



University Information  
Technology Services

# Illustrator CC 2017 Layers Guide

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Adobe Illustrator Creative Cloud - Windows

University Information Technology Services

Learning Technologies, Training & Audiovisual Outreach

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# University Information Technology Services

## Illustrator CC 2017 Layers Guide Adobe Illustrator Creative Cloud 2017

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## Introduction

Layers are similar to clear pages stacked on top of your artwork that help to keep your work organized. You can place content such as text, shapes, and other objects on a layer. You can rearrange layers, add multiple layers, remove layers, hide layers, or lock layers.

**Note:** This guide was created using a document that consists of layers. If you would like to follow along with the guide, either open a document that has layers or use one of Illustrator's templates by selecting **File → New From Template**.

## Learning Objectives

After completing the instructions in this booklet, you will be able to:

- Access the layers panel.
- Navigate the layers panel.
- Change the options for a layer.
- Become familiar with the common functions of layers.

## Access the Layers Panel

1. To list, organize, and edit the objects in a document, use the *Layers* panel on the right side of your screen (See Figure 1).

**Note:** If you do not see the *Layers* panel, follow these steps:

- a. In the *Menu* bar, click **Window** (See Figure 1).
- b. Click **Layers** (See Figure 1).

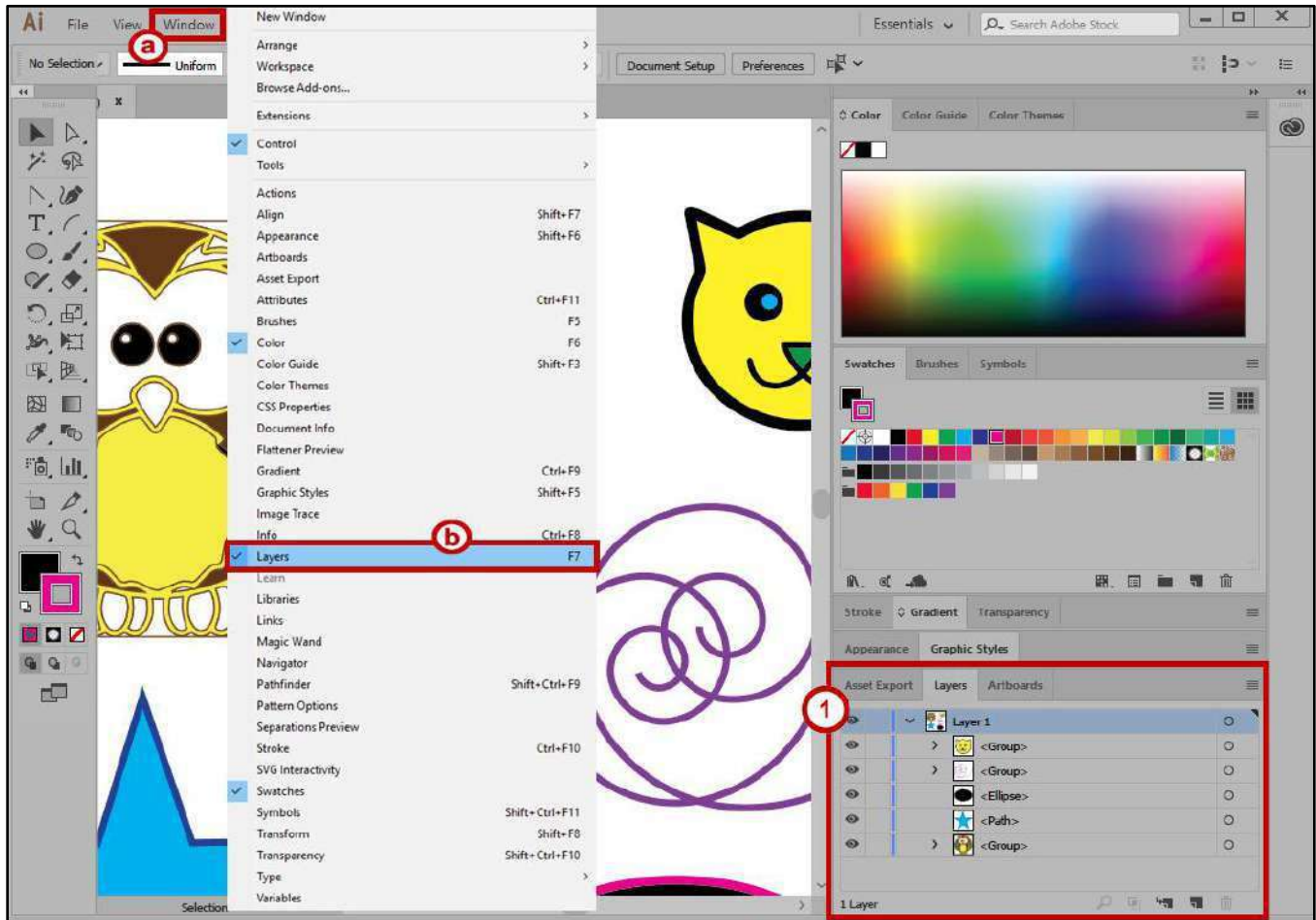


Figure 1 - Accessing the Layers Panel

## The Layers Panel

1. **Layers Panel Menu** - View layer options and access the *Layers Panel* options to modify the Layers panel (See Figure 2).
2. **Visibility column** - Indicates whether items in the layers are visible or hidden (blank space), or whether they are template layers or outline layers (See Figure 2).
3. **Edit column** - Indicates whether items are locked or unlocked. The lock icon indicates that the item is locked and cannot be edited; a blank space indicates that the item is unlocked and can be edited (See Figure 2).
4. **Disclosure Triangles** - Click the *disclosure triangles* to view the components of a layer or an object (See Figure 2).
5. **Layers** - Lists each object created such as paths, groups, and collective elements. Each layer is assigned a unique color (limited to 9 colors) (See Figure 2).
6. **Objects** - Lists each object created on the Artboard (See Figure 2).
7. **Target column** - Indicates whether items are targeted for application of effects and edit attributes in the *Appearance* panel. When the target button appears as a double ring icon, the item is targeted; a single ring icon indicates that the item is not targeted (See Figure 2).
8. **Selection column** - Indicates whether items are selected. A color box appears when an item is selected. If an item, such as a layer or group, contains some objects that are selected and other objects that are unselected, a smaller selection color box appears next to the parent item. If all of the objects within the parent item are selected, the selection color boxes are the same size as the marks that appear next to selected objects (See Figure 2).

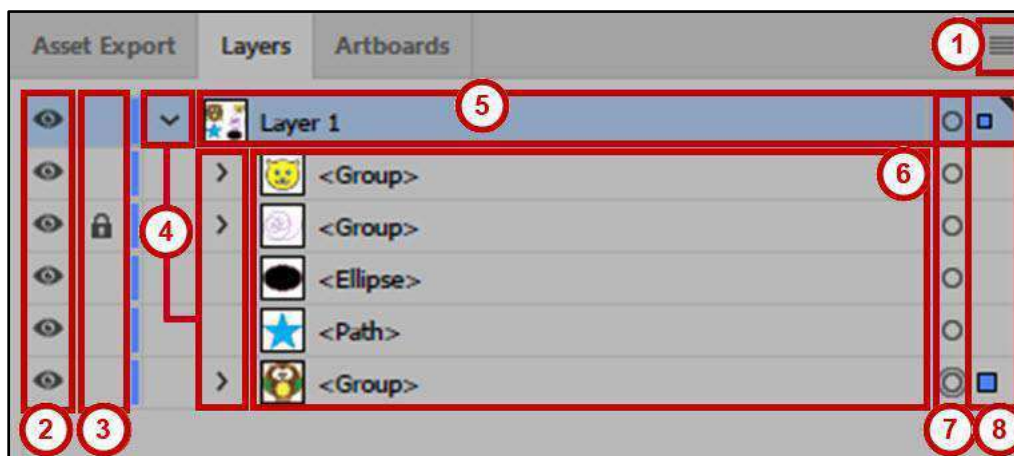


Figure 2 - Layers Panel 1

9. **Locate Object** - Select an object in the document window. If you select more than one object, the front most object in the stacking order will be located. Click *Locate Object* from the *Layers* panel menu to locate the layer (See Figure 3).
10. **Make/Release Clipping Mask** - Allows you to create a clipping mask, and release clipping masks (See Figure 3).
11. **Create New Sublayer** - Click the *Create New Sublayer* button to add a new sublayer (See Figure 3).
12. **Create New Layer** - Click the *Create New Layer* button to add a new layer (See Figure 3).
13. **Delete** - Select a layer or object, and then click the trash can to delete it (See Figure 3).



Figure 3 - Layers Panel 2

## Layer Options

1. **Name** - Name the layer (See Figure 4).
2. **Color** - The layer's color setting (choose a color from the menu or click the color swatch to select a color) (See Figure 4).
3. **Template** - Select this option to make the layer a template layer (See Figure 4).
4. **Lock** - Select this option to prevent changes to the item (See Figure 4).
5. **Show** - Select this option to display all artwork contained in the layer on the artboard (See Figure 4).
6. **Print** - Select this option to make the artwork contained in the layer printable (See Figure 4).
7. **Preview** - Displays the artwork contained in the layer in color. If this option is not checked, the artwork will appear in Outline view (See Figure 4).
8. **Dim Images to** - Reduces the intensity of linked images and bitmap images contained in the layer to the specified percentage (See Figure 4).

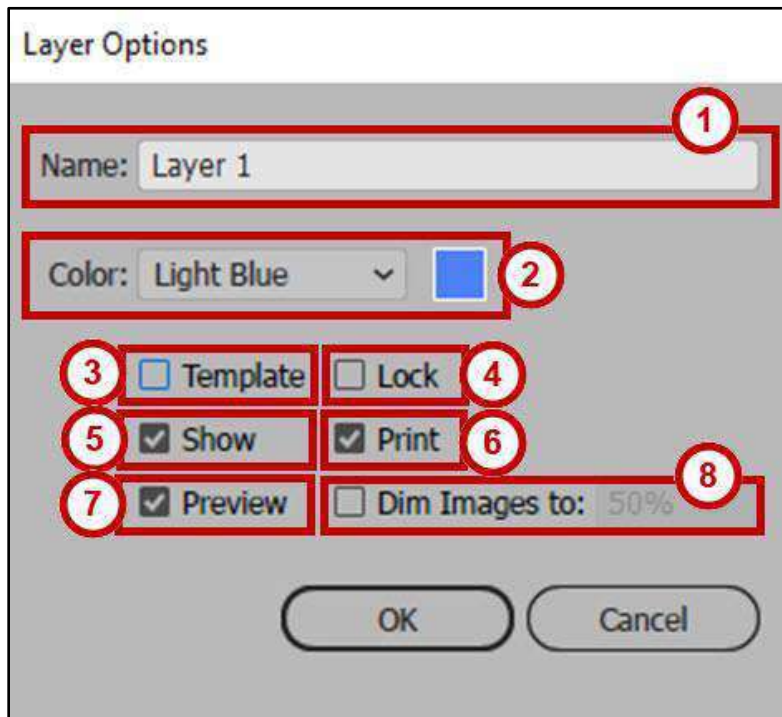


Figure 4 - Layer Options



# Layer Functions

Layers assist in producing complex artwork. Below are some common functions of layers:

## Selecting Objects

To select objects:

1. Find the object you would like to select in the layers panel (See Figure 5).
2. Click the **circle** in the target column. A colored box will appear in the selection column and a highlight box will appear around the object once an item is selected (See Figure 5).

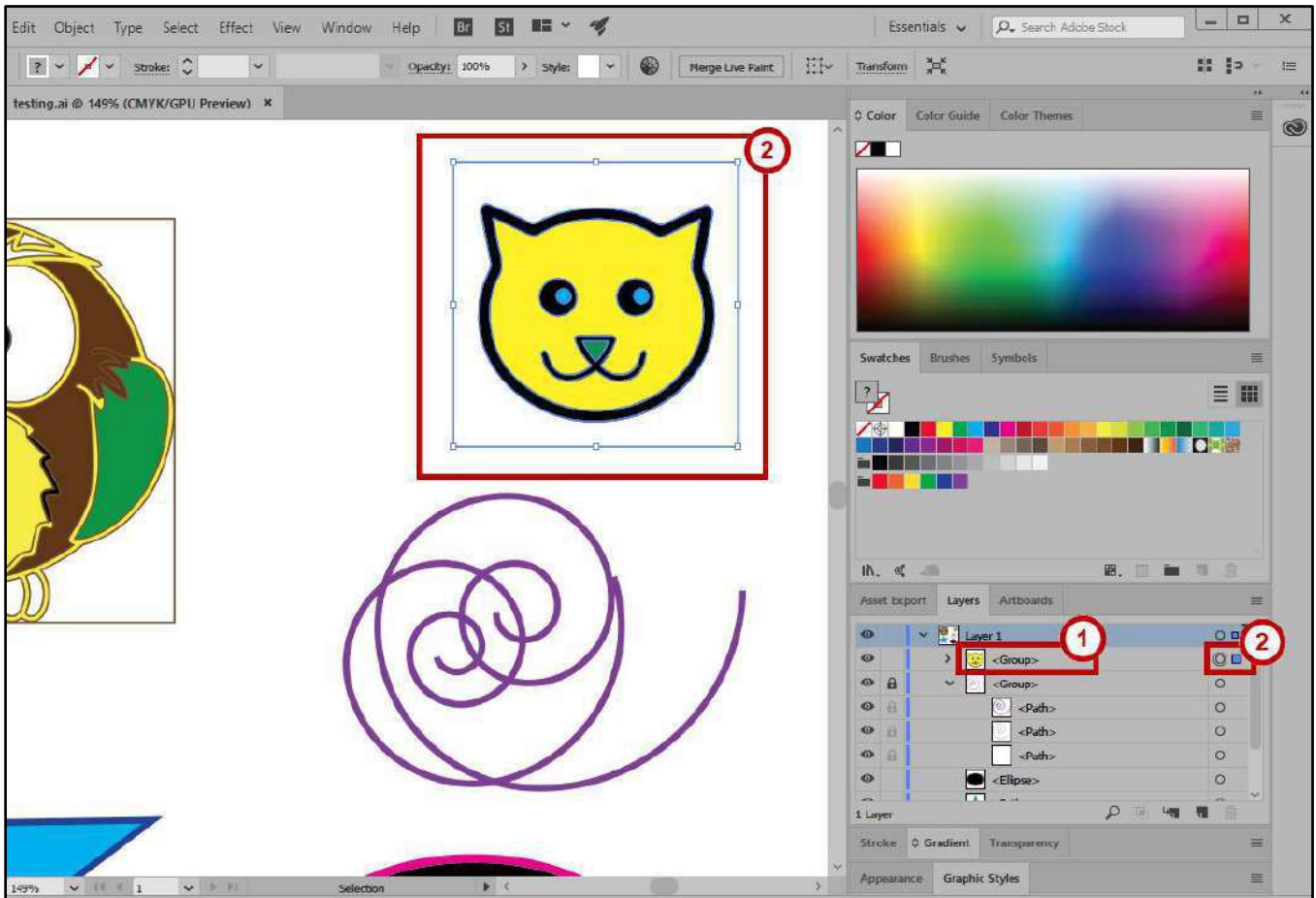


Figure 5 - Select Object

## Locating Objects

To locate an object in the layers panel:

1. Click on an **object** on the artboard (see Figure 6).
2. In the *Layers Panel*, click the **Locate Object** button (see Figure 6).
3. The object is highlighted in the *Layers panel* (see Figure 6).

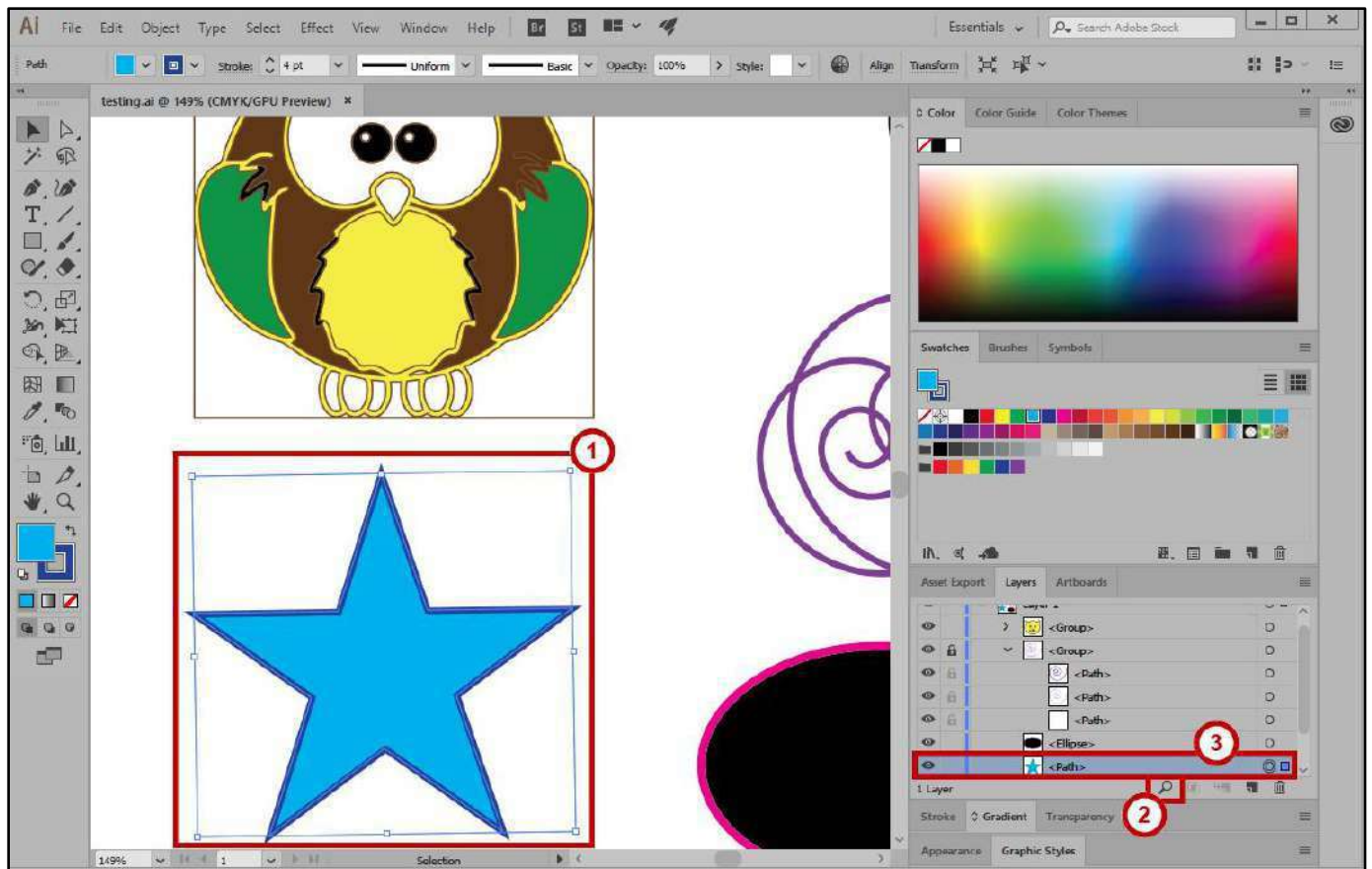


Figure 6 - Locate Object

## Arranging Objects

To rearrange objects:

1. Click the object's **name** (See Figure 7).
2. **Drag** the item until the blue insertion line appears in the desired position (See Figure 7).

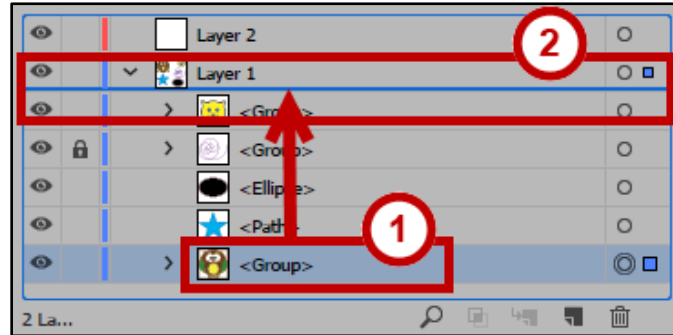


Figure 7 - Arrange Objects

3. **Release** the mouse button. The item has been moved to a new location in the *Layers* panel.

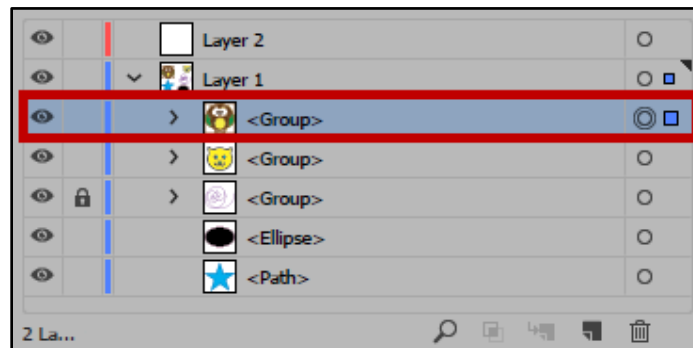


Figure 8 - New Location

## Moving Objects

To move a selected object from one layer to another:

1. Click the **color-selection square** to the right of the target button (See Figure 9).
2. Drag the **object** on top of the layer of your choice (See Figure 9).

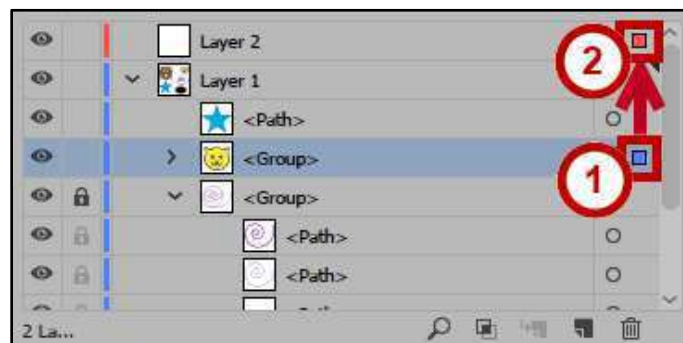


Figure 9 - Select and Drag Object

3. Release the **mouse** button. The object is moved to the selected layer.

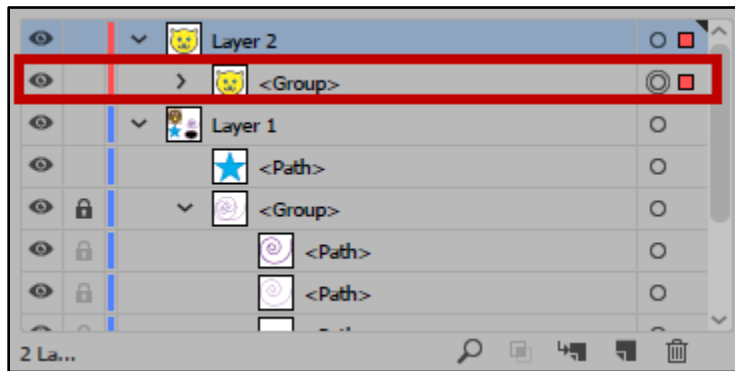


Figure 10 - Moved Object

## Cloning/Duplicating Objects

To make a copy of an object:

1. Press **Alt** on your keyboard while dragging the **color selection square** to another layer. A plus sign appears while you drag to indicate that you are making a clone of the object.

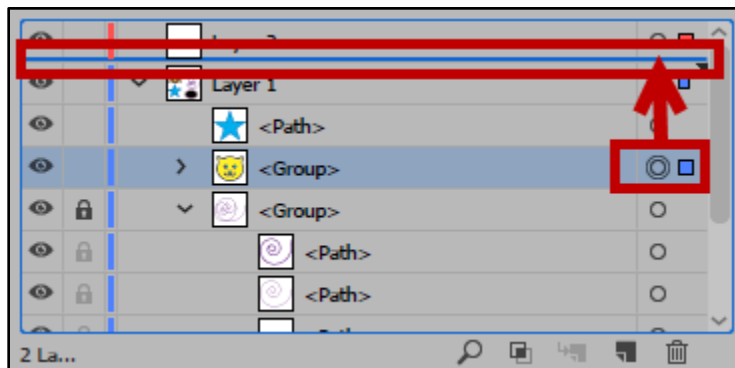


Figure 11 - Press ALT and Drag

2. Release the **mouse** button to place a duplicate object in the selected layer.

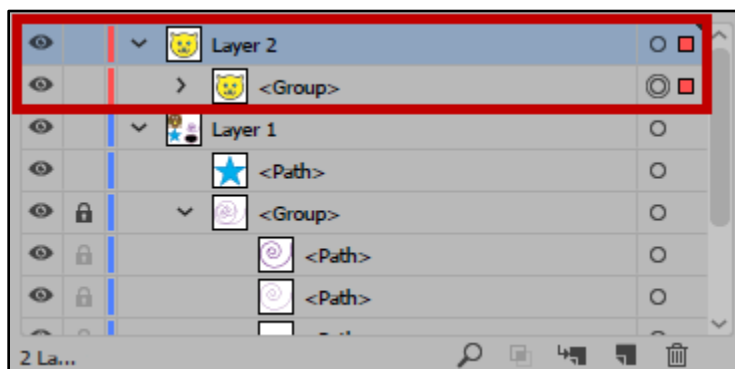


Figure 12 - Duplicate Object

## Masking Objects

A clipping mask is an object whose shape masks other artwork so that only areas that lie within the shape are visible. To make a clipping mask:

1. Draw an **object** or place an **image** into the desired layer.
2. In the *Tools Panel*, click and hold the **Shape** tool (See Figure 13).
3. Click the desired **shape** (e.g. the Ellipse Tool) (See Figure 13).

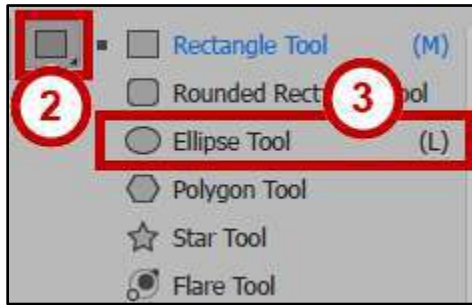


Figure 13 - Ellipse Tool

4. Draw a shape on top of the image using the **Ellipse Tool**.

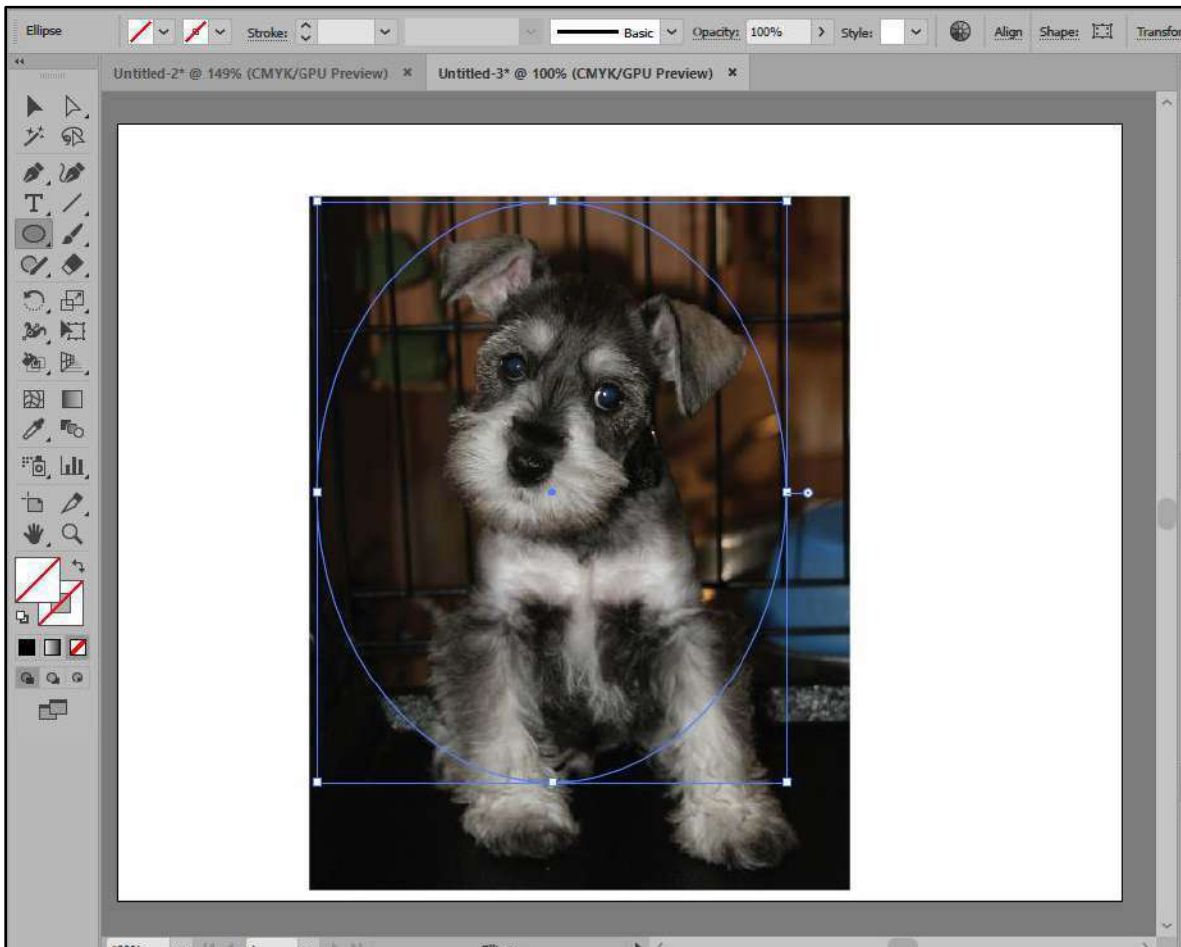


Figure 14 - Draw Ellipse

5. In the *Tools* Panel, click the **Selection** tool (See Figure 15).
6. Left-click and drag to highlight both the **shape** and the **image** (See Figure 15).

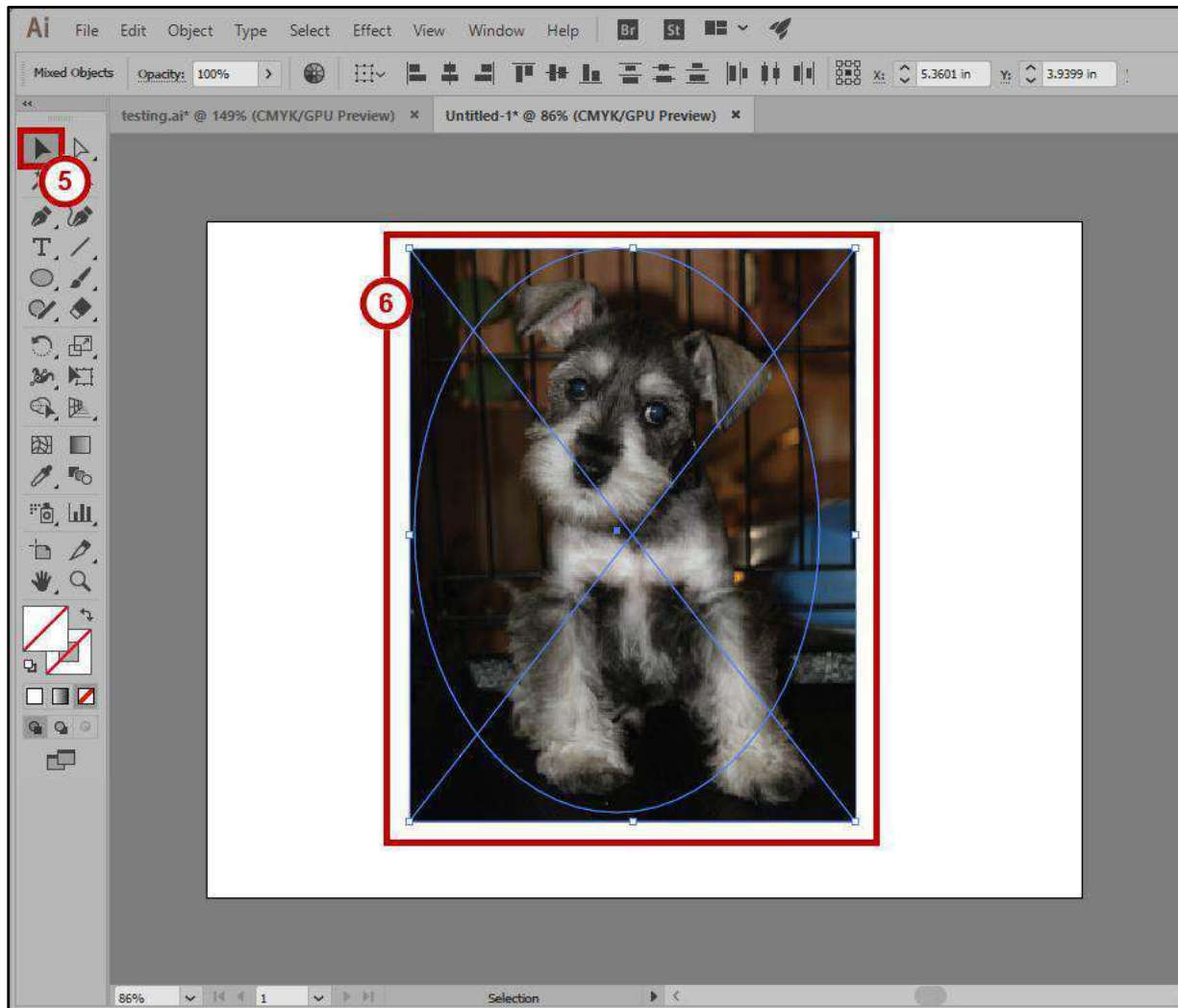


Figure 15 - Select Shape and Image



7. In the *Menu* bar, click **Object** (See Figure 16).
8. Click **Clipping Mask** (See Figure 16).
9. Click **Make** (See Figure 16).

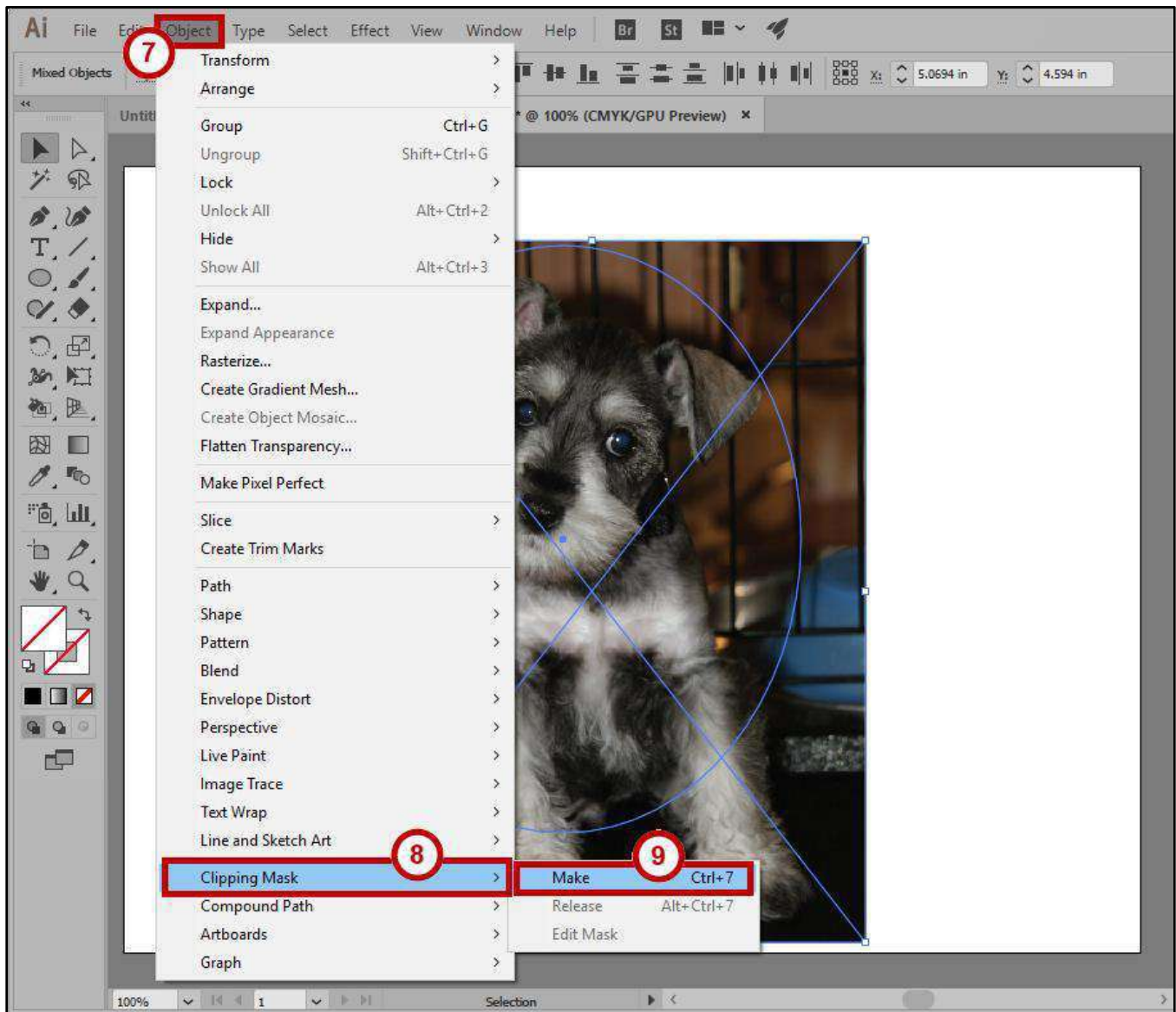


Figure 16 - Object → Clipping Mask → Make

10. The image is clipped into the shape drawn on the image.



Figure 17 - Clipping Mask

**Note:** Any portion of the image that was left outside of the shape will be removed.

11. To adjust the image inside the shape:

- a. Select the **Direct Selection Tool** (See Figure 18).
- b. Click in an empty space on the artboard (See Figure 18).
- c. Click inside the image (See Figure 18).

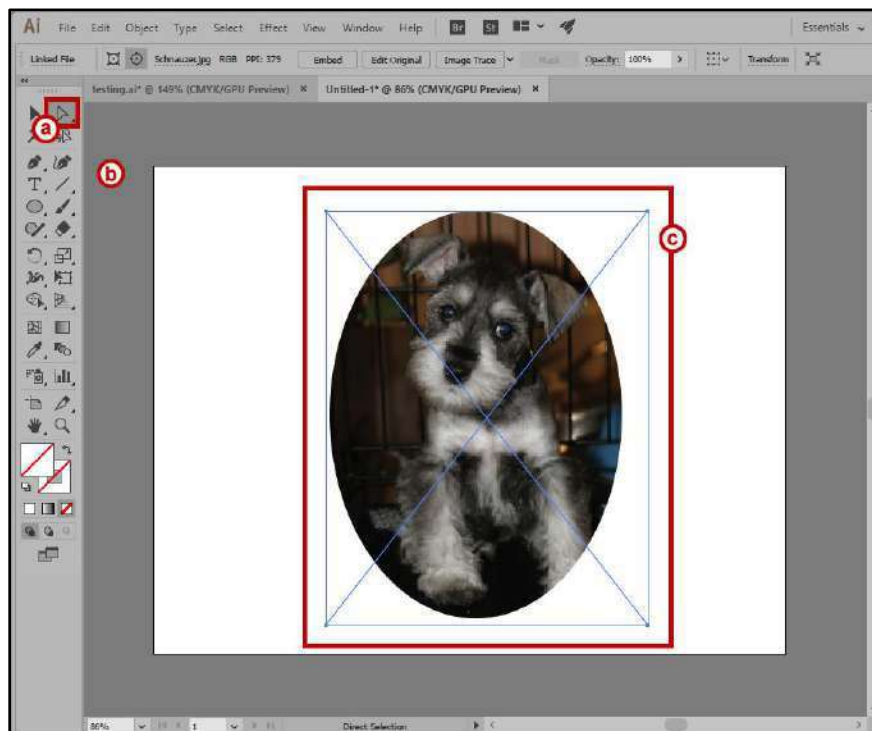


Figure 18 - Direct Selection of Image



- d. You should now be able to click and drag to move the **image** to the desired location within the shape.

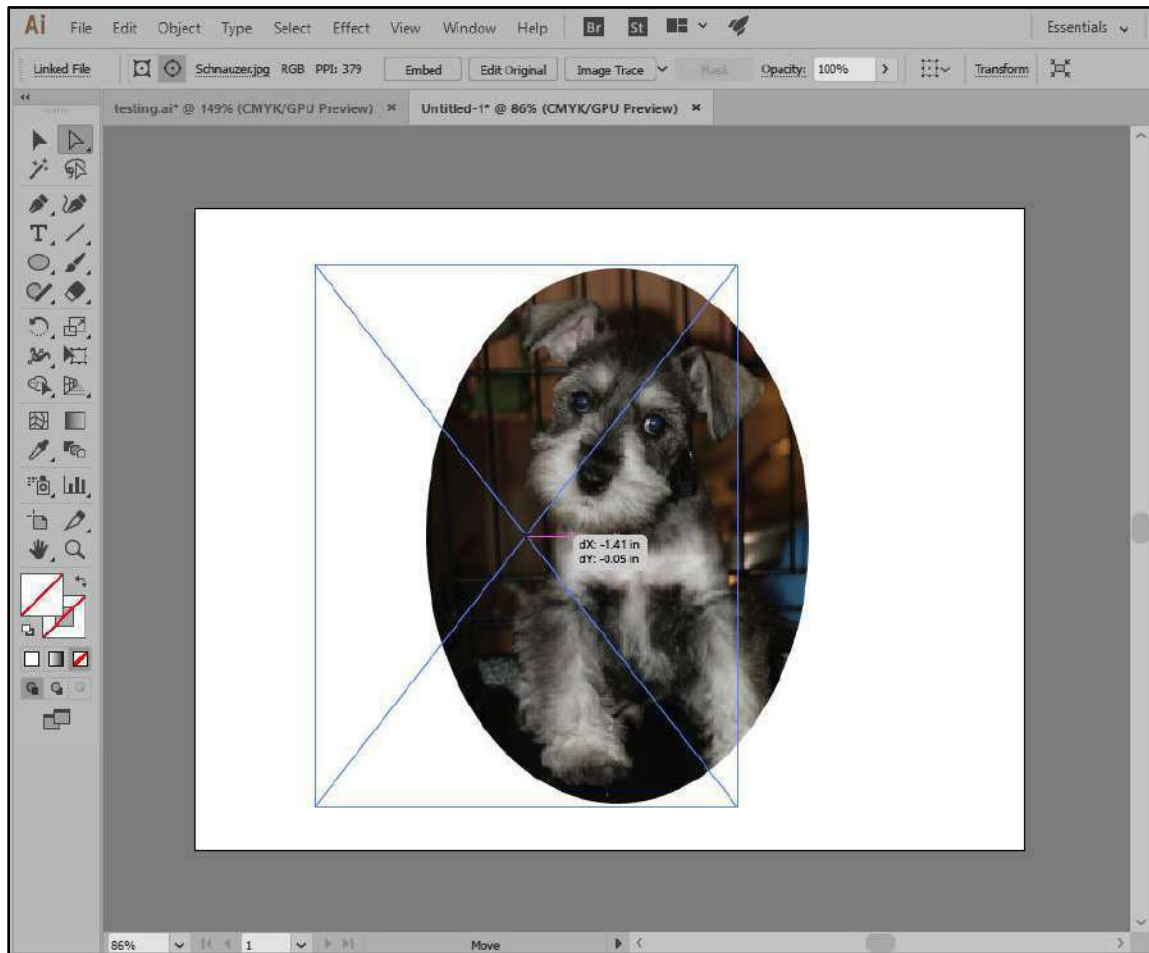


Figure 19 - Move Image

To revert the image back to its original state:

1. Click **Object** (See Figure 20).
2. Click **Clipping Mask** (See Figure 20).
3. Click **Release** (See Figure 20).

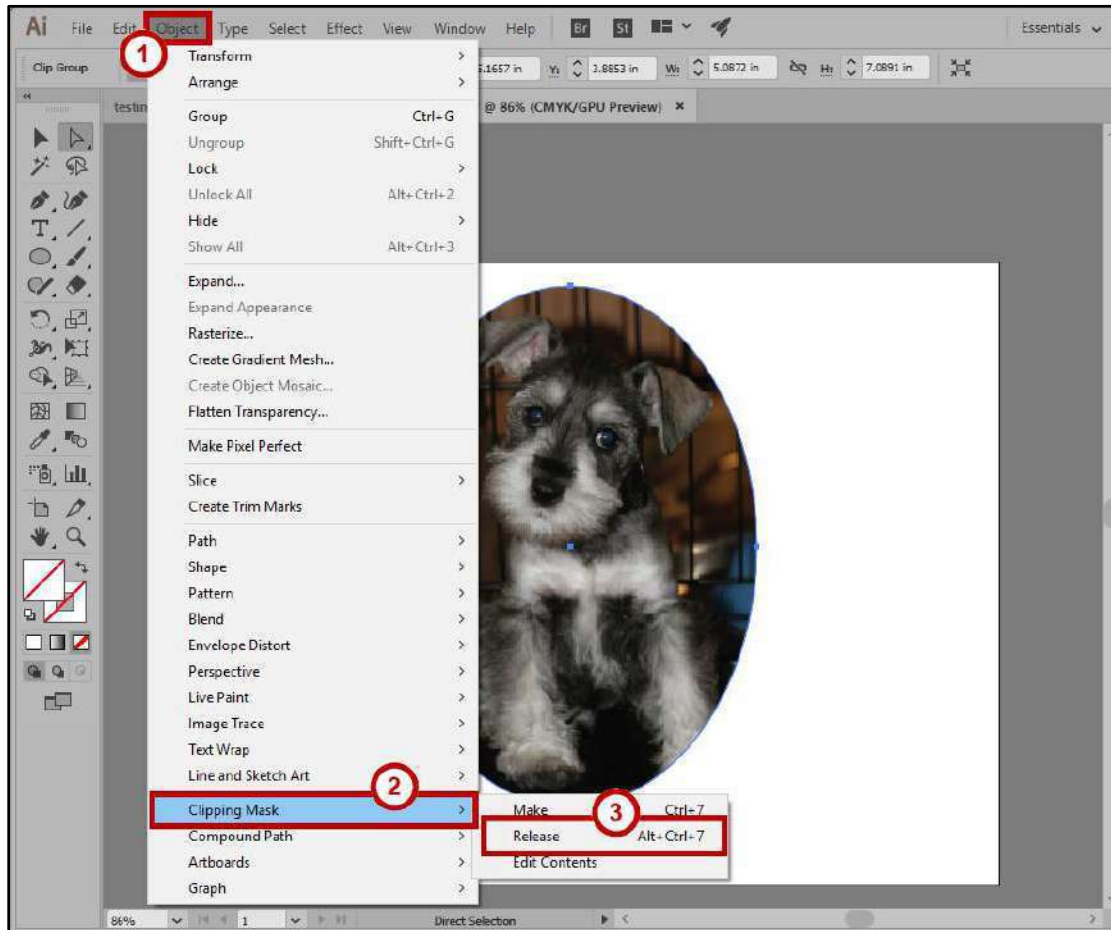


Figure 20 - Revert Image

## Additional Help

For additional support, please contact the KSU Service Desk:

### KSU Service Desk for Faculty & Staff

- Phone: 470-578-6999
- Email: [service@kennesaw.edu](mailto:service@kennesaw.edu)
- Website: <http://uits.kennesaw.edu>

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