How to work with layers

Like Adobe Photoshop CS6 and other Adobe products, Adobe InDesign CS6 features layers that can help you separate content in complex projects. At the very least, you can use layers to separate text from artwork so you can view each separately. You can also lock layers to ensure you do not make inadvertent changes to one layer as you edit another layer.

Moving graphics frames to an artwork layer

Separating text from artwork layers is a useful workflow best-practice when working with print documents.

To move graphics frames to another layer:

1. Start InDesign and open a document that contains text and artwork.
2. Choose Window > Layers to display the Layers panel (**Figure 1**).
3. Click the Create New Layer button to add a new layer.
4. Double-click the new layer to edit it.

   The Layer Options dialog box appears (**Figure 2**).
5. In the Name text box, enter **Artwork**.

   You can also change the layer's color. The layer's color appears in the Layers panel. All frames located in the layer are outlined in the same color. In the example (**Figure 2**), the layer is red.
6. Click OK.
7. Repeat steps 3–6, naming the new layer **Text**.
8. Click the Selection tool in the Tools panel (**Figure 3**).
9. Save the document.

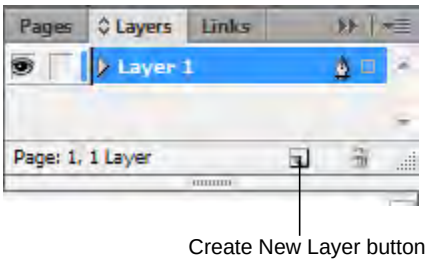

Figure 1 Layers panel

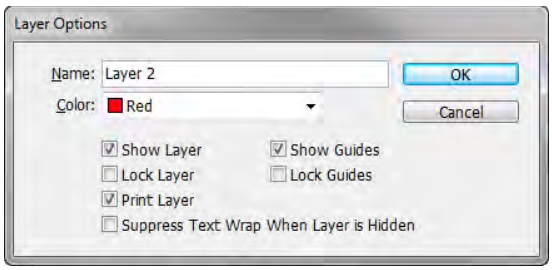

Figure 2 Layer Options dialog box

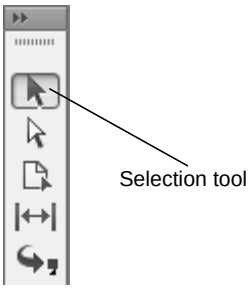

Figure 3 Tools panel

10. Hold down the Shift key and click the edges of all the graphics frames in your layout (**Figure 4**).

Note: Do not select the text frames.

Now you're ready to move all the artwork into the Artwork layer. First you'll remove the artwork from layer 1 and copy it to the clipboard, and then you'll paste it into the Artwork layer.

11. Choose Edit > Cut.

This removes the artwork from the page and copies it into the clipboard.

12. In the Layers panel, click the Artwork layer to select it (**Figure 5**).

13. Choose Edit > Paste In Place.

The artwork appears on the page in its original position, but it is now in the Artwork layer (**Figure 6**).

14. Repeat steps 10–13 to move all text frames to the Text layer.

Figure 4 Artwork selected in the layout

Figure 5 Artwork layer selected in the Layers panel

Figure 6 Artwork pasted into place

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Hiding layers

After you place content into a layer, you can make the content disappear temporarily. You can use this feature to focus on one set of content. You can also use it to try different choices. For example, you could create two layers for artwork with the same frames, name the layers Artwork 1 and Artwork 2, and then show or hide these layers to try different images.

To hide a layer:

1. In the Layers panel, click the Toggles Visibility icon in the left column next to the Text layer.

   The icon disappears (**Figure 7**).

   The frames on the Text layer—the text frames—disappear from the layout (**Figure 8**).

   Note: In order for the text frames to disappear, you need to have first moved them into the text layer (as you did in the previous section).

2. Click the Toggles Visibility column next to the Text layer to view the contents of the layer.

   The text frames reappear.

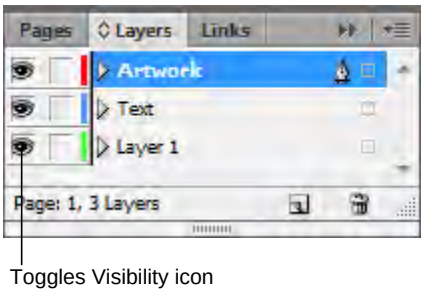

Figure 7 Toggles Visibility deselected for Text layer

Figure 8 Text layer hidden

Locking layers

When you lock a layer, the content in that layer is protected from changes.

To lock a layer:

1. If the Layers panel is not already visible, choose Window > Layers to display it.
2. Click the column to the immediate left of the Artwork layer (the column to the right of the Toggles Visibility column).

   A padlock icon appears in the column (**Figure 9**).
3. Click the Selection tool in the Tools panel.
4. Try to select one of the frames in the Artwork layer (the graphics frames) by clicking on the frame.

   Because the layer that contains these frames is locked, you cannot select them.

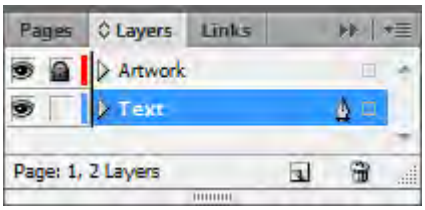

Figure 9 Artwork layer locked

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