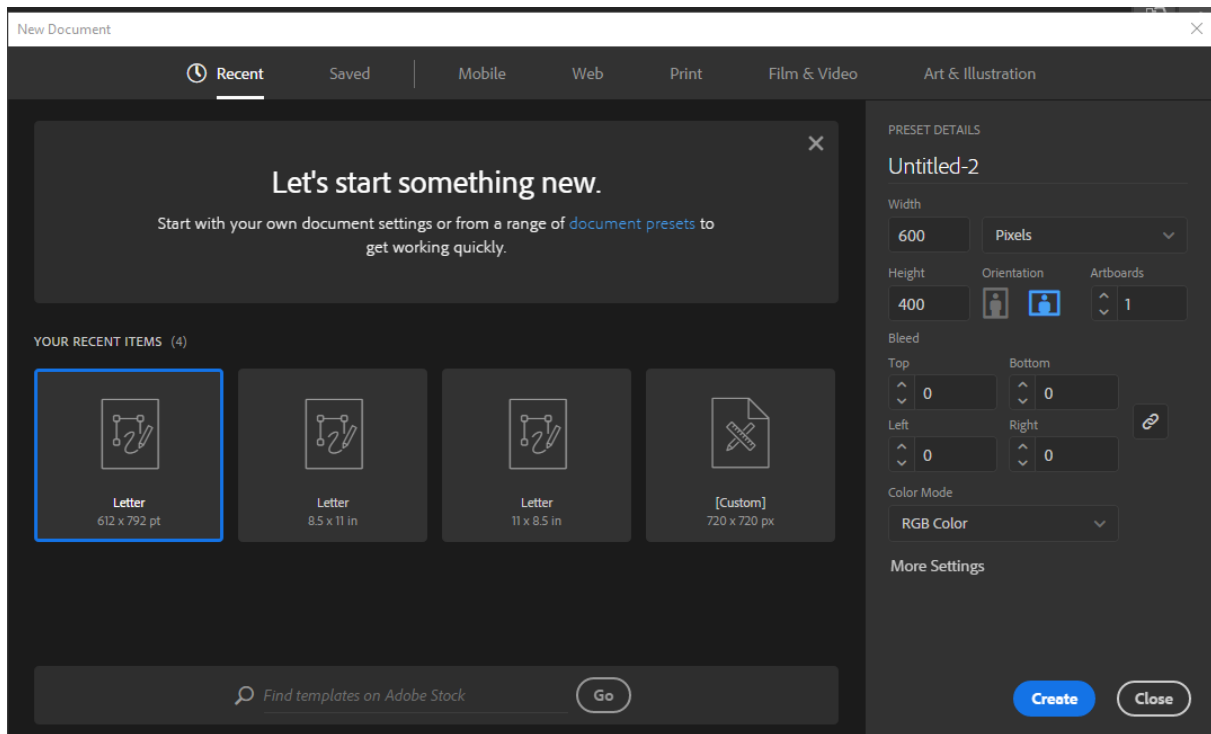


Create Simple Flowers with Gradient Mesh in Adobe Illustrator Editing

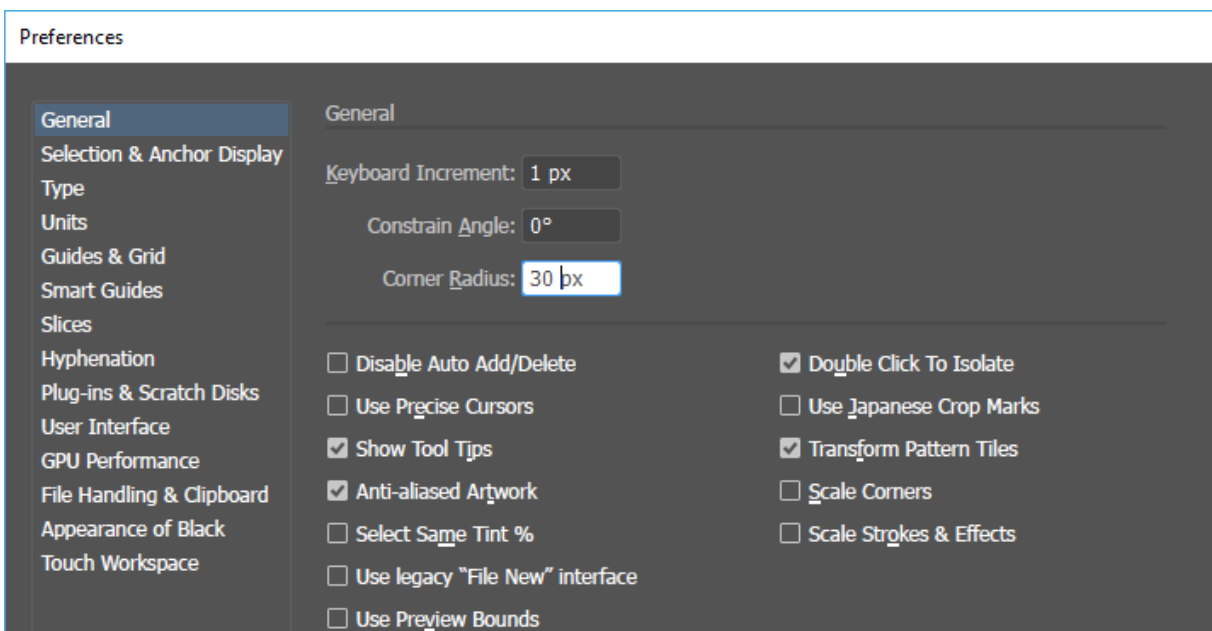


1. Start a New Project

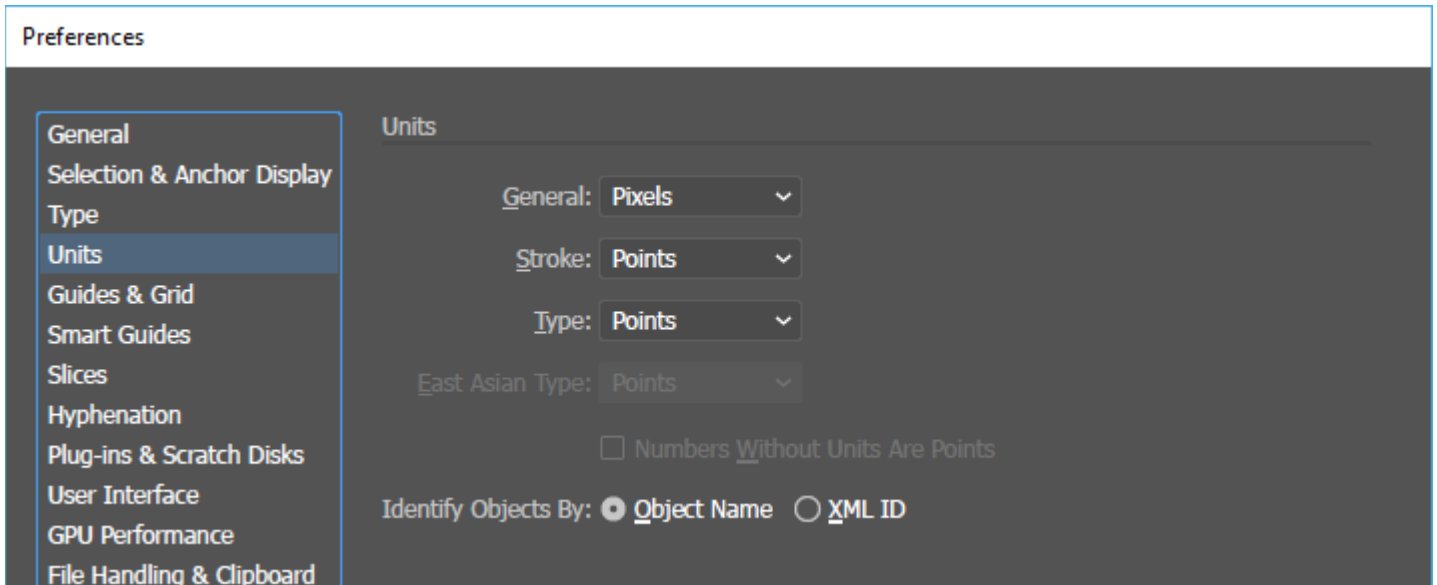
Open a blank document: 600 X 400 Pixels, Color Mode RGB.



Go to Edit > Preferences > General: set the Keyboard Increment to 1 px and Corner Radius to 30 px.



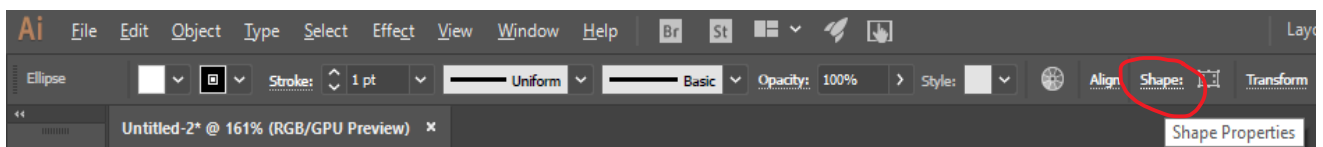
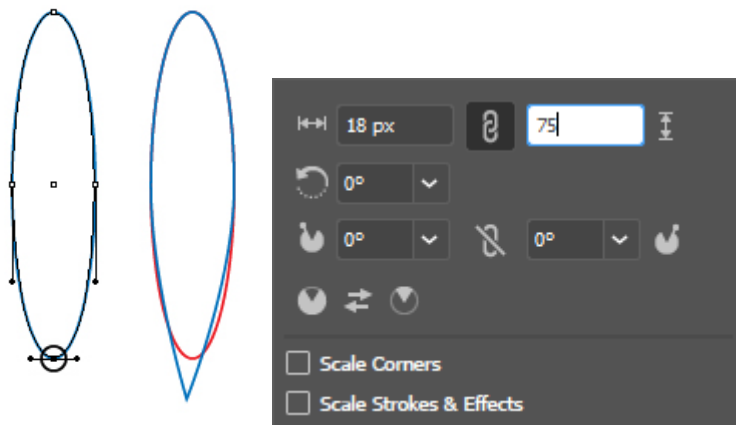
Click Units and set the Units as in the image. Then Click OK.



2. Create the Shape of the Petal

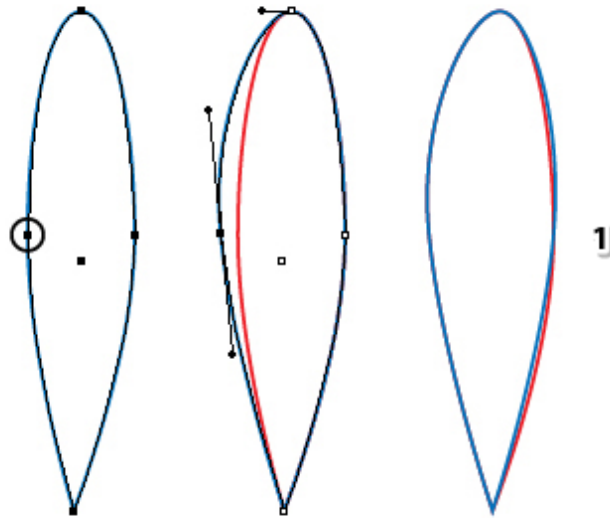
Step 1

Use the Ellipse Tool (L) and draw an 18 x 75px ellipse. You can check the size the ellipse by click ok shape. Using the Direct Selection Tool (A) select only the anchor point at the bottom. Click on convert point and then move it down and a little to the left. Fill color is Gray R: 204 G: 204 B: 204



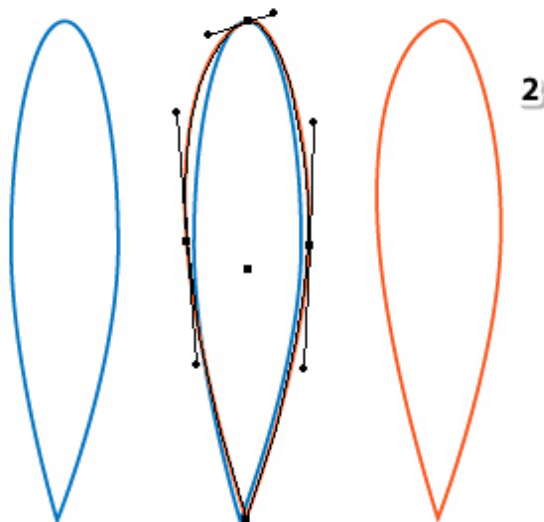
Step 2

Create a copy and set it aside for later. Using the Direct Selection Tool (A) only the anchor point from the left and move it a little to the left. Also move the handles as indicated. Name this shape "petal 1" in the layers palette.



Step 3

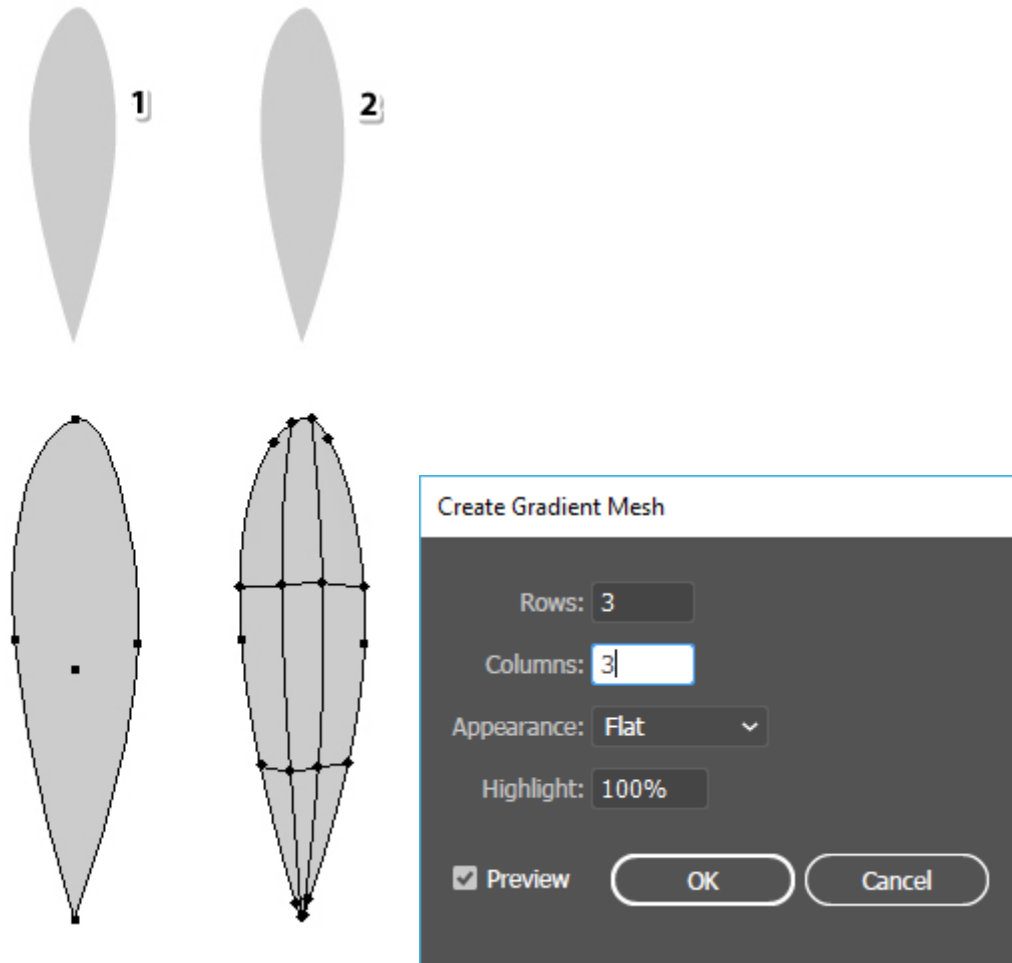
Using the copy that you made and set aside you will create the second petal. With the Direct Selection Tool (A) move the left and right point a bit further from each other then move the handles of the top point as shown. Name the new shape (red) "petal 2".



3. Create the Mesh and Color the Petals

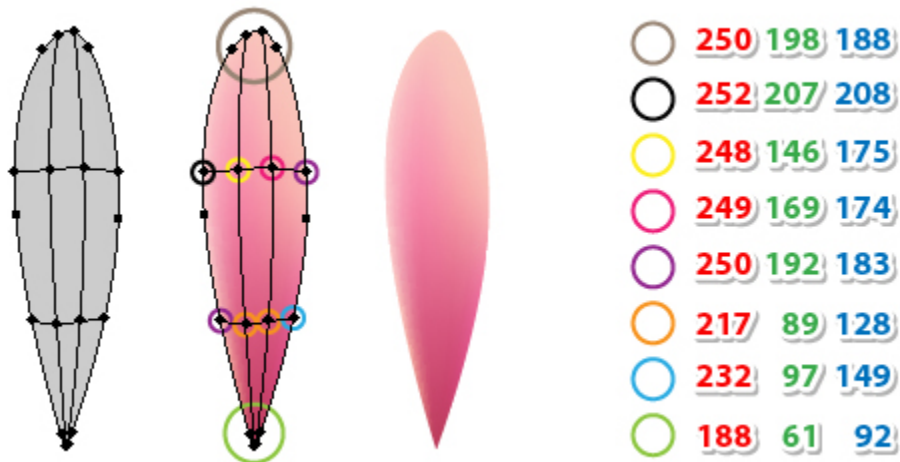
Step 1

Now you have the two petals. Select "petal 2" then go to Object > Create Gradient Mesh, select 3 Rows and 3 Columns and hit OK. Your petal should look like below at this point.



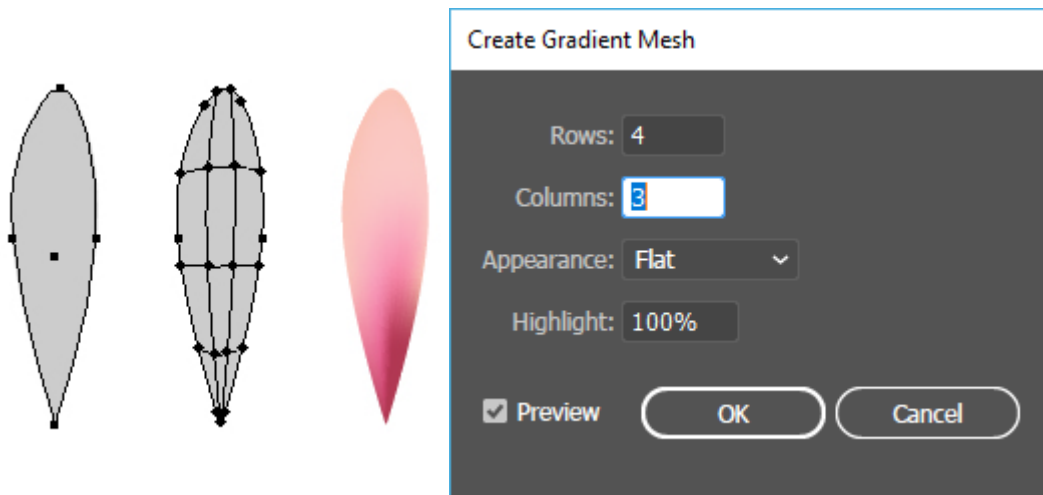
Step 2

Using the Direct Selection Tool (A), select each mesh point (node) and color it. We're using shades of pink. Follow the color codes and replace the gray fill of each point with the colors indicated. The petal should look like in the below image.



Step 3

Next, select "petal 1" then go to Object > Create Gradient Mesh, select 4 Rows and 3 Columns and hit OK. Following step 2 color the petal using again shades of pink.



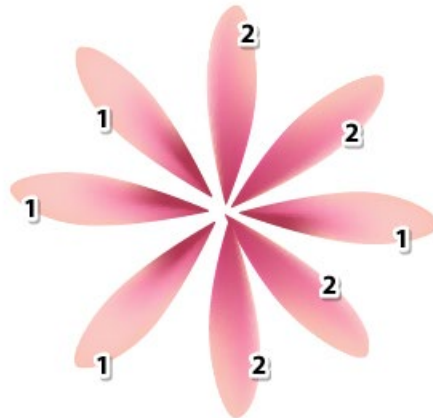
Step 4

"Petal 1" and "petal 2" are ready.

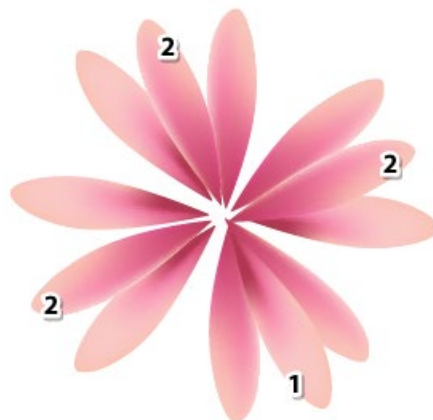


Step 5

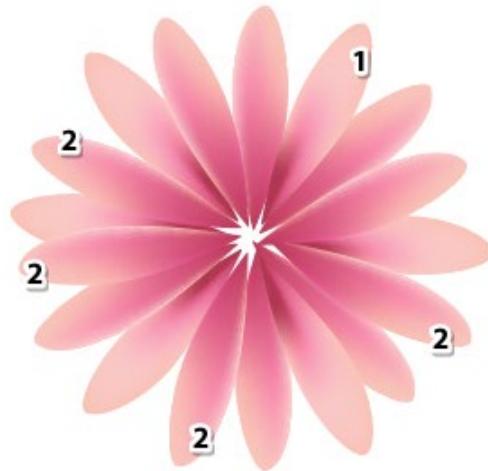
Make copies of "petal 1" and "petal 2". Create the first layer by rotating and arranging the petals as indicated below.



To create the second layer: Make copies of "petal 1" and "petal 2". Then rotating and arranging the petals as indicated below.



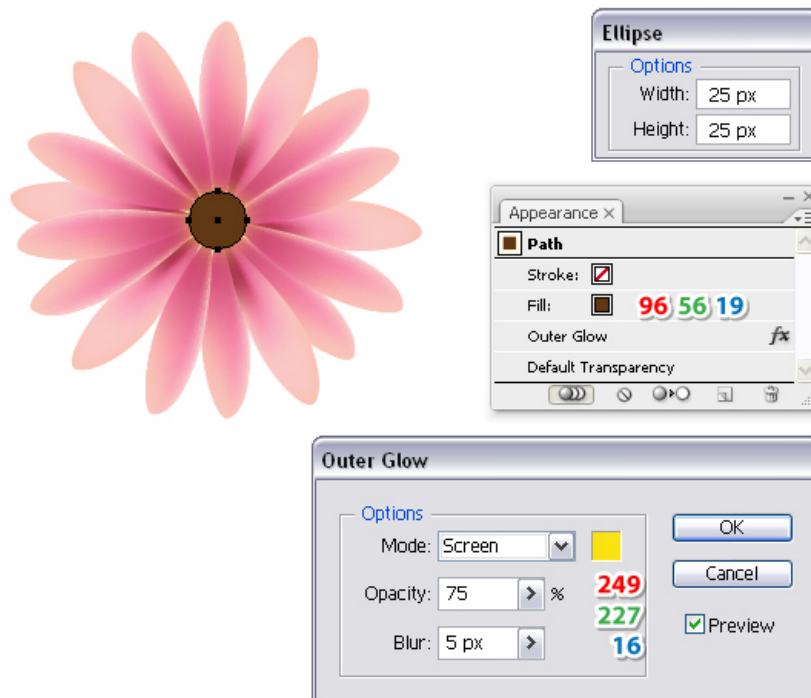
For the third layer just fill the remaining empty spaces.



4. Create the Center of the Flower

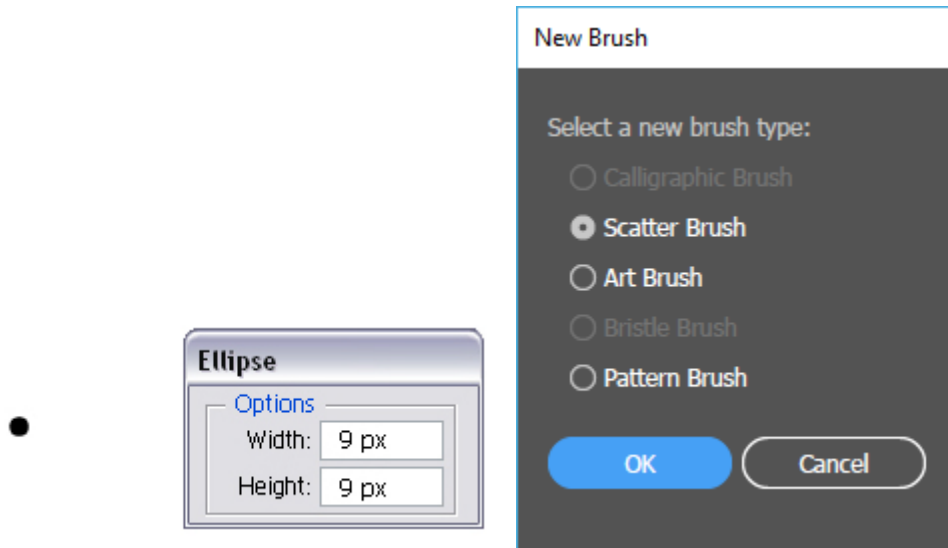
Step 1

Using the Ellipse Tool (L) and draw a 25 x 25px circle and select brown as the fill color. Go to Effect > Stylize and apply the Outer Glow effect using the settings shown below.



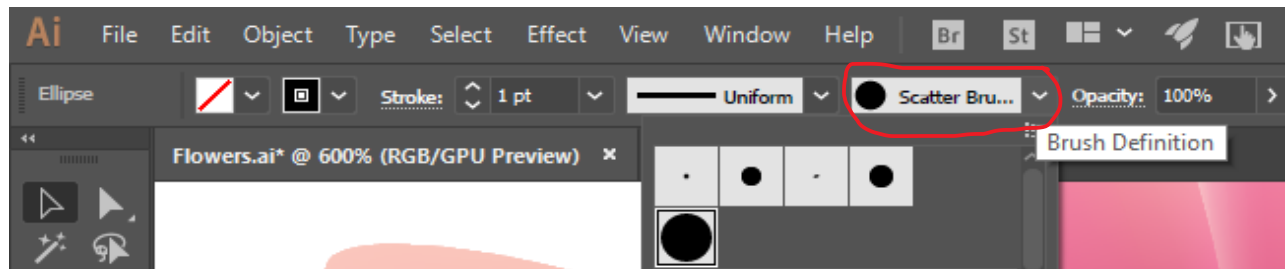
Step 2

With the Ellipse Tool (L) draw a small circle 9 X 9 px and give it a black fill. Open the Brushes Panel, drag the circle into the panel, choose New Scatter Brush and hit OK.



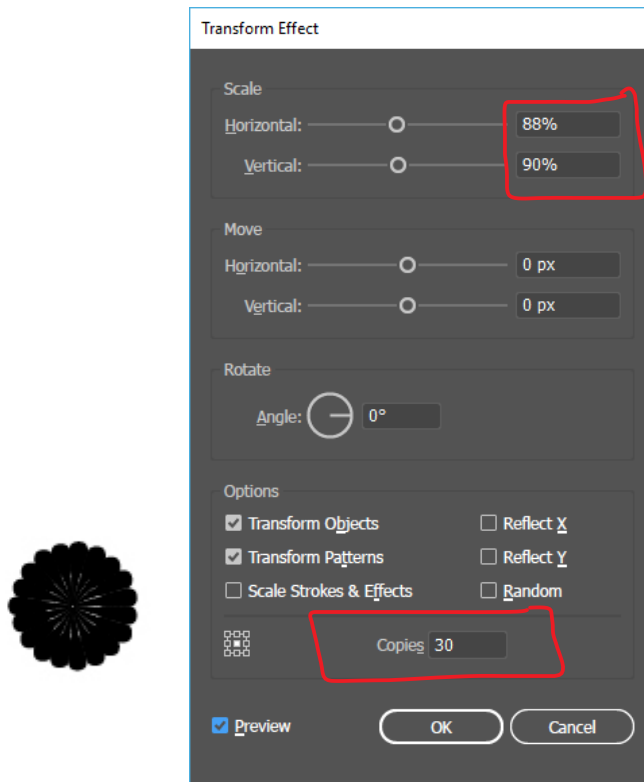
Step 3

Draw a new circle that is 56 X 56 px. The should 1 pt black Stroke and no fill. Change the Stroke of the circle to the new Scatter Brush saved at the previous step.



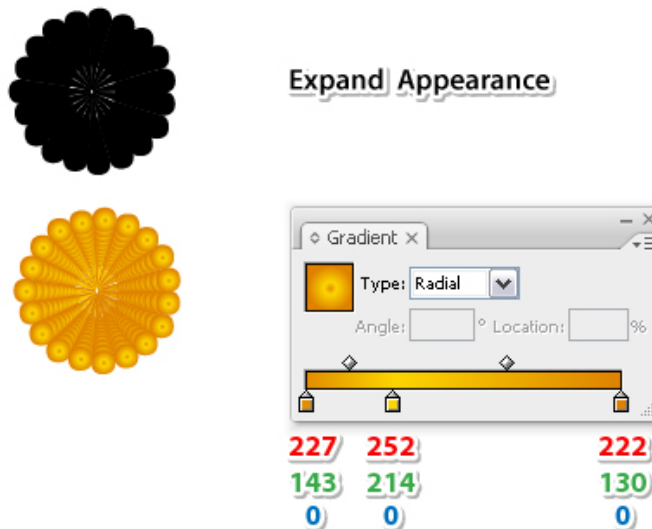
Step 4

Having the circle selected, go to Effect > Distort & Transform > Transform and apply the settings shown below.



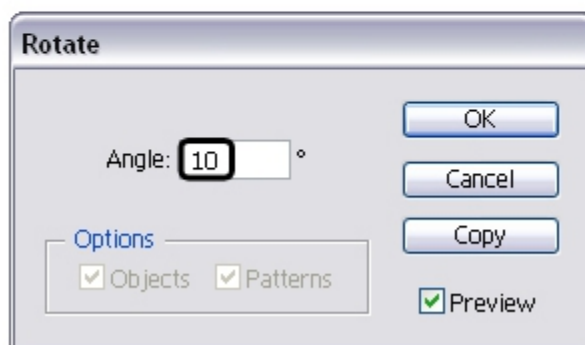
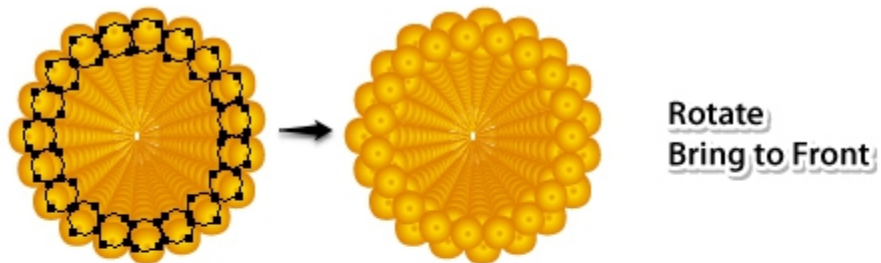
Step 5

With the circle still selected, go to Object > Expand Appearance in order to expand the brush stroke and the effect applied. Fill the resulting group with the radial gradient indicated.



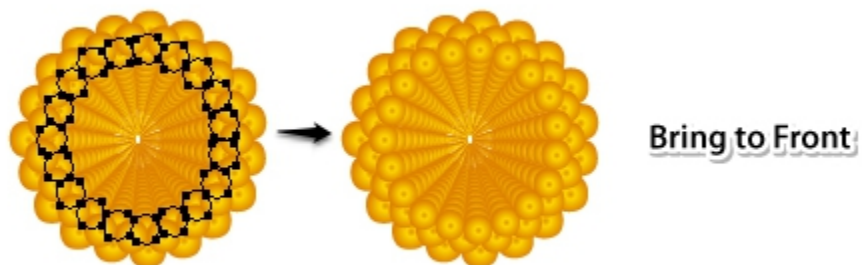
Step 6

Open the layers panel and open the group layer you just created. Select the second group from the Layers panel then go to Object > Transform > Rotate, set the Angle to 10 degrees and hit OK. Do not release the group yet and go to Object > Arrange > Bring to Front (Shift-Control-]).



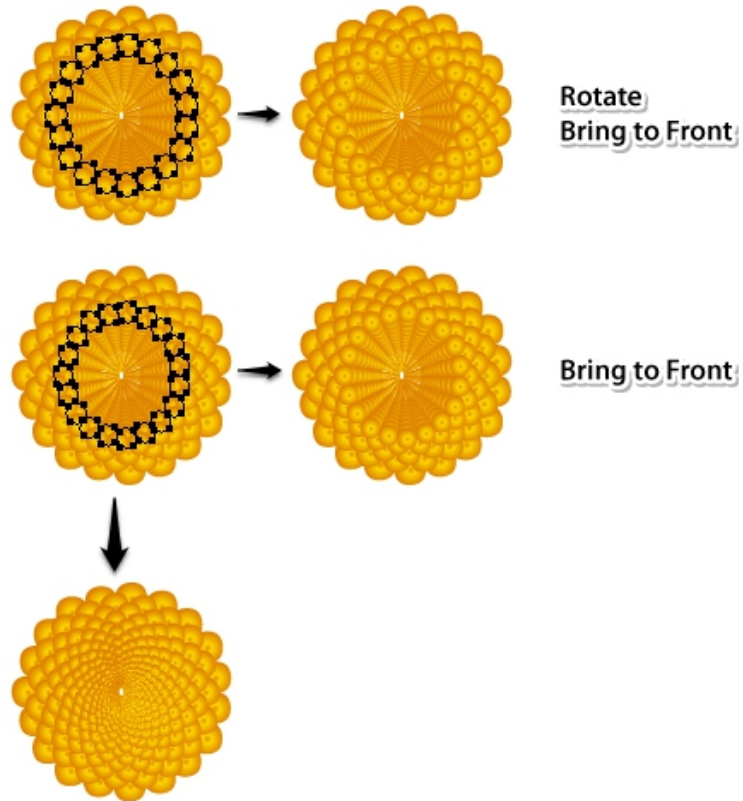
Step 7

Now, select the third group of circles from the Layers panel and go to Object > Arrange > Bring to Front (Shift-Control-]). This time we won't rotate the group.



Step 8

Select the fourth group of circles then Rotate 10 degrees and Bring it to Front as you did in step 6. The fifth group you just have to Bring it to Front like step 7. Continue with the remaining groups and the center of your flower should look like in the next image.



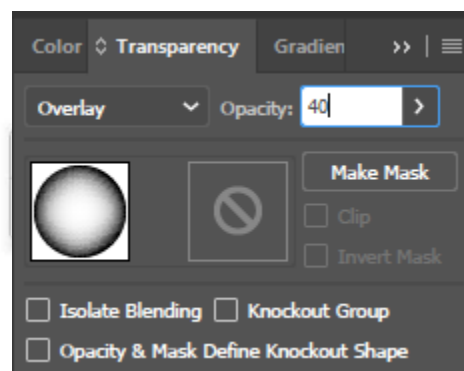
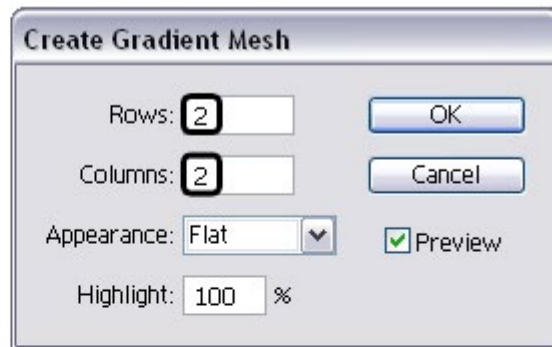
Step 9

Move the entire group in the center of the flower and scale it about the size of the brown circle.



Step 10

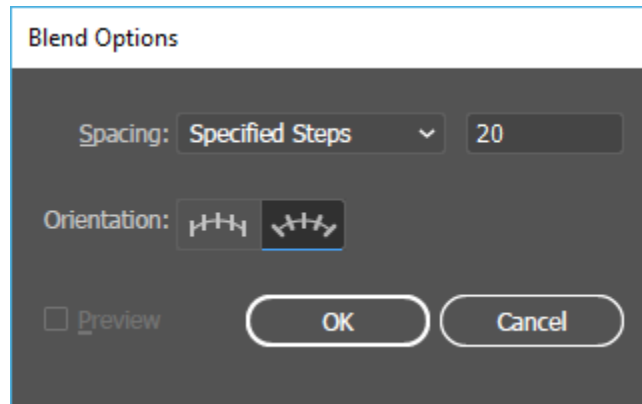
Use the Ellipse Tool (L) to draw a circle, about 26 x 26 px, above the stamens. Select black as the fill color. Then go to Object > Create Gradient Mesh, choose 2 Rows and 2 Columns and hit OK. Using the Direct Selection Tool (A)select only the mesh point from the center and replace the black fill color with white. Set this circle to Blending Mode Overlay and 40-50% Opacity.



5. Add Details on the Flower

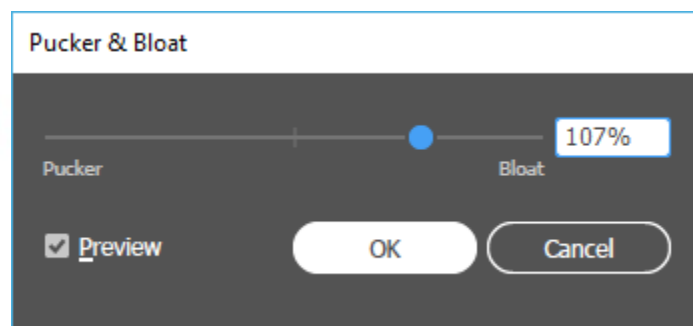
Step 1

Draw two circles with the Ellipse Tool (L) (45 x 45px and 9 x 9px). Fill both circles with black but set the bigger circle to 0% Opacity. Make sure to move the smaller circle to the middle of the bigger circle. Select both, go to Object > Blend > Blend Options change the settings as seen below and then hit OK. Go back to Object > Blend > Make (Alt-Control-B). *Make a copy of the blend group and set aside.* Center the blend group over the stamens and the re-layer blend group behind the stamens but in front of the petals.

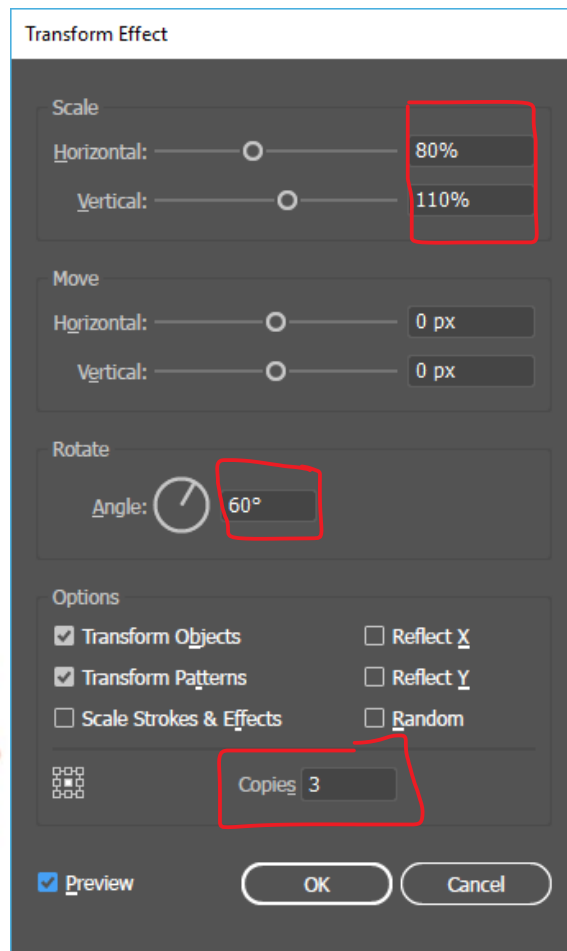


Step 2

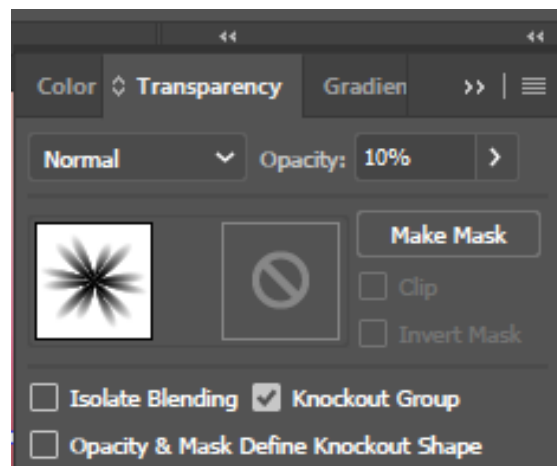
Select the blend group then go to Effect > Distort & Transform and apply a 107% Pucker & Bloat effect.



Don't release the group yet and go back to Effect > Distort & Transform to apply the Transform effects listed below.

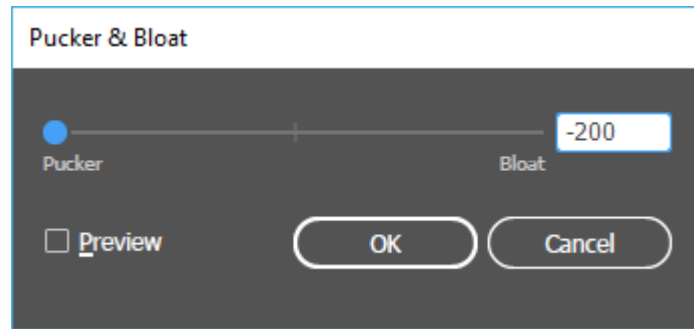


Lower the Opacity of the blend group to 10-20%.

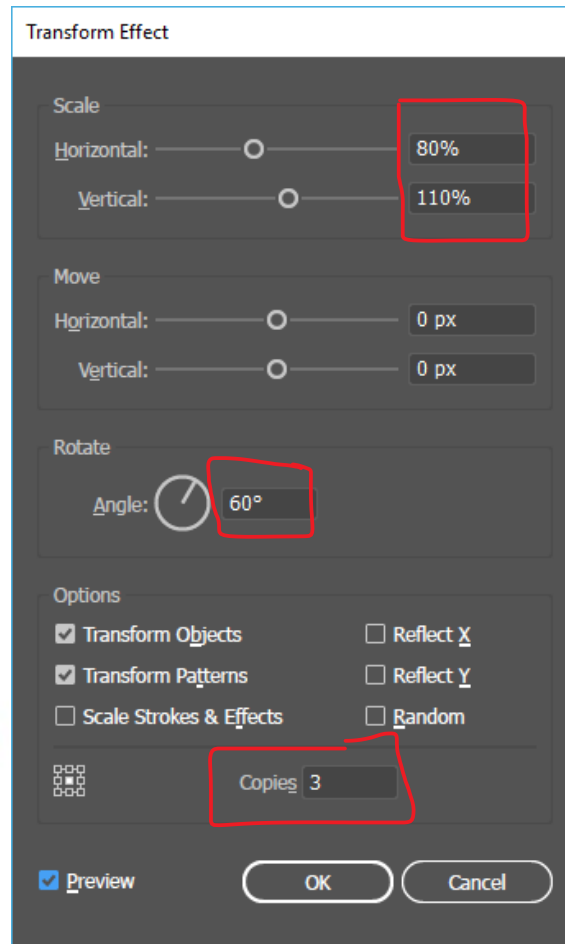


Step 3

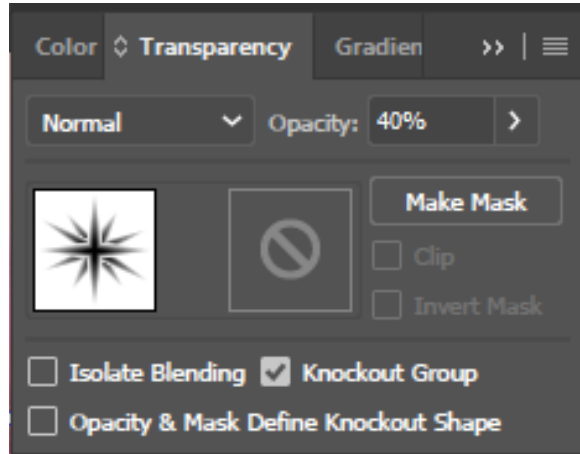
Select one of the blend group copies, center it Center the blend group over the stamens and the re-layer blend group behind the stamens but in front of the petals. Go to Effect > Distort & Transform and apply a -200% Pucker & Bloat effect.



Don't release the group yet and go back to Effect > Distort & Transform to apply the Transform effects listed below.



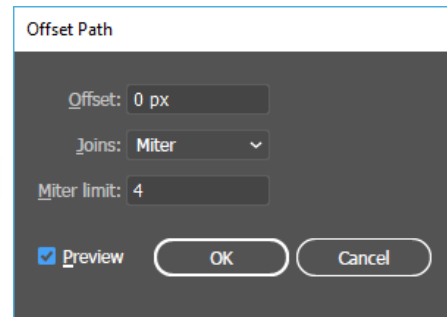
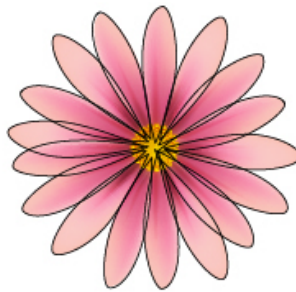
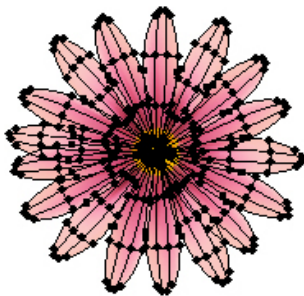
Lower the Opacity of the blend group to 40-50%.



6. Add Shadow Behind the Flower

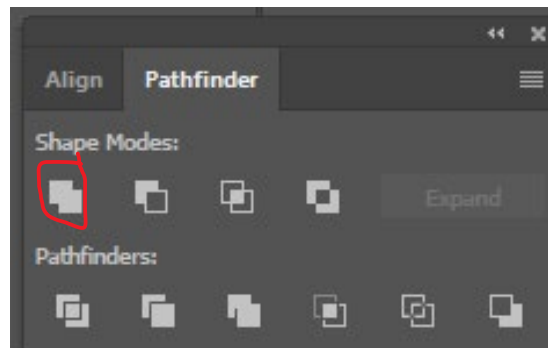
Step 1

Select all the petals then go to Object > Path > Offset Path and apply a 0px Offset. As a result, you will get the shapes of the petals but without the mesh points and lines.

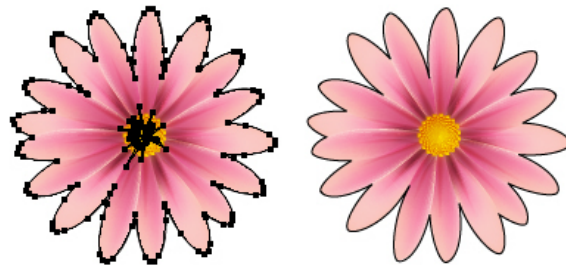


Step 2

Select all the petal shapes obtained at the previous step, open the Pathfinder panel. Click on the Unit icon.

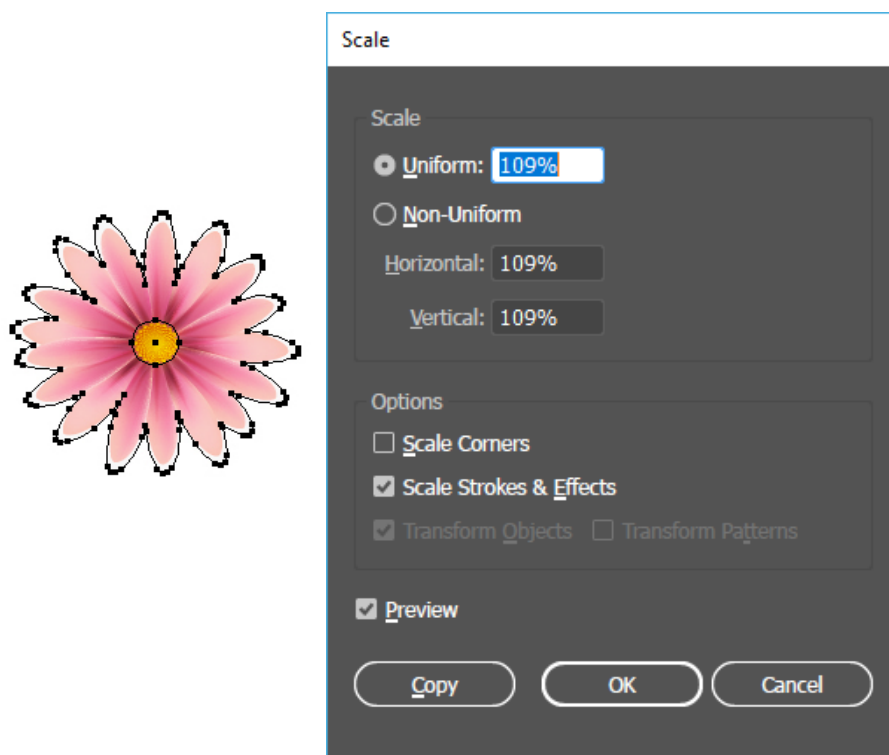


Go to Object > Compound Path > Release. Delete the small shapes in the center. You only need the outline and name the layer "flower-shape".

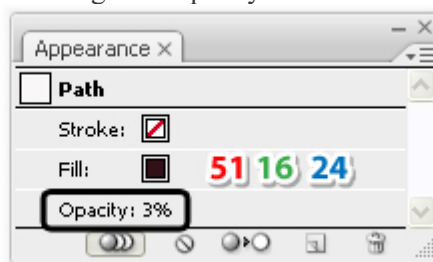


Step 3

Before you continue, make a copy of the "flower-shape" because you will need it later for a mask. Select original shape go to Object > Transform > Scale, type 109% in the Scale field and hit OK.

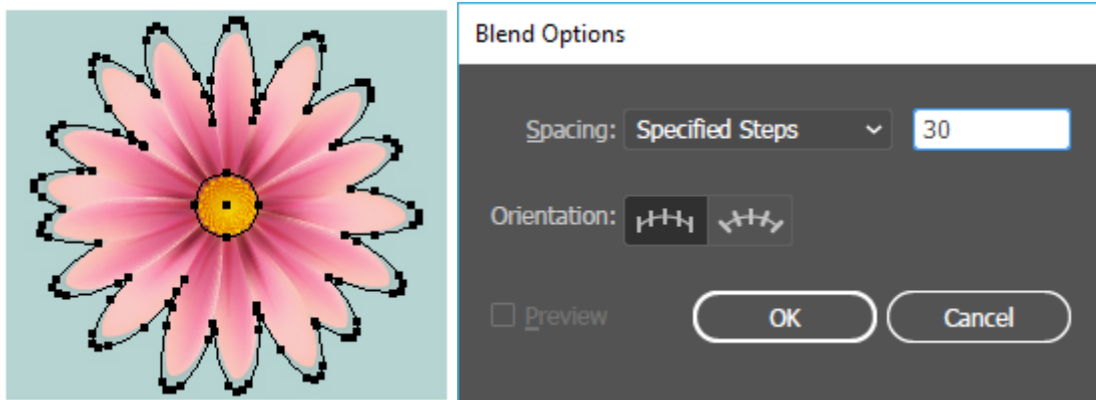


Next, with the Ellipse Tool (L) draw a circle about the size of the stamens. Fill the circle and "flower-shape with the color indicated below. Select the "flower-shape" and change the Opacity to 3%.

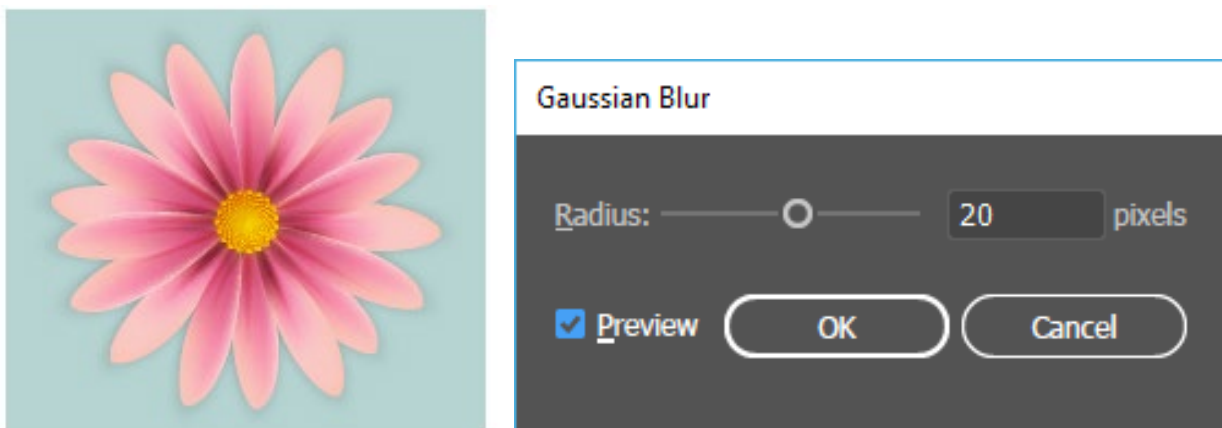


Step 4

Select the "flower-shape" and the circle then go to Object > Blend > Blend Options, choose 30 Specified Steps and hit OK. Go back to Object > Blend > Make (Alt-Control-B). Send the resulting blend group behind everything by going to Object > Arrange > Send to Back (Shift-Control-[]).



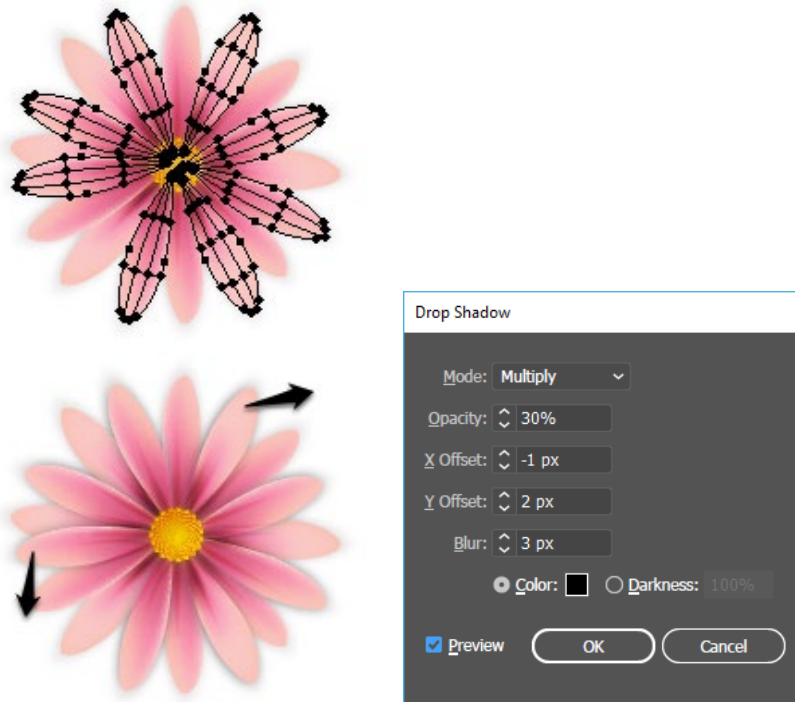
With the blend group you just created, apply a 2px Gaussian Blur (Effect > Blur > Gaussian Blur).



7. Add Shadows between the Petals

Step 1

Select the third layer of petals (step 3.5). Go to **Effect > Stylize** and apply the **Drop Shadow** effect.



Step 2

Take the copy of the "flower-shape" and move it in front of the petals with the help of the Layers panel. Now, select this shape (fill-none, stroke-none) and the group of petals and go to **Object > Clipping Mask > Make (Control-7)**.



Step 3

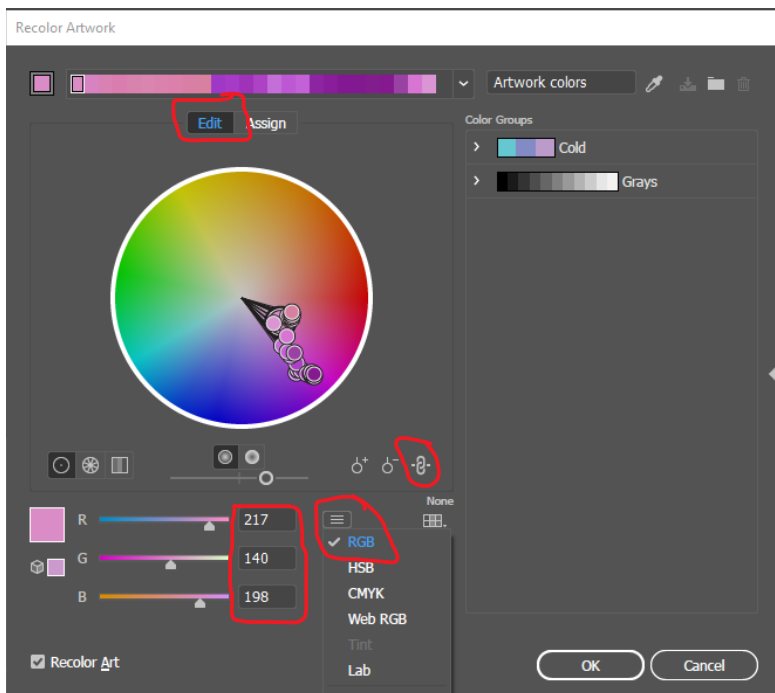
At this point the pink flower is ready and should look like in the next image:



8. Try Different Colors

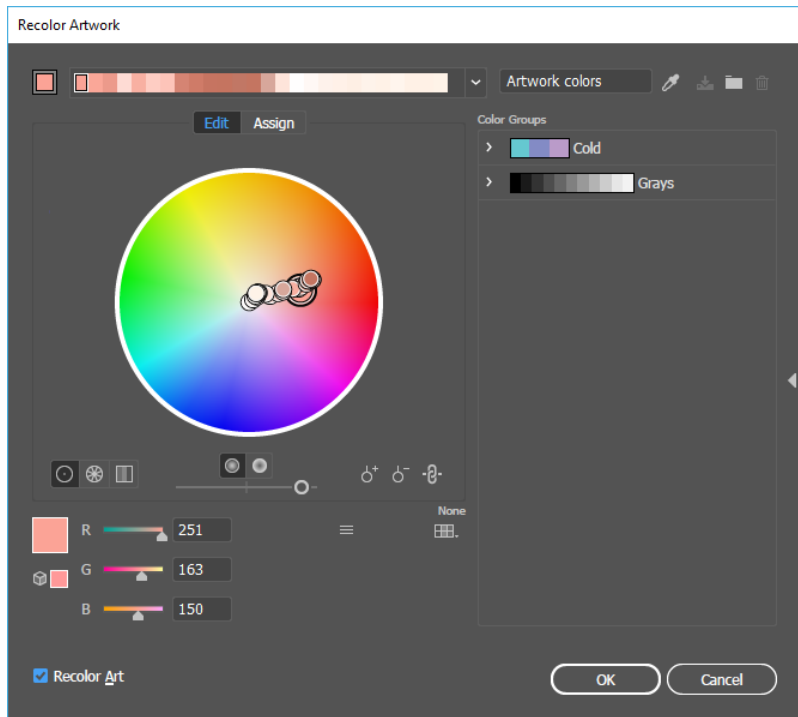
Step 1

Make a copy of the pink flower, then go to the Layer panel and select only the group of petals without the mask. Now, go to Edit > Edit Colors > Recolor Artwork, press the Edit tab, press the Link harmony colors option and select RGB mode. Type in the shade of purple indicated and hit OK.



Step 2

Make another copy of the *pink* flower then select only the group of petals and go to Edit > Edit Colors > Recolor Artwork. This time use the color indicated and you'll get a coral-colored flower.



Step 3

The same thing goes for the orange flower.

