

Useful Tools

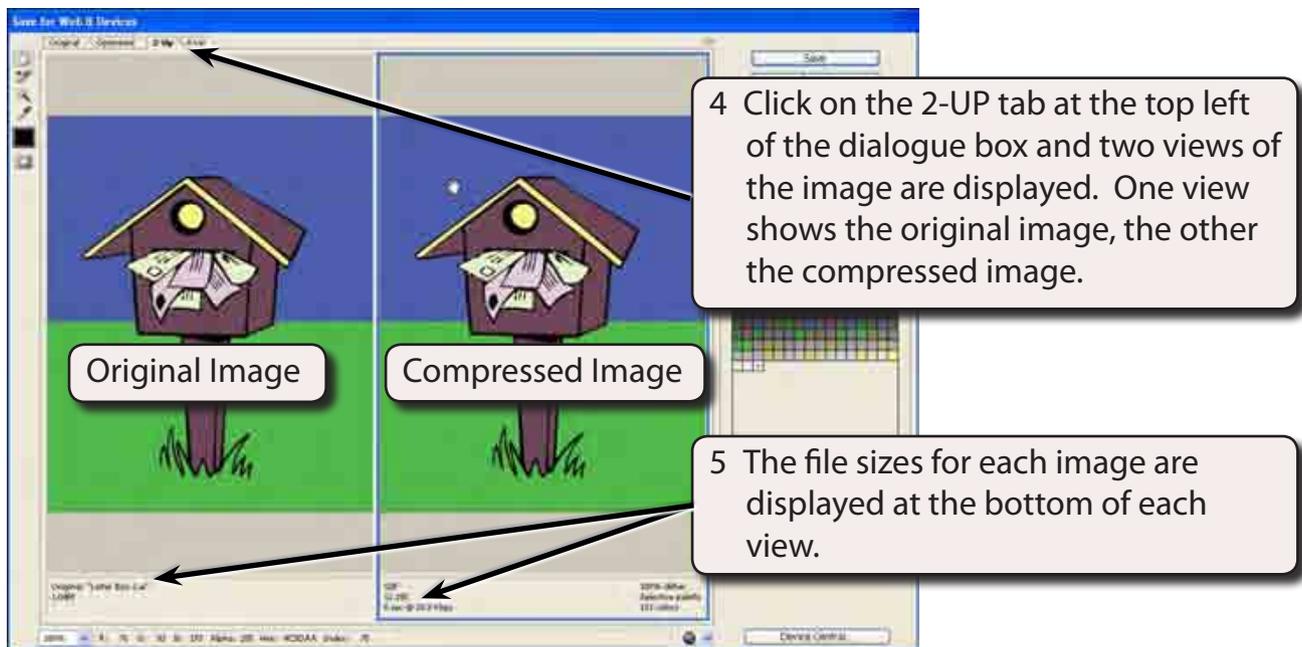
This chapter will look at some additional useful tools that Adobe Illustrator provides. It includes saving images for the web, creating graphs, using Photoshop effects and applying graphics styles to objects.

Saving Images for the Web

One of the uses of Illustrator is in the creation of graphics for use in web sites. These graphics need to be the smallest size possible whilst still retaining their quality. The SAVE FOR WEB & DEVICES command helps you achieve this more accurately than guessing the amount of compression to apply to an image.

A The Save for Web & Devices Dialogue Box

- 1 Load Adobe Illustrator CS4 or close the current document.
- 2 Open the LETTER BOX 2 document from your STORAGE folder.
- 3 Display the FILE menu and select SAVE FOR WEB & DEVICES.

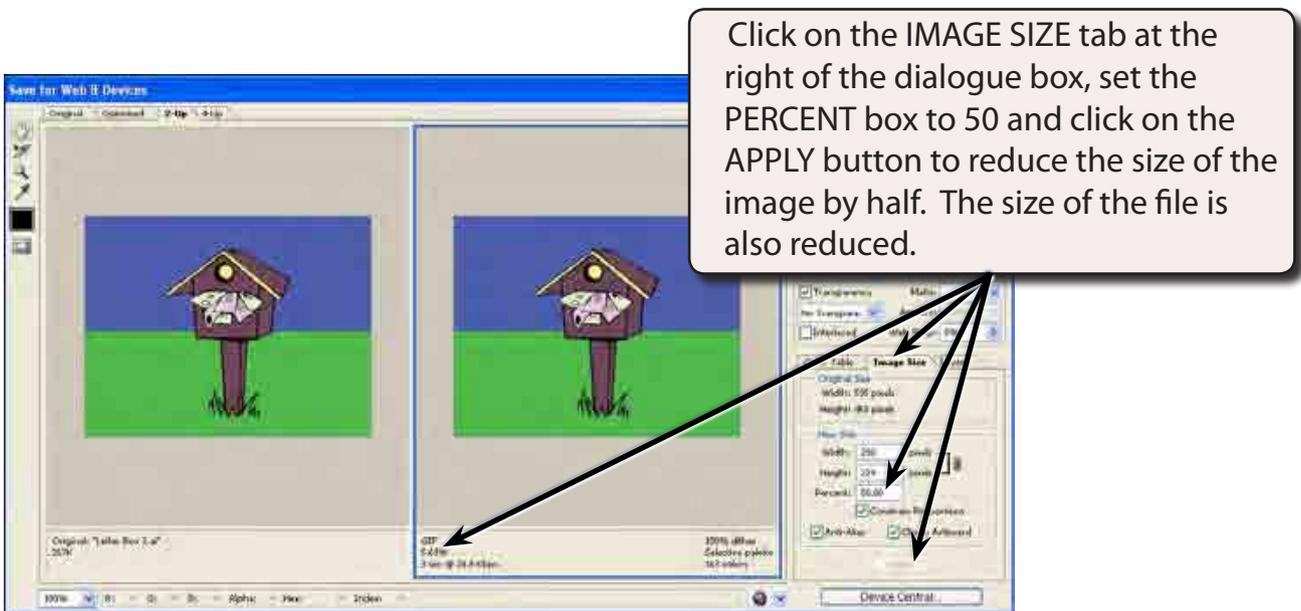


B JPEG or GIF Formats

The two most common formats used for web graphics are JPEG (Joint Photography Experts Group) and GIF (Graphic Interchange Format), and you need to decide which is better for the image you are dealing with. In general, JPEG is used for photographs or images where many different colours are used, GIF is better for images where less colours are used. JPEG files have a white background added to them whereas GIF files can be set to a transparent background.

C Setting the Size of the Image

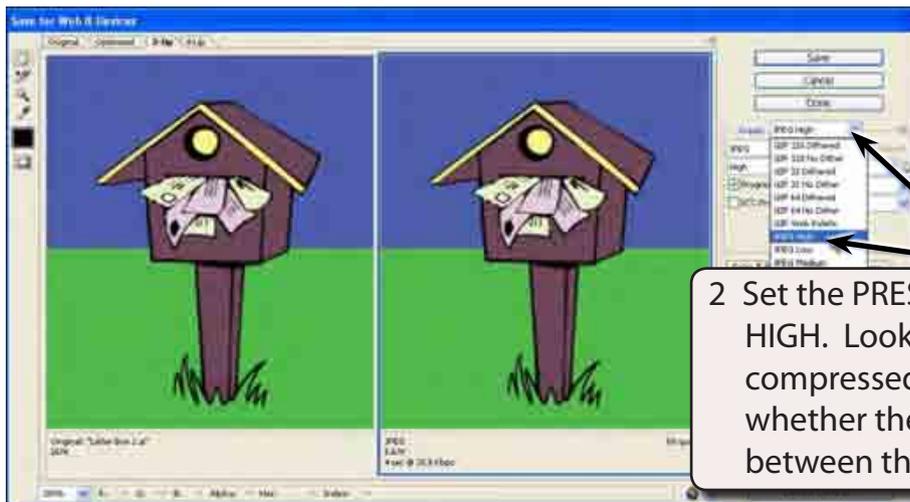
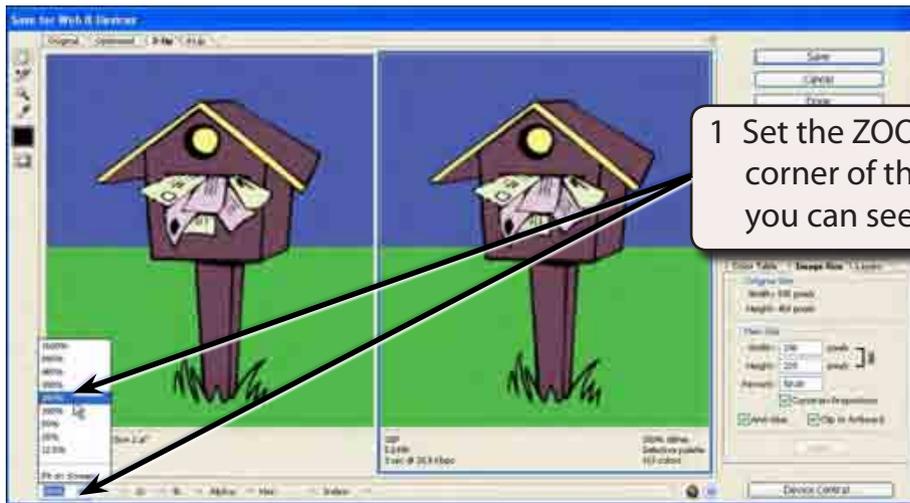
The larger the image the larger is its file size. Usually on web sites you do not need very large graphic images that take up the whole screen. So you can reduce the file size by reducing the size of the graphic.



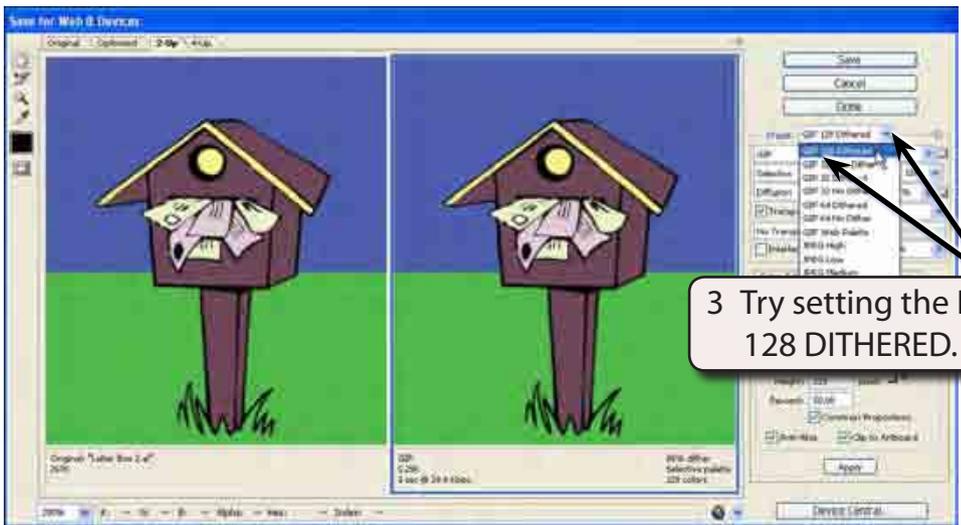
NOTE: You could have set the WIDTH and HEIGHT boxes to specific values to achieve similar results.

D Compression Settings

You can set the quality of the image in the PRESET section and change the settings whilst looking at the images in the two view frames to see if there is significant differences between them.

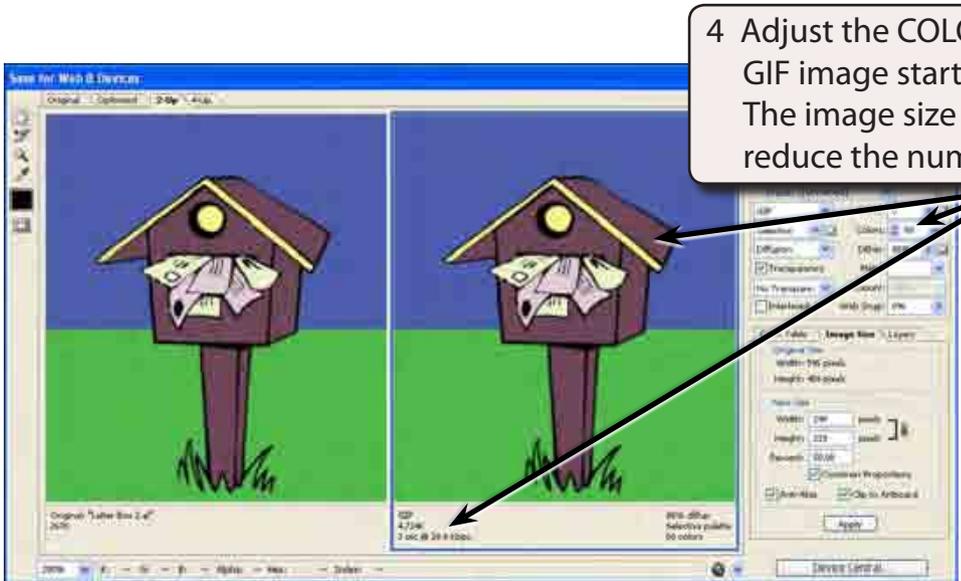


NOTE: JPEG compression is usually better for photographs. It can be used for images as well, but if there is no background colour, a white background is inserted, which can be a problem if the image is to be placed on a coloured background in a web site.



3 Try setting the PRESET box to GIF 128 DITHERED.

NOTE: GIF compression is usually suitable for sketches and images. It does not insert a white background if there is no background in the image.



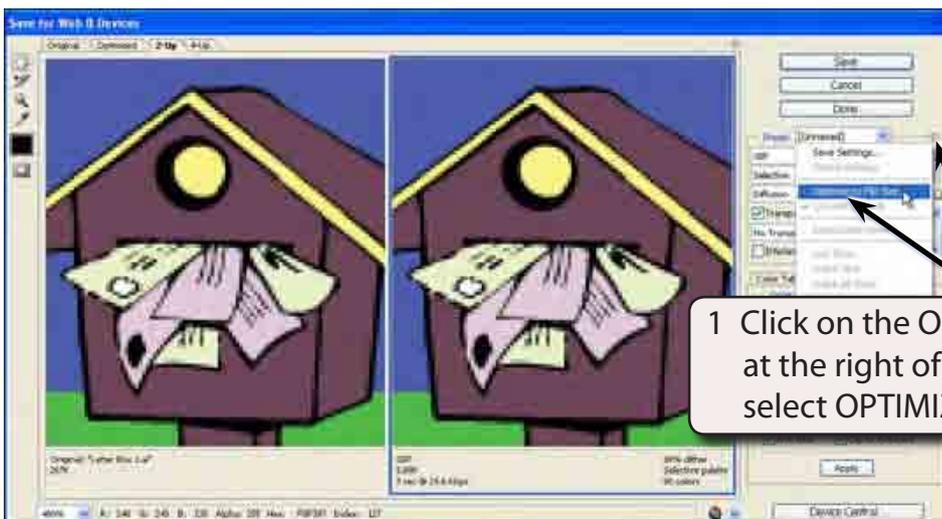
4 Adjust the COLOURS box until the GIF image starts to become 'blurry'. The image size is reduced as you reduce the number of colours.

5 Set the zoom to 400%, drag the letter boxes into view and increase the COLOURS until you can't see much difference between the two views.



E Optimizing the File Size

You can enter a desired file size and let the program choose the settings for you. This includes deciding whether a GIF or JPEG format would be better.



1 Click on the OPTIMIZE MENU icon at the right of the PRESET box and select OPTIMIZE TO FILE SIZE.