# Illustrator Tutorial: Holland Tulip Field

This tutorial will show you how to create a beautiful Holland landscape filled full of colorful tulips and a traditional Dutch windmill. We will start by creating a red tulip flower with the Gradient Mesh tool and then make yellow and purple color variations of the tulips. Then we will create the windmill using simple gradients and solid fills and finally we will arrange all the elements to complete our landscape. I have included steps that are crucial to get the desired look assuming that the user is familiar with basic Illustrator drawing and coloring tools. So let's start creating!
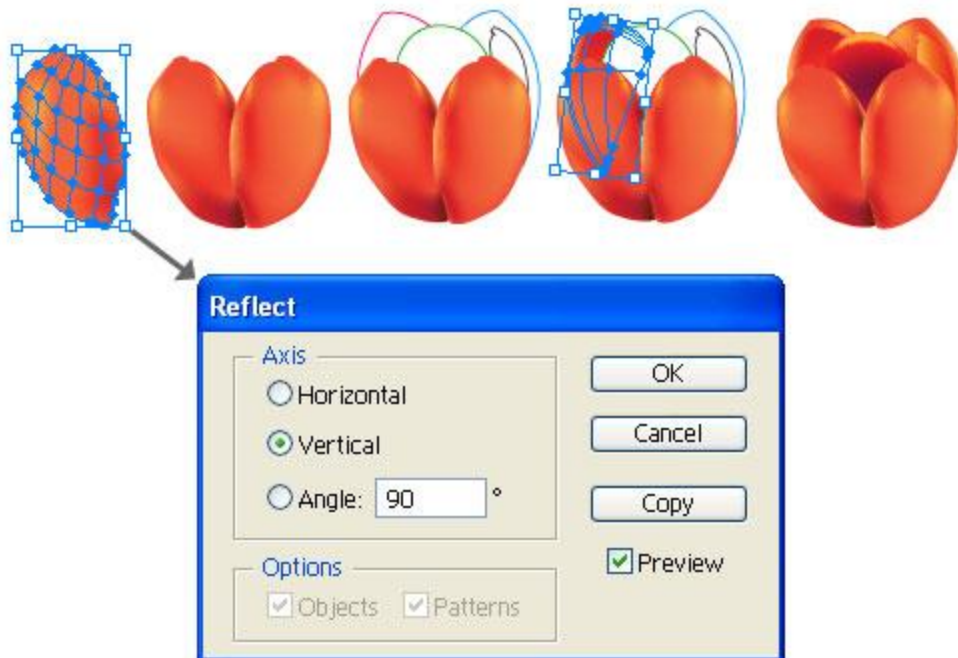
Drawing the Tulips

1. Let's begin with the red tulip flower. Draw a flower petal with the Pen tool (P) as shown and fill it with a red middle tone in the petal. I have filled #F1643A. Select the petal and create a gradient mesh by selecting Object > Create Gradient Mesh from the main menu. In the resulting dialogue box enter values as shown.

Create Gradient Mesh

Rows: 5
Columns: 5
Appearance: Flat
Highlight: 100 %

OK
Cancel
☑ Preview
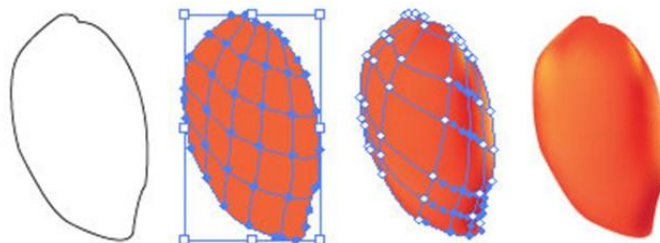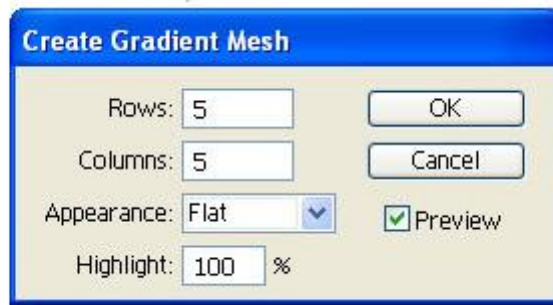
2. To give dimension to the petal, select specific nodes of the petals with the Direct Selection Tool (A) and color them in shades of red. I have also shifted some nodes by selecting them with the Direct Selection tool and using the up and down arrow keys. Add deeper red to nodes in the dark as shown above and add lighter colors to the highlighted parts of the petal. You can add new nodes wherever you feel appropriate by clicking the petal using the Mesh tool (U).

3. Right click the petal we just created and select Transform> Reflect. In the resulting dialogue box select the options as shown and click the Copy button. This creates a copy of the petal and flips it. Arrange the new petal in front of the first one. Add some darker shades to the overlapped petal for visual separation. Draw the other petals with the pen tool as shown and apply the gradient mesh tool to each petal using your judgment. Color them such that the highlighted portions stand out and the darker portions recede. Our red tulip is ready!

Reflect

Axis
◯ Horizontal
◉ Vertical
◯ Angle: 90 °

Options
☑ Objects ☑ Patterns

OK
Cancel
Copy
☑ Preview

4. We will now create the yellow and purple variations of the flower. I have converted the red petals to yellow and purple by gradually selecting nodes and recoloring them. For the yellow tulip select the darkest nodes and fill them with a deep orange like #F26C26. For the middle tone use #F9EC31. Make the highlighted nodes white.

5. Repeat the same process for the purple tulips using shades of purple. For the purple middle tone I have used #C8187F. For the darker nodes I have used #82153C and for the highlights I have used white. The tulips are now ready!

Tulip Stem and Leaves

6. For the stem of the plant draw a slightly bent line with the Pen tool (P) and make the stroke weight 18pts. This will give our stem the desired thickness. Keep the stroke selected and select Object > Path > Outline Stroke from the main menu. Fill the resulting shape with a green gradient as shown. To make the stem a little slender select the top right node with the Direct Selection Tool (A) and shift it a little to the left. Repeat the same with the bottom right node if required. This completes the stem of our tulip plant.

#1D4520   #8BC541   #5AB947

7. Draw the first leaf with a pen tool as shown. Fill the leaf with any color and draw a slightly bent stroke with the pen tool from the tip of the leaf to the bottom dividing it into 2 vertical halves. Select the leaf and the stroke and select Window > Pathfinder > Divide. This will split the leaf into 2 parts and we can now apply different green gradients to each half. Apply gradients with values similar to the stem gradient and make variations in colors to match the leaf colors below. Repeat the same process with the second leaf.
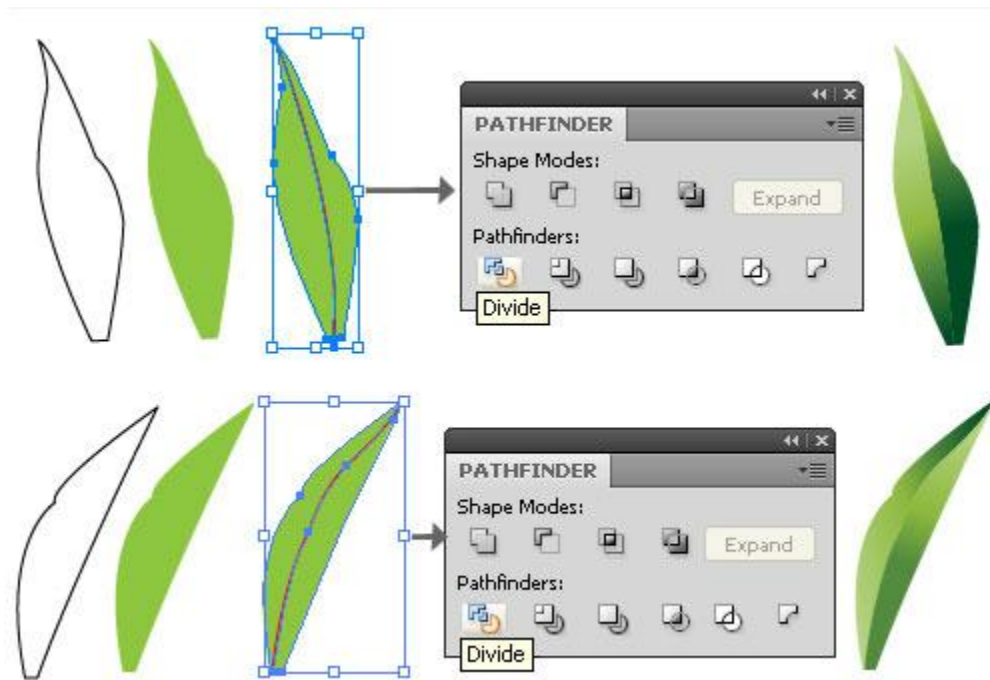
8. To arrange our plant keep the first leaf at the back then place the second leaf on top of it. Arrange the stem behind the front half of the second leaf as shown. The stem now looks as if has grown from between the two leaves. Make sure the bottom nodes of both the leaves and the stem align in a line. This will make our plant look neat.

9. Group the plant we just created and duplicate it 2 times. Arrange the 3 tulips on top of the plant as shown. Our colorful tulip plants are ready!
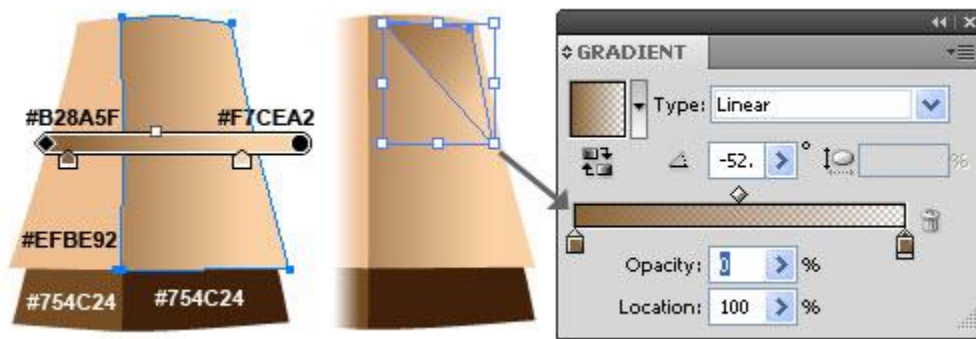
Creating the Windmill

10. It's time to create the windmill now! Our windmill has 4 main parts – base, body, head and fan. It is a good idea to create all the parts in different layers for ease of editing.

11. Draw the base and body of the windmill with the pen tool as shown. Draw a vertical dividing line that divides the body and the base into two parts. Select the two shapes and the dividing line and select Window > Pathfinder > Divide. This will divide the base and body of the windmill into two vertical parts each. Delete extra lines if any.
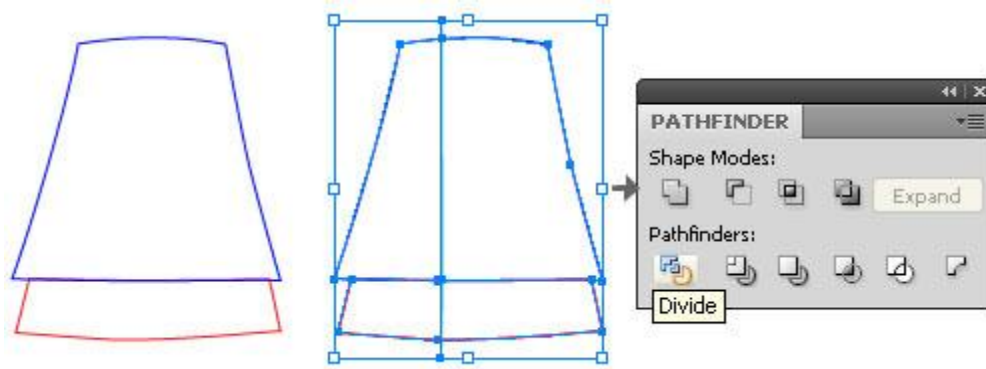
12. Fill each part of the windmill with colors as shown. Then draw a triangular shape over the right side of windmill (for a slight shadow) and fill it with a gradient. Use a darker color like #8A6338 at both ends of the gradient and reduce the opacity of the color at the right end to 0%. This will merge the gradient in the body of the windmill and give our windmill a shadow on its body.


13. On a new layer draw the head of the windmill with the pen tool and fill each part of the head with gradients as shown.
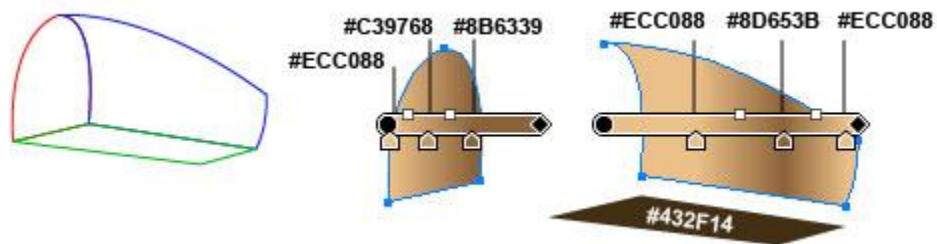

14. With the Ellipse tool (L) draw an ellipse on a new layer to create the centre of the windmill fan. Draw the shapes as shown to give thickness to this centre ellipse. Draw another ellipse at the back to make the base which connects the fan blades. Color the shapes as shown.
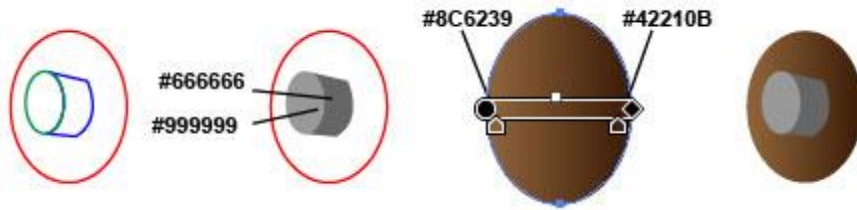
15. Draw the fan blades using the pen tool as shown. The part of the fan which is attached to the centre wheel is narrow and it widens at the outer end. Draw all four blades around the centre wheel and fill them with a orange red gradient as shown. To create the black part of the blade, draw a vertical line which is parallel to one side of the fan blade. Then select the line and the blade shape and use Windows > Pathfinder > Divide. In the resulting smaller shape fill #666666. The windmill fan is ready.
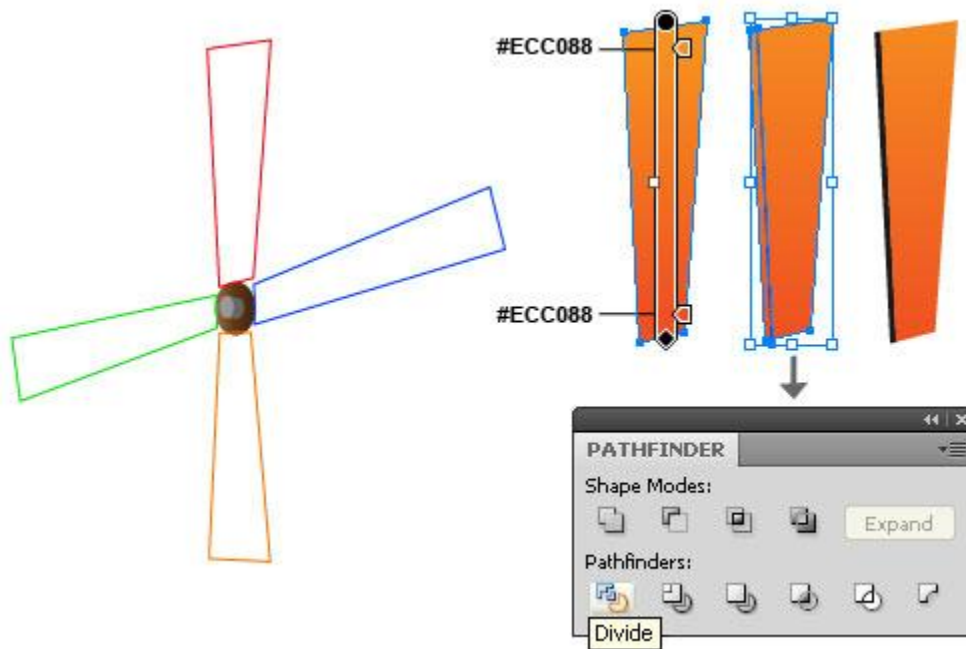

16. There are 2 different windows in the windmill. We will create each of them on a separate layer and then place them on the windmill later. Using the pen tool, draw the windows and fill colors as shown.

#ECC088 #391C0B #807E7D #000000

#402312 #4A361E

#C3996C #BF9768
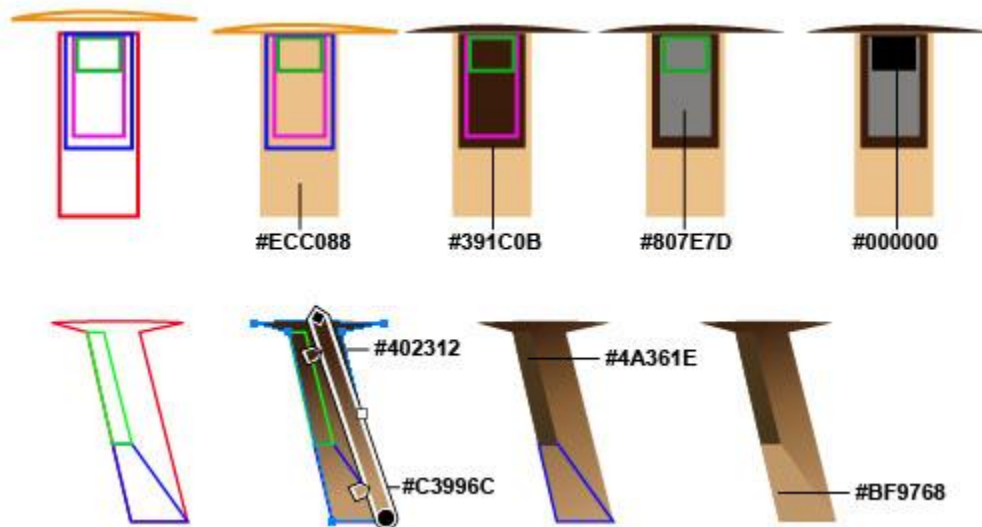
17. Now that all the windmill parts are ready we will put them together. With the windmill base as the object at the back, place the body over it. Place the windmill fan along with the centre wheel as the topmost object on the windmill head.

18. Duplicate the first window two times and place it on the right side of the windmill body. Refer the final windmill below for the placement and size of windows. Duplicate the second window once and place one of it on the bottom right of the windmill body. Place the other on the windmill head.

19. To create the supports of our windmill, use the Rectangle Tool (M) and draw narrow but long rectangles. Color them in shades of brown and arrange them vertically and horizontally behind the fan blades as per our final windmill below. Group all parts of the windmill. Below is an outline view of the completed windmill for a better idea of placement of objects.
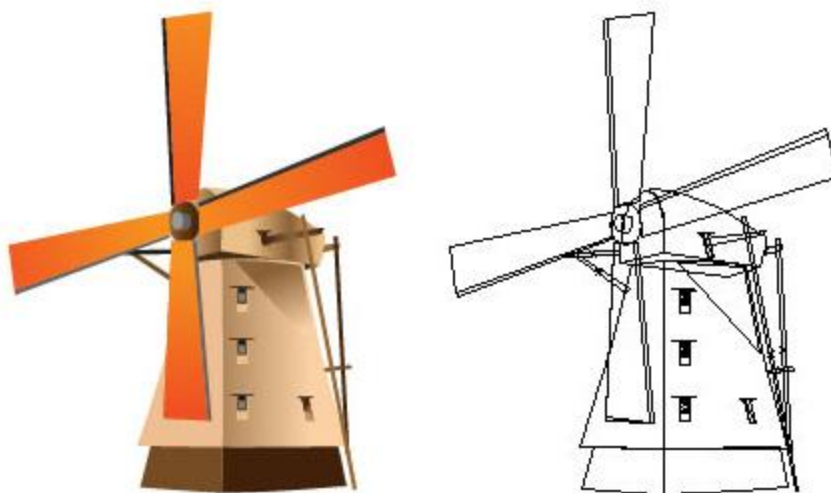

Creating the Background

20. The background of our landscape is made of a bright blue radial gradient for the sky and fresh green linear gradients for the grass.

21. To create the sky, draw a rectangle that covers the entire artboard with the Rectangle Tool (M). Make sure you create the rectangle in a new layer and place this layer at the bottom of the layer stack in the layers panel. Fill the rectangle with a blue radial gradient as shown.
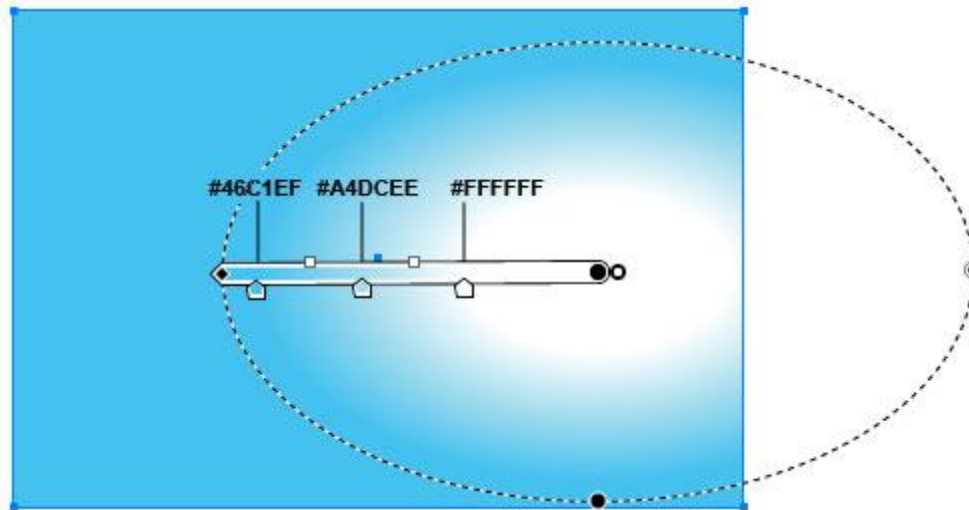

22. Make the top part of the sky a bit darker than the rest of the gradient by adding a linear gradient at the top. Draw a rectangle which covers the width of the artboard and give it a linear gradient as shown. Use a darker blue like # 2989CA at both ends of the gradient and reduce the opacity of the color at the right end to 0%. The new gradient should appear merged with the gradient below.
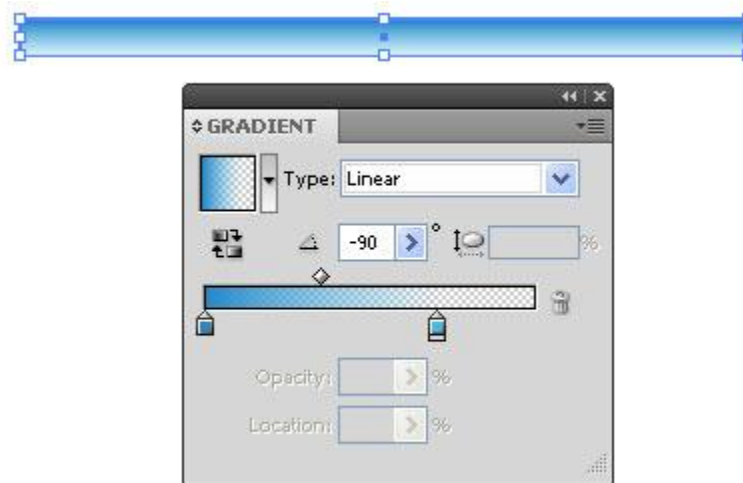
23. To make the ground we will draw the shapes of the ground with the pen tool first. All 3 shapes should be closed as we have to fill different gradients for each. The shape at the front is the largest and the one at the back is the smallest. This creates an illusion of perspective in the scene.
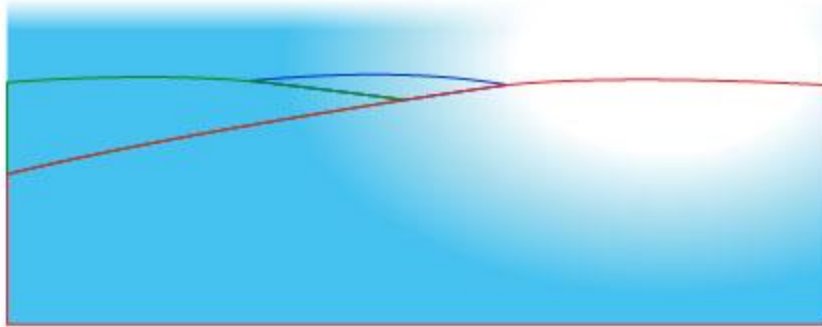
24. Fill the shapes using the gradient tool as shown.
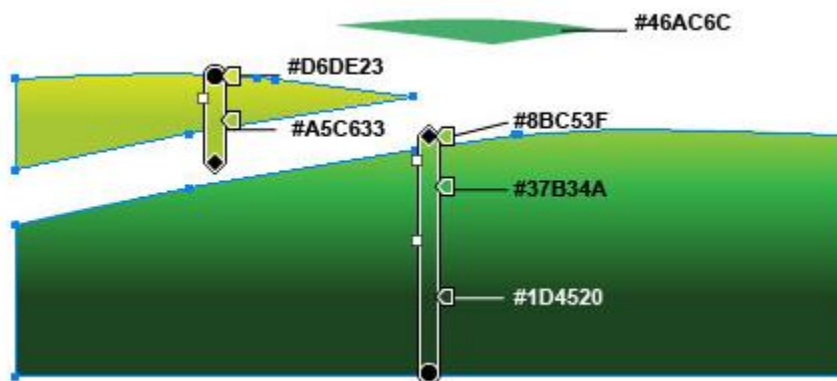
Arranging the Elements

25. The last step in our tutorial is arranging all the elements on the artboard. For aligning the elements with correct perspective, take a new layer and draw some basic guide lines as shown below. The horizontal line depicts the horizon. The other lines are simply guides for us to arrange the tulip plants.

26. Let's start with fixing the place of the windmill. Place the windmill on the horizon line at the right of the artboard. The white part of the sky gradient should fall behind the windmill.

27. Now we will create the red tulip patch. The tulips near the windmill will be the smallest and the ones near us will be the largest. Duplicate the red tulip plant to create 4 tulips and arrange them as shown.
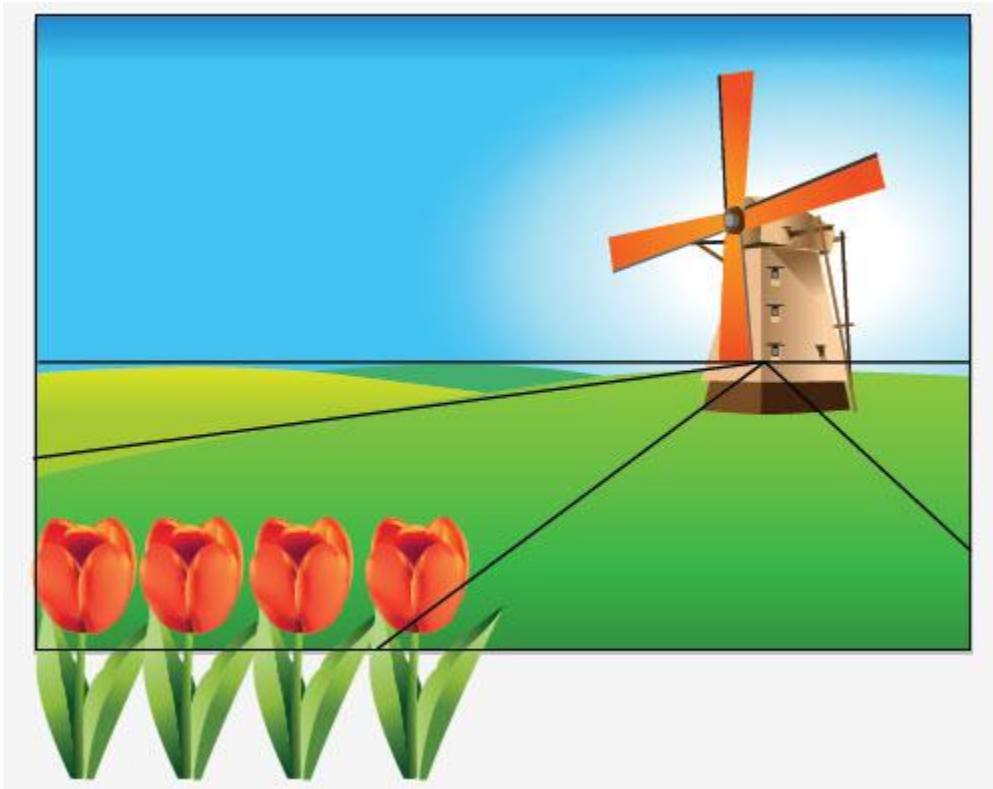
28. Duplicate a tulip again, right click it and select Transform > Scale and scale it by 90%. Arrange the smaller tulip behind the first tulip line. Keep scaling and arranging tulips to complete the red tulip rows. You can also horizontally flip some tulips, delete or add leaves to plants for interesting variations.


29. To delete parts of the tulip plants that have come out of the artboard draw a rectangle over the portion to be deleted. Select the tulips and the rectangle and select Windows > Pathfinder > Trim. Delete the unwanted parts.

30. Repeat the same process as the red tulips for the yellow and purple tulips. Delete the layer of the guide lines we have created. The field is ready! The only thing remaining now is enhancing the scene by adding clouds and grass to it.


Adding Grass and Clouds

31. Access the Symbol library by going to Windows > Symbols in the main menu. Click on the 'options' icon on the top right corner of the symbols panel and select Open Symbol Library. Select Nature. In the Nature library you will find the clouds and grass symbols. Drag them onto the artboard on seperate layers.
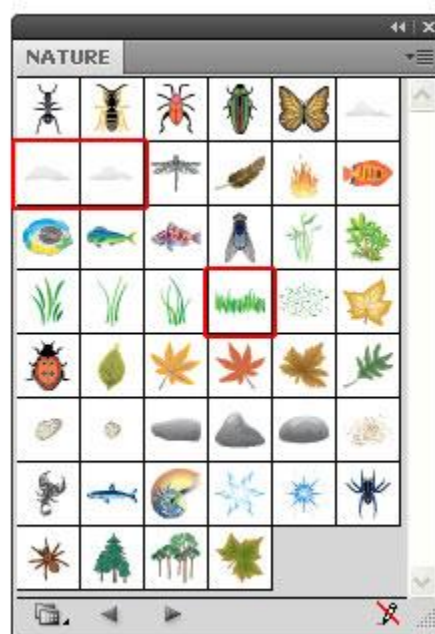
32. Select the grass symbol and click the Break Link button that appears in a row just below the main menu. This will break the link of the symbol and you can edit the symbol freely. Make color and size variations in the grass symbol and arrange it behind the tulips and around the windmill. Make sure the grass at the farthest end is smallest in size.
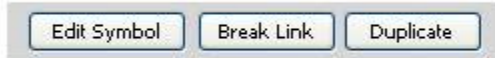
Our beautiful European tulip field landscape is ready!