STRETCHLEARN · WORKBOOK

Affinity Designer — Workbook

This workbook turns the Affinity Designer course into two finished deliverables: a small logo system and a multi-artboard asset set exported for both print and screen. Each section maps to one course module and moves you from document setup and the Personas, through vector drawing and assembly, to raster detail and production export. Work in a single Affinity Designer file and keep an editable master copy before any destructive step such as expanding strokes or converting text to curves.

Getting Oriented in Affinity Designer

Set up correct documents, learn the workspace, and become fluent switching between the three Personas.

Worksheet: New Document Decision Sheet

Before creating each document, fill in this sheet so the colour mode, DPI, units, and bleed are right from the start. Complete one column for a screen project and one for a print project.

Project type (screen / print)

Colour format (RGB/8 or CMYK/8)

Colour profile (sRGB / SWOP / FOGRA39)

DPI (72 or 300)

Document units (px / mm / in)

Trim dimensions (W x H)

Bleed per edge (0 mm or 3 mm)

Exercise: Persona Switching Drill

Open a blank document. Click each Persona button in turn and watch the Tools panel change. Draw a shape in the Designer Persona, paint a stroke on a new pixel layer in the Pixel Persona, then open the Export Persona and note the Slices panel. Return to the Designer Persona and confirm your work persisted.

• Which tools appear in the Designer Persona that vanish in the Pixel Persona?

• What did the context toolbar show when you selected a shape versus the Pen?

• Where does the Export Persona expect you to define what gets exported?

Checklist: Workspace Ready

[ ] Installed Affinity Designer version 2 and opened it
[ ] Created a screen document (1920x1080 px, RGB, 72 DPI)
[ ] Created a print document (A5, CMYK, 300 DPI, 3 mm bleed)
[ ] Located the Layers, Colour, Stroke, and Transform panels
[ ] Practised switching all three Personas in one file
[ ] Know how to Reset Studio if the panels get messy

Vector Drawing Fundamentals

Build precision with shapes and the Transform panel, master the Pen tool, and finish paths with nodes, corners, and strokes.

Exercise: Pen Tool Curve Practice

Trace a simple shape (a leaf, a number, or a single letter) using the Pen tool in standard mode. Place nodes only where the curve changes direction and use as few as possible. Do not add a node to fix a wobble; instead adjust the existing Bezier handles. Close the path and compare your node count to your first attempt.

• How few nodes could you use and still get a smooth shape?

• Where were you tempted to add an extra node, and how did adjusting handles fix it instead?

• Which nodes did you make smooth and which sharp, and why?

Exercise: Corner Tool and Stroke Drill

Draw a rectangle, then use the Corner tool to round its corners live, trying rounded, straight (chamfer), and concave styles. Give it a 2 px stroke aligned to the inside, then duplicate it and run Layer then Expand Stroke on the copy. Observe what you can and cannot edit afterwards.

• How did inside versus centre stroke alignment change the crispness on the pixel grid?

• What became uneditable after Expand Stroke?

• Which corner style suited the badge best and why?

Worksheet: Per-Shape Precision Log

For each key shape you draw, record its Transform values and stroke settings so the set stays consistent and pixel-aligned.

Shape name

X / Y position

W / H size

Rotation (degrees)

Stroke width and alignment

Line cap and join

Snapped to pixel grid (yes/no)

Checklist: Vector Fundamentals Locked

[ ] Drew shapes and positioned them with exact Transform values
[ ] Held Shift to constrain and Ctrl/Cmd to scale from centre
[ ] Drew a closed path with the Pen using minimal nodes
[ ] Edited nodes and handles with the Node tool (A)
[ ] Rounded corners live with the Corner tool
[ ] Set fill, stroke, cap, join, and alignment in the Stroke panel
[ ] Kept an editable master before expanding any stroke

Building Real Artwork: Logos and Layouts

Assemble shapes with Geometry operations, make them reusable with Symbols and Assets, and lay out variations on artboards.

Exercise: Boolean Build Challenge

Build three marks entirely from primitive shapes and Geometry operations: a crescent moon (Subtract), a cross or plus (Add two rectangles), and an abstract leaf (Intersect two circles). Create at least one as a non-destructive Compound by holding Alt while clicking the operation, then edit a child shape to confirm the result updates live.

• Which operation built each mark, and why?

• What changed when you edited a child inside the Compound?

• When would you commit to a destructive operation instead?

Worksheet: Logo System Planning Sheet

Plan the variations your logo system needs before drawing artboards, so every version shares one source where possible.

Primary mark concept

Variations needed (full colour / one colour / reversed)

Elements to make Symbols (synced everywhere)

Elements to store as Assets (reused parts)

Global colour swatches (name and value)

Wordmark font and whether it will be converted to curves

Exercise: Symbols and Artboards Setup

Turn your logo mark into a Symbol and place three instances across three artboards (primary full colour, single-colour black, and reversed white-on-dark). Edit the Symbol master once and confirm all instances update. Add the wordmark with Artistic Text, then duplicate it and Convert to Curves on the copy.

• Did editing the Symbol master update every artboard instance?

• When did you need to toggle Sync off for a one-off change?

• What looked different after converting the wordmark to curves?

Checklist: Artwork Assembly Complete

[ ] Built marks from primitives using Add, Subtract, Intersect, Divide
[ ] Used at least one non-destructive Compound shape
[ ] Created a Symbol and verified synced instances
[ ] Used Constraints on a resizable group (for example a button)
[ ] Saved reusable parts into an Assets category
[ ] Created named artboards for each logo variation
[ ] Kept an editable text copy before converting to curves

Raster, Effects, and Production Export

Add raster texture in the Pixel Persona, keep effects non-destructive, manage colour, and export production-ready files.

Exercise: Raster Texture Pass

Switch to the Pixel Persona, add a new pixel layer above one of your shapes, and paint a soft texture or shadow with a low-opacity round brush. Clip the pixel layer to the vector shape so the texture respects the edges. Switch back to the Designer Persona and confirm the vectors are untouched.

• How did the document DPI affect the painting resolution available?

• What did clipping the pixel layer to the shape change?

• Where would raster texture beat trying to build the same effect as a vector?

Worksheet: Non-Destructive Effects Log

Record the effects, filters, and adjustments you apply and confirm each remains editable so you can re-tune later.

Layer or object

Effect or filter applied (e.g. Outer Shadow, Gaussian Blur)

Key setting value (e.g. blur 4 px)

Clipped to one layer or affects stack

Still editable / removable (yes/no)

Exercise: Multi-Format Export Run

Export your work three ways: an SVG of the primary logo via File then Export, a PDF/X of a print version with bleed and crop marks enabled, and a multi-density PNG set of your asset artboards using the Export Persona with slices at 1x, 2x, and 3x. Open each exported file outside Affinity to confirm it looks correct.

• Did the print PDF include your 3 mm bleed and crop marks?

• Which format did each destination (web, print, app) need and why?

• Did any SVG export with stray groups or excessive decimals to simplify?

Checklist: Production Handoff Ready

[ ] Added raster detail on a pixel layer clipped to the artwork
[ ] Applied at least one non-destructive effect and one live filter
[ ] Built a palette of global colour swatches and applied it
[ ] Confirmed colour mode matches each destination (RGB vs CMYK)
[ ] Exported SVG, PDF/X with bleed, and 1x/2x/3x PNG
[ ] Embedded or converted text so no fonts go missing
[ ] Opened every exported file to verify it outside Affinity

Your Action Plan

1. Install Affinity Designer 2 and create correct screen and print documents
2. Practise switching the three Personas until it is automatic
3. Drill the Pen tool to draw smooth shapes with minimal nodes
4. Master the Node and Corner tools and the Stroke panel settings
5. Assemble logo marks from primitives using Geometry operations
6. Turn repeating elements into Symbols and save reusable parts as Assets
7. Lay out logo variations across named artboards with Artistic Text
8. Add raster texture in the Pixel Persona, clipped to your shapes
9. Keep all effects, filters, and adjustments non-destructive and build global swatches
10. Export SVG, PDF/X with bleed, and multi-density PNG, then audit every file outside Affinity