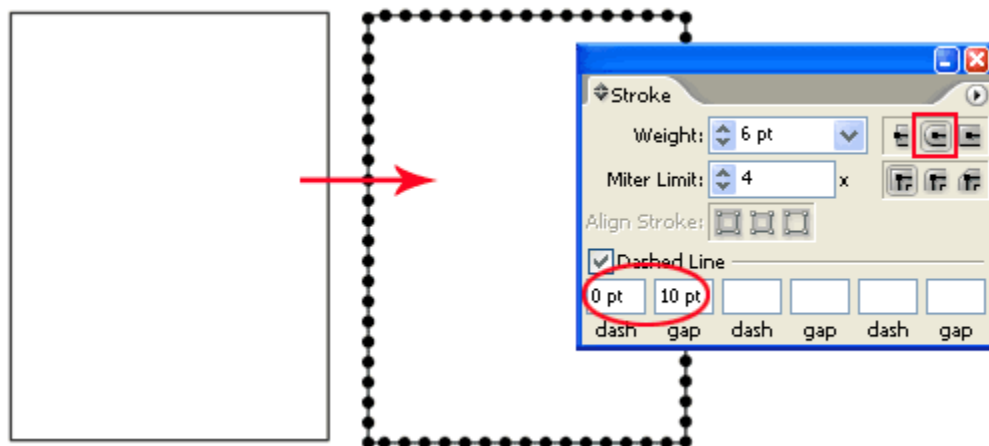


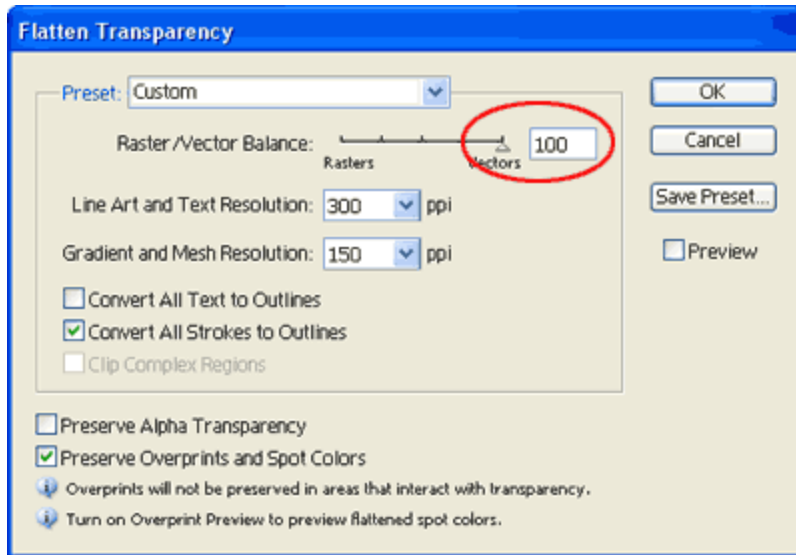


1. Creating the stamp edges

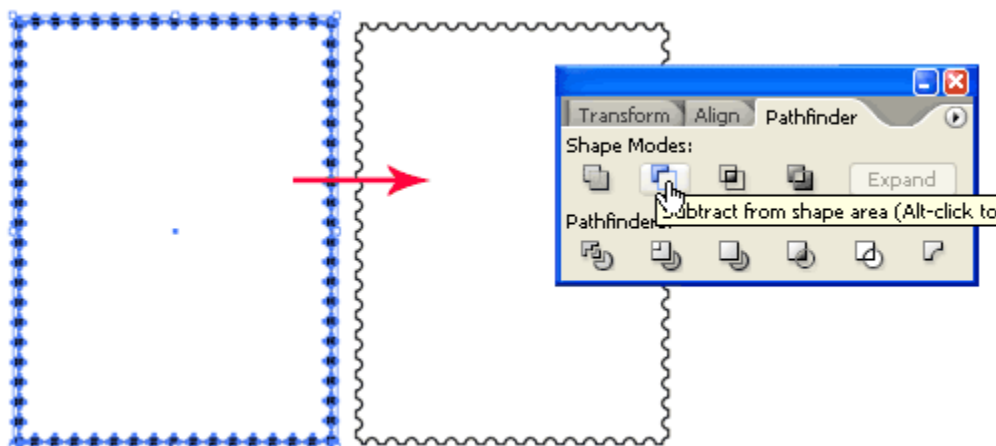
Let's begin by drawing a rectangle with your Rectangle Tool. The rectangle should be about 1 ½ x 1 ¼ inches. Next copy the rectangle by pressing Ctrl/Command+C and duplicate 2 copies of the rectangle by pressing Ctrl/Command+F twice. Go to your Layers Palette and hide one of the rectangles as we will offset it later to create the inner edge of the stamp. Now, here's the trick, we will need to create round dotted lines around the stamp. Open up your Stroke Palette and select the topmost rectangle. Copy the settings below. Make sure dash is kept at 0pt and gap is larger than the Weight. (Adjust your gap settings if you find the dotted lines overlap) Also select Round Caps for the Stroke as boxed in red.



Now we will need to expand the dotted lines. Go Object>Flatten Transparency. Make sure it is set to 100% vector as shown below. Click ok when done.



Select the expanded dotted lines and the rectangle below. Open up your Pathfinder Palette and hold Alt/Option and select Subtract from shape area. This will give you the sawtooth edges of a stamp.

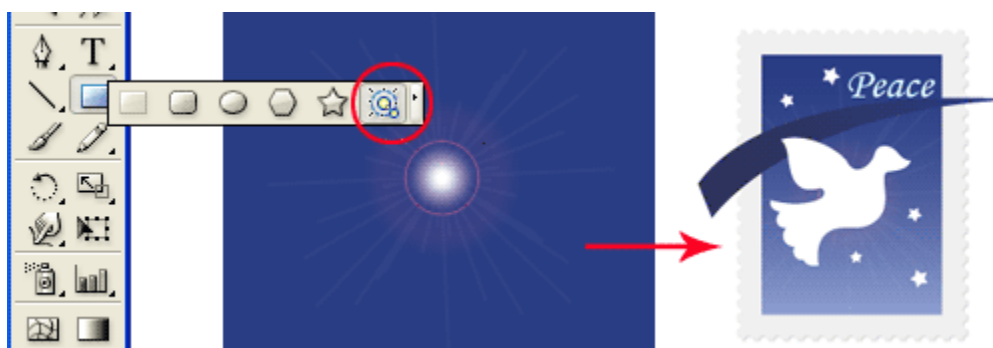


2. Drawing the stamp graphic

Go to your Layers Palette and show the hidden layer of our original rectangle. Go Object>Path>Offset Path. Enter a negative value. This will create the inner edge of our graphic area. Now I will start filling my stamp with different colors. Notice that the stamp has a slight drop shadow. What I did was I duplicated the background and give it a dark grey and I nudge it right and down by 1 pixel using the keyboard arrow keys. With the stamp template done, you can start drawing your stamp graphic.



You notice that I have a star burst effect behind the dove. To create this effect go and select your Flare tool and draw a sun flare. I then hide it behind the dove. A little quick trick of mine.



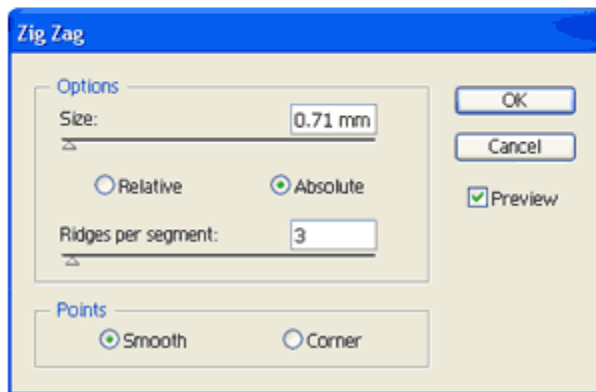
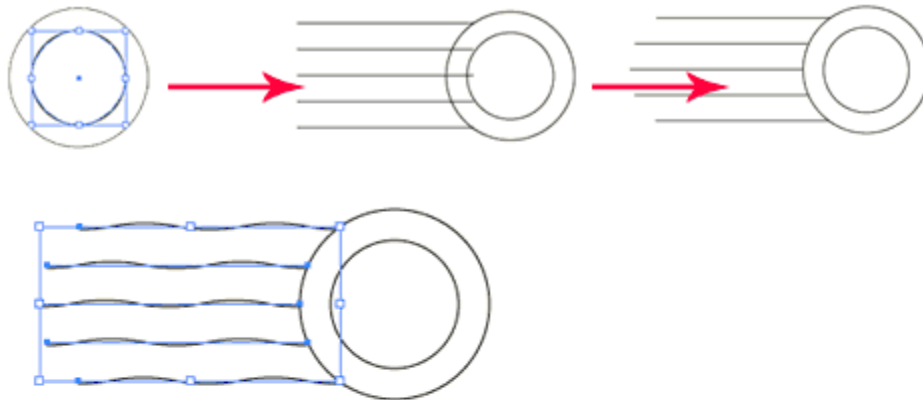
Now we will need to mask away the protruding shapes. Select the blue background and copy it by pressing Ctrl/Command+C. I then group the graphics of my stamp together (stars, dove, blue trail and sun flare) by pressing Ctrl/Command+G. Now paste the blue background by pressing Ctrl/Command+F. Selected the grouped object and the pasted shape and go Object>Clipping Mask>Make to hide away the protruding shapes.



4. Creating the mail stamp

Let's move on to the final step of creating the mail stamp. Draw a circle using Circle Tool and holding Shift as you draw. Draw a smaller circle inside it. Next draw a line with the Line Segment Tool by holding Shift and drag. Select the Line and hold Alt/Option and drag down to duplicate a new line. After you have created 5 rows of lines, nudge the lines to the left so that it doesn't overlap the circle.

Select the 5 rows of lines and go Effect>Distort & Transform>Zig Zag. Enter the values below and click Ok. Go Object>Expand Appearance after that.



Open up your Brushes Palette (Window>Brushes). Click the arrow icon at the top right and choose Open Brush Library>Artistic_ChalkCharcoalPencil. Select your mail stamp and select a thin charcoal brush to give it a textured line. Finally we will move our mail stamp over our stamp graphic and we are done.

