CHAPTER 6
INFOCUS

ADVANCED COLOUR

Once you are used to the fundamentals of applying colour, creating swatches and the like you may wish to use some of the more advanced colour techniques provided in Illustrator such as the ***Colour Guide*** and ***Colour Themes*** tools. The ***Colour Guide*** provides you with colour ideas and suggestions based on the colours you are using in your document. The ***Colour Themes*** panel stores colour themes you have created across a range of different platforms including ***Colour Themes*** in your Creative Cloud, in other Adobe applications, or by using the ***Adobe Colour CC*** mobile app.

Click here to learn about the Colour Theme tool in Adobe InDesign CC.

In this session you will:

- ✓ gain an understanding of ***Colour Themes***
- ✓ learn how to navigate to ***Adobe Colour CC***
- ✓ learn how to use the colour wheel
- ✓ learn how to work with colour rules
- ✓ learn how to save a colour theme
- ✓ learn how to explore colour themes
- ✓ learn how to work with colour themes in ***Illustrator***
- ✓ gain an understanding of ***Colour Guides***.

UNDERSTANDING COLOUR THEMES

You cannot create colour themes directly in the Illustrator desktop application. Instead you must create colour themes online on the ***Adobe Colour CC*** page, then sync the themes to your Adobe application. This allows you to perform a number of actions that you wouldn't necessarily be able to perform inside Illustrator.

Creating Colour Themes

In order to create a colour theme you must navigate to the online ***Adobe Colour CC*** page. You can display this page by either clicking on ***Launch Adobe Colour website*** in the ***Colour Themes*** panel or by navigating to the ***Adobe*** website, signing in and navigating to ***Colour***.

The ***Adobe Colour CC*** page contains a colour wheel that has various colour selectors. To select a colour on the colour wheel, simply click and drag a selector to the part of the wheel that contains the colour you require. This colour is known as your ***base*** colour. Other colours are selected automatically based on the ***Colour rule*** you have selected and the current ***base*** colour. For instance, if the ***Complementary*** colour rule is selected and red is the ***base*** colour, the other colour selected will be green because red and green are opposite each other on the colour wheel and are therefore complementary colours.

Below the colour wheel are swatches for each colour you have selected as part of your colour theme. You can adjust the ***HSV***, ***RGB***, ***CMYK***, ***LAB, HEX*** or brightness of each colour swatch using the controls beneath the swatch. Simply click and drag on a selector to increase or decrease the specified values.

My Themes

Once you have saved a theme it is located in the ***My Themes*** section of your ***Adobe Colour CC*** page. Point to the theme, then click on ***Info*** to select it. A list of potential actions you can perform on the theme can be found under ***Actions*** and information such as who the theme was created by, the date it was created and how many times it has been viewed can be found under ***Info***.

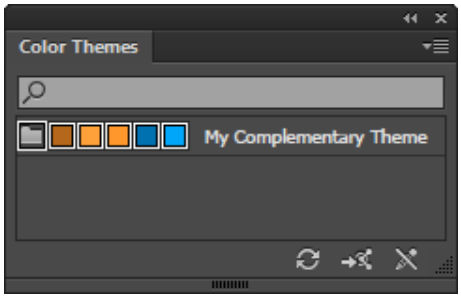
Click on ***Favourite*** to make the selected theme one of your favourites. The theme will then be saved to the ***My Favourites*** section of ***My Themes***. Click on ***Share*** to display several options for saving your theme. If you select a social media option such as ***Facebook*** or ***Pinterest***, a new browser window will display with the login page for the selected site. You can then follow the steps to share the theme on the selected platform. Alternatively you can choose to ***Copy Link***, which creates a link to your theme that you can share with others. Click on ***Public***/***Private*** to toggle between ***Public*** and ***Private***. If ***Public*** is selected anyone can view your colour themes, while ***Private*** themes are visible only to you. Click on ***Edit*** to open the wheel again with the current theme applied. You can then modify and make changes to the selected theme. Click on ***Download*** to download an ***ASE*** (***Adobe Swatch Exchange***) file containing your colour theme that you can share and save. Click on ***Delete*** to delete the theme from online and also from the ***Colour Themes*** panel in Illustrator. Click on ***Report Abuse*** to report any comments or behaviour that you deem inappropriate regarding your colour themes.

The Colour Themes Panel

The ***Colour Themes*** panel in Illustrator can be accessed by selecting **Window** > **Colour Themes**. If you have not previously created any colour themes nothing will appear in the ***Colour Themes*** panel. Once you have created colour themes and saved them using the online ***Adobe Colour CC*** page, the themes will automatically sync to the ***Colour Themes*** panel.

Applying Colour Themes

You cannot apply an entire colour theme to a document. Instead you must select each element you want to apply a colour to, then select the specific colour in the ***Colour Themes*** panel.



Saving Colour Themes As Swatches

You can save a whole colour theme or an individual colour within a theme as a swatch so that it appears in the ***Swatches*** panel. This is useful if you wish to edit the colours within a theme. For instance you may wish to create a tint from one of the hues created in a theme.

NAVIGATING TO ADOBE COLOUR

In order to create a colour theme in Illustrator, you must navigate to the Adobe.com website and display the ***Adobe CC Colour*** page. There are a few ways you can do this – either from inside Illustrator (desktop) or by using the browser window.

Try This Yourself:

Before starting this exercise ensure Illustrator has started and you have an internet connection…

1. Select **Help** to view the help menu

   You must ensure that you are signed in to Adobe CC with your account so that when you navigate to the Adobe CC Colour page it will navigate to your specific account page…

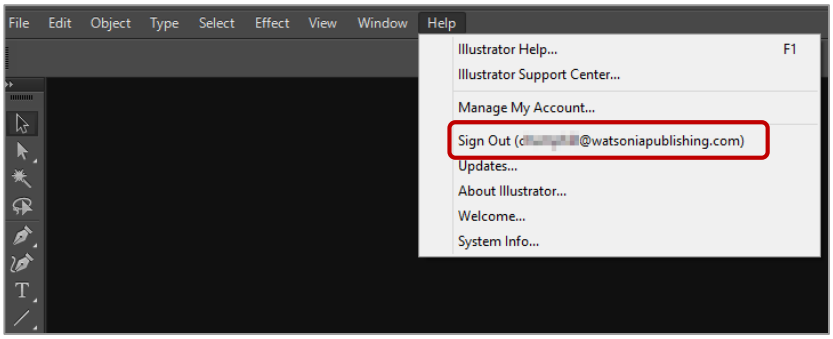
2. Check that you are signed in

   If you are signed in, an option to sign out will be listed and the email address associated with your account will appear in brackets…

3. Select **Window** > **Colour Themes** to display the ***Colour Themes*** panel

4. Click on ***Launch Adobe Colour website***

   Because you accessed the Adobe CC Colour page from within Illustrator and are signed in to CC the page will automatically navigate to your page without asking you to sign in



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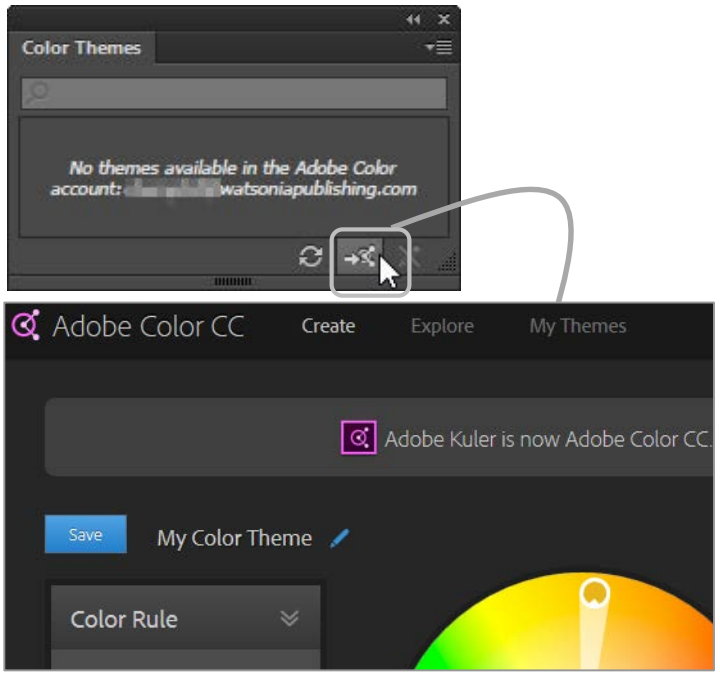


For Your Reference…

To ***navigate*** to ***Adobe Colour*** from ***Illustrator***:

1. Select **Window** > **Colour Themes**
2. Click on ***Launch Adobe Colour website***

Handy to Know…

- You can create colour themes on devices that don't even have Illustrator installed. Simply open a browser window, navigate to the Adobe.com website and sign in with your Adobe CC account, then navigate to the ***Adobe Colour CC*** page.

USING THE COLOUR WHEEL

Using the colour wheel on the ***Adobe Colour CC*** page you can create colour themes by choosing a set of up to five colours. You can change the hue, saturation and brightness of each colour you select in order to create a theme that suits your specific requirements.

Try This Yourself:

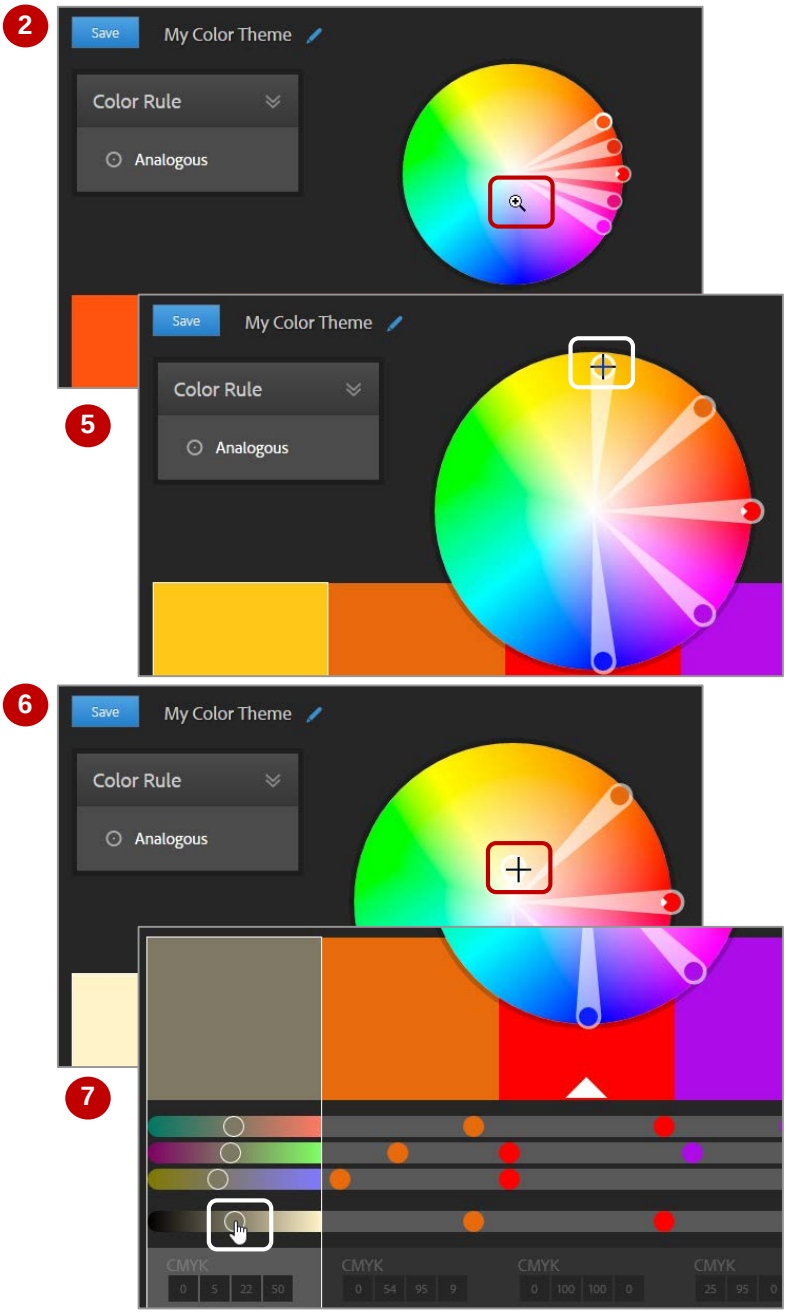
Before starting this exercise ensure the Adobe CC Colour page is displayed…

1. Point to the colour wheel so the cursor displays a magnifying glass with a minus icon
2. Click once to zoom out and make the wheel smaller
3. Click on the wheel again to zoom in and make the wheel bigger
4. Point to the top colour selector so a cross icon appears, then click once

   Notice the colour on the far left below the wheel is selected as the base colour. Let's change the hue…
5. Click and drag the colour selector until it is positioned as shown

   Notice all of the colour selectors move as well. Let's change the saturation…
6. Drag the selector towards the inside of the circle to decrease the saturation, as shown

   Let's change the brightness of the colour…
7. Click and drag on the slider for the base colour to adjust the brightness, as shown



For Your Reference…

To ***use*** the ***colour wheel***:

- Click on a colour on the colour wheel to select a colour
- Click and drag the colour selector in or out to increase or decrease saturation

Handy to Know…

- Clicking on a colour in the section under the wheel will select that colour as the base colour. The ***base*** colour is the colour that the colour rule is based on – this decides what other colours you can choose.

WORKING WITH COLOUR RULES

Adobe Colour CC provides users with seven colour rules – ***analogous***, ***monochromatic***, ***triad***, ***complementary***, ***compound***, ***shades*** and ***custom***. The colour rule you select affects how you can use the colour wheel as it will only allow you to choose sets of colours that adhere to the selected colour rule.

Try This Yourself:

Open File

Before starting this exercise ensure the Adobe Colour CC page is displayed…

1. Click and drag on a colour selector so the selected colours appear as shown

   Currently the Analogous colour rule is selected. This means that all colours selected are next to each other in the colour wheel…

2. Point to ***Colour Rule*** to display a menu of options, then select **Monochromatic**

   The Monochromatic colour rule means the theme can only contain varying shades of one colour. Notice the colour selectors change position…

3. Click on the outer colour selector and drag it to the left

   Notice the other colour selector moves with it…

4. Drag the second selector outwards to display the third colour selector

5. Select the other colour rules and click and drag the colour selectors to see how the colour rule affects them

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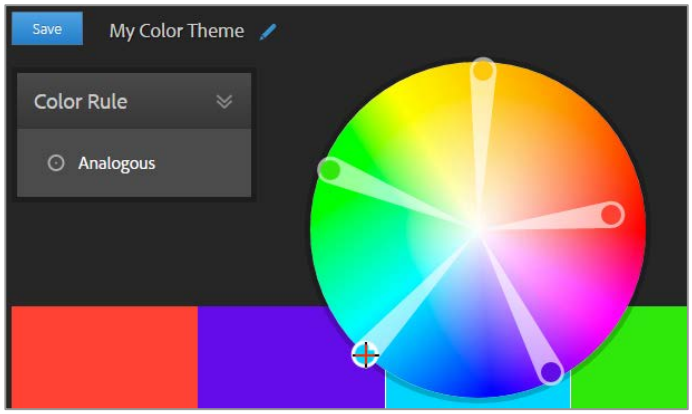

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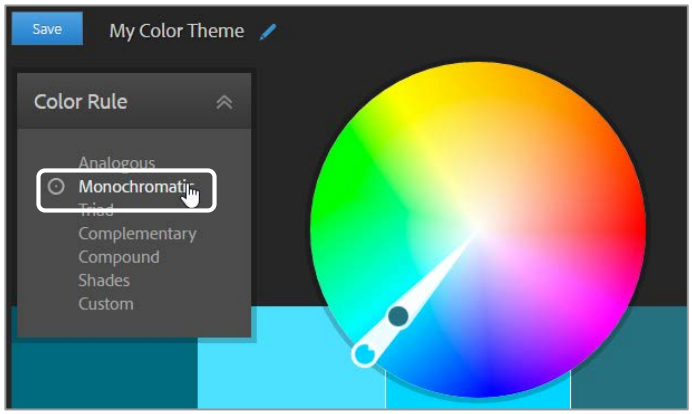

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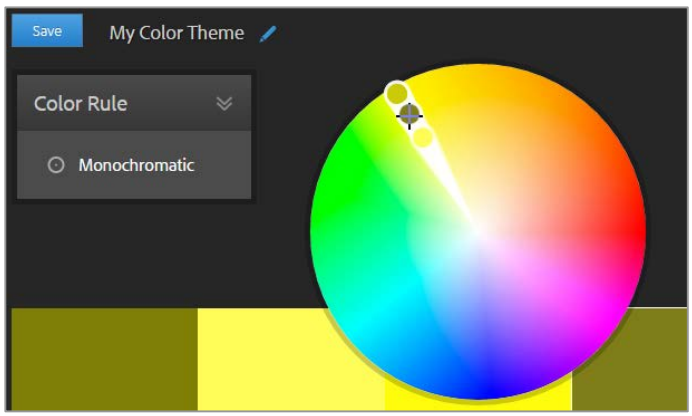

For Your Reference…

To ***work*** with ***colour rules***:

1. Point to ***Colour Rule***
2. Select an option
3. Click and drag the colour selectors on the colour wheel

Handy to Know…

- The ***Complementary*** colour rule deals with colours that are opposite each other on the wheel, ***Triad*** uses colours that are evenly spaced around the wheel, ***Compound*** provides a range of complementary colours – two from each opposite side of the wheel and ***Shades*** allows you to work with one colour.

SAVING A COLOUR THEME

You can easily create colour themes by selecting various colours on the colour wheel, but unless you save the colour theme you will never be able to view or use it again. Once a colour theme is saved it can be located in the ***My Themes*** section of Adobe Colour CC or you can access it from the desktop version of Illustrator.

Try This Yourself:

Continue using the previous file with this exercise…

1. Select the ***Complementary*** colour rule
2. Click on ***My Colour Theme*** to place the title in edit mode, as shown
3. Select the text and type **My Complementary Theme** to rename the theme
4. Click on **[Save]**

   The info section of the My Themes page for the selected theme is displayed…
5. Click on ***My Themes*** to display this page
6. Point to ***My Complementary Theme*** to display options
7. Navigate to the desktop version of Illustrator and if it isn't already displayed, display the ***Colour Themes*** panel
8. Click on ***Refresh*** to download the ***My Complementary*** colour theme

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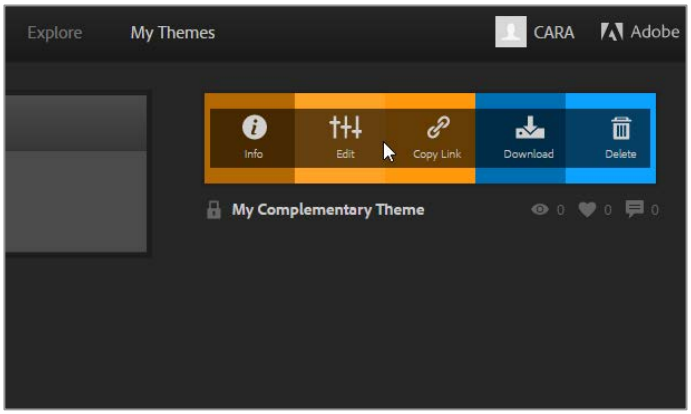

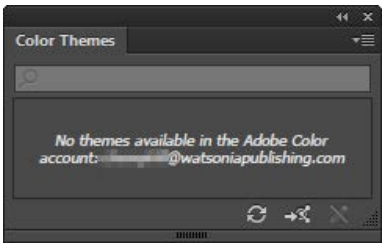

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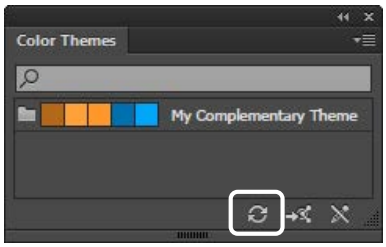

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For Your Reference…

To ***save*** a ***colour theme***:

1. Click on ***My Colour Theme*** and type a name
2. Click on **[Save]**
3. In Illustrator (desktop) display the ***Colour Themes*** panel and click on ***Refresh***

Handy to Know…

- In ***Adobe Colour CC*** you can add tags so that themes are easier to find. Tags are keywords that you can use to find related themes; for example, if you added the tags ***Forest***, ***Outdoors***, ***Woods*** and ***Trees*** to a colour theme it would be found by anyone searching for any of those keywords.

EXPLORING COLOUR THEMES

As well as the colour wheel, the ***Adobe Colour CC*** page contains a multitude of colour themes creates by other users. You can view all of these colour themes, download them, 'like' them, comment on them and much more. This is handy if you are looking for inspiration or looking for a colour theme based on a particular topic as you can easily search for themes by keyword(s).

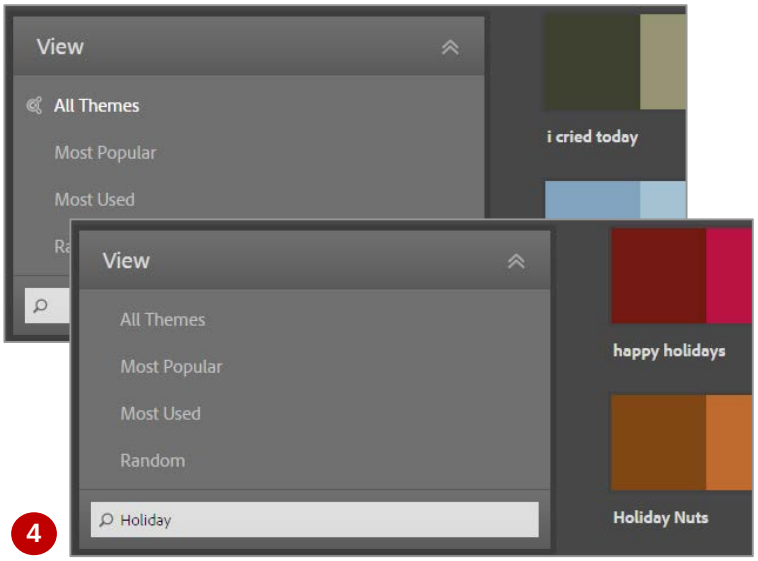
Try This Yourself:

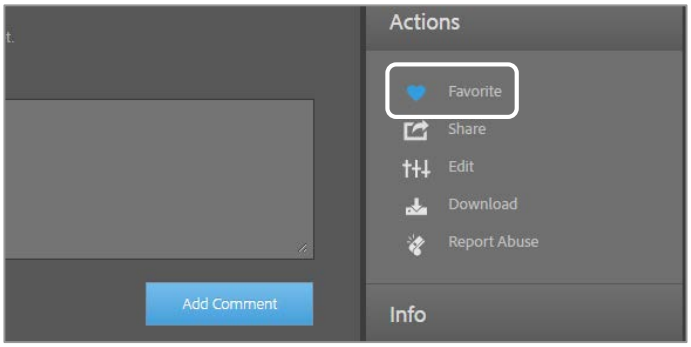
Continue using the previous file with this exercise…

1. Click on ***Explore*** at the top of the ***Adobe Colour CC*** page
2. Ensure ***All Themes*** is selected in the ***View*** menu to the left of the page
3. Click on ***Most Popular*** to view the themes that the most people have viewed, favourited and commented on

   If you click on Week or Month you can view colour themes that are the most popular for the current week or month…
4. Type ***Holiday*** in the search box and press Enter to find results for themes for which people have used ***holiday*** in the title
5. Point to a colour theme, then click on ***Info*** to view the colour theme
6. Click on ***Favourite*** under ***Actions***
7. Click on ***My Themes*** at the top of the page, then click on ***My Favourites***

   Notice the colour theme you chose to 'favourite' is now listed here





For Your Reference…

To ***explore colour themes***:

1. Click on ***Explore*** at the top of the ***Adobe Colour CC*** page
2. Click on an option in the ***View*** panel or search for a colour theme
3. Point to a colour theme, then click on ***Info***

Handy to Know…

- If you click on ***Download*** under ***Actions*** while viewing a colour theme on the ***Adobe Colour CC*** page, you can download an ***ASE*** (***Adobe Swatch Exchange***) file containing the colour theme.

WORKING WITH COLOUR THEMES IN ILLUSTRATOR

Once you have created a colour theme in ***Adobe Colour CC*** and ensured it has synced with the desktop products, you are ready to start using the colour theme in your projects. Colour themes are useful for ensuring a document appears consistent and that the colours all work together.

Try This Yourself:

Before starting this exercise ensure you have completed the previous exercises and Illustrator has started…

1. Navigate to the course files folder and open ***IL1427 Advanced Colour_1.ai***
2. Select the text ***Banjo returns***, then ensure the ***Colour Themes*** panel is displayed
3. Click on the dark blue shade in the ***Colour Themes*** panel as shown
4. Repeat the above steps to apply the dark blue shade to the text ***Adoption Rate At Record High***
5. Select the background rectangle, then click on the light orange colour in the ***Colour Themes*** panel to apply this colour
6. Click on the folder icon next to ***My Complementary Theme*** in the ***Colour Themes*** panel to select the theme
7. Click on the panel ***Options*** menu and select **Add to Swatches**
8. Display the ***Swatches*** panel and view the theme you added

   The theme is added as a colour group below the existing swatches in the panel

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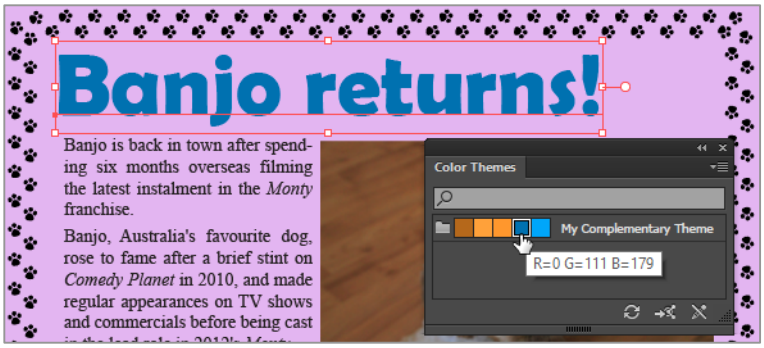

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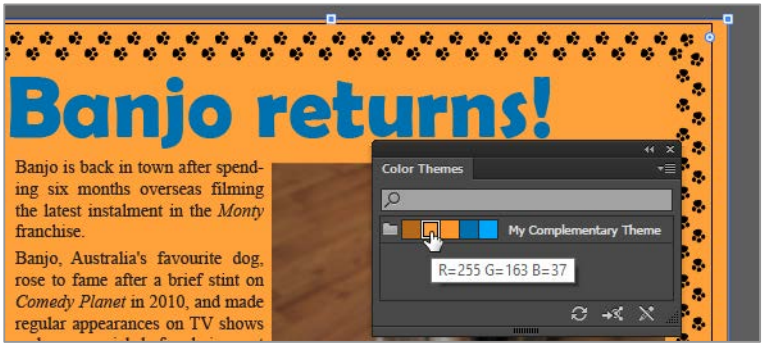

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For Your Reference…

To ***apply colour themes*** in ***Illustrator***:

1. Select **Window** > **Colour Themes**
2. Select an object on the artboard
3. Click on a swatch in the ***Colour Themes*** panel

Handy to Know…

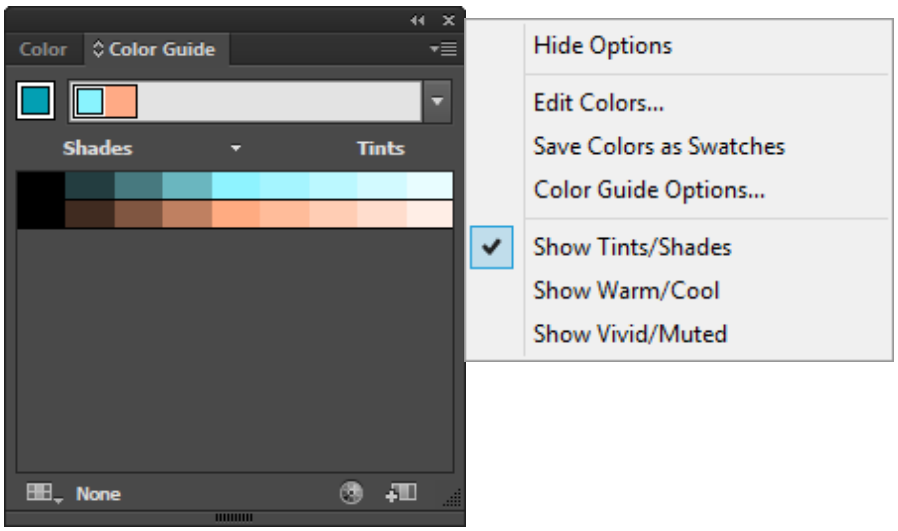
- You can apply one colour from a colour theme to the ***Swatches*** panel. Simply click on the individual colour to select it in the ***Colour Themes*** panel, click on the panel ***Options*** menu then select **Add to Swatches**.

UNDERSTANDING THE COLOUR GUIDE

The purpose of the ***Colour Guide*** is to provide you with colour recommendations based on whatever colour you have selected (either in your document or in a panel). These colour recommendations are based on the selected ***harmony rule***. The ***harmony rule*** selects colour recommendations based on the elements of the selected rule (such as complementary, triad etc.).

The Colour Guide Panel

You can display the ***Colour Guide*** panel by selecting **Window** > **Colour Guide**. If there is no colour selected, the ***Colour Guide*** panel will appear blank and all of the options will be greyed out. To start using the ***Colour Guide*** panel, select a colour in the ***Tools*** panel. Alternatively, select an object in your document that has a colour fill applied to it, or select a colour from one of the other panels such as the ***Colour Theme*** or ***Swatches*** panel.



Harmony Rules

The ***harmony rule*** is the rule that decides what kinds of colours the ***Colour Guide*** will recommend based on the selected colour. To view a list of the available ***harmony rules***, click on the drop arrow for ***Harmony Rules*** and select an option. For instance, if you select **Analogous** the ***Colour Guide*** panel will display four colours based on the selected colour that are located next to each other on the colour wheel. If you select the **Monochromatic** harmony rule, the ***Colour Guide*** panel will display three shades of the same colour.

The Options Menu

In the ***Colour Guide*** panel click on the panel ***options*** menu to display a menu of options for working with the colour guide. Select **Edit Colours** to display the ***Edit Colours*** dialog box, which contains a huge range of advanced options for editing and selecting colours, including a colour wheel similar to the one found online when you log in to your Adobe account. Select **Save Colours as Swatches** to save the selected colour theme as a swatch group in the ***Swatches*** panel. Select **Colour Guide Options** to display the ***Colour Guide Options*** dialog box, which allows you to specify how many colour swatches appear as part of a theme and how much variation should be between the colours. In the second part of the menu you can decide whether to show ***Tints/Shades***, ***Warm/Cool*** or ***Vivid/Muted*** colours in the suggested colour themes. By default ***Tints/Shades*** is selected, meaning that lighter and darker versions of the selected colours are displayed with the selected colour in the middle column (beneath the arrow). When ***Warm/Cool*** is selected the panel will display warmer and cooler versions of the selected colours while selecting ***Vivid/Muted*** will cause it to display brighter and dimmer alternatives.