

# Tutorial :

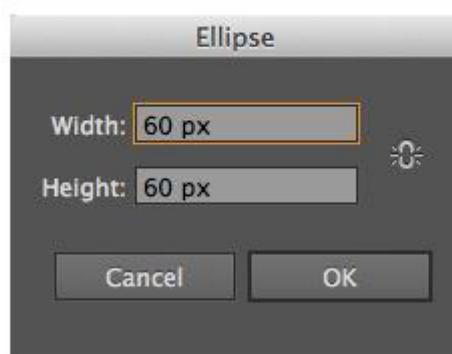
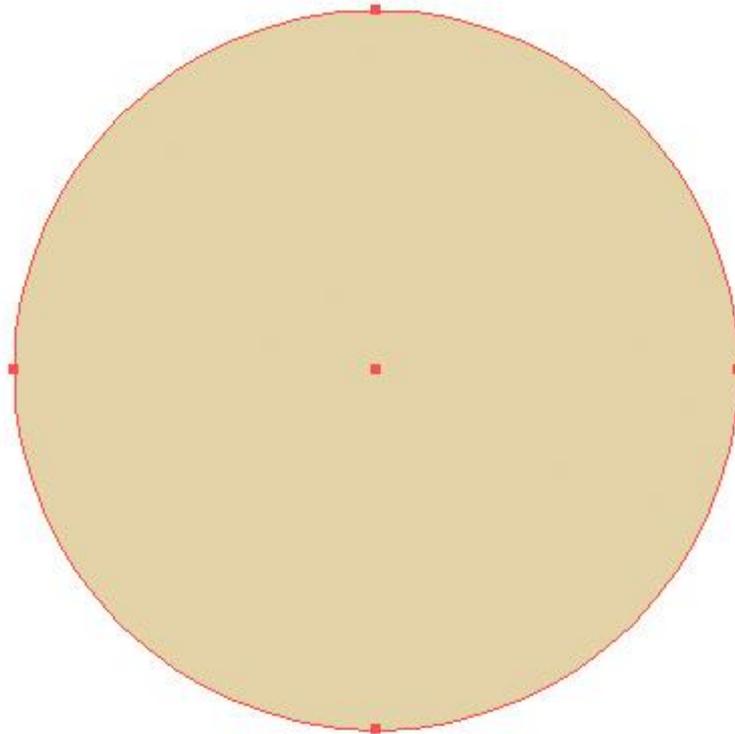
## How to Create a Set of Flat Animal Icons in Adobe Illustrator



# 1. How to Create an Elegant Siamese Cat

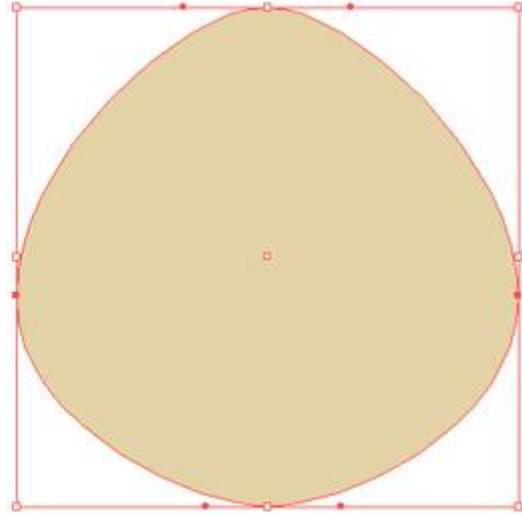
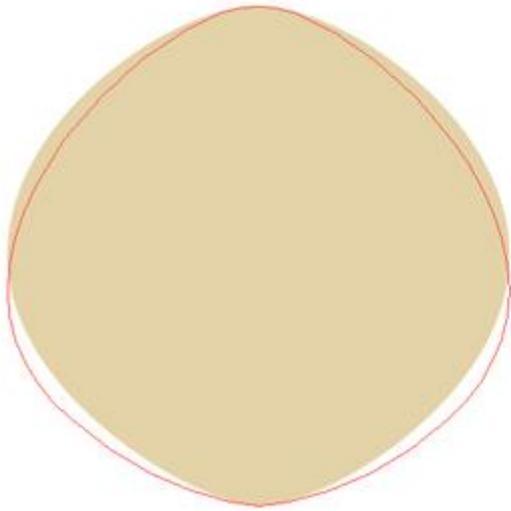
## Step 1

Start forming the cat's face from an even circle of **60 x 60 px** size, made with the **Ellipse Tool (L)**. Fill the circle with a sandy beige color.



## Step 2

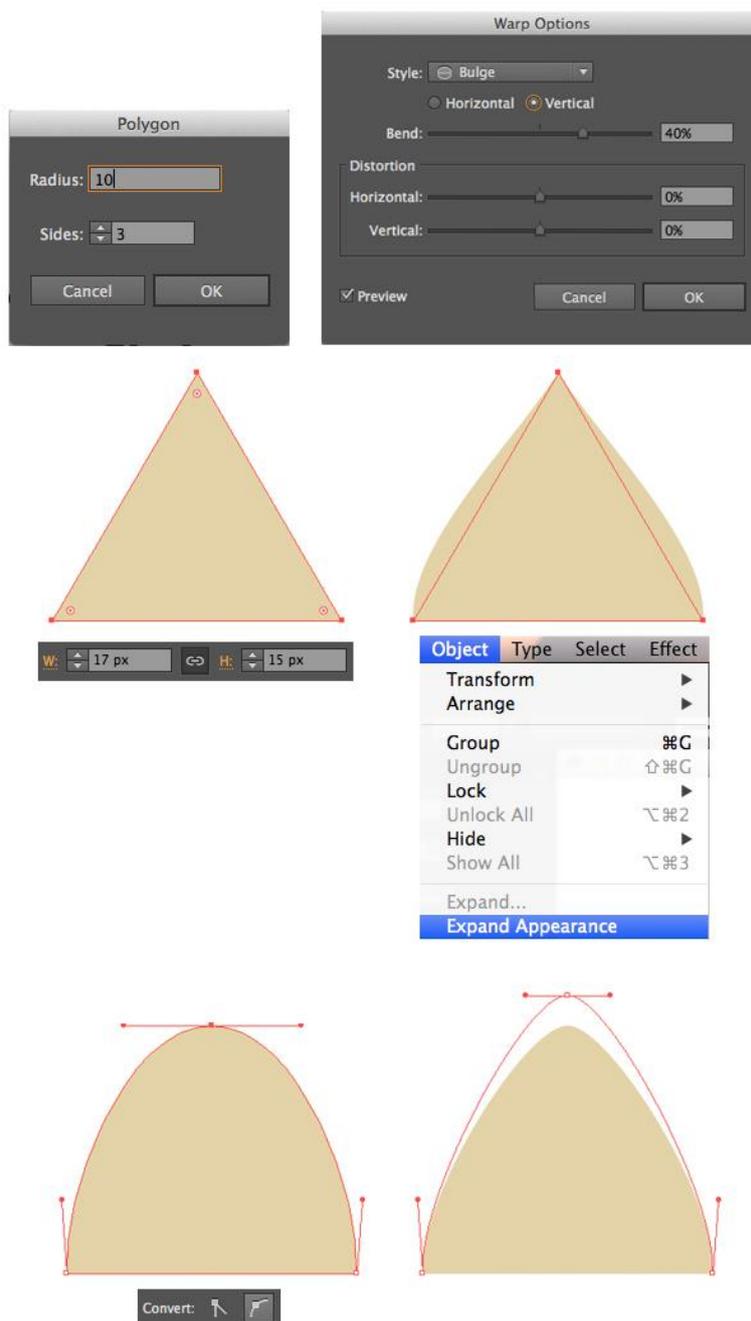
Select both side anchor points with the **Direct Selection Tool (A)** and drag them down, changing the shape of the face.



### Step 3

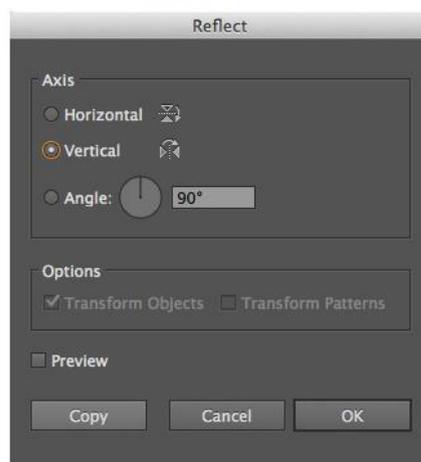
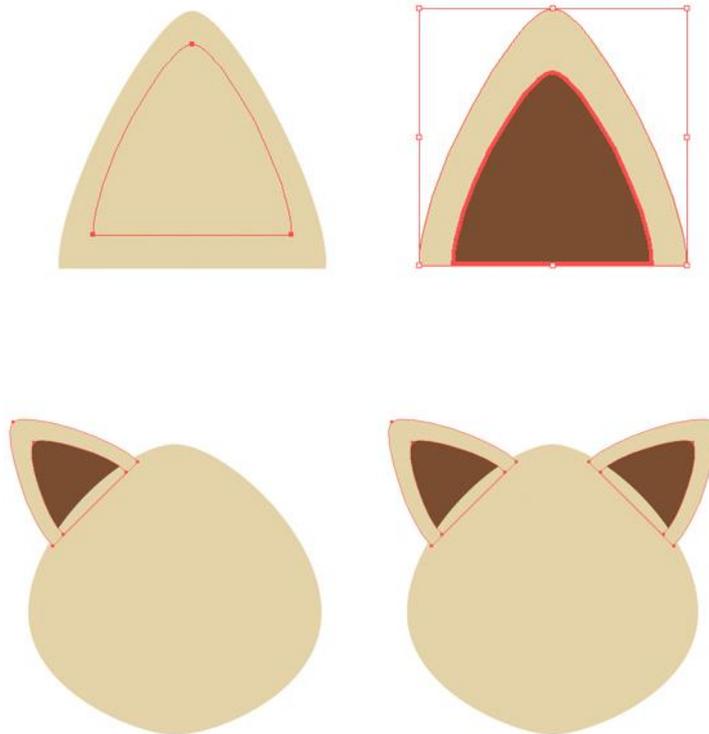
Now let's form the cat's ear. Take the **Polygon Tool** and make a three-sided shape of about **17 x 15 px** size. Go to **Effect > Warp > Bulge** and set the **Vertical Bend** value to **40%**.

**Object > Expand Appearance** of the shape to apply the effect. Select the upper anchor point with the **Direct Select Tool (A)** and make the corner smooth by clicking the **Convert corners to smooth** button in the upper context panel. Shorten the anchor handles of this anchor point and drag the anchor point up, making the ear more pointed.



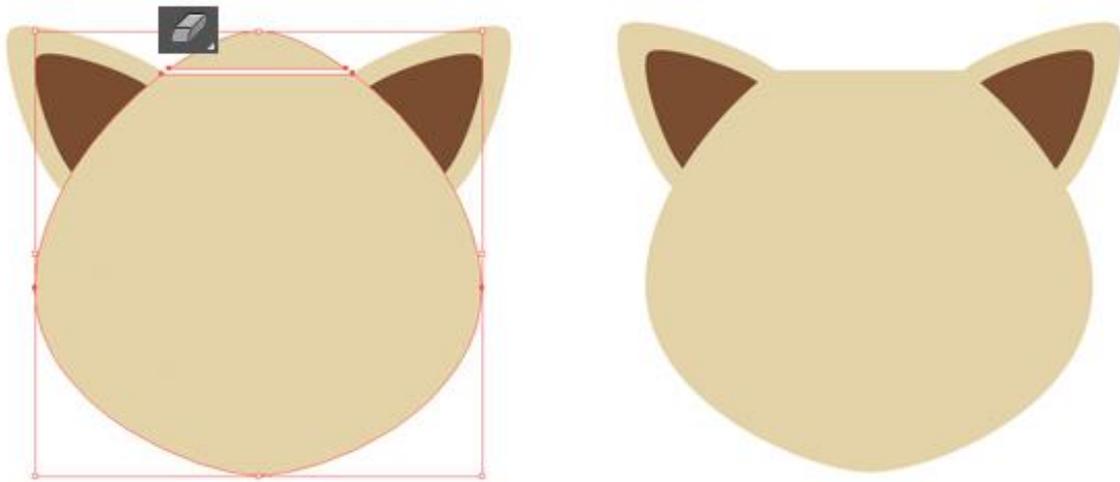
## Step 4

**Copy** the shape and **Paste it in Front (Control-C > Control-F)**. Make the copy smaller and fill it with chocolate-brown color. Rotate the ear and place it at the left side of the head, **Sending it to Back (Control-Shift-[)**, beneath the head shape. Use the **Reflect Tool (O)** by double-clicking its icon in the **Tools** panel to flip the ear over the **Vertical Axis** and to create a copy, placing it at the opposite side of the head.



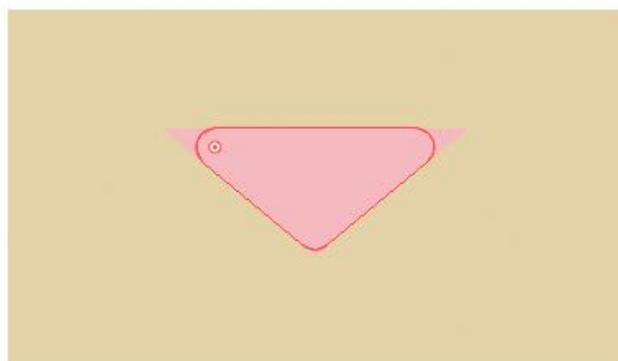
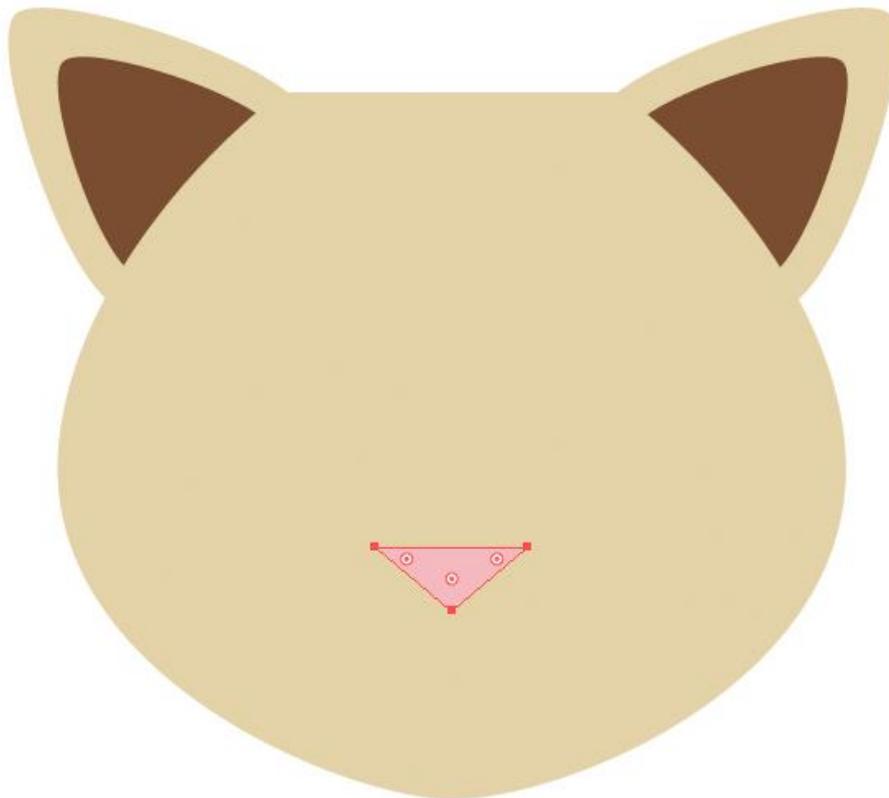
## Step 5

Let's make the top part of the head flat. Select the head shape, take the **Eraser Tool (Shift-E)** and draw a narrow stripe across the head by holding down the **Alt** key. Now we've sliced the shape into two parts. Select the unneeded piece and delete it.



## Step 6

Make a small pink triangle nose with the **Polygon Tool**. Select the nose and pull the circle indicators of the **Live Corners** to make the shape rounded. If this function is unavailable in your version of Adobe Illustrator, use **Effect > Stylize > Round Corners** which does exactly the same.

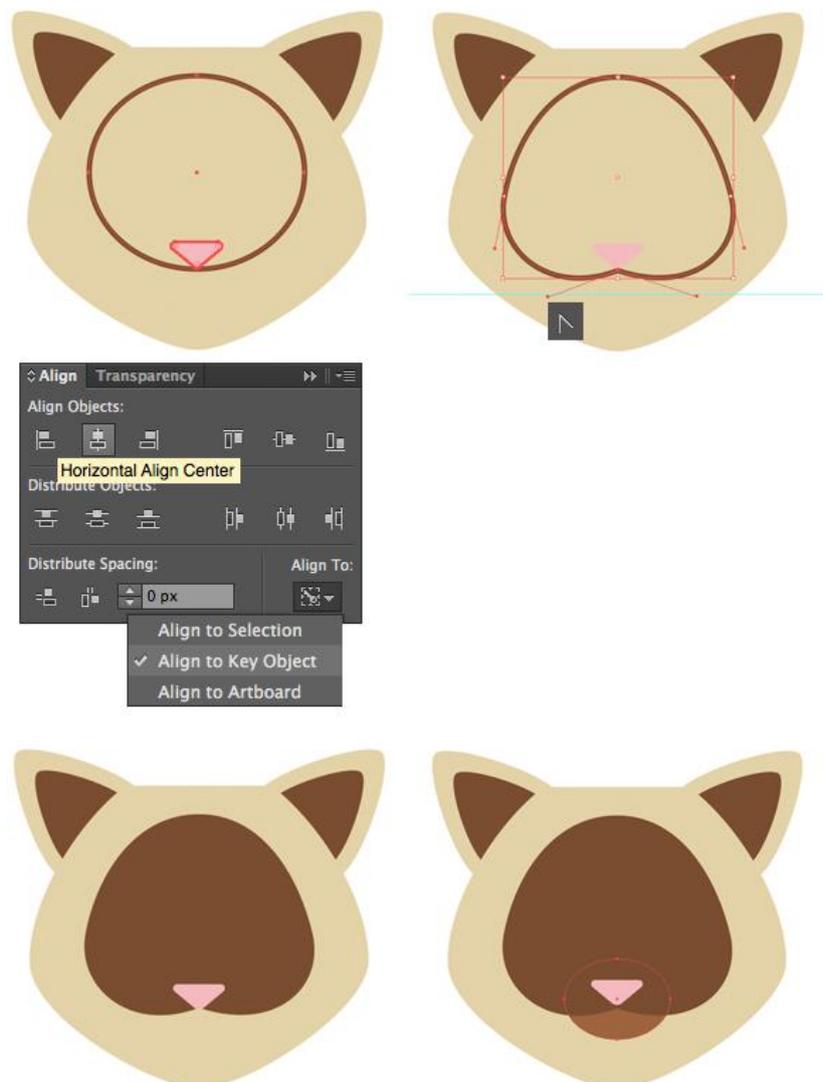


## Step 7

Make another ellipse and place it inside the face, so that it touches the lower point of the nose. Align the ellipse to the nose, using the nose as a **Key Object**. To do so, select both shapes and click the nose while holding down **Alt**. You will see a thick stroke around the nose, indicating the **Key Object**. Head to the **Align** panel and click **Horizontal Align Center**.

Then take the **Anchor Point Tool (Shift-C)** and move the anchor handles of the bottom anchor point down to about **45 degrees**. Use the **Guides** to move the handles to the equal distance (you can add the **Guideline** by dragging it down to your Artboard from the **Rulers (Control-R)**).

Fill the face “mask” with the same brown color as we have on the ears, picking the color with the **Eyedropper Tool (I)**. Add a smaller, lighter-brown ellipse beneath the mask, depicting the lower jaw.

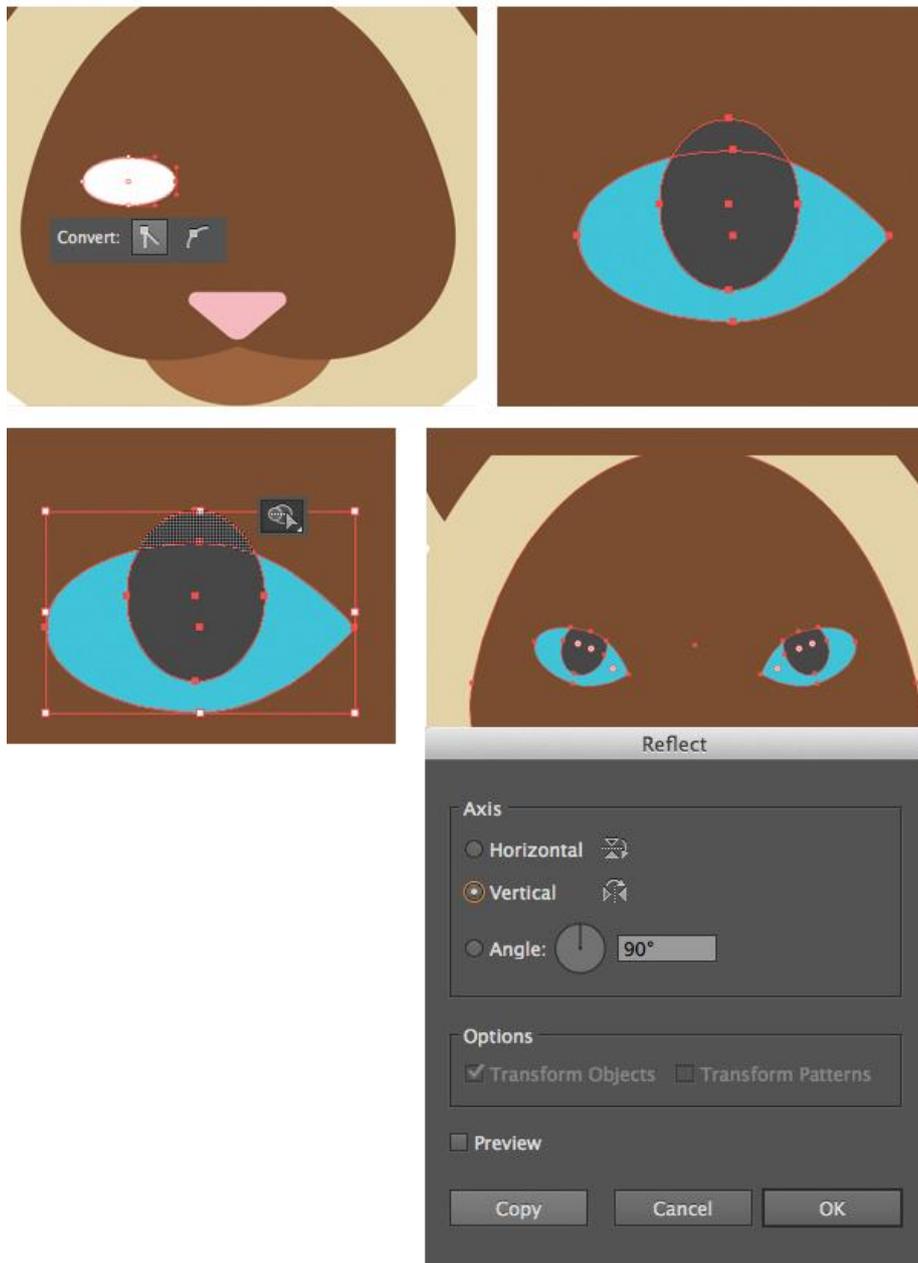


## Step 8

Now let's add the eyes! Make an ellipse, select its right anchor point and convert it to a sharp corner from the **Convert** menu in the control panel above. Fill the ellipse with a bright blue color and add another ellipse above for the iris.

Here we need to delete the piece of the iris that overlaps the edge of the eye. Select both ellipses, and use the **Shape Builder Tool (Shift-M)** to erase the upper part of the iris by holding down the **Alt** key and clicking the unwanted piece.

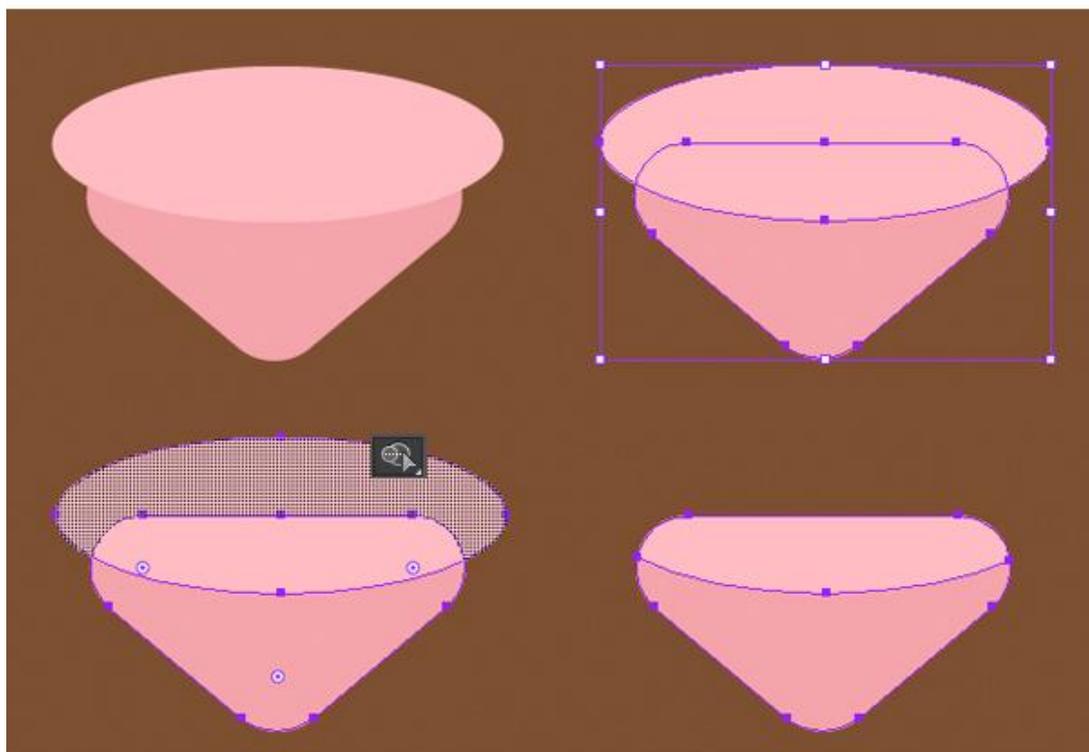
Rotate the eye a bit and create a mirrored copy using the **Reflect Tool (O)**.



## Step 9

Make two light-brown ellipses for the brows of our cat, and add two tiny white circles in the eyes for the highlights.

Create a lighter-pink ellipse, placing it above the upper part of the nose, and use the **Shape Builder Tool (Shift-M)** holding down **Alt** to delete the unneeded part, thus making the nose more detailed.

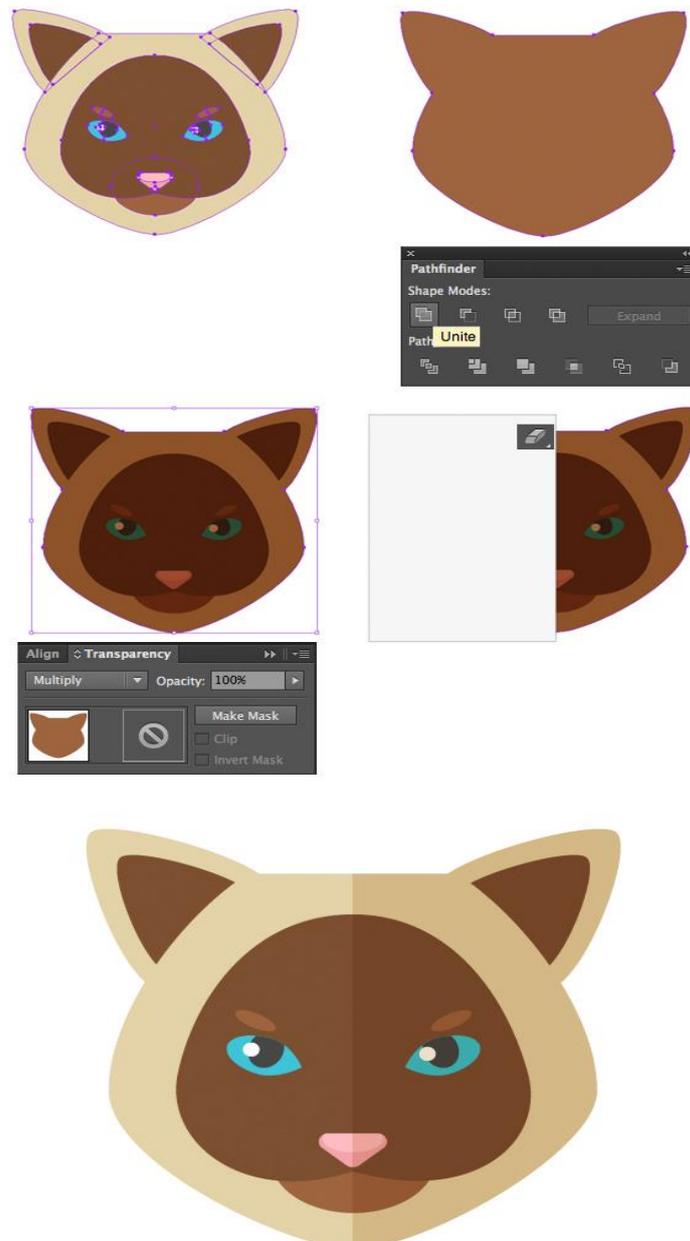


## Step 10

And let's create a trendy flat shadow, covering one half of the cat's head. **Group (Control-G)** all parts of the cat together, **Copy** the group and **Paste it in Front (Control-C > Control-F)**. Keeping the copy selected, **Unite** its parts in the **Pathfinder** panel, merging them into a single shape. Switch the **Blending Mode** of the silhouette to **Multiply**, making it semi-transparent.

Finally, select the silhouette, take the **Eraser Tool (Shift-E)** and, holding down **Alt**, drag your mouse over the left half of the cat's head, covering it with a white rectangular selection. Release the mouse button to delete the covered piece.

And here we have it! Our flat cat is ready. Let's move on to the next element.



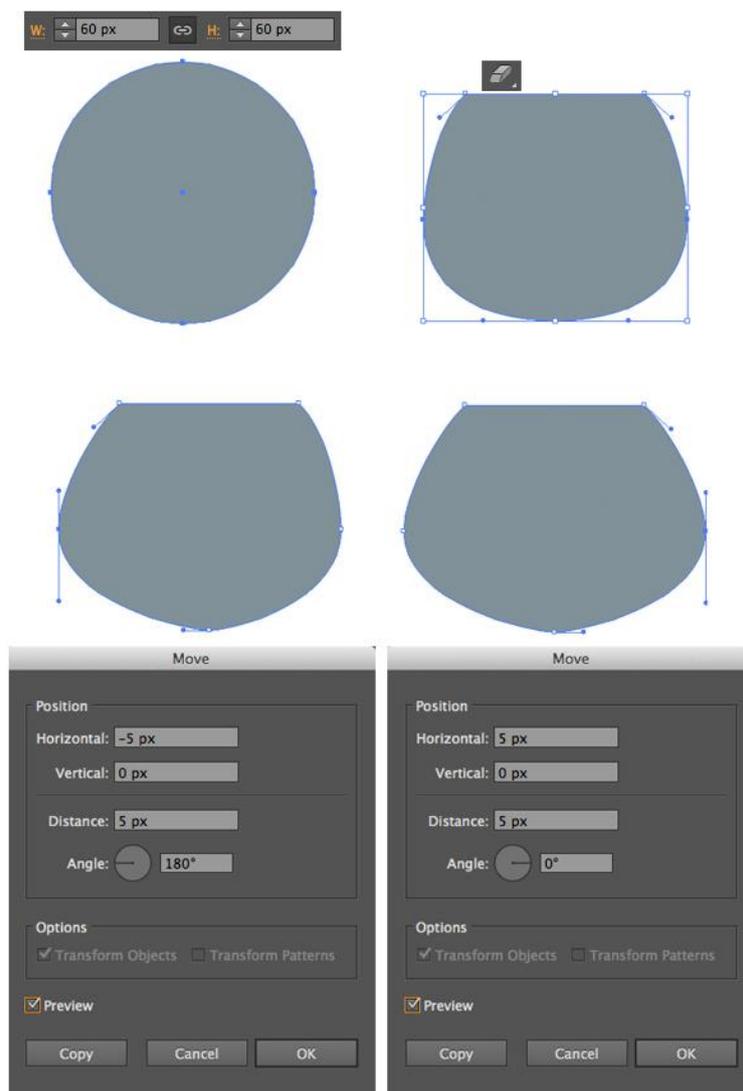
## 2. How to Draw a Cheerful Puppy

### Step 1

As previously, we start forming a portrait from a **60 x 60 px** circle. Move the side anchor points down a bit, making the shape bulgy, and erase its top part with the **Eraser Tool (Shift-E)**.

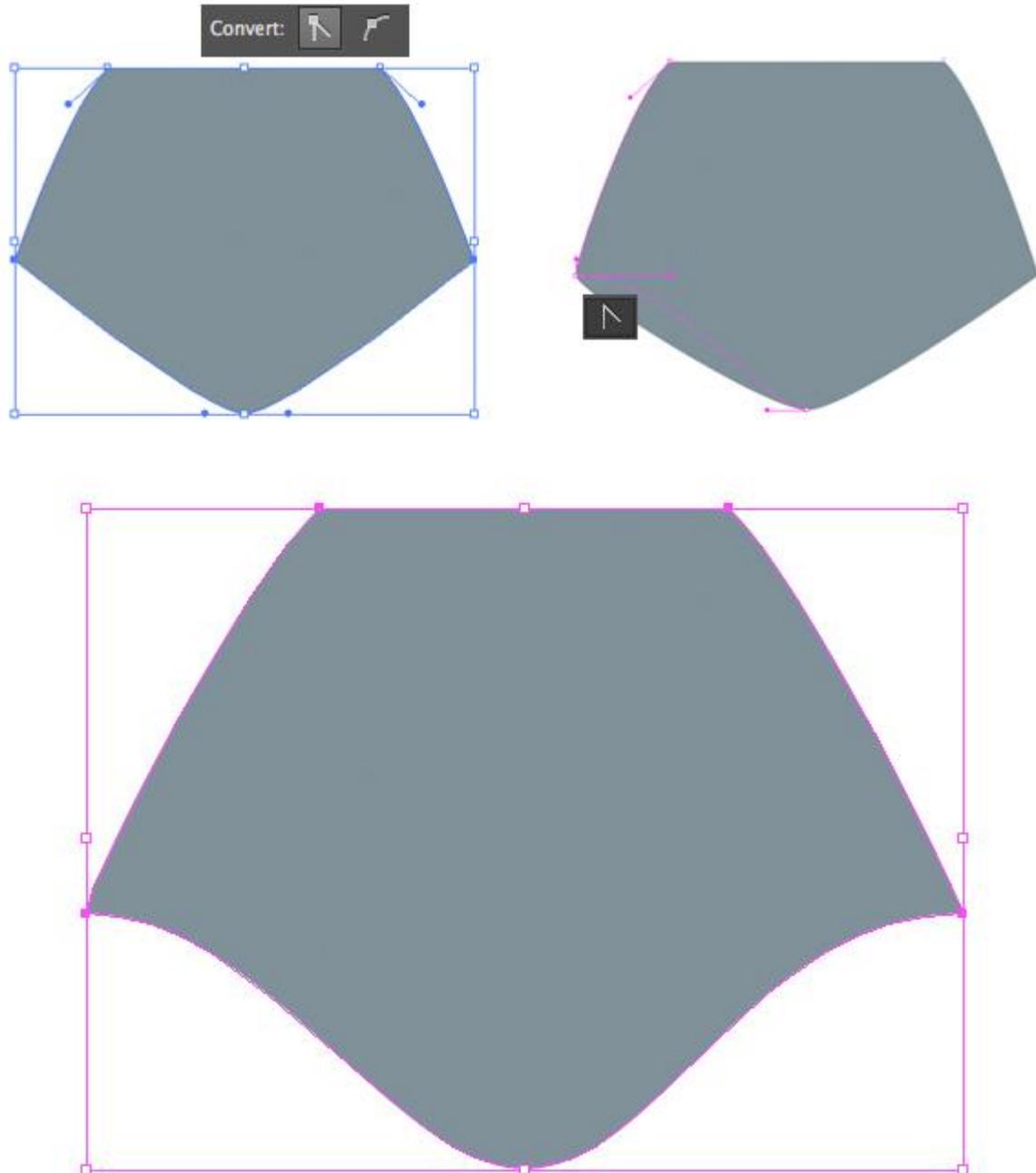
Select the left anchor point with the **Direct Selection Tool (A)** and press **Enter** to open the **Move** options window. Set the **Horizontal Position** value to **-5 px** and the **Vertical** value to **0 px** and click **OK**, thus moving the anchor point 5 pixels to the left.

Do the same for the right anchor point, setting the **Horizontal** move value to **5 px** and moving it **5 px** to the right.



## Step 2

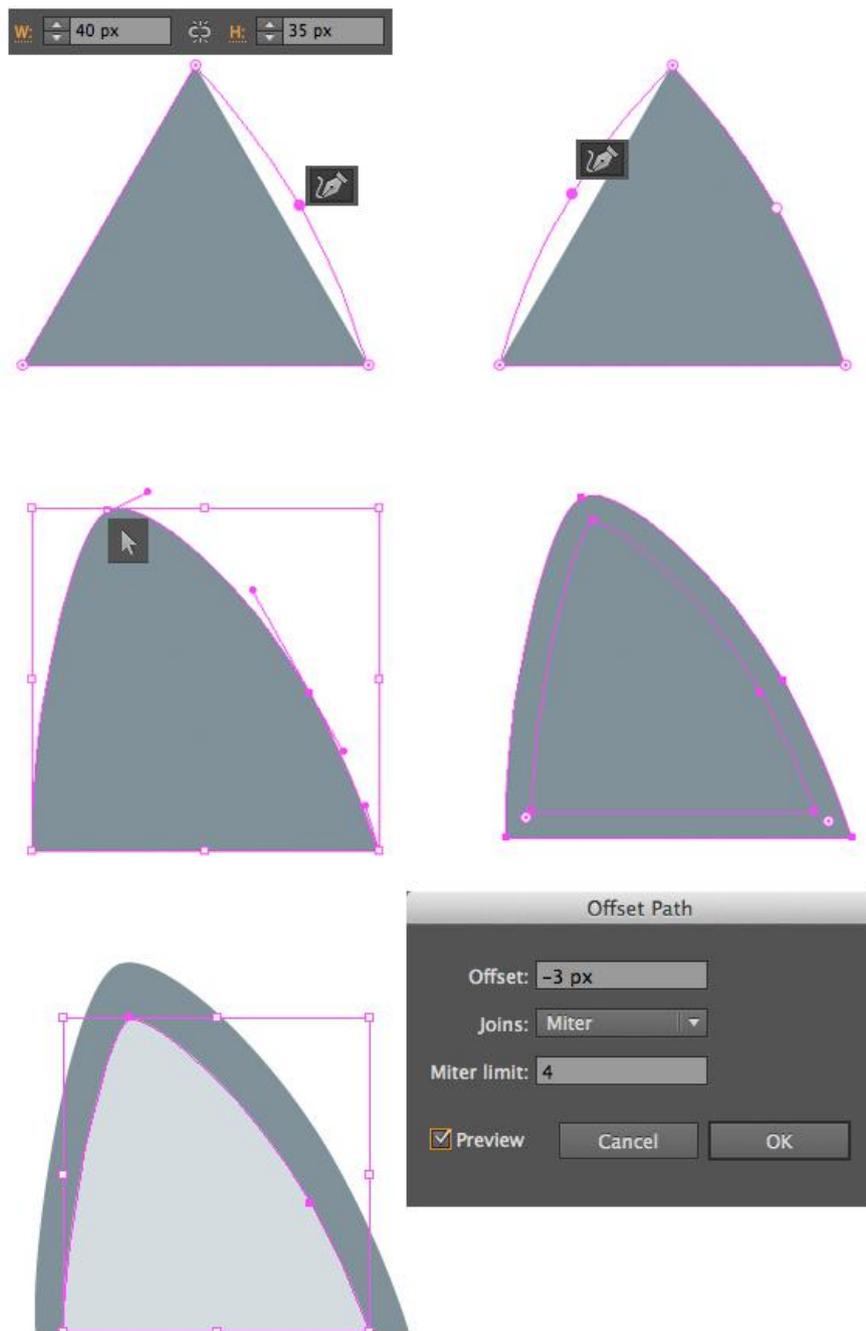
Select both side anchor points and **Convert** them to sharp corners. Adjust the position of the anchor handles using the **Anchor Point Tool (Shift-C)** and move them up, making a smooth curve of the face line.



### Step 3

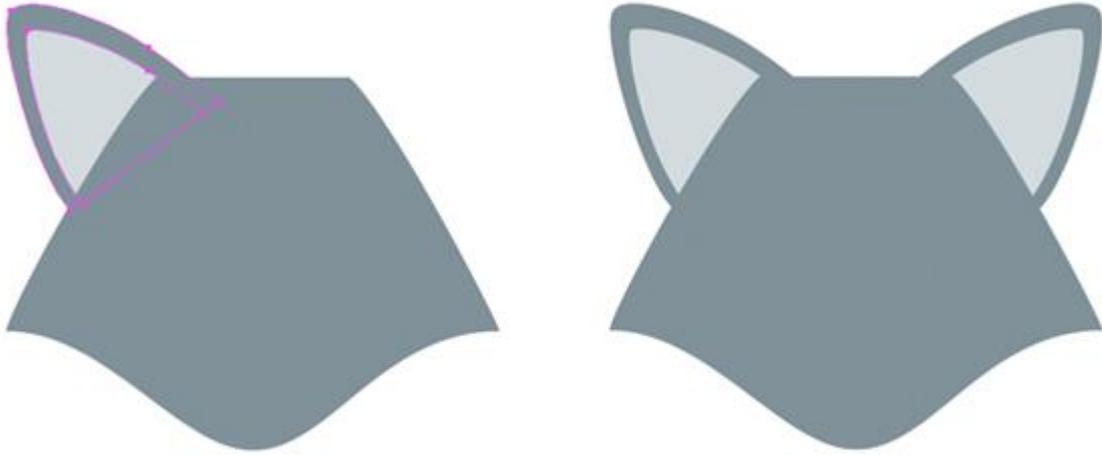
Let's form the ear from a **40 x 35 px** triangle, using the **Polygon Tool**. Take the **Curvature Tool (Control-`)** and make the sides of the triangle more rounded and bulging. If you're using earlier versions of Adobe Illustrator, which don't contain this tool, feel free to use **Effect > Warp > Bulge**, as we did previously.

Select the upper anchor point, make it smoother and drag it to the left, making the shape skewed. Go to **Object > Path > Offset Path** and set the **Offset** value to **-3 px**, forming the inner part of the ear. Fill it with a light-grey color.



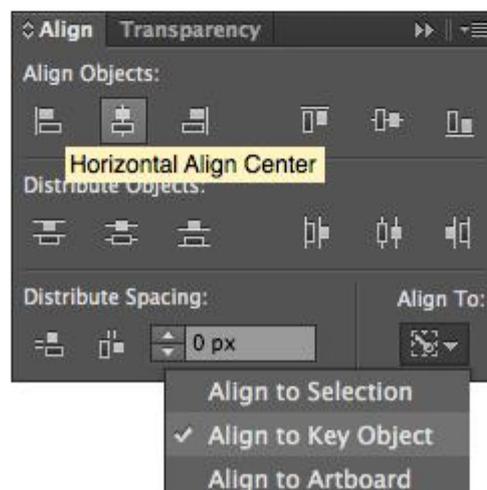
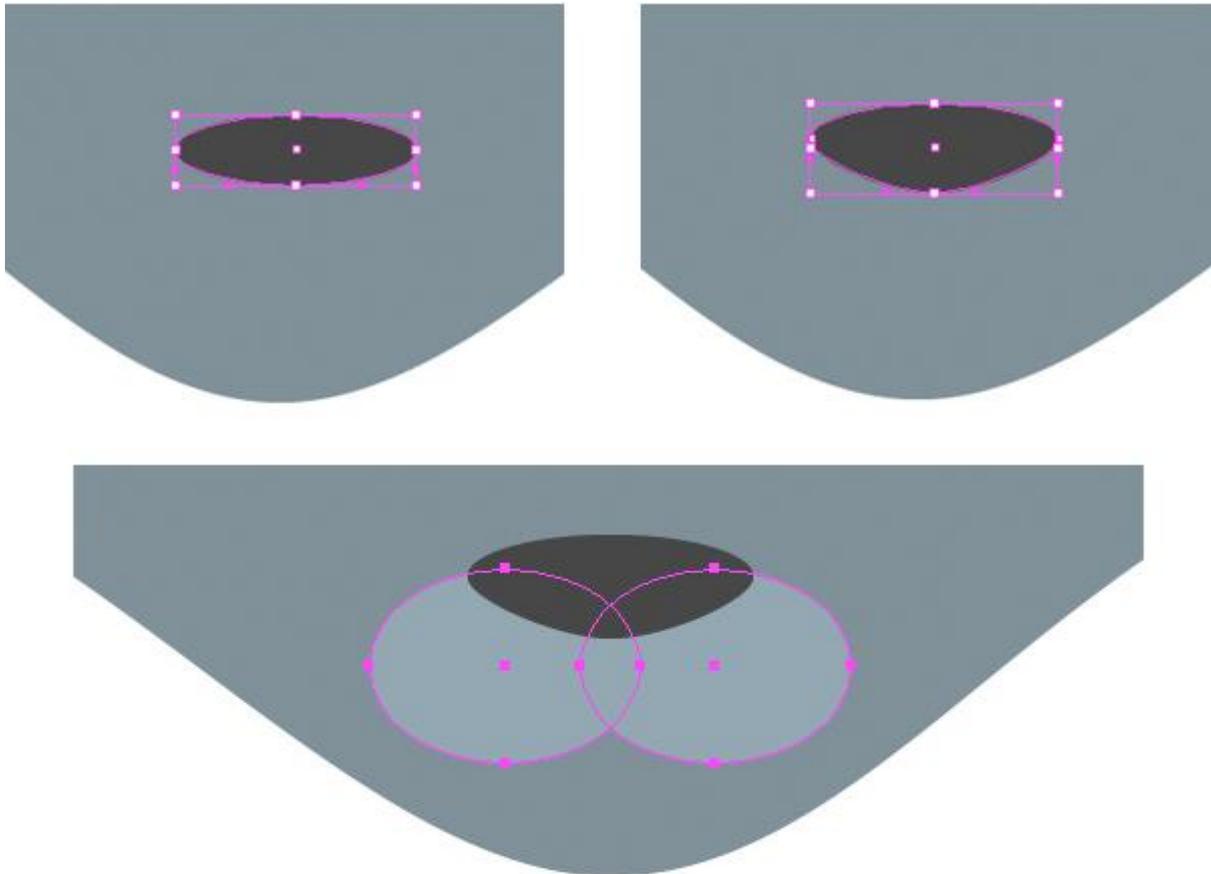
## Step 4

Rotate the ear and place it at the left side of the head. Use the **Reflect Tool (O)** to create a mirrored copy at the opposite side.



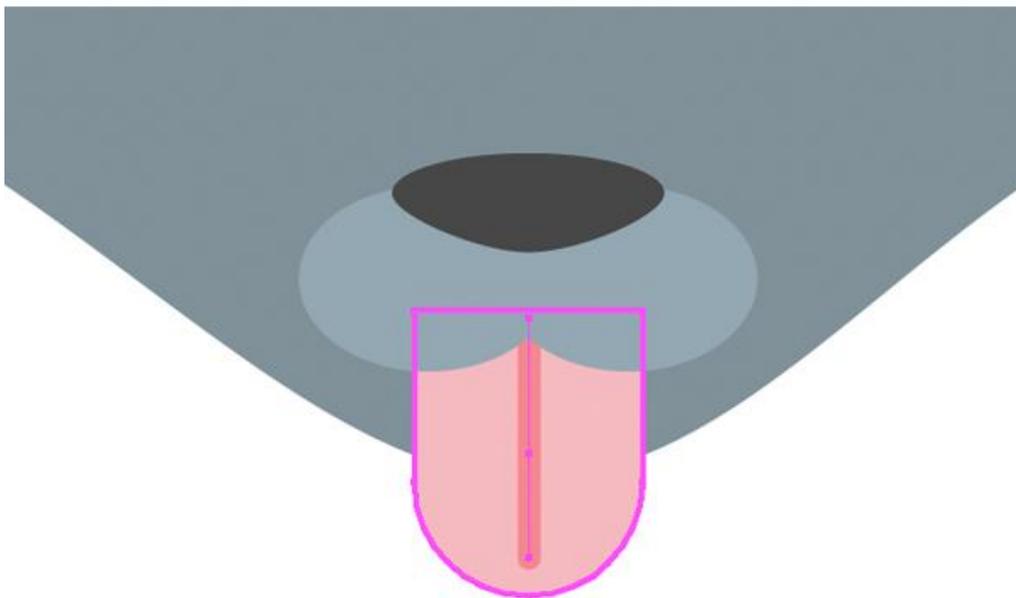
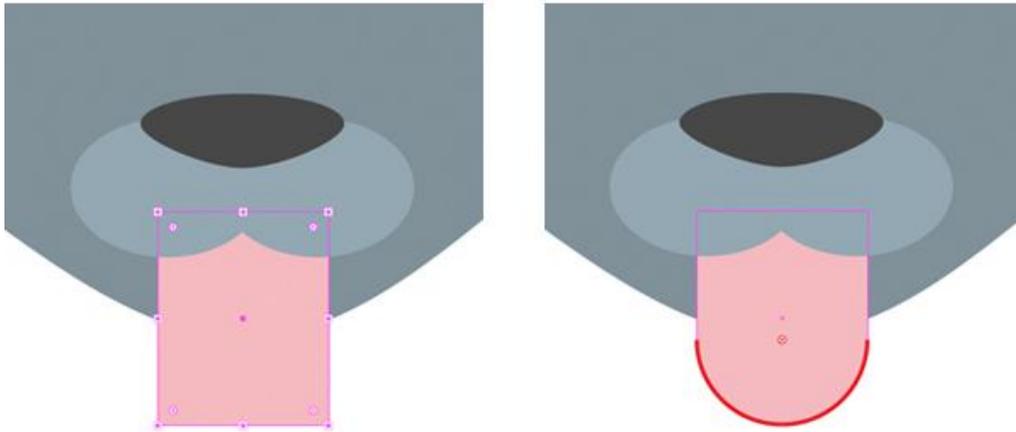
## Step 5

Form a dark-grey nose from a squashed ellipse, dragging its lower anchor point down a bit. Make two overlapping light-grey ellipses beneath the nose, group them and **Align** with the face horizontally, using the face shape as the **Key Object**.



## Step 6

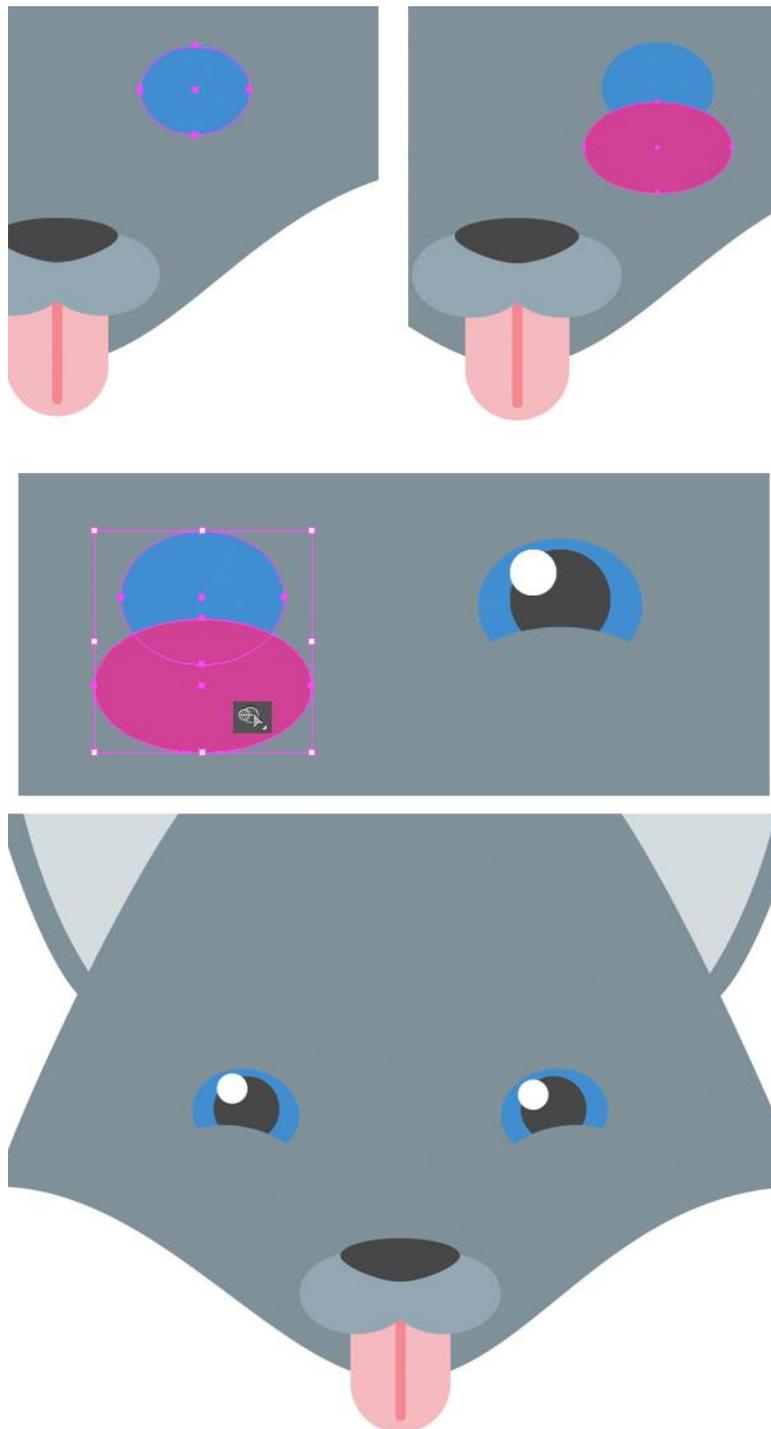
Now let's make a funny tongue sticking out! Create a light-pink rectangle using the **Rectangle Tool (M)**, and place it under the light-grey ellipses. Select both lower anchor points and pull the Live Corners markers up to their maximum, making the bottom of the shape rounded. Take the **Line Segment Tool (\)** and draw a vertical stroke, while holding down **Shift**. You can make the tips of the line rounded in the **Stroke** panel.



## Step 7

Let's move to the eyes. Make a dark-blue ellipse and cover its lower part with another ellipse or any color. Select both shapes and use the **Shape Builder Tool (Shift-M)** to delete the lower ellipse together with the bottom part of the eye, which was covered. This way we're making a playful look. Add a darker iris and a tiny white highlight to the eye.

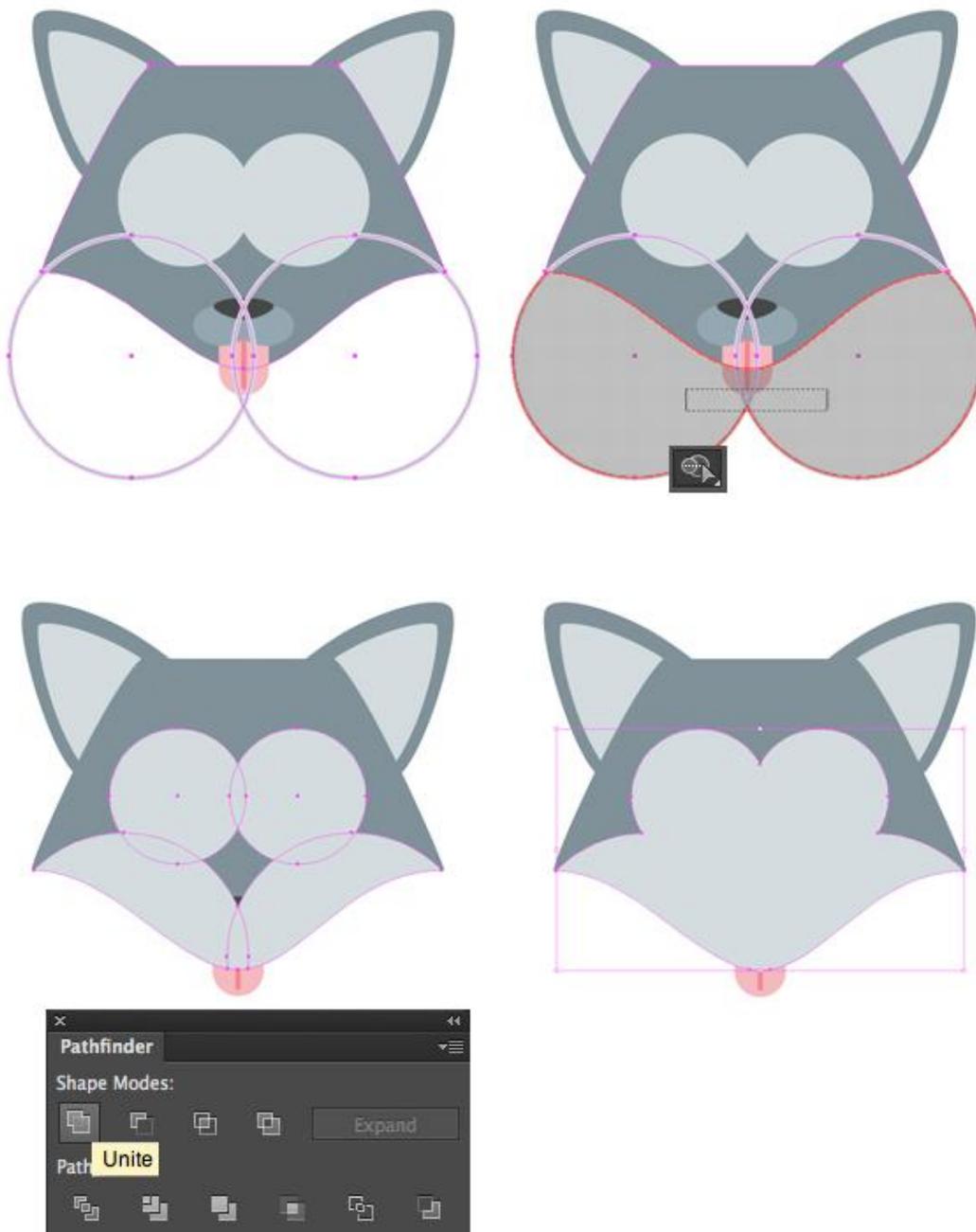
Rotate the eye a bit and create a second one, placing it on the other side of the face.



## Step 8

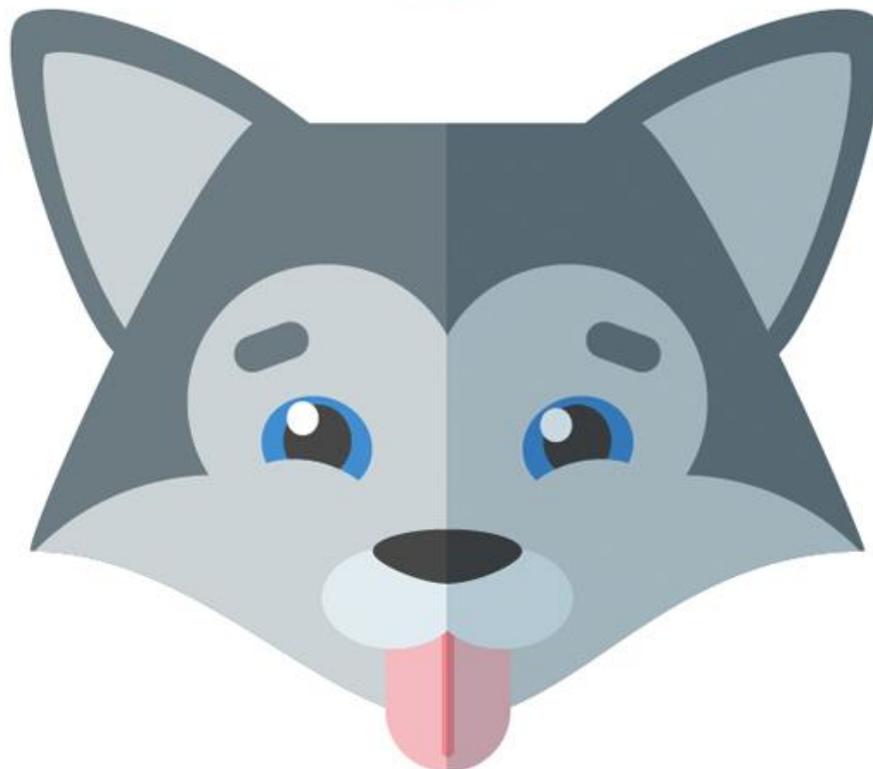
Create two even light-grey circles, covering the eyes. Then add two bigger circles, overlapping and covering the lower part of the face, as shown in the screenshot below. Select the lower circles and use the **Shape Builder Tool (Shift-M)** to delete those parts outside the face.

Select all four new pieces and **Unite** them in **Pathfinder**, making a face “mask”. You can delete the gap in the center of the mask by clicking its edge with the **Direct Selection Tool (A)** and deleting it.



## Step 9

Make two tiny rectangles with rounded corners for the brows, making the dog look kind and cheerful, and finish up by creating a subtle shadow on the right half of the face.

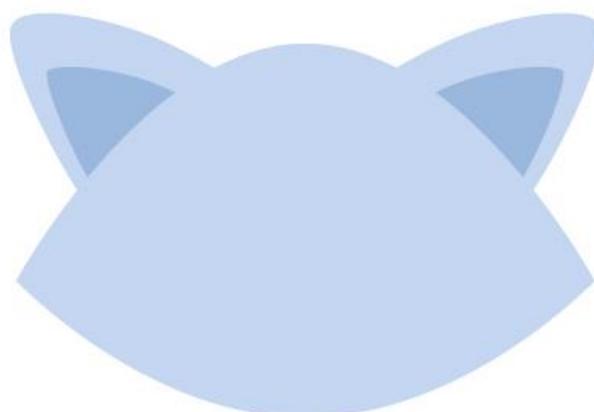
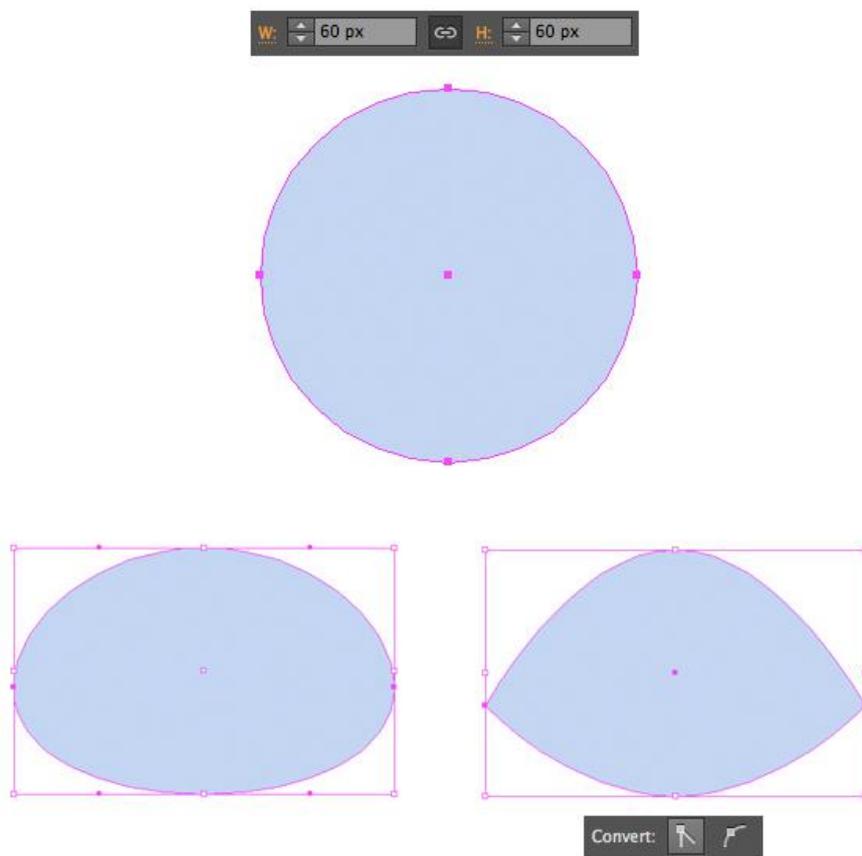


### 3. How to Make a Fancy Raccoon

#### Step 1

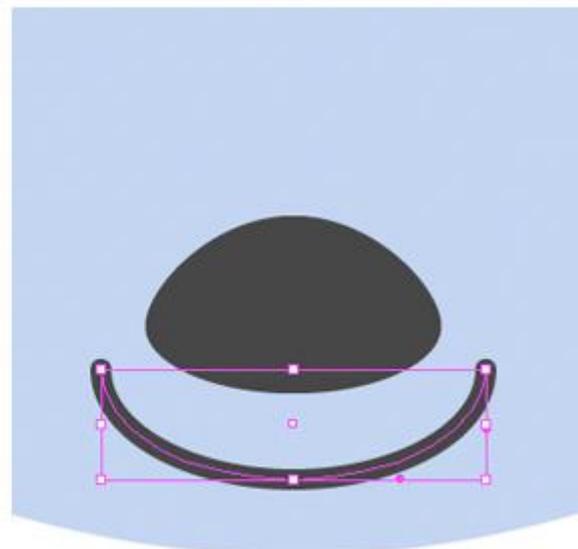
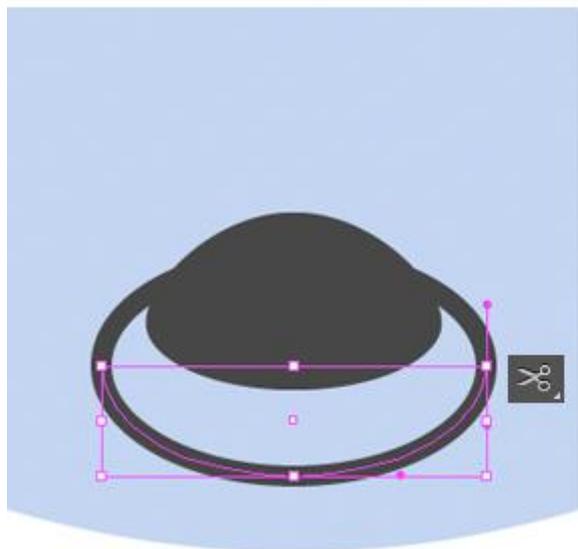
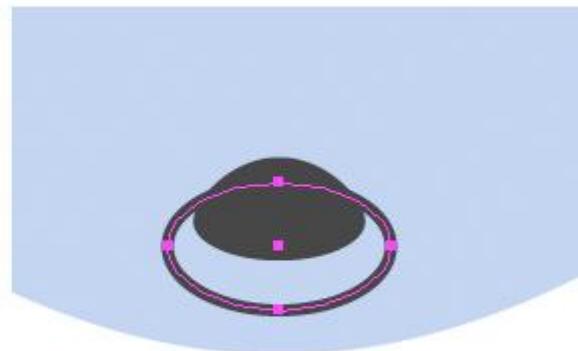
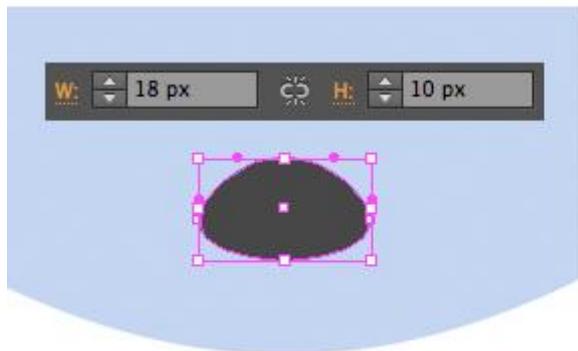
We start shaping out the face from a **60 x 60 px** pastel-blue circle. Squash it a bit and make the shape wider. Drag both side anchor points a few pixels down, and **Convert** them to sharp corners from the **Convert** menu in the upper toolbar.

Copy the ears from our cat, recolor them according to the color of the raccoon's head, and place them on both sides of the head.



## Step 2

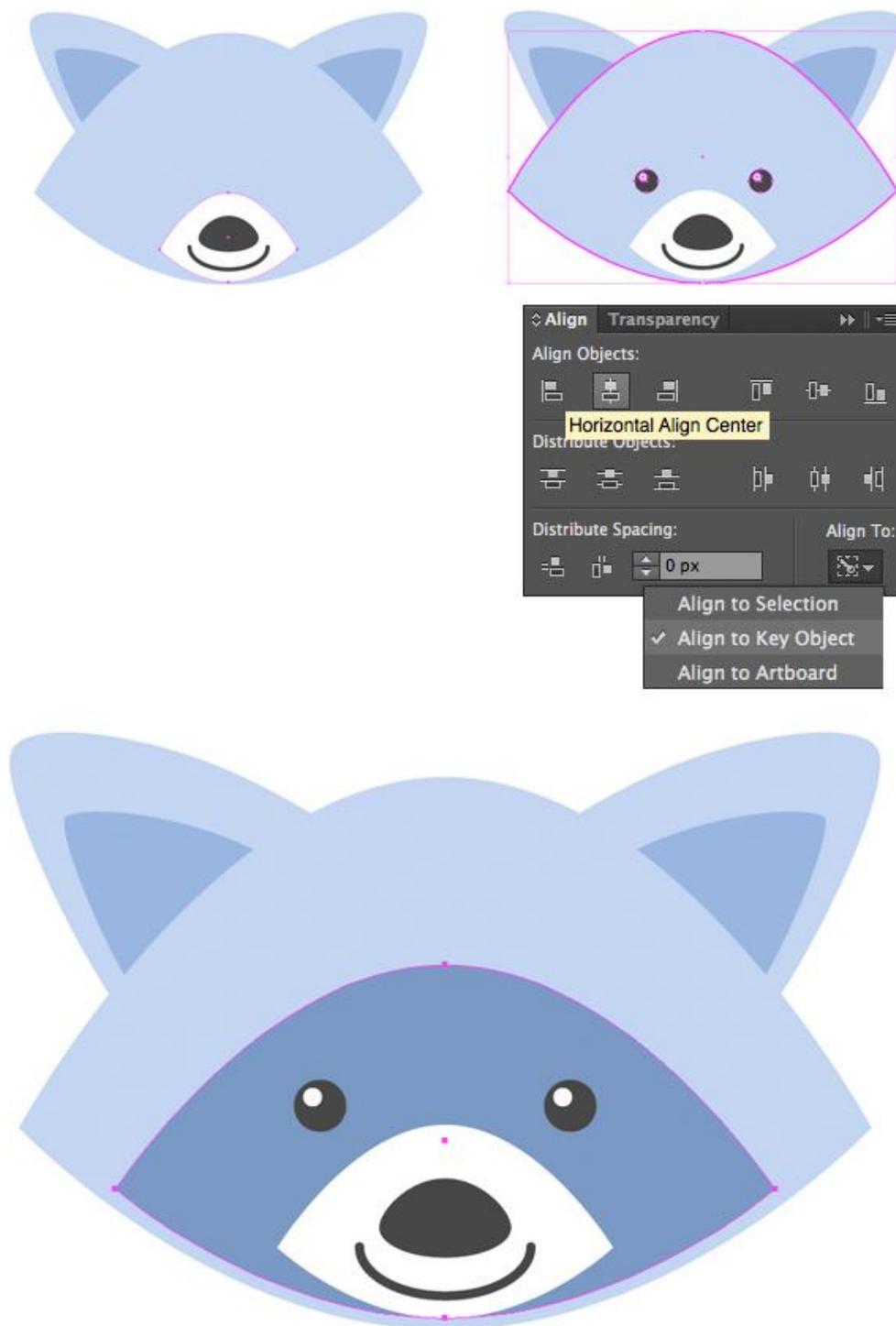
Make a nose from a **18 x 10 px** dark-grey ellipse, dragging its top anchor point up a bit. Create another ellipse with a dark-grey **Stroke** color, setting the **Fill** color to **None** in the **Color** panel. Take the **Scissors Tool (C)** and click the left and right anchor points, splitting the shape horizontally into two equal halves. **Delete** the lower half, making our raccoon smile.



### Step 3

Copy the face shape and make the copy much smaller, filling it with white color and placing it beneath the nose area. Add two tiny black eyes with white highlights, group them and align to the face horizontally in the **Align** panel, making the face a **Key Object**.

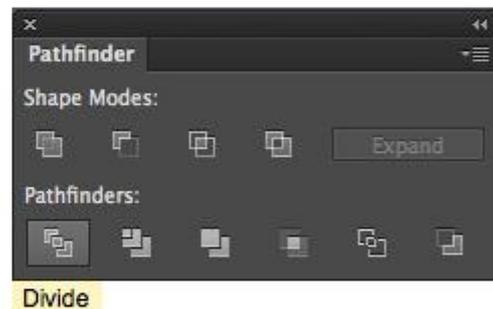
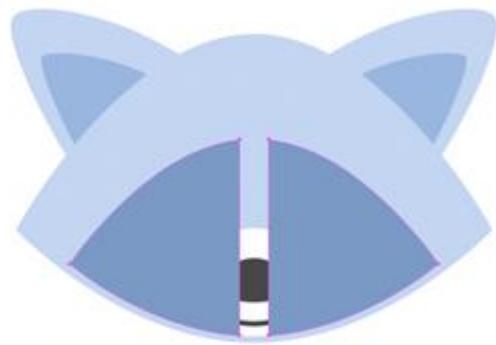
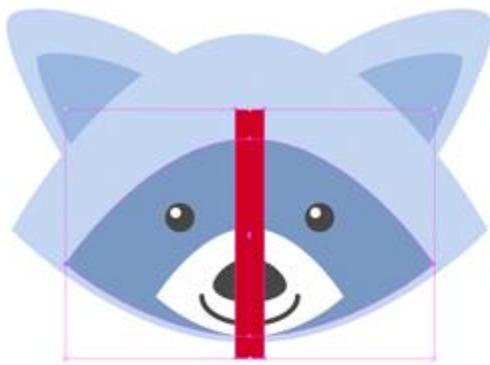
Copy the face shape once again, making the copy a bit smaller, fill it with dark-blue color and place it in the bottom part of the face, forming a mask.



## Step 4

Let's split the mask into two halves, creating two separate spots around the eyes. Take the **Rectangle Tool (M)** and draw a vertical stripe across the middle of the face. Select both the mask and the stripe, and use the **Divide** function of **Pathfinder** to slice all the shapes. Delete the unneeded pieces, if there are any. Place the halves you've created beneath the eyes, and make the corners slightly rounded.

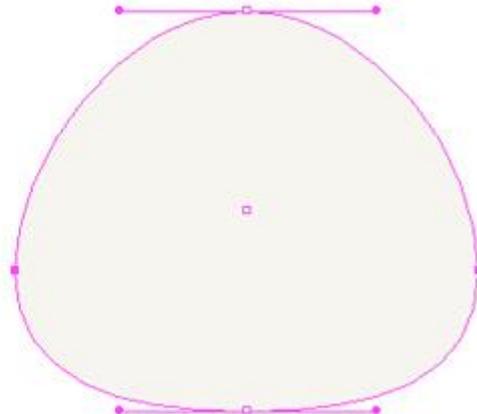
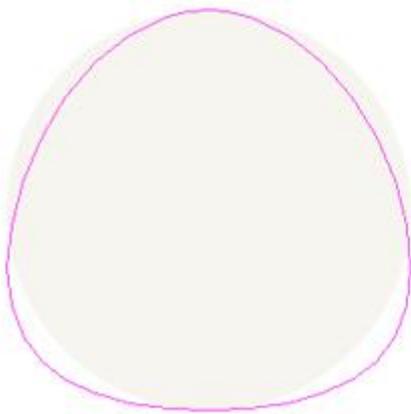
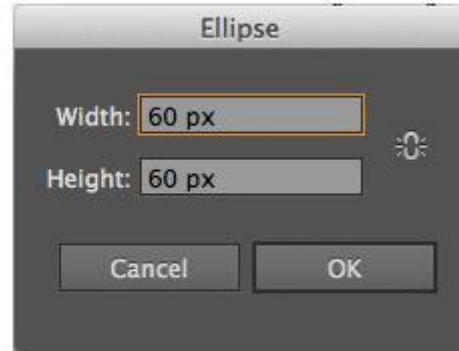
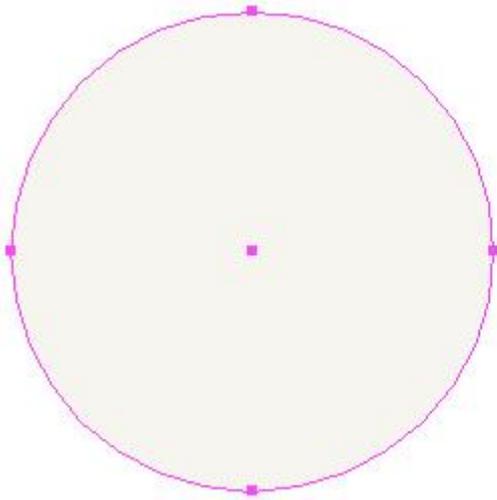
Finally, add a flat shadow to the right part of the face. Now we can move on!



## 4. How to Make a Kind Panda

### Step 1

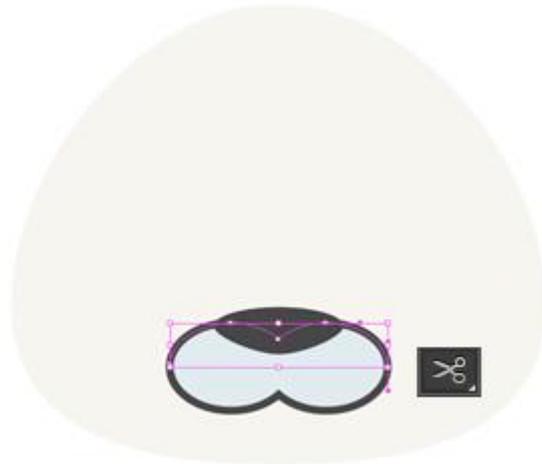
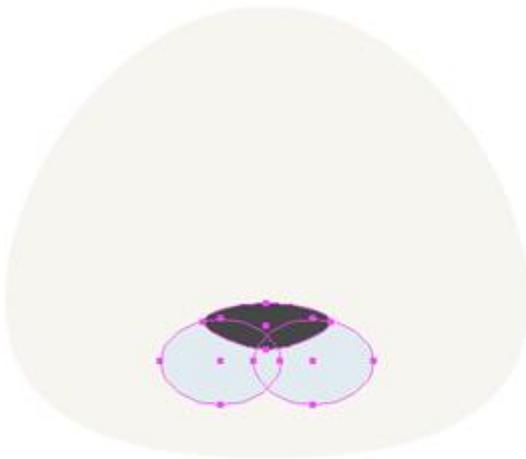
Make a fluffy face shape from a **60 x 60 px** light-beige circle, moving its side anchor points down.



## Step 2

Copy the nose area from our dog and set the **Stroke** color of the “lips” to dark-grey, so that the outline is visible. Select two outlined ellipses (without the nose) and **Unite** them in **Pathfinder**.

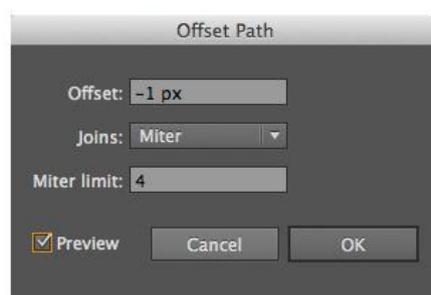
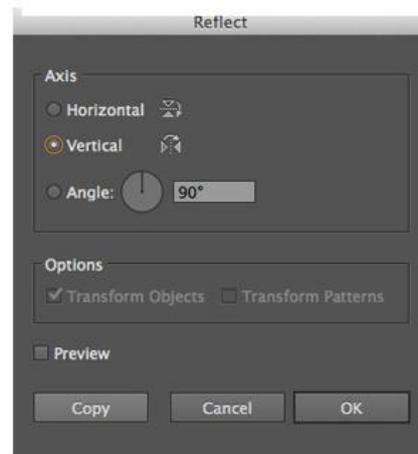
Choose the **Scissors Tool (C)** and click the side anchor points of the outlined shape, splitting it apart. Delete the upper half, forming a kind smile for our panda.



### Step 3

Copy the eyes from our raccoon, and let's form big, dark-grey spots around the eyes. Make a squashed ellipse and rotate it a bit to the left. Use the **Reflect Tool (O)** to make a copy and flip it horizontally to the other side of the face. Fill the eyeballs with white color, so that they are visible above the dark spots.

Keeping the eyeballs selected, go to **Object > Path > Offset Path** and create tiny pupils inside the eyes with **-1 px Offset** value.



## Step 4

Add round, dark-grey ears to the panda's head, and finish up by forming a semi-transparent shadow over the right side of its face.

Great work! Let's move on!

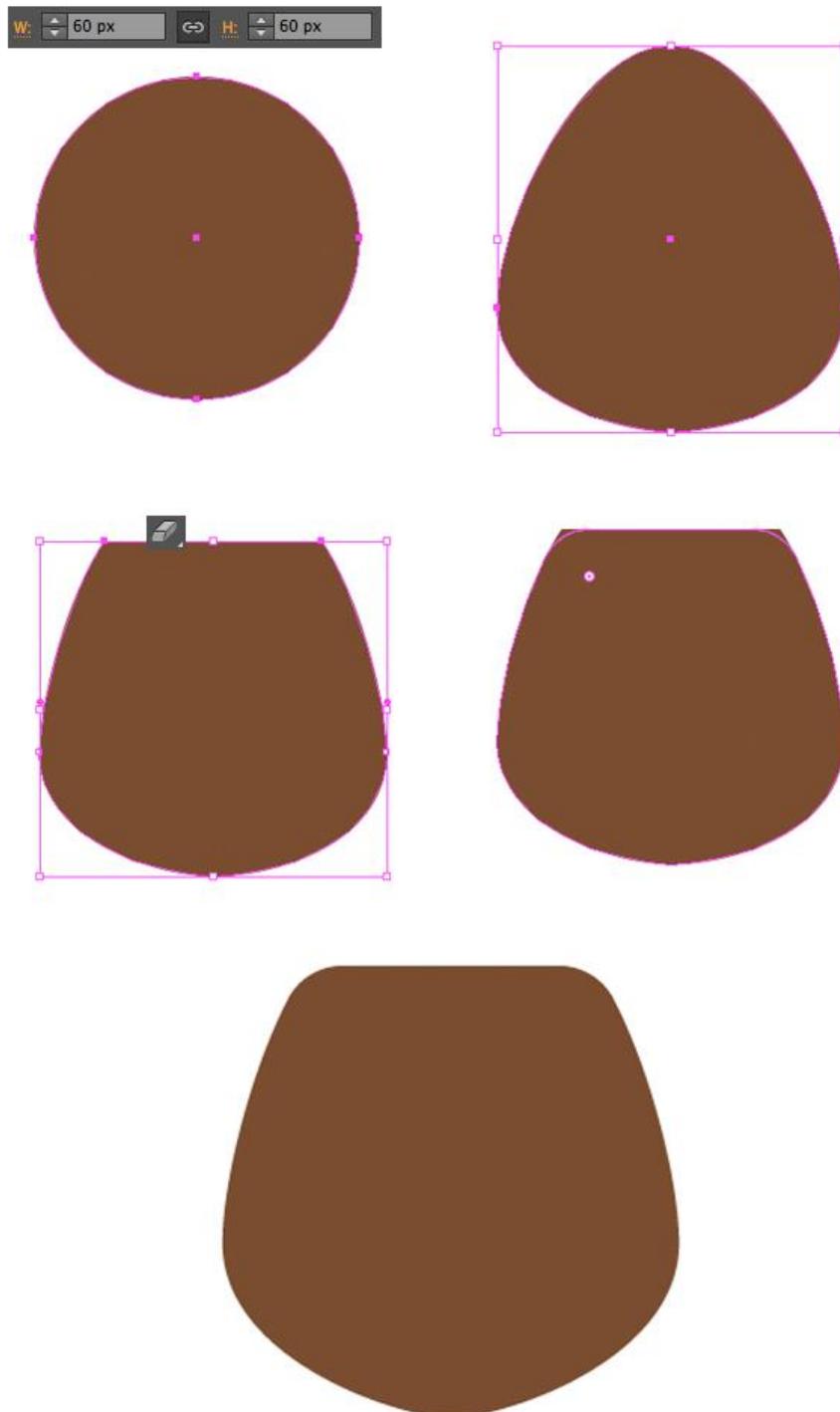


## 5. How to Create a Wise Bear

### Step 1

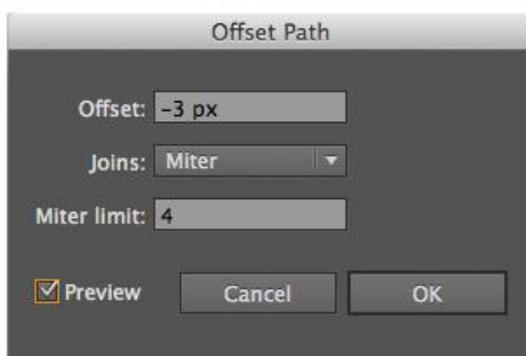
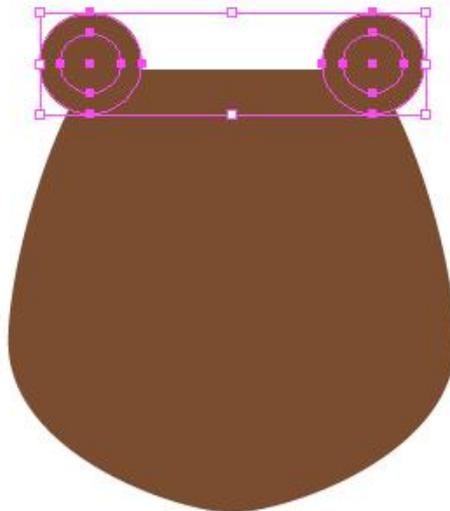
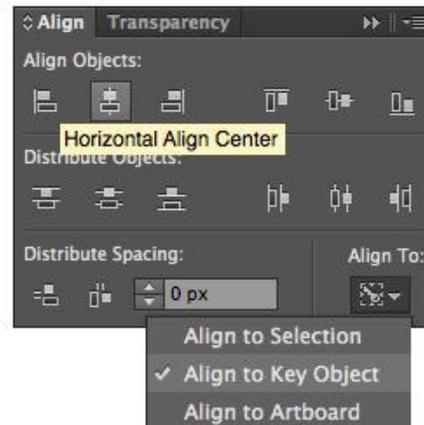
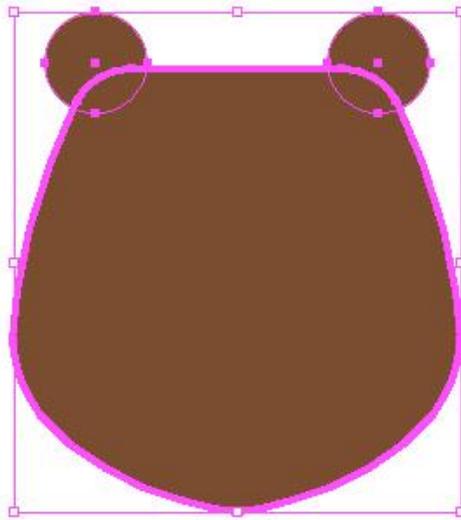
Start making a bear's face from a **60 x 60 px** circle. Move both side anchor points down and drag the top anchor point up, making the head look like an egg.

Make the top of the head flat with the **Eraser Tool (Shift-E)**. And make the corners of the shape slightly rounded.



## Step 2

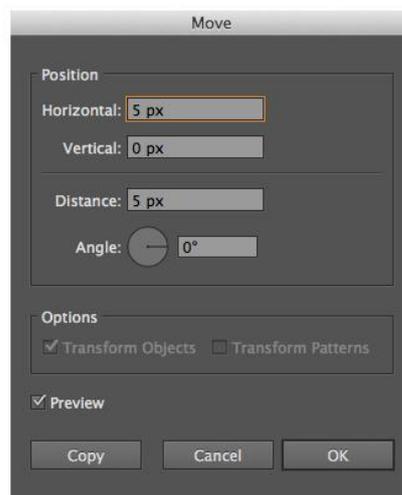
Add two circle ears to the top of the head, group them and **Align** them horizontally, using the head as a **Key Object**. Use the **Offset Path** function with **-3 px Offset** value to form the dark inner part of the ears.



### Step 3

Make a wide, dark-brown nose from a squashed ellipse. And let's form the nose-bridge. Take the **Rectangle Tool (M)** and make a light-beige shape, placing it behind the nose. Move its upper left anchor point **5 px** to the right, using the **Move** options panel. Do the same for the upper right anchor point, moving it in the opposite direction and thus making the top of the nose-bridge narrower.

Make the corners of the rectangle rounded. Using the **Live Corners** function, you can vary the level of the roundness of each separate corner of the shape. For example, you can select only the upper anchor points and thus make the upper corners 100% rounded by pulling the markers down to their maximum.



## Step 4

Add a small ellipse beneath the bottom of the nose-bridge, forming the lower jaw. Add the eyes to the bear's face and, if you feel that the bear's face is too dark, make the brown parts a bit lighter.

Finally, add the shadow to the bear's face.

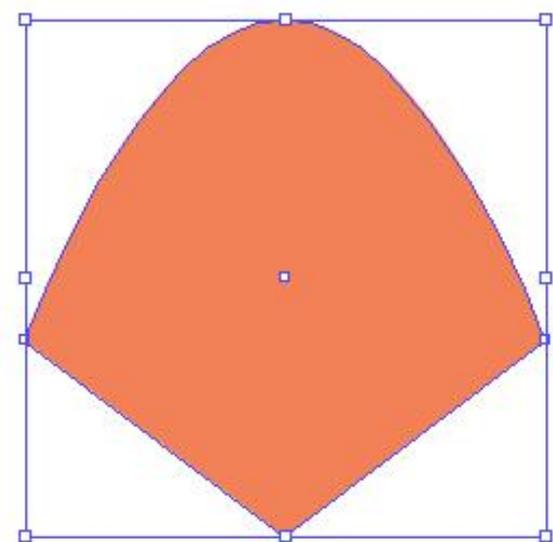
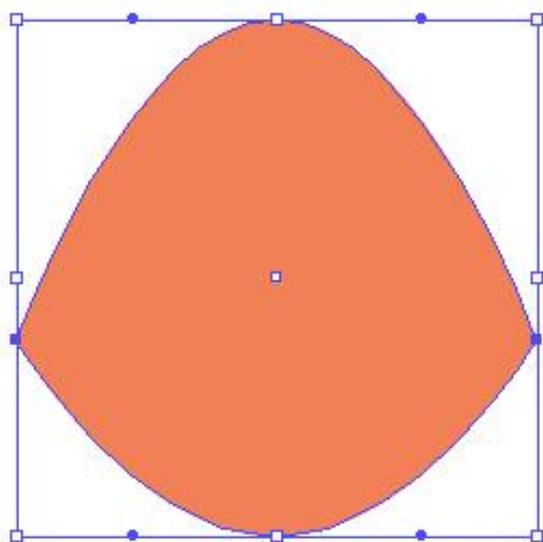
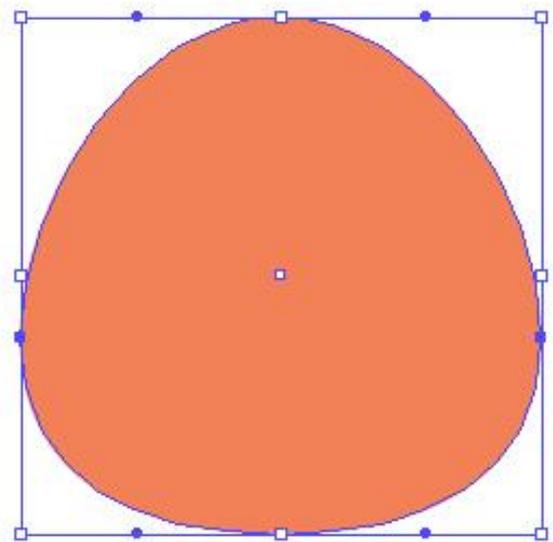
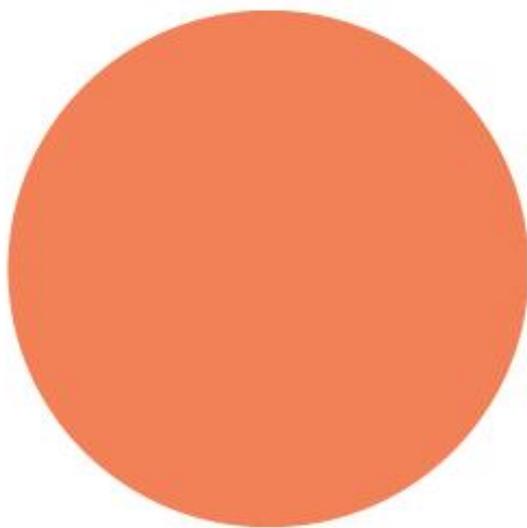
Awesome! We have the last character left!



## 6. How to Make a Cunning Fox

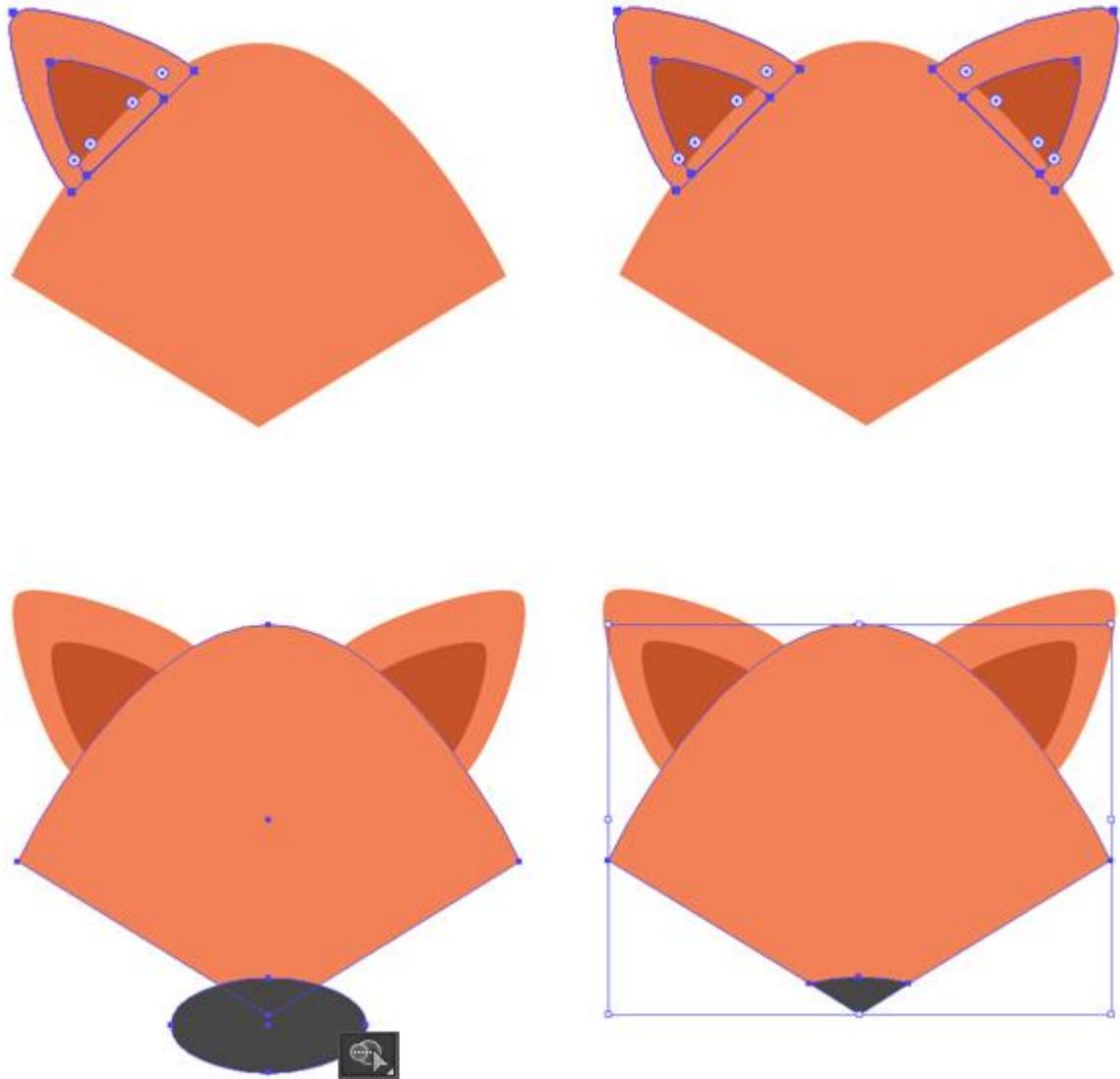
### Step 1

And again, we start forming the face of the fox from our familiar **60 x 60 px** circle of an orange color. Pull the side anchor points down a bit and **Convert** them to sharp corners, making the sides of the face pointed. **Convert** the lower anchor point to a corner as well, forming a sharp nose.



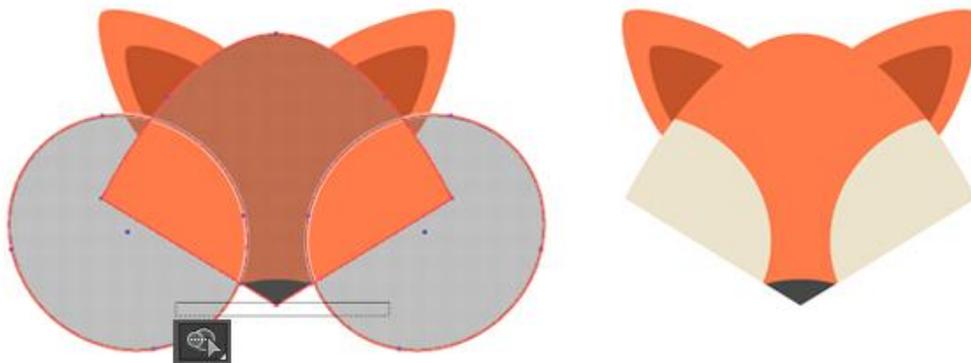
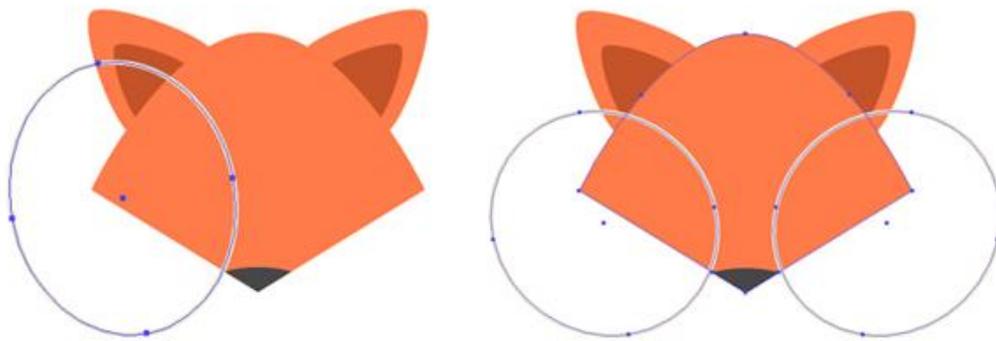
## Step 2

Take the ears from our raccoon and position them at the both sides of the fox's head, adjusting the colors. Put a black ellipse over the bottom part of the face, covering the nose area. Use the **Shape Builder Tool (Shift-M)** to get rid of the piece outside the face, forming a pointed black nose.



### Step 3

Create an ellipse, overlapping the left side of the fox's face, as shown in the screenshot below. Use the **Reflect Tool (O)** to make a flipped copy at the opposite side. Select both ellipses and delete those parts outside the face with the **Shape Builder Tool (Shift-M)**. Fill the shapes with light-beige color, forming the cheeks. Add two tiny, shiny eyes to our fox.

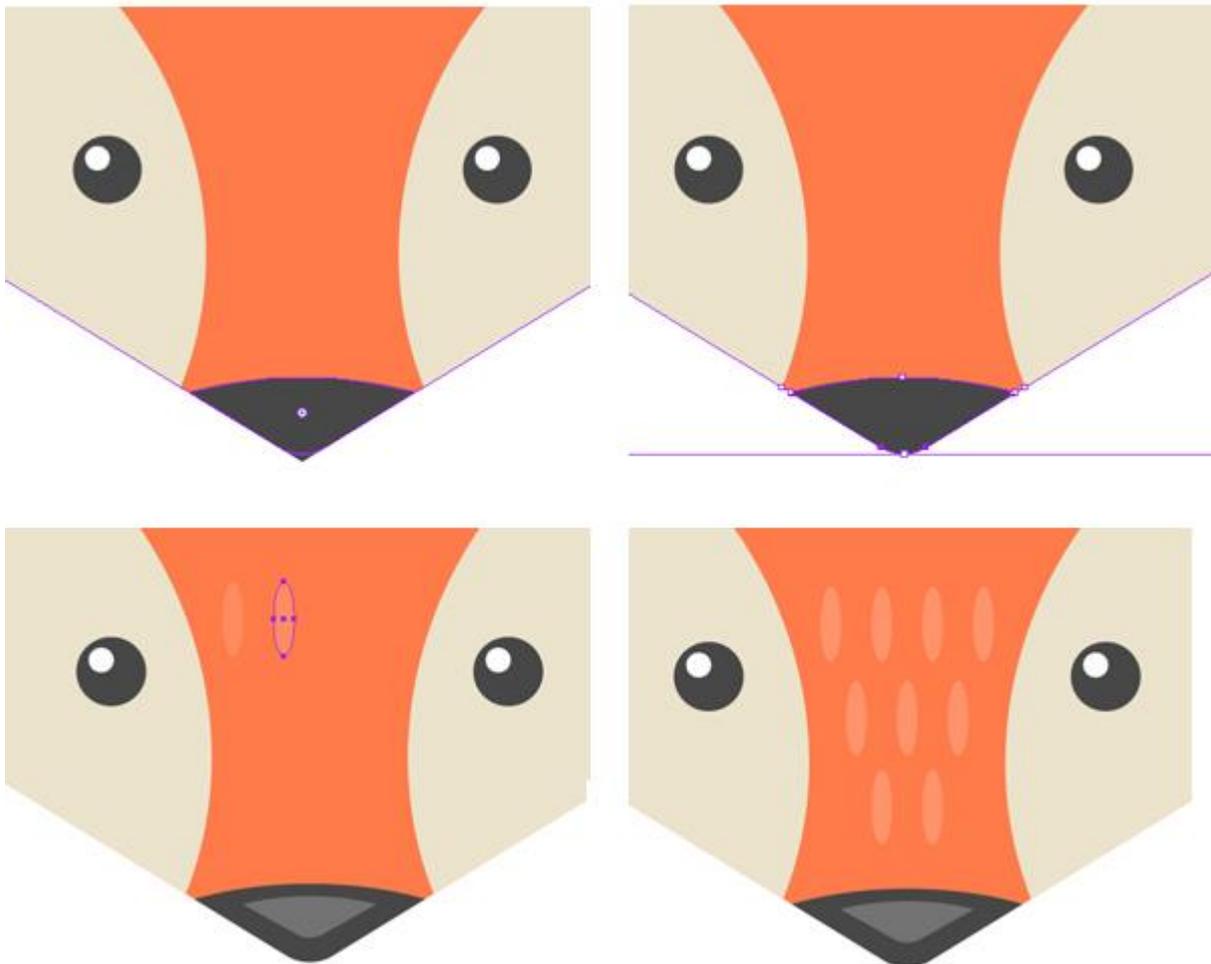


## Step 4

Make the tip of the nose a bit rounded with the help of the Live Corners function. And let's add some more details to our fox!

Make a small squashed ellipse of a lighter-orange color, and place it at the left side of the nose-bridge. Select the shape, hold **Alt-Shift** and drag the ellipse to the right, making a copy. Press **Control-D** twice to form two more copies. Make two more rows of ellipses, placing them in a crisscrossed position. This way we depict a stylized fur on the fox's nose.

Don't forget to add a gentle highlight to the nose by forming a smaller and lighter shape on top of the nose.



## Step 5

Add a gentle shadow to the right side of our cunning foxie.



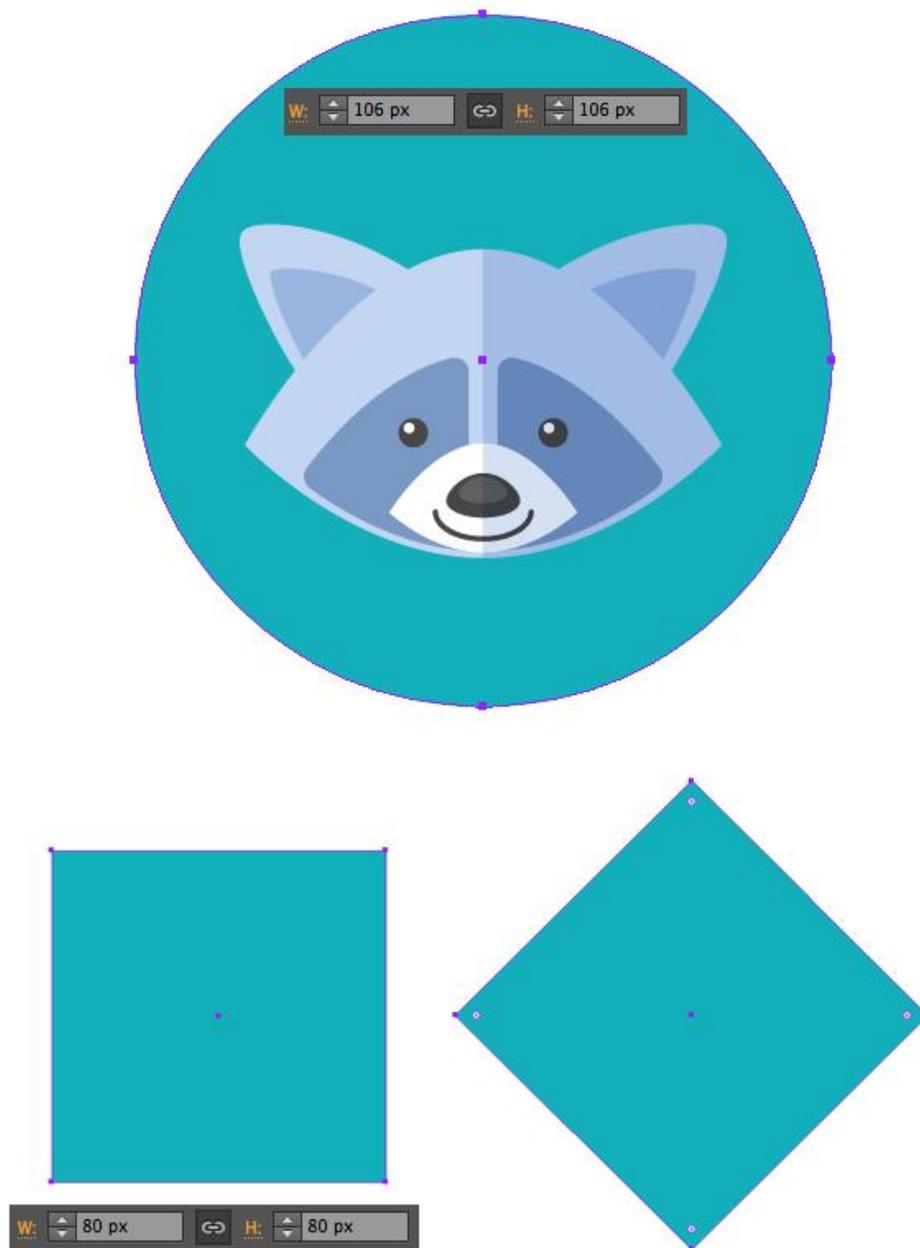
## 7. How to Create Icons With Long Shadows

### Step 1

Now that we have six flat-style animal portraits, let's place them on a set of colorful circles, creating icons.

Make a turquoise circle of **106 x 106 px** size for the icon's base, and put the raccoon's head in the center.

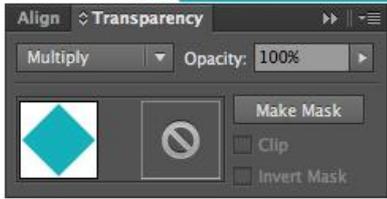
Create an **80 x 80 px** square for the shadow base and rotate it to **45 degrees** by holding down **Shift**.



## Step 2

Switch the **Blending Mode** of the square to **Multiply**, making it semi-transparent, and place the shape above the raccoon. Make the shape a bit narrower, if needed, and move it around, finding the two spots where the shape overlaps the head. In our case, it is the tip of the right ear and the left side of the face. Add two anchor points at these spots using the **Add Anchor Point Tool (+)**, and then switch to the **Delete Anchor Point Tool (-)** and delete those unneeded anchor points at the top of the rectangle, hiding the top of the shape beneath the raccoon's head.

Place the shadow under the head, delete the unneeded piece outside the icon with the **Shape Builder Tool (Shift-M)** and—voilà!—our fancy icon with a trendy flat shadow is finished! Create the circle icons for all the rest of the animals using the same simple techniques.



# Great Job! Our Set of Flat Animal Icons Is Completed!

This was fun, wasn't it? I hope you've enjoyed creating these cute flat animals from one and the same shape and learned some new tips and tricks, playing around with ellipses, the **Pathfinder** panel and the **Shape Builder Tool**! Stay tuned for new tutorials, and don't forget to show your result in the comment below!

