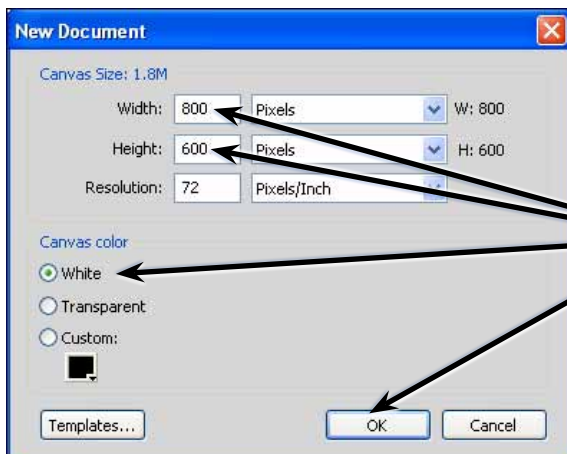# The Pen Tool

The PEN TOOL is one of Adobe FireWorks' more difficult tools, but a necessary tool for creating efficient and more detailed drawings. So, if you are intending to use FireWorks to its fullest, it is worth spending the time to learn the PEN TOOL.
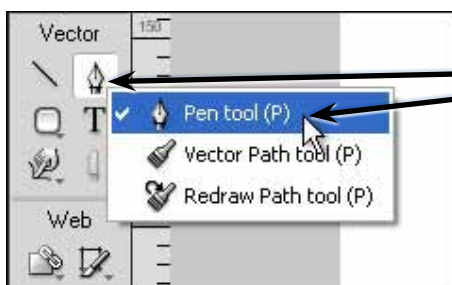
Starting a New Document

1   Load Adobe FireWorks or close the current document.

2   In the CREATE NEW section of the WELCOME screen click on FIREWORKS DOCUMENT to start a new document.
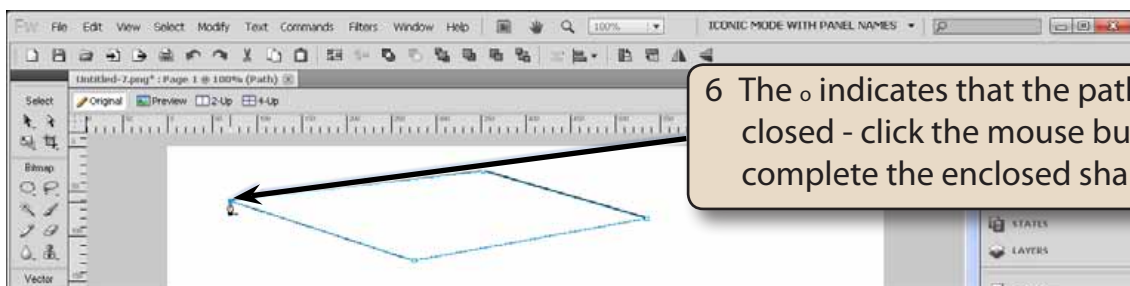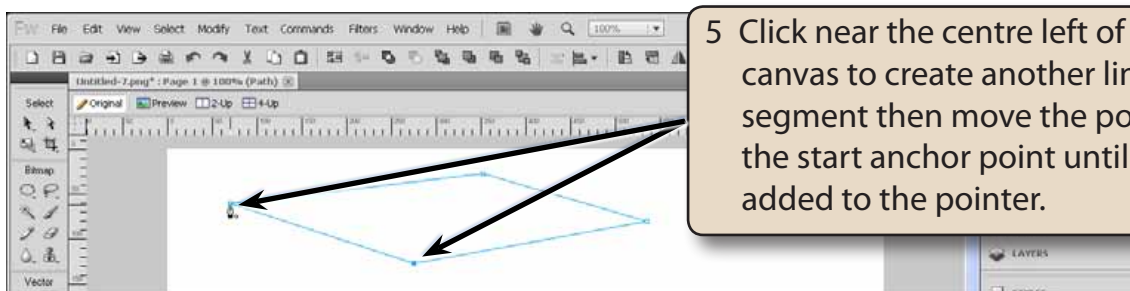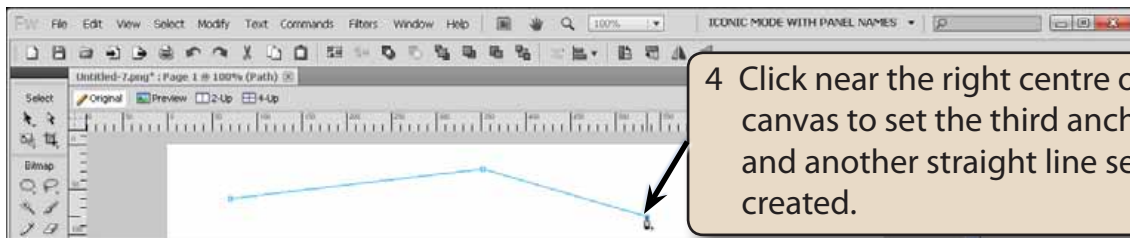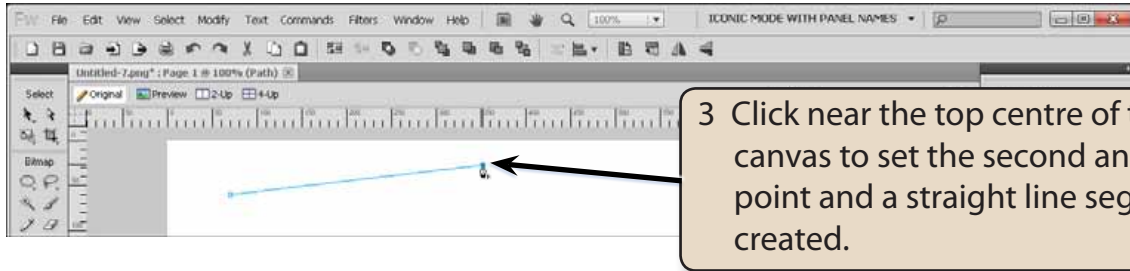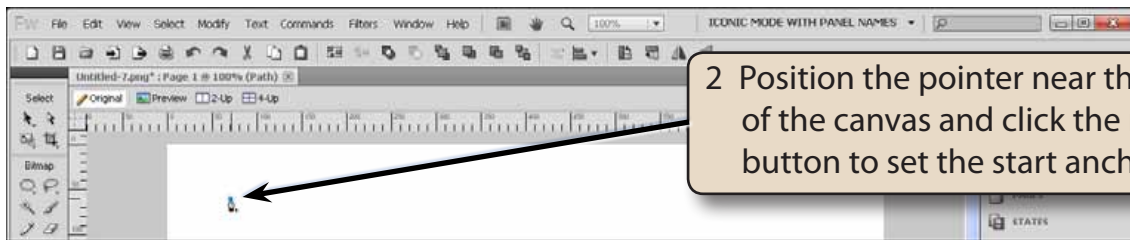

3 Set the WIDTH to 800 pixels, the HEIGHT to 600 pixels, the CANVAS COLOUR to WHITE and select OK.
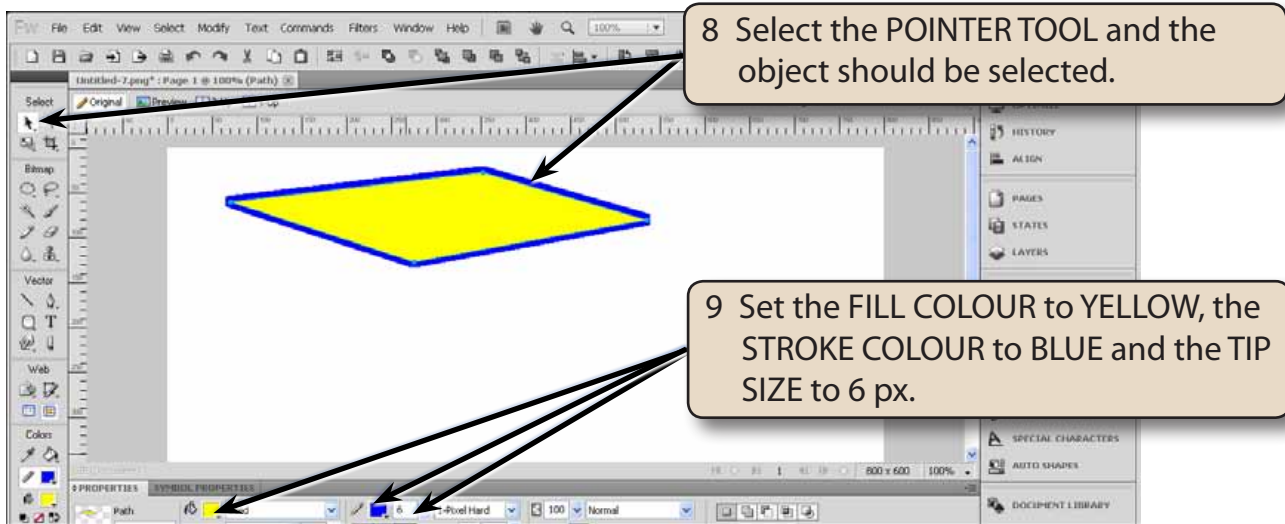
Drawing Straight Paths

The PEN TOOL can be used to quickly create joined straight lines or objects with straight sides.

1 Select the PEN TOOL from the VECTOR section of the TOOLS panel.

2 Position the pointer near the top left of the canvas and click the mouse button to set the start anchor point.

3 Click near the top centre of the canvas to set the second anchor point and a straight line segment is created.

4 Click near the right centre of the canvas to set the third anchor point and another straight line segment is created.

5 Click near the centre left of the canvas to create another line segment then move the pointer over the start anchor point until an o is added to the pointer.

6 The o indicates that the path will be closed - click the mouse button to complete the enclosed shape.
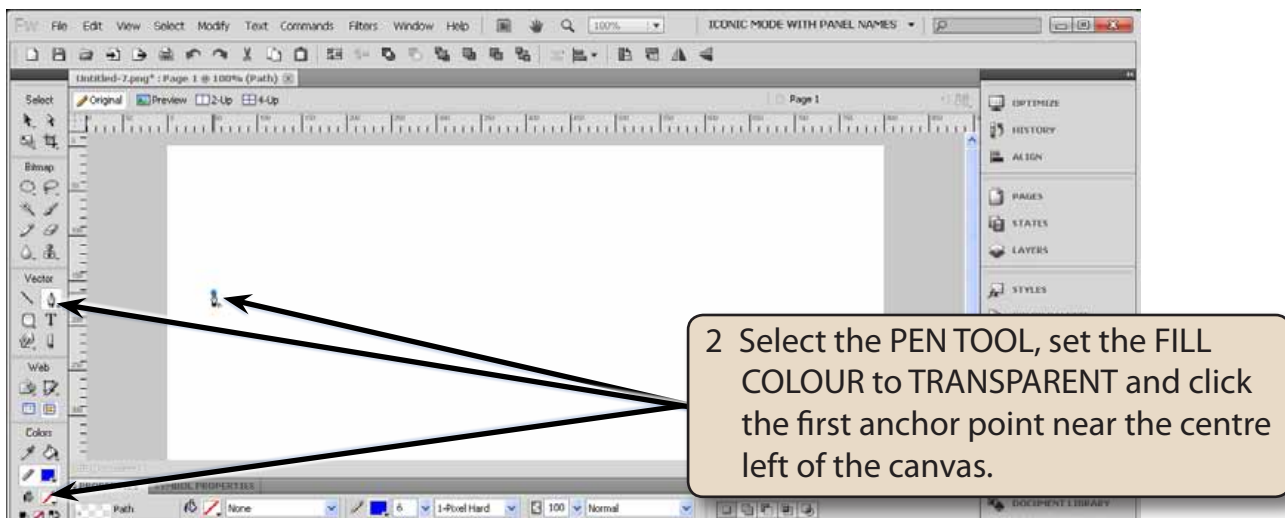
© Guided Computer Tutorials, 2011

7 You can now apply a fill colour to the object or move the object around the canvas like other objects you have created.

8 Select the POINTER TOOL and the object should be selected.

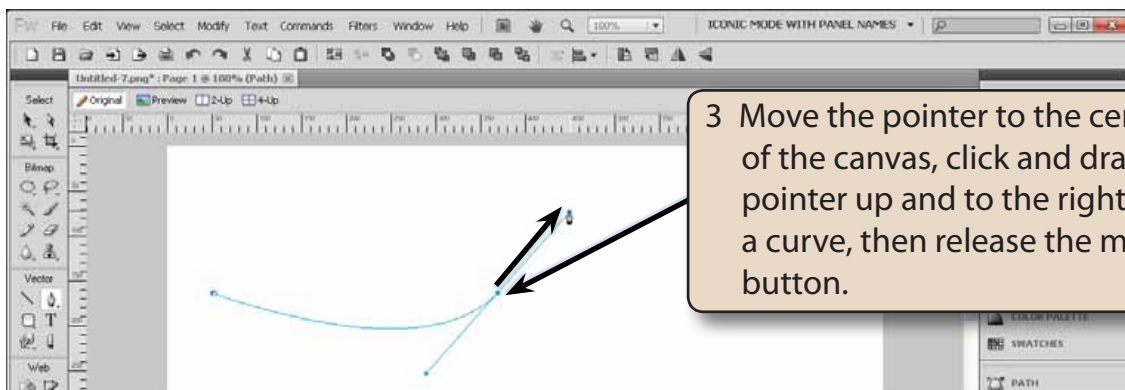9 Set the FILL COLOUR to YELLOW, the STROKE COLOUR to BLUE and the TIP SIZE to 6 px.

Drawing Curved Paths

The PEN TOOL can be used to create curves with a minimum number of anchor points. This means that the shapes will print faster and be more accurate.
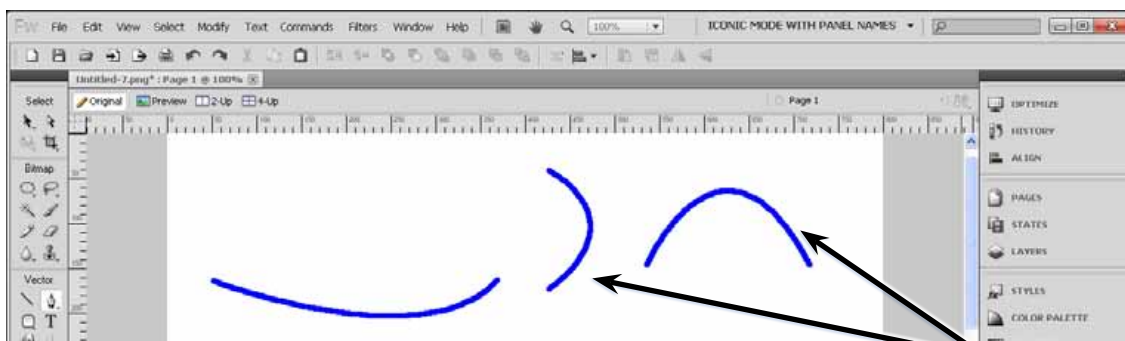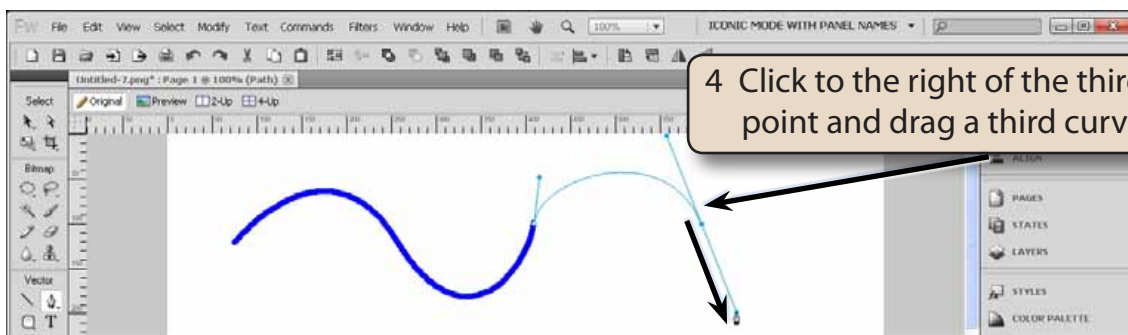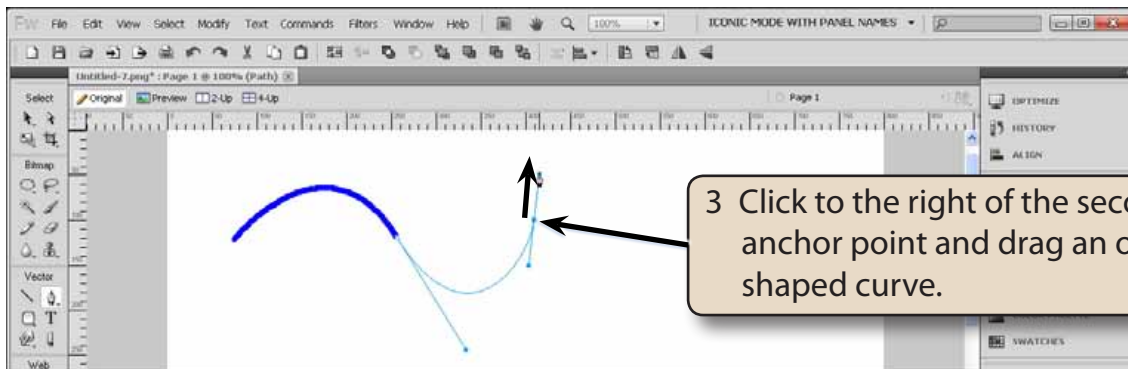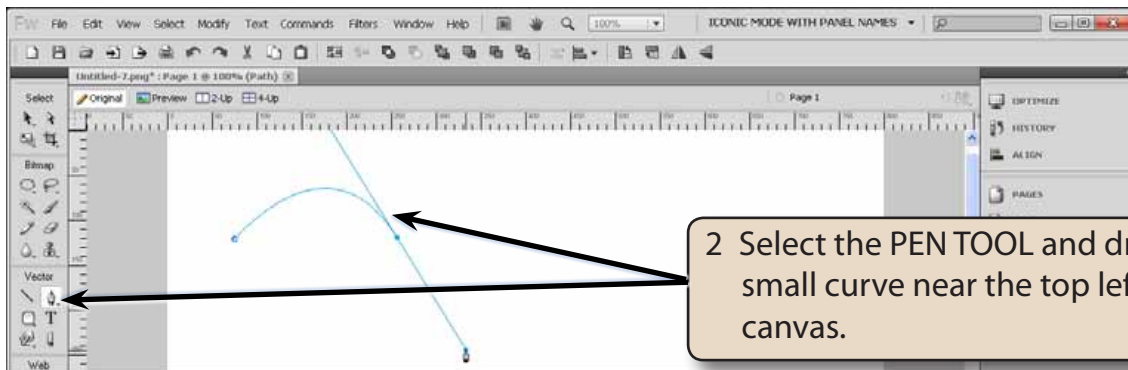
1 Delete the previous shape.

2 Select the PEN TOOL, set the FILL COLOUR to TRANSPARENT and click the first anchor point near the centre left of the canvas.

3 Move the pointer to the centre of the canvas, click and drag the pointer up and to the right to create a curve, then release the mouse button.

NOTE: i When you click and drag an anchor point, lines (called Bezier lines) are added to the point and these can be dragged to create the curve.

ii In general, you drag in the opposite direction that you want the curve to take.

4 Display the SELECT menu and select DESELECT to set the curve. You can press CTRL+D or COMMAND+D as a shortcut.

5 Experiment with creating some other curves using the PEN TOOL.

Drawing Multiple Connected Curves

1   Use the POINTER TOOL to delete all the objects on the canvas.

2 Select the PEN TOOL and draw a small curve near the top left of the canvas.

3 Click to the right of the second anchor point and drag an opposite shaped curve.

4 Click to the right of the third anchor point and drag a third curve.

5   Select DESELECT from the SELECT menu to set the curves.