



“Design is the intermediary between information and understanding.”

HANS HOFFMANN

Adobe InDesign is a graphic designer’s toolbox for creating polished, multi-page layouts. It excels at bringing together text and visuals from other Adobe programs like Photoshop and Illustrator. The designer can use InDesign to create layouts for magazines, brochures, or even business cards. They can establish grids and guides for precise placement of images and text boxes. InDesign also allows for the creation of master pages, which act as templates for consistent headers, footers, and page numbering across the entire document. This ensures a cohesive and professional final product.

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C—Adobe InDesign Palettes

D—Customizing the Adobe InDesign Workspace

E—Page Makeup Options

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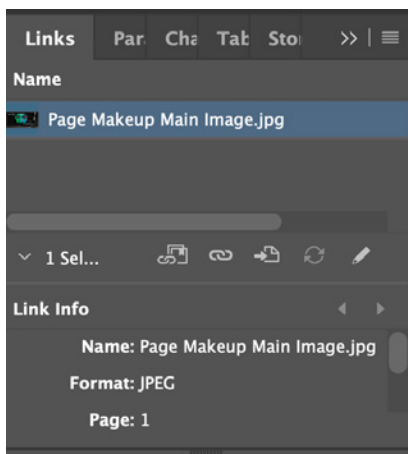
A—Page Makeup Basics



Note: Some of the basic design tools shown here are now also available in most modern applications from Microsoft Word to Canva.

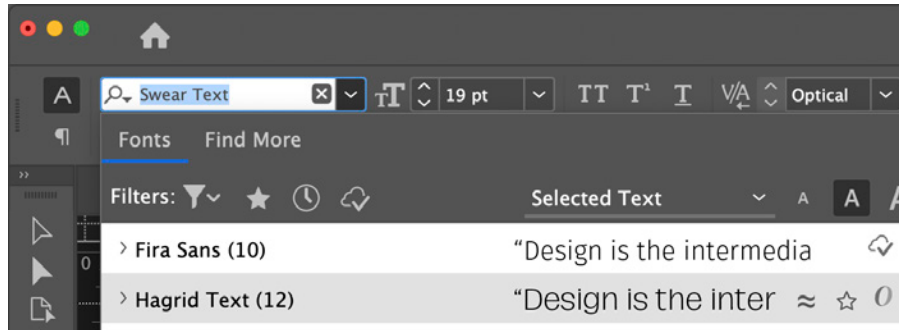
Above: The first page of this document. The screenshot shows some basic elements. At the top is a graphic frame. The chain icon indicates the placed image is linked and shows the high-res image. Below that intro quotation shown in the chosen font.

Below: I can quickly change the image using the Links palette and clicking the chain icon and navigating to find a different image. Here, I've replaced it from the main image from another document.

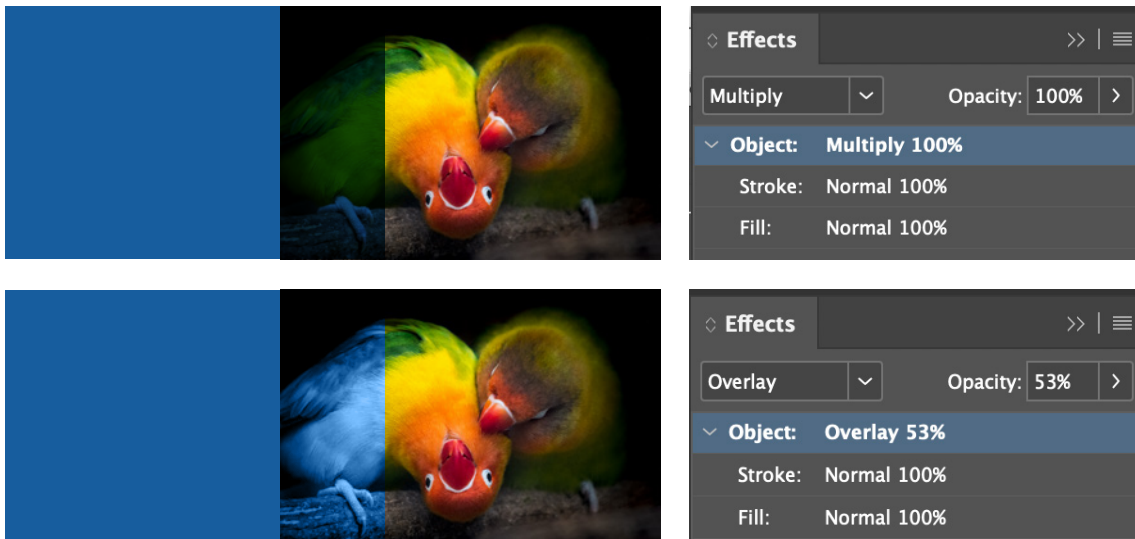


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Above: By highlighting the text, we can change it's size, font or color using the text palette or dropdown menus at the top of the screen. The dropdown menu (below) shows me a preview of the text in any of the available fonts. (Example shows text changing from “Swear Text” to “Hagrid Text”, the two main fonts in all of these documents. These are very basic functions available in most modern applications. The following screen shots may be available in some other applications, but most people likely don't use them.

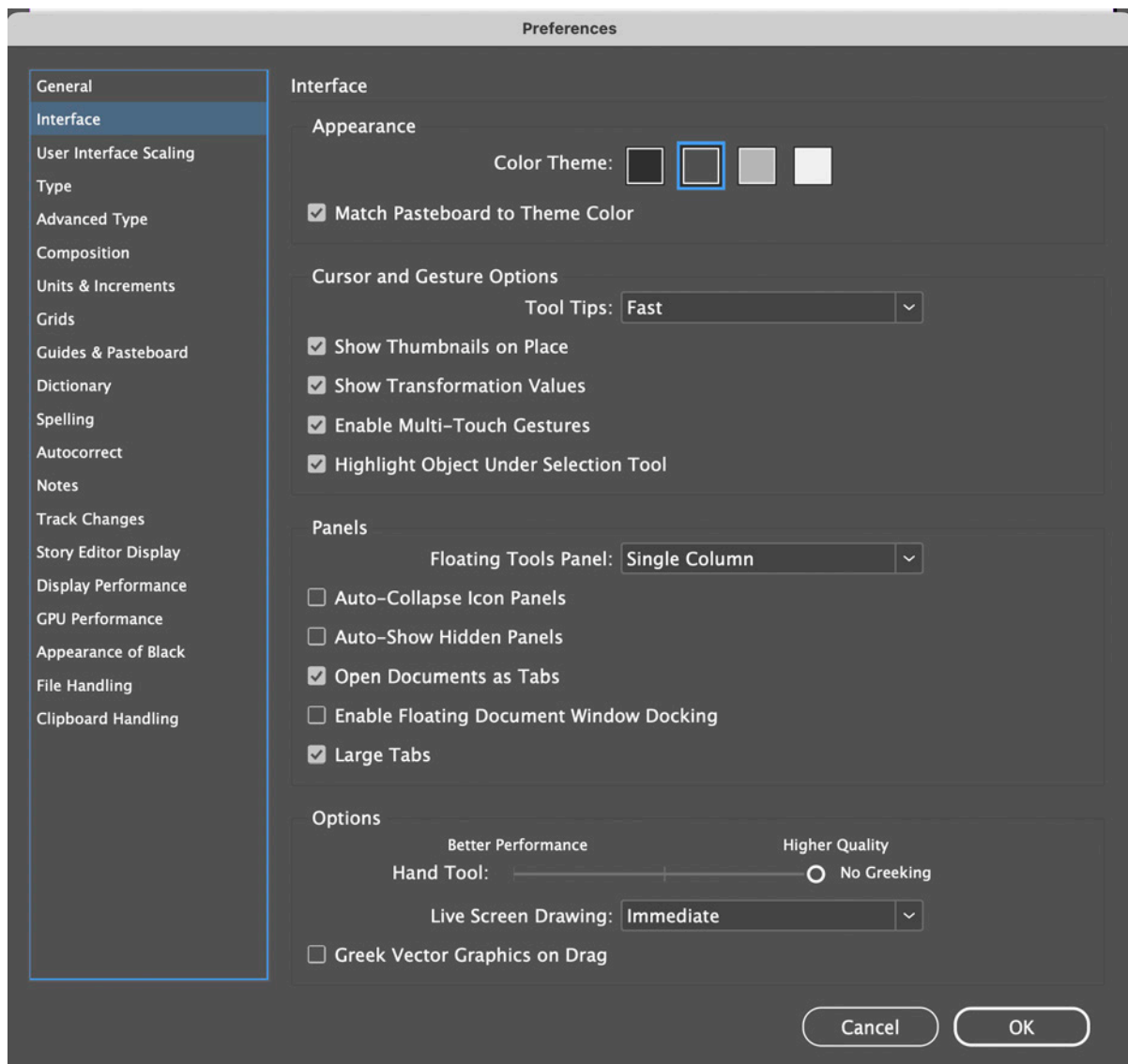


Above: The effects palette gives us mant options to change the relationship between objects. Here's a photo with a blue box in front of it with just two of the many options for both the effects type and the amount of opacity.

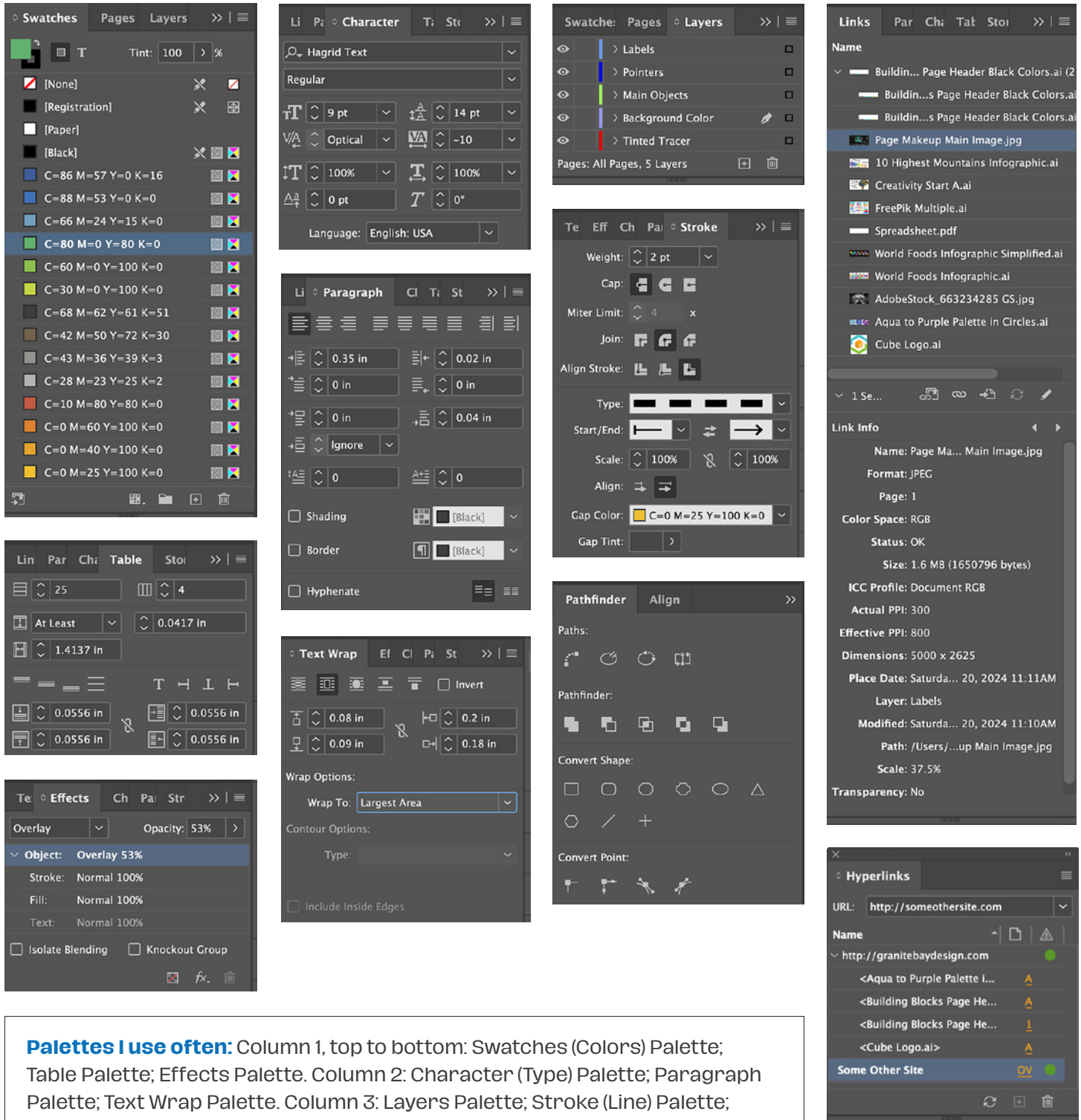
B—Advanced Page Makeup

Most applications have some sort of settings or preferences. The Adobe applications not only allow us to make changes within a document, but to control the application itself, we can change the interface. The screenshot below shows the preferences panel options. Note the extensive list of setting options in the left column. Most of these have been customized to meet our needs.

How we work greatly influences all of the preferences we select, from the background color (Color Theme, below; I prefer the dark grey) to the default fonts, whether like hyphenation, xxx...



C—Adobe InDesign Palettes



Palettes I use often: Column 1, top to bottom: Swatches (Colors) Palette; Table Palette; Effects Palette. Column 2: Character (Type) Palette; Paragraph Palette; Text Wrap Palette. Column 3: Layers Palette; Stroke (Line) Palette; Pathfinder Palette. Column 4: Links (Images) Palette; Hyperlinks Palette.

Note: Many of these palettes use dialog boxes to add or control the contents of the palette. For example, you can mix new colors or change existing ones in the color palette. The links palette has multiple uses: you can examine the properties of existing images or relink to new images.

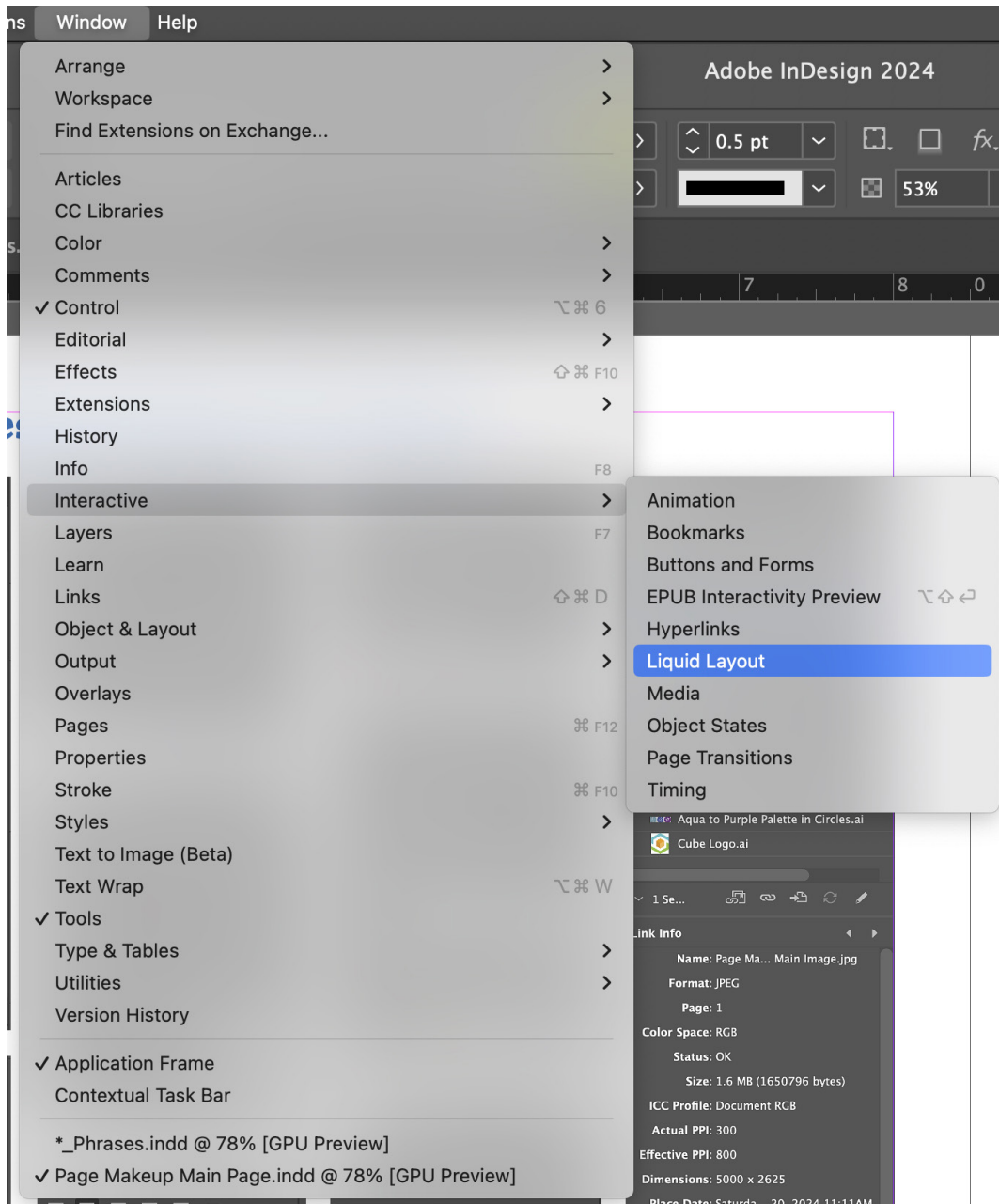
D—Customizing the Adobe InDesign Workspace

Here are the InDesign tools most graphic designers use on a regular basis:

- A Swatches:** This is our color palette. We can customize the default colors for every new document and add or change as many colors we need for each assignment.
- B Pages:** We can create as many pages and spreads as we need and create as many “master” pages as we need allowing us to place objects and text and assign that master to any number of pages.
- C Layers:** These allow us to place text and objects on different layers which can be reordered, locked or turned off.
- D Pathfinder:** These tools allow us to modify objects. We can take two objects and combine them into a single object, subtract one object from another or divide objects a variety of ways.
- E Align:** This palette allows us to align any number of objects in any direction and allows us to select any number of objects and space them evenly horizontally or vertically,
- F Links:** This is the control center for all of the images in a document. Here we can get info on an image, see its location on our computer change an image link and see if images are not linked.
- G Paragraph:** This useful palette allows us to select text and indent it left or right. We used this palette to set the space between the paragraphs in this document.
- H Character:** Here we can select any text and set its font, font weight (regular, bold, italic, etc.), font size, leading, letter spacing, increase height or width and raise or lower characters.
- I Table:** This palette allows to create or modify tables, setting height, width and horizontal and vertical indents.
- J Text Wrap:** The Text Wrap palette allows us select objects and create “runarounds”. This forces the text to wrap, using a rectangle or circle. We can set the spacing and further refine the wrap.
- K Effects:** This palette allows us to select anything and apply effects, including transparency and a variety of other effects focused on lightening and darkening. Each effect can be set from 0–100%.
- L Character Styles:** Using the settings from the Character palette (above) we can apply the style to any text. Any changes we make to the style are then applied to all text assigned to that style.
- M Paragraph Styles:** Similar to the Character palette above except that these are assigned to a whole paragraph. Any changes to a style here affects all paragraphs assigned to that style.
- N Stroke:** Here we can apply or modify any lines (rules) in a document, assign weight (width or height), end caps, joins (corners), stroke alignment and make it solid or dotted, etc.
- O Buttons and Forms:** This palette allows us to add those items to almost any object on a page before saving it as an interactive PDF. Buttons can link within the document or on the web. Lots of options.
- P Gradient:** This palette allows us to add that effect to any object, applying two or more colors, setting it as linear or radial and setting any number of points for color transitions.
- Q Hyperlinks:** This simple palette allows us to select text or any object and assign it any URL on the Internet. A green or red “light” confirms validity of the link which is saved to an interactive PDF.



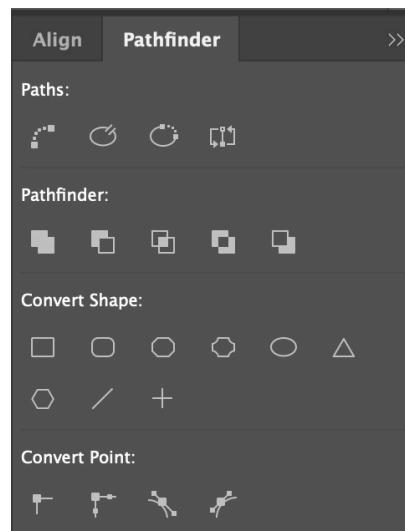
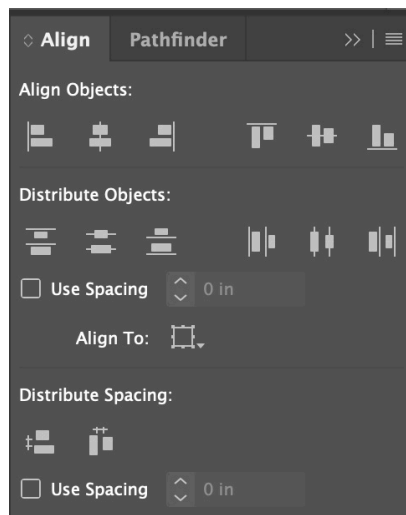
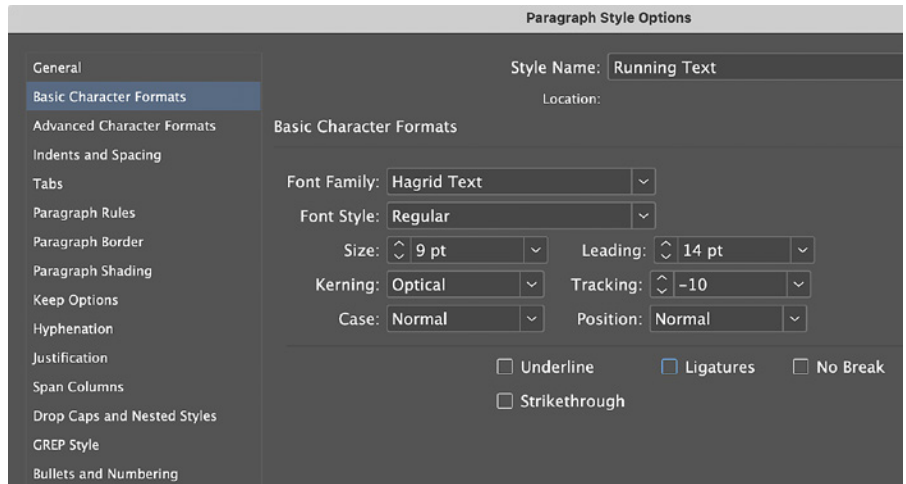
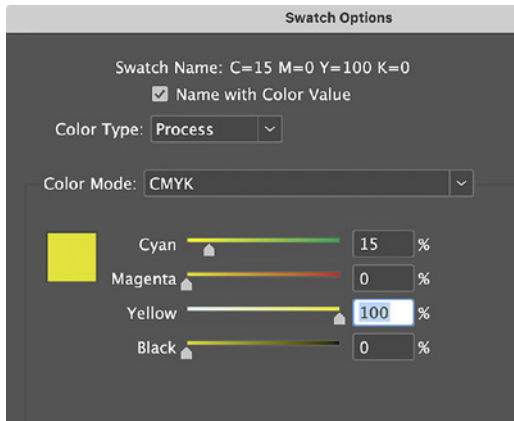
E—Page Makeup Options



The palettes I frequently use on the previous page only scratch the surface of the control a graphic designer has over the documents he or she manages. I do primarily print work, so the palettes and options I use may vary a lot from someone who's building a website or creating social media graphics. Take a look above to see how many palettes are available! Just the "Interactive" menu shown has these sub-menus (each would open a new palette): Animation, Bookmarks, Buttons and Forms, EPUB Interactivity Preview, Hyperlinks, Media, Object States, Page Transitions and Timing.



F—Using Dialog Boxes and Palettes to Add or Make Changes



Many palettes offer further refinement of the palette's content. In the upper left, I can double-click a color swatch to change it. In this case, I changed the amount of cyan in the color from 30% to 15%. Above right: The Paragraph Style Options dialog box offers a near-infinite number of options. Each of the links in the left column is home to a myriad of options. This is an indispensable tool when assembling multiple page documents with lots of running text. Once I assign a paragraph a style (for example "running text" above), any changes I make in this options box are made to every paragraph assigned to that style. If my document is running long, I can reduce the font size, or change the font completely to a condensed font, or simply change the "tracking" (the overall space between letters). Here I can change colors, fonts, font weights (light or medium or bold) control the appearance of bullets and numbering and much, much more.

Directly above, the align palette offers many ways to align or distribute objects and to distribute spacing. The pathfinder palette allows us to control paths, to add and subtract from two objects and convert shapes and points.



G—Page MakeUp Software History

I've been working in graphic design since the early 1980s. In the early days everything was done with type-specking being sent out to a typesetter. We had to use our intuition and reference materials to figure out font size, leading, fonts, columns—everything. Often times the fit wasn't right and the job would go back to the typesetter or we would painstakingly cut and paste individual words or letters to get the right fit.

We would put in black squares where photos would go and use layers of acetate if we had to create a diagram. For photos, we would tape a sheet of tracing paper to the photo to show how a photo would be cropped.

We used waxers to apply wax to the back of type or images and complete page layout that way before turning our "boards" over to a printer who would assemble all the layers and eventually show us a proof of the whole job. Sometimes adjustments had to be made and the next proof would go to the client for approval.

We always went on "press checks" where press operators would make adjustments to colors. Sometimes the changes were subtle. Other times the changes would require big shifts and we'd often come back the next day to continue.

I got my first computer, a Macintosh II in 1988. It had 40MB of internal memory and 4MB of RAM. I had to change floppy discs every time I wanted to change fonts. I mostly used it for typesetting in the early days. Eventually, when I upgraded to more powerful Macs, I began doing color separations and more.

Aldus Pagemaker

Aldus PageMaker was a revolutionary desktop publishing (DTP) program created by the Aldus Corporation and first released in 1985 for the Apple Macintosh. Its introduction, alongside the Apple Macintosh computer and the Apple LaserWriter printer, is credited with launching the DTP revolution.

The software allowed users to combine text and graphics in a single document and visually lay out pages on a screen, a concept known as "what you see is what you get" (WYSIWYG). Aldus founder Paul Brainerd coined the term "desktop publishing" to describe this new process, making sophisticated document design accessible to a broader audience outside of traditional publishing houses.

Adobe acquired Aldus in 1994 and continued to develop PageMaker, but it eventually lost market share to competitors like QuarkXPress. Adobe ultimately discontinued PageMaker in favor of its more advanced DTP program, Adobe InDesign.



Quark Express

QuarkXPress, a desktop publishing (DTP) application, was first released by Quark, Inc. in 1987 for the Apple Macintosh. It quickly established itself as a powerful alternative to Aldus PageMaker, gaining a reputation for its precise typographic controls and advanced page layout capabilities. A key innovation was its “XTensions” technology, an application programming interface (API) that allowed third-party developers to create add-on features, significantly expanding its functionality. By the mid-1990s,

QuarkXPress had become the dominant software for professional designers, newspapers, and magazines, achieving an estimated 90% market share. However, Quark’s position was challenged in the late 1990s by slow innovation, high prices, and a perceived arrogance toward its customer base. This created an opening for its primary rival, Adobe InDesign, which was released in 1999 and eventually overtook QuarkXPress as the industry standard. While no longer holding its former market dominance,

QuarkXPress continues to be developed and used today, particularly in niche markets and by users with legacy workflows.

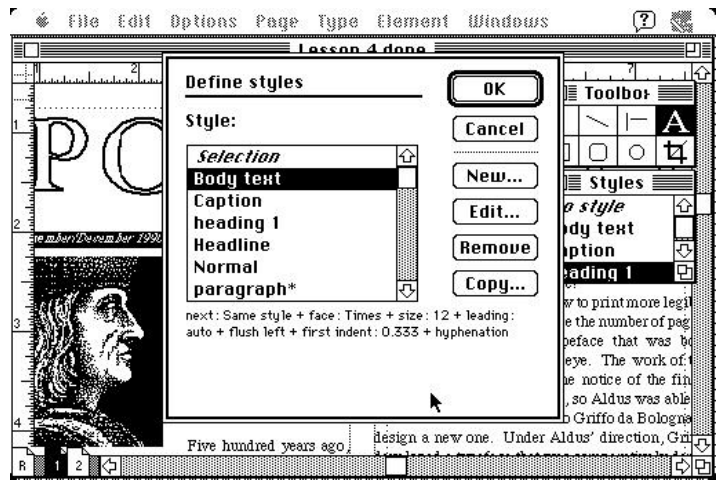
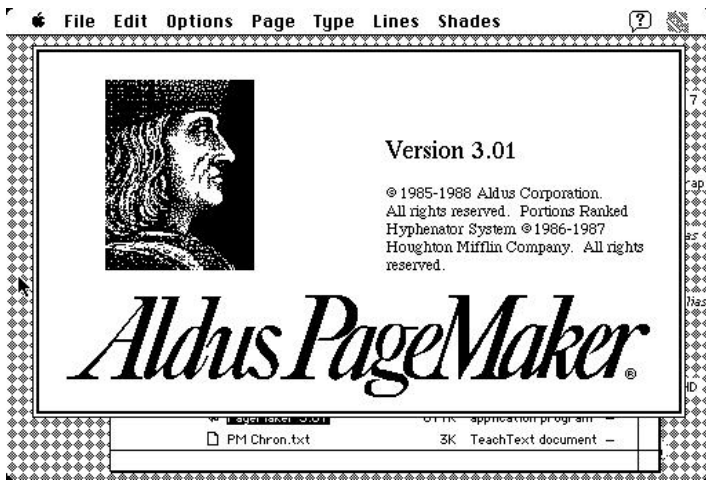
Adobe InDesign

Adobe InDesign, released in 1999, was created as a modern successor to Adobe PageMaker, which had been losing significant market share to its rival, QuarkXPress. Adobe saw an opportunity to challenge Quark’s dominance by creating a new, more advanced desktop publishing application.

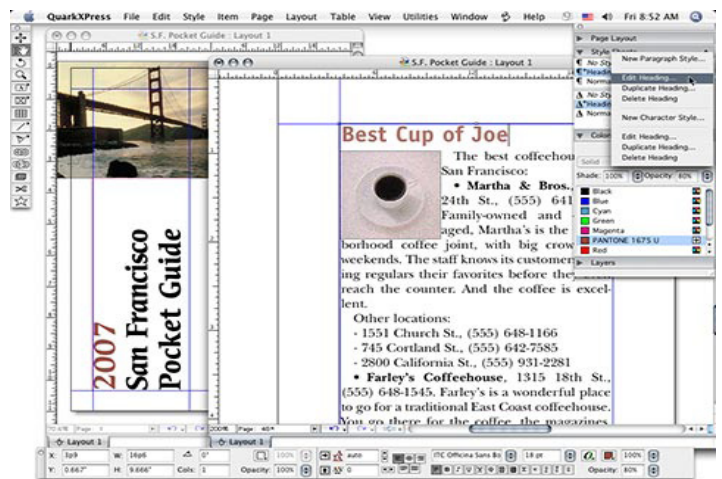
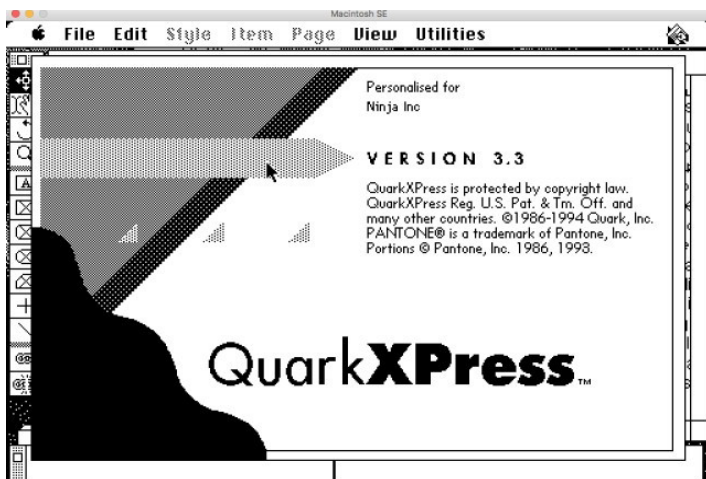
InDesign gained traction quickly due to its tight integration with other Adobe products like Photoshop and Illustrator, which were already industry standards. The release of InDesign 2.0 in 2002, which offered native support for Mac OS X, gave Adobe a crucial advantage over QuarkXPress, which was slower to adopt the new operating system.

Adobe’s decision to bundle InDesign within its Creative Suite and, later, the Creative Cloud subscription model, made it an indispensable part of the professional designer’s toolkit. By offering a comprehensive and integrated ecosystem of creative software at a competitive price, Adobe InDesign effectively displaced QuarkXPress to become the new standard in professional page layout and design.

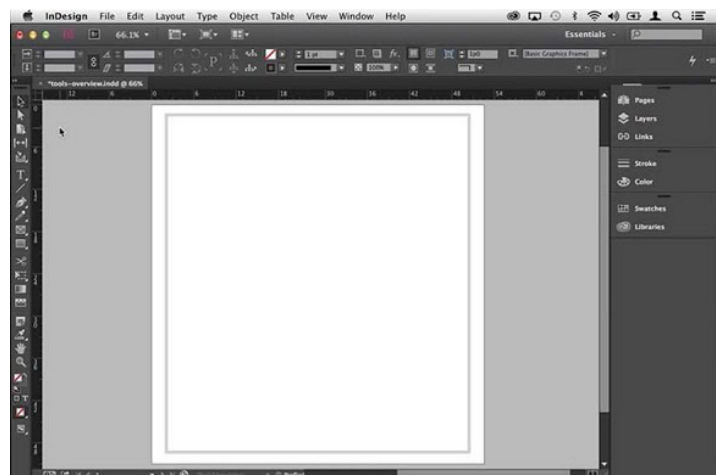
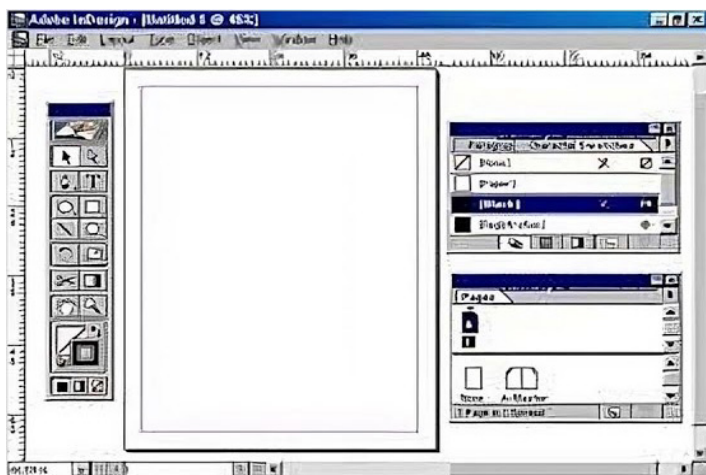




Screenshots from version 3.01 of Aldus Pagemaker, the software many of us first used for page makeup.



Many of us switched from Pagemaker to Quark Express which was more powerful and had many more features than Pagemaker.



Over time, Adobe InDesign became the software of choice for graphic designers. Above left, InDesign in 1998 and above right, in 2023.