

Overview of Adobe InDesign

Adobe InDesign is a desktop publishing software application. Its page design and layout toolset lets you work across desktop and mobile devices to create, preflight, and publish everything from printed books, posters, and brochures to digital magazines, iPad apps, eBooks, and interactive online documents (**Figure 1**). With InDesign you lay out and manipulate your projects using various elements, such as panels, tools, bars, and windows. The arrangement of these items is called a workspace, adaptable to the unique way you work. Select from several preset workspaces or create one of your own. The InDesign workspace includes command menus at the top of your screen and a variety of tools and panels for editing and adding elements to your designs.

In this guide, you'll learn how to do the following:

- Work with the InDesign workspaces, tools, document windows, and panels.
- Customize the workspace.
- Change the magnification of a document.
- Navigate through a document by using the Pages panel and page controls in the document window.

You can download the assets used in [this tutorial here](#).

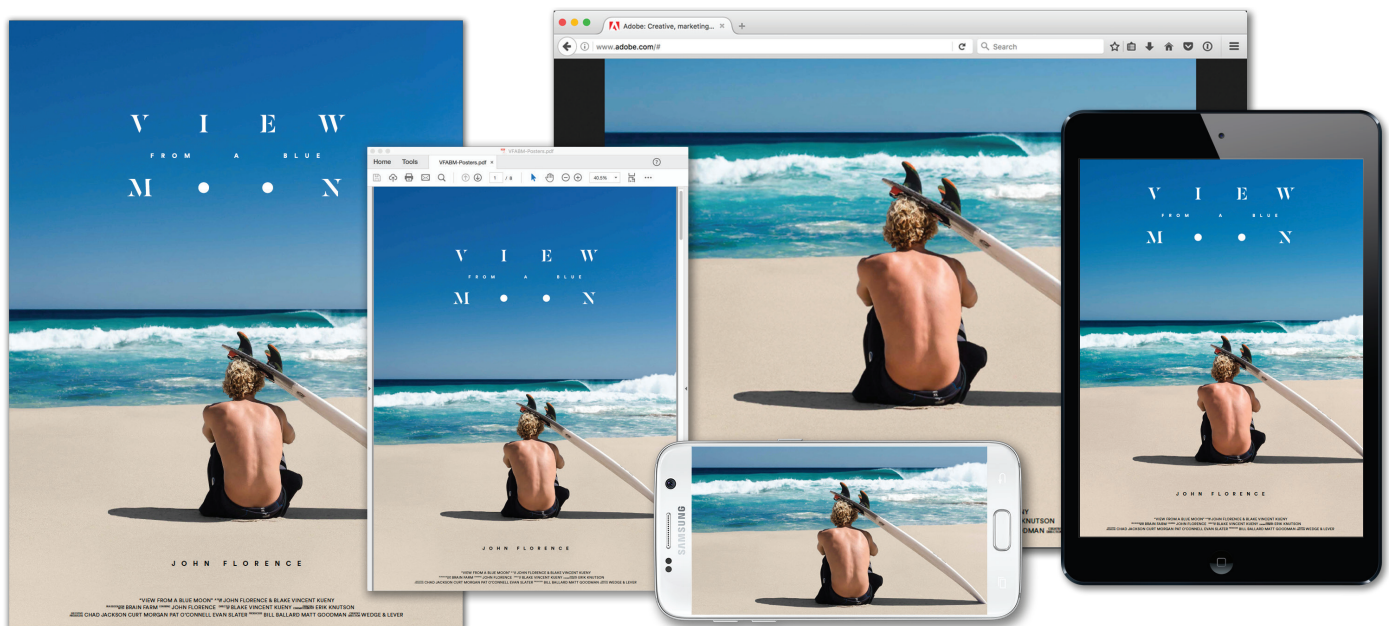


Figure 1 Publish design projects to a wide variety of formats and devices

The Start workspace

When you open InDesign, the Start workspace appears. If it's your first time opening the application, the recent files section will be empty (**Figure 2**). This workspace gives you quick access to your recent files, libraries, and mobile creations. Depending on your subscription status, the Start workspace may also display other content, including Adobe Stock. InDesign displays the Start workspace at launch or whenever no documents are open.

Access files and libraries

Tile and List icons

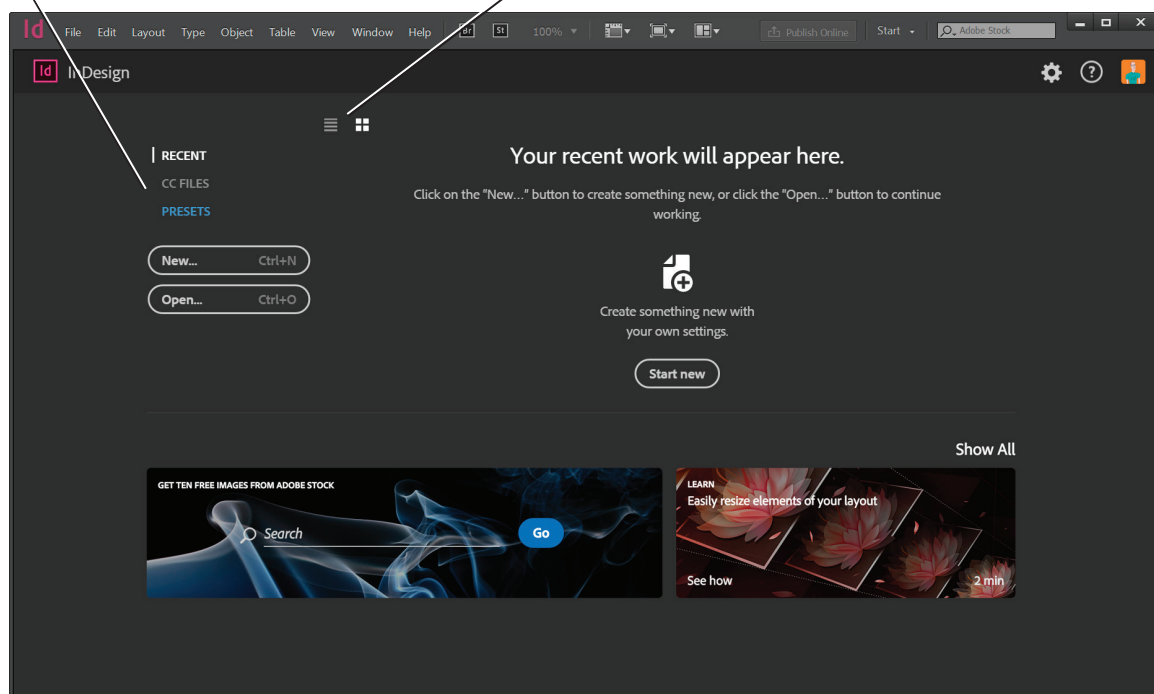


Figure 2 The Start workspace, Recent Files tab

To open a document from the Start workspace:

1. Start Adobe InDesign.

The Start workspace opens. If you've previously used InDesign, your recent files will be shown.

2. Use the options in the Start workspace to browse your recent files and libraries:
 - *Access your assets* - View recently-opened files, define and browse libraries, or select a preset option by clicking the **New** button.
 - *Toggle between tile and list views* - Click the Tile icon or the List icon.
 - *Find a stock asset* - Enter a keyword in the Search field. InDesign displays the search results from Adobe Stock in a new browser window.
3. Use one of these workspace options to create a new document, open an image, or select a defined preset.

The InDesign working area opens.

Exploring the workspace

The InDesign workspace (**Figure 3**) encompasses everything you see when you first open or create a document: the Tools panel, document window, pasteboard, and other panels. You can customize and save the work area to suit your work style. For example, you can choose to display only those panels you frequently use, minimize and rearrange panel groups, resize windows, and add additional document windows.

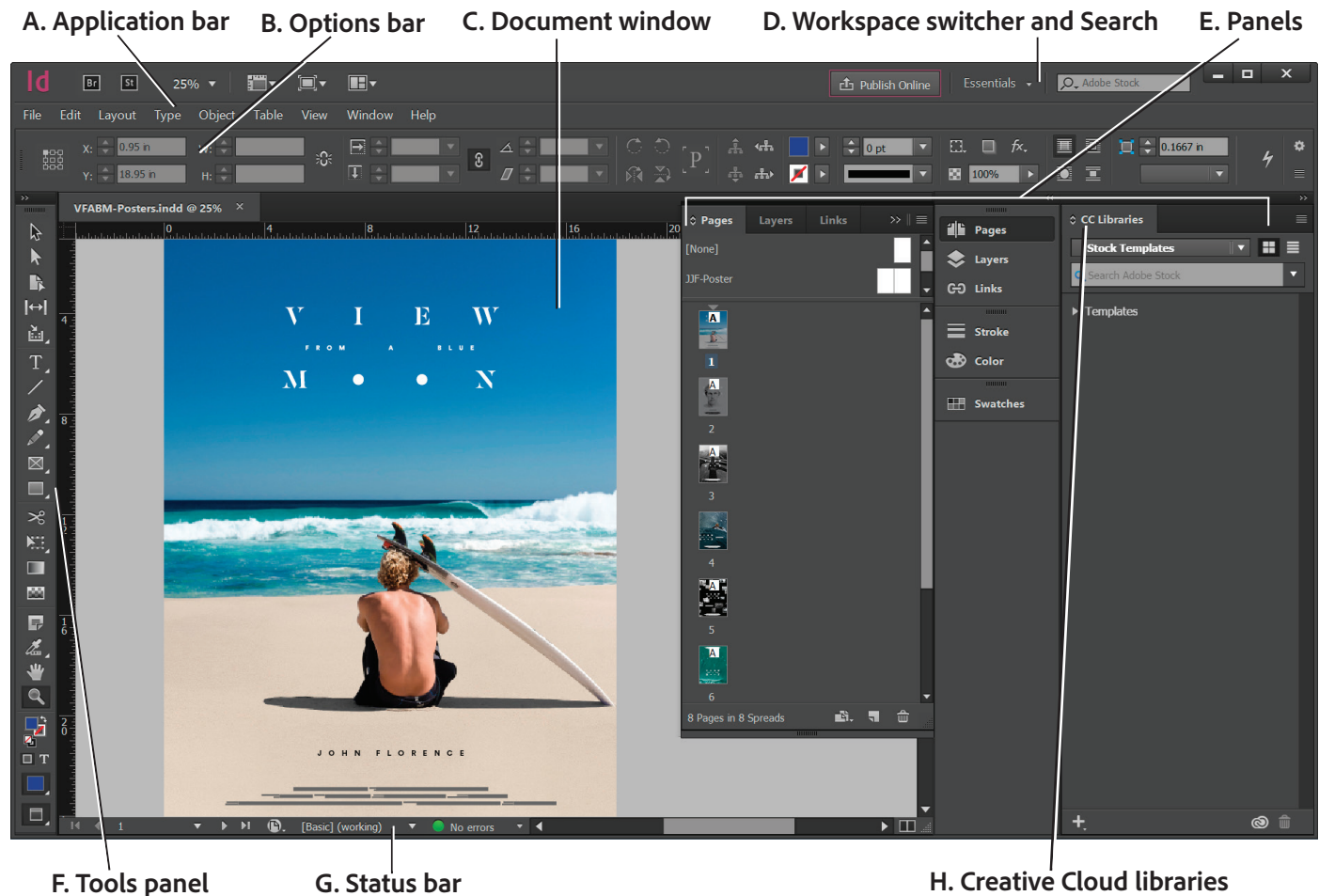


Figure 3 Adobe InDesign application frame with open file in the workspace

The default workspace in InDesign includes an Application bar at the top of the screen. Within this Application bar are the InDesign application icon, main menu, application controls, View controls, and the workspace switcher. Below this bar is the Control panel, the Tools panel on the left, panels on the right, and one or more document windows, which are opened separately.

Here's an overview of the elements that make up the Essentials workspace:

- The *Application bar* across the top contains a workspace switcher, menus (Windows only), and other application controls. On Mac, the application bar is available only when Application frame is off. You can toggle it on or off using the Window menu.
- The *Options bar Control panel* displays options for the currently selected tool.
- The *Document window* displays the file you're working on. Document windows can be tabbed and, in certain cases, grouped and docked.
- The *Workspace switcher* allows you to adjust the layout and functionality of the InDesign workspace. The *Search bar* lets you search for inspiring Stock assets.

- E. *Panels* help you monitor and modify your work. Certain panels are displayed by default, but you can add any panel by selecting it from the Window menu. Many panels have menus with panel-specific options. You can separate, group, stack, and dock panels into your preferred layout.
- F. The *Tools panel* contains tools for creating and editing images, artwork, page elements, and so on. Related tools are grouped.
- G. The *Status bar* appears at the lower-left edge of the illustration window. It displays any of the following:
 - current zoom level
 - current tool in use
 - current artboard in use
 - navigation controls for multiple artboards
- H. The *Creative Cloud Libraries* makes your images, colors, text styles, and more sharable across desktop applications and mobile apps. You create new libraries and access them via the Libraries panel.

The *Application frame* groups all the workspace elements in a single, integrated window that lets you treat the application as a single unit. When you move or resize the Application frame or any of its elements, all the elements within it respond to each other so none overlap. Panels don't disappear when you switch applications or when you accidentally click out of the application. If you work with two or more applications, you can position each application side by side on the screen or on multiple monitors. If you are using a Mac and prefer the traditional, free-form user interface, you can turn off the Application frame. Select Window > Application Frame to toggle it on or off.

Exploring the workspace options

Preset workspaces are available and optimized for specific types of workflows and creative projects. You can adjust the layout and functionality of the InDesign workspace for dedicated uses by using the workspace switcher.

To explore the workspaces:

1. Click on the Workspace switcher and confirm the option is set to **Essentials** (Figure 4).
2. Select one of the other workspace options, for example, **Typography**.
The interface changes to feature the tools and panels best suited for that particular set of tasks.
3. Try another option, perhaps **Digital Publishing**.
Notice how the panels options change.
4. Choose **Essentials** to restore the default workspace.

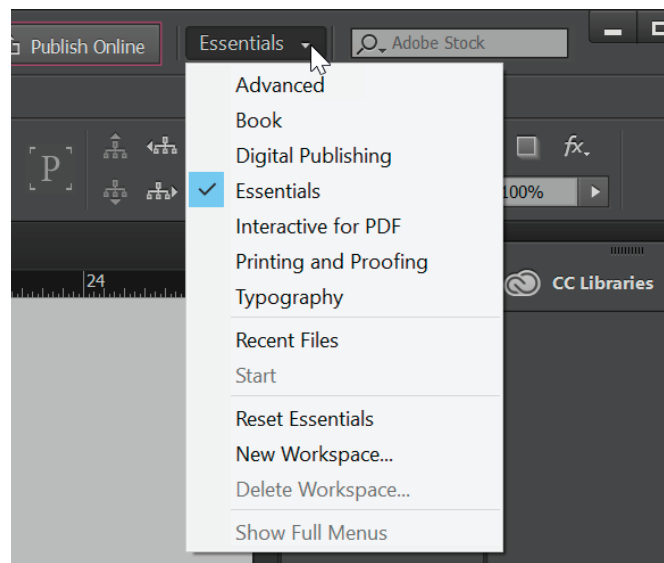


Figure 4 Workspace switcher

Customizing the workspace

By saving the current size and position of panels as a named workspace, you can restore that workspace even if you move or close a panel. The names of saved workspaces appear in the workspace switcher.

To create a custom workspace:

1. To create a custom workspace, move and manipulate the interface in InDesign (Figure 5) to create a unique layout.

2. From the Workspace Switcher menu, select **New Workspace** (Figure 6).

The New Workspace dialog box appears (Figure 7).

3. Name your workspace.

4. Click **OK**.

Your new workspace appears in the upper-right corner of the interface in the workspace switcher area (Figure 8).

5. Open the workspace switcher menu.

Even if you change to another type of workspace, at any time you can return to your saved workspace by reselecting it from the workspace switcher menu.

InDesign also records any changes you make to your task-specific or saved layouts, so that if you switch to a different workspace and then switch back during an editing session, the panels will be exactly where you left them.

You can restore the saved workspace at any time by choosing **Reset [your named workspace]** from the workspace switcher menu (Figure 8).

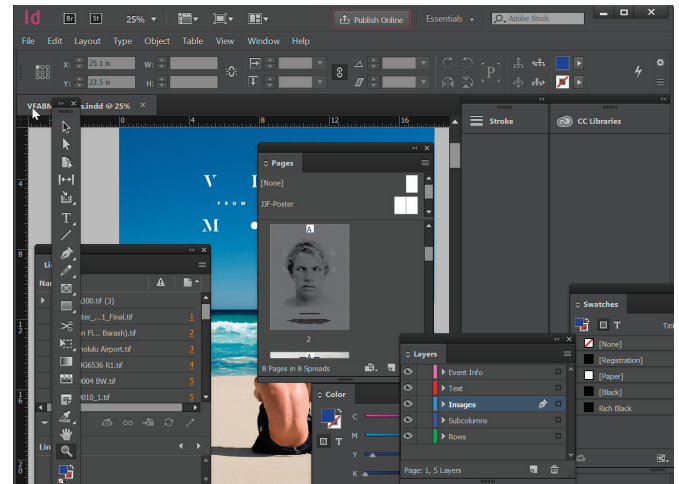


Figure 5 Custom interface layout

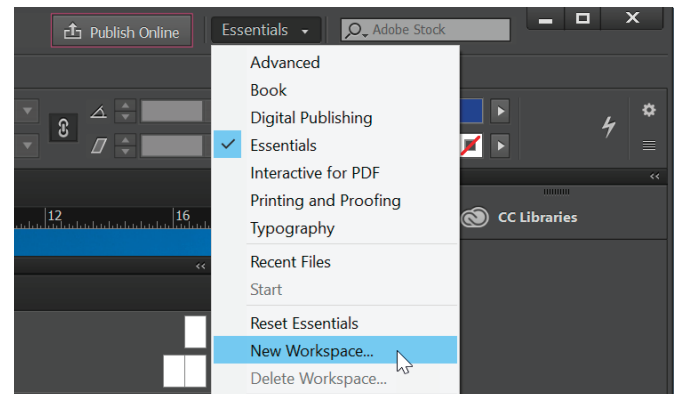


Figure 6 Creating the New Workspace

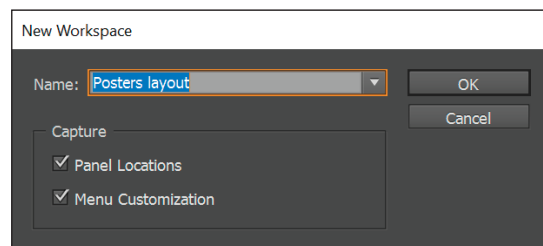


Figure 7 New Workspace dialog box

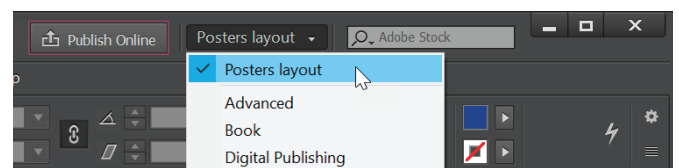


Figure 8 Reselecting a saved workspace

Opening a file in InDesign

You can open files using Open command and Open Recent command. Creative Cloud Libraries is another way to access, organize, and share creative assets with other users, and across Adobe desktop and mobile apps. Learn more about [Creative Cloud Libraries](#) here.

To open a file:

1. Choose **File > Open**.

The Open dialog box appears.

2. Browse to the location of the file and select the name of the file you want to open.
3. Click **Open**. In some cases, a dialog box appears, letting you set format-specific options.

The file opens in its own window, called the document window (**Figure 9**).

4. Use the zoom controls in the status bar to reveal the full window to show the canvas, paper edge and artboard.
5. To close the image file, choose **File > Close** or click the close button on the title bar of the window in which the image appears. (Do not close InDesign.)

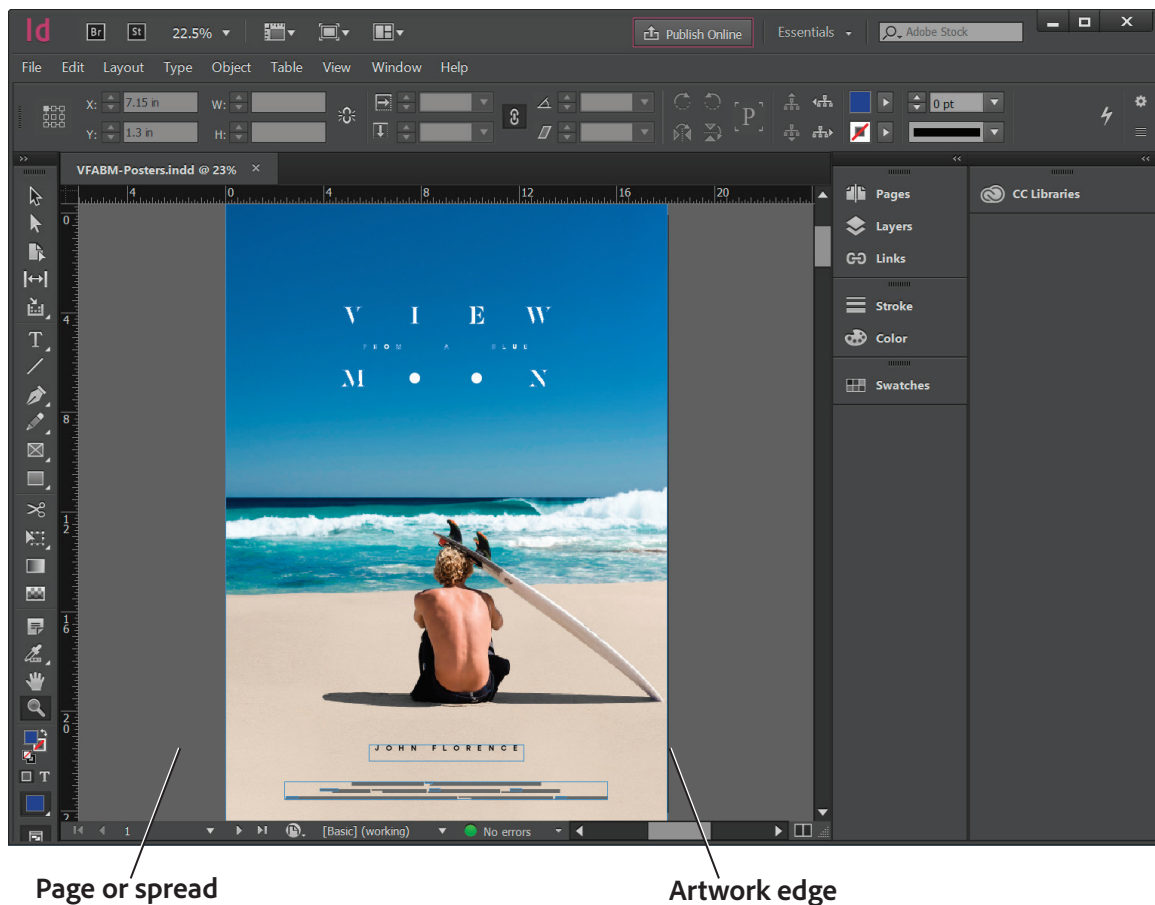


Figure 9 File open in the document window

To open a recently used file:

1. Choose **File > Open Recent**, and select a file from the submenu.

Tools panel overview

InDesign provides an integrated set of tools for selecting, editing, and creating page elements. Other tools are for choosing types, shapes, lines, and gradients. You can change the overall layout of the Tools panel to fit your preferred window and panel layout. Some tools are arranged in groups, with only one tool shown for each group and the other tools in the group hidden behind that tool. A small triangle in the lower right corner of a tool icon is your clue to look for hidden tools. Select a hidden tool by clicking and holding down the small triangle. You can also show or hide the Tools panel by choosing **Window > Tools**.

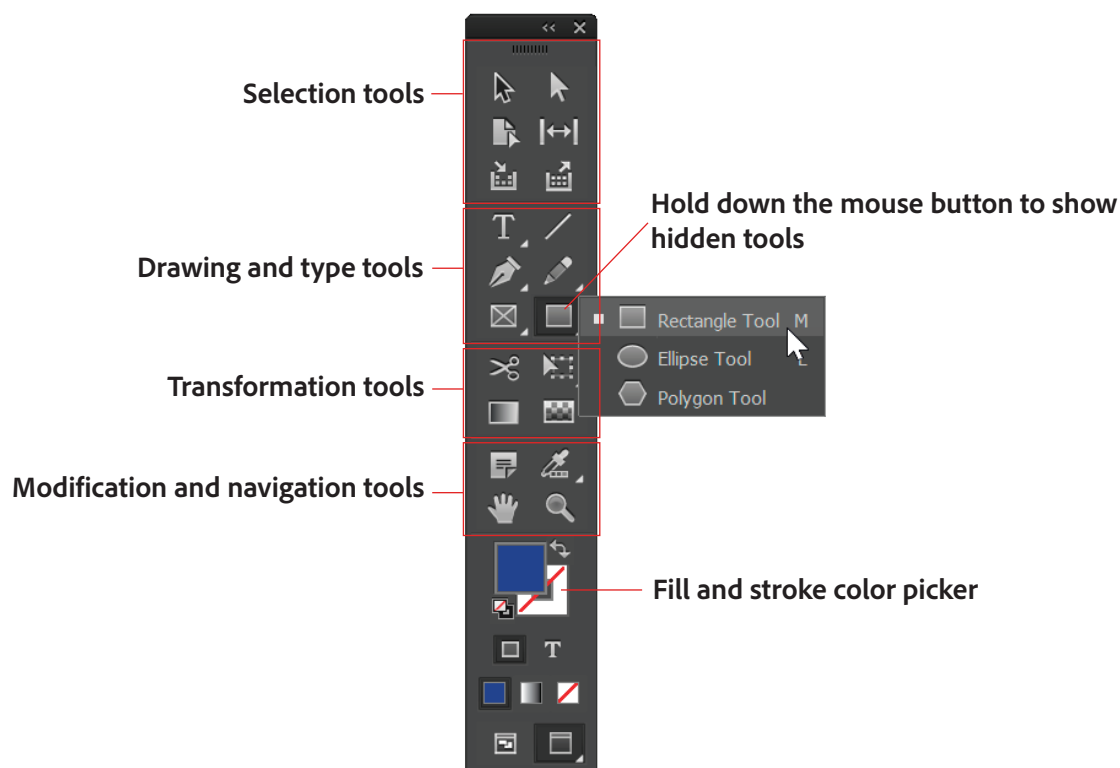


Figure 10 Tools panel

The next section covers the Zoom tool. The process for selecting and using this tool is similar to that for the rest of the tools in the panel.

The Zoom tool

You can use the Zoom tool to change the magnification level in your document.

To use the Zoom tool to change the magnification:

1. Notice the Tools panel appears as a single column. Click the double-arrow button at the top of the Tools panel to toggle to a double-column view (**Figure 11**). Use the single-column, horizontal, or double-column panel that allows you to arrange your screen space most efficiently.

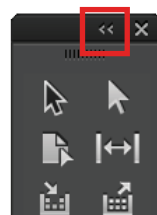


Figure 11 Tools panel

2. Open a multipage document, examine the zoom level in the Application Bar, and notice the percentage listed (**Figure 11**).

This represents the current enlargement view of the page, or zoom level.

Note: This value will also appear in the title bar of the document window.

3. Move the pointer over the Tools panel and hover over the magnifying-glass icon until a tool tip appears, identifying the tool by name and providing its keyboard shortcut (**Figure 12**).
4. Select the **Zoom Tool** either by clicking the Zoom tool button in the Tools panel or by pressing Z, the keyboard shortcut for the Zoom tool.
5. Move the pointer over the image window. Notice that it now appears as a tiny magnifying glass with a plus sign in the center of the glass.
6. Click anywhere in the image window.

The image zooms in according to a preset percentage level, which replaces the previous value in the status bar. The location you clicked when you used the Zoom tool becomes the center of the enlarged view. If you click again, the zoom advances to the next preset level, up to a maximum of 3200%.

7. Hold down **Alt** (Windows) or **Option** (Mac OS) so that the Zoom tool pointer appears with a minus sign in the center of the magnifying glass (**Figure 13**), and then click anywhere in the image. Then release the Alt or Option key.

Now the view zooms out to a lower preset magnification.

Note: You can also hold the **Alt** (Windows) or **Option** (Mac OS) and use the mouse scroll wheel to zoom in and out of an image.

Zoom level

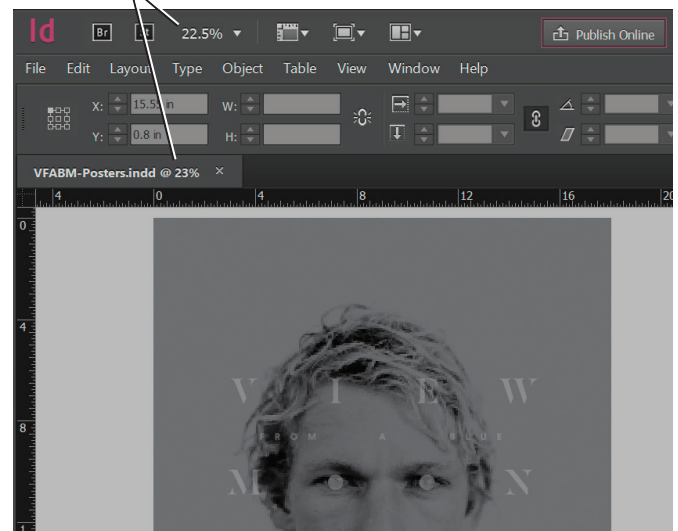


Figure 11 Zoom level

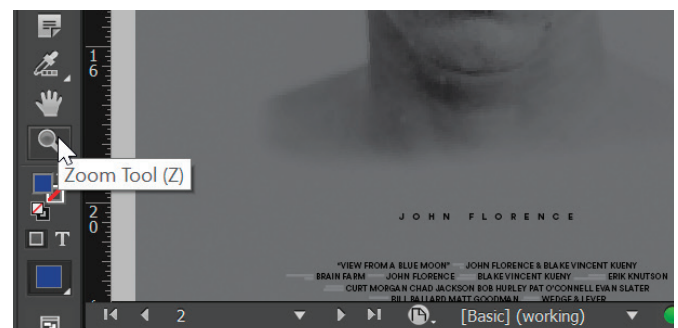


Figure 12 Tool tip

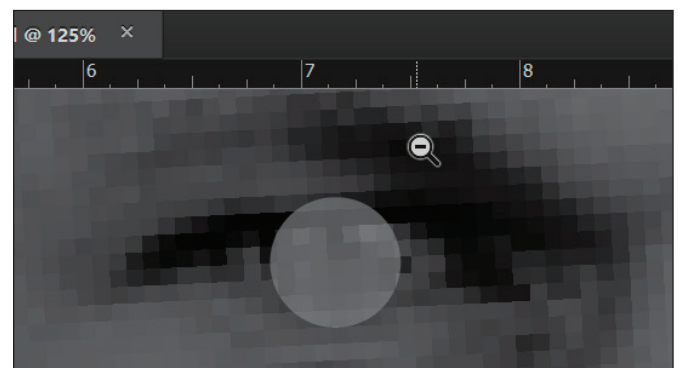


Figure 13 Using the Zoom tool with a minus sign

The Hand tool

The Hand tool moves a document within the document window. This is useful if you want to see a part of the document that is currently out of view.

To scroll around the document with the Hand tool:

1. Open an image and zoom in until scroll bars appear on the image window.
2. Select the **Hand Tool** from the Tools panel (**Figure 16**).
3. Using the **Hand Tool**, drag to scroll around and view different parts of the image (**Figure 17**).



Figure 16 Hand tool in the Tools panel

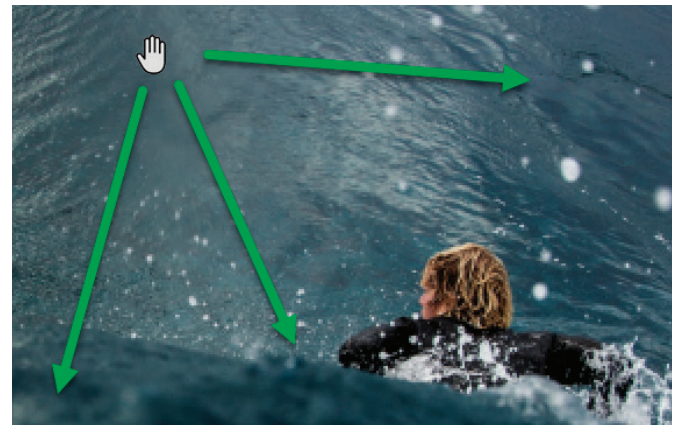


Figure 17 Dragging the Hand tool

How to select an object and work with the Control panel

The Control panel (Window > Control) offers quick access to options, commands, and other panels related to the current page item or objects you select (this is called contextual). By default, the Control panel is docked to the top of the document window; however, you can dock it to the bottom of the window, convert it to a floating panel, or hide it altogether.

How to use the Selection tool:

1. With a document open, choose the Selection tool from the Tools panel (**Figure 18**), and then select an object in your document.

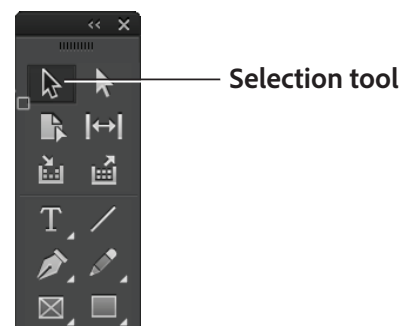


Figure 18 Tools panel

Notice that the Control panel information reflects such things as X and Y coordinates, size, stroke color, fill color, and other options (**Figure 19**).

- Next, choose the Type tool and select a region of text.

The Control panel changes to show options that provide control over text formatting, like font, size, all caps, font colors (**Figure 20**).

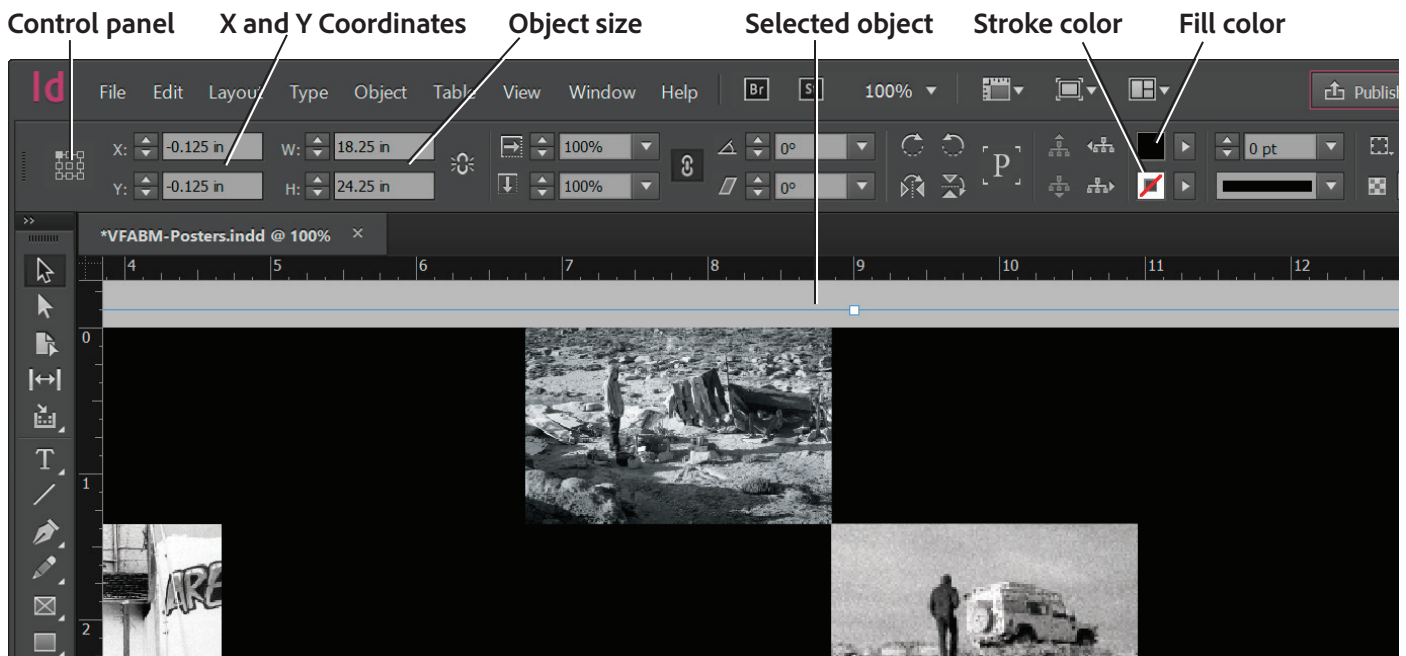


Figure 19 Control panel with a path selected

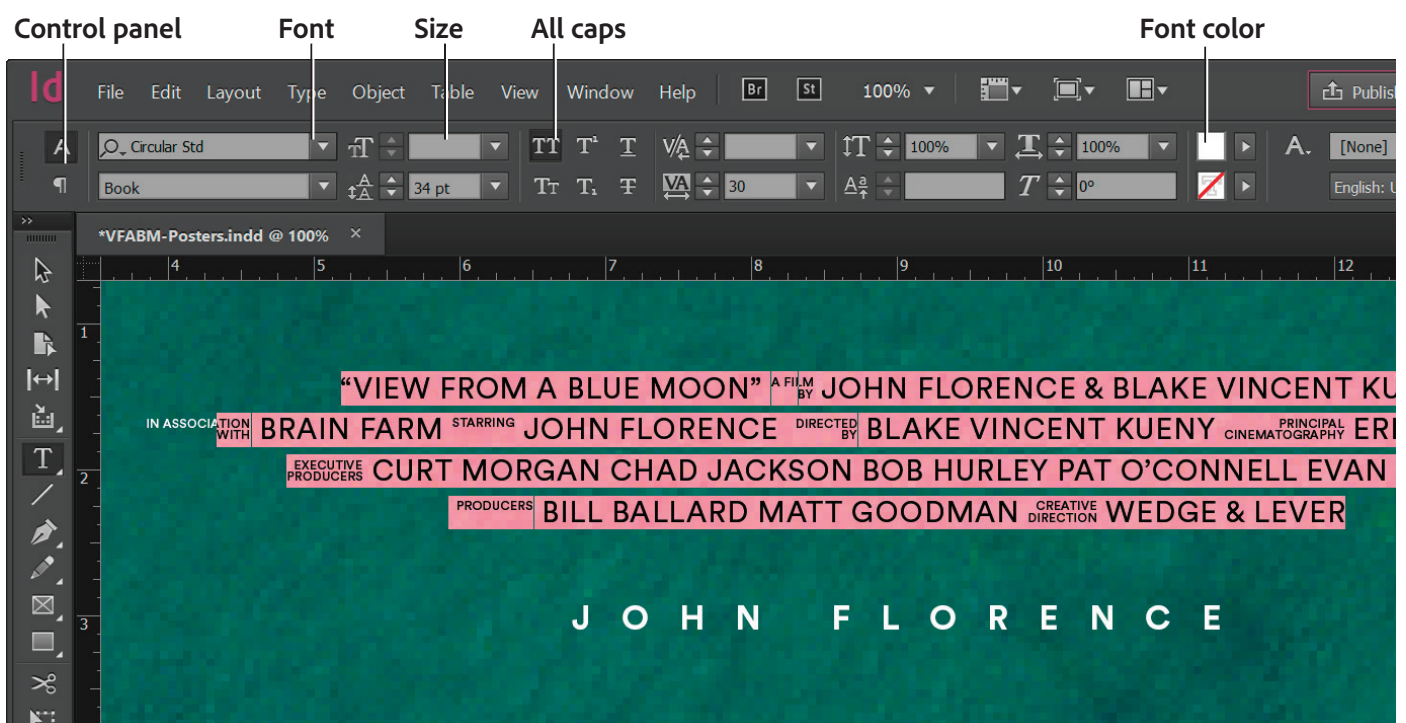


Figure 20 Control panel with text selected

Navigating through the pages in your document

You can turn pages by using the Pages panel, the page buttons at the bottom of the document window, the scroll bars, or a variety of other commands.

To navigate through a document:

1. You can move from one page to another by using the arrow controls in the lower left corner of the document window (**Figure 21**). Click the forward arrow to go to the next page and the back arrow to go to the previous page.

An arrow control is dimmed if there is no page to go to. A pop-up menu also allows you to navigate by page number.

2. A second way to navigate your document is by using the **Pages** panel (**Figure 22**). This panel lists document layout templates in the top section and actual pages in the lower section. To choose a page in your document, double-click the page icon in the lower section.

The document window displays the selected page.

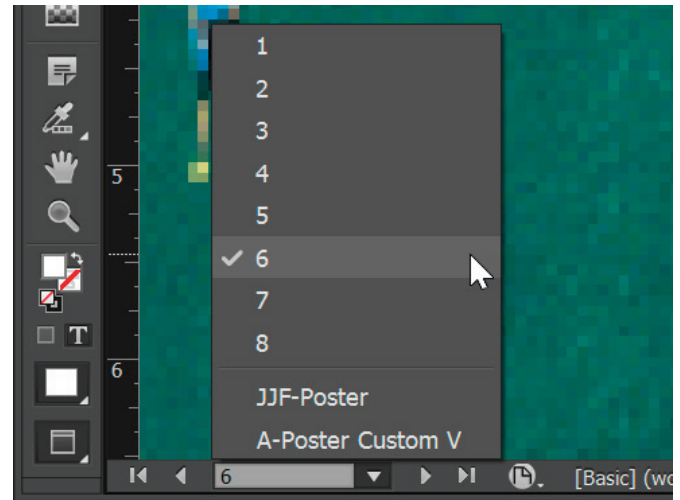


Figure 21 Using the controls at the lower left of the document window

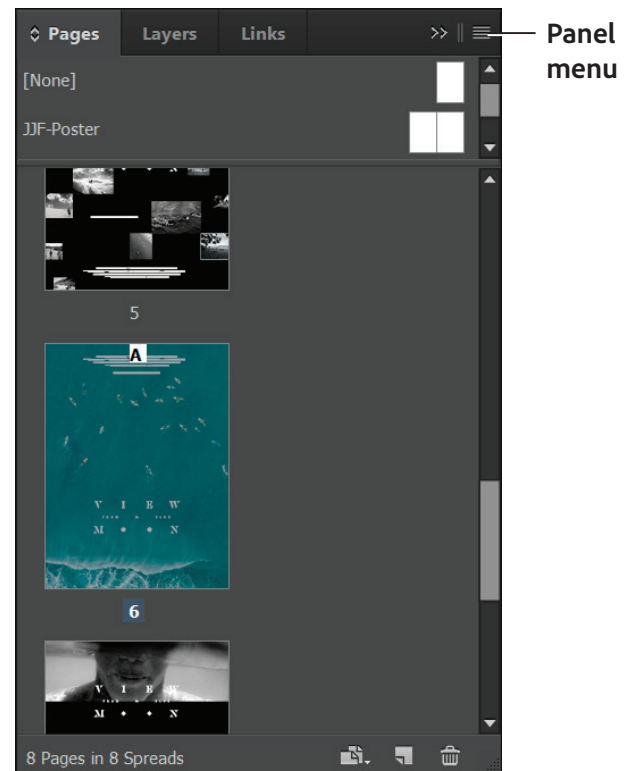


Figure 22 Using the Pages panel to navigate

Note: You can change the size of the page thumbnails by choosing the Panel menu > **Panel Options** and selecting a Pages size between **Extra Small** and **Jumbo** (Figure 23).

3. You can also go directly to a particular page by choosing **Layout > Go to Page** (Figure 24) and then entering the page number in the dialog box (Figure 25).

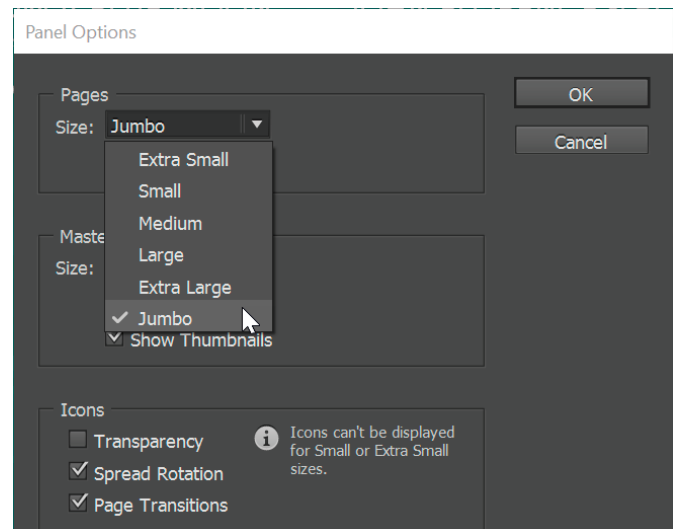


Figure 23 Panel Options dialog box

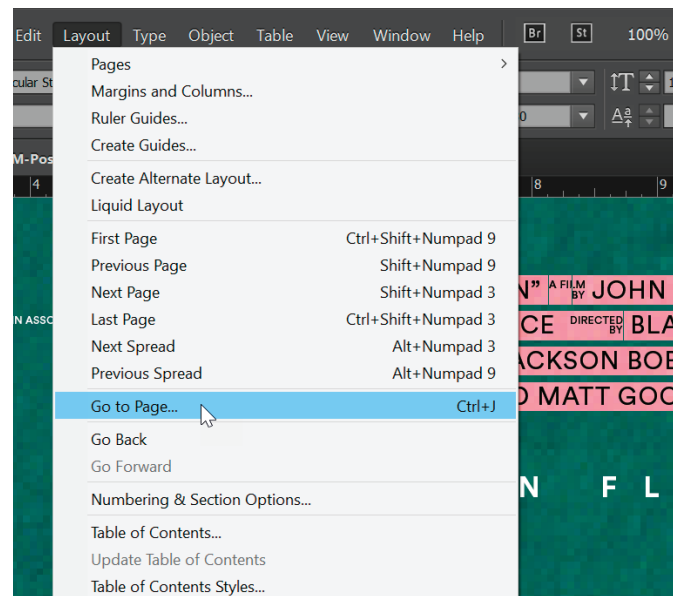


Figure 24 Using a menu command to navigate

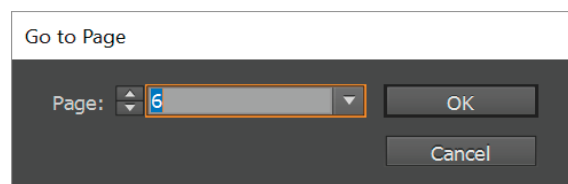


Figure 25 Go to Page dialog box

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