Cartographic Symbols

OVERVIEW

"In cartography, symbols are everything. The very nature of a map as an abstract representation of the Earth requires symbols to perform the abstraction. To not have symbols is to not have maps."

The Digital Wisdom cartographic symbol library provide graphic artists and mapmakers with a complete, well-designed contemporary set of map symbols packaged into a EPS vector library covering most of the features that need symbolizing on a map. Each library contains point, line and area symbols (including colors and patterns).

The design of each and every symbol has been very carefully thought through to allow intuitive recognition of the main features of a map and use a minimal footprint to cut down on map clutter. These beautifully designed point, line and area symbols and color sets for both Illustrator and FreeHand, are compatible with their earlier versions wherever possible, but also recognizing that a higher level of cartographic presentation, quality and efficiency possible with Illustrator 10 should be a key feature. This allows the definition of points and symbols to a higher level, depicting the purpose and function of a wide range of activities, specifically geared towards tourism, travel, orientation, navigation and entertainment.

POINT SYMBOLS

Illustrator 10
You can access the point symbols by opening the Illustrator file and copying the symbols (use Shift-select to copy two or more symbols simultaneously) and then pasting in your map file.

You can also access the files when your map file is open by selecting Window > Symbol Libraries > Other Library. In the pop-up dialog box, browse to find this file and then click Open. A new palette will open containing all of the Illustrator Symbols found in this file. Simply click on a symbol in the palette and it will load into your map file's Symbol palette.

Illustrator 9
One difference between Illustrator 9 and 10 is that 9 lacks the Symbols palette. You'll have to copy and paste between this file and your map file.

Illustrator 8
Illustrator 8 lacks the Symbols palette as well. So copy and paste is your only option.

LINE SYMBOLS

Illustrator 10
The line symbols are actually multi-stroke Styles. You can copy a line symbol from this file and paste it in your map file (which also imports the line symbol's Style into your map file at the same time).

Also, you can select Window > Style Libraries > Other Library while in your map file and browse to find this file. Click on each Style you want in your map file in the new palette that displays.

To modify a Style, select the style in the Styles palette and then in the Appearance palette, click on a component of the style (a stroke, for example) and modify its color, width, and other attributes. Consult the Adobe Illustrator User Manual for more information on using the Appearance palette.

Illustrator 9
Illustrator 9 also provides a Styles palette. Access and edit your symbols as discussed above for Illustrator 10.

Illustrator 8
Illustrator 8 lacks a Styles palette. Copy the artwork for a line symbol and paste it into your map file. Ungroup the artwork your just pasted one or more times so you can move overlapping components.

You'll have to copy and paste (Paste in Front or Paste in Back) a path on the map and use the Eyedropper tool to make a path look like a component of the line symbol. For example, an interstate line symbol has three components--thick, medium and thin paths. Your interstate path should be copied and pasted so that there are three paths; make each path look like one of the interstate line symbol's components.

AREA SYMBOLS

Illustrator 10
The area symbols are multi-fill Styles. As with the Line Symbols discussed above, you can copy and paste from this file to your map file, or select Window > Style Libraries > Other Library to display a palette containing these Styles.

To modify a Style, select it in the Styles palette and modify a component of it (a fill, for example) in the Appearance palette. Consult the Adobe Illustrator User Manual for more information on using the Appearance palette.

Illustrator 9
Illustrator 9 provides a Styles palette. Use it in the same way as discussed above for Illustrator 10.

Illustrator 8
Unfortunately, the Area Symbols are not compatible with Illustrator 8. The artwork for the Area Symbols, in Illustrator 8, do not resemble their artwork in Illustrator 9 and 10.

EDITING TIPS
Ungroup a symbol to select and modify its component artwork. If the symbol is an Illustrator symbol instance that you've dragged onto the artboard from the Symbols palette, use Object > Expand to convert it to artwork so that you can ungroup and edit it.

When scaling the symbol artwork, be aware of the Scale tool's Scale Strokes & Effects checkbox. Keeping it checked will modify the stroke width of the symbol's linework. Unchecking the box will keep the stroke width of the linework unchanged.

When you edit a line or area Style, you can drag the preview icon in the upper-left of the Appearance palette and drop it in the Styles palette to create a new Style. If you hold down the Option (Mac) or Alt (Windows) key, you can drop the icon on an existing Style to change it (and all artwork painted with that Style).

You can add Illustrator Effects (like drop shadows) to any symbol by selecting it and choosing the effect from the Effects menu. To change the effect later, select the symbol

and in the Appearance menu, double-click the name of the effect. An effect dialog will pop up, allowing you to modify effect parameters.

PRINTING TIPS

The Area Symbols use transparency (in the Appearance palette you'll see that the Mezzotint component has a transparency value and a blending mode). Be sure to choose Effect > Document Raster Effects Settings and set the resolution and other parameters to match the output you plan. Set resolution high for printing or keep it low for screen display and exporting web graphics.

If you are printing the map, be sure to choose File > Document Settings > Transparency, too. In this dialog, set the Flattening Settings to a position recommended by your printer. Transparency is a known culprit in printing problems--let your printer recommend how artwork with transparency should be flattened or otherwise handled.

As an alternative, you can rasterize the area symbol artwork by bringing it into Photoshop, saving the file as a TIFF, and then bringing the TIFF file back into Illustrator.

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