



Adobe Illustrator for Packaging Course

Duration: 2 Day

Prerequisites:

This course is ideal for beginners who have a basic understanding of computer operations and an interest in visual design or product branding. Familiarity with other Adobe Creative Cloud applications is a bonus but not a prerequisite.

Course Objectives

By the end of this course, learners will be able to design and produce professional, print-ready packaging and labelling for products using Adobe Illustrator. Ultimately, the course empowers learners to transform creative packaging concepts into market-ready designs that communicate quality, beauty, and brand identity - while meeting all technical requirements for production.

Related Courses:

Adobe® Photoshop, Adobe® Dimension and Adobe Acrobat

Foundation: Understanding Illustrator & Design for Print

- Workspace setup: Artboards, panels, rulers, and guides.
- Document setup for print: CMYK Colour mode, bleed, trim, and safe areas.
- Units & measurements: Inches, millimeters, points – when to use what.
- File formats: AI, PDF, EPS, SVG, TIFF, JPEG – differences and use cases.
- Vector vs raster graphics: Why vectors are essential for packaging.

Essential Drawing & Shape Tools

- Basic shape tools: Rectangle, Ellipse, Polygon, Star.
- Pen Tool mastery: Drawing precise shapes, curves, and dielines.
- Pathfinder panel: Combine, subtract, intersect, and divide shapes.
- Align & Distribute tools: Perfect spacing and alignment for design elements.
- Smart Guides: Snapping, alignment, and precision placement.

Typography & Brand Elements

- Type Tool & Area Type Tool: For product names, descriptions, and ingredients.
- Text on a path: Perfect for curved packaging surfaces or circular labels.
- Character & Paragraph panels: Spacing, kerning, line-height, and alignment.
- Fonts & licensing: How to choose and embed fonts properly for print.
- Styles & hierarchy: Using typographic contrast for elegant label design.

Colour & Materials Simulation

- Colour modes: CMYK vs RGB (and when to convert).
- Pantone (Spot Colours): Using the Pantone Solid Coated library.
- Swatches & Global Colours: Consistency across multiple components.
- Gradients & Blends: Metallic effects, subtle gradients, and ombré looks.
- Transparency & Overprint settings: Managing inks and special finishes.

Packaging Dielines & Structural Design

- Working with dielines: Importing or creating vector dielines for boxes or labels.
- Layers: Keeping dielines, artwork, and text on separate layers.
- Template scaling: Maintaining proportions and bleed when resizing.
- Symbols & Repetition: Reuse elements like logos or icons consistently.
- 3D preview (optional): Using “3D and Materials” or Adobe Dimension integration for mockups.

Image Placement & Linked Assets

- Placing images (File > Place): Linked vs embedded.
- Clipping masks: Cropping photos to label shapes.
- Image Trace: Converting logos or sketches into vectors.
- Linked file management: Keeping file paths organized for production.

Advanced Tools for Cosmetic Packaging Detailing

- Appearance panel: Multiple fills, strokes, and effects on a single object.
- Graphic Styles: Save and reuse stylized appearances.
- Effects: Drop shadows, glows, and emboss effects for mockups.
- Pattern creation: Seamless background patterns for boxes or tubes.
- Brushes: Decorative lines or strokes for brand accents.

Prepress Setup & Output

- Bleeds & Crop Marks: Setting up and checking in the PDF export.
- Overprint Preview & Separations: Ensure inks behave correctly.
- Transparency flattening: Avoiding issues with printers' RIPs.
- Outline text: Prevent font substitution errors.
- Linked files & packaging: Using *File > Package* to collect all assets.
- PDF/X-1a or PDF/X-4 standards: Correct settings for print-ready exports.

Mockups & Presentation

- 3D Revolve / Extrude: Create basic mockups in Illustrator.
- Adobe Dimension / Photoshop integration: Place artwork onto packaging renders.
- Exporting for digital presentation: RGB PDF or PNG exports for client previews.

Workflow & File Management Best Practices

- Naming conventions: Clear file, layer, and artboard naming.
- Version control: Save iterations safely (v1, v2, FINAL, etc.).
- Asset Libraries: Share logos, brand Colours, and assets via Creative Cloud.
- Checklists: Preflight check before sending to print (bleed, Colour mode, links, fonts).