



— WEBINAR —

# 8 Quick InDesign Tips to Boost Your Productivity



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# ALL-STAR TIPS

75  
TIPS  
TO MAKE  
WORKING IN  
INDESIGN MORE  
PRODUCTIVE AND FUN

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IT'S TIME TO FIRE UP THE bright lights and roll out the red carpet! To celebrate the legacy of *InDesign Magazine*, we invited a galaxy of InDesign superstars to share their favorite tips and tricks. Some of the tips are beloved classics; others are having their world premieres. So, grab some popcorn, elbow your way past the paparazzi, and grab a front row seat. On with the show!

## How to Master InDesign

*David Blatner*

If you want to learn InDesign better, there are three things you have to do:

- ▶ First, set aside 15 minutes each week, find some feature in InDesign that you don't know, and force yourself to play with it. The word

*play* is important: The best way to learn anything is to get playful!

- ▶ Second, find layouts that you think look good (book spreads, magazine ads, etc.) and practice recreating them in InDesign. This kind of practice is sure to make you a better InDesign user.
- ▶ Third, teach InDesign to someone else; it's the very best way to learn InDesign yourself. Every time I teach something, I learn it better. Plus, teaching someone else is like paying it forward!

## Find Free Templates

*Anne-Marie Concepción*

When the pressure is on to quickly create a high-quality publication, beginning with a solid InDesign template can save you hours of time. It's easy

to edit the template elements—styles, master pages, images—to customize it for your project.

[CreativePro.com](https://www.creativepro.com) has a good number of free and subscriber-only templates, as do other sites, but don't overlook the templates that come with your Creative Cloud subscription. As I write this, Adobe Stock offers thousands of InDesign templates, and almost 800 of those are free!

To find the free InDesign templates:

1. Go to [stock.adobe.com](https://stock.adobe.com).
2. If necessary, click the Sign In link (upper right) and sign in with your Adobe ID. You don't need to sign in to view or search, but you will need to have done so before you can download anything.
3. To the left of the Search field, change the scope

from All to Free, and press Return/Enter.

4. Now you can use the sidebar on the left to filter the results. Choose Asset Type: Templates and App: InDesign (**FIGURE 1, NEXT PAGE**) to see all the free layout templates!
5. Click any template preview to see more details, and then click either the License for Free button to download it or the Save to Library link to stash it in your CC Library and open it in InDesign from there.

## Tips for Scripts

*Mike Rankin*

Using scripts is an essential part of being productive in InDesign. But the more scripts you collect, the more time you might waste trying to find the right one in your Scripts panel.

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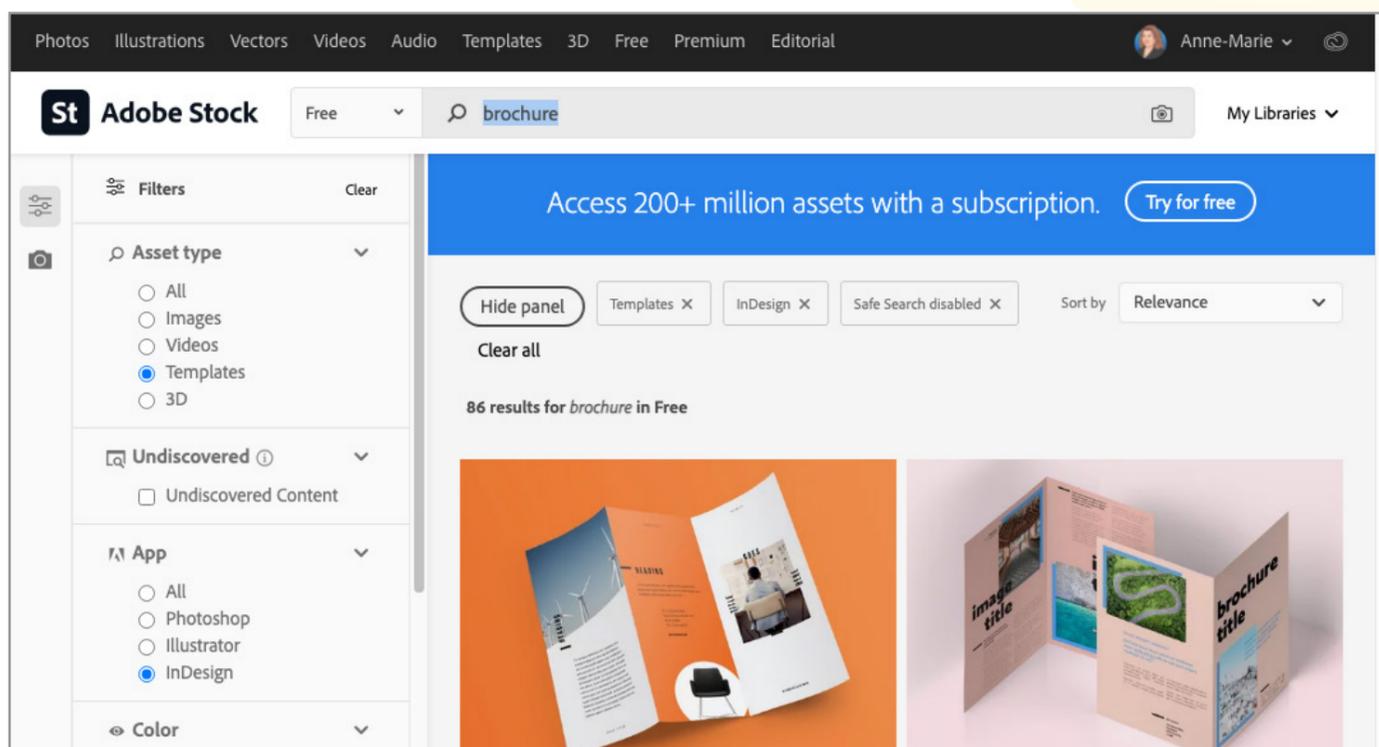
One way to deal with a large script collection is to organize it. Open your User scripts folder by right-clicking it and choosing Reveal in Finder/Explorer. Then, create subfolders for each category of scripts you have. I use folder names like *Book Scripts*, *Image Scripts*, *Table*

*Scripts*, and so on. By default, scripts will be listed in alphabetical order, but you can rearrange them in any order you like with a naming trick. Add 00) to the start of the file name of the script you want to appear first in the panel list. Add 01), 02), 03), and so on to the file names of other scripts.

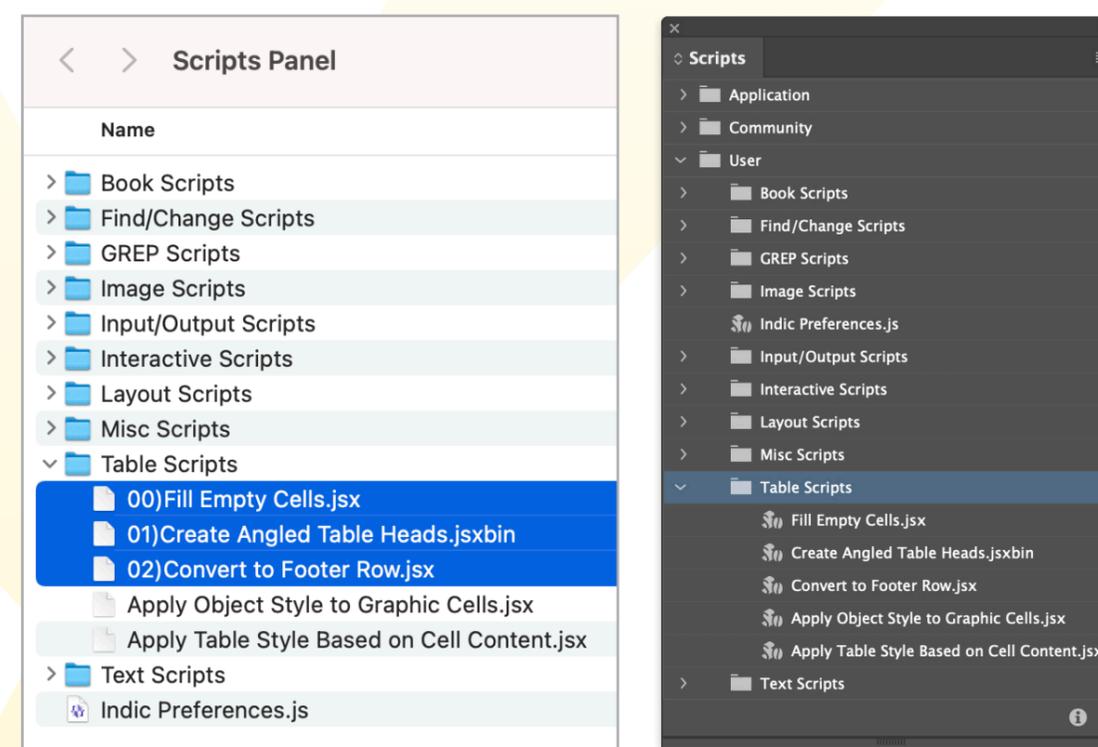
The numbering won't appear in the panel but it will control the order in which the scripts are listed there (FIGURE 2).

An even faster way to run scripts is to not bother with the Scripts panel at all and just use Quick Apply. Open the Quick Apply panel by pressing

Command+Return/Ctrl+Enter. Click the triangle near the top of the panel to reveal its options and turn on Include Scripts. Now you can just start typing the name of the script you want to run and when it appears highlighted in the list, press Return or Enter to run it.



**FIGURE 1.** You can add keywords (like *brochure* above) in Adobe Stock Search field to further winnow down the list of free InDesign templates.



**FIGURE 2.** You can organize your collection of scripts by putting them into folders in the panel and adding numbered prefixes to the script files.

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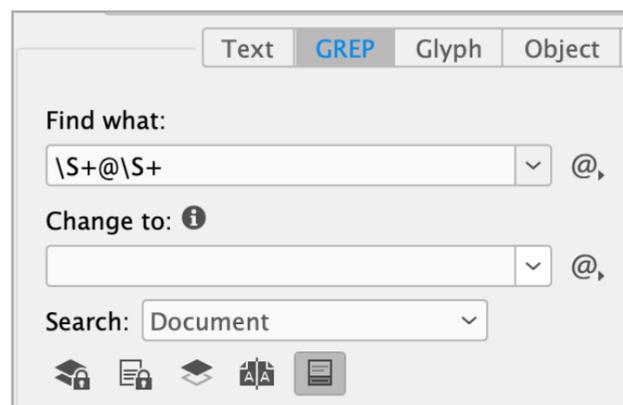
## Auto-Format Email Addresses

*Bart Van de Wiele*

You can use GREP in InDesign to easily find and format email addresses in your document.

Here's how:

1. Choose **Edit > Find/Change**.
2. Click the GREP tab.
3. In the Find What field, type `\S+@\S+` (**FIGURE 3**).
4. In the Change Format field, add your formatting.
5. Click the Change All button to execute the command.



**FIGURE 3.** A simple GREP search to find email addresses

## Find/Change Shortcuts

*Chad Chelius*

Even your dog knows that Command/Ctrl+F opens Find/Change. But I bet Spot didn't know that Command/Ctrl+1 through 5 toggles between the various Find/Change areas in the dialog box (Text, GREP, Glyph, Object, Color).

Even cooler: With Find/Change open, you can select some text and press Command/Ctrl+F1 to copy the selected text into the Find What field. Likewise, press Command/Ctrl+F2 to copy selected text into the Change To field.

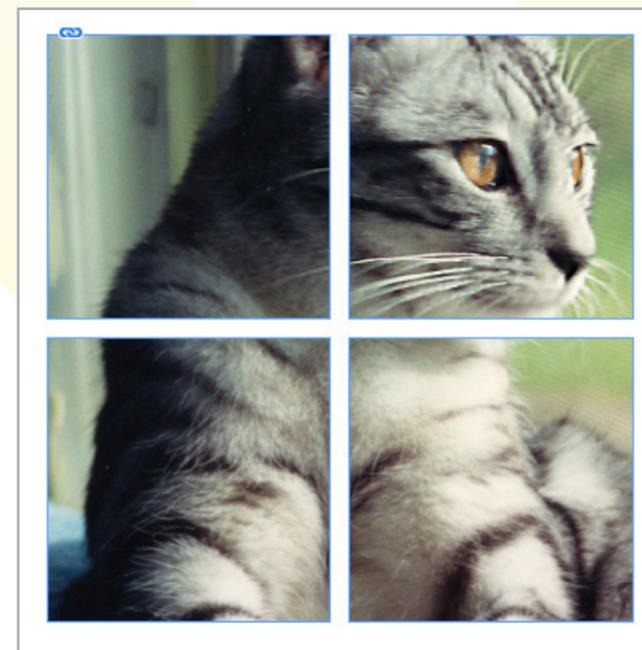
Here's one more: Press Command+Option+Return/Ctrl+Alt+Enter to toggle the Direction of a search Forward or Backward.

## Custom Image Frames

*Claudia McCue*

Want to spread an image across multiple frames for visual interest? It's easy!

1. Create multiple frames, and select them all.
2. Go to **Window > Object & Layout > Pathfinder**.
3. Select the Add option, which combines the selected frames



**FIGURE 4.** Use the Pathfinder to create the purr-fect frames for your images.

into one object (Note that this is not the same as creating a group. Add results in a single object.)

4. With the new compound object selected, place the desired image. You can move and transform the image as you would with any normal frame (**FIGURE 4**).

## Automate Alt-text

*Colleen Gratzner*

Setting and reviewing alt-text usually means checking each image individually, which can be tedious and time consuming. To make it easy, use the [Alt-text Extractor](#) script to export the alt-text for all of the images in the document to a single file.

When you run the script, you'll get a TXT file with listings for all the images and accompanying alt-text, if any. You can then add

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to, modify, or spell check the alt-text. When it's time to put the alt-text back into InDesign, you can either copy and paste it for one image at a time or import it all at once by using the companion [Alt-text Automator](#) script. These scripts aren't free; both currently cost \$49. But the time they save will repay that investment many times over if you need to produce accessible documents from InDesign.

## Position Chapter Titles Automatically

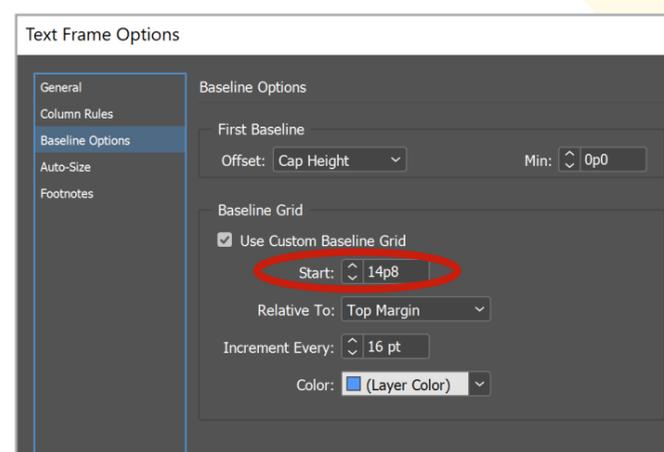
*Alan Gilbertson*

Laying out the opening pages of book chapters can be complex, with consecutive paragraph styles for title, opening paragraph, and body text. Here is a way to speed things up in InDesign and be certain

that everything is consistent throughout the book.

Use the “invisible rule above” trick to put your chapter title where you want it: Define a Rule Above in the paragraph style, give it enough offset to push it down to where you want, and turn on Keep in Frame.

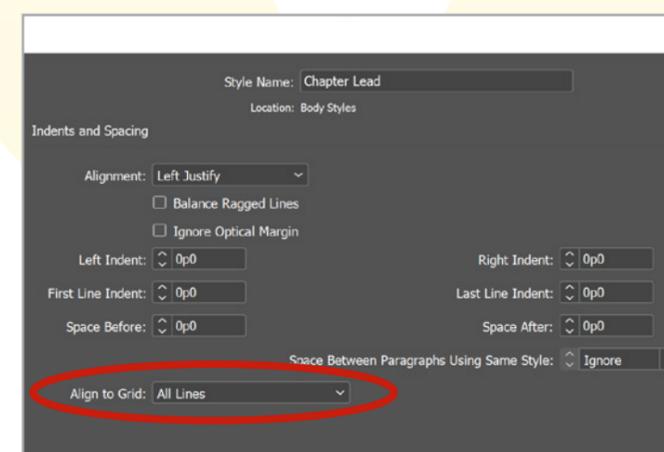
Give your text frame a custom baseline grid that starts far enough down the page that the opening paragraph can always



**FIGURE 5.** The custom baseline grid matches the document baseline but starts where I want the opening paragraph to fall.

appear at that height whether the title is one, two, or even three lines long (FIGURE 5). Set your chapter opening paragraph style to use the baseline grid (FIGURE 6), make its Next Style your body text, and make that the Next Style in your title style.

Now your title and opening paragraph will always be in the right place and properly dressed for the occasion.



**FIGURE 6.** The Chapter Lead paragraph style must have Align to Grid set to All Lines or First Line Only for this to work.

## Make a Corners-Only Stroke Style

*Rufus Deuchler*

Here's how to make a stroke that appears only at the corners of a frame:

1. Create a new dashed stroke style by choosing Stroke Styles from the Stroke panel menu. Call it something like Corners.
2. Apply the stroke to a text or graphic frame, and give it an adequate stroke width.
3. Return to the Stroke Styles dialog box, and edit the Corners style.
4. For Pattern Length, insert a value that's much larger than your frame.
5. For Corners, choose Adjust Gaps (which will keep the length of the dash fixed).
6. Choose Preview for real-time fine-tuning.

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7. Move the little ruler arrow until you achieve the desired result, or enter a value for Length (FIGURE 7).

## ★ Recolor Graphics with Blend Modes

Conrad Chavez

Want to jazz up a photo on your layout without opening Photoshop? Simply draw a rectangle over the image, fill it with a color, and change the blend mode and opacity. This

can be handy if you don't want to modify the original file and you don't have (or are unfamiliar with) an application that can edit the original graphic.

If you want to lighten or darken an image, select it, choose **Edit > Copy**, choose **Edit > Paste in Place**, and then apply a blend mode such as Screen or Multiply, respectively.

Other blend modes can create a range of visual effects. You can adjust the amount of the effect

by changing the Opacity value for the object in front (FIGURE 8).

A great time to try this technique is when you have a design where you want to repeat one image multiple times on a

layout but give each instance a different visual style. You can place a single image and make 10 instances of it look different, instead of having to manage 10 separate Photoshop files.

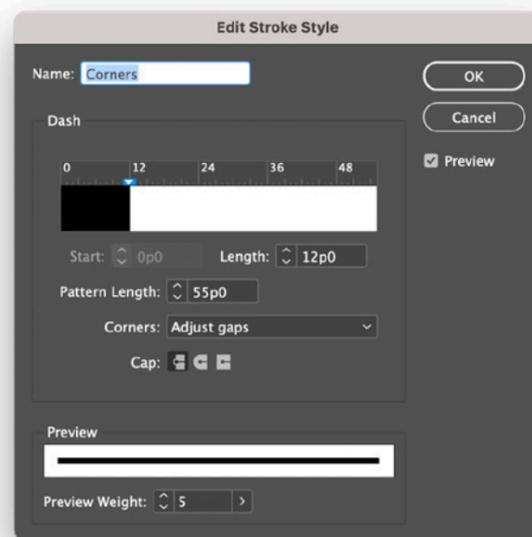


FIGURE 7. A custom stroke style can achieve a corners-only stroke effect.



FIGURE 8. **Top Row:** Original placed image; Lightened by pasting a copy in front using Screen; Darkened by pasting a copy in front using Multiply **Bottom Row:** Graphic drawn in InDesign; Graphic layered over image with Hard Light; Graphic layered over image with Darken

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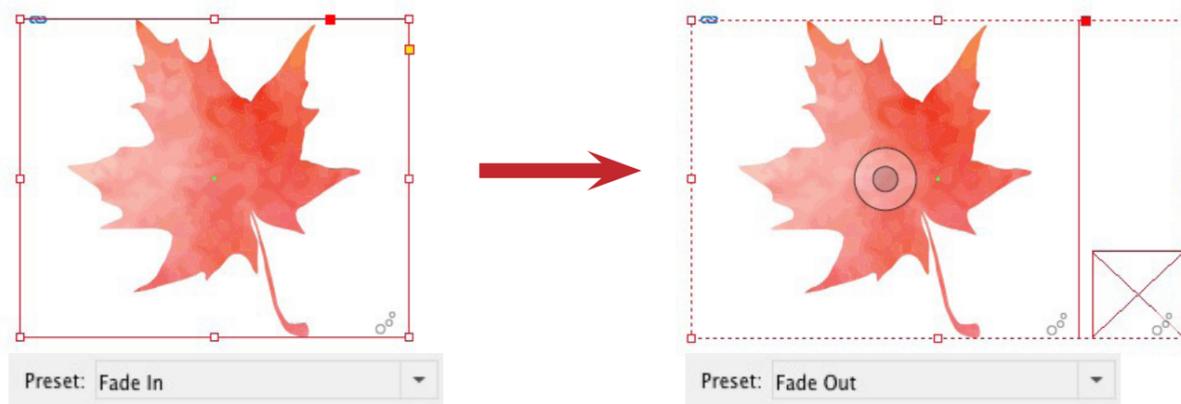
## ★ Arranging Animations

*Diane Burns*

You may know you can easily apply multiple animation effects to an object and have them all play at the same time. You can apply a motion path and a scaling percentage to an object, for example, and the object will move and scale simultaneously. But what if you want to apply sequential animations to the

same object? Let's say you want an object to move, stop, and then scale. Or maybe you want an object to fade in, and then fade out.

Applying sequential animations to the same object requires a little trick. After you apply the initial animation to an object, group the animated object to another object, like a small rectangle with no fill or stroke.



[Click/tap to view a sample of this technique](#)

**FIGURE 9.** After applying a Fade In animation to this image you can make it fade out by grouping it with an empty frame and applying the second animation to the group.

InDesign treats grouped objects as a unique object, so you can now apply a new animation to the group (**FIGURE 9**).

## ★ Bookmark This Tip

*Erica Gamet*

When creating an automatic table of contents, you can make the individual entries into navigation bookmarks when the document is exported to PDF. Just select Create PDF Bookmarks in the Table of Contents dialog box, and then select Include Bookmarks in the Export PDF dialog box.

You can even create a hidden TOC that doesn't show in the final PDF but still allows navigation via bookmarks. To do this, simply put the table of contents out of sight anywhere on the pasteboard.

A document isn't limited to only one table of contents, either. You could create one TOC for bookmark navigation with page listings, another with an alphabetical listing of contributors, and still another with photo credits—all in the same document!

## ★ The Page Tool Has It Covered

*James Wamser*

The Page tool is great for creating perfect-bound covers, letter-fold brochures, and other documents that have various page sizes. When creating a perfect-bound cover, start by creating three pages built to final trim size. For example, if your document's final trim size is 8.375 × 10.875, then initially, all three pages would be that size.

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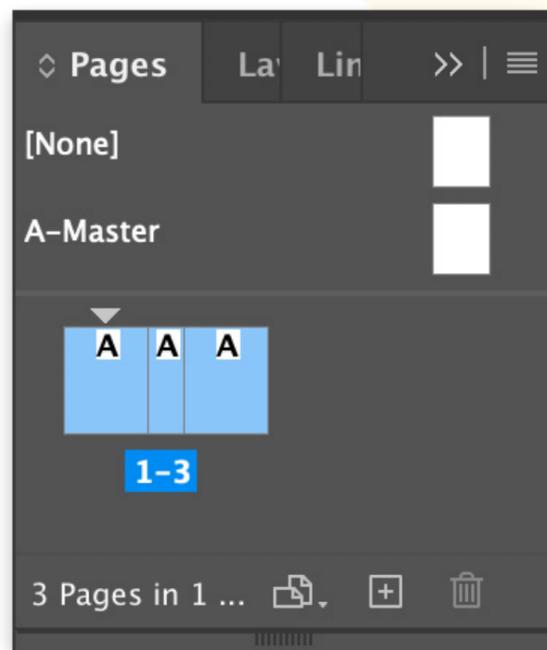
Using the Page tool, select page 2; which will be the spine. Choose **Layout > Margins and Columns**, and change the Margins to 0. Then with page 2 still selected, change the width to your desired spine width. This number is based on the paper and number of pages and should be obtained from your print service provider.

Next, from the Pages panel menu, choose Allow Document Pages to Shuffle. You will now be able to drag page 2 next to page 1 and move page 3 next to page 2 (**FIGURE 10**).

If you need to adjust the spine, select page 2 with the Page tool and adjust the width in the Control panel (Width field). Then use the Align panel to make sure all three pages are aligned correctly. Select each page with the Page tool using the Shift key

to select multiple pages, then use the Align panel to align all three pages with a Space of 0.

When it comes time to export the cover to PDF, be sure you export as spreads so pages 1–3 are all next to each other on a single spread. Page 1 is the back cover, page 2 is the spine, and page 3 is the front cover. Perfect!

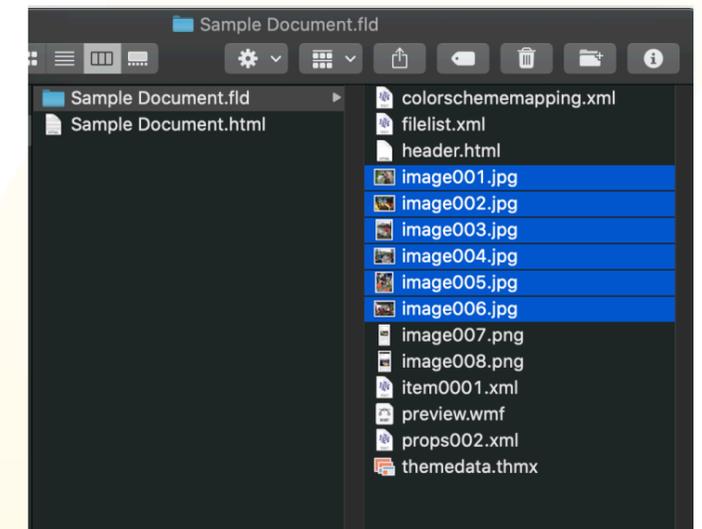


**FIGURE 10.** Turning on Allow Document Pages to Shuffle in the Pages panel menu enables you to set up a three-page spread for a book cover.

## Easier Image Extraction *Jamie McKee*

Way too often, I'll open a Word file destined for my InDesign layout, only to discover the file contains embedded images. There are a couple of different ways to extract embedded images from Word files, but the easiest way, with the file open, comes from Word itself: Save As Web Page. Save your file, choosing the Save As Web Page option from the File Format menu. Word will save the document as an HTML file with a folder containing the HTML/XML code and include the embedded images as separate files. Just look for the images in the folder, and you can place them in InDesign wherever you like (**FIGURE 11**).

**FIGURE 11.** Use the Save As Web Page option to separate embedded images from text in Word documents.



## Noticeable Notes *Jeff Potter*

Do you want to create a note to yourself in your file but are concerned that you'll forget to delete it? Fear not, here's how to make your notes unforgettable.

1. Create a color swatch using a color space that you won't be using in your document. Most of us won't be using LAB or HSB.

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2. Apply this color to text that you want to revisit, or as a background for a text frame for a note.
3. Create a preflight profile that will flag this color space.

Now, when you preflight your document, every instance of this color use will show up in the Preflight panel (FIGURE 12). If you double-click, you will be taken

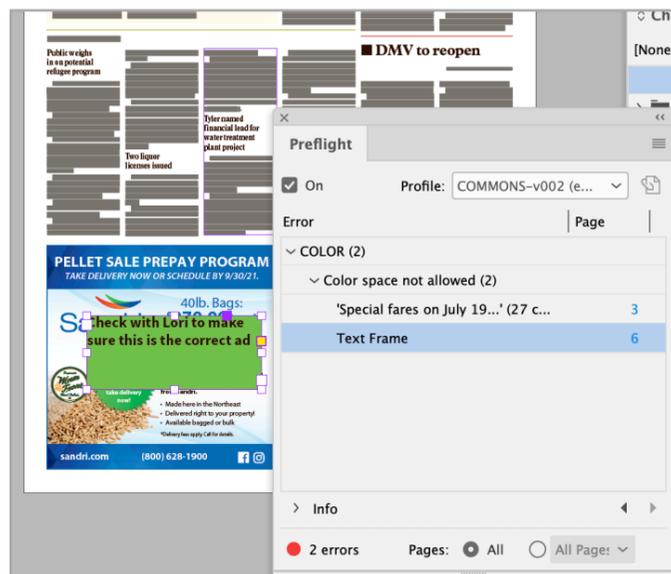


FIGURE 12. Behold! A dynamic to-do list that automatically links to the locations in your document that need attention.

directly to the location in your document. Once you apply the correct color or delete your note, the error will go away.

## Temporarily Tabled Jeff Witchel

Recently, I was making changes to a wine and spirits catalog that contained a lot of information about the products arranged in rows and columns. Tabs were used so that columns lined up across the page. I was moving through the changes very quickly and figured that I'd have the project done and back to the client in no time for final approval.

Then Murphy's Law struck. I turned to the next page in the client's printout of corrections and was greeted by a nightmare. He wanted an entire column deleted in a product chart that

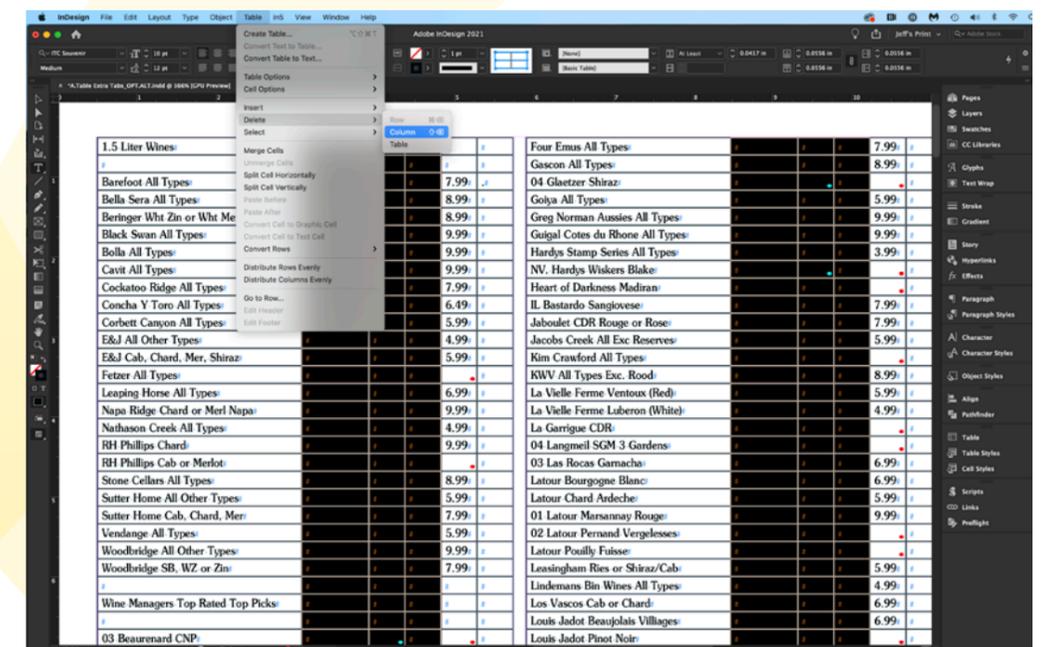
went on and on for many pages. As tabbed text, the text in each row would have to be selected and deleted manually.

"Too bad it's not a table," I thought. "This change would take seconds."

"Wait a minute," I said aloud. "Why not?" I selected the chart copy that went on and on for pages in threaded frames. Then, in the Table menu, I chose Convert Text to Table and clicked OK.

FIGURE 13.

Converting tabbed text into a table to delete unneeded text can save you hours of work.



I placed my cursor above each column that needed to be deleted until I saw a heavy, black, down-facing arrow. I clicked to select the entire column throughout all the Linked Frames and chose **Table > Delete > Column** (FIGURE 13). I finished up by choosing **Table > Convert Table to Text** and clicking OK. After readjusting my tabs, I thought, "I just tabled Murphy's Law." (Sorry, couldn't resist that one.)

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## Easy Icons

Julie Shaffer

Ubiquitous in graphic design, icons can provide eye-catching visuals to complement your text content. Sure, you can download stock icons from hundreds of online resources, but why not hack into your font glyph sets to easily create your own, right in InDesign?

Choose **Type > Glyphs** to open the Glyphs panel. The panel will display the glyph set of your active font, but you can select a different font from the menu at the bottom of the panel. For this example, I chose a water drop available in Wingdings (FIGURE 14).

With your cursor in a text frame, double-click on the glyph that you want to use as the starting point for your icon.

Next, choose **Type > Create Outlines** to turn your glyph into

a vector graphic. Now, you can add color, effects, and so on to customize your icon (FIGURE 15).

FIGURE 14. The Glyphs panel has all of the glyph characters for each font used in your document.

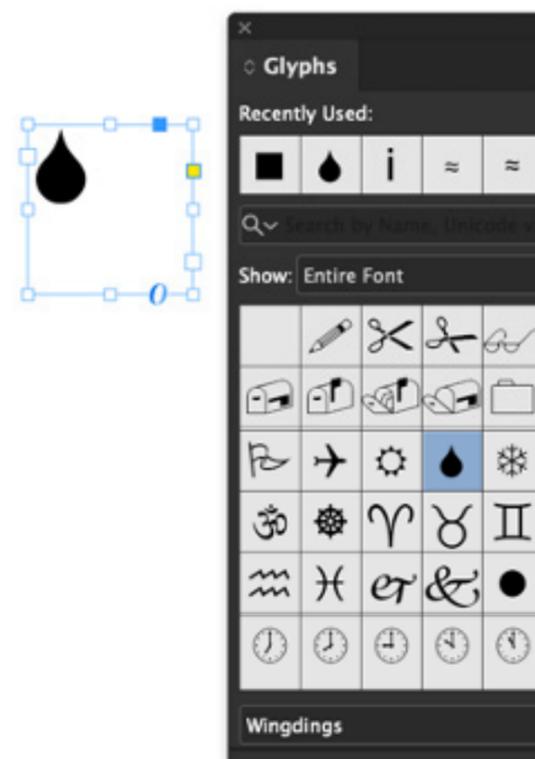


FIGURE 15. Create Outlines to convert your glyph to a vector graphic. Then you can stylize your icon as you would any other vector graphic.

## Name Your Objects

Keith Gilbert

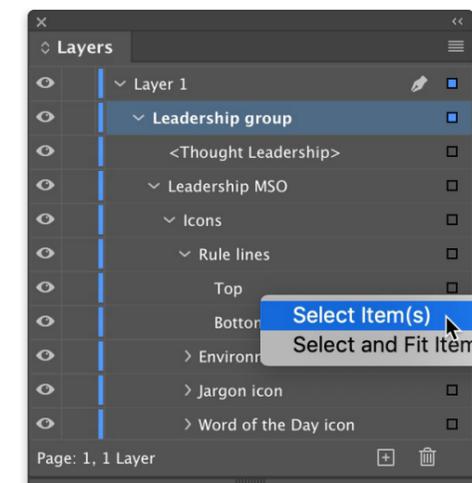
When working on a complex layout, with lots of frames, placed graphics, groups, and locked objects, it can be difficult to find or select the specific item that you need. The challenge becomes amplified when creating complex interactive objects. One thing that really helps is to name as many items as you can in the Layers panel. This makes the items easier to locate and select later on. It can also make your designs much easier for others to understand and edit.

If you look in the Layers panel, you'll see that each object on the page being viewed is listed, with such default names as <square>, <path>, <group>, or <text frame>. The <> brackets indicate that the item has a default name automatically assigned by InDesign.

You can replace these default names with whatever is helpful for you to keep things organized. Just click the text, wait a beat, click again, and the text will be highlighted, ready for you to type a new name.

Later, you can simply locate an object in the Layers panel, right-click, and choose Select (or click the small square to the right of the object name) (FIGURE 16). Easy-peasy!

FIGURE 16. Naming objects in the Layers panel makes it easy to locate and select those objects later on.



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## Paste Instead of Place

*Khara Plicanic*

When working with simple vector graphics in InDesign, it's sometimes helpful to retain some editability for making color adjustments and other small changes. However, if you bring the file in via the Place command, InDesign will treat it



**FIGURE 17.** Opening the file in Illustrator first, then copying and pasting it into InDesign makes it possible to edit individual components within InDesign using the Direct Selection tool.

as any other graphic, putting it in a graphics frame and thereby making the vectors themselves inaccessible. Instead, open the file in Illustrator first, then copy and paste it into InDesign. Then, use the Direct Selection tool to select and edit specific elements without having to bounce back and forth to Illustrator each time you need to make a minor change (**FIGURE 17**).

## Be Careful Where You Drop Anchor

*Laurie Ruhlin*

The first time I made a catalog, I didn't think it really mattered exactly where I anchored the objects, as long as they ended up in the right position on the page. So, I anchored all of the product photos in the middle of the product name! But I soon ran into major problems.

One day, my client asked me to find a product named Metal Hook. I chose **Edit > Find/Change** and typed *Metal Hook*. No results. I typed *Metal*. No results. Horrible thoughts ran through my head. Did that product get deleted accidentally? Fortunately, I finally found the “missing” product. Why didn't Find/Change find *Metal Hook*?

I saw the answer when I turned on **Type > Show Hidden Characters**. I had dragged the anchor marker (¶) right in the middle of the word *Metal* (**FIGURE 18**).

**FIGURE 18.** Avoid dragging the anchor into the middle of a word, which will mess with spell check and find/change.

To find that, I would've had to search for *Me^atal* (^a is the metacharacter for an anchored object marker). So, I edited the catalog and moved all the anchors to the end of the name of the product. Why to the end and not the beginning? Because the client was always asking me to re-order the products, so I had to make sure that my selection included the ¶ symbol. If I had put it before the name, there was a chance that I would miss it when I cut and pasted the rest of the text.

## Color-Coded Styles

*Matt Mayerchak*

When composing type for long documents, you can set up “loose” and “tight” variations of your most used body text styles by simply editing the justification settings.

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Changing the justification settings gives you more precise control than tracking, since you can set the values for word and letter spacing separately and use glyph scaling if you wish. Applying the modified paragraph styles will keep your text from having local overrides.

In **FIGURE 19**, I have two levels of tight settings, and one loose

setting. You'll probably need to tighten text more often than loosen it.

Adding temporary color swatches for these styles allows you to see which paragraphs you have modified. When you make text edits, it's easier to see where you can gain or lose a line. Once your text is final, you simply delete the swatches and replace them with black.

The Typefitter plug-in from Typefi makes this process easier and more intuitive with many levels of loose and tight hyphenation and justification settings. If you have Typefitter but are sharing files with other designers who do not, you can use it to modify the justification settings, and then create paragraph styles with those settings. It's not as easy as using the plug-in, but still gives your colleagues access to your settings.

Similarly, when you have different paragraph styles that look similar, use temporary text colors to make it easier to distinguish between them while working. This is great for text with multi-level headings, such as a bibliography or index, where the text looks similar but may have slightly different white space above or below.

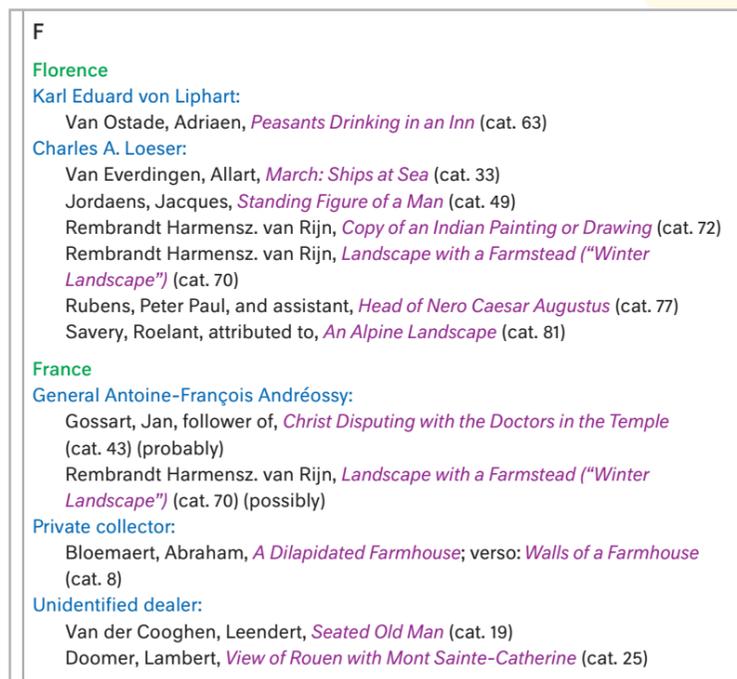
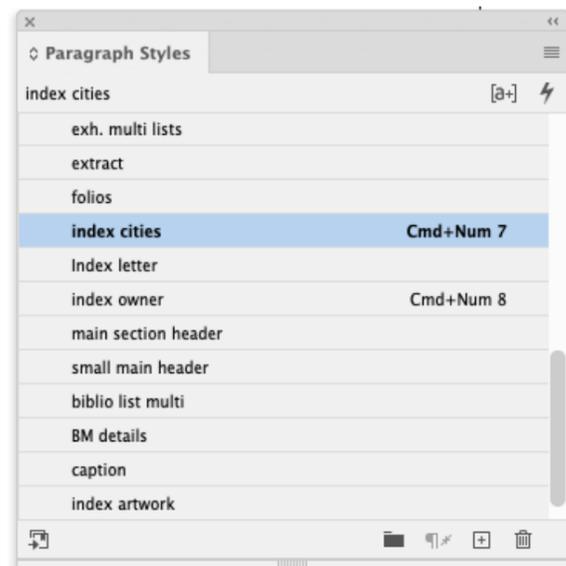
You can also add color to a character style to see where bold or italic has been applied to punctuation. When you're done, simply delete the temporary swatch and replace it with black.

## Keep Things in Perspective

**Maya P. Lim**

If repeatedly zooming in and out to check how a design element looks in the bigger context of the layout gives you vertigo, try Split Layout view. Click the double rectangle icon in the bottom-right corner of your screen (it looks like the outline of two side-by-side panels) (**FIGURE 20**). A second panel will open on

**FIGURE 19.** Temporary colors applied using paragraph styles

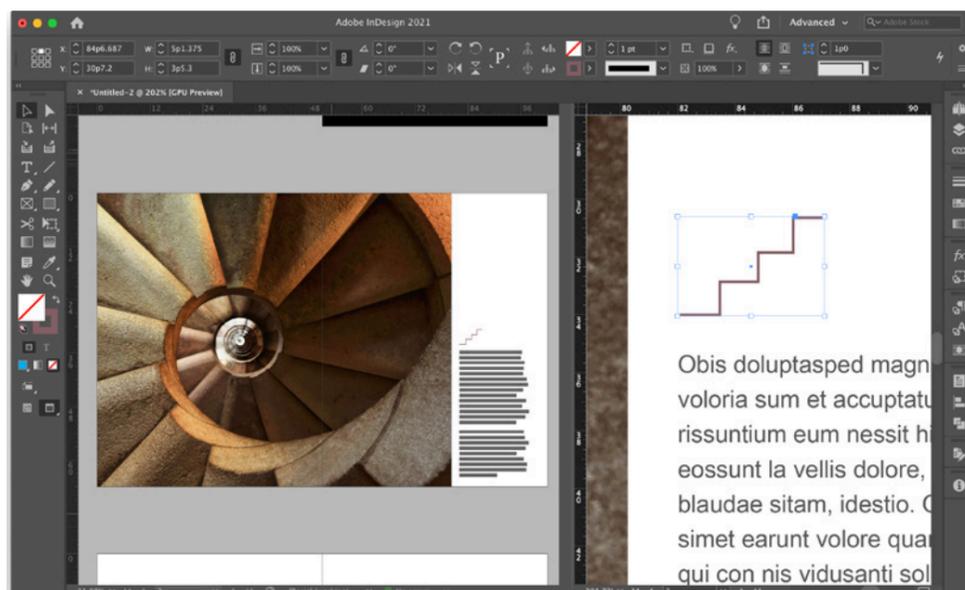


**FIGURE 20.** The Split Layout icon resides in the bottom-right corner of the screen.

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your screen. Navigate to the area of the design where you need to do detailed work. Keep the other panel open to a more zoomed-out view of the layout. Drag the divider between the views to resize them (FIGURE 21). Click the Split Layout View icon again (it will be a single rectangle) to return to the single panel view.

FIGURE 21. So near, yet so far away...



## Go Bigger Nigel French

InDesign has a maximum type size of 1296 points. But you can fool InDesign into setting type up to twice that size—without having to resort to converting the type to outlines. You can increase the horizontal and vertical scale up to 200% for an effective type size of 2592 points (FIGURE 22). So long as the horizontal and

vertical scales are the same, the type remains proportional. By the way, this also works in Illustrator and Photoshop.

## Explore the Keyboard Shortcuts Peter Kahrel

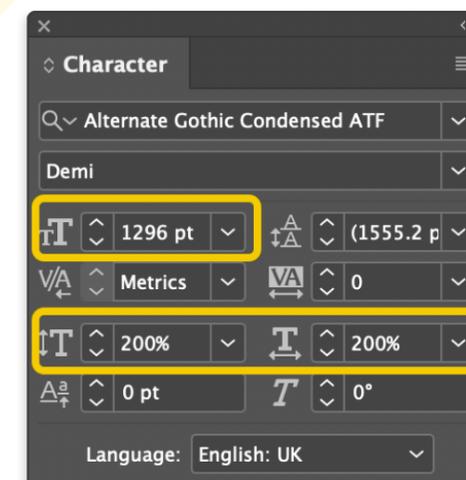
InDesign menu items show the shortcuts associated with them. But what you see in the menus isn't all you can do. Many actions

aren't present in the menus but can be triggered with a shortcut. The best place to look for some of these "hidden" actions is in the Views and Navigation section of the keyboard shortcut editor.

Open the keyboard shortcut editor by choosing **Edit > Keyboard Shortcuts**. Then in the Product menu, select Views, Navigation. In that section you'll see a lot of familiar menu



FIGURE 22. The page size is set to a massive 84 × 60 inches (7 × 5 feet). To exceed the maximum type size and keep the type editable, increase the horizontal and vertical scales.



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commands, but also some very useful things that you'll wish you had discovered earlier. I'll list a couple of my favorites:

- ▶ **Activate last-used field in panel.** I use this one all the time. After you enter a value in a field and press Return/Enter to commit it, just press the shortcut key to return to that same field a later.
- ▶ **Toggle Measurement System.** Another useful one. If you work in picas and want to know the width of a frame in millimeters, select the frame and press the shortcut until millimeters are displayed. The default is Command+Shift+Option+U/Ctrl+Shift+Alt+U.
- ▶ **Save All.** Pressing Command+Shift+Option+S/Ctrl+Shift+Alt+S saves all open documents.

- ▶ **Close All.** Pressing Command+Shift+Option+W/Ctrl+Shift+Alt+W closes all open documents. What is missing is an action “close all documents without saving,” but there's [a simple script](#) for that.

Many of the shortcuts in this section involve three or more keys. If you use one of these shortcuts often, simply redefine it. For example, I use the “Activate last-used field in panel” key so often that I redefined it to Command/Ctrl+`, which is much easier than the original.

## Do the Application Frame Double-Click

*Scott Citron*

If like me you're a fan of InDesign's Application Frame, (**Window > Application Frame**), double-clicking anywhere on the

Frame with no document open is the same as **File > Open** or Command/Ctrl+O.

Yes, it's a small thing, but it never fails to delight me every time I use it. By the way, this shortcut works in Photoshop and Illustrator, too.

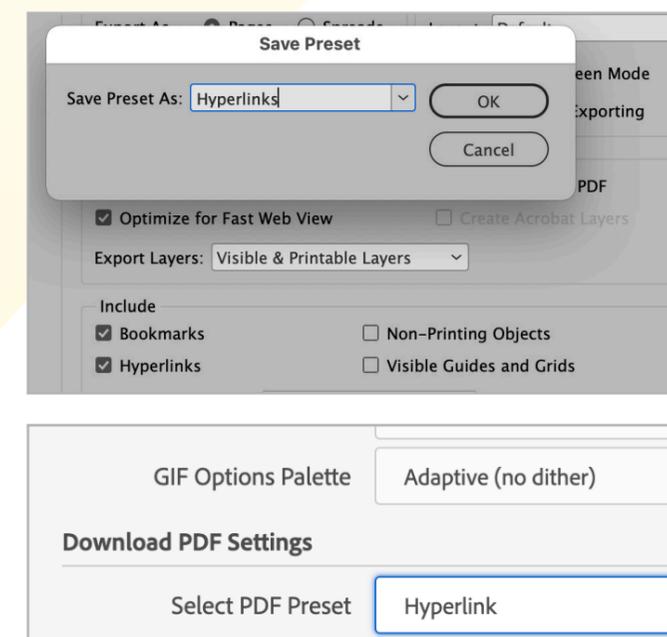
## Preserve Hyperlinks in Publish Online Downloads

*Steve Werner*

If you upload an InDesign document to Publish Online, hyperlinks will work fine in the published document. But if you permit viewers to download a PDF, it takes extra work for the hyperlinks to be included.

Default Print PDF presets don't include hyperlinks, so you need to create and save a Print PDF preset where hyperlinks are turned on.

When uploading to Publish Online, in the General tab of the Publish Your Document Online dialog box, turn on Allow Viewers to Download the Document as a PDF (Print). In the Advanced tab of the same dialog box, select **Download PDF Settings > Select PDF Preset** and select your custom preset (**FIGURE 23**).



**FIGURE 23.** Save a preset that includes hyperlinks and then choose it in the Download PDF Settings.

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## Apply Object Styles to Groups (Without Tears)

Steve Laskevitch

You've got a group of objects, each (or most) of which have different object styles applied to them.

You've also got an object style called "figure upper-right" that sets the position on the page and text wrap. But, when you apply that style to the group, Very Bad Things happen.

That's because InDesign applied the "figure upper-right" object style to each object in the group, removing any previous styles each object had. This behavior is especially terrible if you ever want those objects to change when their styles are edited. Here's the solution to this dilemma. Make sure the objects are indeed grouped.

1. Cut the group.
2. Select an empty frame.
3. Choose **Edit > Paste Into** or use the shortcut Command+Option+V/ Ctrl+Alt+V.
4. Choose **Object > Fitting > Fit Frame to Content**, or press Command+Option+C/ Ctrl+Alt+C.
5. Apply the object style to this container frame. The objects inside will retain their styles and the whole figure will do what you like (FIGURE 24).

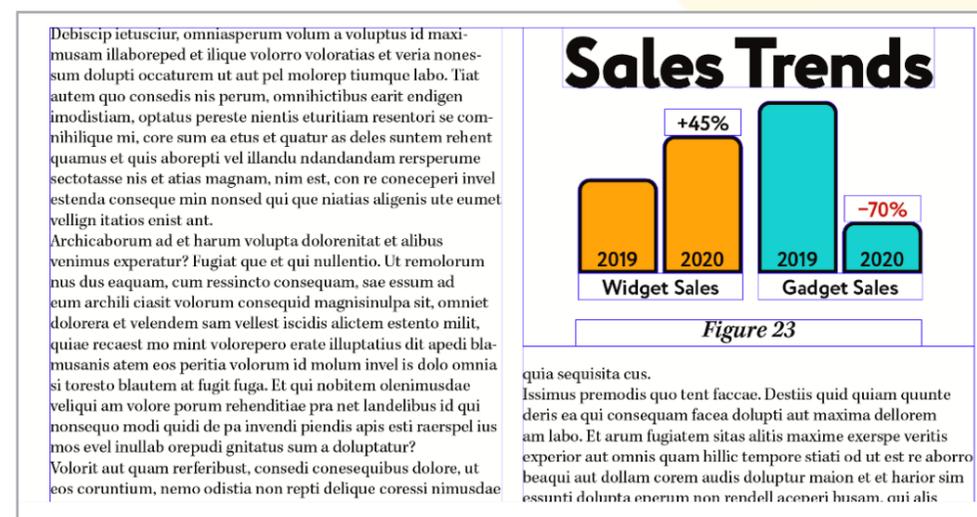


FIGURE 24. A frame containing a group with the "figure upper-right" style applied to it. Each object in the group retains its own style.

## Scale Objects from the Keyboard

Mike Rankin

Want to tweak the size of a selected object or group? You don't need to go to the Control panel or Properties panel. You don't even have to take your hands off the keyboard. Just press Command/Ctrl+, to decrease the scale by 1%, or Command/Ctrl+. to increase it by 1%. Want to scale in bigger increments? Add the Option/Alt key to scale in 5% increments.

## Create a New Table Instantly

Michael Ninness

When most folks need a table, they create a text frame, and then choose **Table > Insert Table**. I'm here to tell you there's a quicker way. Don't bother with making a text frame. Simply press Command+Shift+Option+T (macOS) or Ctrl+Shift+Alt+T (Windows). This opens the Create Table dialog box, where you can choose the number of columns and rows you want. After you click OK, simply drag out the new table to the size you want it to be.

## Align a Tab on Any Character

Michael Murphy

Any character you can type can be designated as the alignment point for a decimal tab. If you

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want several lines of text to line up on the first letter *e* in the line, simply type *e* in the Align On field when a decimal tab is selected in the tab ruler. The first *e* following a tab will act as the alignment point (FIGURE 25).

## Well-Placed Windows Kelly Vaughn

Have you ever chosen **Window > Arrange** and been unsatisfied with the results?

What's not readily apparent is that InDesign uses the order of the document tabs when arranging your files. In most

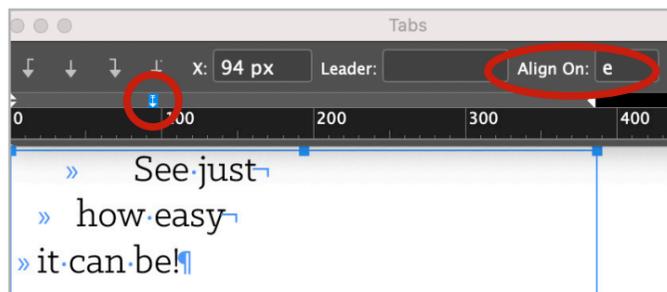


FIGURE 25. If you can type a character, you can align on it with a decimal tab.

of the examples shown in FIGURE 26, all of the documents were consolidated into a single tab, and in order from left to right: Window 1.indd to Window 6.indd. Window 1.indd was the active document.

The terms *vertical* and *horizontal* refer to the dividing lines in between the documents.

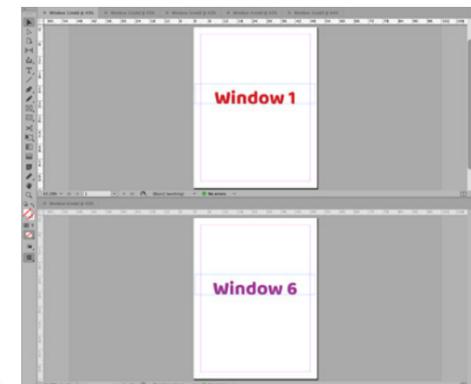
When choosing one of the “Stacked” options, the active document will be the one made larger and placed on the left side.

## Create a New Color Swatch for a Text Style Bob Levine

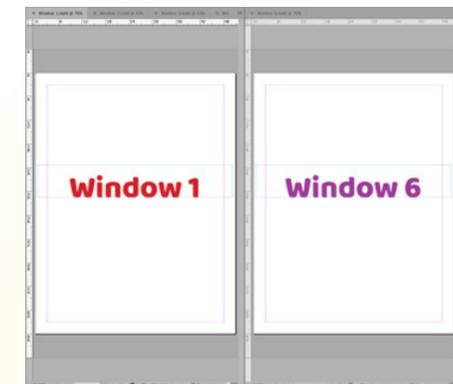
Bob Levine

If you're creating a new paragraph style or character style and you realize you don't have the color you need in your Swatches panel, just double-click the color proxy to open the New Color Swatch dialog box.

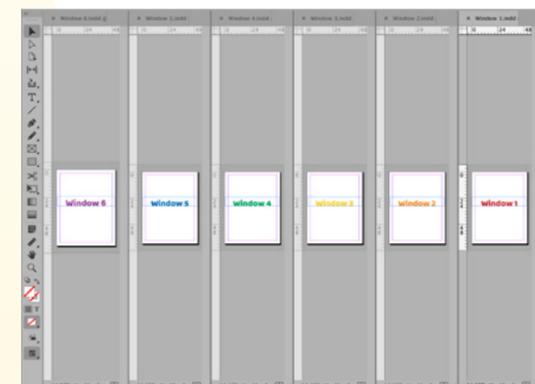
FIGURE 26



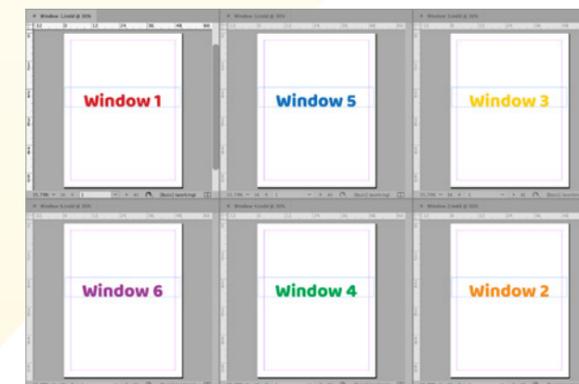
Window > Arrange > 2up Horizontal



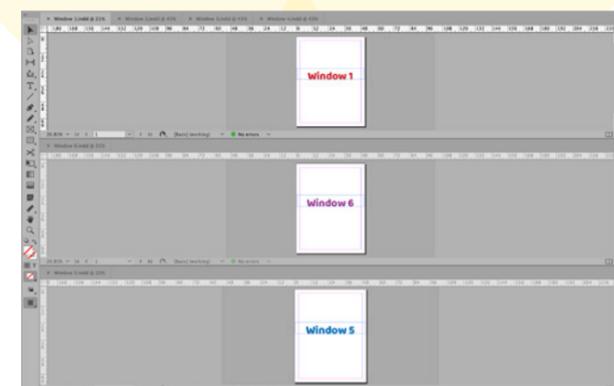
Window > Arrange > 2up Vertical



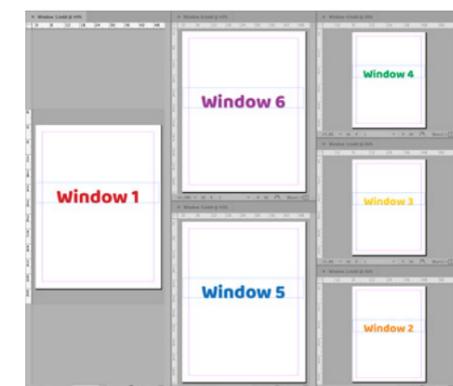
Window > Arrange > Tile all vertically



Window > Arrange > 6up



Window > Window > Arrange > 3up Horizontal



Window > Arrange > 6up Stacked

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## Convert InDesign Files to Other Formats

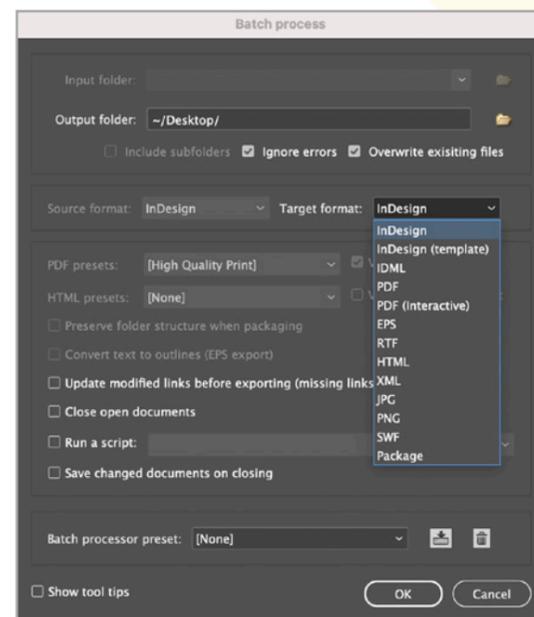
*James Fritz*

Have you ever had to create a bunch of PDFs from a bunch of InDesign files? Or maybe you needed to down-save a series of InDesign projects to an earlier version by exporting to IDML. These common situations can become tedious if you have more than a few files, because you need to manually go through the export process for each file. Thankfully, there is a fantastic free script called Batch Convert by Peter Kahrel, which you can download from [CreativePro](#). You'll need to put all the InDesign files into one folder. When you run the script, choose that folder as the input folder, and then choose where you want the converted files to be saved to (FIGURE 27).

## Don't Resize Frames, Change Indents

*Russell Viers*

To be efficient in working with long documents you need to learn how to use indents to position text in frames instead of moving the frames around. For example, if you have a catalog with a bunch of products all



**FIGURE 27.** The dialog box for Peter Kahrel's Batch Process script is loaded with useful options.

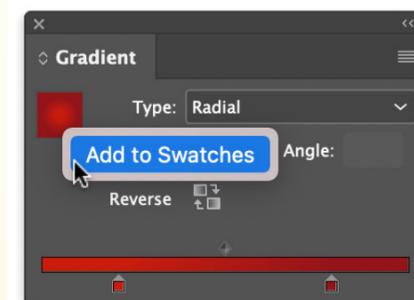
lined up and the client requests that you move the copy under the photos to be more centered, don't move or resize the frames one by one. Instead, edit the paragraph style to indent the left side of the text and move it over. That way, if the client changes their mind, you simply remove the indent and things are back the way they were. In terms of time invested it will take you minutes instead of hours.

## Add New Colors and Gradients to Swatches

*Jean-Claude Tremblay*

The Gradient and Color panels offer great ways to work on the fly. But to preserve your work, saving it so you can use it on another object, right-click the preview thumbnail in those panels and choose Add to Swatches. You don't have to

do this right when you're first mixing the color or gradient, either. Just select an object with the color or gradient at any time and right-click the thumbnail (FIGURE 28).



**FIGURE 28.** Always add newly mixed colors and gradients to your Swatches panel.

## Rounded Corners, Straight Margins

*Sandee Cohen*

If you work with text frames that have rounded corners you might have noticed a common problem: The first and last lines appear slightly indented when they should align with the rest

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of the paragraph (FIGURE 29). The best way to avoid this problem is to make the size of the text inset at least the same size as the rounded corner.

**Lyman Frank Baum** (May 15, 1879) was an American author of children's literature, known for writing *The Wonderful Wizard of Oz*. He wrote thirteen novel sequels, nine screenplays, and a host of other works.

**FIGURE 29.** It's very slight, but the first and last lines of text are indented from the rest of the paragraph.

## Don't Touch That Mouse! (or Trackpad)

**David Blatner**

The only way to truly be efficient in InDesign is to keep your hands on the keyboard as much as possible. I'm not going to tell you which keyboard shortcuts to learn, but I will share a rule that

will make you a more efficient InDesign user: If you find yourself choosing a menu item or tool more than three times in an hour, you should learn the shortcut for it. (And, if there is no shortcut, then you should make one, with **Edit > Keyboard Shortcuts**.) You have to learn it, and then force yourself to use it every time you're tempted to choose the feature from the menu or Tool panel! Every tool has a shortcut... V or Esc for the Selection tool, T for the Type tool, and so on. You just have to get your fingers to learn these, or you'll forever be inefficient.

As a subscriber, you have access to the PDF versions of the InDesignSecrets keyboard shortcuts posters for Mac and Windows. Just log in at [CreativePro.com](https://www.creativepro.com), and visit [this page](#) to download them.

## Sharp Vector Art for Publish Online

**Anne-Marie Concepción**

Publish Online does marvelous work in creating a digital, interactive version of an InDesign document. Type is converted to SVG to maintain crisp outlines, and images are rasterized to 96 ppi (or 144 ppi if you choose that in the **File > Publish Online > Advanced** panel).

Wait... what? Images are rasterized to 96 or 144 ppi? That's okay for raster artwork, but it decimates the fine lines and the type in vector artwork from Adobe Illustrator.

The solution is to swap out your AI files for SVG files before you upload. Publish Online passes the SVG code right through, and Illustrator artwork appears as pristine on the web as it does in a PDF. (FIGURE 30).

Replacing your placed AI files with SVG ones is straightforward. Open an AI file in Illustrator, and choose **File > Export As > Format: SVG**. Accept the default settings for the SVG format. In InDesign, use the Links panel to relink your AI file(s) to the SVG version(s).

Cest estestium ventur aditi nihillandae is remporem. Ut v  
ru mquam, ut ut quiatium restrumqui offic tem re colloru  
taturionem in num fugitio sandante volor sum in repre si  
velloberfers peliquo diantio mi.

*.AI Butterfly*



*.SVG Butterfly*



**FIGURE 30.** In this Publish Online document, the Lorem Ipsum text set in InDesign (which the upload process converts to SVG) appears at the top. Illustrator artwork and text (left) is rasterized. Converting it to SVG format (right) prevents the rasterization. You can see the Publish Online document [here](#).

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You cannot detect any change in the layout, and it will print and export to PDF just fine. The Edit Original command opens the linked SVG artwork in Illustrator, too.

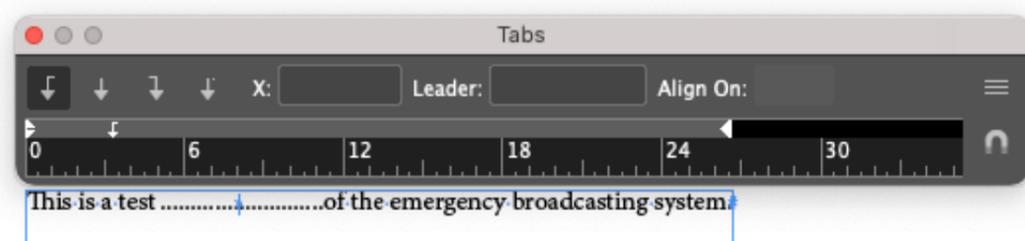
## Trouble-Free Tabs

*Chad Chelius*

If you work a lot with tabs, you've probably encountered this situation: You set a right-aligned tab that positions text all the way to the right side of a text frame. Then later on you need to make the frame narrower. Boom, all of your text breaks and you have to fiddle with the tab to fix

things. Instead, try using a Right Indent Tab, which pushes any text to the right of it all the way to the right side of the frame, regardless of the frame's width. You can insert a Right Indent Tab by pressing Shift+Tab or by choosing **Type > Insert Special Character > Other > Right Indent Tab**.

Need to apply a dot leader to your Right Indent Tab? The method is obscure but easy: Just add any tab stop within the paragraph and apply the leader character to it. The Right Indent Tab will pick up that character (**FIGURE 31**).



**FIGURE 31.** The Right Indent Tab picks up the leader of any tab in the paragraph.

## Copy Effects to Other Objects

*Bart Van de Wiele*

You easily can duplicate existing effects onto other objects by following these steps:

1. Choose **Window > Effects**.
2. Select an object with the effects you want to use elsewhere.
3. Click and drag the *fx* icon from the Effects panel onto the target objects to duplicate the effect (**FIGURE 32**).



**FIGURE 32.** There's no need to reinvent the wheel when you can duplicate effects with a simple drag and drop.

## Sidebar Styling Made Simple

*Colleen Gratzer*

You can style all the text inside a sidebar by simply applying an object style.

1. Set up your paragraph styles for the sidebar head and text, as you normally would.
2. In your sidebar head paragraph style, in the General options, select the Next Style, which is the paragraph style to be applied



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after this one, such as Sidebar Text.

3. Create an object style for how you want the sidebar to look. Within that object style, go to Paragraph Styles. Select the first paragraph style for it to apply, such as Sidebar Title, and turn on Apply Next Style.
4. Select the text frame of the sidebar and apply the object style.

## Rotation Liberation

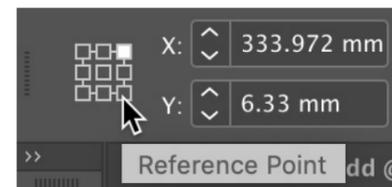
*Keith Gilbert*

You may already know how to rotate objects using the Selection tool, the Free Transform tool, or the Rotation Angle field in the Control panel. When you rotate with these methods, the selected object(s) will rotate around whatever point is selected in the proxy, which resides on the

left end of the Control panel (FIGURE 33).

But what if you need to rotate an object around a point that isn't located within the boundaries of the selection? In these cases, the proxy doesn't help at all, but you can use the often-neglected Rotate tool, which works just like the Rotate tool in Illustrator. With this

**FIGURE 33.** The proxy lets you control the point of rotation, but it is limited to a point within the boundaries of the selected object(s).



**FIGURE 34.** Option/Alt-click with the Rotate tool on the point you want the selected object to rotate around.



tool, you can choose a rotation point anywhere on the page. There are lots of ways to use the Rotate tool. Here is one common, easy-to-understand method:

1. Select an object.
2. Press R to switch to the Rotate tool.
3. Hold down the Option/Alt key and click any point that you want the object to rotate around (FIGURE 34).
4. Enter the desired rotation angle (positive values rotate counter-clockwise, negative values rotate clockwise), then click OK or Copy (FIGURE 35)
5. Choose **Object > Transform Again > Transform Again** to rotate the copied object by the same amount. Repeat as many times as desired (FIGURE 36).

**FIGURE 35.** After previewing the rotation angle you've entered, you can click Copy to rotate a copy of the selected object(s).



**FIGURE 36.** The Transform Again command allows you to repeat a transformation again and again to create all kinds of step-and-repeat-style effects.



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## Copy Links

*Khara Plicanic*

Sometimes when you need to wrangle all your links as part of getting the file ready to pass to a colleague, saving the file to an archive, or just cleaning up a scattered collection of assets, InDesign's Package command can be overkill. If you're not worried about fonts and don't want to fuss with managing another copy of your document, head to the Links panel instead. Select all your links and from the panel menu, choose **Utilities > Copy Links(s) To**. Navigate to the desired location, create a folder to store your links, then click Choose.

InDesign will gather your links from wherever they may roam, create copies (in the designated folder), and—here's the kicker—redirect the file paths to link to

the newly created copies so you can stop worrying about accidentally deleting a link when cleaning your system.

## Drag and Drop Delight

*Jeff Witchel*

If you do a lot of text editing, once you try dragging text to a new location, you won't be able to live without this feature. You need to enable the feature in your preferences first by choosing **InDesign > Preferences > Text** (in the Edit menu on Windows) and clicking Enable in Layout View in the Drag and Drop Text Editing area of the Type section. Now just select some text, click and drag it to the desired position, and drop it when an insertion point appears. It's easy and a lot faster than cut and paste. But wait, there's more! You can click and

drag text to an insertion point in a totally different text frame—even in a different document! If you want to duplicate the text instead of moving it, just hold Option/Alt as you drag and drop.

## Camouflage the Grid

*Nigel French*

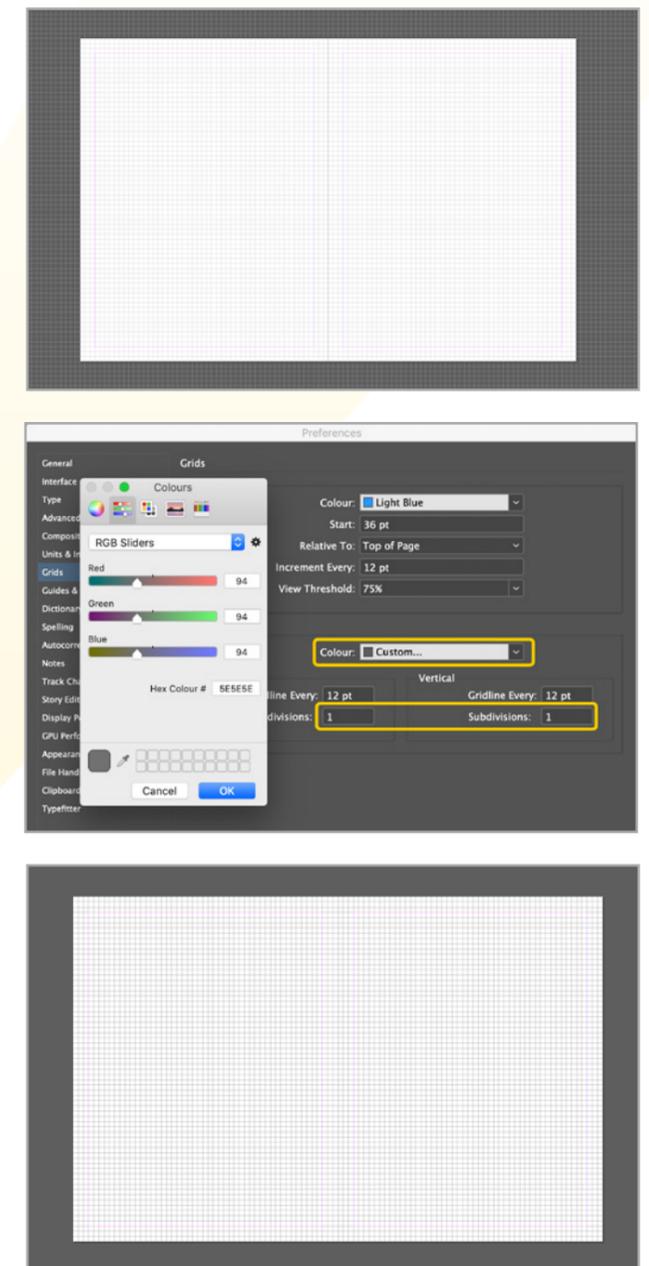
The document grid (Cmd/Ctrl+) covers your page and your pasteboard—and that can be too many gridlines to look at. You can make it appear as if there's no document grid on the pasteboard by making the grid the same color as the pasteboard. If you're using a Medium Dark interface this is R94 G94 B94 (FIGURE 37).

## Cast a Long Shadow

*Mike Rankin*

Here's a method for making simple cast shadows for native InDesign objects. Copy and paste

**FIGURE 37.** Change the document grid color to the same color as the pasteboard so that the grid is only visible on the page itself. Note that Subdivisions need to be set to 1.



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the object in place. Set the fill (and stroke, if any) to Paper. Set the blending mode to Multiply. This makes the object fully transparent. Now add a drop shadow, and in the Effects dialog box, set the distance to zero (so the shadow is in the exact same location as the object). Select the option Shadow Honors Other Effects and deselect the option Object Knocks Out Shadow (FIGURE 38).

Now you can see the shadow of the copied object but not the

object itself. Use the Control panel to scale and skew the shadow as desired to make a cast effect. Finally, press Shift+G to get the Gradient Feather tool, and drag over the shadow so it fades out as it gets farther away from the original object.

## ★ Make Transparency Stick in CC Library Objects

*Steve Werner*

Using CC Libraries to store objects like logos can be very efficient. But sometimes when

you drag-place a vector object from a CC Library (like an Illustrator logo), the artwork unexpectedly appears on a white background even though the same art will come in with no background when you place it directly (FIGURE 39).

Here's the source of the problem: When the art is placed with **File > Place** from Illustrator, turning on the Show Import

Options dialog box gives you the choice to enable transparency. But there is no such option in the CC Library (FIGURE 40).

The solution is to place an Illustrator file before you use the CC Library. Choose Show Import Options, and turn on the Transparency option. That setting is “sticky” and will be remembered when you subsequently drag-place Illustrator art from a CC Library.

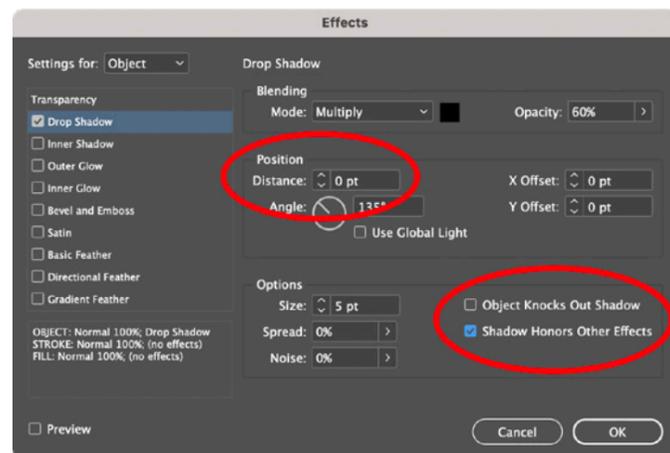


FIGURE 38. The key Drop Shadow settings for a cast shadow and an example of the effect.

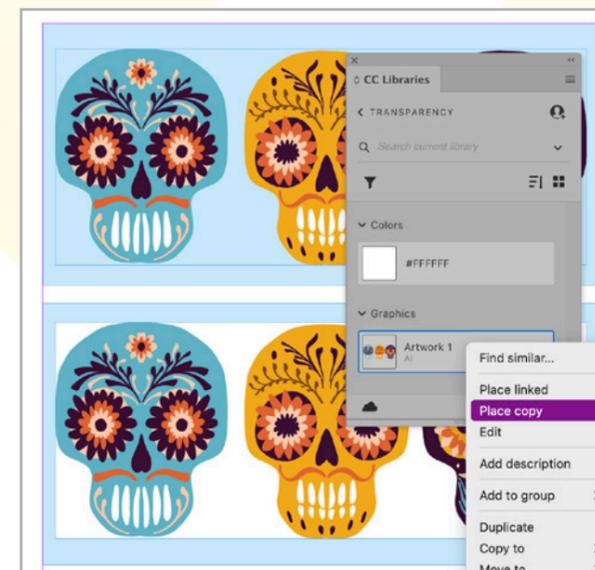
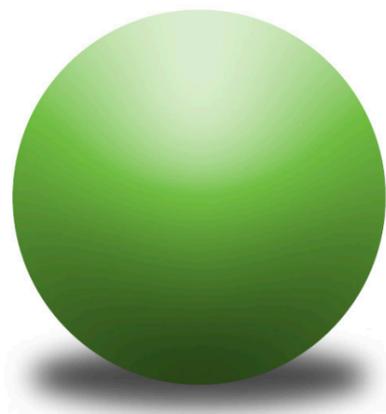


FIGURE 39. Vector art drag-placed from CC Libraries can unexpectedly appear on a white background.

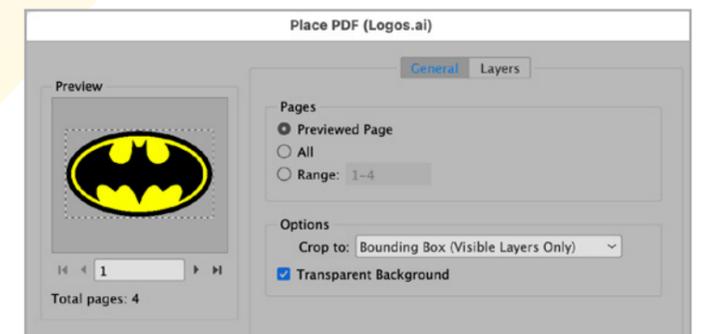


FIGURE 40. The solution is to turn on transparency in Show Import Options when placing another Illustrator file. That setting will be used later when you drag items from CC Libraries into your layout.

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## Clean Up Your CC Libraries

**Anne-Marie Concepción**

If you're a fan of Creative Cloud Libraries like I am, your CC Libraries panel is probably stuffed with old Libraries that you don't need anymore. While you can delete a Library from the panel by choosing Delete [name of library] from the panel menu, it only deletes the active Library.

You can't Shift-click multiple ones to delete them *en masse*—unless you delete them from the web view of your Libraries. To get to the web view, go to [assets.adobe.com/libraries](https://assets.adobe.com/libraries), or choose “View on website” from the CC Libraries panel menu (and then click the left arrow next to the name of the library at the top of the browser window to view the full list).

If you're viewing your libraries as a list, you can hover your cursor over the left of a Library name so a checkbox appears. Click inside the checkbox and checkboxes for all the other Libraries appear. Now you can select multiple Libraries at once by clicking in their checkboxes (**FIGURE 41**).

As long as you only select the ones that you own—in the Sharing column it says Only You, Public Link, or Shared With and you're the owner—you'll see a Delete link (upper-right of the browser window). Click the Delete link to clear them out of your web view and your CC Libraries panel.

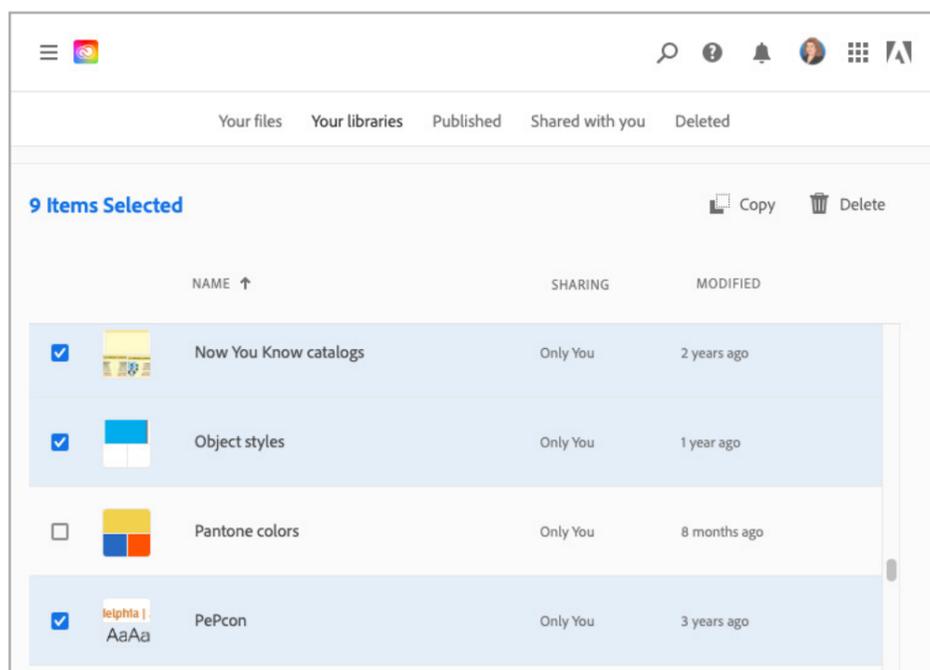
To remove yourself from Libraries that others have shared with you, select one or more that say Shared With, and the Delete link changes to Unfollow.

Now go back to InDesign and admire your slim and trim CC Libraries panel!

## Demystify Your Styles

**Sandee Cohen**

You might be confused one day when you click on some text that looks like it must be formatted with a character style, but nothing is selected in the Character Styles panel. What has happened is the paragraph style includes a nested style, line style, or GREP style. A character style is applied, but because it's applied automatically via a paragraph style, it's listed only at the bottom of the Character Styles panel, preceded by a paragraph symbol (**FIGURE 42, NEXT PAGE**). Unfortunately, the listing doesn't tell you if it's a nested style, line style, or GREP style.

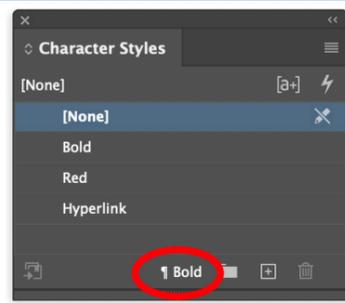


**FIGURE 41.** The CC Libraries panel won't let you select multiple libraries, but you can in the web view.

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But at least you have your first clue as to the source of this “hidden” character style.

A glance at the bottom of the Character Styles panel offers a clue about why the text at the start of this paragraph looks different.



**FIGURE 42.** Look at the bottom of the Character Styles panel to find what character formatting has been applied to the text.

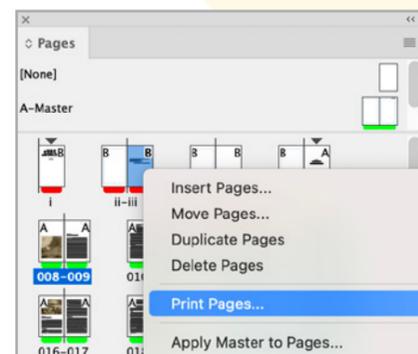
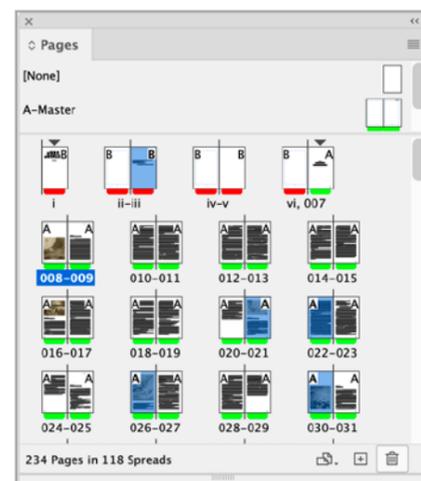
## Print from the Pages Panel

*Bart Van de Wiele*

If you need to print a nonlinear range of pages from your InDesign document, it’s often easier to use the Pages panel instead of the Print dialog box.

1. Choose **Window > Pages**.

2. Hold down Command (macOS) or Ctrl (Windows) to select all pages you wish to print.
3. Right-click your selected pages and choose Print Pages.
4. Notice InDesign automatically inserts your selected pages into the Range field (FIGURE 43).
5. Print away!



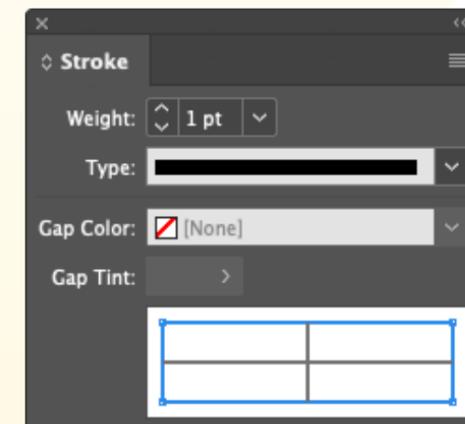
**FIGURE 43.** The Pages panel makes it easy to select even the most complicated set of pages for printing.

## Target Table Strokes

*Chad Chelius*

When you create a table, there’s initially a 1 pt black stroke around every cell. This is rarely the look you want nowadays, so you need to adjust and/or remove strokes in some parts of the table. To quickly target specific strokes for adjustment, use the table stroke proxy in the Control panel or Stroke panel (FIGURE 44). Single-click at the intersection of any two strokes to

select or deselect them. Double-clicking an inner or outer stroke in the proxy toggles the selection of all the inner or outer strokes. Triple-clicking on any stroke in the proxy preview toggles the selection of all the strokes in the table.



**FIGURE 44.** The stroke proxy makes it easy to target the table strokes you want to edit.

## Measure with the Gap Tool

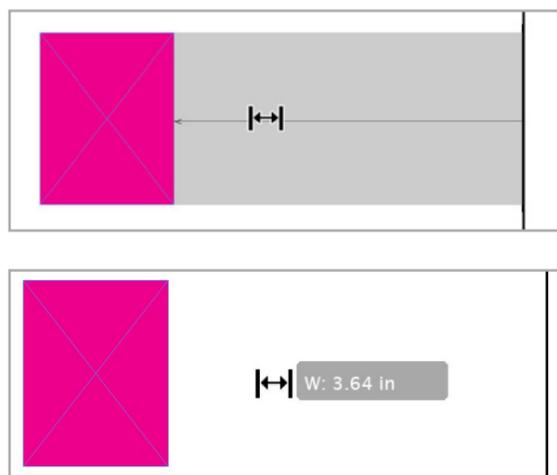
*Keith Gilbert*

The Gap tool, ignored by many users, is often the quickest way to check the distance between

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two objects or the distance between an object and the edge of the page.

To measure with the Gap tool, select the tool by pressing the U key, and then hover over the space between two objects or between an object and the edge of the page. You should see a gray highlight containing an arrow. Click and hold to see the size of the gap (FIGURE 45).



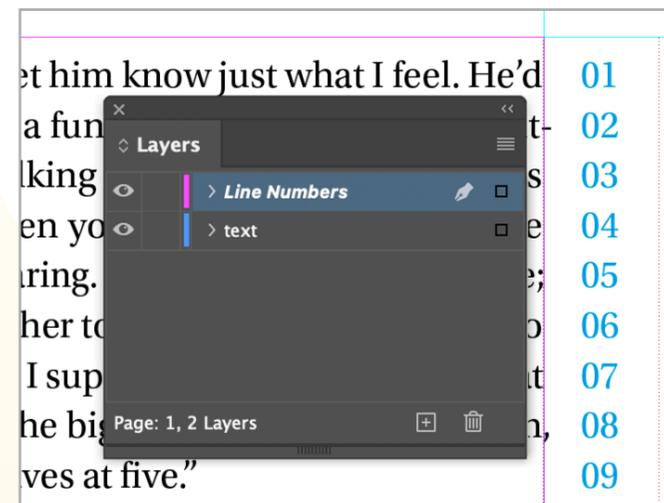
**FIGURE 45.** Hover over a gap between two objects, or a single object and a page edge, then click and hold to see the size of the gap displayed.

For this to work as described, you must first choose **Preferences > Interface > Show Transformation Values**.

## ★ Line Numbers Nigel French

Ever need to communicate the exact locations of a word or phrase on the page? Perhaps you have a client who likes to give you corrections over the phone (I know... but it happens). Rather than waste time with instructions like “left a bit,” “up a bit,” “down a bit,” include line numbers on your drafts in the outside margins. Put these on the master page(s) so that they show up on all your document pages, and on a separate layer that can be turned off when you make your final export to PDF. That way you and your client can easily identify the problem: “left

page, line 6,” “right page, line 24,” and so on (FIGURE 46).



**FIGURE 46.** Add a nonprinting line scale to your master pages, for easy referencing of editorial problems. This is useful if communicating by phone with a client.

## ★ Find Keyboard Shortcuts Steve Werner

InDesign comes with hundreds of keyboard shortcuts built in and offers you the ability to customize them. But many shortcuts are not shown in InDesign’s menus and how to

find them isn’t obvious. The trick is to use Show Set.

1. Choose **Edit > Keyboard Shortcuts**. In the dialog box, click Show Set.
2. Show Set opens up a text window in the default text editor on your computer where you can browse or search for specific commands.

Get curious and scrutinize that massive list of commands, and I guarantee that you’ll learn lots of things that make you more productive (and happy) spending time in InDesign than the vast majority of users.

## ★ Make Images Conditional Anne-Marie Concepción

Want to make an image appear and disappear along with conditional text? Paste it into the

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text flow as an anchored inline object. Select the object with the Type tool, and then assign a condition to it. Now when you hide the condition, the image winks out of existence. If the image was in its own paragraph, be sure you apply the condition to its paragraph marker too so that no telltale empty space is left behind when you toggle off the condition's visibility. For custom anchored objects, show hidden characters (**Type > Show Hidden Characters**) and apply the condition to the anchor marker in the text.



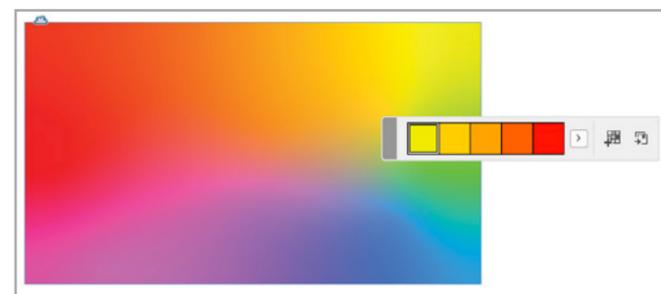
**FIGURE 47.** In this example, the Color Theme tool selected both placed images.

## Create Color Themes with Precision

*Bart Van de Wiele*

The Color Theme tool allows you to create themes from not just individual objects (by clicking them with the tool), but also from parts of images or the combination of multiple objects on your page.

1. Select the Color Theme Tool.
2. Press and hold Option (macOS) or Alt (Windows).
3. Click and drag across multiple objects to create a combined color theme (**FIGURE 47**).



**FIGURE 48.** Here, the Color Theme Tool selected only the warm colors in the image.

4. Alternatively, click and drag across a small area of an element to limit the source of the color theme to only that section (**FIGURE 48**).

## Protect Master Page Elements

*Chad Chelius*

If you work with long documents, you're probably used to overriding master page items to make local changes to them on document pages. As a shortcut, you might use the feature Override All Master Page Items in the Pages panel menu instead of overriding items one at a time.

But this can open the door for errors to creep in because some page elements you may never want to change, like running headers and footers. To protect those items, select them on the master, go to the Pages panel

menu, and choose **Master Pages > Allow Master Item Overrides on Selection** (so it's turned off). Now, you can now use the Override All Master Page Items command on your document page, and it will override only the elements that you actually want to be overridden.

## Creative Cell Shapes

*Diane Burns*

Here's a handy trick for using anchored objects to change the shape of your table cells.

Draw a shape that will appear at the intersection of cell strokes, as in **FIGURE 49, NEXT PAGE**. This example uses a shape that mimics a rounded corner, but you could also use circles, diamonds, or triangular shapes.

The key is to anchor the shape at the beginning of the text in a cell or its adjacent cell. The

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top and left insets must be the same for all cells in the table, so that you can set the horizontal position of the anchored shape relative to the anchor marker, and the vertical position relative to the baseline.

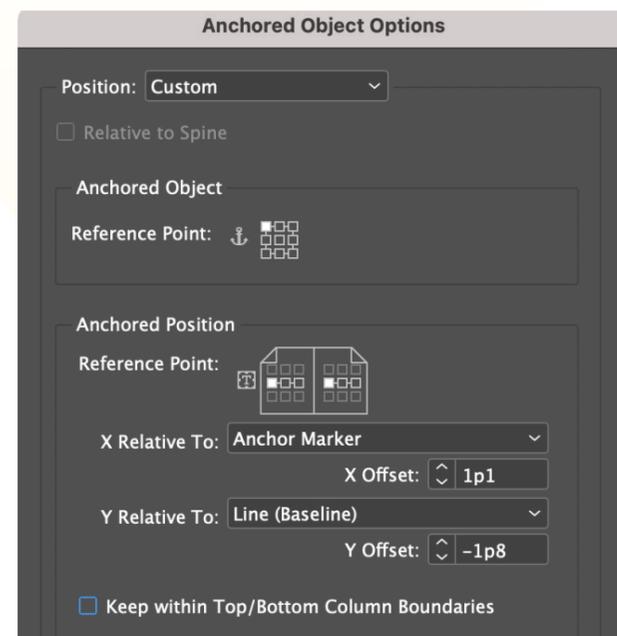
If the shape falls at the right edge of a cell, anchor to the cell to the right. That way, even if you change the column width, the shape will be in the correct position.

You don't have to anchor a shape at the cell intersections. You can use shapes anywhere on the cell edge to create the illusion of a non-rectangular cell.

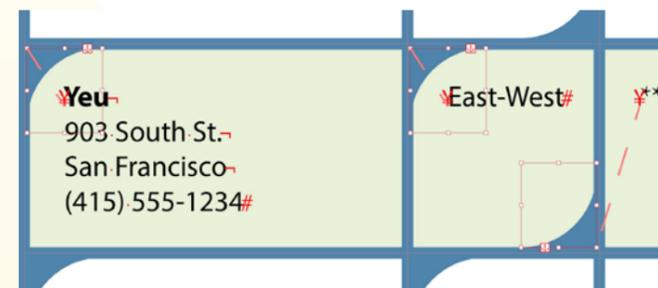
## ★ Populate Custom Dictionaries with Word Lists

*Anne-Marie Concepción*

Tired of adding your company's name or industry jargon to



| Restaurant                                                              | Cuisine   | Rating | Price  | Comments                                                                                                                                |
|-------------------------------------------------------------------------|-----------|--------|--------|-----------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------|
| House O' Burgers<br>88 Main St.<br>San Francisco<br>(415) 333-1234      | American  | ***    | \$     | The best-ever burger stand serving grass-fed beef and other fine items. Even the turkey burgers are good here! Try with grilled onions. |
| Yeu<br>903 South St.<br>San Francisco<br>(415) 555-1234                 | East-West | ****   | \$\$\$ | Pan-Asian menu now focuses on small plates, but larger plates are winners, too. Try stuffed quail, clay pot chicken, sumac-ginger pork. |
| Hideko's Bento Plus<br>963 South St.<br>San Francisco<br>(415) 777-1234 | Sushi     | **     | \$\$   | Neighborhood veteran offers top-notch sushi and other dishes such as chasoba noodles, eggplant Dengaku. Friendly, engaging service.     |
| Cherie Amour<br>921 Main St.<br>San Francisco<br>(415) 444-1234         | French    | ****   | \$     | Solid menu and the food is a good bargain at this California-French restaurant. Good desserts. Dogs are welcome every Monday night.     |



**FIGURE 49.** Anchor shapes at the beginning of the text in each cell or adjacent cell, horizontally relative to the anchor marker. This allows you to resize columns while the objects maintain their position relative to the appropriate cell edge. (Note: The final image above is a composite; you can't select multiple anchored objects.)

InDesign's dictionary one by one as it flags those words during a spell check? Try adding them all at once instead.

First, compile your word list. You can use any file (such as a staff directory or product listing) that's been exported or saved as

Text Only (TXT), as long as every word or number is separated by the same delimiter: tabs, paragraph returns, commas, or even just spaces.

Then in InDesign's Dictionary dialog box (**Edit > Spelling > Dictionary**), click Import to

add your word list to your User dictionary (or to any custom dictionary you've added previously). It's far faster than choosing Add to Dictionary one by one as InDesign flags each item during a spell check.

## ★ Think Negative

*Erica Gamet*

When it comes to values in InDesign, don't be afraid to think negative. For an unusual effect, have your text overlap an object slightly by entering negative values in the Text Wrap panel. The effect looks best when wrapping around the object shape (**FIGURE 50, NEXT PAGE**).

Another place where you can experiment with negative values is text indents. Use a negative value for your first-line indent to create hanging type. Set up your paragraph with a left indent

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value (e.g., 10 pts) then set the First Line Indent to the negative opposite (–10 pts).

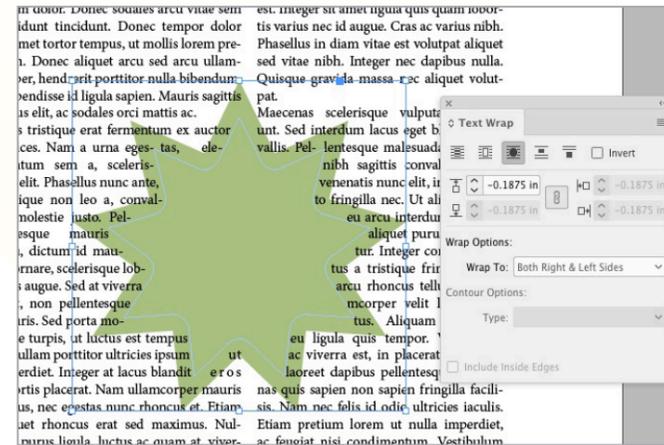
Although you can't enter them everywhere, try negative values where you can, such as in the Baseline Shift box to move type below the baseline.

## Use Bookmarks to Navigate in InDesign

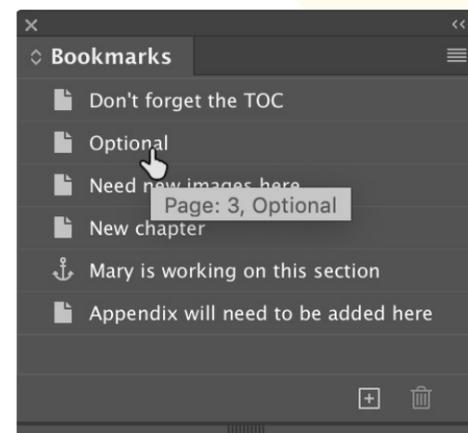
*Keith Gilbert*

The Bookmarks panel (**Window > Interactive > Bookmarks**) is typically used to create and manage bookmarks that you want to include in an exported PDF. But don't overlook how useful they are for navigating while working on a long document in InDesign.

To create a bookmark, open the panel, turn to a page in your document, click the plus icon at the bottom of the panel, and



**FIGURE 50.** Negative text wrap around a shape



**FIGURE 51.** The Bookmarks panel is a dead-simple way to add temporary navigation points to help you return to selected locations as you work on a long document.

give the bookmark a name. Now, as you get further along in the document, you can return to the bookmarked page by just

double-clicking the bookmark name in the panel (**FIGURE 51**).

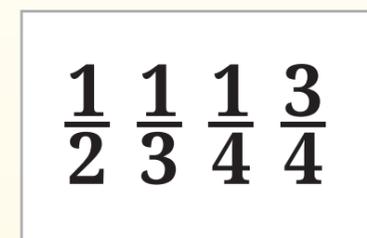
By default, bookmarks point to a specific page. But if you select text before you click the plus icon to create the bookmark, InDesign will create a text bookmark right before the selected text. If the text flows to another page, the bookmark flows with it to the new page! When you're finished working in your document, just select all these “temporary” bookmarks in the panel and click the trash icon to ensure that they aren't accidentally included in an exported PDF.

## Stack Your Fractions

*Nigel French*

When it comes to fractions, the vast majority of designers use a diagonal slash or solidus to separate the numerator and denominator. But what if you

want a horizontal fraction bar—known as nut fraction? Thankfully you don't have to resort to making your own. Nutso is a free OpenType font for making nut fractions (**FIGURE 52**). You can download it at [GitHub](#).



**FIGURE 52.** OpenType stacked or “nut” fractions in the Nutso font

## Duplicate Table Rows and Columns

*Mike Rankin*

Got a table row or column you want to duplicate? Don't bother with copy and paste. In InDesign CC 2014 and later, you can select a table row or column (click just above a column or to the left of a row), and then hold Option/Alt and drag the copy where you want it in the table.

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## ★ Guides Be Gone

**Anne-Marie Concepción**

Ruler guides tend to clutter up documents, so it's nice to clear those out from time to time. A quick way is to press Ctrl/Command+Shift+G, which selects all the ruler guides on the active spread, and then press the Backspace/Delete key to get rid of them. You have to do this spread by spread, but if you've already deleted most of the document pages, it only takes a moment or two.

## ★ Shifting Values

**Erica Gamet**

When you're trying different values in a panel or dialog box field (e.g., changing fonts or scaling), press Shift+Return/Enter to apply the change and instantly re-highlight the value to make another choice.

And speaking of selecting values, here's a trick to do that quickly. Instead of double-clicking the existing value and hoping you select it all, click the field's name or icon to highlight the whole value in the field.

## ★ Create a Jumbo Page Review Workspace

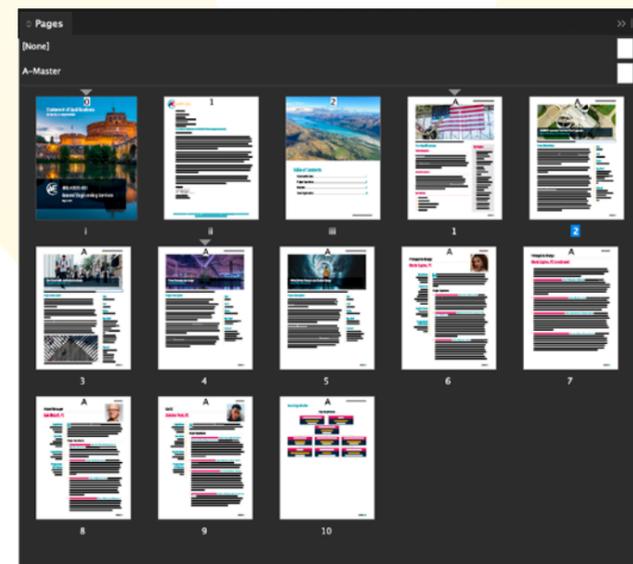
**Julie Shaffer**

One of the things that I love about Acrobat is the ability to see large page icons so I can shuffle them easily. Let's do the same thing in InDesign by modifying the Pages panel and creating a new workspace.

Go to the Pages panel menu and choose **View Pages > Horizontally**. Also from the Pages panel menu, choose Panel Options. In the Panel Options dialog box, choose Jumbo from the Size options. Click OK. Now,

drag the left side of your panel to make it wider to see more of your pages (**FIGURE 53**).

To save this workspace, go to **Window > Workspace > New Workspace**. Name your workspace *Jumbo Page Review* and make sure Panel Locations and Menu Customization are selected. Now, whenever you need to see jumbo pages, you can choose your new workspace.



**FIGURE 53.** Make your Pages panel wider with pages shown horizontally as jumbo icons to easily see your content.

## ★ Maintain Proportions While Scaling

**Keith Gilbert**

If you select an object, enter a new value in any one of the Width, Height, Scale X, or Scale Y fields in the Control panel (**FIGURE 54**), and then press Command+Shift+Return/Ctrl+Shift+Enter, the corresponding value will be calculated so that the proportions of the object are maintained. In other words, if you enter a new width, the proper height will be calculated to keep the object proportional. Learn to do this, and you'll never have to check



**FIGURE 54.** Enter a new value in any one of these fields, and then hold down Command/Ctrl+Shift while pressing Return or Enter to maintain proportions while scaling objects.

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to see if the little Constrain icon next to the Width, Height, Scale X, and Scale Y fields is selected or deselected.

This tip is particularly useful when using the Page tool to resize a page using the Width and Height fields, since there is no Constrain icon in the Control panel for resizing pages.

## Override-o-rama

**Mike Rankin**

I bet you already know that to override a single master page item you need to Command/Ctrl+Shift-click it. But have you ever Command/Ctrl+Shift-dragged over several items to override them all at once? Furthermore, you can override all master page items on a range of pages by selecting those pages in the Pages panel and then pressing

Command+Option+Shift+L/ Ctrl+Alt+Shift+L, or by choosing Override All Master Page Items from the Pages panel menu. If you change your mind, you can set any of those objects back to their original master page state by selecting them and choosing Remove Selected Local Overrides from the Pages panel menu.

## Don't Dot Your "i"s

**Nigel French**

As designers we like to dot our "i"s and cross our "t"s. But maybe sometimes you don't

fickle  
fickle

**FIGURE 55.** At display sizes, using a dotless *i* in place of an *fi* ligature makes it easier to equalize the spacing between the characters.

want to dot your "i"s. The dotless *i* is a character in its own right (Shift+Option+B/Shift+Alt+B)—you can also type a dotless *i* into the Find field of InDesign's Glyphs panel to find it. Every once in a while it might be just the subtle twist that your design needs (**FIGURE 55**).

## Feed and Water Your Templates and Starter Files

**Anne-Marie Concepción**

Do you know why designers abandon the beautiful templates and starter files they created once upon a time? Because they let them die on the vine. You may have created the first issue or three of your newsletter from a template, but soon, that old INDT was out of date.

Here's the reality: When you're laying out an actual publication,

you tend to tweak, iterate, and revise. Soon enough, the starter file you created earlier in the year doesn't have all the goodies the most recent issues carry, like that new sidebar treatment you came up with, the updated style you're using for pull quotes, or the hyphenation tweaks you added to some paragraph styles.

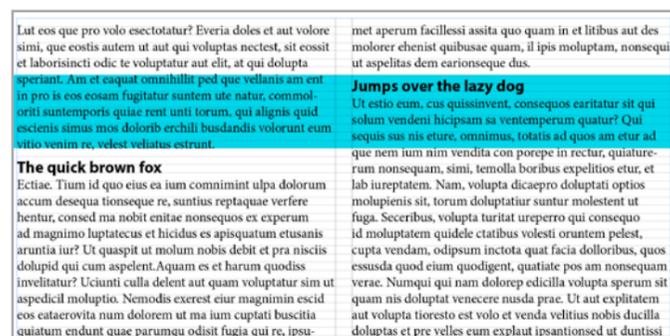
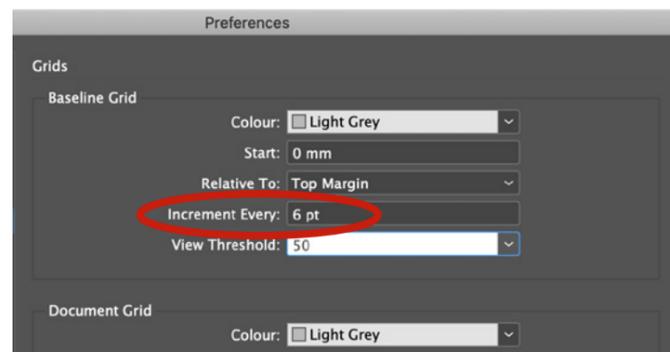
To keep your starter file healthy, periodically open it and update its styles, swatches, and master pages to sync with the latest version of your publication. One way to update the text styles is to open the template and import the styles (**Paragraph Styles panel menu > Load All Text Styles**) from the publication into the template. The default behavior is for the incoming style definition (the publication's) to replace the destination, which is exactly what you want.

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## Use A More Granular Grid

*Nigel French*

Do you like to use a baseline grid but sometimes find it too constricting? Let's say you have a



**FIGURE 56.** Halving the baseline grid increment gives you the option of adding half-line spaces above subheads. Baselines will be out of register in adjacent columns (as indicated by the blue shading) until a corresponding subhead is introduced in the adjacent column.

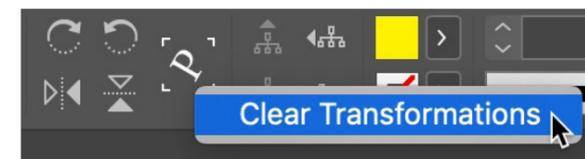
grid increment of 12 points. This is going to mean that spacing before paragraphs will need to at least 12 points, which can look clunky. What if you want only a half line space? The solution is to subdivide the grid. Keep your leading at 12, but make your grid half that—allowing you to add 6 points of space above a subhead (**FIGURE 56**). Depending on how granular you want to get you could subdivide further, to 3 points.

## Clear All Transformations

*Keith Gilbert*

An easy way to clear all the transformations (rotation, scaling, shearing, or reflecting) from selected objects is to right-click the Transformation Indicator icon next to the rotation icons in the Control

panel and select Clear Transformations (**FIGURE 57**).



**FIGURE 57.** Right-click the small P icon in the Control panel to clear transformations from the selected objects.

## Score a Knockout

*Erica Gamet*

Make an overlay from an image by “punching out” shapes from it. Place the image you want to use as the overlay—you can even use just a shape filled with color—and position it on the page. Next, create the shapes that will become the “windows” you’ll use to see through the image. Make as many as you need; you can change the size, shape, and position at any time. These shapes must have a fill color,

though it doesn’t matter what color it is. Select these shapes and set their Opacity sliders to 0%. Next, select all the shapes and the main image, and choose **Object > Group**. With the group selected, head up to the fx menu in the Control panel, choose Transparency (or go to **Window > Effects**), and turn on Knockout Group. Make changes to the main image or the “window” shapes by double-clicking and editing. You can even add or change out the image in the main shape whenever you need!

## Never Type Anything Twice

*Julie Shaffer*

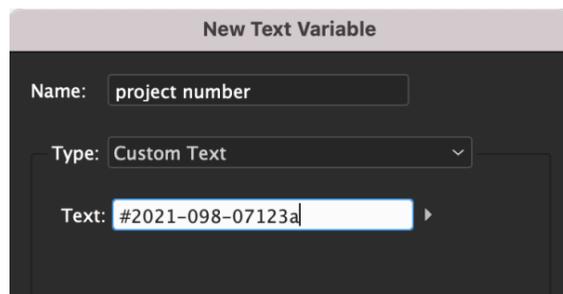
“That which has been typed shall not be typed again” is my mantra. Rather than type the same text repeatedly, like a critical date, client name,

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or project number (and risk mistyping it or putting it in the wrong format), I use custom text variables.

To create one, choose **Type > Text Variables > Define**. Click New and give your variable a name. In the Type menu, choose Custom Text. In the text field, type the text you never want to type again. Click OK (FIGURE 58).

To insert your new text variable in a flash, use Quick Apply. Press Command+Return/Ctrl+Enter to open the Quick



**FIGURE 58.** Use custom text variables to automate repetitive content throughout your documents to save time and ensure consistency.

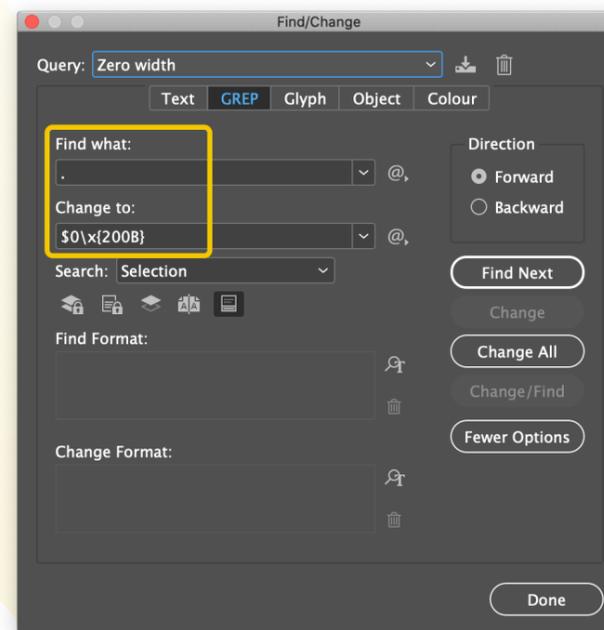
Apply panel. Start typing the name of your variable and when it appears highlighted, press Return/Enter, and marvel at your new InDesign superpowers!



## Put Hyphens on Hold *Nigel French*

If you've ever wanted to size type to recreate run-on words that don't hyphenate and don't become overset, then you need a

zero-width space. This Unicode character is conspicuously absent from InDesign's **Type > Insert White Space** menu, but you can insert it through Find/Change (FIGURE 59).



**FIGURE 59.** When you size display type to create the effect in this example, the type will either become hyphenated or overset. Add a zero-width space between characters to let the type break as needed. Note, the example combines the zero-width space with full justification and vertical justification to fill out the type area.





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CreativePro  
**Week**

Ps Ai Id P

July 8–12, 2024  
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(AND ONLINE!)

The poster features a black background with colorful geometric patterns in the corners and various icons scattered throughout. The CreativePro logo is at the top, followed by the event title and software icons.

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**Design +  
Accessibility  
Summit**

Id P W

October 8–11, 2024  
AN ONLINE EVENT

The poster has a purple gradient background with geometric patterns and icons. It includes the CreativePro logo, event title, software icons, and date.

CreativePro

**Design +  
Marketing  
Summit**

Ps Ai Id P

November 18–19, 2024  
AN ONLINE EVENT

The poster features a green gradient background with geometric patterns and icons. It includes the CreativePro logo, event title, software icons, and date.

CreativePro

**Design + AI  
Summit**

Ps Ai Id P

December 9–10, 2024  
AN ONLINE EVENT

The poster has a blue gradient background with geometric patterns and icons. It includes the CreativePro logo, event title, software icons, and date.

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