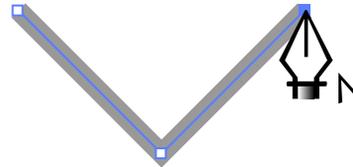# Pen Tool Technique
for Illustrator, InDesign, and Photoshop

This is the Pen tool with an *x* beside it, showing it is ready to draw. In Illustrator only, you should first click on the Direct Selection tool; then click the Pen tool.
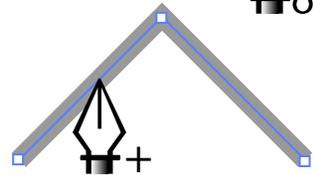
Click to create anchor points. Each next click creates a straight line segment or sub-path. While drawing, the pen shows a *delta shape*.
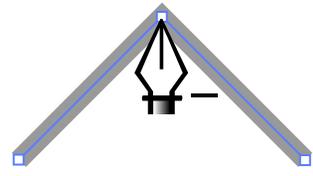
Hover the Pen tool over the first anchor point and it shows the *close path* symbol. Click or drag to close. A closed path is a rectangle, ellipse, polygon, or other shape.
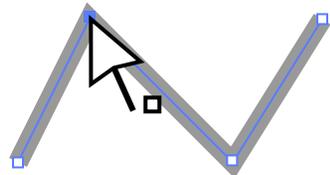
Hover the Pen tool over an existing sub-path or line segment, and the Pen tool will change to the *Add Anchor Point* tool. See the plus + sign. Click to add a new anchor point.
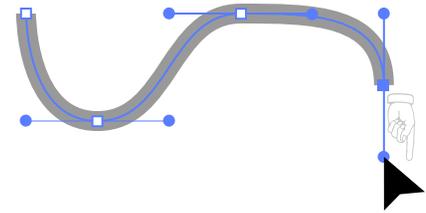
Hover the Pen tool over an existing anchor point and it will change to the *Delete Anchor Point* tool. See the minus sign. Click to delete an anchor from a open or closed path.
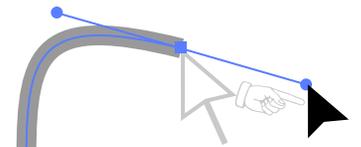
To move an anchor point, press the Cmd/Ctrl key, and the Pen changes to the white *Direct Selection* tool. In Illustrator, click the Direct Selection tool before using the Pen tool.
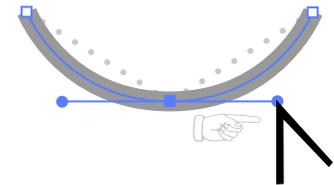
Drag to create anchor points with Bézier direction points that control curved lines. Dragging the mouse button sets both the anchor and the direction point.
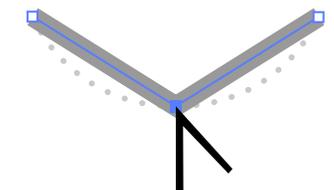
To adjust a direction point, press the Cmd/Ctrl key and the Pen tool changes to the *Direct Selection* tool. Drag the handle to adjust the symmetrical curve. Notice the *arrowhead icon* as you drag.
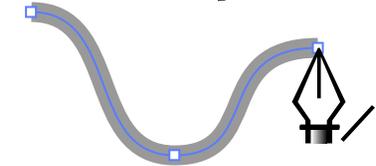
To convert a sharp corner to a curve, hold the Opt/Alt key to get the *Convert Anchor Point* tool; then drag, pulling direction points out of the anchor.

To convert a curve to a sharp corner, hold down the Opt/Alt key and click the curve anchor point. The direction points retract; and it becomes a sharp corner.

To join onto an open path, hover the Pen tool over an end anchor point. The tool shows a *forward slash*. Click or drag to continue the pen drawing.

To join two separate open paths, hover over the end anchor point of the first path and click; then click the other path's end anchor point.