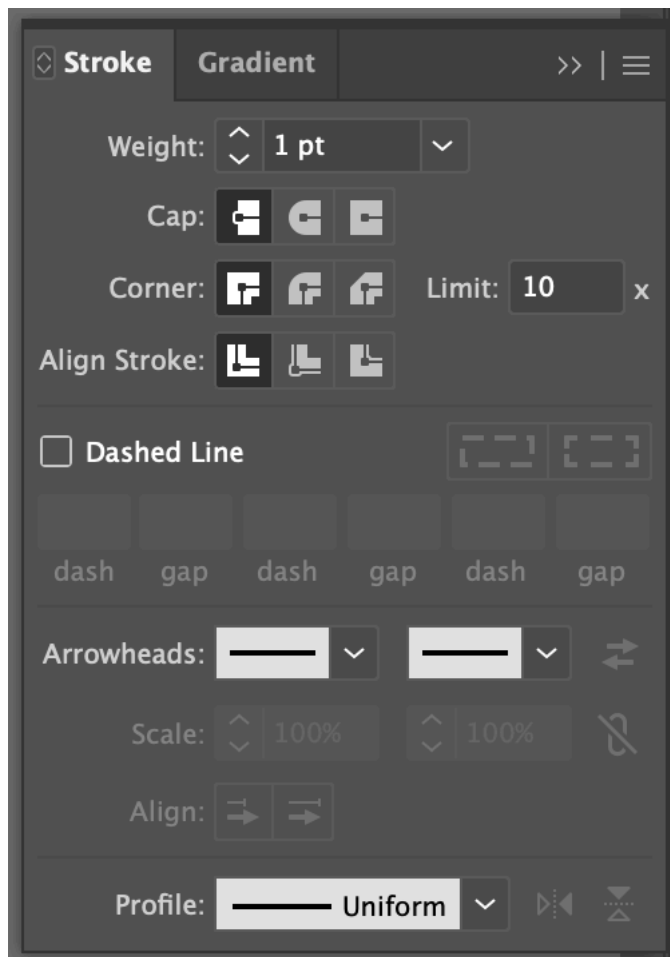
Once you've got the correct height and width entered and you're sure Relative is unchecked, hit OK and your canvas should be properly resized!

The stroke panel can actually appear in different ways, depending on whether you've opened Illustrator before or not.

You may see it in its very basic form:

You may see it in it super expanded form:

The most useful version is the version in the first screenshot. But you can cycle through all the versions by clicking the tiny arrows next to the word "Stroke" (they're a little hard to see but they're there!). Just click once while the panel is open and you'll cycle through all the views available.

CAP, CORNER, AND ALIGNMENT

In either of the expanded views, you'll see Cap, Corner, and Align Stroke underneath the "Weight" dropdown.

Cap is most helpful if you're drawing lines or curves with the pen tool or the Line tool. You might want rounded edges as opposed to the default square edges on the ends of your line. (This especially helpful if you're doing, say, a signature, or you just want a less harsh end to your line.)

To give yourself rounded ends, just choose the middle option (with your line selected, of course). Keep in mind that you cannot make one end pointy and the other end round on a stroke, though.

Corner is helpful if you are drawing a shape and you want rounded corners or tapered corners instead. (Tapered corners look like corners that have been cut off cleanly.) The choices are pretty self-explanatory here. This can be especially helpful for advanced text stroke techniques where you're applying strokes to a complex shape (like a person) or text. If you're getting unwanted pointy parts in your art, try changing the corners to rounded to fix it.
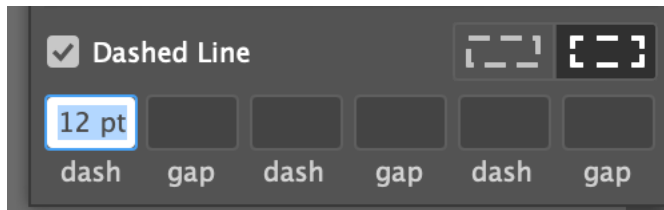
Align is helpful when you need really precise alignment with other shapes and the strokes are driving you insane. The default aligns a stroke in the middle of the outer bounds of the shape you drew. The other two options allow you to place the stroke on the inside of the shape or the outside of the shape.

If you're having trouble aligning objects that have strokes, try aligning the stroke to the inside of the shape to help.

DASHED LINES

If you're looking for dashed lines (a.k.a. "coupon lines"), you can achieve this in the Stroke panel. Just checkmark "Dashed Lines" with your line (or shape with a stroke) selected.

When you check Dashed Lines, there are a few things you can fiddle with:

To the right of "Dashed Line", you'll see two boxes. This only applies if you're adding a dashed line around a shape (and if it's a shape that has corners). The default option is the right icon, which gives you actual corners. The left icon strictly applies your dash and gap preferences without regards to corners.

You'll also see that you can adjust your dash and gap size. If you just put one value under "dash", that will make your dashes and your gaps the same size. If you'd like to keep your dashes even but make the gaps a different size, put a size under the first "gap". If you'd like to go hog wild and have more variation, you can adjust as necessary, but do know your pattern is limited by three sets of dashes and gaps.

OTHER SETTINGS

If you have the super expanded Stroke panel, you'll notice a few other settings below the Dashed Lines section. The only one you might want to mess around with here is the Arrowheads setting (helpful if you are drawing arrows or need decorations at the ends of your lines). There are several end caps to choose from — not just arrows! — and you can choose the ends independently of each other.