

INTRODUCTION TO GRAPHICS

Gradients of the Conforming Kind

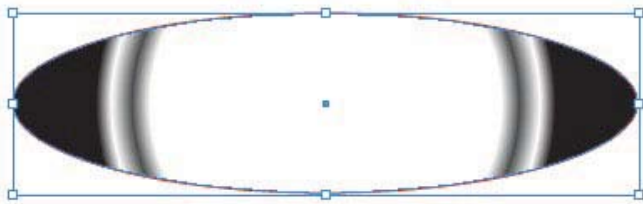
Information Sheet No.

IL792

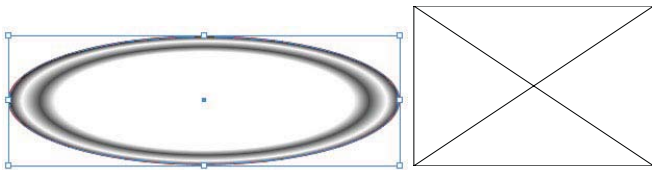
In Illustrator CS2, standard radial gradient fills won't automatically follow the edges of an object. They'll generally be circular and clipped by the bounding box of the object, rather than conformed to the object itself. However, with oval-shaped objects, there's a little trick to get the gradient to follow the edges of the object, rather than appearing completely circular and clipped by the bounding box.

Conforming the gradient to the oval

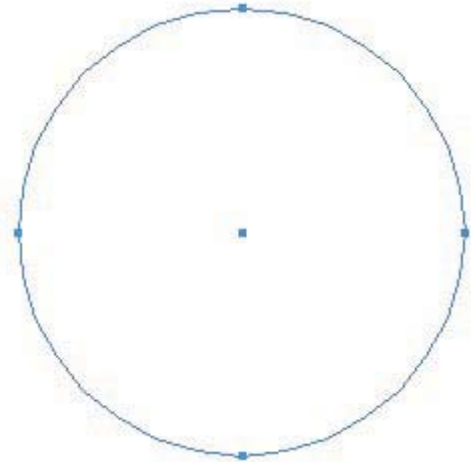
To illustrate the problem, here's an example of an oval created with the Ellipse tool. It's had a radial gradient applied to it, and the result is clipping along the top and bottom.



So now let's walk through the process of creating this oval with a radial gradient that actually conforms to the edges, like this.

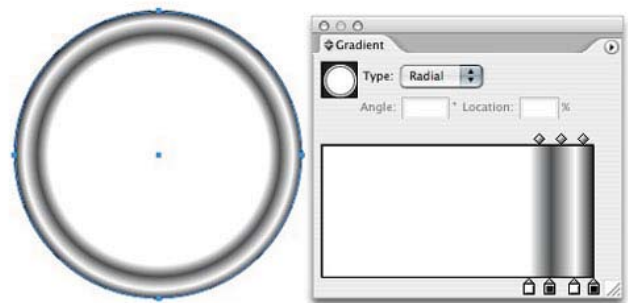


1. Begin by creating a perfect circle. This is the key to the whole thing. You create a perfect circle by clicking on the Ellipse tool, then holding down the Shift key while dragging on the canvas.



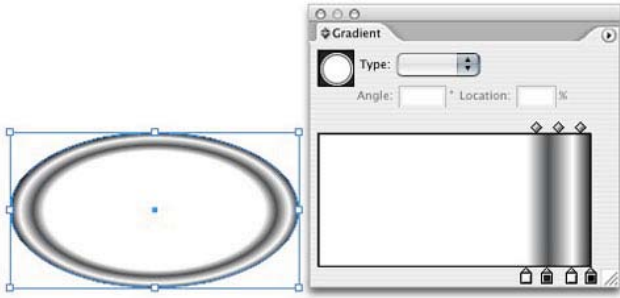
2. Now apply a gradient to the fill of the object. You can do this by clicking on a gradient swatch in the Swatches palette or by creating your own manually in the Gradient palette. Make sure the Type is set to "Radial" in the Gradient palette.

Here's the gradient, applied to my circle.



3. Now all you have to do is transform the circle into an oval. To do that, switch to the Selection tool (the black arrow) and click and drag on a handle on your circle's bounding box. Stretch or contract your circle until it's the shape you want.

Voila!



Realigning the center of the gradient

One more thing you can do to this to add a little style to your gradients is adjust the center point. This is a really simple process, and I add it in here just for your edification in case you were unaware of it. To realign the center point, click on the Gradient tool in the Tool palette. Then click with that tool somewhere around your object. Wherever you click (within the object's bounding box) becomes the center point of the gradient for whichever object you currently have selected.

