

# PROGRESSIVE TICKMARKS

Workaround For Logarithmic Blend

The need is to create a set of progressively spaced tick marks, like those commonly seen around an analog dial gauge.

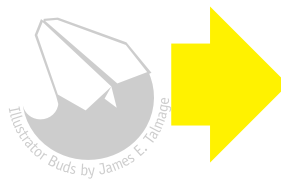
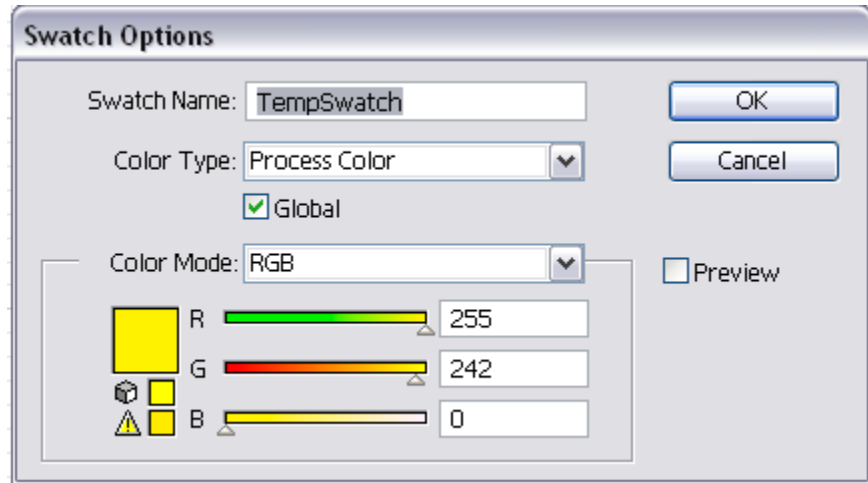
Unfortunately, Illustrator lacks a progressive Blend feature.

The Polar Grid tool should serve this need handily, but doesn't, because it doesn't have a way to set the overall sweep range, and the numeric value fields for Skew require much tedious trial and error.

Therefore, we will use a workaround involving a Blend, the Distribute Spacing feature, and a Brush.

Before starting:

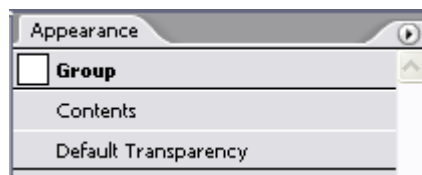
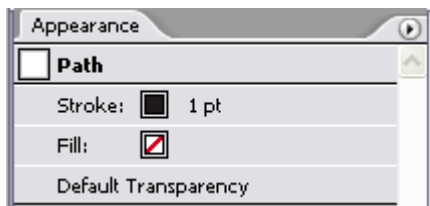
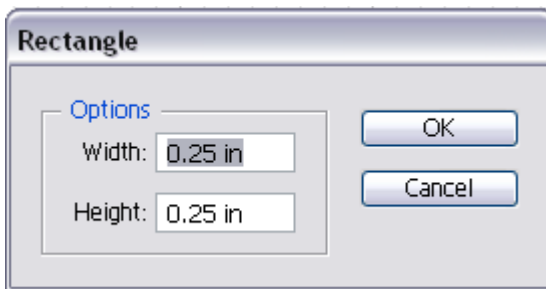
Create a new Global color Swatch and name it "TempSwatch."



# PROGRESSIVE TICKMARKS

Workaround For Logarithmic Blend

1. Rectangle Tool:  
Click to create a new rectangle. Enter the desired height of the tickmarks in both the height and width fields.
2. DirectSelect the left segment of the rectangle.
3. Copy.  
Paste In Front.
4. Apply the color desired for the tickmarks to the stroke of the pasted path. Set the desired stroke weight. Set its fill to none.
5. Select both the rectangle and the line and Group them.



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Workaround For Logarithmic Blend

6.

Copy.



Paste In Front.  
ShiftDrag the pasted copy toward the right.

7.

Object>Blend>Make.

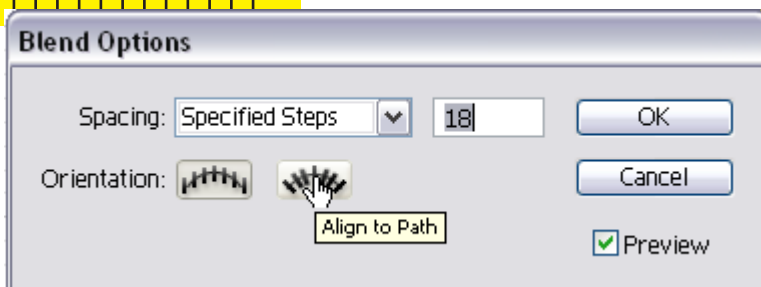


8.

Object>Blend>  
Blend Options.  
Select Specified  
Steps. Enter the  
desired number of  
tickmarks, minus 2.



Click the  
Align To Path  
icon.



9.

Black pointer:

DoubleClick the Blend  
to put it in Group  
Isolation Mode.

Click the rightmost  
Group and ShiftDrag it  
straight toward the  
right, far enough to  
remove any overlap  
between the  
intermediate steps of  
the Blend.

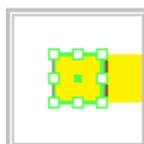


# PROGRESSIVE TICKMARKS

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10.

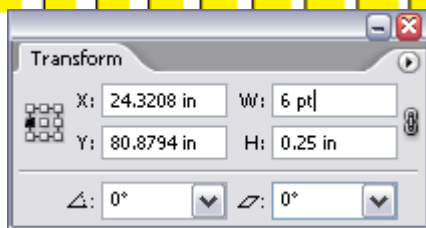
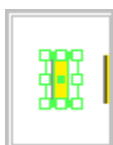
Black pointer:  
DoubleClick the leftmost square in the Blend to put it in Group Isolation Mode. Click the square again to select it.



11.

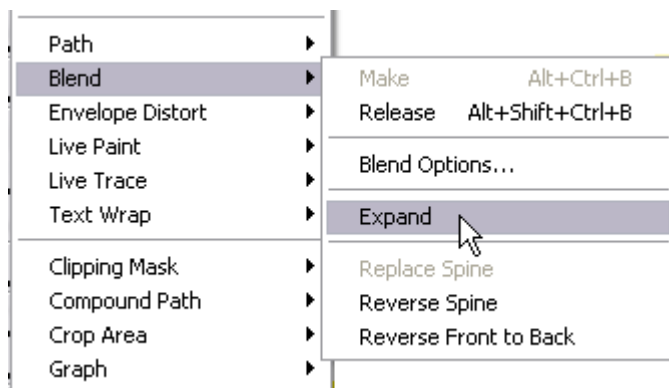
Transform Palette:  
Set the transform origin to middle left.

Turn off the proportional chain link. In the Width field, enter the distance you want between the first and second tickmark. Press Enter.



12.

DoubleClick outside the Blend to deselect it. Then select the whole Blend. Object>Blend>Expand.



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13.

Marquee select the resulting whole Group.  
Ungroup.  
Each rectangle/line pair is now a separate Group.

14.

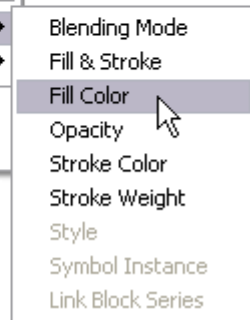
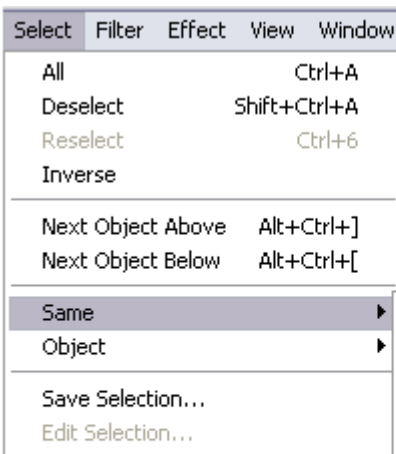
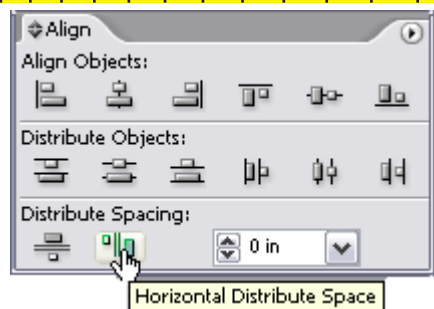
Black pointer:  
Click once on the rightmost Group. This sets it as the anchor object for the Align operation.

15.

Align Palette:  
If the Distribute Spacing portion of the palette is not showing, select Show Options from the flyout menu. Enter zero in the Spacing field. Click the Horizontal Distribute Space icon.  
The Groups should now abut each other horizontally.

16.

White Pointer:  
DirectSelect one of the rectangles.  
Select>Same> Fill Color.  
Delete.

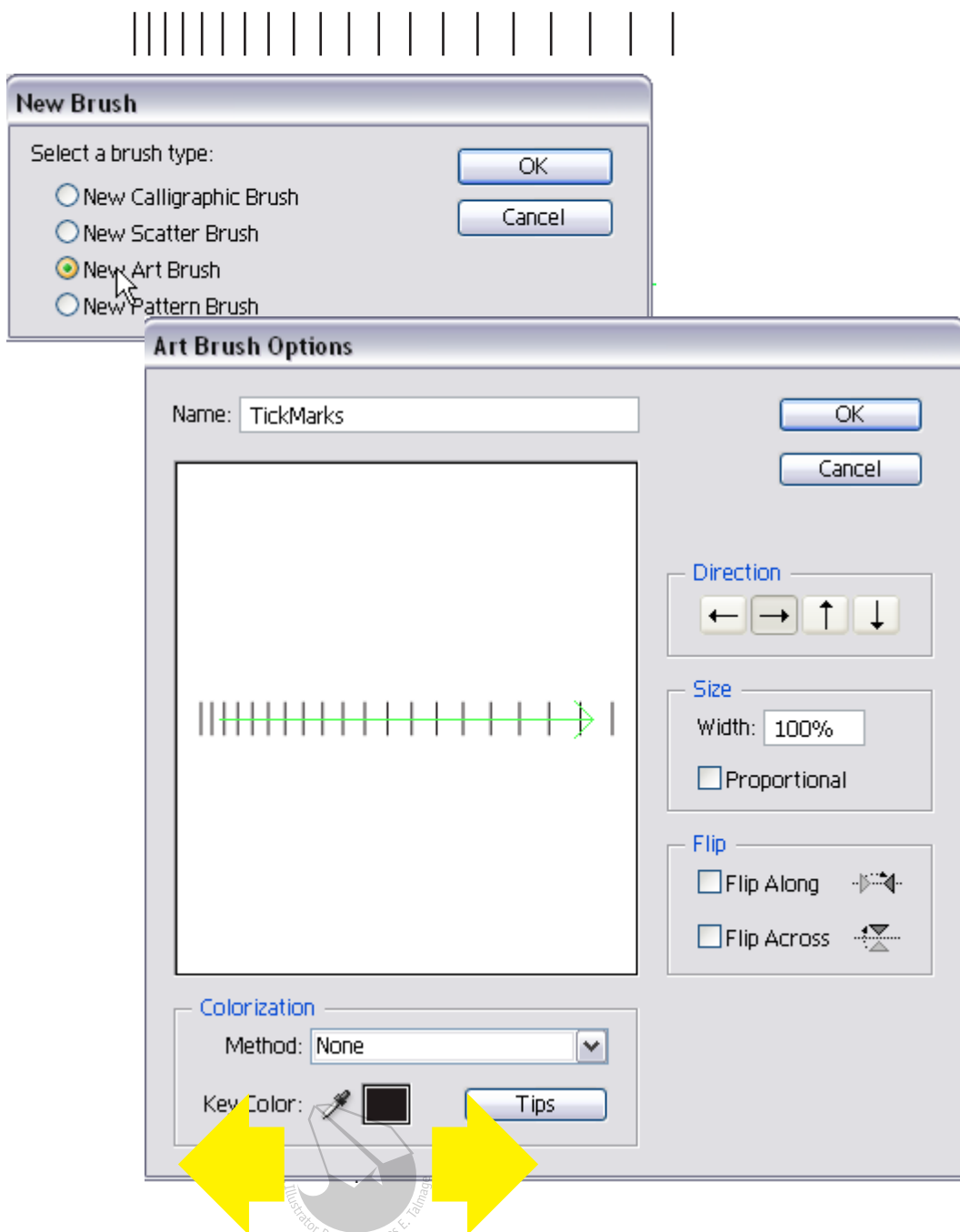


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17.

Marquee select the remaining lines. Brushes Palette: Click the New Brush icon at the bottom of the palette. Select New Art Brush. Name the Brush and make sure the direction arrow is pointing toward the right.



# PROGRESSIVE TICKMARKS

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18.

Ellipse Tool:  
Click (don't drag).  
In the Ellipse dialog,  
enter the desired  
diameter for the dial  
scale in both fields.

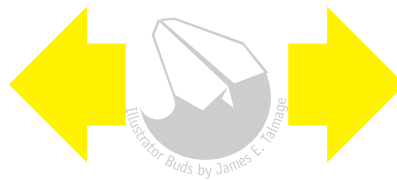
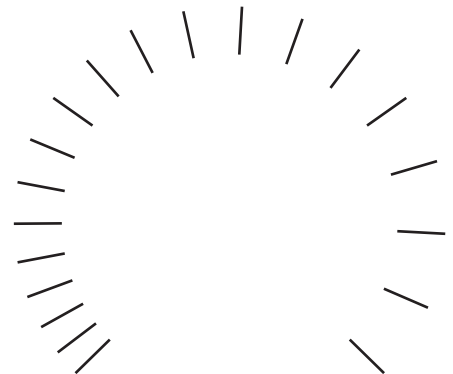
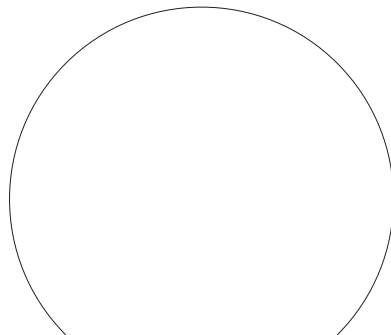
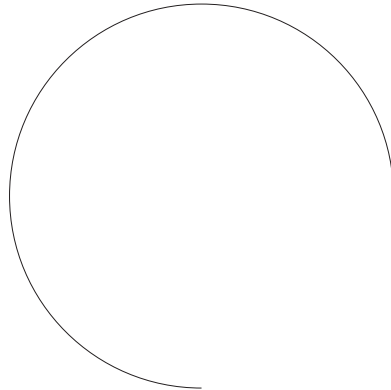
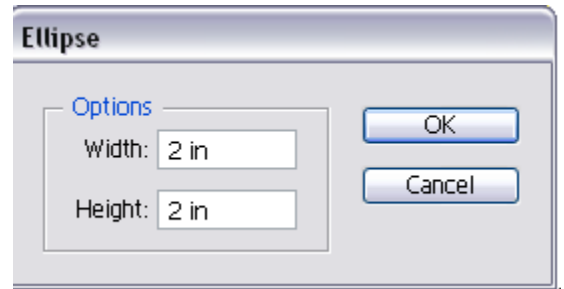
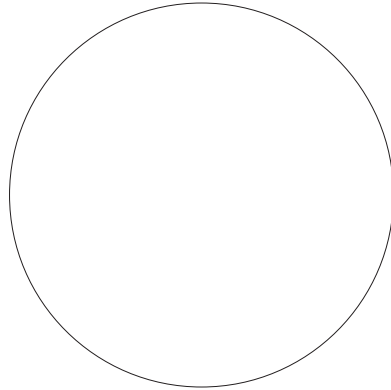
19.

Cut away the  
unwanted portion of  
the circle.

In this example,  
directSelecting and  
deleting one segment  
removes  $90^\circ$  of the  
circle, leaving  $270^\circ$   
for the needle sweep  
of the dial. Rotating  
the path  $-45^\circ$  orients  
it properly.

20.

Brushes Palette:  
Click the Brush you  
created to apply it to  
the path.



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Of course, the same principle works for objects other than tickmarks, and can be applied to spine paths of any shape.

