

Christmas Tree

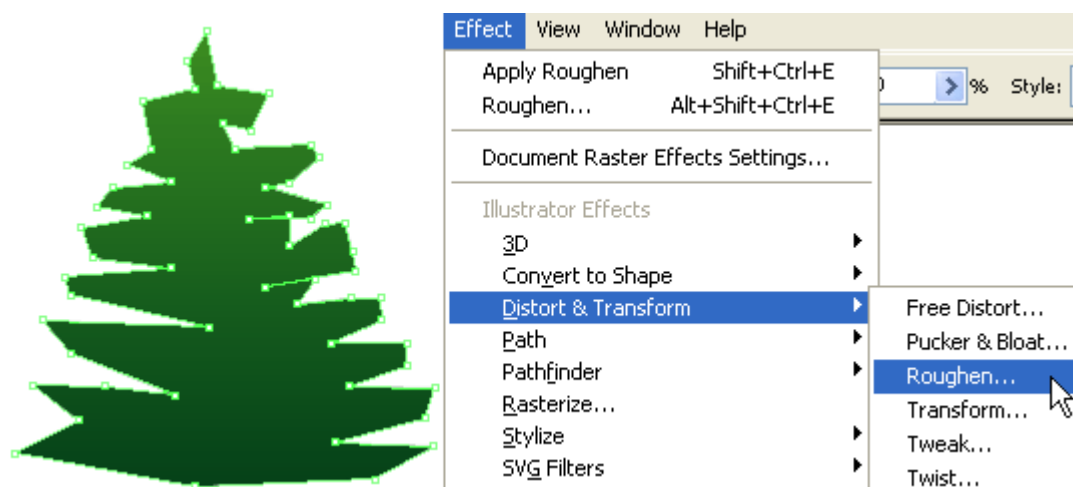
This tutorial shows you how to make a beautiful Christmas tree with Adobe Illustrator by using the Roughen effect and Art Brush.

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Required: Illustrator 9+

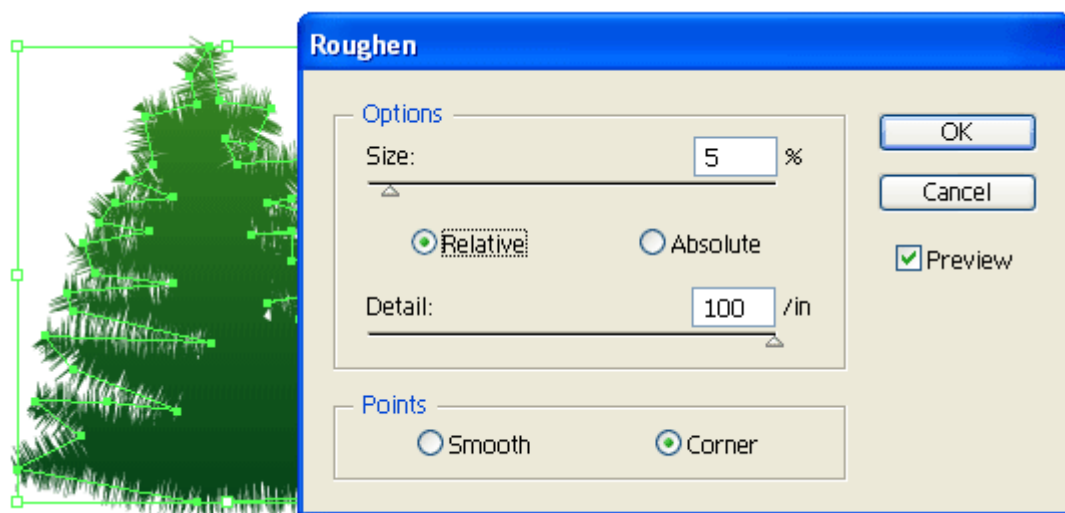
1. Create the Tree Foundation

First, roughly create the tree path with **Pen Tool** and fill it with (green-darker green) gradient. Go to **Effect > Distort & Transform > Roughen**



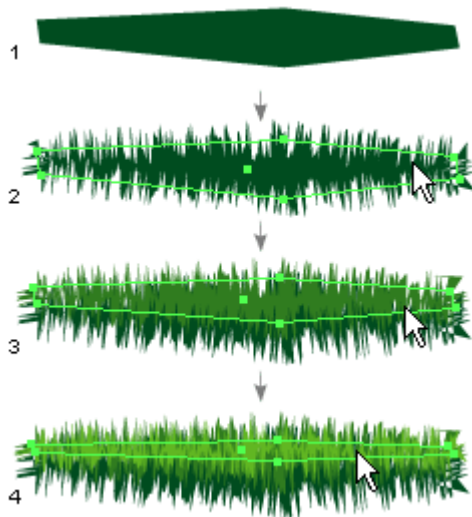
Roughen Options

When the **Roughen** options window popup, enter the following values: **Size:** 5%, **Detail:** 100/in and select **Points=Corner**, then click OK.



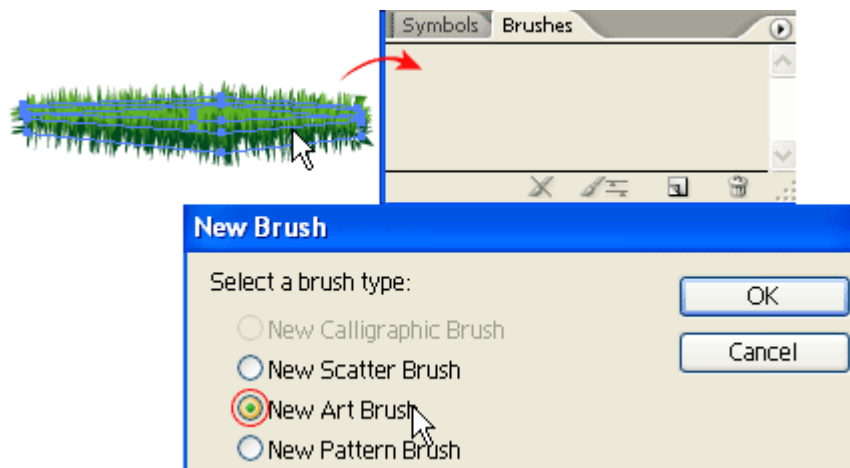
2. Create the Art Brush

Now we need to make a **New Art Brush** for the tree branches. With the **Pen Tool**, make a path as shown below(1), fill with dark green, and apply the same **Roughen** effect as the previous step. Your path now should look like path(2). Duplicate path(2) by **ALT+Drag** or Copy & Paste, vertically scale it down a bit, and change it to lighter tone of green(3). Repeat this step, duplicate one more path and fill it with a even lighter tone of green(4).



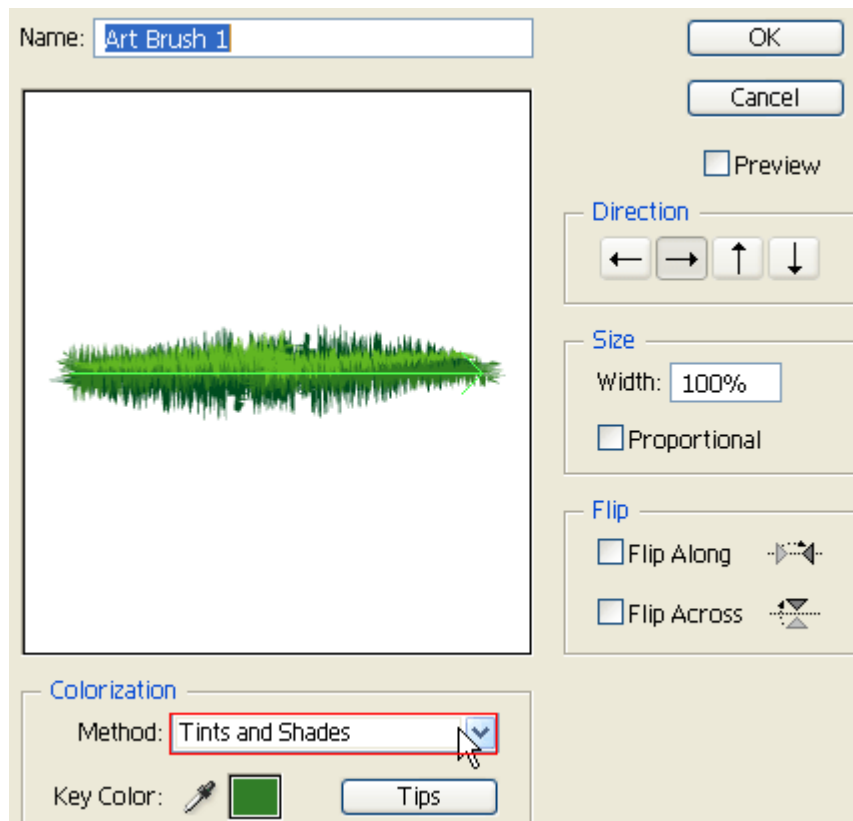
New Art Brush

Select these 3 paths and drag it to the **Brushes Library** to make a **New Art Brush**.



Art Brush Options

Leave everything as default, but select **Tints and Shades** from the **Colorization Method** drop down menu.



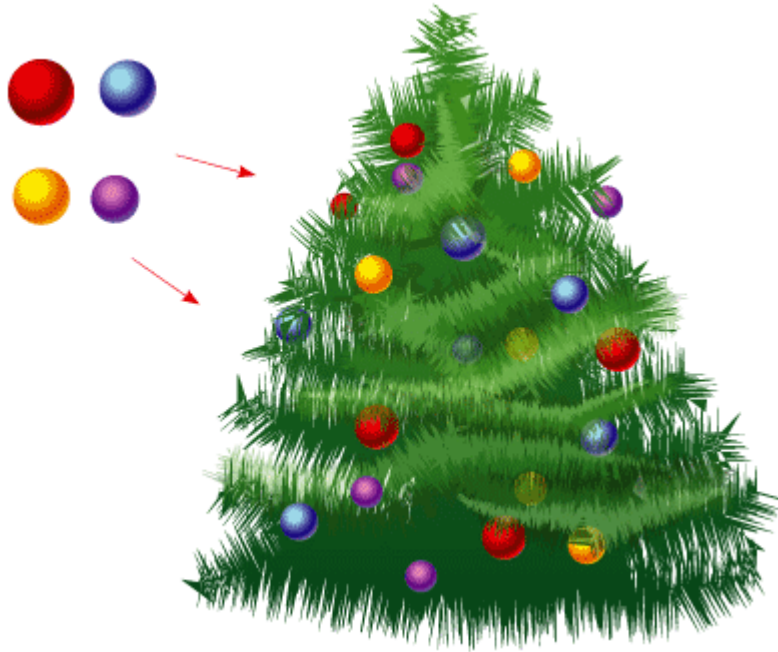
3. Tree Branches

With the **Pen Tool**, create some wavyly stroke paths and fill stroke color with green. Then apply these paths with the **Art Brush** you've created in the previous step. Adjust the **Opacity** between 40-50% so it blends with the tree. If you want bigger tree branches, apply thicker stroke weight, thinner stroke = smaller branches. Play around with the **Opacity** and **Stroke Weight** and try to make the tree looks as natural as possible.



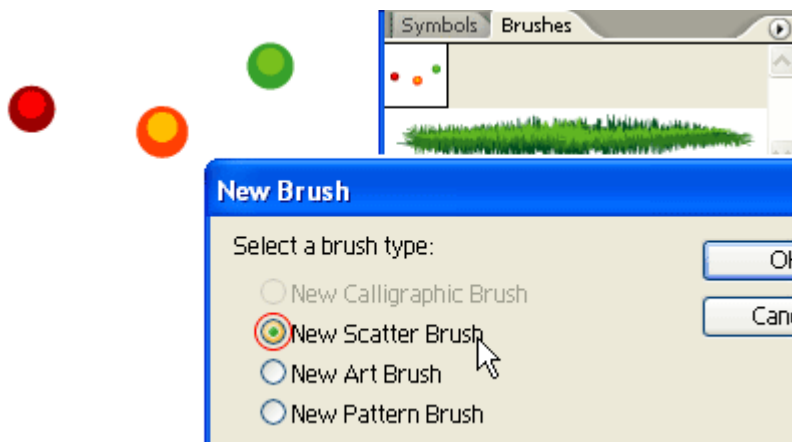
4. Christmas Balls

Create various size and gradient Christmas balls with the **Ellipse Tool**. Place some on top of the tree, send some to the back, and put some behind the branches.



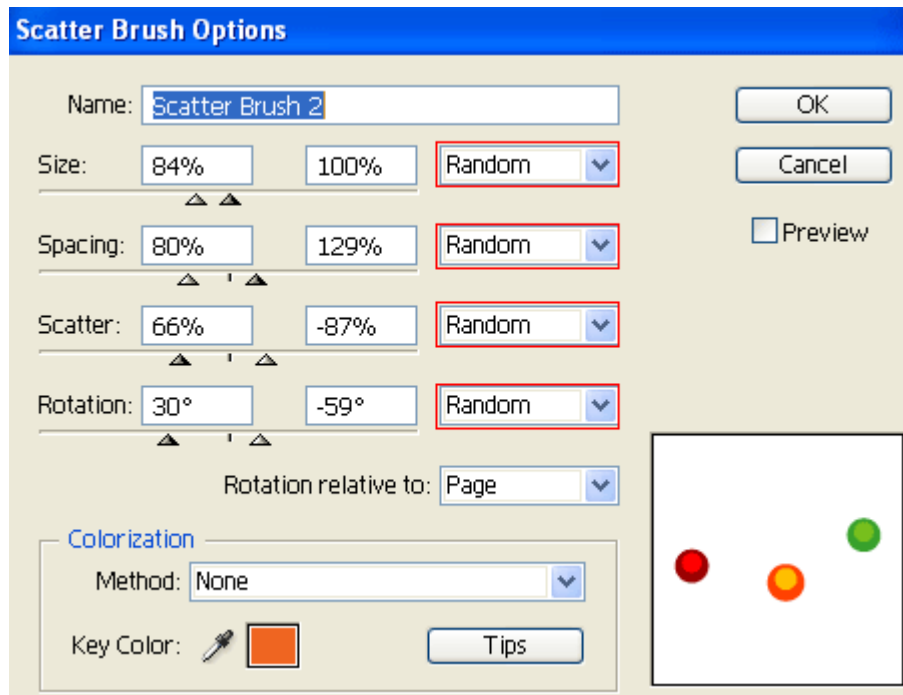
5. Light Bulbs

The tree still looks too plain, we need some more decorative lights. Create some light bulbs as shown on the left, drag it to the **Brushes Library** to make a **New Scatter Brush**.



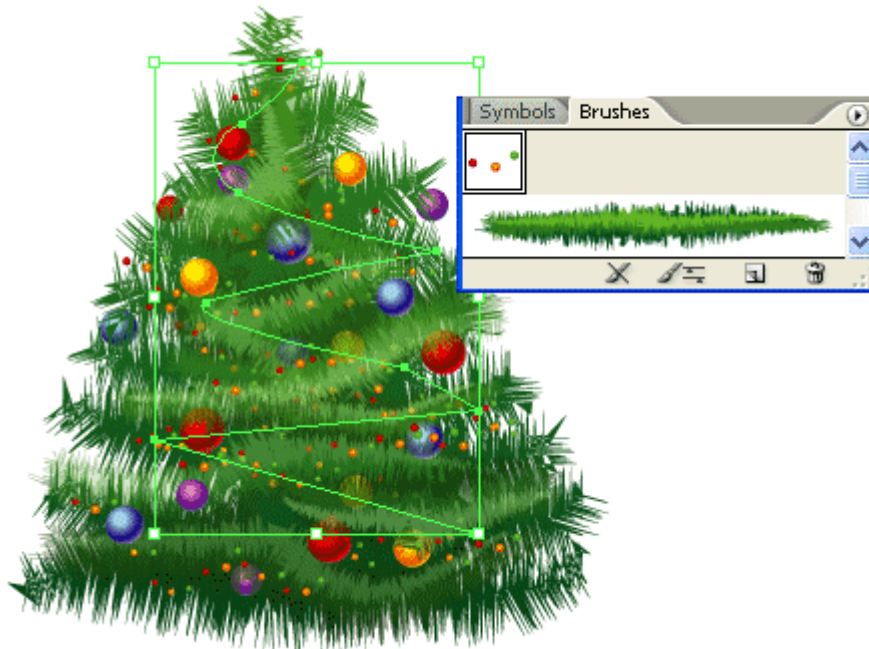
Scatter Brush Options

When the **Scatter Brush Options** window popup, select Random for all options and enter the range values as shown below.



6. Tree Lights

With the **Pen Tool**, roughly draw a zig zag path from the top to bottom, and apply the **Scatter Brush** you've created in the previous step. Notice how the light bulbs are randomly rendered base on the range values you've entered in the **Scatter Brush Options**, and you can change these setting at any time by double click on the Library object. If you want to have more lights, create another path and apply the same **Scatter Brush**.



Final

Download the [source file](#) now and see how it is done!

