

Extracted from:

Web Design for Developers

A Programmer's Guide to Design Tools and Techniques

This PDF file contains pages extracted from Web Design for Developers, published by the Pragmatic Bookshelf. For more information or to purchase a paperback or PDF copy, please visit <http://www.pragprog.com>.

Note: This extract contains some colored text (particularly in code listing). This is available only in online versions of the books. The printed versions are black and white. Pagination might vary between the online and printer versions; the content is otherwise identical.

Copyright © 2009 The Pragmatic Programmers, LLC.

All rights reserved.

No part of this publication may be reproduced, stored in a retrieval system, or transmitted, in any form, or by any means, electronic, mechanical, photocopying, recording, or otherwise, without the prior consent of the publisher.

The
Pragmatic
Programmers

Web Design for Developers

A Programmer's Guide to
Design Tools and Techniques

Brian P. Hogan

Edited by Daniel H. Steinberg



Many of the designations used by manufacturers and sellers to distinguish their products are claimed as trademarks. Where those designations appear in this book, and The Pragmatic Programmers, LLC was aware of a trademark claim, the designations have been printed in initial capital letters or in all capitals. The Pragmatic Starter Kit, The Pragmatic Programmer, Pragmatic Programming, Pragmatic Bookshelf and the linking *g* device are trademarks of The Pragmatic Programmers, LLC.

Every precaution was taken in the preparation of this book. However, the publisher assumes no responsibility for errors or omissions, or for damages that may result from the use of information (including program listings) contained herein.

Our Pragmatic courses, workshops, and other products can help you and your team create better software and have more fun. For more information, as well as the latest Pragmatic titles, please visit us at

<http://www.pragprog.com>

Copyright © 2009 Brian P. Hogan.

All rights reserved.

No part of this publication may be reproduced, stored in a retrieval system, or transmitted, in any form, or by any means, electronic, mechanical, photocopying, recording, or otherwise, without the prior consent of the publisher.

Printed in Canada.

ISBN-10: 1-934356-13-1

ISBN-13: 978-1-9343561-3-5

Printed on acid-free paper.

P1.0 printing, December 2009

Version: 2009-12-21

Designing the Foodbox Logo

Your original sketches included a logo for Foodbox. You will often have an existing logo that you need to re-create or tweak. Your client might also have contracted with a third party to create a logo that you will need to incorporate into the site. In the case of Foodbox, it is up to you to create the logo from existing artwork because the original site doesn't use the logo, and there's just no suitable digital version available. As a guide, you can use the sketch in Figure 2.4, on page 32.

5.1 Setting Up a Working Folder

It pays to be organized in your projects. If you've ever used Ruby on Rails, you know that a major advantage of that framework is its standard directory structure. Unfortunately, there's no such standard available to us, but most web designers have their own way of keeping track of things. For this project, we'll use a simple directory structure with places for our style sheets and our images.

Create a new folder called Foodbox. Within that folder, create three additional folders: images, stylesheets, and originals.

The originals folder will hold all your work files, such as your Illustrator and Photoshop documents, as well as any stock or other photography given to you by a client. The images folder will hold the images that you'll use directly in the web page you create. The stylesheets folder will hold the CSS styles you will create once you build the site.



Joe Asks...

Must I Have Adobe Illustrator?

Of course not. On the other hand, Illustrator is a great tool to learn if you're looking at doing design work. It's used by print and web designers all over the world, so learning a little about it can only help you. Adobe makes 30-day trial versions available on its website, which should be more than enough to get you through this chapter. If you want an alternative to Illustrator, I recommend Inkscape.* The exercises in this chapter use Illustrator; if you use a different vector-graphics tool, you'll have to translate the steps described to that environment.

*. <http://www.inkscape.org/>

5.2 The Foodbox Logo

When you're doing logo work, it's important to use a tool that supports vector-based graphics. That way, you can scale your logo to any size and use it not only on a website but in print media as well. The industry standard for this is Adobe Illustrator, and we'll use that program to re-create this logo.

The Foodbox logo consists of four squares and the word *Foodbox*. The finished logo should look like Figure 5.1, on the following page. You can re-create this logo in only a few steps.

Open Illustrator, and create a new document. Dimensions don't really matter here because we'll scale it later, when we integrate it with our Photoshop document. We'll use Illustrator only to create a logo here, so I won't go into great detail about how everything works. However, I urge you to investigate Illustrator further if you plan on doing more graphics work, because it's a wonderful tool.

Let's start with the four boxes. We need to draw a two-by-two array of boxes with rounded corners. We can do this in a handful of steps by drawing one box using specific dimensions and then using Illustrator to replicate that box for us:

1. Select the Rounded Rectangle tool from Illustrator's tool palette by clicking and holding the Rectangle tool. This will make the other



Figure 5.1: Our finished logo

shape choices fly out from the menu. Then choose the rounded rectangle.

2. On the Options toolbar, change the fill to #FCEE21, a yellow color, and choose black for the stroke.
3. Now, double-click the canvas. A dialog box appears, asking you to enter the dimensions of the square. Enter 100pt for both the height and the width. Use 12pt for the corner radius, and click OK. You've just drawn a single square by defining its exact dimensions.
4. Now, double-click the Selection tool on the tool palette. This opens the Move or Copy dialog box.
5. We want to copy the box, and we want to ensure that we have a nice, even space between the two boxes after the copy. The box we just made is 100 points wide. Enter 110 in the horizontal box, and click Copy. This creates a copy of the box 110 points away from



Joe Asks...

Whoa! Where Did These Colors Come From?

I used variations of the colors in our Color palette. I adjusted the saturation slightly to make the colors in the squares show up better, and I did some test prints to make sure that the logo looked similar when printed.

the start of the first box, which means we now have two boxes placed 10 points apart.

6. We'll use that same Copy command to create the other two boxes, this time adjusting vertically rather than horizontally. Select both boxes by drawing a box around them with the Selection tool, and then double-click the Selection tool to open the Move or Copy dialog box again. This time, set the horizontal value to 0 and the vertical value to 110. Click Copy, and you have your four squares, evenly spaced.

Next, we need to apply a colored fill to each box:

1. Press **F6** to display the Color palette.
2. Select each square with the Direct Selection tool, and then double-click the color-fill square on the Color palette to choose the color.
3. Clockwise from the top left, the box colors should be yellow (#FCEE21), green (#C2EE21), orange (#FCBA21), and beige (#FCEEB5).

Now it's time to add some text. To make the logo look balanced, we want to make sure that the word *Foodbox* is as tall as our boxes. To do this, we'll use *guides*.

Most drawing tools provide guides that you can place on your composition to help you align items or help you define where items in your composition should be placed. The concept of guidelines is nothing new to anyone who's done design work before. We'll use guides to align our text quickly and easily:

1. Ensure that the rulers are showing by pressing **Ctrl+R**.

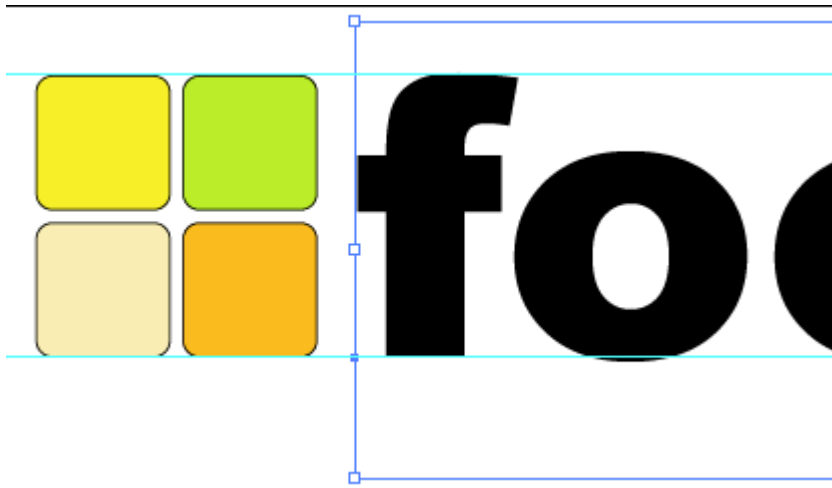


Figure 5.2: Scaling the font

2. Create a guide that touches the top of the boxes. Place the mouse pointer anywhere on the horizontal ruler at the top of the image. To create a new guide, press and hold the mouse button, and then drag it down toward the boxes. Position the guide so it touches the top of the boxes, and then release the mouse button to place the guide.
3. Place another guide along the bottom of the boxes. You can now use these guides to place the text.

You should have two guides placed like the horizontal lines above and below the boxes, as shown in Figure 5.2.

Now we need to add the text to our logo:

- Select the Text tool.
- Use the Options panel to choose Arial Black for the font style and 72pt for the font size.
- Click the canvas, and type *foodbox*. Don't worry if you didn't place it between the guides—we're going to move it now.
- Choose the Selection tool from the tool palette. The section you just typed will now have resizing handles that you'll use to scale up text so it's the same size as the boxes. Hold down the Shift key,

Creating Outlines

Designers often use Illustrator's Create Outlines command to modify a font once it's been applied, but the command provides an additional advantage, as well.

When I am doing a design for a client, I ask if the client has a logo already. If a logo exists, I try to get a copy of it in Illustrator or EPS format so I can scale it and manipulate it for the website. Occasionally, I'll get a logo from a designer that requires a specific font that I must either find online for free or (more often) pay a lot of money to use.

The solution to this is to ask the original designer to create a copy of the logo. I take that logo, use Create Outlines on any text in the image, and then use that. This preserves the way the font looks, and it's portable across platforms and operating systems.

and drag the upper-right resizing handle on the text area until the top of the *f* in *foodbox* touches the guide you placed. Check to make sure that the bottom of the *f* also touches the guide. If it doesn't touch, keep resizing and repositioning until you get it. Don't worry about any other letters that drop below the guide; we'll get those next.

If you look carefully, you'll notice that a few of the letters drop below the guide. Let's fix that by slightly modifying the text shapes:

1. Select the text layer with the Selection tool.
2. Select Text > Create Outlines. This command turns the text object into vector shapes. You can't change the text anymore, but you can use any of Illustrator's drawing or manipulation tools on these shapes.
3. Choose the Direct Selection tool from the palette, and draw a box around the lower half of the *o*. Now press the up arrow key four or five times, until the bottom of the *o* touches the guide.
4. Do this with the rest of the letters that cross the bottom guide.

Finally, click the Select tool, and press **Ctrl**+**A** to select everything. Hold down the **Shift** key, and use the resize handles to resize the logo

so it is constrained within the *bounding box*, which is the solid black rectangle on the background of the canvas.

Save this document as `foodbox_logo.ai`, and put it in the originals folder in your project folder. We'll need to import this into our Photoshop project later, so when you save, make sure you select the option to create a PDF-compatible file. If you miss this step, Photoshop won't be able to import the file.

Keep in mind that we used a vector-based drawing tool, so we can use this logo for anything from coffee mugs to huge billboards. We can resize the logo as required, without impacting its image quality.

5.3 What if We Need to Create Our Own Logo?

In this example, we had a drawing we could follow, and we were essentially learning to use Illustrator to re-create that drawing. But what kinds of things would you need to think about if you were developing a logo for your product or business?

Think about the most successful logos today. People all over the world recognize Coca-Cola's logo. The Nike swoosh is pretty noticeable, too. However, these two logos are completely different in the way they advertise the products they represent.

It turns out that you can approach designing a logo much as you approach designing a website.

People process images faster than they process sentences or tag lines, and you want your logo to take advantage of that where you can. People look at the Coca-Cola logo, and they don't need to read the words; they immediately recognize the logo and associate it with the company's product. This is your ultimate goal with your logo—you want your logo to represent you and only you.

Instant recognition is achieved only through the logo's constant and consistent use. If you're always changing your logo, it's harder to gain that brand recognition you're looking for. A logo represents you. People remember a logo, and having an inappropriate one will sink things pretty quickly. The logo of a law office will be very different from the logo of a waterslide park.

If your logo will contain words, be sure the words are readable. Use clear typefaces that are readable at very large and very small sizes.

Keep the color choices simple and safe. Use what you learned about evoking emotion to your advantage with your logo.¹

Unlike a web page, your logo might appear often in print, so test colors on a printer from time to time to make sure that they look acceptable. When you work on the Web, use the RGB color mode. When you're designing anything that might end up being printed, you need to work in the CMYK color mode. You can save your CMYK-based images to RGB mode for use on the Web, but going the other way is extremely difficult when it comes to matching colors.

Finally, be sure to test your logo without color. For example, does it work when printed in black and white?

5.4 Summary

Vector-based tools such as Illustrator make it easy to build scalable and versatile logos. The next time you need to design a logo, try some of the techniques we explored in this chapter, such as duplication and font manipulation. Remember to be creative. In fact, feel free to play with the logo we created here. Make some variations. Use different shapes, different fonts, different sizes, or different placement, or try to apply some of the advice on logo design and create your own completely different logo for Foodbox.

Now it's time to tackle the next step of the process: building a color mock-up.

1. Also, be aware of any cultural problems with your color choices. Certain colors are offensive to certain people, so be sure you do some research.

The Pragmatic Bookshelf

The Pragmatic Bookshelf features books written by developers for developers. The titles continue the well-known Pragmatic Programmer style, and continue to garner awards and rave reviews. As development gets more and more difficult, the Pragmatic Programmers will be there with more titles and products to help you stay on top of your game.

Visit Us Online

Web Design for Developers' Home Page

<http://pragprog.com/titles/bhgwad>

Source code from this book, errata, and other resources. Come give us feedback, too!

Register for Updates

<http://pragprog.com/updates>

Be notified when updates and new books become available.

Join the Community

<http://pragprog.com/community>

Read our weblogs, join our online discussions, participate in our mailing list, interact with our wiki, and benefit from the experience of other Pragmatic Programmers.

New and Noteworthy

<http://pragprog.com/news>

Check out the latest pragmatic developments in the news.

Buy the Book

If you liked this PDF, perhaps you'd like to have a paper copy of the book. It's available for purchase at our store: pragprog.com/titles/bhgwad.

Contact Us

Phone Orders:	1-800-699-PROG (+1 919 847 3884)
Online Orders:	www.pragprog.com/catalog
Customer Service:	orders@pragprog.com
Non-English Versions:	translations@pragprog.com
Pragmatic Teaching:	academic@pragprog.com
Author Proposals:	proposals@pragprog.com