How to apply effects to text

To add interest to headings and other objects on your page, you can apply text effects in Adobe InDesign, including drop shadow, inner glow, and bevel/embossing (**Figure 1**).

Figure 1 Heading text with drop shadow and color gradient applied

The Effects panel lists four categories to which you can apply effects:

- *Object*: Applies effects to whatever object is currently selected—a frame or shape.
- *Stroke*: Applies effects to the outline of the object.
- *Fill*: Applies effects to the fill of the object.
- *Text*: Applies effects only to text.

This guide covers three effects:

- Drop shadow
- Bevel and emboss
- Gradient feather

This document is merely an introduction to effects; using what you learn from these steps, you should be able to easily apply them to other effects.

Applying the Drop Shadow effect

A drop shadow is a visual effect that creates the illusion that an object is raised above other objects or a background surface.

To apply the Drop Shadow effect:

1. Start InDesign and create a new document.

2. Create a text frame by using the Type tool.

3. Add text to the text frame.

4. Select the text by using the Type tool.

5. In the Control panel, select a font family, change the size of the text to 72 points or larger, and change the font style to bold (if available) and apply a color.

   You can now observe effects better as you apply them.

6. Choose the Selection tool in the Tools panel.

7. Select the text frame.

   Selection handles appear around the text frame.

8. Choose **Window** > **Effects** to display the **Effects** panel (**Figure 2**).

9. Click the **Text** category to select it.

10. Select **Effects** > **Drop Shadow** from the **Effects** panel menu (**Figure 3**).

    The **Effects** dialog box appears (**Figure 4**).

    Text is selected in the **Settings For** pop-up menu in the upper-left corner, and the **Drop Shadow** category is selected in the list of effects categories on the left side of the dialog box.

11. In the **Opacity** box under **Blending**, type **50%**.

12. Select the **Preview** option so you can observe changes as you make them.
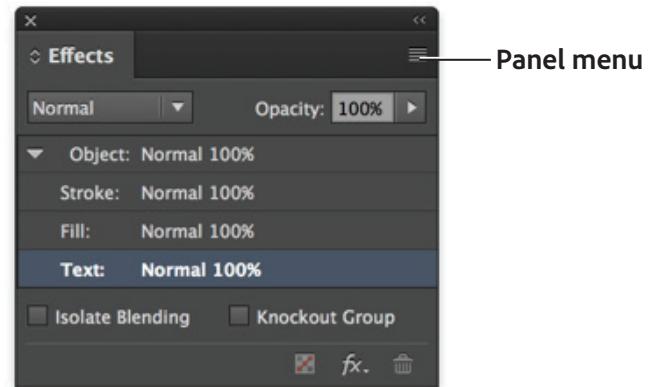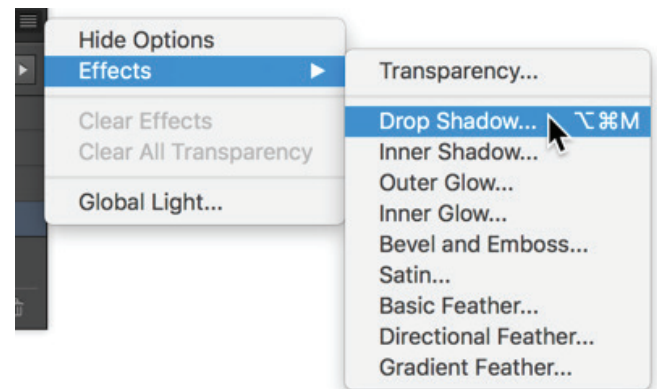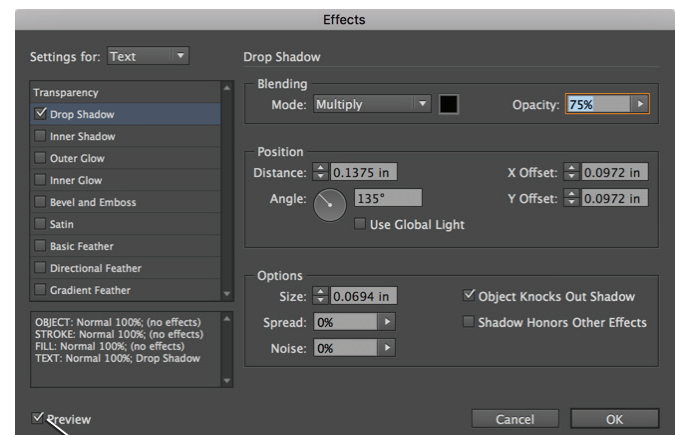

Panel menu

Figure 2 Effects panel

Figure 3 Effects panel menu

Preview option

Figure 4 Effects dialog box with Drop Shodow category selected

13. Leave the rest of the settings unchanged, and click **OK**.

    The **Effects** dialog box closes, and the effect is applied to the selected text (**Figure 5**).

    Observe that the text appears to be floating slightly above the page as a result of the drop shadow.

Figure 5 Drop shadow effect applied

Applying the Bevel And Emboss effect

Other effects can add visual interest to text by giving the illusion of three dimensions and increased texture.

To apply the Bevel And Emboss effect:

1. Choose the Type tool in the Tools panel.

2. Select text by using the Type tool.

3. In the Control panel, change the size of the text to 72 points and change the font style to bold.

    You can now observe effects better as you apply them.

4. Choose the Selection tool in the Tools panel.

5. Select the text frame.
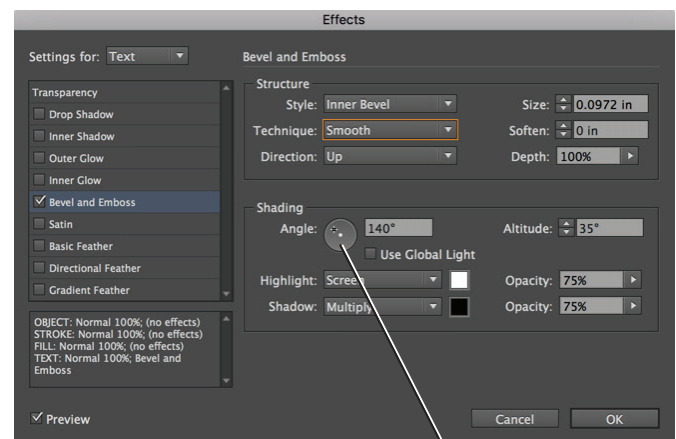
    Selection handles appear around the text frame.

6. Choose **Window** > **Effects** to display the **Effects** panel.

7. Click the **Text** category to select it.

Angle option

Figure 6 Effects dialog box with Bevel And Emboss category selected

8. Select **Effects** > **Bevel And Emboss** from the **Effects** panel menu.

    The **Effects** dialog box appears (**Figure 6**).

    Text is selected in the **Settings For** pop-up menu in the upper-left corner, and **Bevel And Emboss** is selected in the list of categories on the left side of the dialog box.

    Confirm **Preview** option is selected.

9. Under **Shading**, change the angle of the light source by dragging the pointer in the **Angle** circle.

10. Leave the rest of the settings unchanged, and click **OK**.

    Observe that the text changes.

    The **Effects** dialog box closes, and the effect is applied (**Figure 7**).

    Observe that the text seems to have depth or three-dimensionality.

Figure 7 Bevel And Emboss effect applied

Applying the Gradient Feather effect

A gradient feather is used to smooth or fade images and text.

To apply the Gradient Feather effect:

1. Choose the Type tool in the Tools panel.

2. Select text by using the Type tool.

3. In the Control panel, change the size of the text to 72 points and change the font style to bold.

   You can now observe effects better as you apply them.

4. Choose the Selection tool in the Tools panel.

5. Select the text frame.

   Selection handles appear around the text frame.

6. Choose **Window** > **Effects** to display the **Effects** panel (**Figure 8**).

7. Click the **Text** category to select it.

8. Select **Effects** > **Gradient Feather** from the **Effects** panel menu.

   The **Effects** dialog box appears (**Figure 9**).

   Text is selected in the **Settings For** pop-up menu in the upper-left corner, and **Gradient Feather** is selected in the list of categories on the left side of the dialog box.

   Confirm **Preview** option is selected.

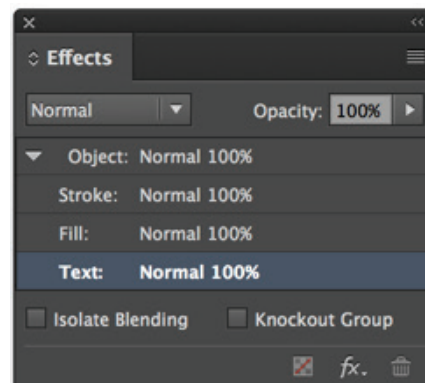9. Under **Gradient Stops**, enter **90%** in the **Location** text box.
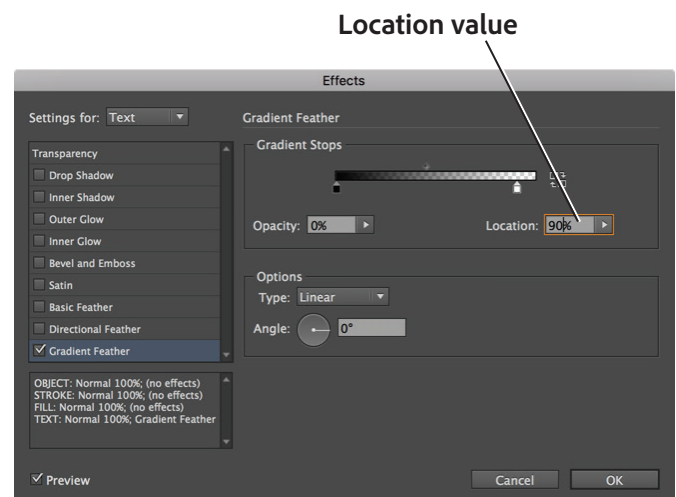

Figure 8 Effects panel

Figure 9 Effects dialog box with Gradient Feather category selected

Note: You can also drag the slider above the **Location** value box.

Observe that the text changes.

10. Leave the rest of the settings unchanged, and click **OK**.

The **Effects** dialog box closes, and the effect is applied (**Figure 10**).

Observe that the text fades progressively as you read from left to right.

Figure 10 *Gradient Feather effect applied*

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