Welcome to Concepts!

Few things in life satisfy like creating with your hands. Concepts is a power tool for both quick-and-dirty and accurate, intricate design jobs. It's portable and flexible, and it helps you to get things done. This is your instruction manual.

Like any idea, Concepts is a work in progress. We update every 4-6 weeks, adding new features and improvements based largely on your feedback. If you have suggestions, let us know.

Help Doesn't End Here

While this manual has detailed information on specific features, we write and publish how-tos and interviews with industry experts almost weekly on [Medium](#). If you're a visual learner, you might appreciate our video tutorials and workflow videos on [YouTube](#). If you still can't find what you're after, find us on your favorite social channel, email us at [concepts@tophatch.com](#), or tap *Ask Us Anything* in app for some lovely, direct conversation.

Your fans,

The Concepts Team @ TopHatch

The Gallery

The first time you open Concepts, you'll start in the Gallery. This is where all of your drawings are stored. They're organized into "projects."

1. **Start Something New.** Start a new drawing, make a new section, create a new project, paste from the clipboard or import an image, or take a quick picture for later markup.
2. **Breadcrumbs.** You're now in the Gallery, in the "Artwork" project. *Tap* this to bring up a list of your projects, *tap* a project to go straight there, and *tap+hold* a project to reorder it in the list. You can also *tap+hold+drag* multiple drawings, and add them into a project here. You can also slide your finger on the breadcrumbs to quickly scroll through projects.
3. **Pro Shop.** Show your status, find cool tools and libraries to make your life easier, and support us!
4. **Your Account.** *Tap* for preferences.
5. **Sorting.** You can sort drawings manually, or automatically by date created, updated, or alphabetically.
6. **Help.** Always available with a *tap*.
7. **Project Meta.** *Tap* to change.
8. **Sections.** You can organize your drawings into Sections for portfolio, confidentiality, and general organizational purposes. These are hidable if you *tap the arrow*. *Tap+hold a section title* to rename or delete it, and *tap+hold+drag* a section to rearrange it.
9. **Drawings.** All of your drawings in this project. *Swipe right/left* to switch between projects. *Tap+hold* a drawing to drag it about, duplicate it or delete it. *Tap* the drawing name to rename or delete it.
10. **New Drawing.** A self-explanatory shortcut - *tap* to start from scratch. *Tap+hold* it to bring up the other "new" options

Navigation

To page between projects, swipe left and right using one finger, or use the project scrubber in the status bar.

To see all your drawings in a project, scroll up and down with one finger. Pinch or expand your fingers to zoom in and out, and see many tiny thumbs or just one at a time.

Managing Drawings

To **open** a drawing, just *tap* it.

To **delete** or **duplicate** a drawing, *tap+hold* it, then let go. You'll see a popup appear with several options.

To **restore** a deleted drawing, *shake your device* to Undo.

To **rename** a drawing, *tap* the drawing name.

To **move** a drawing, either inside a project or to a different project, *tap+hold* to pick it up, then *drag* it where you want it to go. To move many drawings at once, *tap+hold+drag* a drawing, then *tap* to add other drawings to your selection and drag them about, either between sections or between projects.

Project Meta
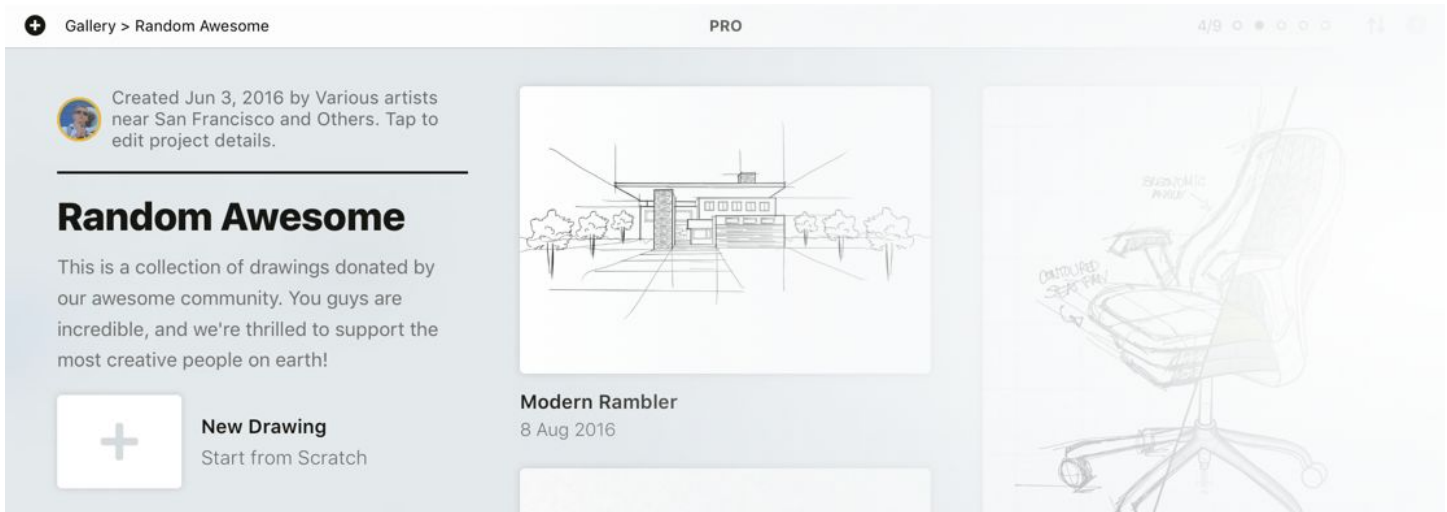
Each project has its own information that's useful for organizing, searching, and keeping things straight in your head. On iPad, this is on the left side of the drawings; on iPhone, it's above the drawings. Tap any field to update it.

You can set a location for the project manually or automatically (handy for remembering a build site or where you came up with your idea). You can set it by tapping the location button in the project meta editor, which starts as "Unknown." You'll see a blank line that can hold whatever location you like, or you can opt to set the location automatically. Tap the crosshairs to enable it - you'll see a prompt that asks if it's okay for us to use your current location. We respect your privacy. If, for some reason, you hit "Don't Allow", you can re-enable it in the Settings App → Privacy → Location Services → Concepts. It's worth noting that enabling automatic location recording will start tagging every new drawing you make with your current location. Of course, you can turn it off in the Settings App or override it whenever you like.

Setting the author for a drawing is much the same. We'll assume you drew everything, but you can override that with a tap on the author field. Enter a name, then tap the screen or Done to apply it.

Concepts Accounts

You can now create a free Concepts Account to securely sync your purchases, object libraries and palettes between your devices. (Note that drawing sync is not available at this time, it will be coming later this year via iCloud.)
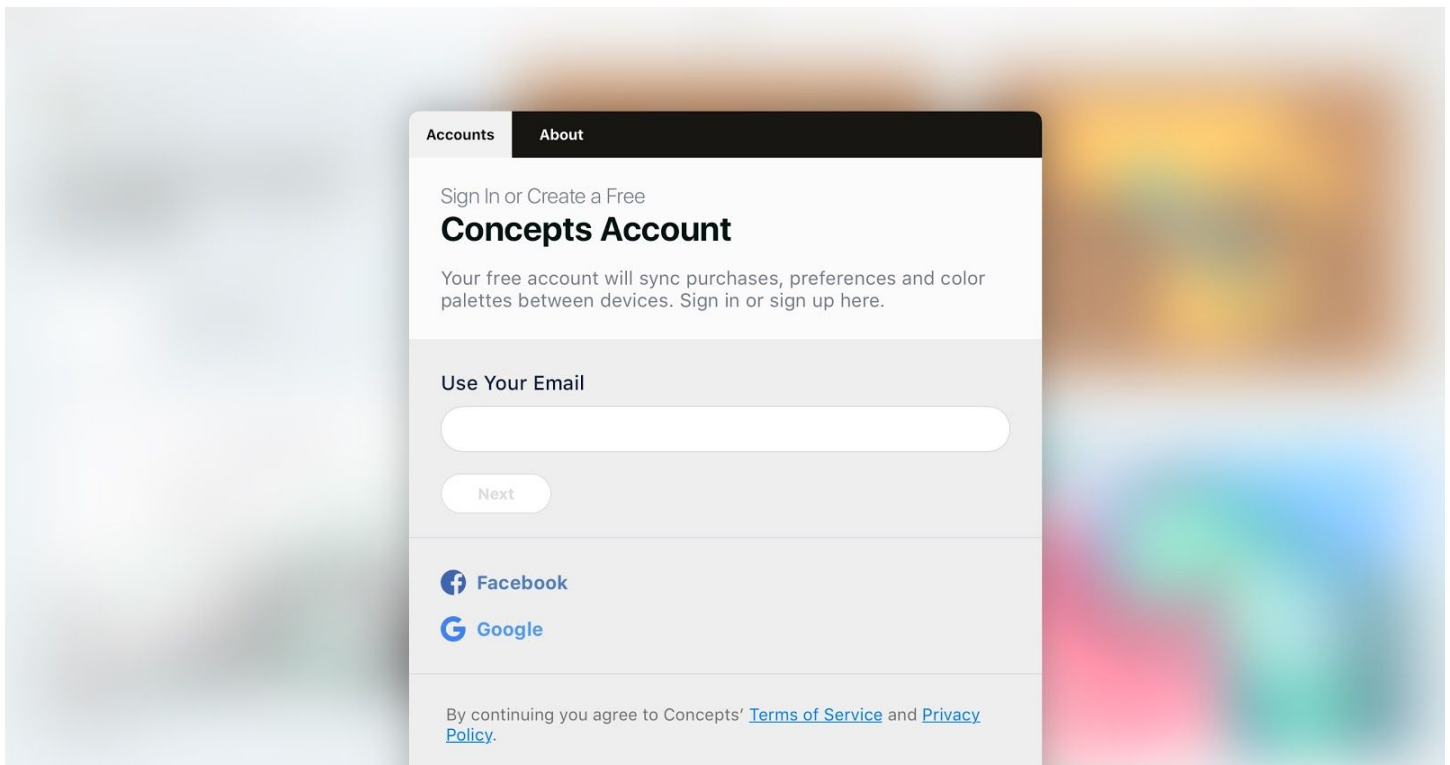
1. Touch your profile icon in the Gallery.

2. Under the Accounts tab, enter your email address and create a password. We won't share your email, it's our way of contacting yours truly in the Concepts universe.

3. Confirm your email address via your email account.

4. Voilà, you're official! Your purchases, objects and color palettes will automatically sync between your devices. Create an object or update a palette on one device, and watch it sync live to your other device.
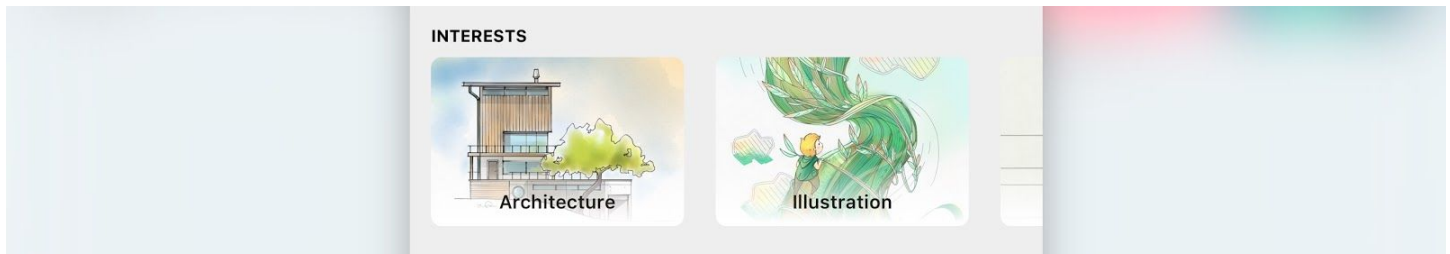
5. While you're on the accounts tab, would you mind telling us your interests? We'll know to create awesome content for someone just like you.
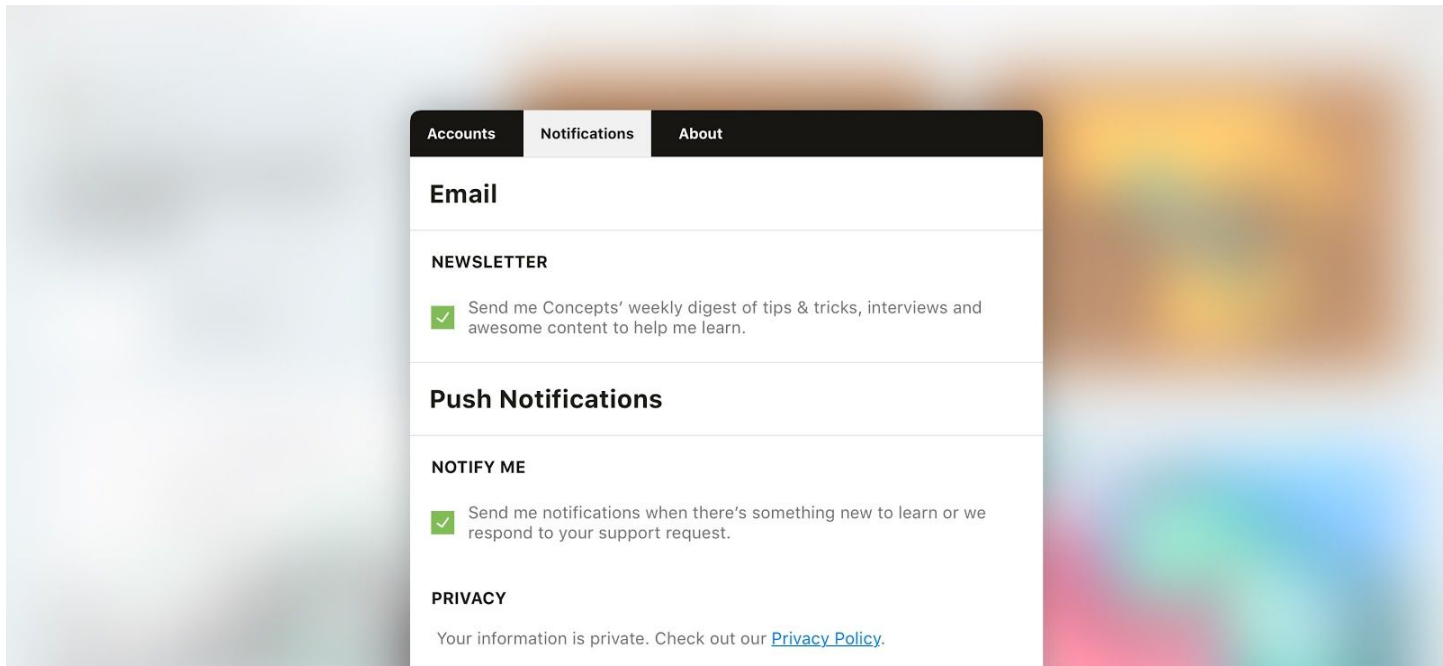
6. You'll also see a new tab at the top of the overlay - Notifications. Go here to subscribe to our weekly newsletter filled with tips, interviews and cool stuff, and receive notifications when there's something new to learn or we respond to your support request.

Your Workspace
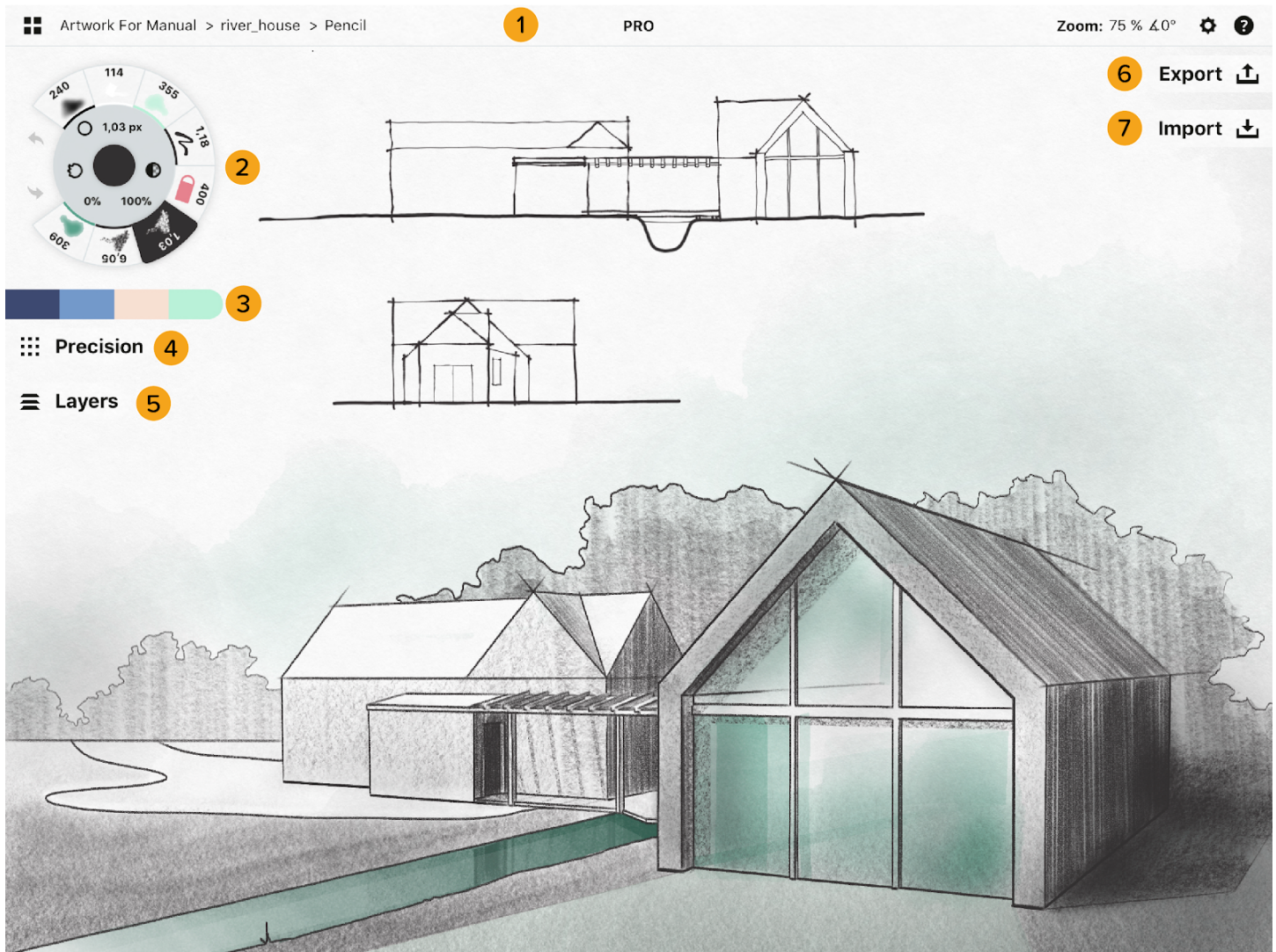
Freehand Interface.

1. **The Status Bar.** Important information and control of various states, plus access to the Gallery, Drawings, Settings, the Pro Shop and Help.
2. **The Tool Wheel.** Eight of your favorite tools, each configurable, plus undo and redo. You can change this into a Tool Bar on the side, if you prefer.
3. **Color Palette & Mixer.** Configurable, on-canvas palette.
4. **Precision Tools.** Grids, Snap, Measure, and Shape Guides to help you be precise.

5. **Layers.** A way of organizing your drawing, separating tools, or achieving a specific look. Automatic or manual.

6. **Export.** Send your drawings anywhere in many different formats.

7. **Import.** A combined menu with objects and external assets. Like a library.

The Status Bar

Much like the Gallery, the Canvas has a persistent Status Bar that displays and controls information relative to your current state.

The Gallery button is the grid on the top left - *tap* it to close your drawing and find or start another one.

The Breadcrumb trail is next, showing what project, drawing, and layer you're currently in. *Tap+hold* any of these to quickly rename them. Just like in the Gallery, you can *tap* a menu to bring up a list of your drawings inside a project and navigate immediately between them. You can also tap on the project name to display your full projects list, select an alternate project and access its drawings instantly.
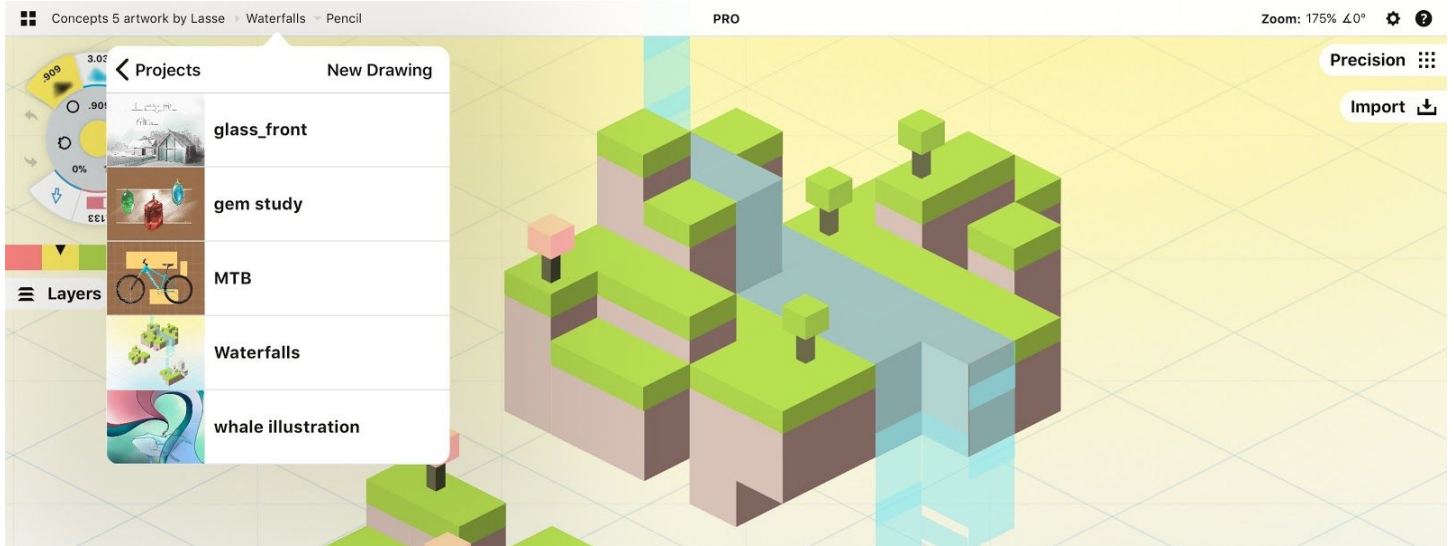
Drop down menu for access to Drawings in the current project, via the Drawing breadcrumbs. Access drawings in other projects by tapping the Project breadcrumbs.

In the middle is the status indicator. It'll normally say "Go Pro" or "Pro" (which links to the in-app store), but will change to various states like "Saving" or "Rendering" when appropriate. You'll also see an animated blue strip just below the status bar when Concepts is working.

The zoom / rotation info helps you retain a reference to the canvas state - it's easy to feel lost sometimes. You can tap+hold these values to set them to something specific. This also applies when you have a selection and want to fine-tune measurements and get things just right. Double-tapping on these values resets them back to default.

The Settings button lets you access workspace-specific settings like your paper type, artboard size and units + scale, as well as gesture and stylus configuration options. See **Settings** to learn more.

Help is always a tap away via the question mark. You can find many different resources there, including the ability to *Ask Us Anything* directly from the app.

The Infinite Canvas
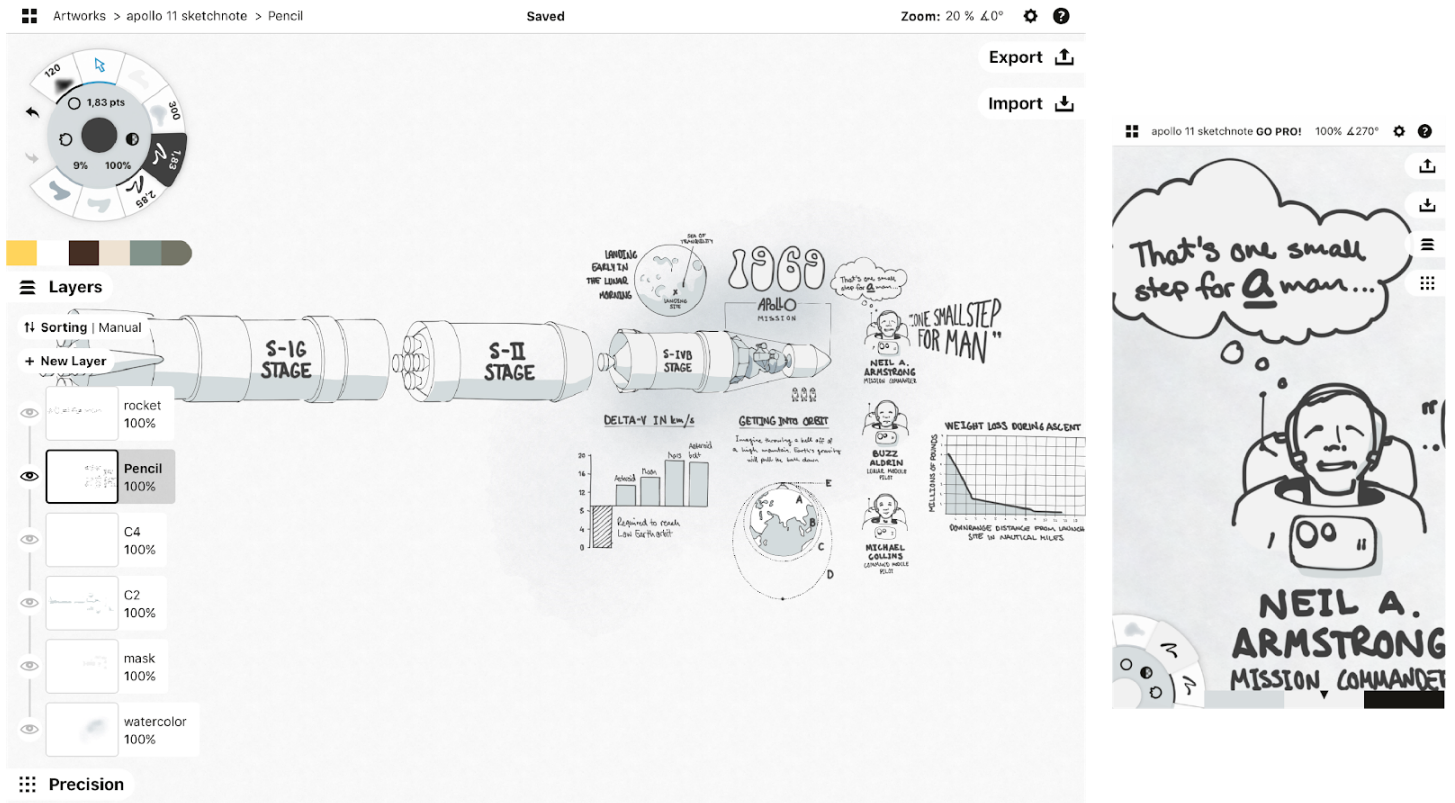
Work on the bigger picture or zoom in to focus on the details. With the infinite canvas, there are no boundaries unless you set them yourself.

Concepts is equipped with an infinite canvas, which is our way of saying you can extend your paper in any direction you need it, as far as you need it to go. You can pan around using two fingers normally, or one finger while using the Pan tool. If you're using an Apple Pencil, you can set your Finger Action to pan around as well, which makes navigating while drawing more convenient.

To zoom in and out, or to rotate the canvas, use a two finger pinch / spread gesture. Lines stay sharp no matter how far you go - one of the many benefits of a vector-based platform. You'll notice there are "zoom steps" at common increments which help you find standard sizes and rotations by feel. For a more precise level, *tap+hold* the zoom/rotation values in the Status Bar.

If you move far away from your drawing, you'll see some pointers appear on the outside edges of the screen. *Tap* one to quickly navigate to the closest off-screen stroke.
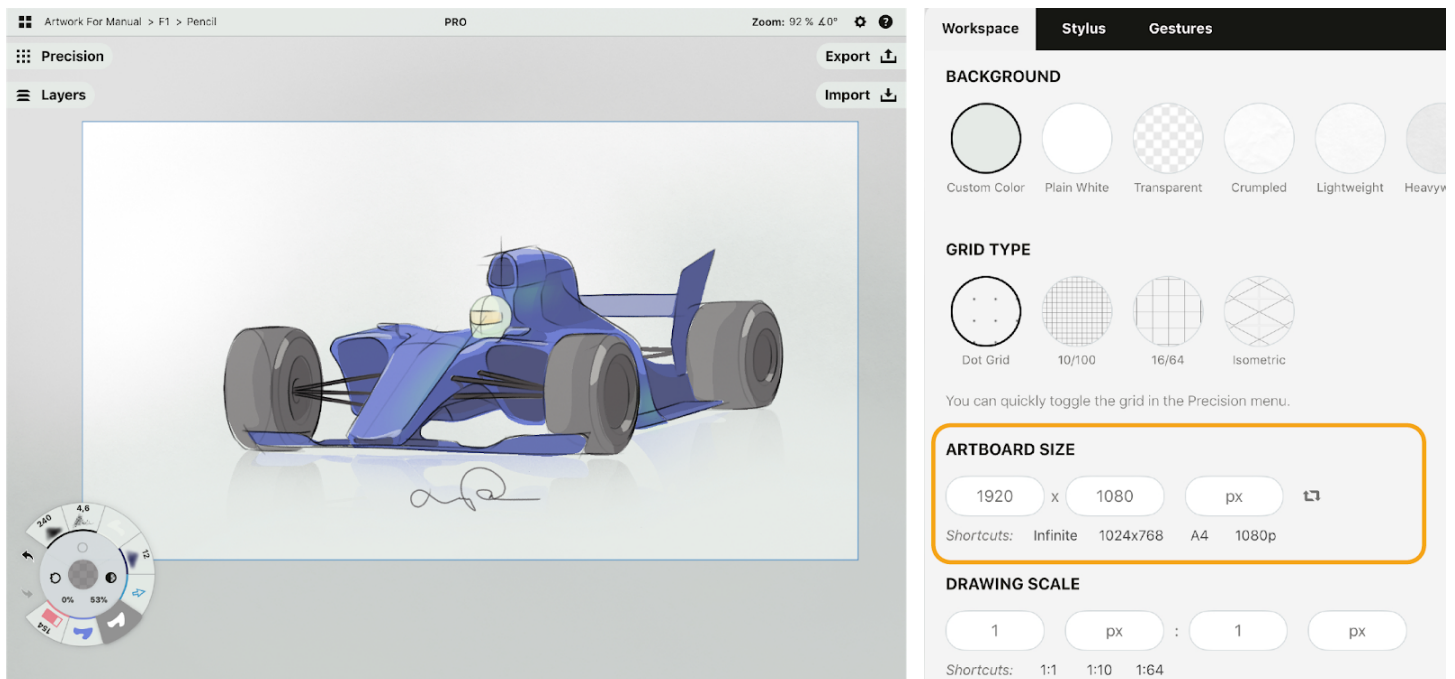
Of course, you can add a predefined boundary or artboard to your infinite canvas, too. Just go to the **Settings** menu and define your custom size or choose from the popular choices.

Tap+hold a corner of the artboard to move it about - handy for framing your drawing just so, cropping images into an exact size, and getting a reference for how big / small your drawing is based on real-world scale. When you **Export**, you can choose to capture the image according to the artboard's sizing.

Customizable Menus

Export ⬆

Import ⬇

⋮⋮⋮ **Precision**

≡ Layers

≡ **Layers**
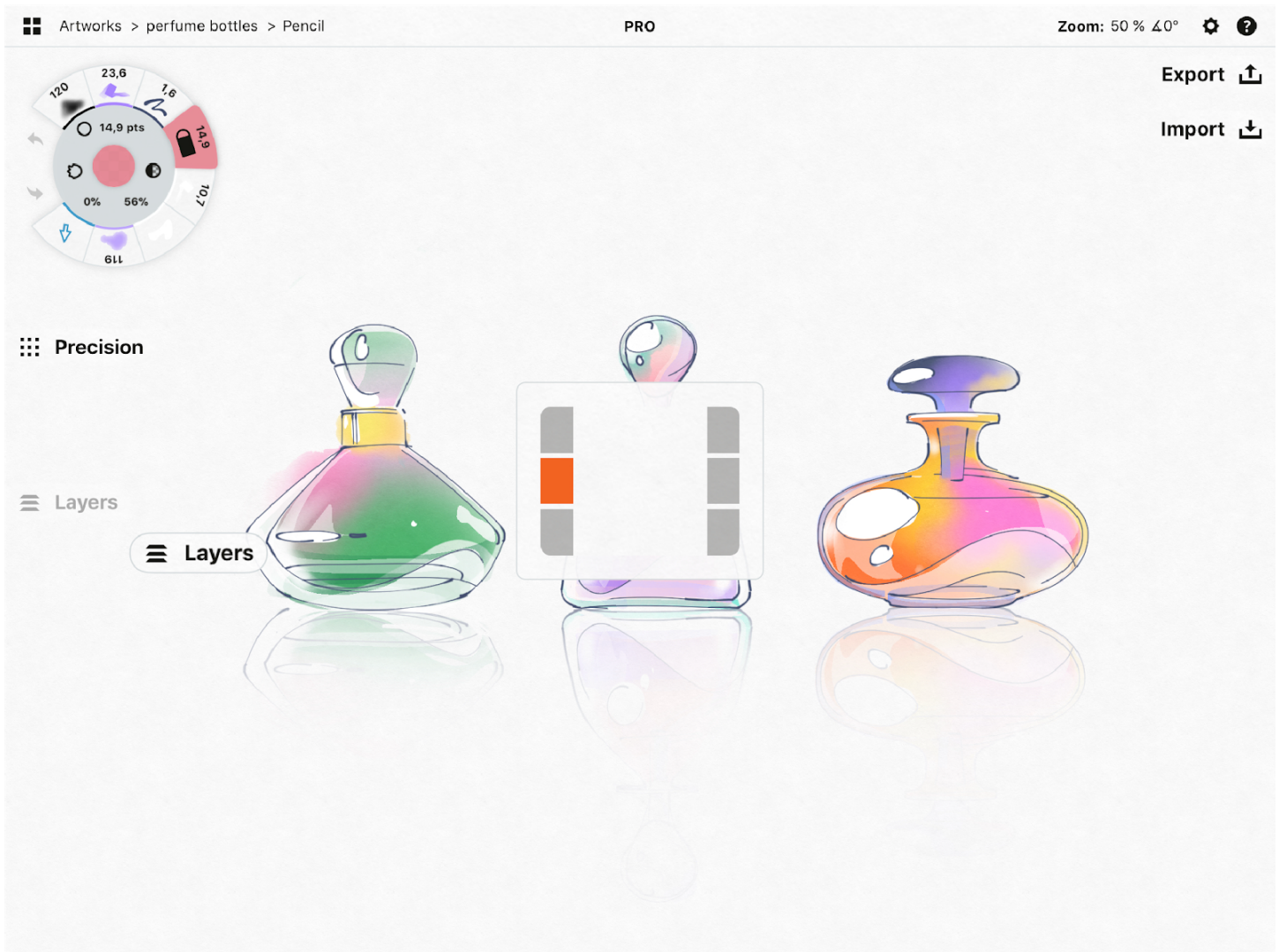
Every designer works differently, so we've made your workspace customizable. Every menu on the screen can be moved to where you want it, to maximize your canvas space and comfort.

To move a menu, *tap+hold+drag* it. To move the tool wheel, *tap+hold+drag the outer ring* of the wheel (as the center and middle rings bring up other menus). A map of possible zones will appear to help guide you. Let go when it's where you want it. The menus can stack in the same port, just drag a menu up or down to rearrange their order.

The tool menu will appear as a tool wheel in any corner. It can be docked way up into the corner as a spinnable wheel to maximize your canvas space, or if you drag it to either edge of the screen, it will change to a more classic tool bar.
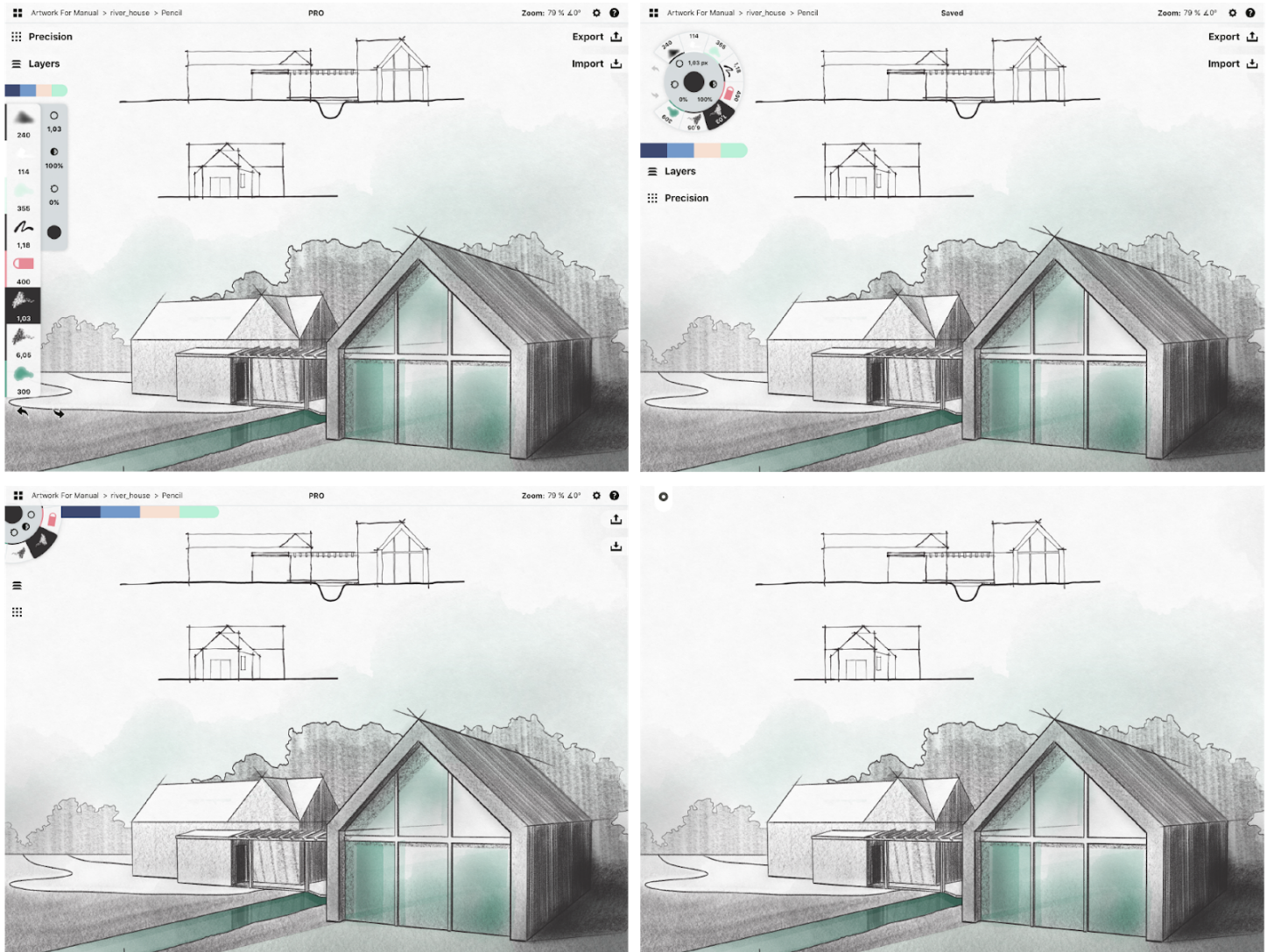
Possible toolbar configurations.

You can also define your space with three different modes - normal, compact and hidden. In normal mode, all the menus are visible and the tool wheel is completely on canvas. You can enter compact mode by swiping outwards on the canvas menu buttons. This minimizes the labels into simple icons and docks the (spinnable) tool wheel into the corner. To hide everything for a full canvas workspace, swipe outward one more time on any of the menu buttons. Just touch the dot

visible on the edge of the canvas to bring them back. You can also configure one of the tap shortcuts to toggle hidden mode, see **Gestures** to learn more.

The Tool Wheel / Bar

The focal point of the Concepts interface is the Tool Wheel. This is where you access your favorite tools, configure them, and choose your colors.

The *outer ring* contains your tools - eight completely customizable tools of your choice, plus undo and redo buttons. *Tap* a tool to activate it and draw with it. *Tap again* to bring up a **Brushes menu**, where you can choose among the different brushes and set your tool's **presets**.
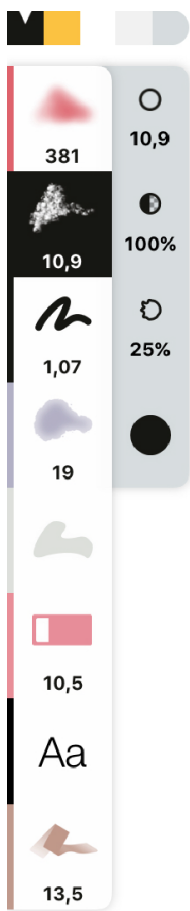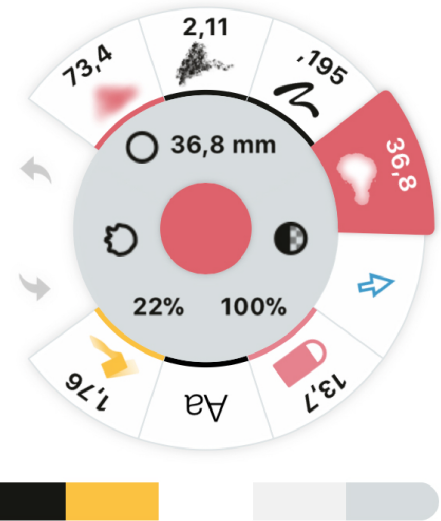
The *middle ring* contains shortcuts to your **brush size**, **opacity**, and **smoothness**. *Tap* one to bring up a slider and find your tool's presets. Select a preset by tapping on it, then drag your finger along the slider to set its value, or *tap+hold* the preset value to manually enter a new value. *Tap* again to dismiss the menu.

If you want to adjust the size, opacity or smoothness values quickly in flow, just *tap+hold+slide* on any of the shortcut buttons to adjust immediately. The slider will open as you slide it and close as soon as you lift your finger from the screen.

The *innermost circle* inside the tool wheel displays your current color and its opacity. *Tap* the circle to bring up the **COPIC color wheel** and find the **color picker**. *Tap+hold* the circle to bring up your **Colors menu**, which is where you can customize your **color palettes** and **color mixer**.

If you drag the tool wheel to the right or left edge of the screen, it will become a tool bar. The same abilities are available with the tool bar as with the tool wheel, with the customizations and color options available along the inside edge.

Some people prefer their buttons larger or smaller to fit their fingers. You can **scale the tool wheel** by pinching or expanding your fingers on it, and find the size that is most comfortable for you.

Undo / Redo

Mistakes can be wonderful, but sometimes they're not. In case you need to take a step back and change something, you can always use the undo and redo buttons. The buttons are on the outer ring of the tool wheel or beneath the tool bar. But you may use them less than you think.

You can configure gesture shortcuts for undo and redo in **Settings** under Gestures. Our most popular setting is a two-finger tap to undo, to the point we've heard our designers wail about not having a two-finger undo on a normal piece of paper.

You can also configure shortcuts for undo and redo on any of the supported active styli that have physical buttons. Again, check out **Settings** to configure them.

But the biggest reason you might not use undo so much is that we're vector-based, which means you can **Select** and adjust the offending line, or delete it entirely *whenever you want*. This is a selective way to alter your sketch (no pun intended) without being limited to a brute force undo that loses all of your latest work. We think you'll prefer it.

The Color Mixer
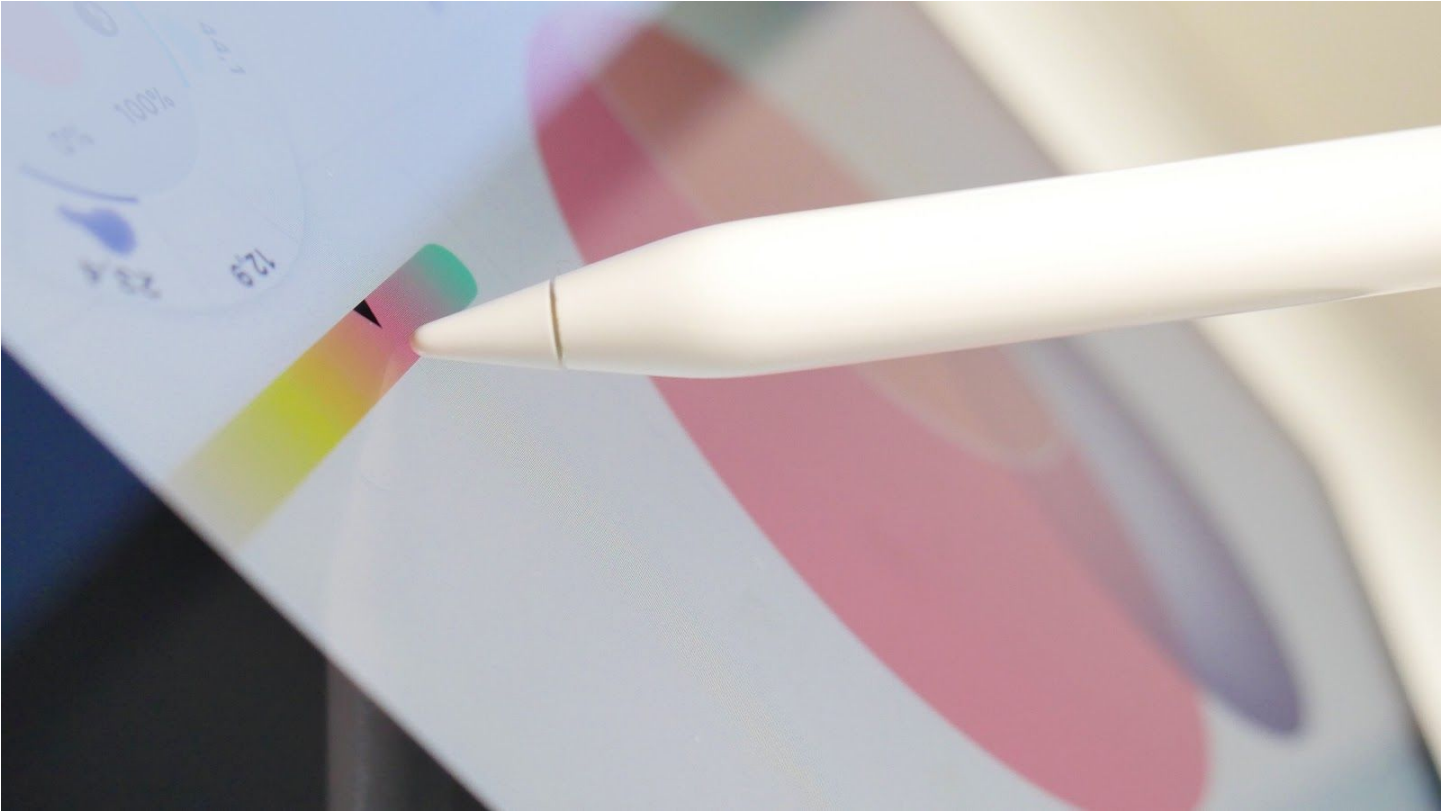
Below the tool wheel is a color palette aka the Color Mixer. This mixer is scrollable left and right, and can be customized from your **Colors menu**. Any palette you activate in the Colors menu will appear on screen in this mixer, in the order you tapped them in.

As a mixer, it also has the ability to blend your chosen colors, allowing you to choose complementary shades inside your palette. *Tap+hold* on the mixer to activate this feature, then slide your finger or stylus to the left or right, and let go to select your preferred color.

You can add this complementary shade to your palette from the Colors menu. Learn more in **Colors**.

Using a Stylus

Concepts is at its best with a stylus. Of course, you can use any standard capacitive stylus. These don't need to be connected in any special way beyond touching them to the screen to draw. There are many good ones, but we like the Wacom Bamboo stylus for its solid weighting and unassuming pocket clip, or the same one with a built-in pen.

We also support the most popular Bluetooth styli, which bring greater control over line weight through surface pressure and in some cases, configurable shortcut buttons. We support Palm Rejection, writing angle adjustments, and pressure curve trimming. Here are the models we support, and Amazon partner links to them:

- Apple Pencil *(iPad Pro only)*. This is by far the best experience, as latency is very low and you get native hardware support and tilt/pressure response on supported tools. You also

get the ability to separate Finger actions from Pencil actions, allowing you to draw with the Pencil and perform a separate action with your finger. These extra actions include: *Use active tool* (the default), *Do nothing* (for extra robust palm rejection), *Pan Canvas* (to move around with a single finger vs. the standard two-finger zoom/pan), *Select* (a quick way to make selections), and *Configured tool (8)* (the tool beneath the redo button on the tool wheel; it can be any tool you want).

- Adobe Ink. An older stylus that is no longer supported by Adobe. We support it for the moment but don't recommend it.

- Adonit Jot Touch, Script and Pixel. These are quite good for older iPads or any iPhone model. The Script doesn't support pressure sensitivity.

- Pencil by 53. While thicker than some, this doesn't require a bluetooth connection (in a pinch) and is very comfortable to hold.

- Pogo Connect, first and second generation.

- All Wacom Styli. Long an industry standard, Wacom hardware is reliable and well-supported.

The shortcut buttons on some styli can be configured once the pen has been connected. Buttons can be configured to: No Action, Undo, Redo, Select Last Item, Show Layers, Show Color Wheel, Tool Setup, Show Objects.

Note when using Palm Rejection: Make sure you turn off "Multitouch Gestures" in the device's Settings app (under General). If you don't disable it, it will cause conflicts and the screen will jerk around a bit.

Left Handed Support
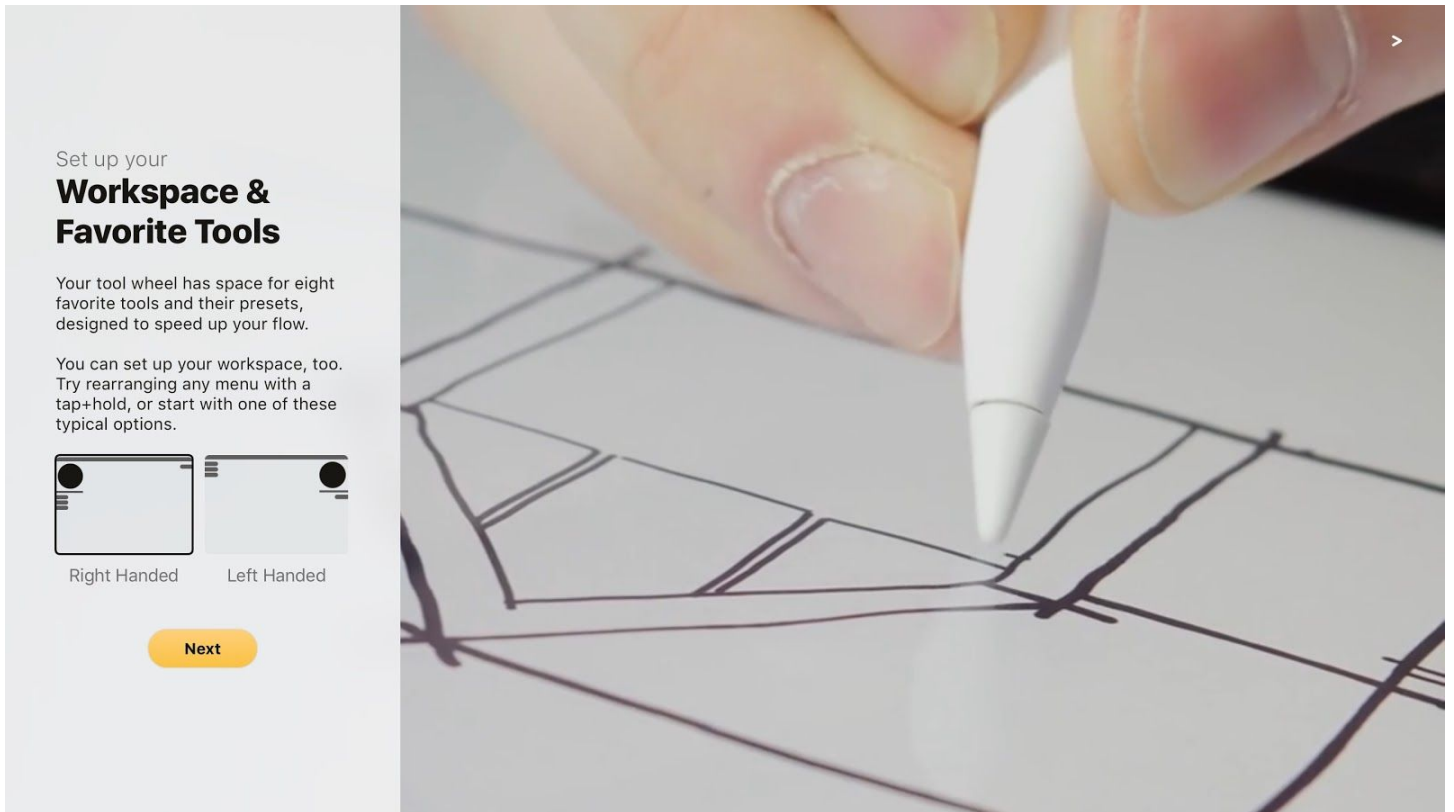
Concepts works great for lefties and righties. While the app gives you some default options the first time you launch, they're really just suggestions - try moving the tool wheel to the opposite side of the screen as described above, and move your menus where they won't be in the way.

Brushes and Tools

Brush Gestures

To use a tool, just *tap* on it and start sketching. Tilt and pressure are supported with some styli (like Apple Pencil) and with some tools (each tool is a bit different), and will happen naturally as you tilt or press on the screen. Try them out and see which you like best.

As mentioned in the **Tool Wheel** section, the *middle ring* allows you to adjust the active brush's **size** (how big it is), **opacity** (how transparent it is), and **smoothing** (how bumpy or smooth you want your line to appear once it's drawn. 0% is no smoothing, 100% gives you a perfectly straight line between your starting and ending points no matter how wriggly you get. Great for train rides and polishing any hand drawn line.) *Tap* on one of these options to bring up your presets, or for a shortcut, just *drag* across it with your finger to adjust.

To access the Brushes menu, *tap* again on the active tool, or *double-tap* on an inactive tool.

Brushes Menu
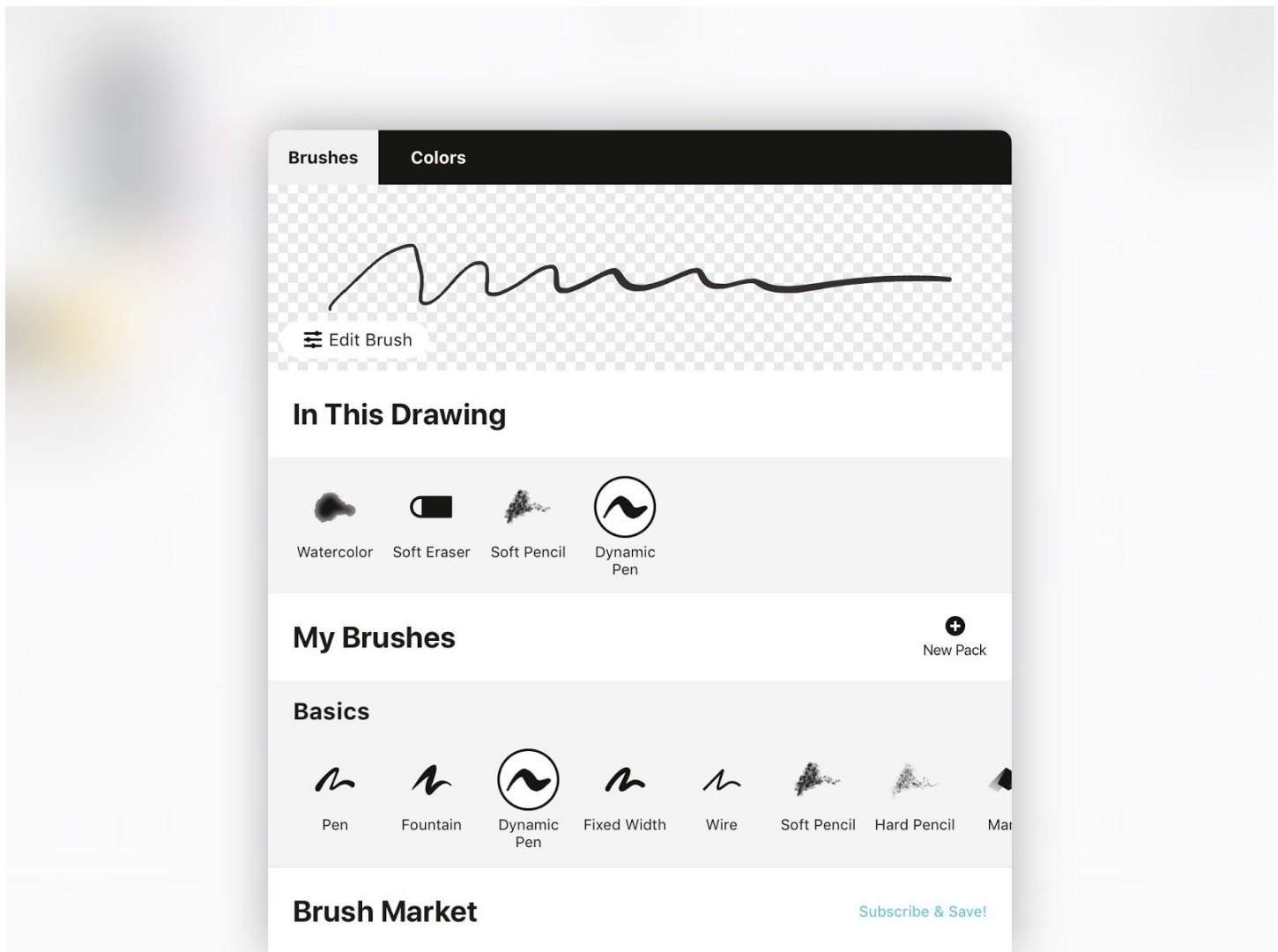
In the Brushes menu, you can configure your tools with the bigger picture in mind. Up at the top is your brush viewer, which actively changes according to your settings. You can draw inside it yourself and try out the tool.

Below the viewer you can find the brushes you've used in the current drawing. Then under My Brushes, find the basic set of tools (non-editable), where you can select from a variety of organic or engineering brushes. You also have the ability to create your own brushes (more on this below)

and purchase brushes from the Brush Market. Any brush or brush pack that you create will be shown in My Brushes and all the purchased ones will be available in a section called Purchased.

Scroll down further and you'll find the Brush Market, with different types of artistic brush libraries that you can unlock with credits, the same as with object libraries (or if you're subscribed, you have open access). These are carefully crafted, editable stamp-based brushes with all the vector maneuverability.

Basic Brushes and Tools
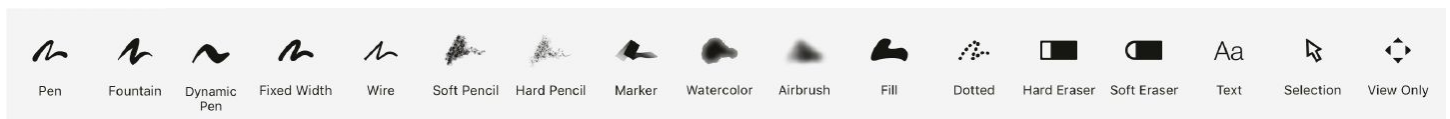
Pens

Pens are most widely used in sketching when you want to make a statement or reflect permanence. Our **Pen** and **Fountain Pen** tools react to *velocity* to vary their line width - draw fast to get a thicker stroke. Our **Dynamic Pen** reacts to pressure. The **Fixed Width Pen** does what it says on the tin - it maintains a constant width from cap to cap.

Wire

This tool behaves like a traditional CAD or vector tool would - the line width is maintained at any zoom level, making it perfect for wireframes, light CAD drawings, perspective layouts, and more. **Export** an SVG file using Wire into another vector program and find the same clean line.

Soft & Hard Pencils

Slightly different in texture and feel, these traditional sketching tools are modeled on real pencils. They react naturally to tilt, pressure and velocity with a supported active stylus like Apple Pencil. For great shading, tilt your stylus like you would a real pencil.

Marker

Have you ever used a COPIC marker? Our markers have the same texture, transparency and edge that these popular markers have, making them great for highlighting, texturing and illustration work. Give yourself a wide tip or a narrow one, or increase / decrease the opacity to your liking.

Watercolor

This artistic wet brush blends beautifully with consecutive watercolor strokes in the same layer. Within a single layer, you can interrupt the blending by using other types of strokes in between (like Pen). You can use the eraser tool (below) to mask different pieces without affecting the blending. Enjoy using this brush with infinite **Layers** for an organic, dry edge effect.

Airbrush

The airbrush flows onto the screen with subtle texture and soft edges like the real medium. Popular with sketchnoters, for highlights and for painting, give your design some sheen.

Filled Stroke

Not to be confused with Bucket Fill (which we're currently working on - lots of definitional bits to think about with the interactive parameters of vector strokes), the Filled Stroke tool is a brush unique to Concepts. It allows you to draw any type of shape - simple, wriggly, complex - with a stylus or finger, and fill the positive space inside.

"Positive space" refers to any area inside your drawn line between start and end point that is original to the stroke - as in, the area hasn't been drawn over a second time during the same stroke. This crossing over of filled area causes it to become "negative space" and remain empty. Of course, if you draw over the area a third time within the same stroke, it becomes positive again and is filled.

Your resulting fill is a smooth, clean finish, customizable with opacity. Excellent for shadows, light, and complex figures, we think you'll appreciate the possibilities this brush offers your design + art toolkit.

Troubleshooting. Since Fill takes into account the start and end points of your line, *make sure Line Smoothing is set below 100%.* Otherwise your shape will disappear into a line or a point as though the rest of the stroke never happened. Also check that your transparency is above 0%, or like all strokes it may disappear, only to be found when Selecting in the area.

Dotted

Great for annotations, partial boundaries or a bit of variety, the dotted line is a single stroke, not thousands of dots. Treat it as a textured stroke susceptible to color, opacity and smoothing.

Soft & Hard Erasers

In a traditional pixel-based world, erasers delete things permanently. But vectors aren't pixels, they behave and remember data differently, and if you're comfortable with programs like Adobe Photoshop or Autodesk Sketchbook Pro, it may be easier to think of the Concepts erasers as *masking tools*. Our erasers visually remove anything underneath them, but the data isn't actually gone. You can still retrieve old strokes later, or adjust your mask as your drawings progress.

If you want to remove strokes completely, try selecting them with a *tap+hold* and then use Delete.

Double-tap the eraser button to open a **Quick Clear** menu. Here you can choose to delete everything, or clear all strokes, images or text.

The erasers stay the same size regardless of your zoom level. This means the further you zoom inward, the smaller its effects will be - very useful for working with the details. You can also change the size of the eraser using the Size slider, and its effects will scale the same way.

Eraser at zoom level:

25%   50%   100% 200% 400% etc.
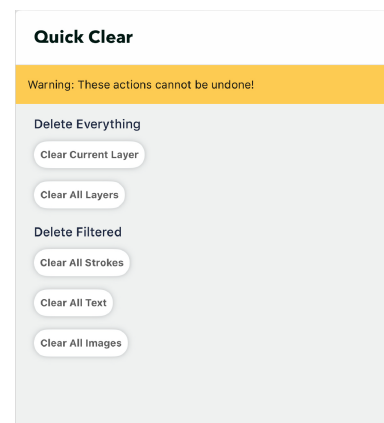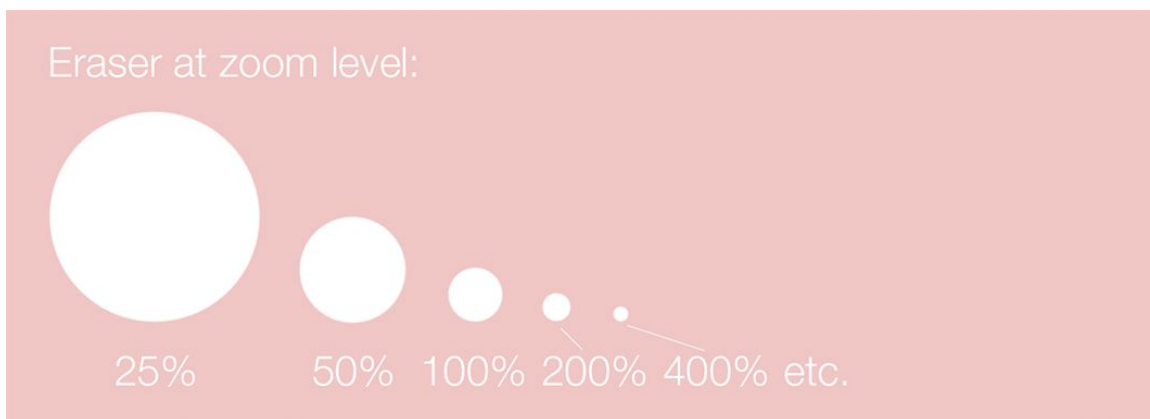
The Hard Eraser gives you crisp, clean edges; the Soft Eraser works beautifully with the pencils and watercolor (and any other tool) to soften edges in a true-to-life, artistic manner.

Text

Text labels are an easy, clean way to add annotations to your drawing. You can manipulate text the same way you manipulate other strokes and images.

1. Set the active tool to Text. It might already be on your toolbar, or you may need to select it from the Brushes menu.
2. *Tap* anywhere on screen to add a new text label. The keyboard will appear; type or paste text, then dismiss the keyboard by tapping done to solidify the label.

To edit a text label, **Select** it, then tap the text edit icon in the popup. It will take you back to the keyboard.

You can select and modify the appearance of your text label just like you'd select any other stroke. Select the text, then change its color or opacity via the tool wheel, use the **Selection popups** to rotate, flip, scale, group, lock, delete it (etc), or use the **control points** to stretch your text into Star Wars-like perspectives and align it with your drawing.

Concepts has full support for any language your device can input, including emojis :). We are currently limited to a single font, but we plan to allow font selection in a future update.

Selection Tool

The Selection tool can be added to any of your tool slots and has two modes: a single-select *Item Picker* and a multi-select *Lasso*. Toggle between these two options using the popup at the bottom of your canvas, or put a second finger down anywhere to temporarily toggle the mode.

The Selection tool can also be activated via *tap+hold* anywhere on the canvas - helpful for when you're in sketching flow and don't want to change tools. It can also be assigned as your finger gesture in **Stylus settings**. To learn more more about this tool, see **Selection**.

View Only

Whether you want to showcase your work to your client or just pan through your infinite canvas, you can use the View Only tool. It allows you to pan and zoom without accidentally selecting or changing anything in your drawing.

Creating a Custom Brush

You can create your own brushes in the Brush editor (with Essentials or subscription). These are image or "stamp" based brushes that you can apply pressure, tilt or velocity settings to, as well as spacing, scatter and rotation settings. You can create simple or deeper responsive brushes that fit your style quite easily.

To create a brush, find the My Brushes section in the Brushes menu, tap **+ New Pack** to create a new brush set, then tap the "Untitled" brush that appears in the set or tap Edit Brush up in the viewer. You'll be brought to the Brush editor.
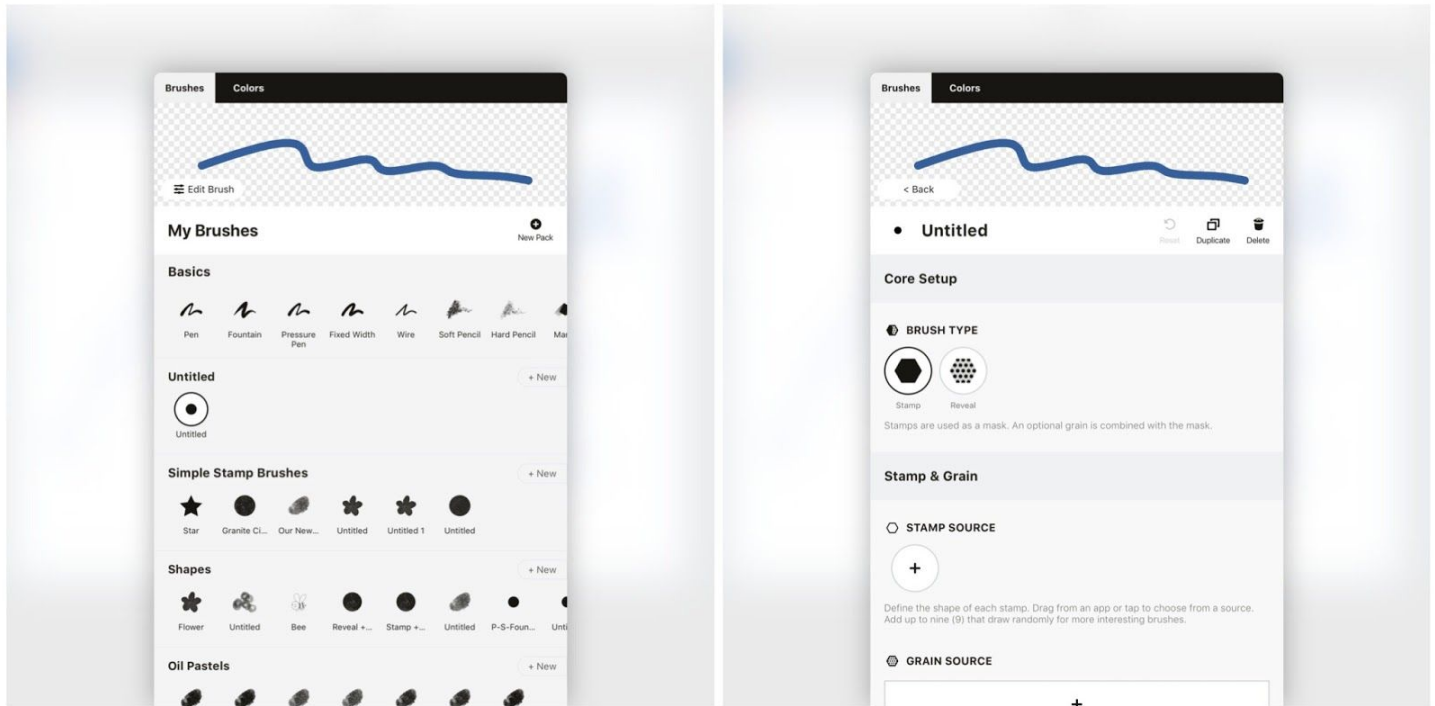
[Left: In the Brushes menu, tap the Untitled brush. Right: Enter the Brush editor.]

Here you'll see the live viewer, then the title of your brush (tap to rename) with the abilities to reset, duplicate or delete the brush.

Core Setup

Next you'll find the Core Setup for your brush. You have two types of brushes to choose from - a **Stamp** brush and a **Reveal** brush. These function oppositely from each other in a fundamental way.

- A **Stamp** brush creates a stamp using one or several images, and stacks these stamps on top of each other at intervals you set to create your brush texture. Think real-life ink stamps built on top of each other, repeating as they create a stroke.

- A **Reveal** brush uses its image base to unmask a grain underneath. A good metaphor for this might be watercolor paint — it seeps into the textured paper to enhance the paper

with pigment and reveal the texture further. The resulting stroke of this brush type is even and consistent, there is no "overlap" when a stroke doubles back on itself.

Stamp & Grain

Choose a brush type and then move down to **Stamp & Grain**. Here you'll be able to upload images (JPG or PNG) to use as an image base for your brush. "Stamp" here refers to the image, not to the brush type above. We've created a complete tutorial on creating stamps and grains for your brushes [here](#).
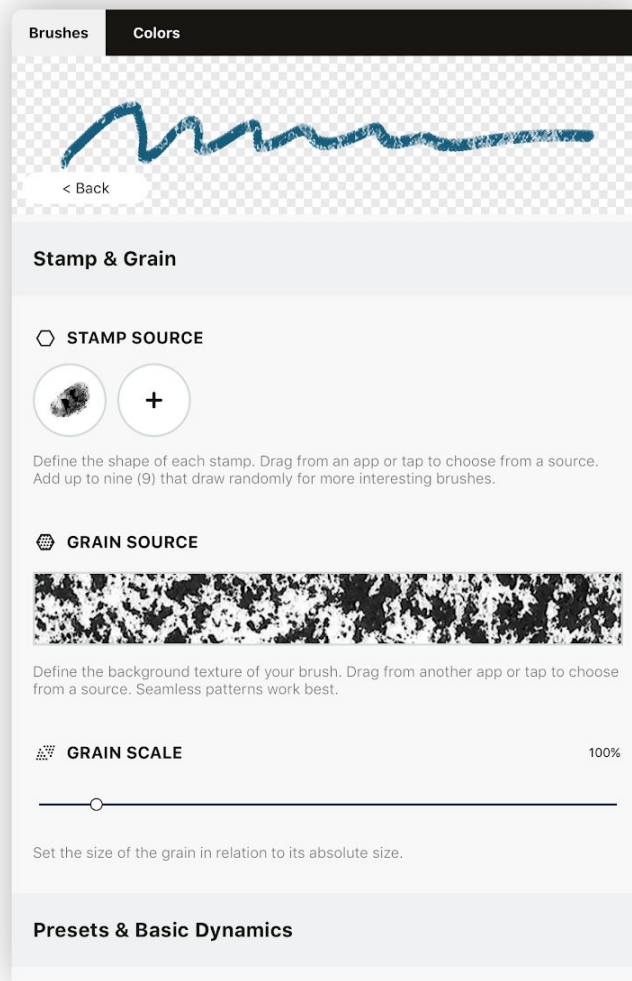
One of the hardest problems to solve with digital media is creating a truly random stroke like traditional tools can create - natural brush strokes and "happy accidents" are difficult to replicate. To help with this, we've given you the ability to import up to 9 stamps, more than any other professional illustration app. Stacking these stamps on top of each other can give you a wonderful level of depth, richness and randomness when combined with the other controls.

Import your stamp(s), then import your grain. The grain is a background image that adds additional texture to your brush. Grains work best when they are "seamless" - you don't want to see the edges of the image when it repeats. Again, you can learn how to make a seamless grain [here](#) (and find an example to work with if you don't want to create your own).
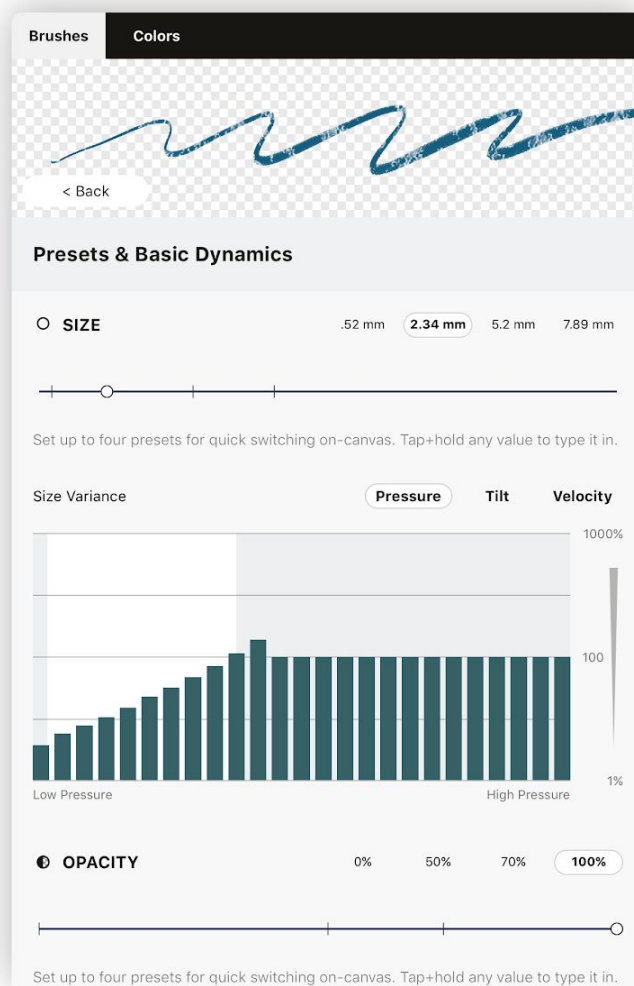
Presets & Basic Dynamics

In **Presets & Basic Dynamics**, you'll find the Size, Opacity and Smoothing presets that you're used to from the main canvas, as well as variance graphs that help you to fine tune the brush action to your stylus' pressure, tilt and velocity inputs.

- **Size.** Use the size slider or tap+hold the preset field to enter a custom value to determine your brush's median size. This is the size that in the graph is represented at the 100% line. Depending on how you adjust the variance for pressure etc, your brush will range around this size.
- **Opacity.** The same principle applies to the Opacity slider and graph. Note that there isn't a variance graph for opacity when the Reveal brush is selected, as when it draws over itself, it doesn't build up opacity. You can still make the brush more transparent overall with the slider, but there is nothing to adjust during the stroke action itself.
- **Smoothness.** Smoothness is a simple percentage and doesn't have a graph.

Working With the Variance Graphs

Before adjusting one of the graphs, we recommend you draw a stroke in the live preview area.
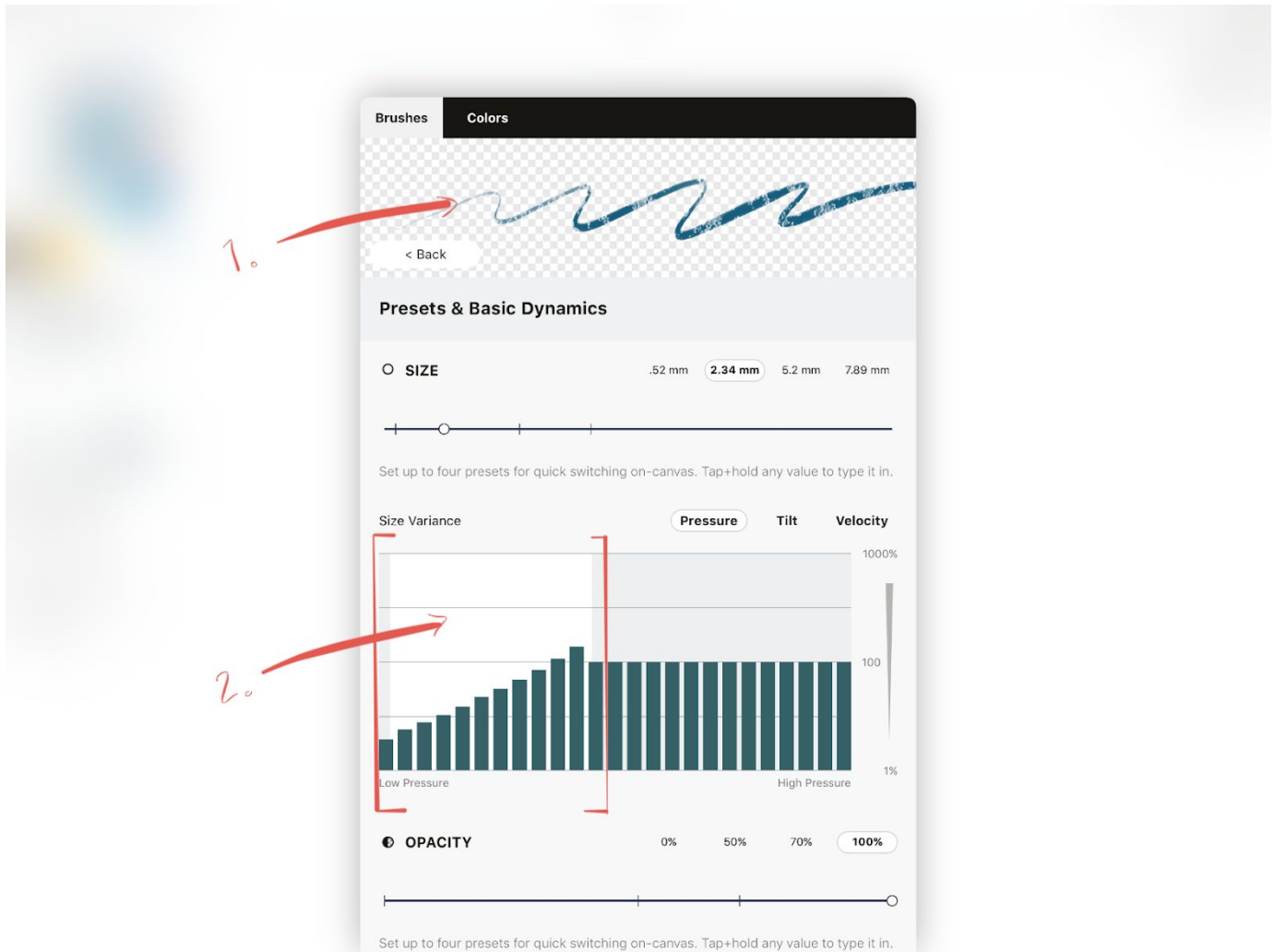
1. Draw a stroke in the viewer. 2. Notice the white range area appear behind the graph.

While you draw, take a look at a graph: you'll see a white area appear behind the bars while drawing. This is a live match to your brush stroke on the viewer, reflecting the range of pressure, tilt or velocity (depending on your selection) you are applying as you draw. As you adjust the bars in the graph, you'll see the effects in the viewer. Experiment with these different types of input, and see what feels natural for the brush you'd like to create.

Typically, you want a nice smooth line upward or downward across the white range box. A pressure-sensitive fountain pen, for example, will start small and gradually increase in size depending on how hard you press the pen to the paper. You would use the Size preset with the

Pressure dynamic for this pen, and draw a smooth line upward from the left side of the graph to the right side. It would look something like this:
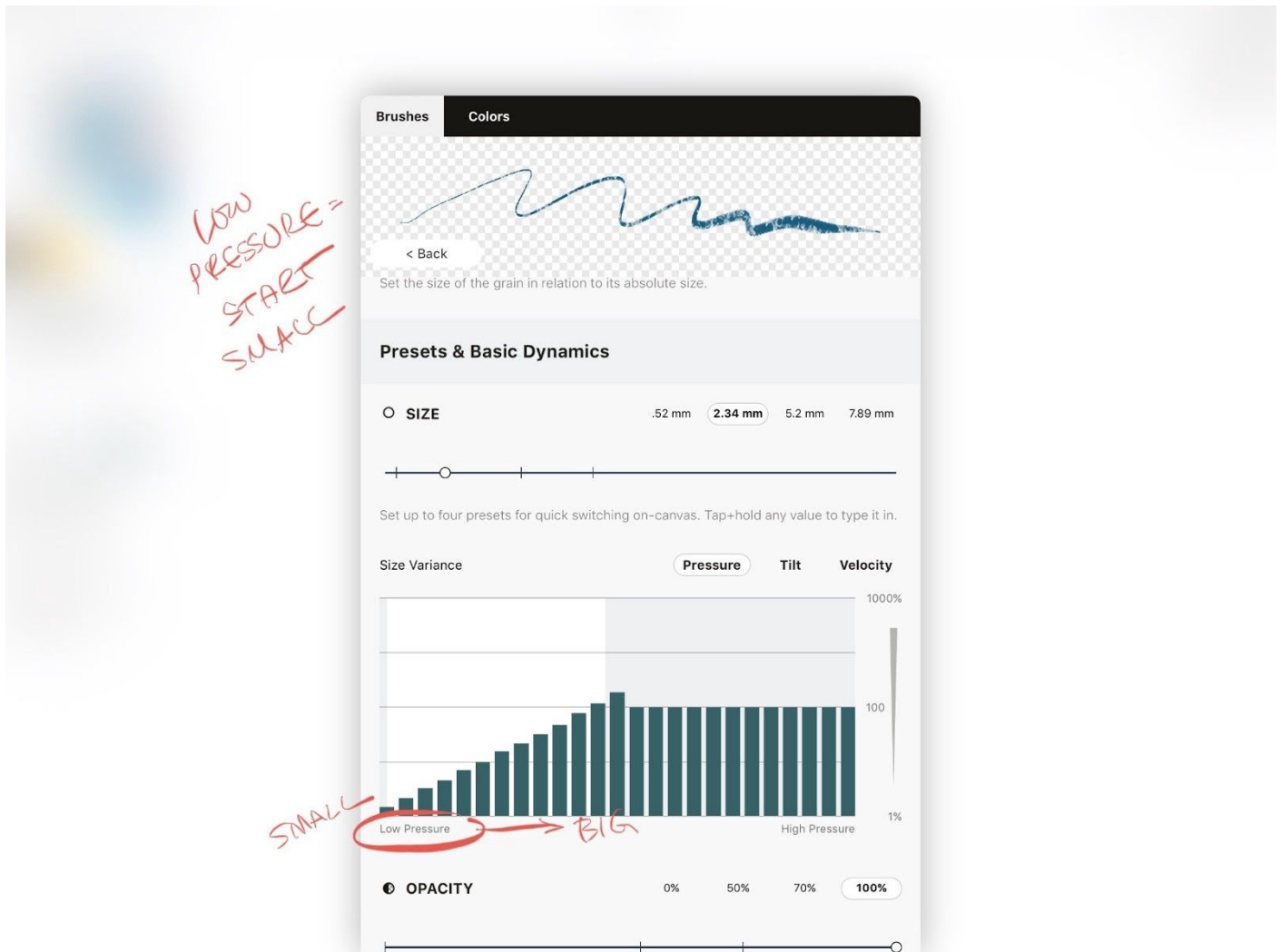
If you want the stroke to start wide and get narrower as you press or increase speed etc, you can draw the variance curve downward — bigger to smaller.
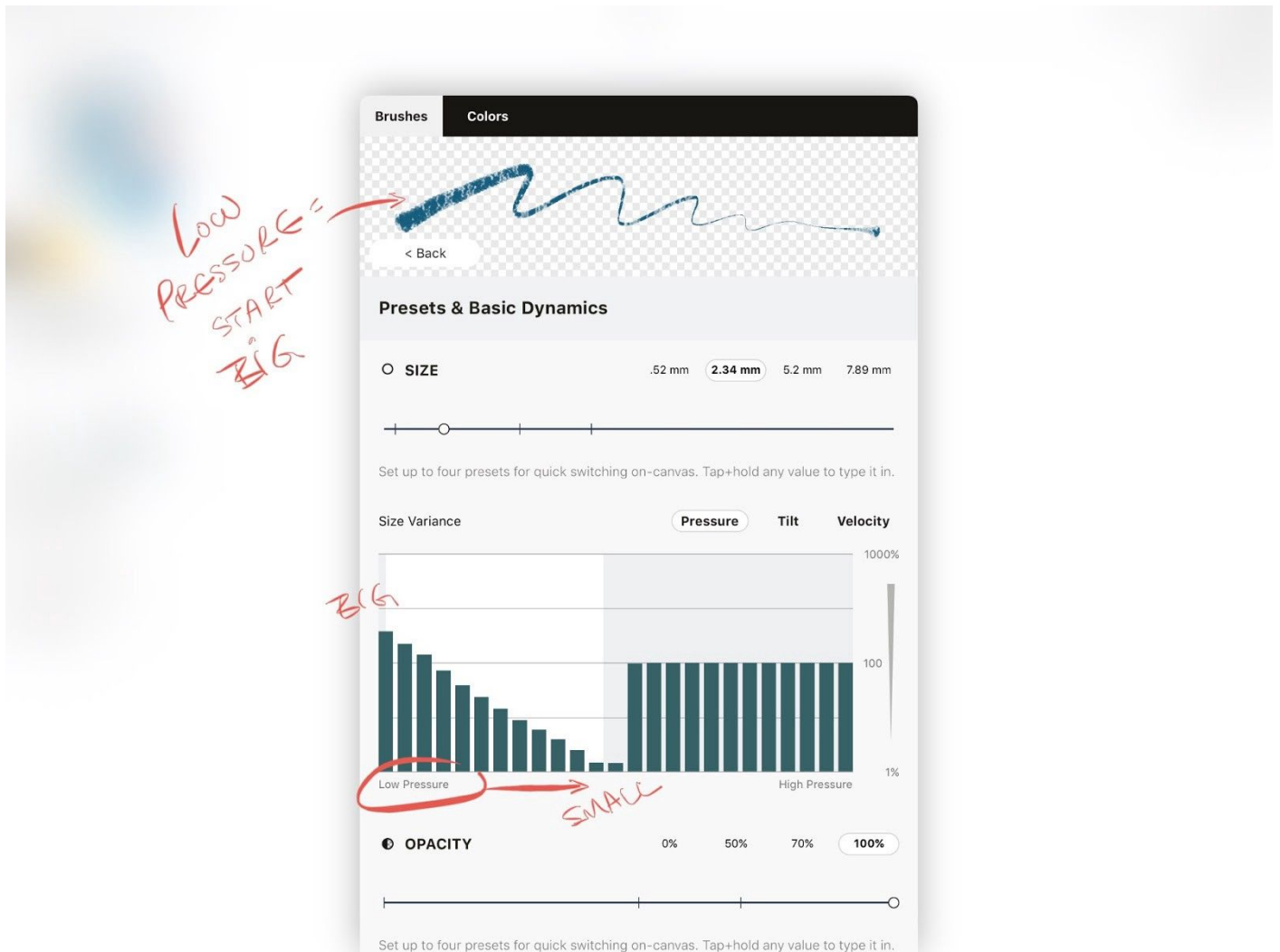
Applying extreme ups and downs to the bars in the middle of a stroke represent "accidental" or "unexpected" variations to your brush stroke. You might like these if you're feeling artistic — try a "rough" graph and see what happens to the stroke in the viewer.
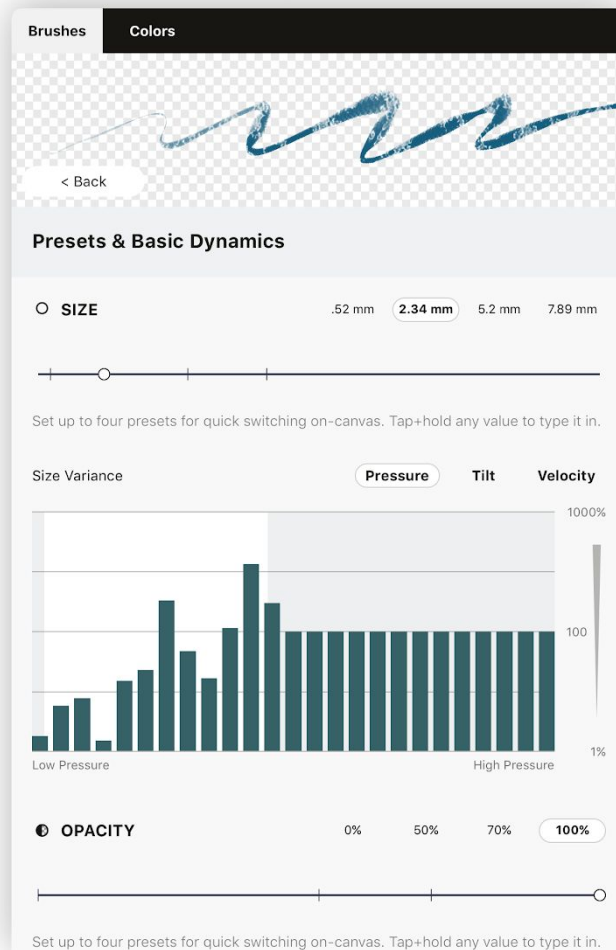
Generally, however, smooth is the norm. Just a fairly quick, simple upward or downward stroke along the graph - all the way across your white range area - will work fine.

As you apply these settings to your brush, notice how it responds in the live viewer. If at any time you don't like what's going on, you can reset your graph. **To reset a graph, double-tap the vertical value axis (1% — 1000%) beside it.**

Notice that on the value axis, the bottom half of the graph is 1 - 100% (the size or opacity value you entered), whereas the upper half is 100 - 1000% - an exponential level larger. The majority of your graph will be within the bottom half of the graph, while continuing the stroke along past the 100% mark will create larger differences in your brush stroke in the viewer.

An additional note - the range on the white box for pressure is directly related to the pressure setting for your stylus in Settings -> Stylus. You can adjust this setting to between 30 and 70% for a nice clip your brush's action.

Shape Controls

Now continue on to the **Shape Controls**. In this section, you can adjust the spacing, scatter and rotation of your stamps. Pay attention to the live viewer as you play with these controls and enjoy seeing the stamps respond to your adjustments.

With each of these controls, you'll notice the handle is split down the middle. This allows you to create a range of random "jitter" for your shapes to appear in. When the handles are together, there is no jitter, they will appear along the stroke path with an even spacing or rotation etc. If you pull the handles apart, you create a range of randomness that the stamps can appear in.

- **Shape Spacing** allows you to adjust the distance your stamps appear from each other. Separate the handles to create more random spacing.
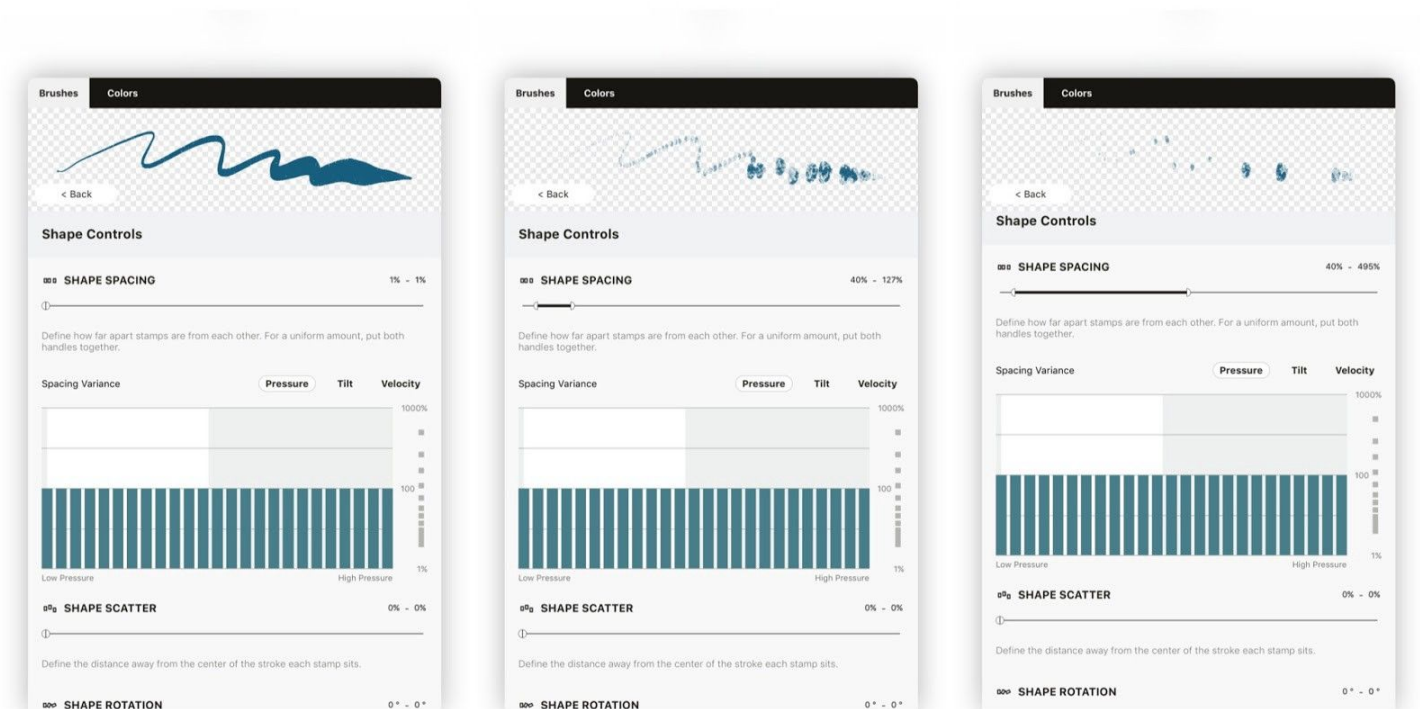
- **Shape Scatter** gives your stamps an additional vertical field to appear in along the stroke path. Separate the handles to create a more random scatter.

- **Shape Rotation** affects the rotation of the stamp along the stroke line. Separate the handles to create a more random rotational effect.
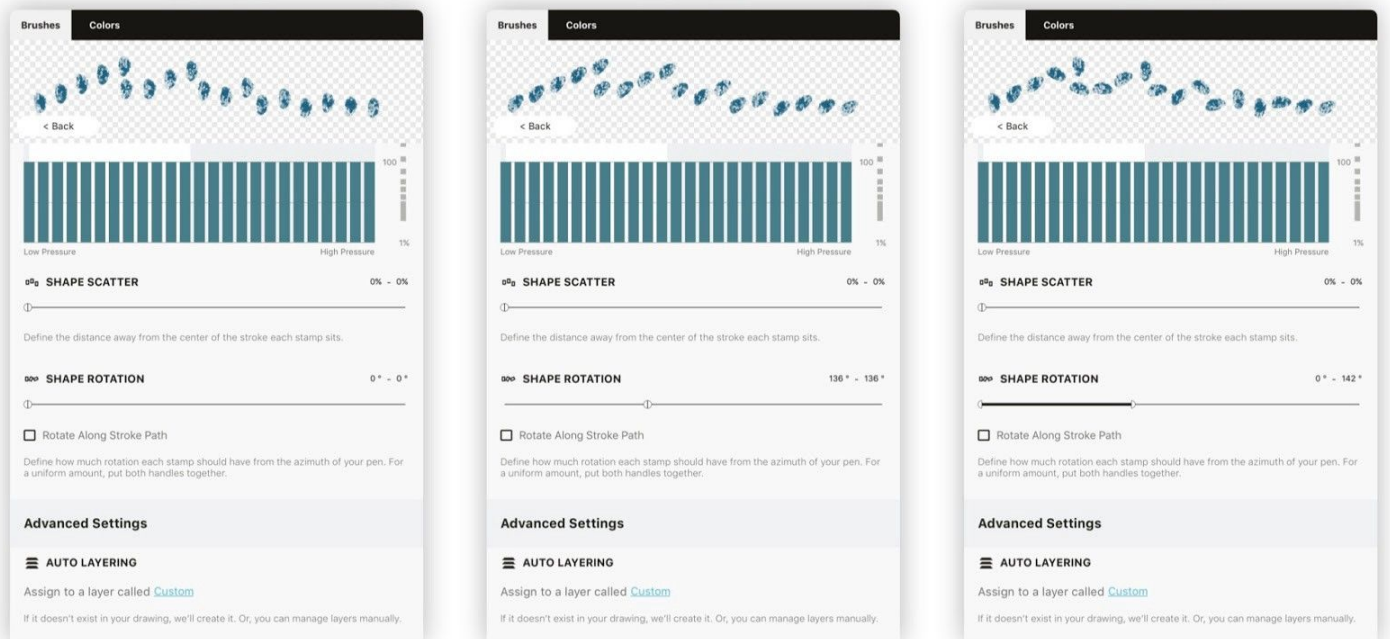
Rotate Along Stroke Path. By default, your stroke follows the azimuth of the stylus, so if you turn your stylus upward or downward, the stroke will rotate along with it. If you want to disable this rotation, you can check this box.

Advanced Settings

Finally, under **Advanced Settings**, you have the ability to define the layer your brush will appear in. Automatic layering separates your strokes by tool type, so defining your brush as a Pen, for example, will make the brush appear in the Pen layer along with any other Pen tool you've used in the drawing.
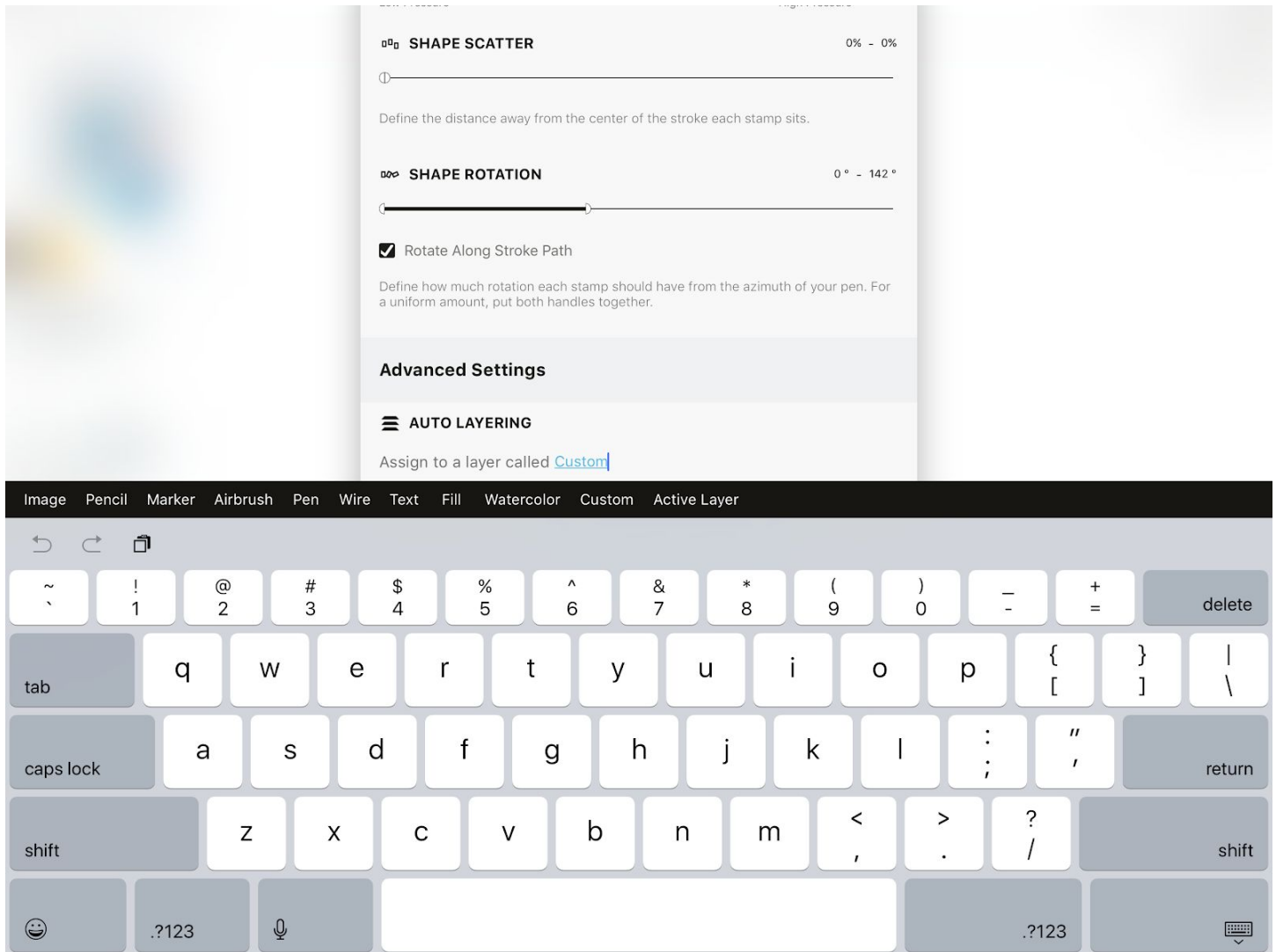
Tap on the layer label ("Custom" in the above image), and a keyboard along with several pre-set layer labels will appear. You can tap one of these options to define your brush as an Image, Pencil, Marker, Airbrush, Pen, Wire, Text, Fill, Watercolor or Custom tool type, set it to appear in your Active Layer, or enter in your own brush title.

We hope you enjoy creating your own brushes. It might appear overwhelming at first, but as you play and experiment with the editor, you'll find it's very simple and can give you very satisfying results.

For more practice, try our [photo-based brush tutorial](#) and create an easy brush using your own hand, face or other photograph.

Brush Sharing

With the team-sharing capability, you can share your custom-made brushes with any colleague or friend who has a free Concepts account. These are read-only brushes, non-editable by anyone except for you. Any change you make to a brush will update live on the accounts you've shared your brushes to.
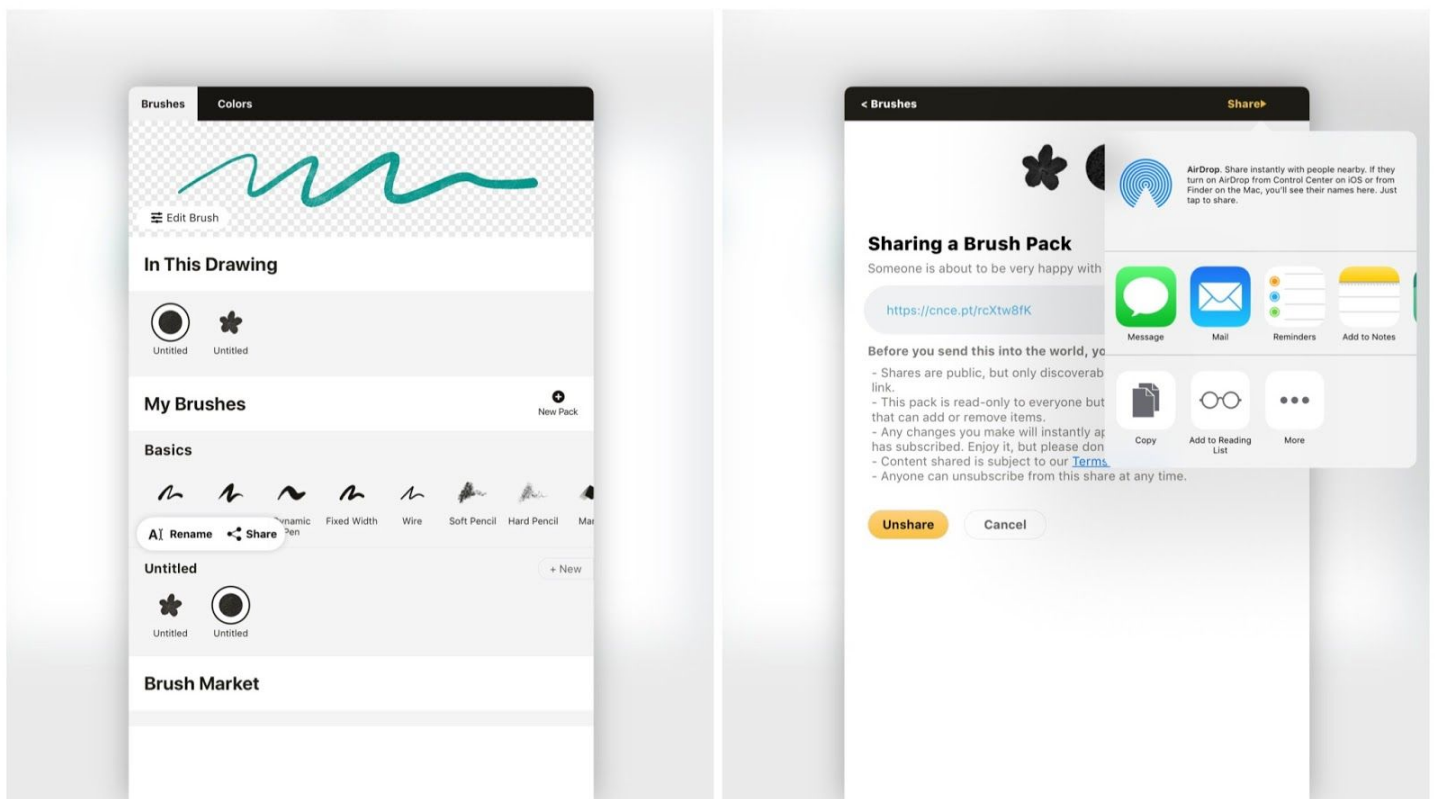
Tap+hold the title of the brush pack you wish to share, tap **Share**, and find a link you can text or email along, or tap Share in the upper corner of the popup and send it off. At any time, you can unshare your pack.

Colors

The COPIC Color Wheel
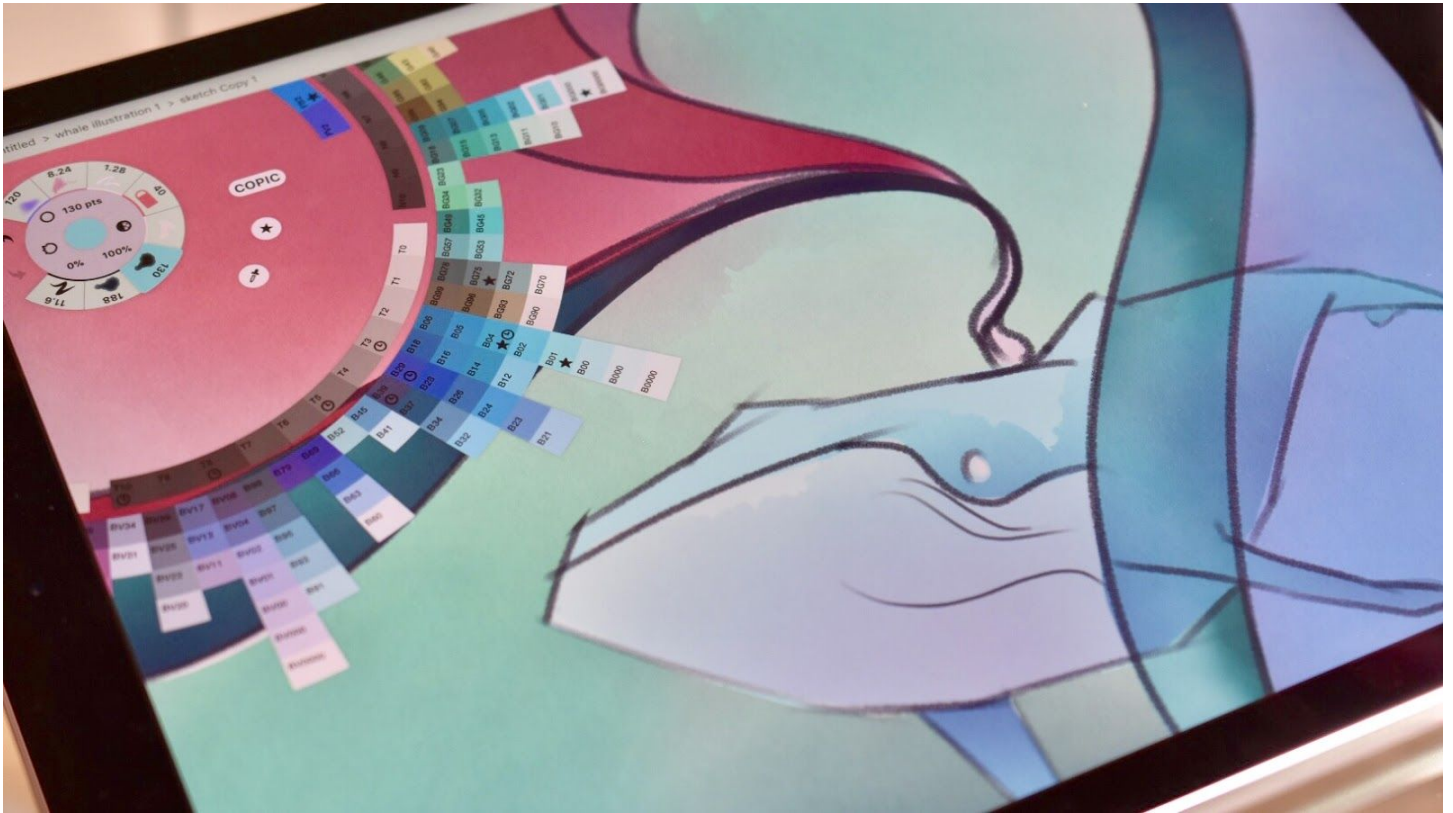
At the center of your tool wheel is a circle representing the current color and opacity of your current tool.

Tap the circle to bring up the COPIC color wheel. This wheel is a spectrum of colors hand-picked by *Too Corporation* to help artists and designers add consistency and beauty to their work while simplifying the matching process. These colors are mathematically sorted by pigment and saturation, and are represented on the wheel by a letter+number code. Visit here to learn more about Copic color theory. The values in Concepts are as similar as they can get to their real-life marker complements.

The color wheel is spinnable. *Drag* your finger up or down to turn the wheel.

At the center (beyond the tool wheel), you'll find a star denoting your favorite colors, which will bring you to the Colors menu and color palettes, and an eyedropper activating the **Color Picker**.

Next you'll see a tonal value spectrum, true black and white, and when a color is available to your **clipboard**, another block containing that special color. Next is a ring of your cool, warm, neutral and tonal grays. Then the colors in their particular blending gradients, in all their glory.

The occasional clock tells you it was one of your latest used colors. You'll notice the occasional clock on some of the colors. The star denotes your favorites, which are remembered on the Colors menu for easy reference and dragging into new color palettes. The clock tells you it was one of your latest used colors.

Tap on a color to set it to your active brush.

Tap+hold a color to drag & drop it into another supported app.

Tap+hold the color circle at the center of the wheel to bring up your Colors menu.

The Colors Menu and Color Palettes
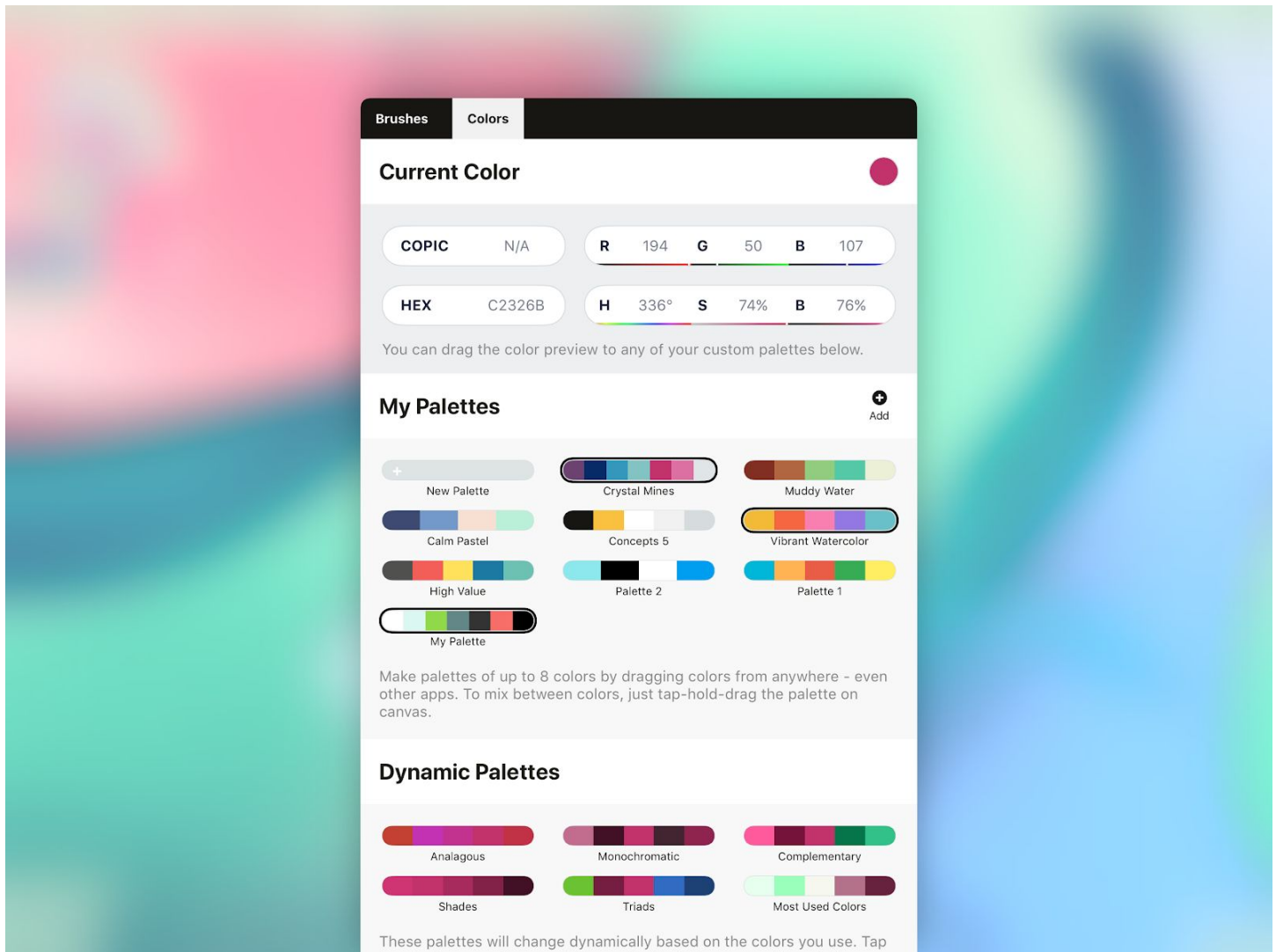
Here in the Colors menu, you can find color values, create custom colors, and customize palettes unique to your project that you can access from the main canvas via the **Color Mixer**. From the top:

1. Your current color is shown in the circle to the upper right. *Tap+hold+drag* the circle to pull the color into any of the color palettes lower down on the menu.

2. *Tap* the current color circle to bring up the COPIC color wheel inside the menu.
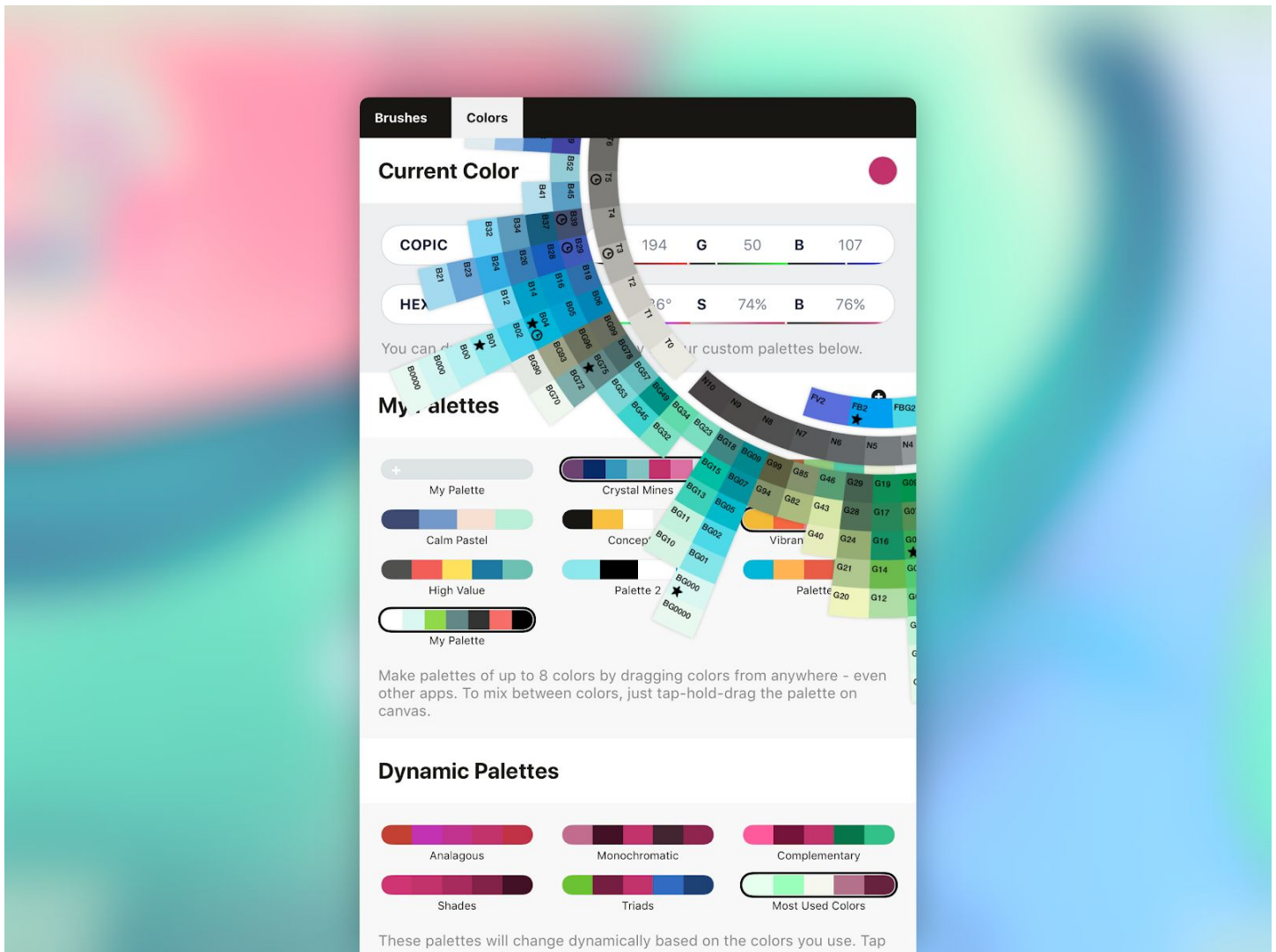
3. In the next section, you can manually type color values into the COPIC, RGB, HEX and HSB fields to find custom colors, or drag the tip of your finger / stylus along their spectrums beneath. The color will appear in the color circle up top. You can hang onto that custom color by dragging it into a color palette below.

4. In **My Palettes** are your custom palettes. *Tap* a palette to activate it and access it from the main canvas via the scrollable color mixer. They will appear in the color mixer in the order you tapped them in.

Tap the **+** button to create a new palette. You can have an infinite number of palettes, and each palette can have up to 8 colors inside it.
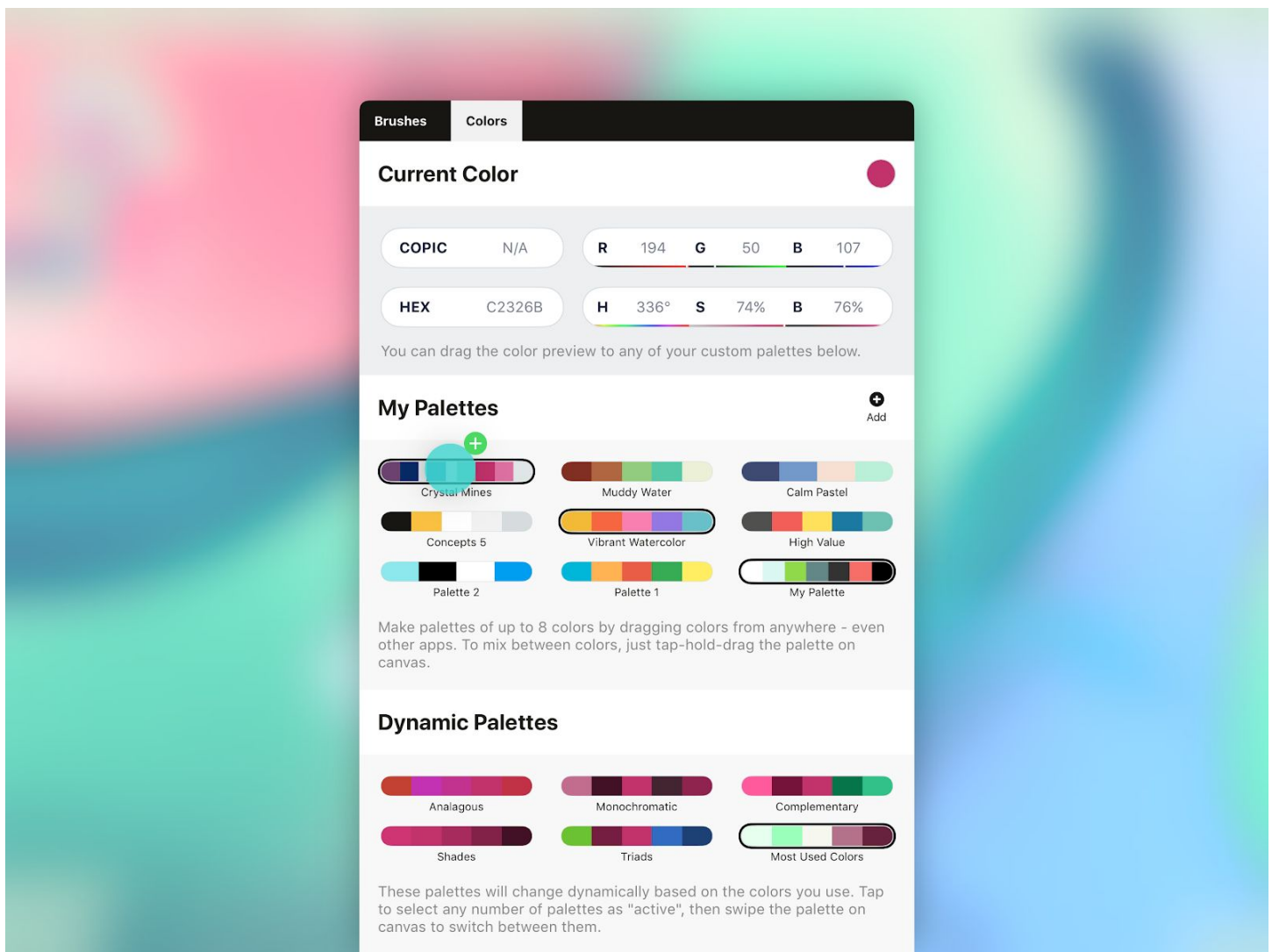
To **add a color** to a palette, *tap+hold+drag* any color on screen (or from **Drag & Drop** supported apps) and pull it into the palette. The animation will guide you. You can drag from the current color circle, from the COPIC color wheel (tap the circle to bring it up), or from any other palette in the menu, including the dynamic ones below.

To **re-order colors** in a palette, *tap+hold+drag* the color, and move it to its new spot.

To **remove a color** from a palette, *tap+hold+drag* the fated color away from the palette and release it.

5. At the bottom are your **Dynamic Palettes**. Helpful for choosing shades based on color math and recently used colors, you can always rely on them to give you a good match.

Sharing Color Palettes
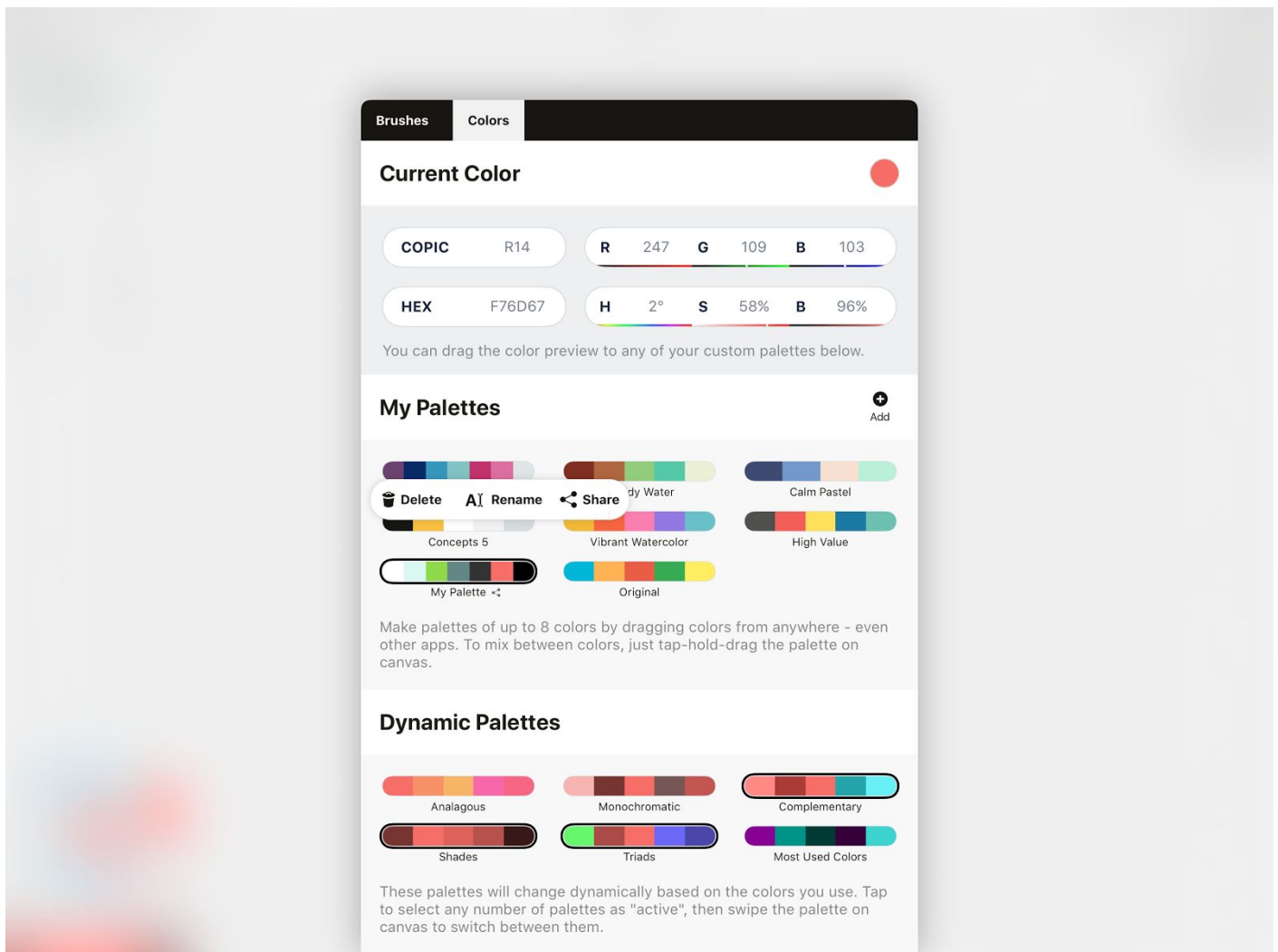
When you **subscribe** to Concepts' team-sharing capabilities, you can share your color palettes with your team members, colleagues, or anyone who has a Concepts account. Helpful for keeping projects synced and to standard, it's also super simple.

1. *Tap+hold* your palette to bring up its popup menu.

We highly recommend *naming your palette* before sharing it**.** Since it's read-only to everyone but you, this helps your colleagues to remember what your special palette was for, exactly.

2. *Tap* **Share.**

A few things you should know about sharing:

- Sharing is public, but is only discoverable by people who have the link.
- Your palette is read-only to everyone except you. You are the only one who can add or remove items, or rename the palette.
- Any changes you make will instantly appear on anyone's device that has subscribed, with whom you've shared your link.
- Any palette that you have created, you can share. Content shared is subject to our Terms of Services.
- Anyone can unsubscribe from your share at any time.

3. A menu will appear with your palette preview and its own Direct Link. *Tap+hold* the link to copy it to your device's clipboard, or just tap Share in the upper right corner to show your device's sharing locations.
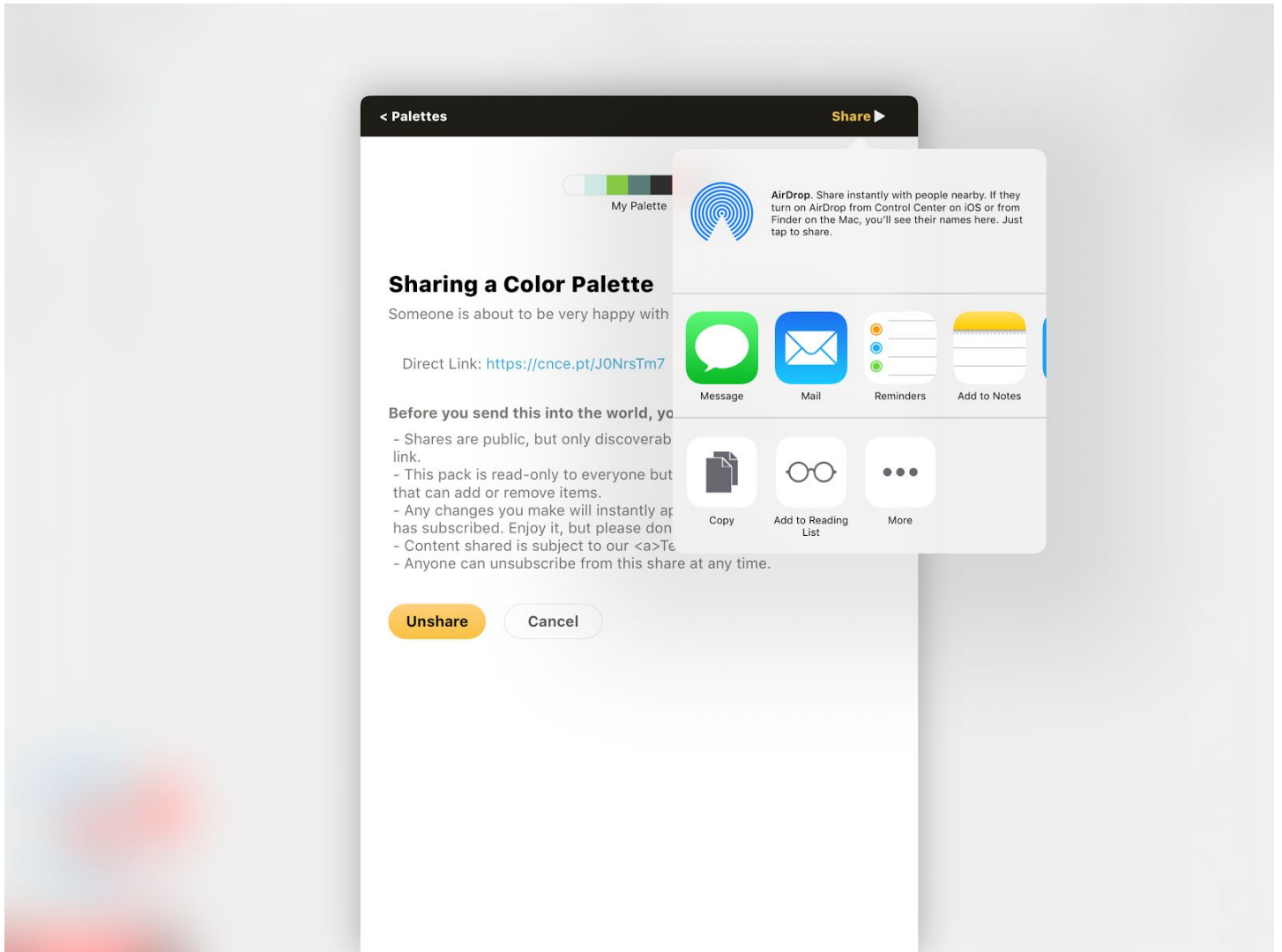
4. Paste your link into a message, email or other application, or touch the location on the sharing popup to share your color palette.

5. Anyone with the link can load your palette to their device for use in their own projects. Any time you update your palette, their palette will update, too.

Color Picker

The Concepts color picker is certainly a traditional color-picking tool, but it also has some neat properties as part of a vector-based application.
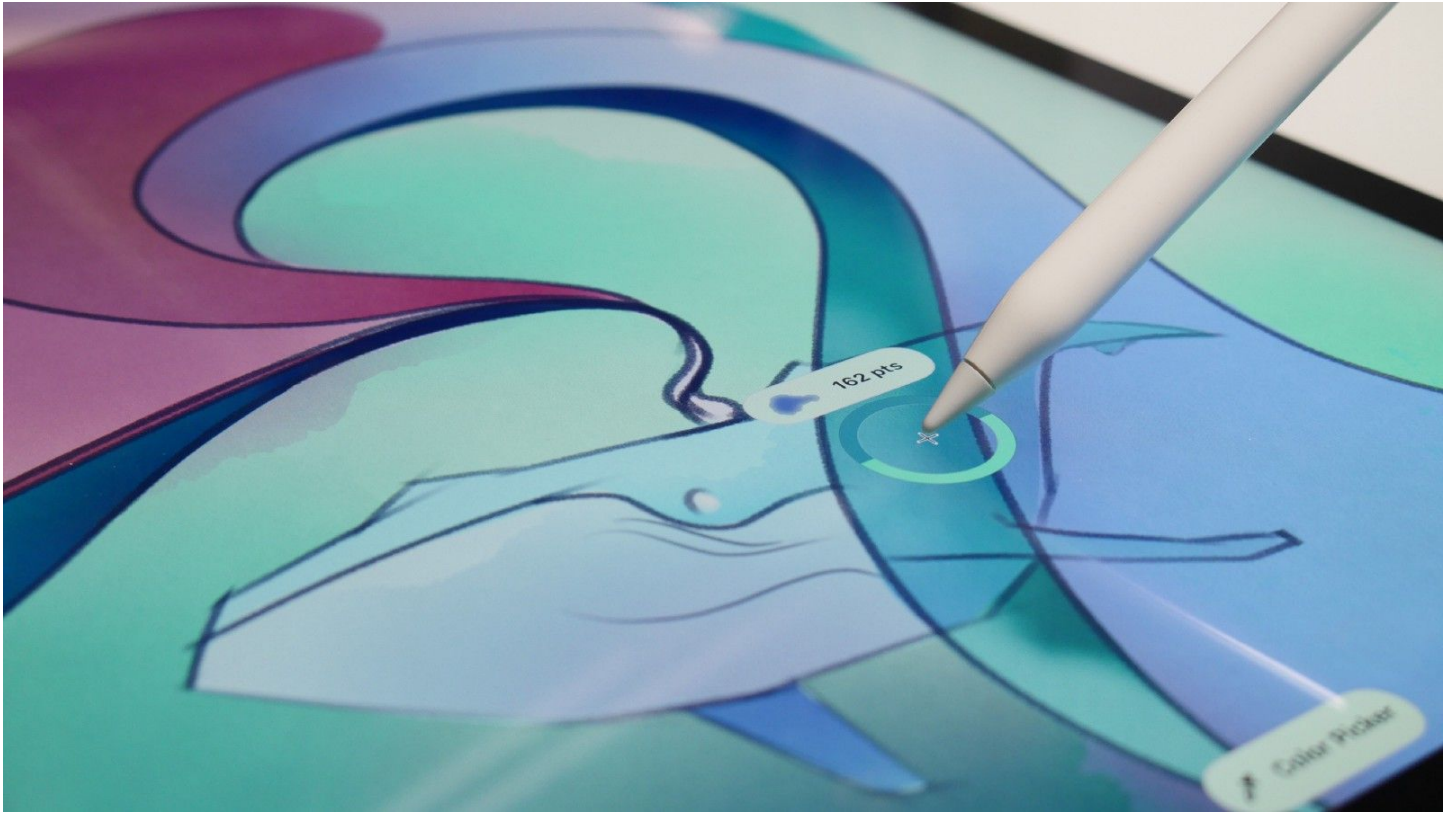
You can access the color picker in a couple ways:

1. *Tap* the color circle in the center of the tool wheel to bring up the COPIC color wheel and find the **eyedropper**.
2. *Tap+hold* anywhere on the canvas to bring up the **Selection** menu. With another finger, you can tap the left button to toggle from *Item Picker* to *Lasso* to *Color Picker*. This is a great shortcut for selecting colors and brush properties without having to break your drawing flow.

As you drag the color picker about your screen, you'll notice:

1. Its shape. The circle acts as your target zone, with the crosshairs at the center giving you the exact point of choice.

2. The solid color on the bottom half of the rim is your currently selected color for your brush. It won't change until you tell it to.
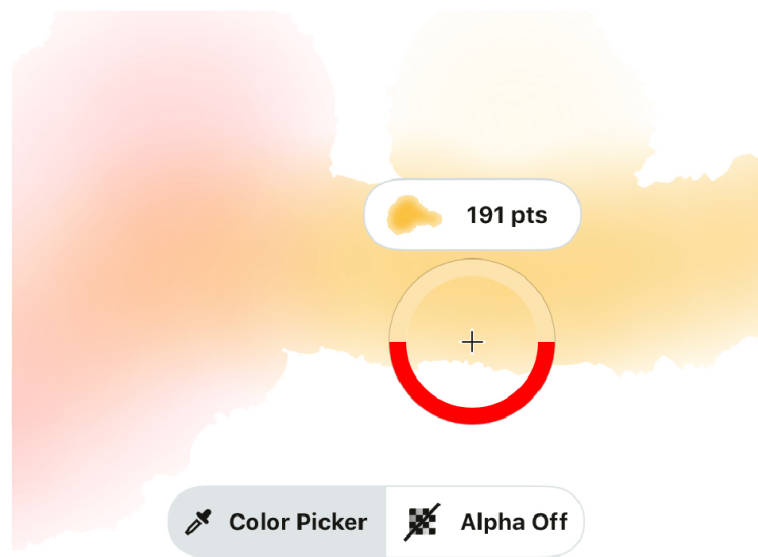
3. The changeable color along the top half of the rim is the color your crosshairs are currently touching. This is the color your brush will take on if you let go of the color picker. The color picker searches among all layers of your drawing.

Notice that in the bottom of your screen is a popup where you can toggle between 'Alpha On' and 'Alpha Off'. With alpha on, the color picker will ignore the background and also detect the opacity of the color. With alpha off, you will always get a color with 100% opacity that includes the background color in the mix (like traditional pixel apps).

4. While the ring analyzes the color and opacity of the stroke, the tag floating above the circle shows the vector details — its brush type and size etc. These are the characteristics of the brush you used when initially drawing the stroke. If you *tap the tag* instead of letting go of the ring, it will assign the exact brush you used to your tool slot.
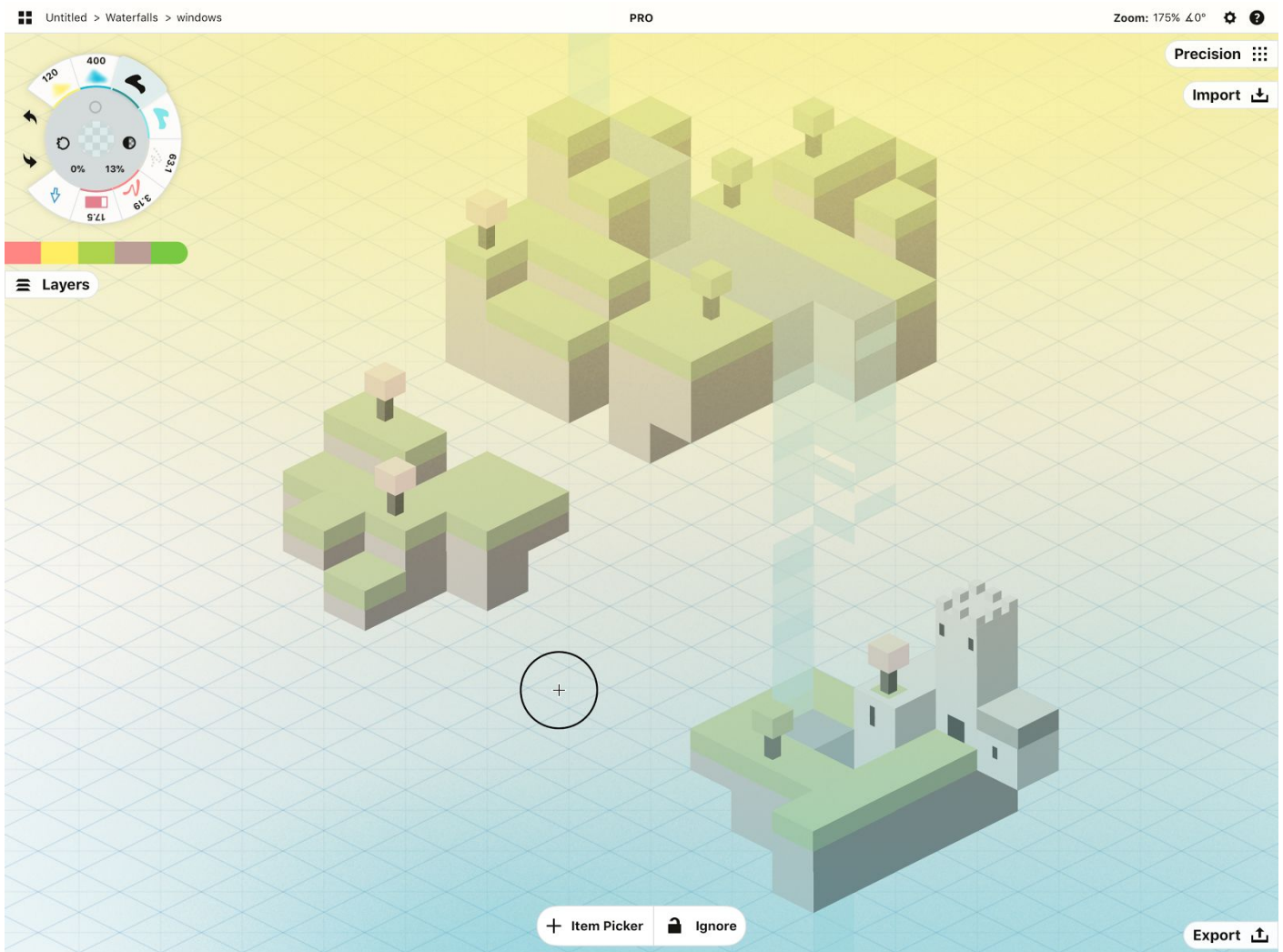
Selection

Concepts is a vector-based app, which gives you the powerful freedom to pick up and move, tweak or change any stroke at any time, even after it's drawn. It allows you to make changes to your designs with minimal effort - instead of redrawing an entire project, you can just select what needs to be adjusted and change it. Perfect for design iterations, reorganizing mind-maps, or preparing materials for clients after feedback, Selection frees you to accomplish more.

There are four ways to Select (aka pick up) a stroke or multiple strokes in your sketch.

1. Use the Selection tool. In the Brushes menu, you can choose the Selection tool (the arrow) and set it as a separate tool on your tool wheel or bar. Touch the screen to use it like you use any tool.
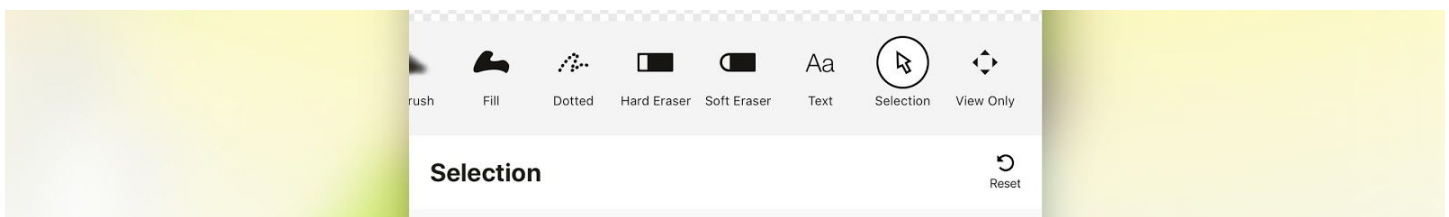
2. *Tap+hold* anywhere on canvas to activate Selection. This is a really nice shortcut so you don't have to interrupt your drawing flow by changing tools.
3. If you're using an Apple Pencil, configure your Finger Action to *Select* (Settings → Gestures). Your finger will work as the Selection tool while the Apple Pencil follows your selected preset in the tool wheel.
4. If you want to select all strokes on a single layer, you can tap on the active layer to open the [Layer Selection](#) pop-up. Tapping the *cursor icon* will select everything on that layer.

The Selection Menu

Once you've activated selection by any of the above options, you'll find a popup at the bottom of the screen. This is your Selection menu. The Selection menu helps you to filter the strokes you'd like to select from, so whenever you select something, this menu will hang around.

- When using the *Selection tool* from your tool wheel, the menu will remain on screen as long as the brush is active.

- When Selecting via the *tap+hold*, the menu will remain for as long as your finger rests on screen. With a second finger, you can toggle the menu buttons to set your filters (we'll talk about those below).

Item Picker, Lasso, Color Picker and their respective popups.

In the Selection menu, depending on which toggle you have active, you'll find from left to right:

1. A *Selection Type* toggle, for which selection method you'd like active. Tap it to toggle between Item Picker (single item selection, with the ability to add or subtract strokes individually), Lasso (multi-select using drag to lasso your strokes), and Color Picker (select color and vector properties from strokes).

2. A *Stroke Type* toggle, allowing you to choose whether you'd like to select Partial or Complete strokes inside your selection.

3. A *Lock* toggle, which includes or ignores any strokes you may have locked while drawing.

4. A *Layers* toggle, so you can choose whether to select inside your *Active* layer only, or inside *All* layers at once.

Item Picker

On the first, left-hand toggle is your Item Picker. This is a single item selection mechanism, which allows you to add and subtract individual strokes to your selection.

Drag the crosshairs over a stroke. For a single selection, let go. To multi-select, tap the screen with another finger to select the stroke, then move to another stroke and repeat.

To use Item Picker, set your finger or stylus on the screen. A small crosshairs or plus (+) will appear above your finger, or at the tip of your stylus.

When you touch the crosshairs to a stroke, a circle will appear, telling you it has located a stroke. Tap the screen to validate the stroke, and let go of the screen. The stroke will be selected.

To add strokes to your selection, just drag the crosshairs to your next stroke and tap the screen to select it. It doesn't matter whether you have lifted your finger from the screen or not, you can select as many strokes as you'd like.

Precision

Import

Layers

Item Picker   Ignore

Export
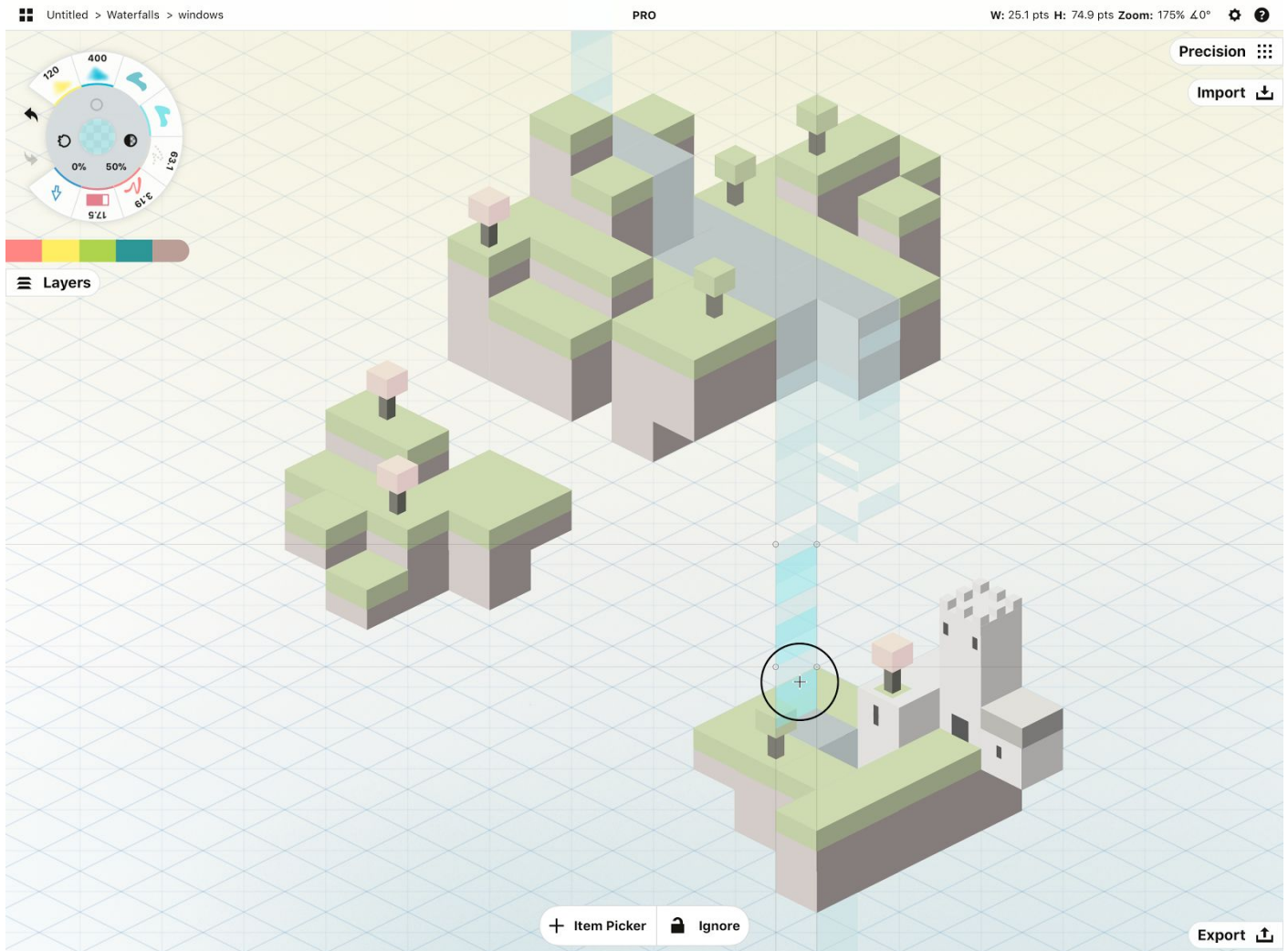
To subtract a stroke from your selection, drag the crosshairs to an already selected stroke. You'll see the plus turn to a minus. Tap the screen to accept it.

Lasso

If you tap the Selection Type toggle again, you'll find the Lasso. This allows you to select multiple items by dragging your finger across or around your strokes. Whatever the blue lasso touches will be part of your selection. Lasso again to subtract from the selection.
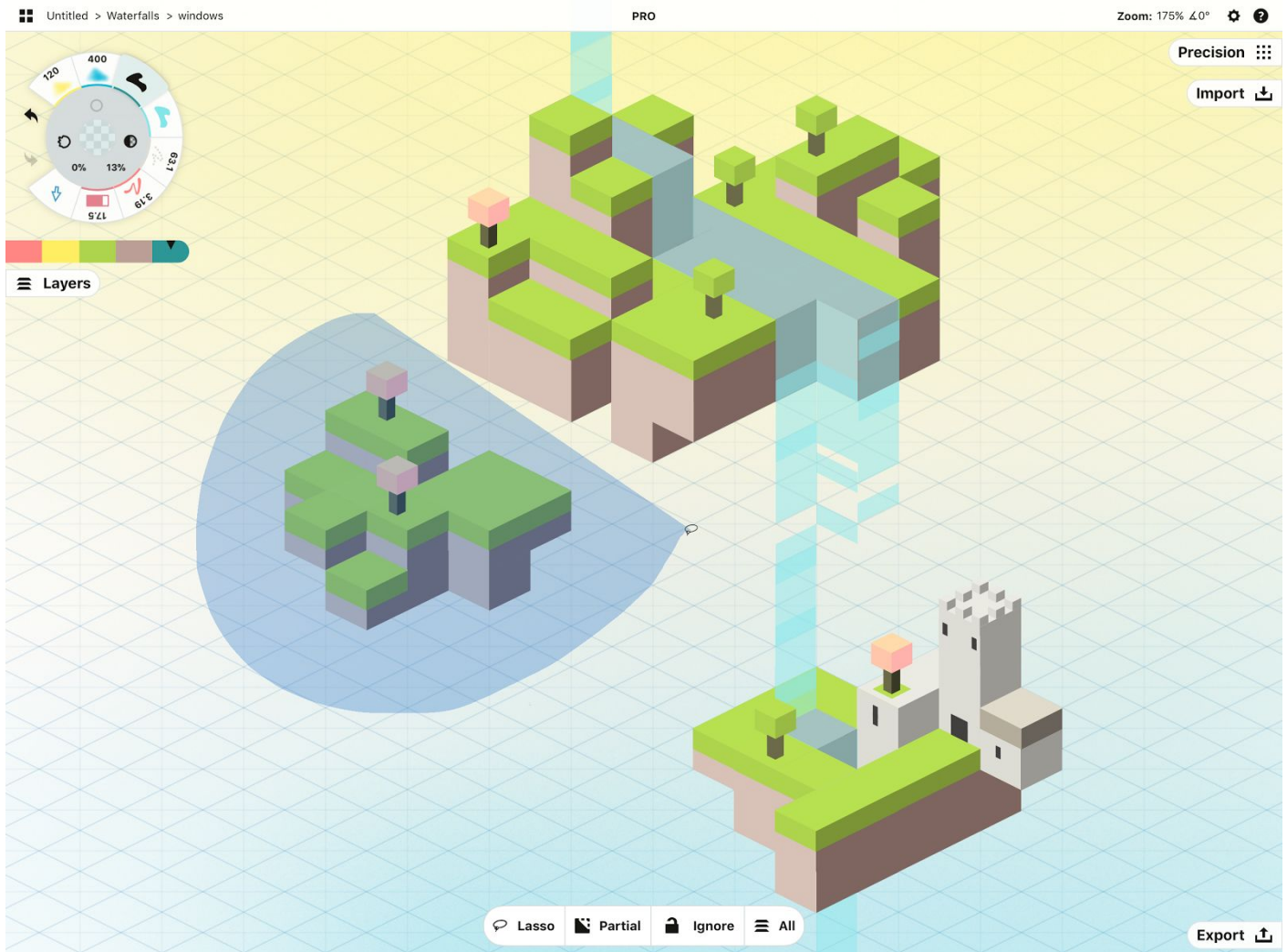
If you lasso a selection and decide you want to add further individual strokes, toggle the button back to Item Picker via the Filters toggle, and continue making your selections.

Color Picker

The third Selection toggle, our Color Picker is a vector color picker and has a few more capabilities than standard color pickers in other apps. It allows you to select color, brush and stroke properties, and set them to your tools. You can read in depth about this tool **here**.
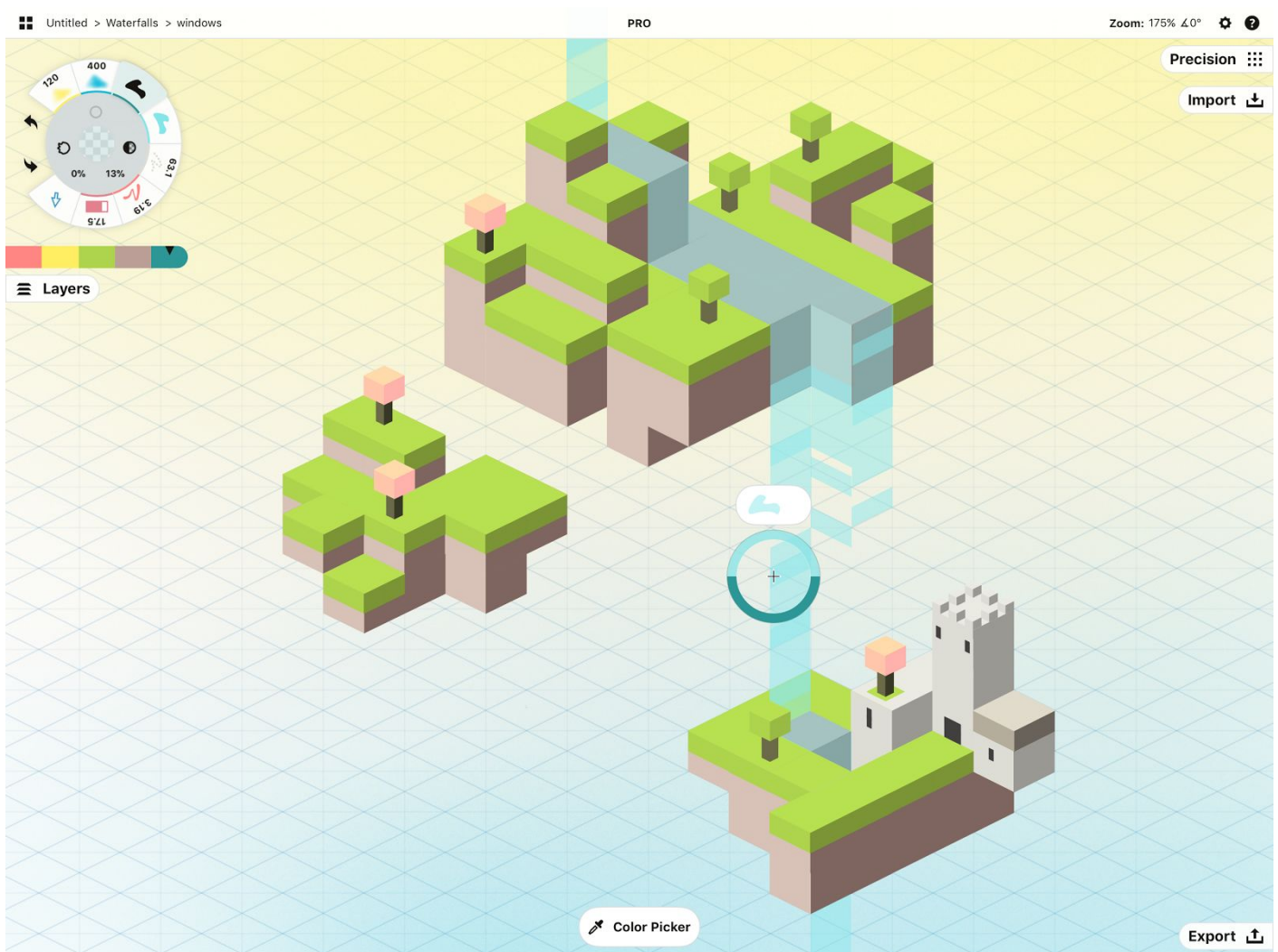
Adjusting a Selection

Once you've selected a stroke or group of strokes, you'll notice the Selection menu at the bottom of the screen has shifted to give you a few more helpful toggles.
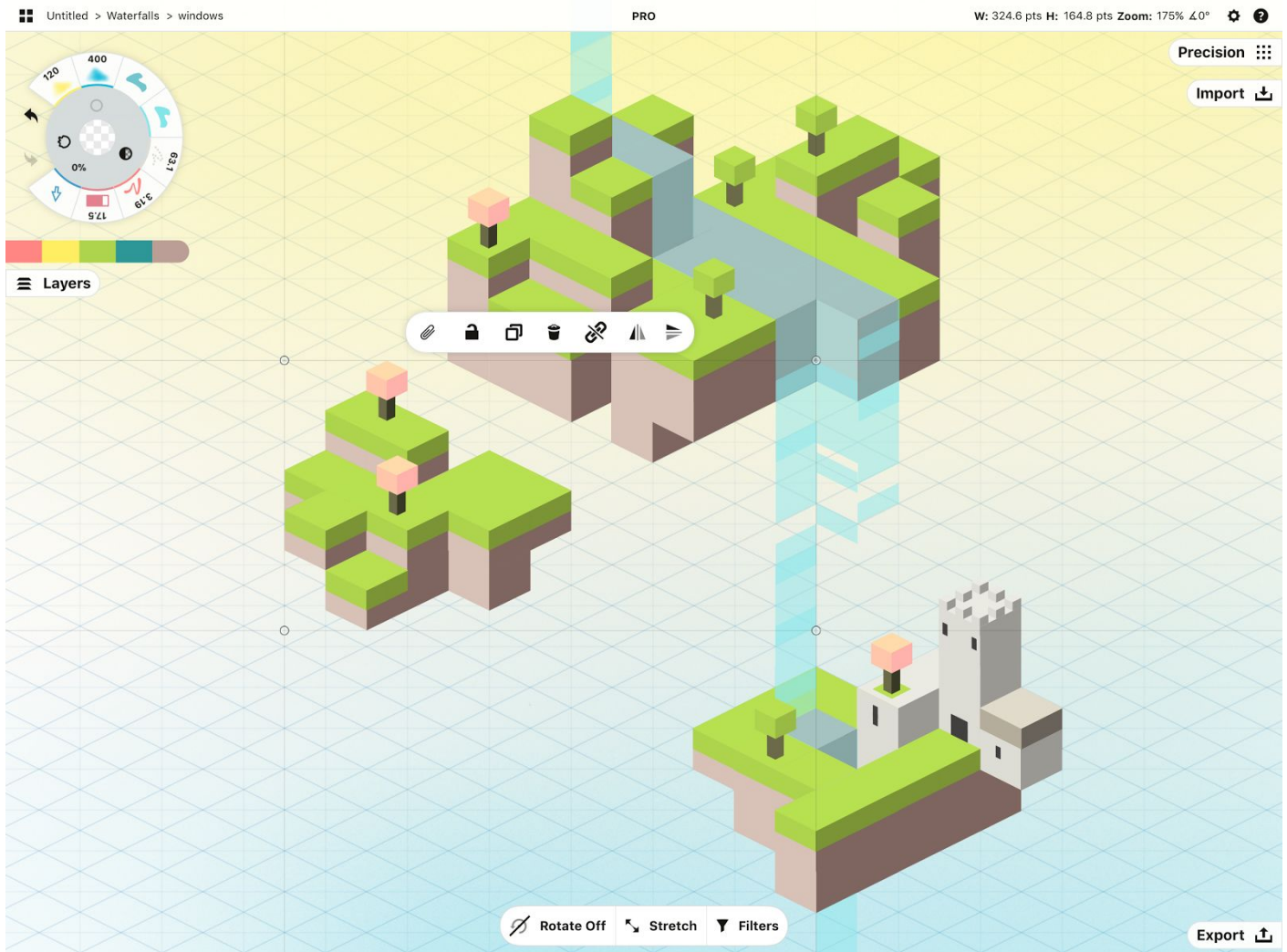
- **Rotate.** Allows you to rotate your selection. Tap it on or tap it off.
- **Scale / Stretch / Off.** Toggle between these to scale strokes (grow the whole selection bigger or smaller, with a locked aspect ratio), stretch strokes (stretch strokes longer or shorter, keeps the same tool size), or lock your strokes from scaling or stretching.
- **Filters.** Tap this to return to the original Selection menu filters — Item Picker, Lasso, Color Picker.

To scale and rotate the selection, use a two finger gesture *away* from the four corner handles of the selection.

These handles are your **Control Points**. They allow you to distort, skew and warp your selection just by tapping a corner or two, and pulling with one or two fingers. They are excellent for tweaking size and shape to make your drawing proportions exactly right. They're also helpful for aligning strokes, text or other images into your sketch's perspective.

- **Distort**. Tap one corner and drag anywhere on screen to pull it around. Drop a second finger on the screen anywhere to lock the aspect ratio.
- **Skew**. Tap two corners at once, and use one finger to pull the entire side about.
- **Warp**. Tap two corners at once, and use two fingers to either pinch or expand your selection. This makes your drawing act like the Star Wars credits.
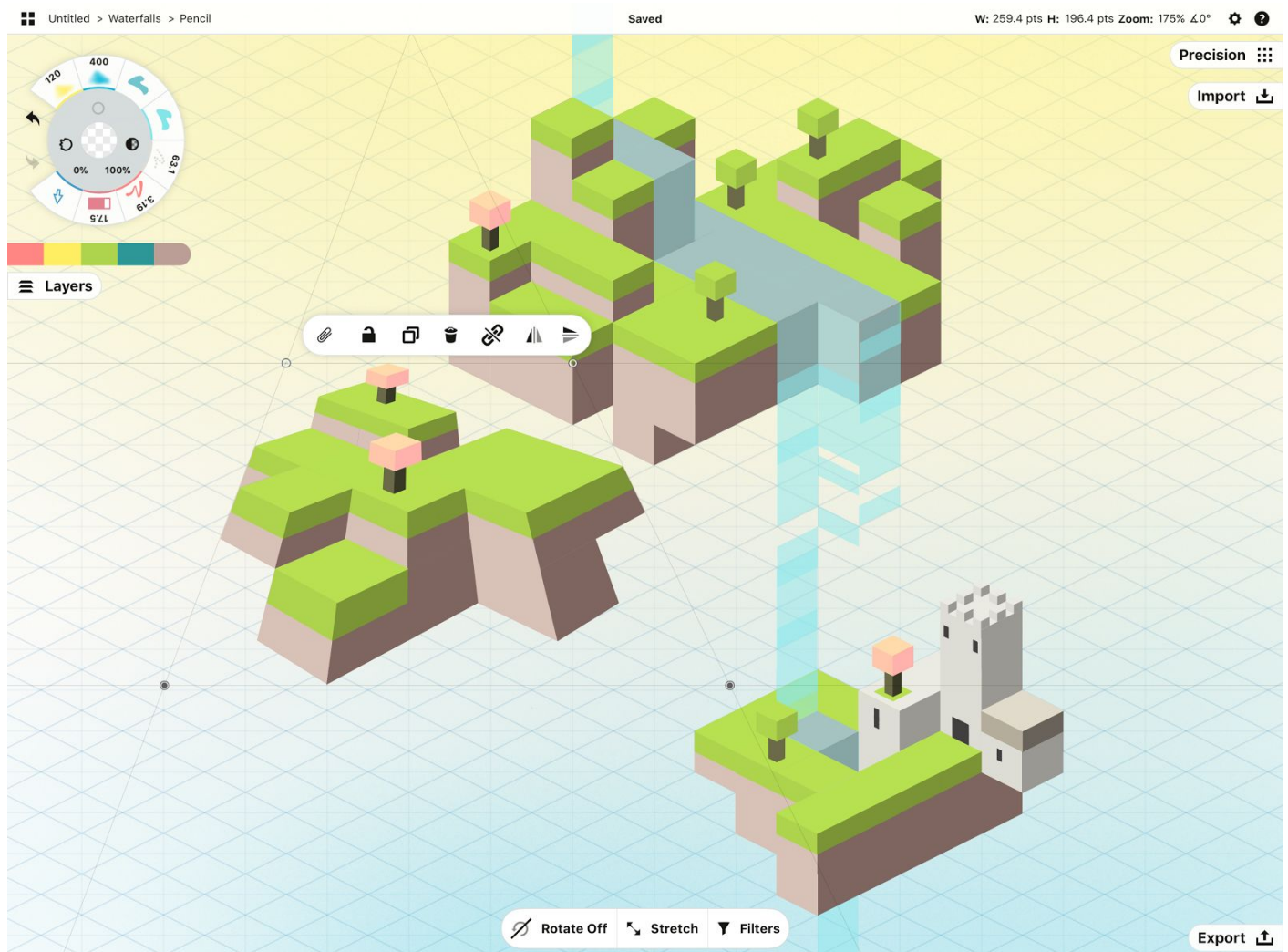
May the Force be with you.

The Selection Popup

Above the selection box is a Selection popup. This has many useful features you might use to adjust your strokes.
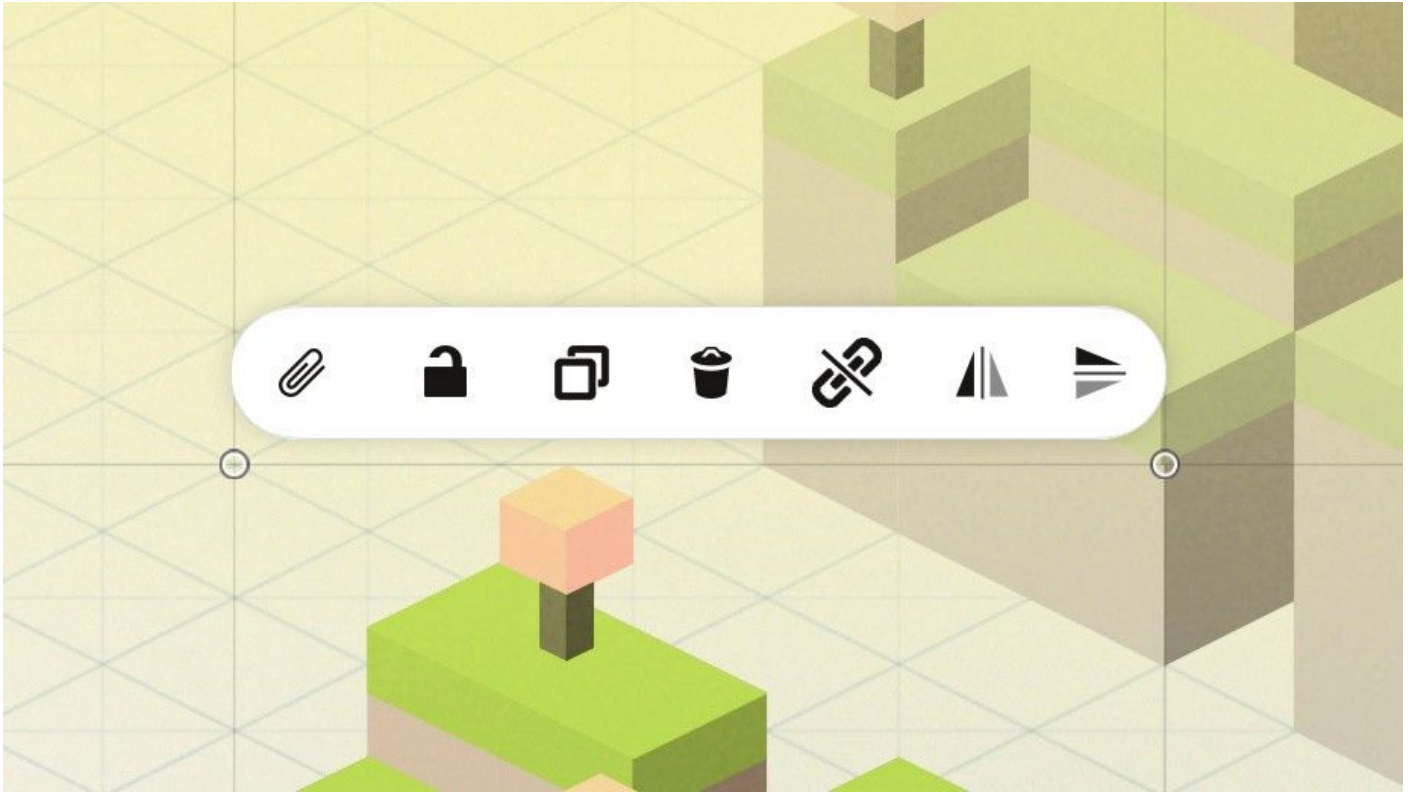
Clipboard. The clipboard copies your selection to your main device's clipboard, just like when you copy text from an email or link. Tap *Paste* in any email, message, document editor etc. to paste in a transparent PNG version of your selection. Inside the app, you can find the clipboard from your Gallery, at the top of your current object library, from inside the Import menu → Imports, or just by a *tap+hold* on the screen. You can also attach colors from other apps to your clipboard, and access them on the Color wheel.

Lock. The Lock button locks your selection from all other selections and adjustments you might make in the future. You can access it again by selecting and unlocking it, or by changing the Lock filter on the Selection menu.

Duplicate. Anything you select, you can also copy, as many times as you'd like. Just touch Duplicate and it will create an exact match for fast iterations. Drag the duplicate to a new layer to keep or hide your old selection, and iterate on the new.

Delete. The best way to erase a vector stroke is to delete it. At this point, our erasers work as movable layer masks, so if you truly dislike a stroke and want to banish it to the far nethers, just delete it from your life and drawing. Of course, you can Undo.

Group. This chain link button allows you to group all items inside your selection together, into a single "object." You can then select the entire object with a single tap, instead of having to re-select multiple strokes. To separate them again, just select the object and tap the button again to ungroup them.

Flip and Mirror. The final two buttons allow you to flip your selection from side to side, or to mirror it vertically. Great for creating reflections and shadows, as well.

Highlight Selection
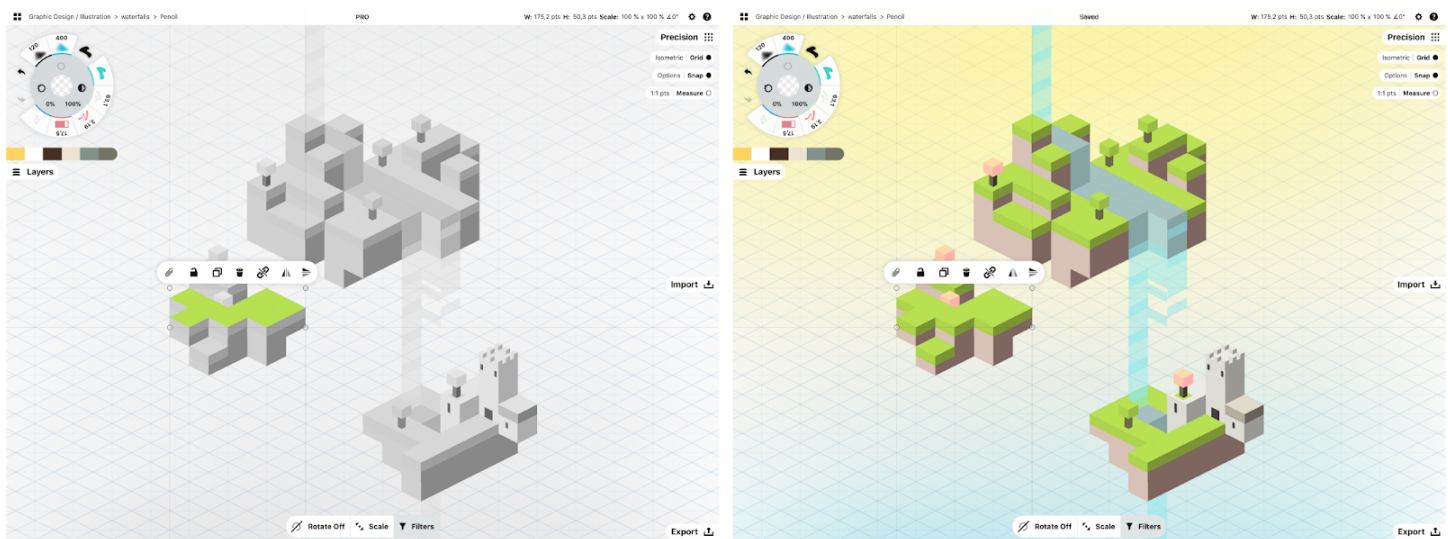
Highlight selection allows you to clearly see the strokes you have selected. When you have an active selection, the selection maintains its actual colors and everything else is greyed. The active selection also pops to the front, meaning that if the stroke you selected is behind other

strokes, it will be presented on top for as long as the selection is active. If you turn off Highlight Selection, the only thing differentiating the selection from other strokes is the bounding box.

You can turn Highlight Selection on or off in Settings → Gestures.

Layers
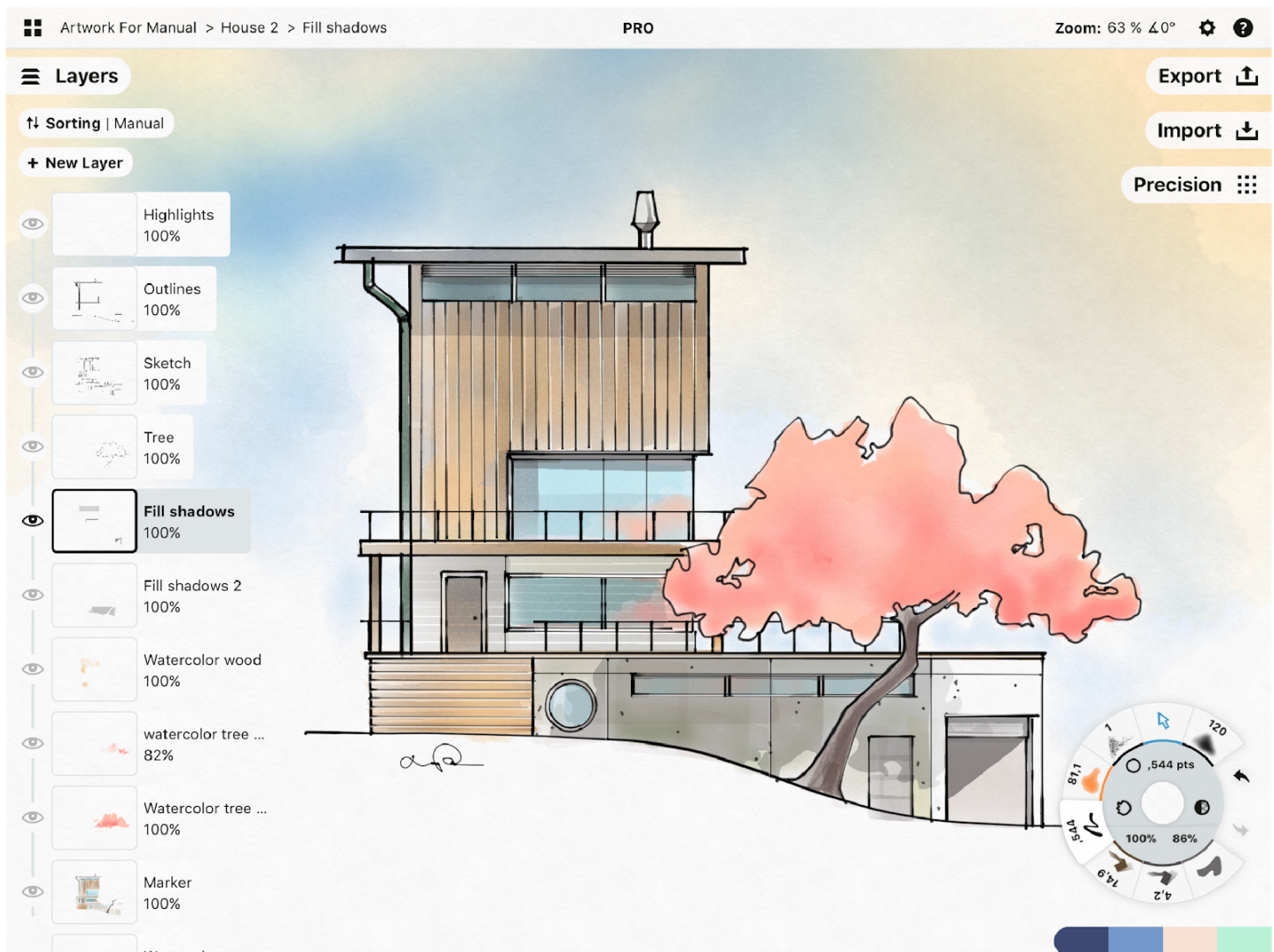
Concepts comes equipped with a fully adjustable set of layers to help you design as flexibly as you need. Enjoy five layers if you're a free user, or infinite layers as a Pro. Some of our architects

have over a hundred layers in a drawing as they create iterations for clients, and many of our illustrators are a close match.

Layering comes in two modes - Automatic and Manual. Switching between them is as easy as a *tap* on the appropriate "Automatic" or "Manual" button at the top of the Layers menu.

⇅ **Sorting** | Automatic

- **Automatic layering** is the default and sorts your layers by *tool type*. Any time you switch to a different tool, it will draw on its namesake layer. (Note that fountain pen and pen share a layer, as do soft and hard pencils.) This is great for sketchnotes, presentations, and any time you want retain control over your strokes but not think about them - it's built in.

⇅ **Sorting** | Manual

- **Manual layering** allows you to draw with any tool on any layer, with as many layers as you'd like for each tool. Infinite layers allow for infinite sorting, stacking, and control of your textures, lines, colors, shapes and subject matter. As you use them, you'll appreciate just how much control you have to adjust and make changes.

These modes will generally take care of themselves as you draw, depending on which / how many layer types you have, or you can switch between them with a tap. If you've broken the Automatic layering rules by having more than one layer for a tool or by having more than one tool-type in a layer, it will always remain in Manual.

Each layer comes equipped with its own set of controls:

- *Tap* on a layer to activate it for drawing.
- *Tap* **+ New Layer** to create a new layer. It will always appear directly above your current layer. You can also select strokes from the canvas and drag them to this button, where they will create a new layer just for themselves.

- Likewise, you can make a selection from your drawing and *drag* it to any layer, where they will nestle into their new home.
- *Tap+hold* a layer to rearrange layers into your preferred order.
- *Tap* the **eye** to the left to switch on / off the layer's visibility. It's still there, it just doesn't show up when off.
- *Double-tap* a layer or *scrub* through the eyes (aka rub your finger quickly up and down them) to enter **Focus Mode**. This mode isolates the layer and allows you to work in or view only that layer. *Tap* the layer to return to full layers visibility.
- *Tapping* an active layer brings up the layer's **selection** popup. From here you can *select everything* on the layer, *lock* the layer, *duplicate* it, *delete*, *merge* it down into the layer beneath it, and *rename it*. You can also adjust the full layer's *opacity* level by dragging your finger along the slider.
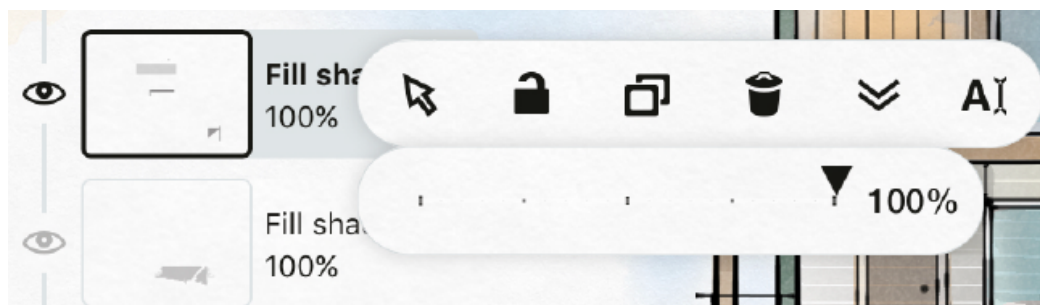
Precision Tools

When your design is in need of precise lines, shapes, measurements and scaling - all the things that allow you to keep those real-life dimensions and estimates accurate - our Precision tools have you covered.

If you tap the Precision button on the canvas, you'll see some options expand beneath the menu - Grid, Snap, Measure and

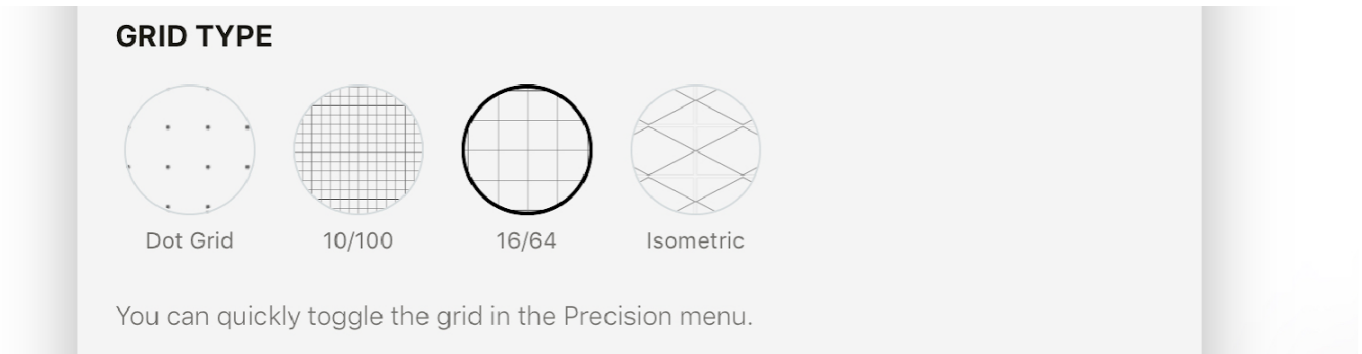Guide. We'll also discuss setting Scale to your drawings and plans.

Grid

The grid is a smart underlayment to your canvas that allows you to not only visually use the grid, but interact with it via Snap. *Tap* the circular button beside Grid to turn it on or off. Touch the label to the left of the Grid button (i.e. isometric) to bring up the Workspace menu and choose a different grid.

Snap

For help lining up your stroke ends without excess squinting or trouble, Snap auto-connects your stroke's end-caps to nearby points on the grid or sketch.

Tap the circular button beside Snap to enable it. You'll see an Options label to the left - touch it to bring up multiple options which can be active simultaneously.

- *Key Points* - Snap to significant points on the canvas or shape guides.
- *Grid* - Snap to points on the grid.

- *Autocomplete* - Connects start and end-points of your strokes. You may see small circles appear showing you possible points to connect to - tap one if it's useful or ignore them if not.
- *Layers* - Activate this to Snap to points only inside the active layer, or de-activate to apply to all layers.

When you **Select** a previously drawn stroke, you can adjust it using Snap.

- With single-stroke selections, Snap points are the beginning and end-points of any given line.
- With multi-stroke selections, Snap applies to the four corners and the center point.
- When used with **Shape Guides**, Snap applies to the handles and the center point.

Measure

When Measure is active, you'll see real-world measurements appear beside your strokes. The units and **Scale** of these measurements are based on your current app **Settings**. Choose points, units as defined by your iPad settings (may read as inches or metric), inches (Feet & Inches), metric units, or specify your exact desired unit you'd prefer your measurements to appear as (pixels, feet, centimeters etc).

An example of measurements labeling an interior layout.

To keep those measurements on screen, *tap* the measurement tag to make it stick to the canvas. Note that it will only appear and Export with your drawing while Measure is active.
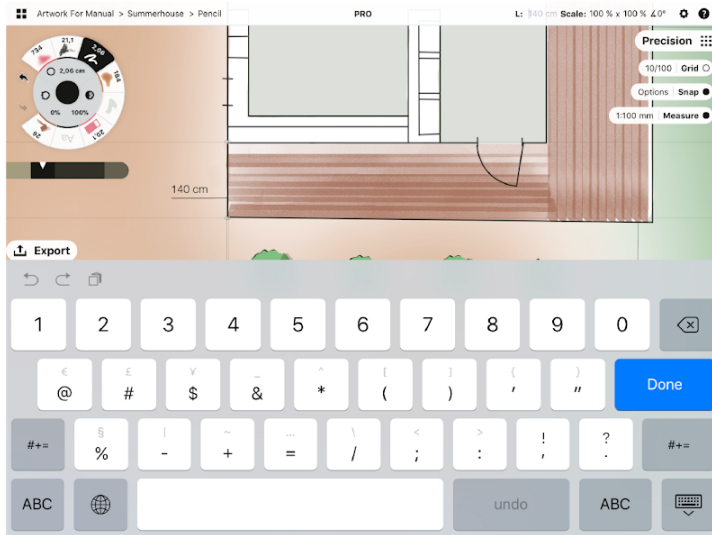
Entering a custom measurement value.

Select a stroke and then *tap+hold* a measurement tag to enter a custom length. It will change the length of your line to be the value you entered. You can also change the length of the selection by *tap+hold*ing the length indicator up in the status bar.

Tap+hold+drag a measurement tag to reposition it along your drawn line.
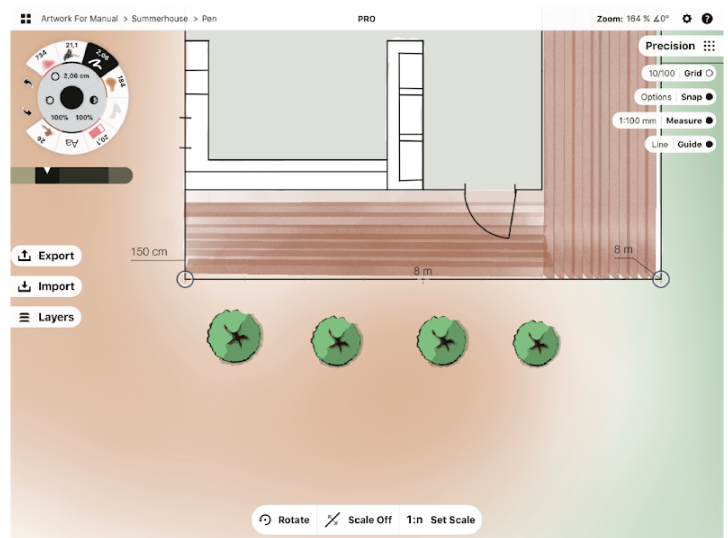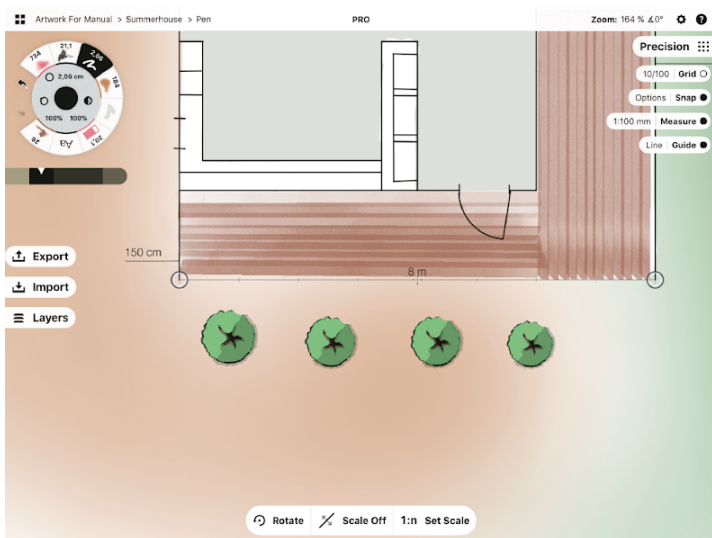
Applying measurements using the Line guide.

Measure is also useful when working with the **Shape Guides** to help your design plans retain exact dimensions. Enter a custom value with a *tap+hold* on the measurement tag, and the entire

guide will adjust to your value. Specify the length of the side of a rectangle, and the rectangle will adjust accordingly. *Tap+hold* the radius of your circle and enter a value, and the circle will adjust likewise. The same applies to any value of any shape guide, including angles.

You can also create floating measurements that aren't attached to any stroke in your drawing. Read more in the [Shape Guides](#) section.

Scale

Scale is a multiplier that defines how big an object is in real life as compared to its size on screen. Popular scales for model airplanes, for example, are 1:24 or 1:72, which indicates that the drawing is 1/72nd of the real size.

A giant part of Precision that affects *every tool and guide in the app*, you can set your **Drawing Scale and Units** by touching the ratio / units button just to the left of Measure. (You can also access it from the **Settings** gear on the status bar.)
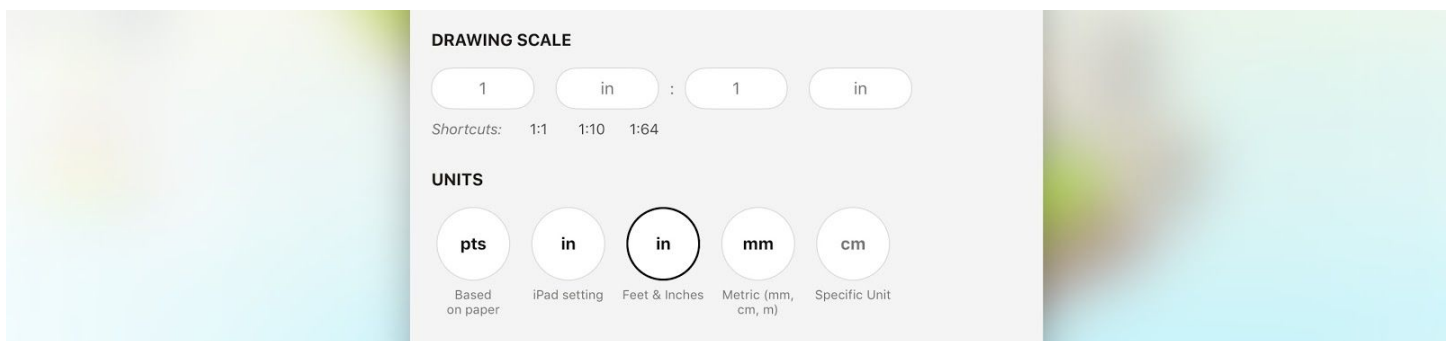
The Workspace tab of the Settings menu will appear - find Drawing Scale and tap one of the popular scale shortcuts or enter your own scale. *Be sure to set your Units at the same time*, just below Drawing Scale, or it will revert to your Units set.

- At 100% zoom level, a 1:1 ratio on the iPad is true-to-life. Place a ruler on the screen and *1:1 in* will actually be 1 inch both on ruler and on screen.

From this point onward, all tool and measurement values will appear according to this scale, so don't be surprised when a pen set to 2 points is suddenly .015 inches. Your tool presets will be

the same as you've set, only the units will be converted.

How to Set Scale with an Imported Plan or Photo

1. *To set scale in a project, you need one accurate measurement of your real space.* Take out your tape measure or ruler, and measure one actual length of a wall or section represented on your plan. It doesn't matter which one it is, so long as it's clear and easy to mark on your screen.

2. **Import** your photo or plan onto your canvas. (A helpful, in-between step is to lower the opacity of your image (see **Layers**) so you can see your tools and drawing easily.)

3. Turn on Precision, and activate Measure.

4. Activate the Line guide, and align the handles on your plan to the same segment of wall or other item that you measured in real life. It helps to *double-tap* the crosshairs at the center of the Line guide, to contain the boundaries of the line to your measurement when you draw.

5. *Tap* the 1:1 ratio beside Measure. You'll notice the values under Drawing Scale have been filled in with the current length of the Line guide according to your current units, scale and zoom level.

6. Enter your real-life measurement in the *second field*, and tap anywhere to dismiss the menu. Now when you look at the ratio beside the Measure button on canvas, you'll see a new ratio - 1:your-new-calculated-value. This will remain the same regardless of zoom level, and regardless of how much you shrink or expand your Line guide.

Shape Guides
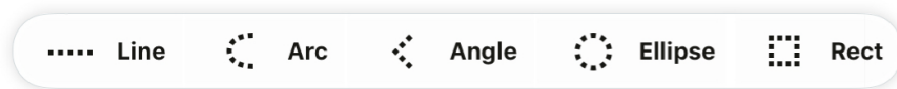
The Shape Guides are your design-sketching friend. Different from pre-set stamps like **Objects** (which do work with Measure when on but not to the same level of control), the Shape Guides

give you precision control over every edge and radius you draw. Use them to sketch partial or complete perfect shapes, and adjust them to any size, shape or angle.

When you activate a Shape Guide, you'll see a number of features appear.

1. The *shape* of the guide itself. The gray boundary is a reflection of the brush you're using - narrow or fat - and is the area that will fill when you trace the shape. *Trace anywhere on screen* to draw the shape.
2. The circles or *handles* of the guide. Touch a handle and pull it, and watch the shape stretch or shrink accordingly.
3. The *crosshairs*. Located at the center of the guide, *tap+drag* the crosshairs to move the entire guide without altering it. If you *double-tap* the crosshairs, each guide will respond with a special function:
   - The Line guide will limit your drawn stroke to between the handles.
   - The Arc tool will become a perfect half-circle.
   - The Angle tool will snap to 90 degrees.
   - The Ellipse tool will become a perfect circle.
   - The Rectangle tool will become a perfect square.

The Shape Guides are really powerful when combined with Measure. If you have both enabled, you can draw lines and other shapes with precise measures and angles. You can see the Measure labels on your guide and tap them to stick them to your plan. (As long as Measure is active, they'll export with your plan, too.) *Tap+hold* them to edit the values via keyboard.

You can also use Shape Guides to create floating measurements that aren't attached to a stroke or group for more general use, like adding a scale indicator on the drawing. To do this, just tap the measurement and it will stay on your canvas. You can Select the label and move it around, and scale it like any other stroke.
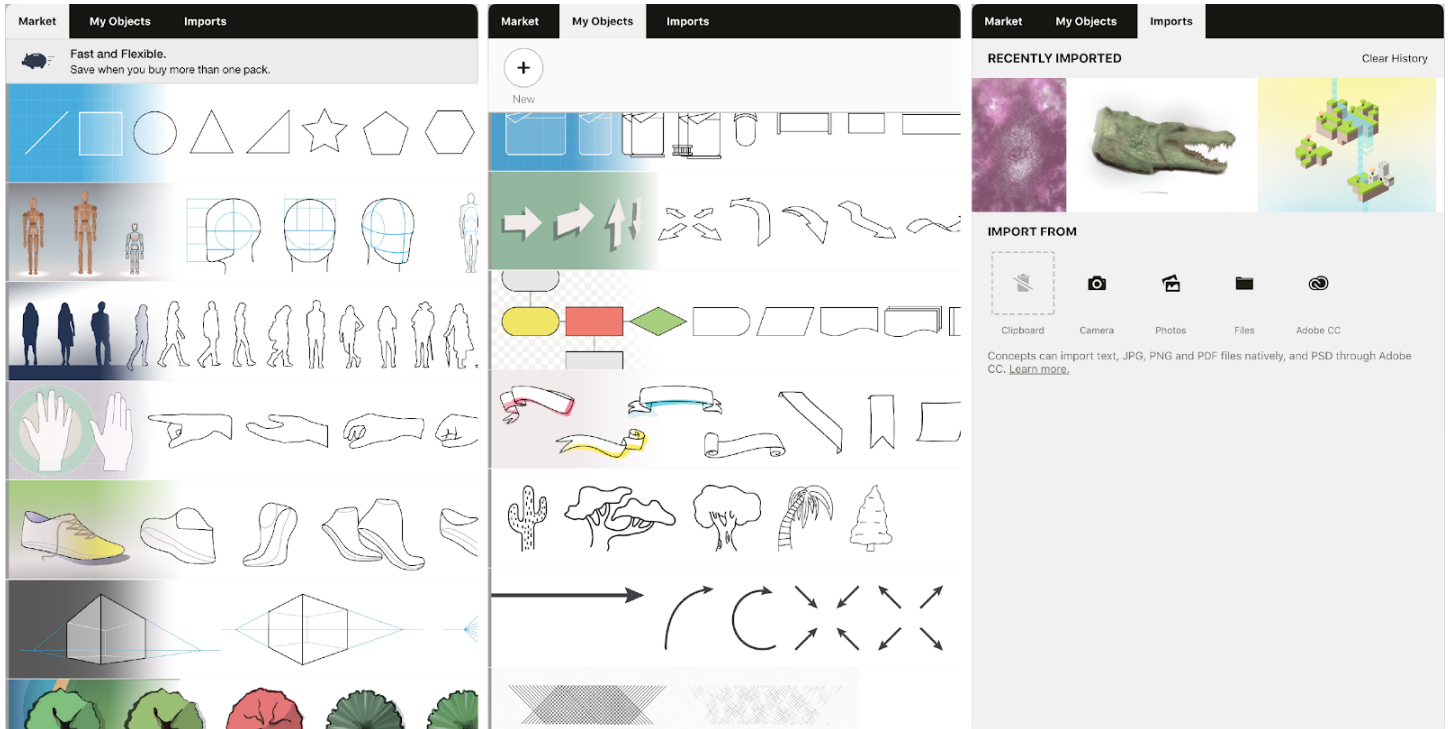
Import

A helpful, often necessary part of any creative endeavor is the ability to import images, **PDFs**, **Objects** or other file types into your workspace. Concepts has multiple ways to help you import files - from working with Apple's iOS (including **Drag & Drop)** to import directly into the app, to copy / pasting from your device's clipboard, to a comprehensive access of all files via the Import menu.

Import Menu

On your canvas is an Import button. *Tap* to expand it into a full menu of your current library of objects, and to find the **More** button. Tap *More* to bring up a menu of all imports. Or to quickly open the Import tab, *double-tap* on the Import button.

The Import menu has three tabs: 1 - Market, 2 - My Objects, 3 - Imports.

This menu includes three tabs: *Market* (where you can find all sorts of **Objects** to help in your workflows), *My Objects* (your personal collection of objects, including any you have bought, created or shared with someone else), and *Imports* (all other Import types).
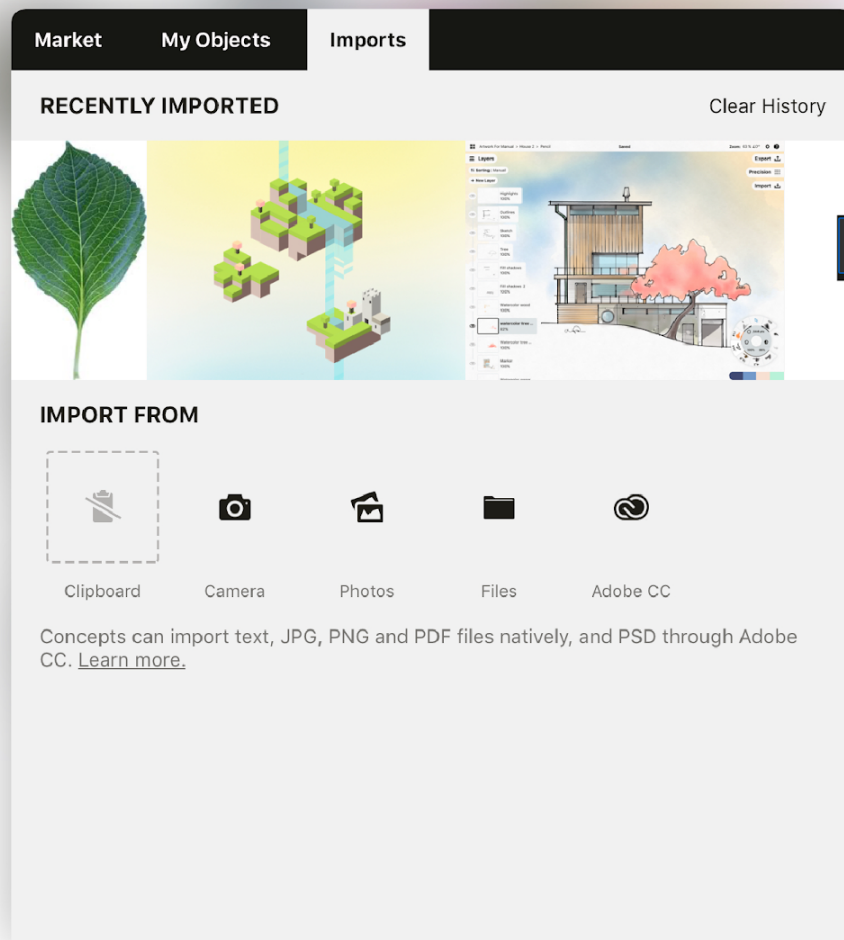
The final Imports tab includes easy access to your 10 most recently imported items, and an **Import From** selection, where you can access your Clipboard, the device's Camera, your Photos library, Files, or the Adobe Creative Cloud if you have an account with them. **Tip:** To quickly open this tab, *double-tap* the Import button on canvas. (Note that this doesn't work if the object list is open).

Concepts can import text, JPG, PNG and PDF files natively, and PSD through Adobe CC. Images are imported to scale onto your canvas.

Clipboard

Your device's clipboard is a handy place to store the occasional image, object, color or selection, and you can access the clipboard from multiple places to import items quickly into your drawing. Access it from the Gallery, from the top of the Objects list under Import, and from the Import menu under More → Imports.
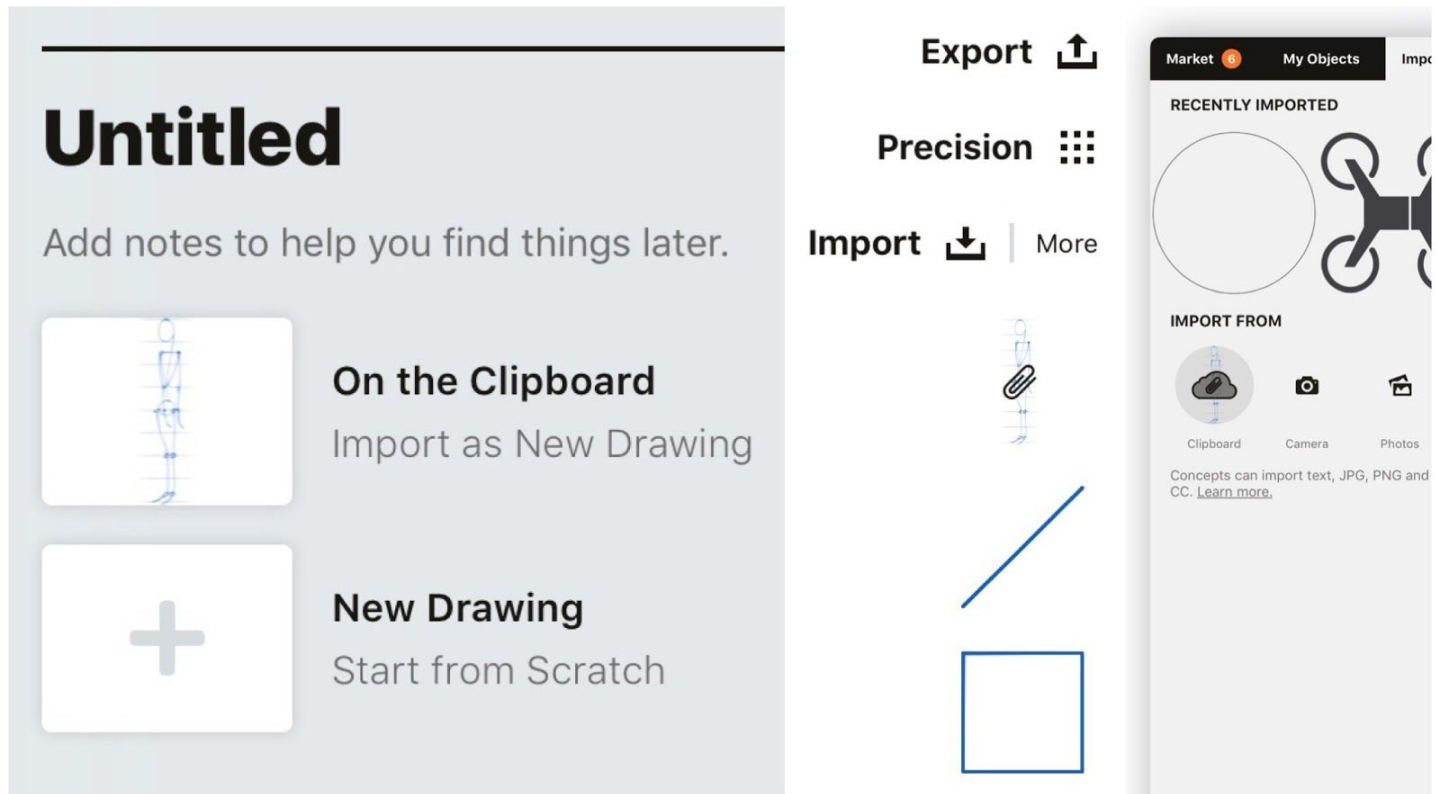
Direct from iOS or Files

Let's say you've just received the latest batch of slides you need mark up in your inbox. Just as you would open the file with any other supported application, download the file to your device, then *tap+hold* it to bring up sharing locations. Scroll through to Concepts and tap the icon. It will open the file inside a new drawing.
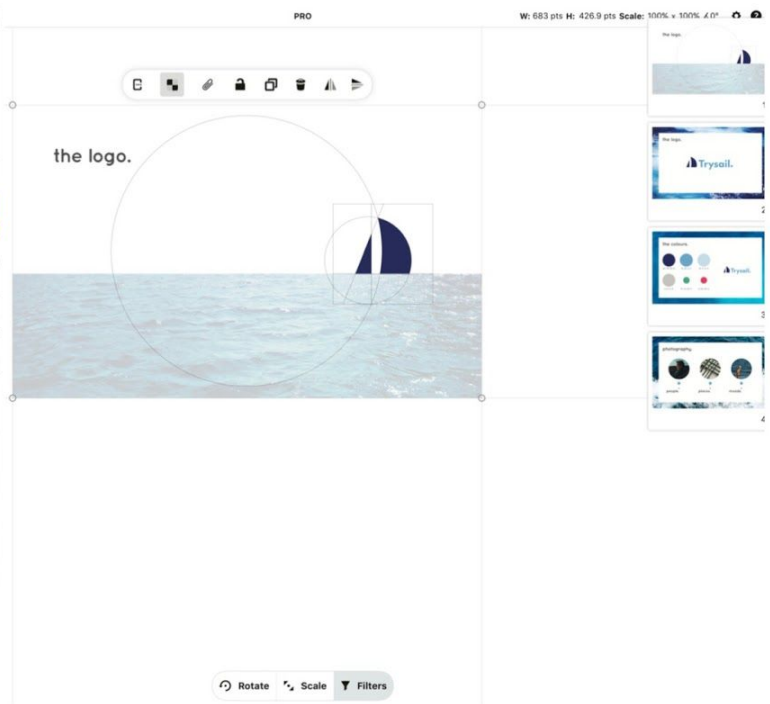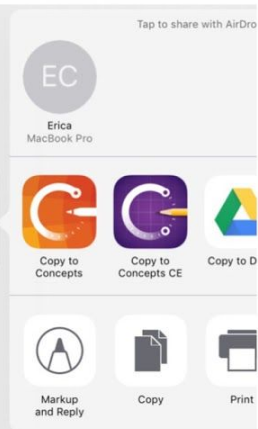
Perhaps you have a relevant image or PDF stored in Files. Touch Select in the upper corner of the screen, select your image, touch Share, and scroll to the Concepts icon. Tap "Yes" to accept the import.
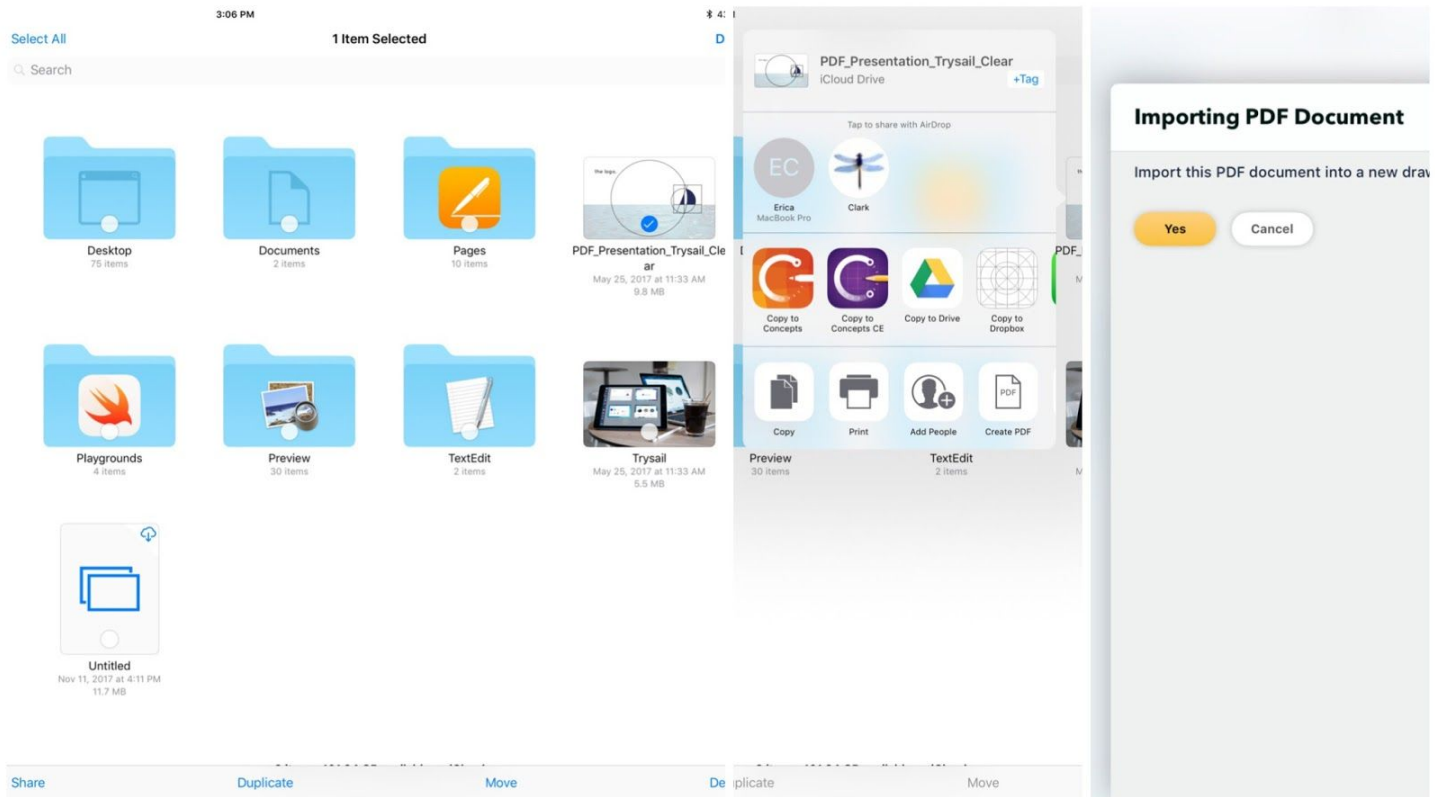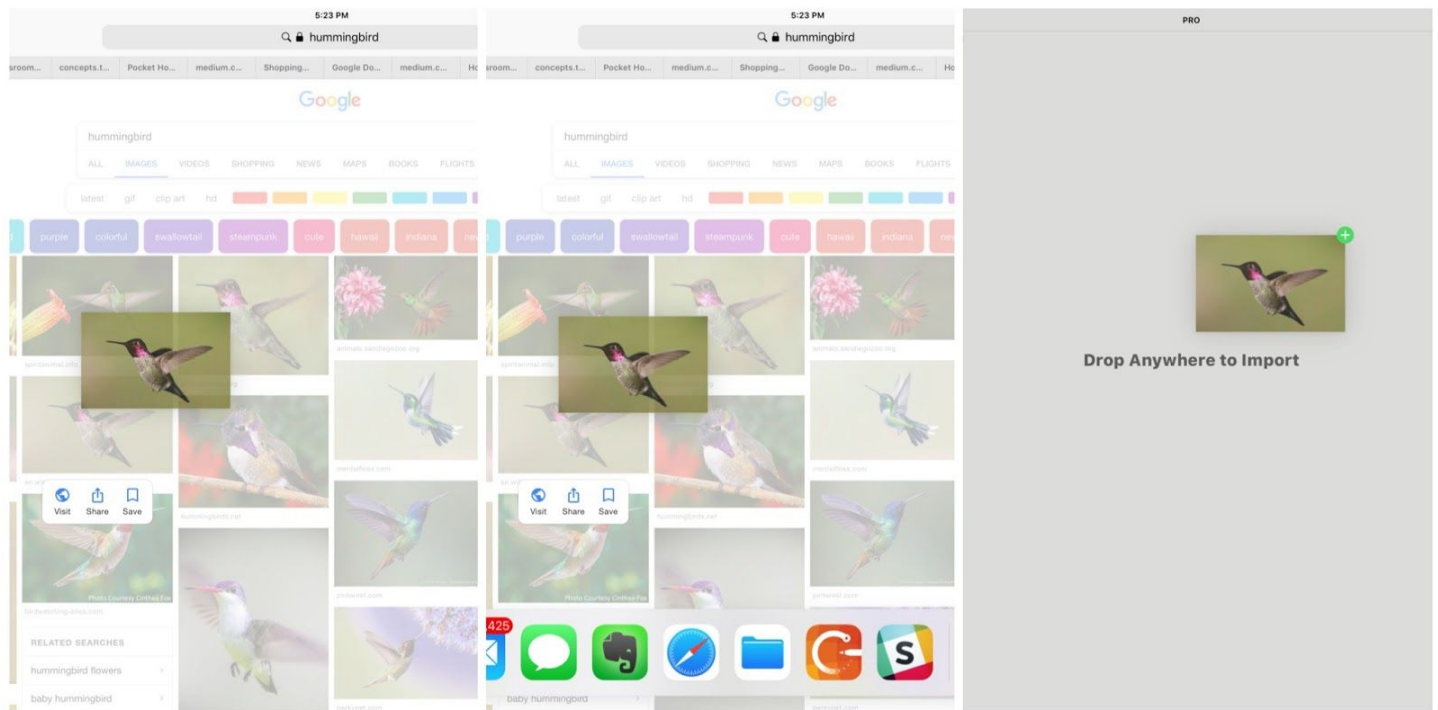
Drag & Drop

You can also import via Drag & Drop from any supported app. For example, if you find an image you'd like to reference from a Google image search, you can *tap+hold* the image in the web browser, and drag it straight onto your canvas. You can do the same with colors via supported apps and drag them into your color palettes.

## How to Drag & Drop from another app into Concepts

1. Tap-and-hold the image or selected text you'd like to bring into Concepts.
2. Swipe open your dock with another finger and choose Concepts.
3. When you see the green "+" icon, drop your selection onto the canvas.

How to Drag & Drop colors into Concepts

You can also drag colors straight into your color palettes from apps that support iOS 11's Drag & Drop capability. Note that the interactions will differ between apps, depending on each app's workflow — you might have to experiment a bit to see what is draggable.

1. Set up Concepts and your other app to appear together on a split screen.
2. Open your color palettes menu in Concepts.
3. *Tap+hold* your color of choice from the other app, and drag it straight to your Concepts color palette.
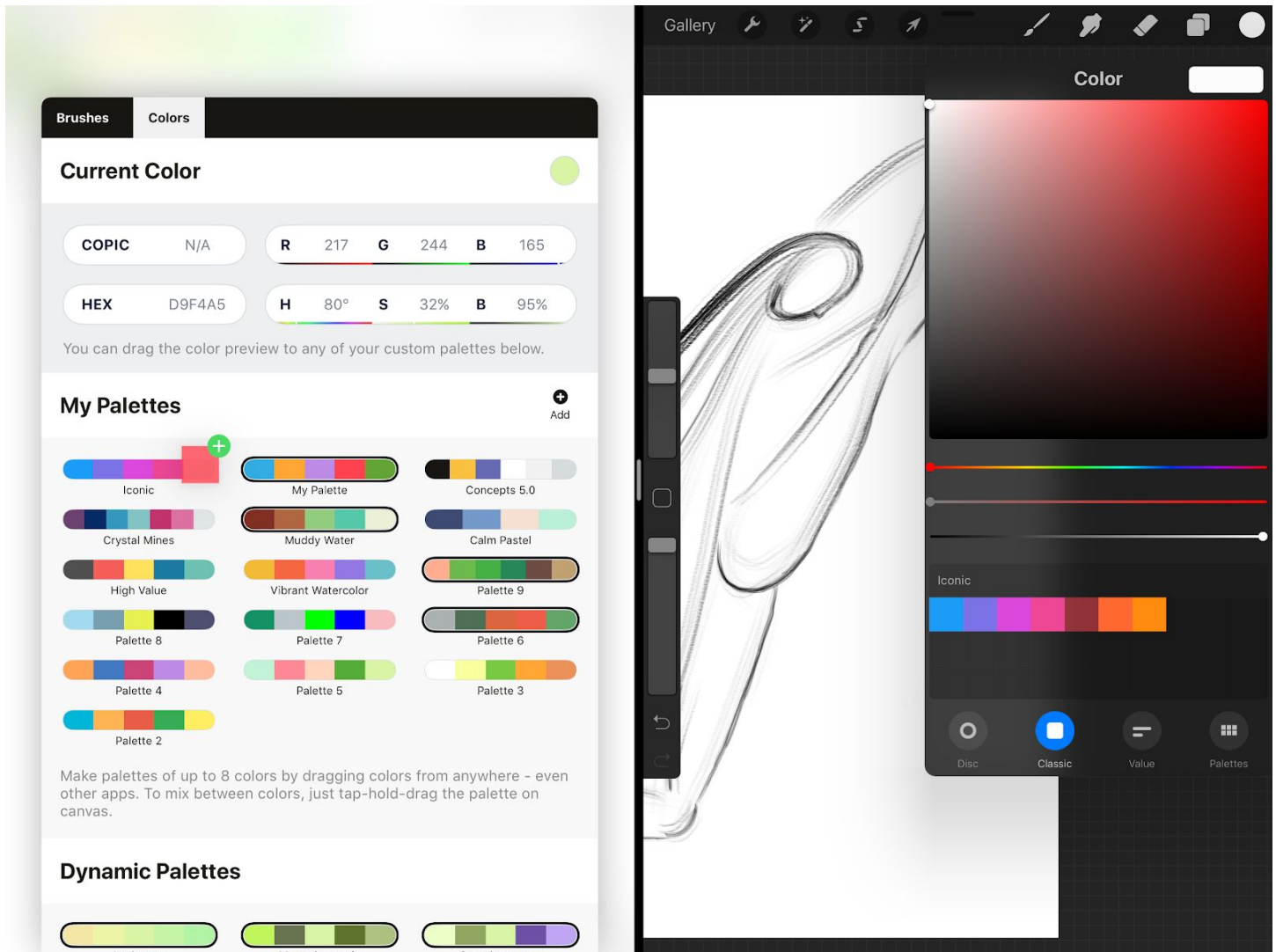
Importing a CPT File

CPT is the Concepts native file type, including all data necessary to work with the drawing further in Concepts. You can import CPT files just like any other compatible files; open them from the import menu or go to your Files app and select "Copy to Concepts." You may also receive a Direct Link that allows you to open a drawing by clicking on that link. To learn how to share drawings like this, see **Exporting a CPT File**.

Objects

In Concepts, objects are your ultimate, super-powered stickers. Royalty-free and 100% vector adjustable, you can Drag & Drop them straight onto your canvas from the Import menu and cut your workload into a fragment of the time. Purchase pre-made objects for any workflow from our Market, create infinite libraries of your own objects with **Make Your Own Objects** (MYOO), or **Share** your object libraries with colleagues to help your collaboration efforts.

Tap the Import button on your workspace to bring up a menu of your current objects. To switch to an alternate library of objects, tap the *More* button and you'll be taken to the Import menu. Here you can find the *Market* tab with pre-made objects for different workflows available for purchase, and the *My Objects* tab, where all the objects you've purchased and created live, as well as libraries your colleagues have shared with you.
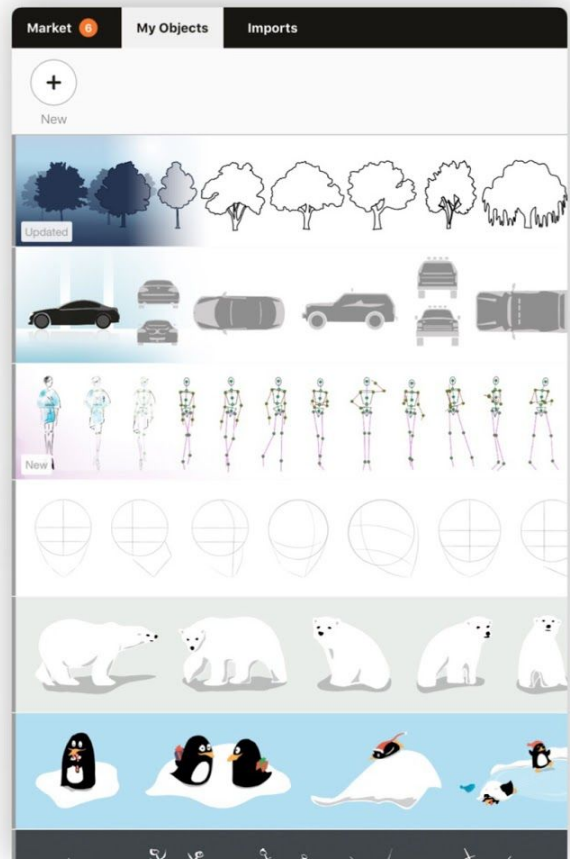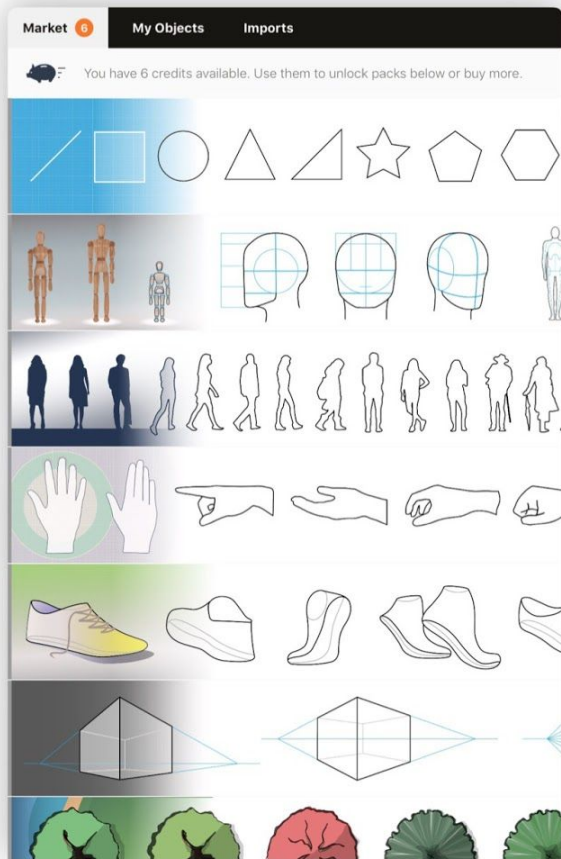
When you purchase object packs from the Market, you'll find the option to buy bundles of 3, 5 or 10 packs in the **Pro Shop**. A bundled purchase places Credits on your account, which you can redeem for packs. If not used, they remain on your account, redeemable at any time. We update our Market often according to our community's feedback. Is there an object pack you'd like to have that you don't see? **Let us know**.

Once you've purchased the object pack, it will appear under your My Objects tab. Just *tap* on a pack to activate it on your canvas, and find it under the open Import menu.

Tap+hold+drag on a pack to rearrange its position in the menu.

Tap+hold on a pack in My Objects to **Edit**, **Delete,** or **Share** your object library.

When you choose to *edit* your pack, a popup will appear where you can name, describe, and add search tags to your object pack. (Find the *Search* field at the top of the My Objects tab for quick searching through pack names, object names, and tags.) Object packs that are bought from the market or have been shared with you by others are read-only and cannot be edited in any way.

Make Your Own Objects (MYOO)

You can create your own libraries of Objects with anything you draw. To create an object, make sure you've purchased MYOO from the Objects Market.

1. To create a new object pack, touch the **New +** button at the top of the My Objects tab. You'll be taken back to the canvas where you'll find a nearly empty library under the Import menu. It will contain a paperclip (access to the Clipboard) and a **+** button.

2. *Select your drawing*. We recommend grouping your strokes into a single object (by touching the chain link on the popup) so that selecting it later is easy. You can always ungroup it to adjust individual elements down the line.
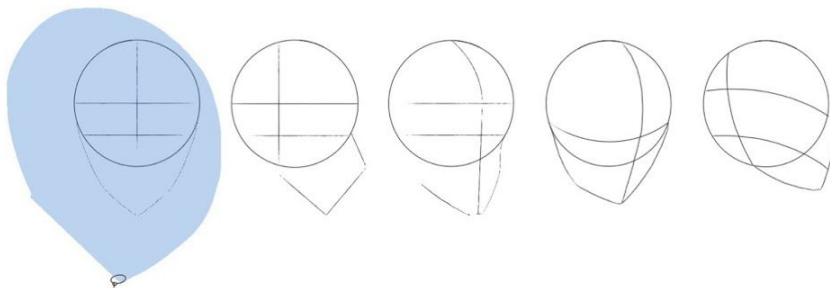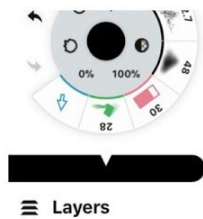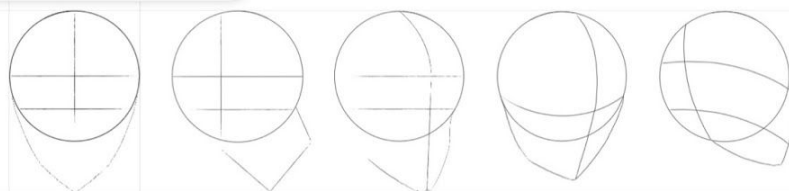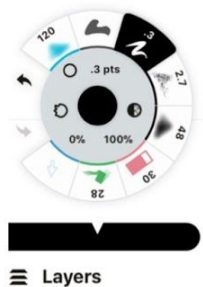
3. *Tap* the **+** button on the object pack. Alternatively, you can *drag* your selection anywhere on the object pack and then let go. It will add itself to the pack while your original slides back to its position on your canvas.

Export ⬆

Precision ⦙⦙⦙

☰ Layers

Import ⬇ | More
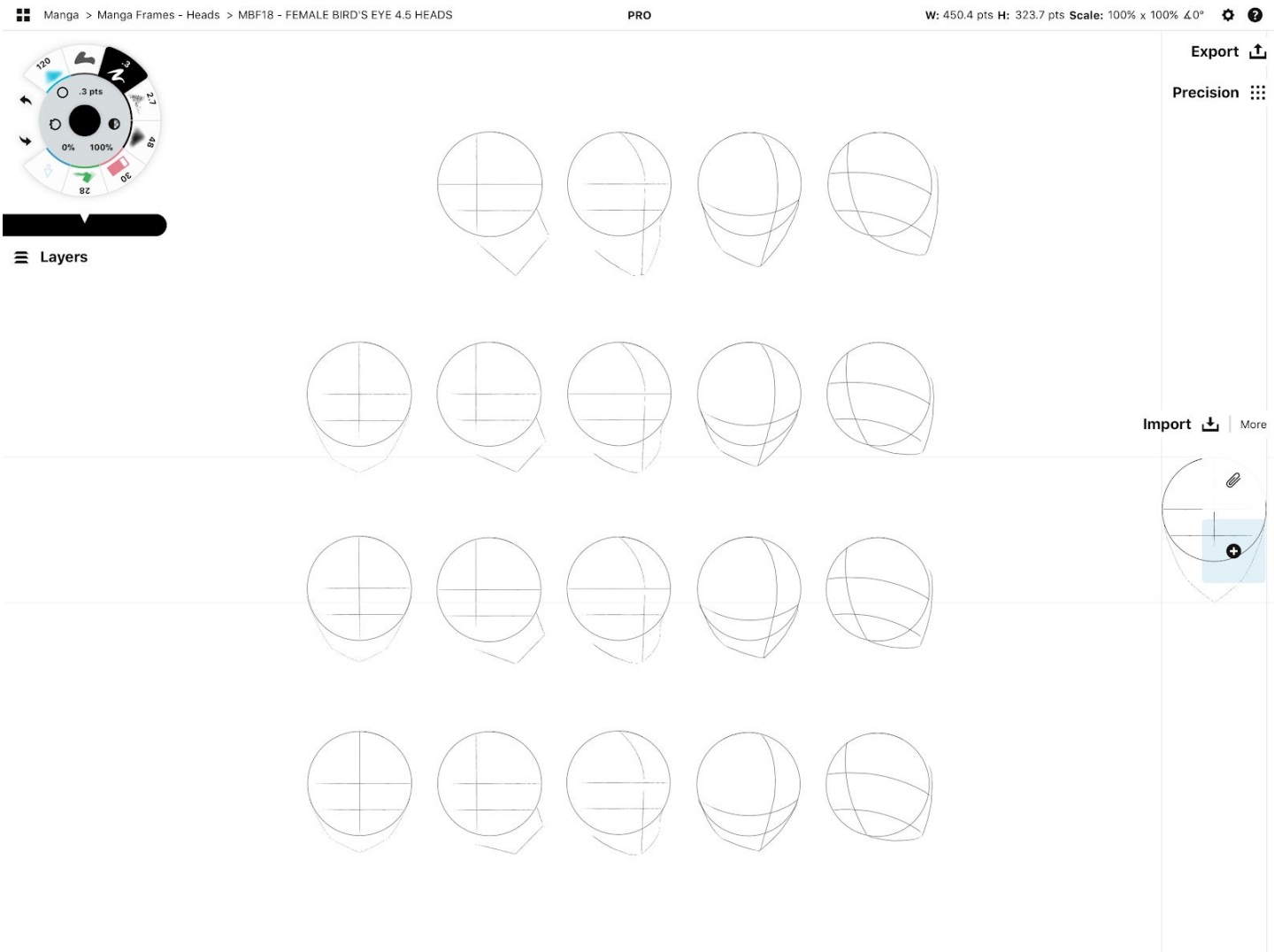
4. *Tap+hold* the object on the pack to **Edit** or **Delete** your object. Giving it a name will help you to search for it from your object packs, and will keep them clear for your colleagues when shared.

When you drag the object onto the screen, its name will appear for reference, and once added to the canvas, the object will appear at the original scale it was added into the object pack.
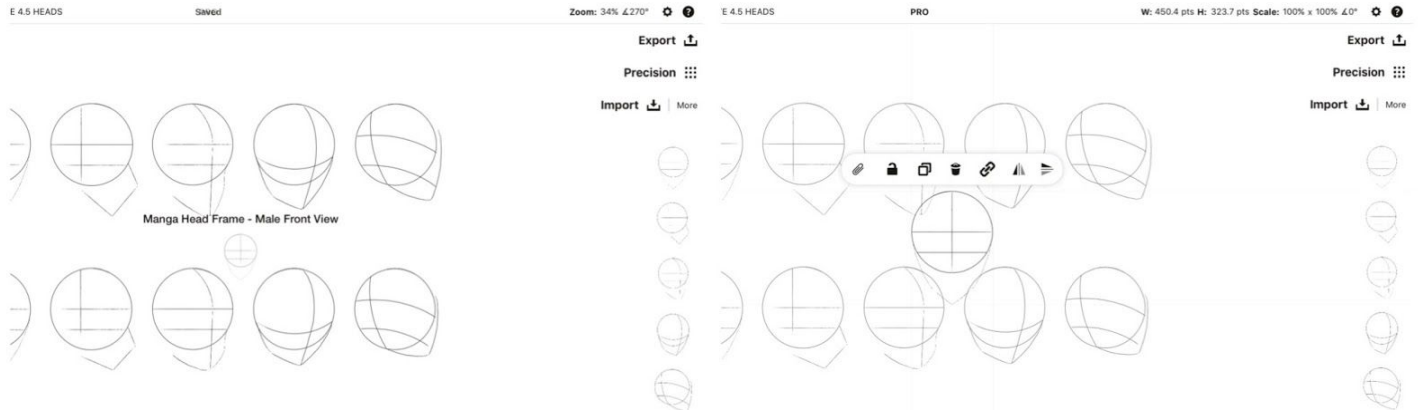
Sharing Object Packs

If you'd like to share an object pack with a colleague who has also subscribed to team-sharing, go to the **My Objects** tab in the Import menu. *Tap+hold* your object pack to select it, and touch **Share**.
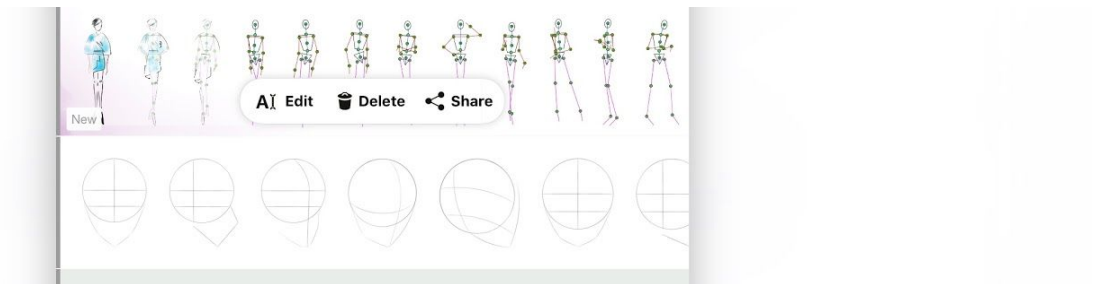
You'll be given a Direct Link that you can copy to your device's Clipboard, or just tap Share in the upper right corner. Choose your destination and share the link.

When you or your colleague touch a link and open it in your app, it will ask if you'd like to accept the object pack. Accept it, then find the pack in your My Objects tab in the Import menu.

Troubleshooting. If for some reason you can't find the object pack, log out of your account via your profile icon and log back in, and the object pack will appear. You can also *Ask Us Anything* in app via the question mark on the status bar.

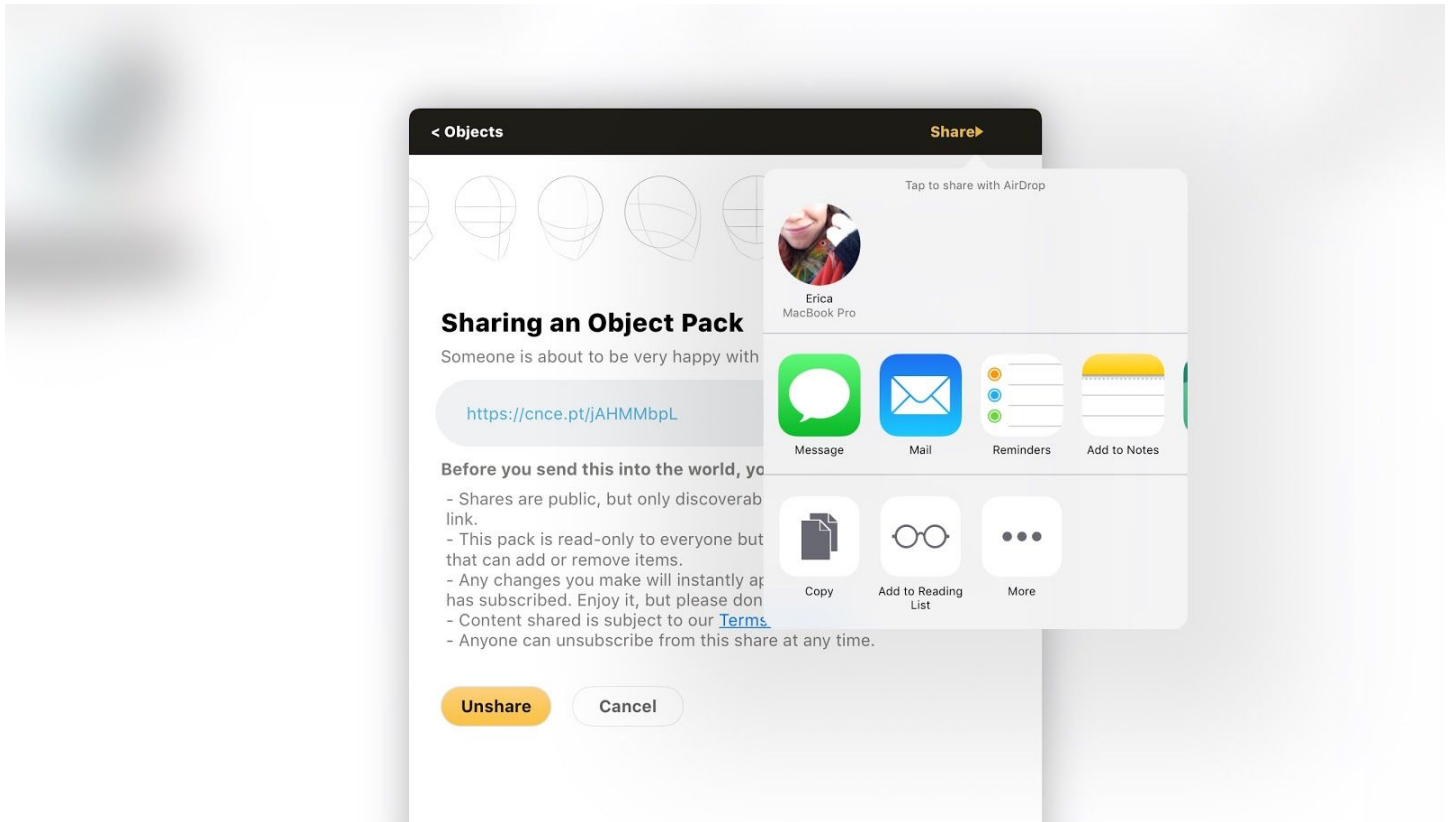Things you should know about sharing object packs:

- Sharing is public, but is only discoverable by people who have the link.
- Your object pack is read-only to everyone except you. You are the only one who can add, rename or remove objects, or rename the pack.
- Any changes you make will instantly appear on anyone's device that has subscribed, with whom you've shared your link.
- Any object pack that you have created, you can share. Content shared is subject to our Terms of Services.

- Anyone can unsubscribe from your share at any time.

We think you'll find a substantial and enjoyable amount of value in creating and sharing your object packs - time savers plus fun for everyone.

Objects as iMessage Stickers

Concepts works with iMessage directly to display your objects as stickers for your text messages.

1. Allow iMessage to use Concepts. Apple has a quick how-to [here](#).
2. In iMessage, choose Concepts, and tap one of the object packs at the top of the Sticker menu.
3. Tap a sticker and send it.

PDF

For importing PDFs, please see **[PDF](#)**.

Export

Once your sketch is ready to export, touch the Export button in your workspace. The Export menu displays multiple file types you can choose from, to allow efficient bridging with your other apps and destinations.

You'll also notice a *Region* and an *Options* area. Your *Region* is the area you'd like to include in the export (since you have an infinite canvas to choose from). If you have an [artboard](#) active, you'll see that region available, as well, and you can choose to export to your preset boundaries. Your *Options* include exporting with a transparent background, exporting with your current

Paper type, and whether or not you'd like to include your Grid in your export. These options differ a bit depending on which file type you choose - go ahead and select to your desired outcome.
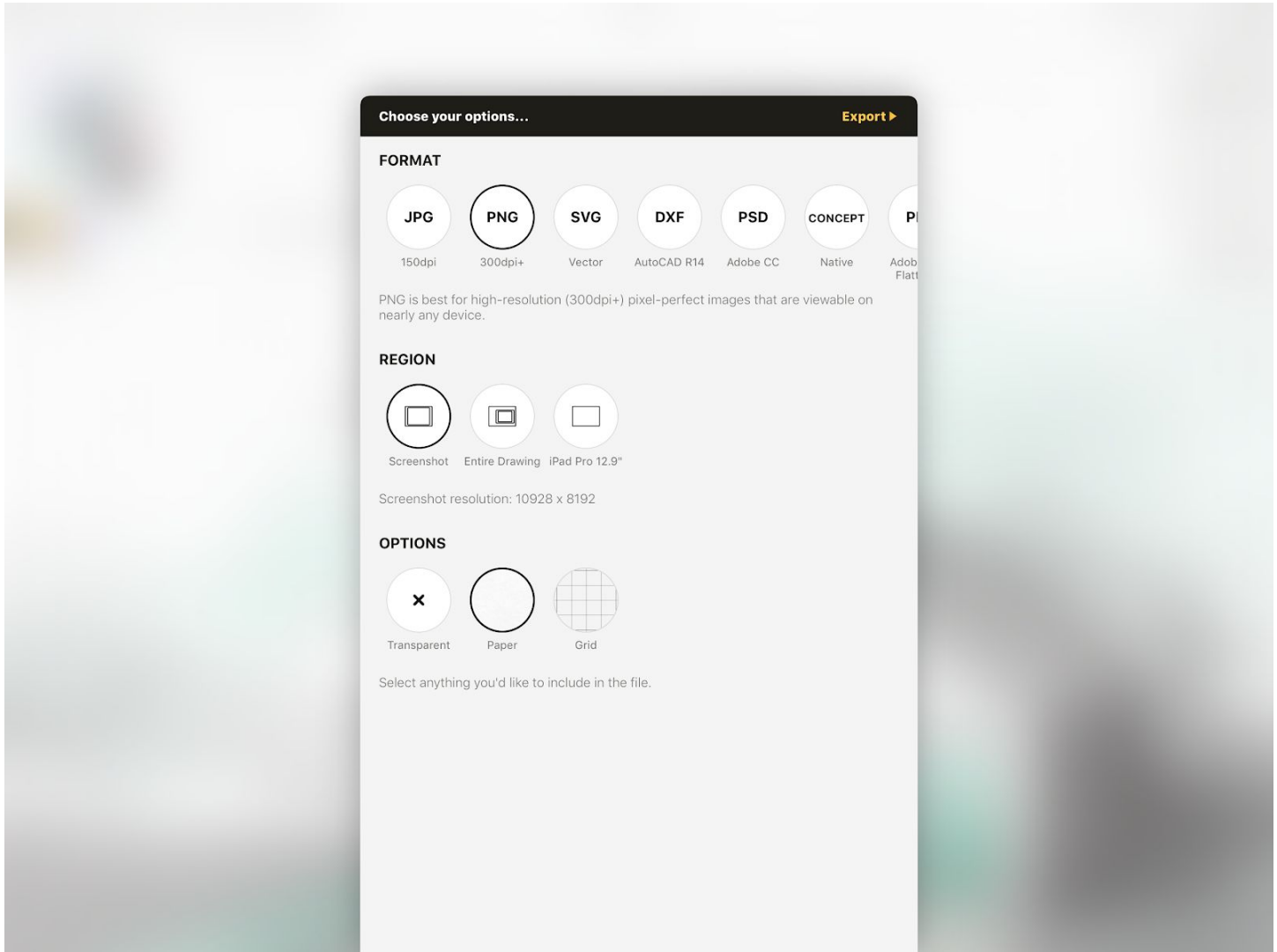
We support exports to the following file formats:

JPG

Standard, low-resolution export that's best for quick emails or low-res screenshots. On iPad and iPhone it's 72dpi, on iPad Pro it's 150dpi.

PNG

Standard, higher-resolution export for pixel-perfect images that are viewable on nearly any device. This is 300dpi up to a maximum resolution based on the device (4 times the screen size on an iPad Pro, and two times for other devices).

SVG

A standard format for simplifed vector paths that include point data and colors, but is limited to a single line-weight per stroke and very rough texture support. Please be aware that not all SVG formats are equal between apps. In fact, they're all different and proprietary, and you can expect to see inconsistencies between vector stroke appearances in Concepts versus other vector apps. Eraser marks will display as white lines. If exporting for Adobe Illustrator, make sure to uncheck 'Filters' in the options.

DXF

DXF is a CAD format from Autodesk (R14) that includes vector paths and basic color representation, useful for organic CAD models and laser / waterjet cutting. Eraser marks will display as white lines.

PSD

Adobe's Photoshop format supports multiple layers in a raster (high-res PNG) format. This export type requires and exports to your Adobe Creative Cloud account.

CPT

Concepts' native file format. This format is best if you want to preserve your file's unique vector-raster hybrid data, and continue editing the file on another device.

PDF (Adobe PDF, Flattened)

Adobe's PDF is an industry standard for cross-device workflows. This is the raster version that maintains look and feel but loses vector path data. Files can be quite large as they're exported at high resolutions.

PDF (Adobe PDF, Vector Paths)

Adobe's PDF is an industry standard for cross-device workflows. This is the vector version that supports basic paths but loses the textured feel of your brushes.

Exporting a CPT File

If you would like to share your file to a new device or import someone else's CPT file onto your own device, choose CPT on export. Send to your Files, Cloud etc, and you'll also be given a direct link that looks something like this:

https://concepts.tophatch.com/s/210df7d8-7e73-4506-8a0e-e82848ecfbba

The link is copied to your clipboard and you can then share it via email, Airdrop or any other method. Clicking on the link will open it automatically inside Concepts as a new drawing.
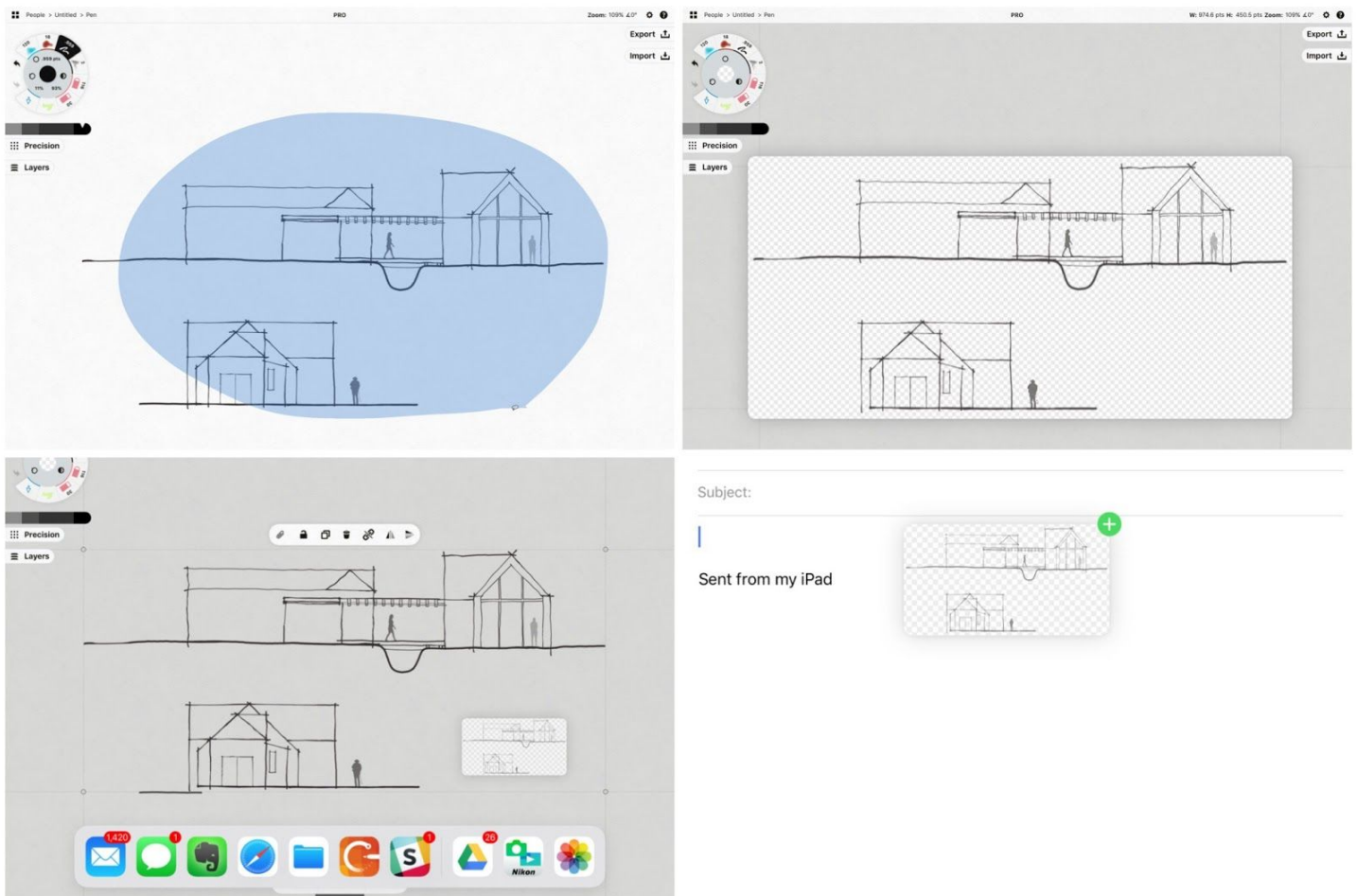
Exporting a PDF

Please read more about exporting your PDF files **here**.

Drag & Drop

Concepts supports iOS 11's *Drag & Drop* capability. You can drag & drop selections, images, text and colors both into and out of Concepts with supported apps. Images are exported in a transparent PNG file format.

How to Drag & Drop from Concepts to another app

1. Using the Item Picker or Lasso, select what you'd like to bring to another app.
2. *Tap+hold* your selection. It will pop out from the screen just like any drag & drop image.
3. Start dragging your selection. Swipe upward on the tab with another finger to open your dock and choose your destination app, or have it ready to go split screen.
4. Drag in your selection.

Read how to drag & drop selections *into* Concepts **here**.

Exporting via Clipboard

You can attach selections, images, colors and text to your device's clipboard, and paste them into email, text, supported document editors and other apps. To copy a selection to your clipboard, select your drawing, drawing portion, or object, and touch the Paperclip in the Selection popup or at the top of the Import menu. In your destination app of choice, *tap+hold* the screen and touch **Paste**.
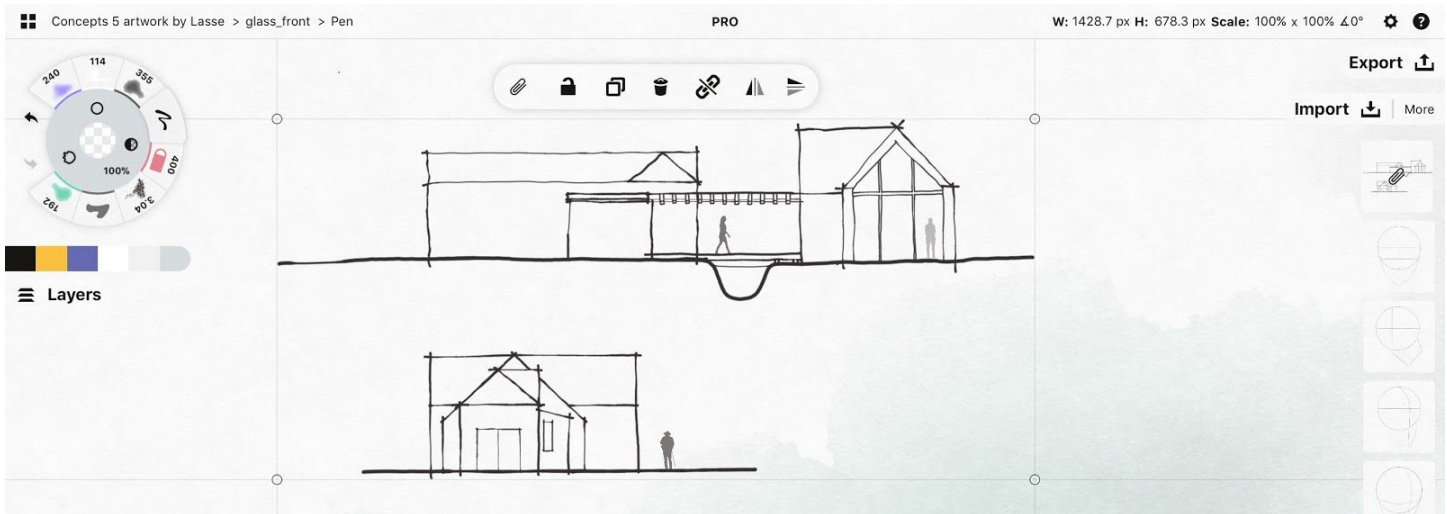
PDF

PDF or Portable Document Format is the universal language for document shares. It's a file type that allows graphic data like fonts, images and layouts to be flattened as-is and shared independently of all software and hardware brands, so that your important work can't get mucked up during the export / import process.

It also means your work can't be edited, which means design iterations are difficult and require lengthy re-drawing. Concepts allows you to create, import, mark up, rearrange, substitute and

export crystal clear PDF pages. Available in the **Pro Shop** either a-la-carte or as part of subscription, it has a lot of power but is simple to use.

Importing a PDF

To import a PDF, download it via your email, text, Files, Cloud or other preferred method to your device, and open it in Concepts.
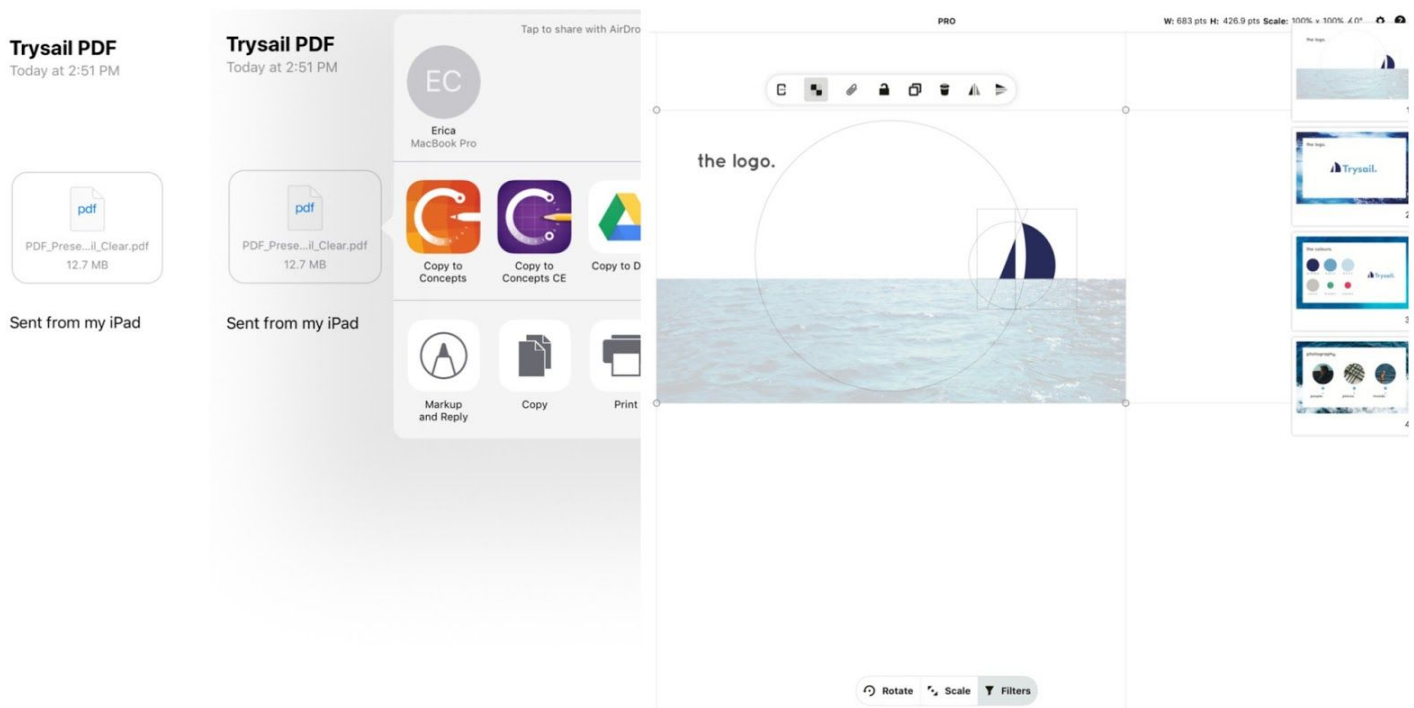
Importing a PDF from email: 1 - Download the PDF to your device. 2 - *Tap+hold* to bring up sharing. 3 - *Tap* the Concepts icon.
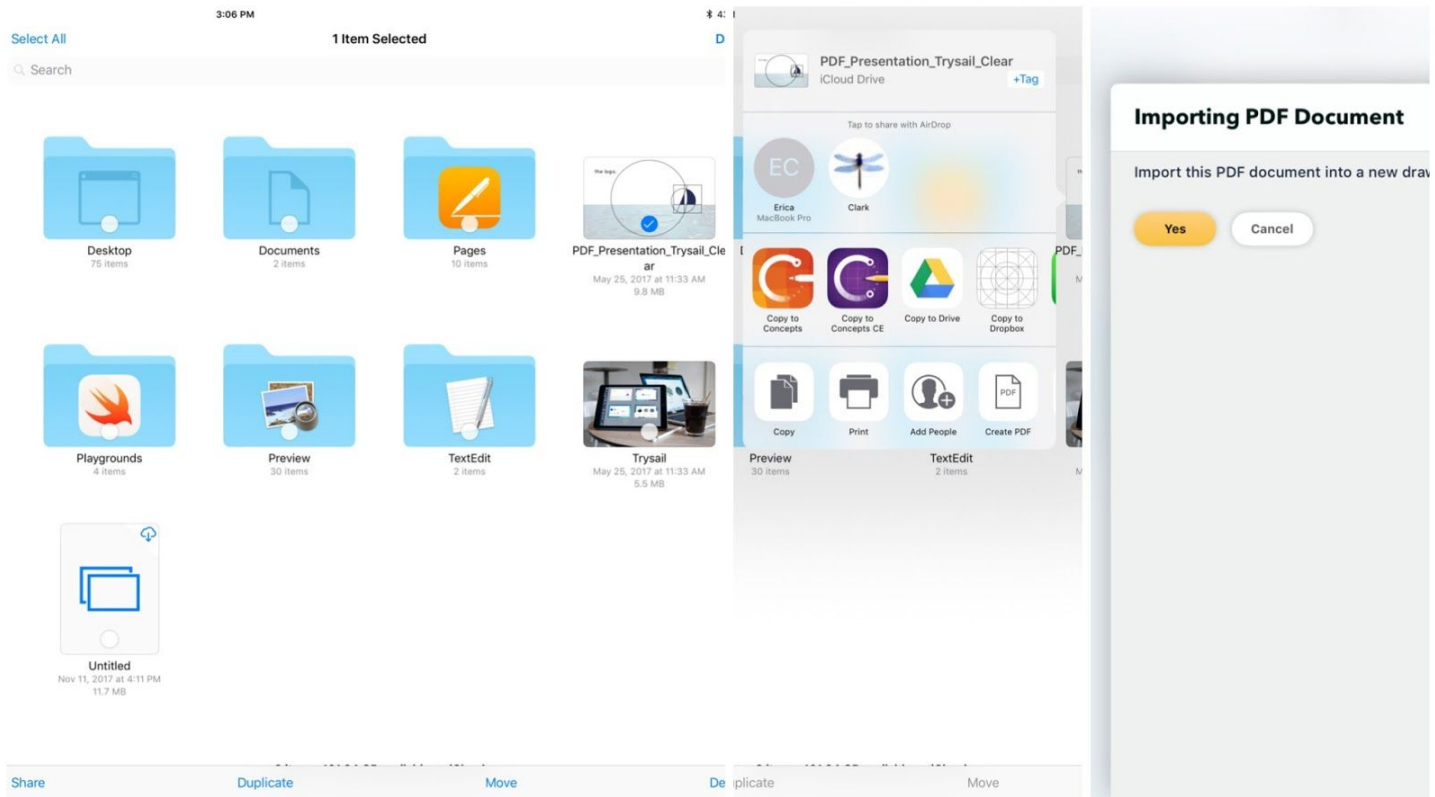
Importing a PDF from Files: 1 - Tap *Select* in the upper corner and select your PDF. 2 - Tap *Share* in the lower corner to bring up Sharing locations. 3. Select the Concepts icon and accept the import.

With a **single-page PDF**, it will import just like an image onto the canvas.

With a **multi-page PDF**, you'll see a scrollable selection of pages appear at the side of the screen. You can drag these pages onto your canvas and position them exactly as you would an image, object or other selection.

Your PDF will import to scale onto your canvas. A PDF has a "real world" size based on a standard 72dpi. When Concepts imports the PDF, it respects that size - for example, a PDF that is US Letter size will be shown as 8.5 by 11.0 inches on your canvas. If you enable measurements, the imported document will match the measurements displayed in Concepts.

the logo.

Layers

Rotate   Scale   Filters
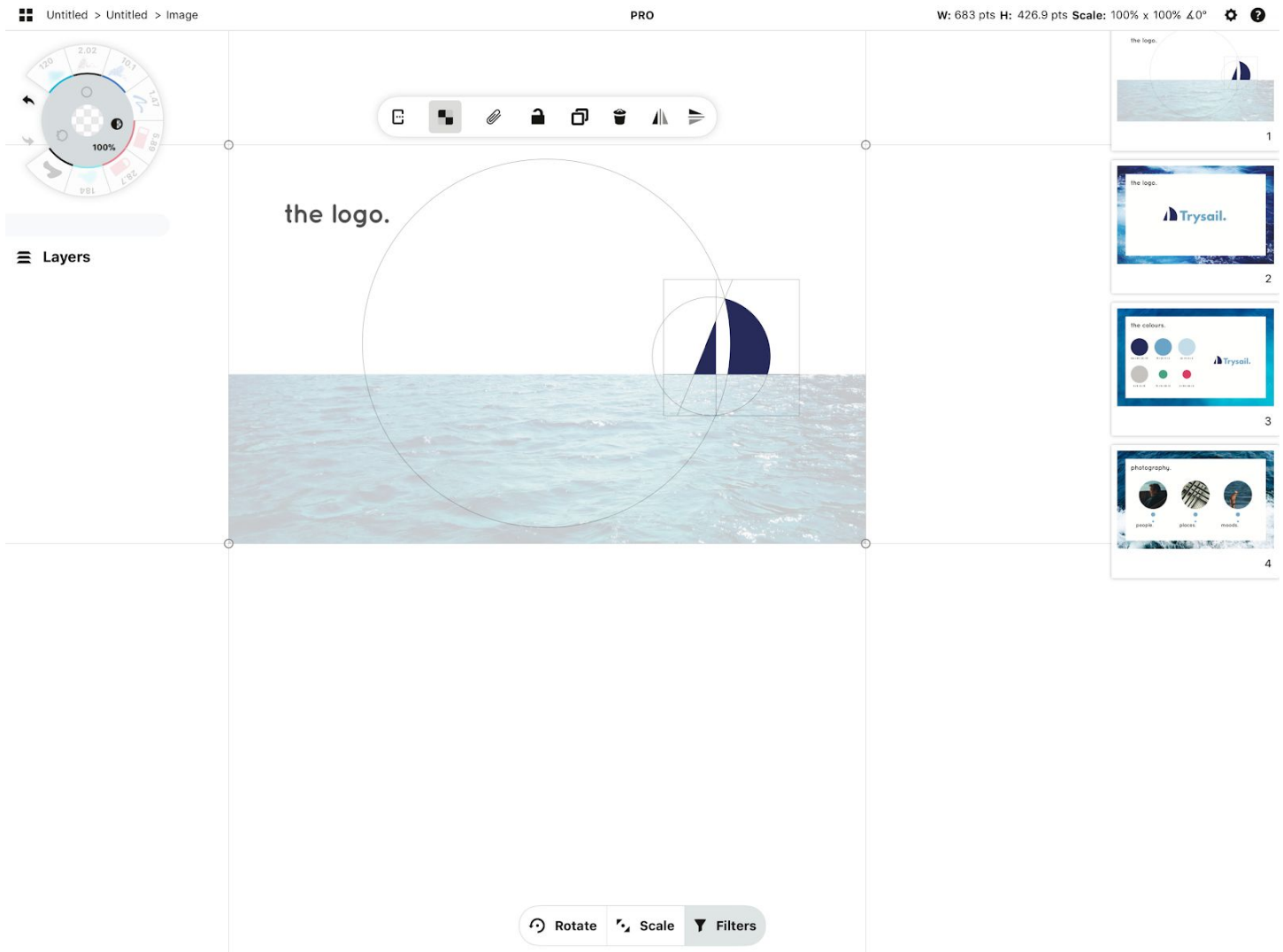
Interacting with your PDF

When working with a PDF, the standard gestures and selection abilities apply, plus a few extras.

- *Drag* a page with a finger or stylus onto the canvas.
- *Tap* to set the page onto the canvas.
- *Tap+hold* the page to select it, move it about, and perform all the useful abilities selection offers, plus one just for PDF - apply transparency when exported (below).

- With a multi-page PDF, *swipe* the PDF menu off the edge of the screen to hide it while you work.
- To bring it back, *select* a PDF page and touch the left-most button on the popup with the *rectangle+dots* - another PDF-only button - and it will reappear.
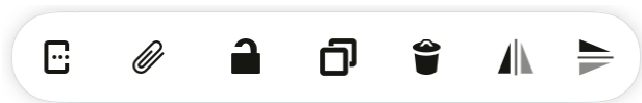
Go ahead and mark up or make edits to your PDF how you'd like.

Concepts reads your pages from **top to bottom**, and from **left to right**. If you're looking to *rearrange* pages in your PDF, drag your pages onto the screen into the order you'd like them to appear, then export your PDF.

Don't worry about crooked pages, Concepts will export anything within a page's selection rectangle and true it up to the page, assessing the furthest left / right and top / bottom points. If it's more horizontal, it will export to your true horizontal page; if it's more vertical, it will export to your true vertical page.

For substituting in pages without having the recreate the entire document, read on to **Exporting a PDF** (option 4b).

Exporting a PDF

When your document is how you want it and you're ready to export it as a new PDF, touch the Export menu button. It will take you to this screen:

Notice there are two PDF options. The first is **PDF (Adobe PDF, Flattened)**. This option is the standard PDF export that flattens your work into an untouchable, high-resolution document.

The second option is **PDF (Adobe PDF, Vector Paths)**. This allows you to export the Concepts vector paths to PDF for use in editors that allow you to work with vector PDFs (e.g. Adobe Illustrator). *Warning*: the resulting PDF will not look exactly the same as your Concepts sketch - you can expect your lines to appear as simple, non-textured lines. PDF simply does not support the rich, textured strokes that Concepts produces.

Select whichever PDF option you prefer, then move to *Region*. Here you see several options, with a Part B on the last. Choose wisely.

1. If you choose Screenshot, whatever configuration of pages or beautiful work you've created that show within the current boundaries of the screen will save as a *single PDF page*.

2. If you choose Entire Drawing, everything you've drawn, including what you don't see in the visible screen boundaries, will save into a *single PDF page*.

3. If you have an artboard on canvas, you'll see this represented in your Region. Choosing this option exports your configured size to a *single PDF page*. We don't support multiple artboards yet.

4a. If you choose PDF Bounds, you will create a *multiple-page PDF*. As many PDF pages you have within your drawing, read from left-to-right and top-to-bottom, will export into a full PDF document.

4b. If you select *PDF Bounds* and include *Original Pages*, any page(s) you dragged from the PDF and adjusted will **automatically substitute in** for the original pages, giving you an updated version of your original PDF. This is great for signing the last page of a legal document, for example, without having to recreate the entire spread.

Settings

In the Settings menu, you'll see three different tabs, allowing you to configure your *Workspace*, your *Stylus*, and your *Gestures*.

Workspace

In the Workspace tab, you can configure your canvas experience.
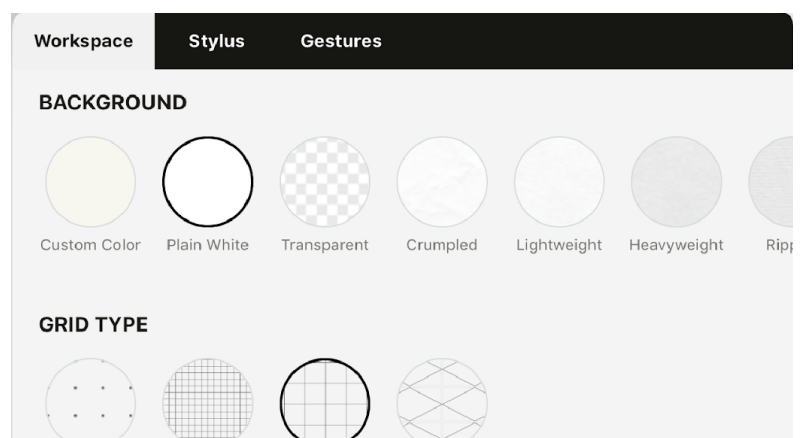
The first option in this menu is the **Background**. Concepts offers you nine different backgrounds, including basic paper types with subtle textures, transparent, blueprint and darkprint. We also give you the option to create a custom color background.

The second feature on the menu is your **Grid type**. There are four grid types to choose from: Dot grid, 10/100, 16/64 and Isometric. To learn more, see **Grid**.

Next up is the **Artboard Size**. If you want to create a certain sized drawing, this is the place to set your boundaries. You can use one of the presets Concepts offers or create a custom-sized artboard - just *tap+hold* on the size to enter the values. We offer four shortcuts for most-used sizes, but you can find more presets if you *tap+hold* the size, and find the presets field above the keyboard. You can find common paper sizes, screen sizes and even business card sizes.
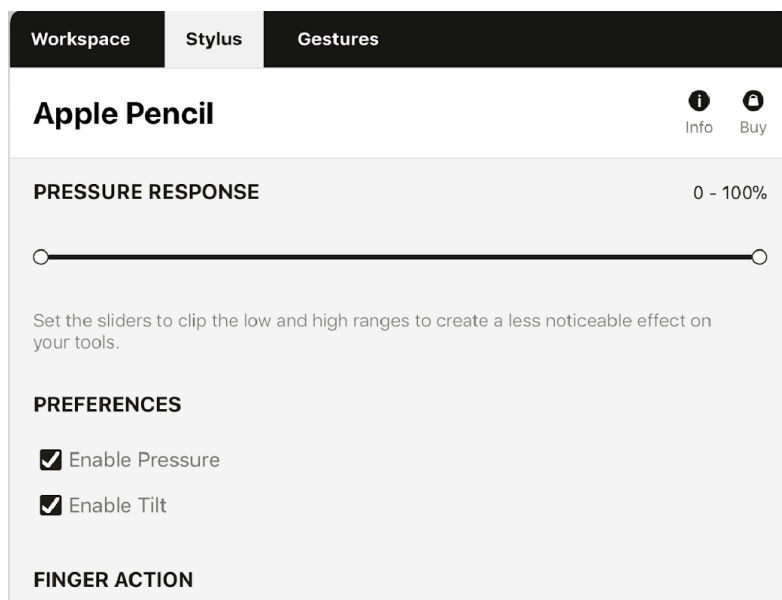
Pro Tip: On canvas, *tap+hold* a corner of the artboard to move it about - handy for framing your drawing just so, cropping images into an exact size, and getting a reference for how big / small your drawing is based on real-world scale. When you Export, you can choose to capture the image according to the artboard's sizing.

Third on the menu, you can set your **Drawing Scale**. Select from the shortcuts, or *tap+hold* on the value fields to choose from other presets or to enter custom values. *Tap+hold* on the units to change them, as well.

Lastly, select the overall **Units** you prefer to apply them to your workspace.

Stylus

Under the **Stylus** tab, configure settings specific to your stylus. If you're using the Apple Pencil, you can adjust and enable the pressure response and enable the tilt. Also choose from five finger actions that function independently from the stylus: *Do Nothing*, *Use Active Tool*, *Pan Canvas*,

Workspace	Stylus	Gestures		

Apple Pencil   ⓘ Info   🔒 Buy

PRESSURE RESPONSE   0 - 100%

Set the sliders to clip the low and high ranges to create a less noticeable effect on your tools.

PREFERENCES

☑ Enable Pressure

☑ Enable Tilt

FINGER ACTION

Select, and *Configured Tool*. If you choose *Select*, for example, you can use your finger to quickly select in your drawing, and continue drawing with your Apple Pencil.

The shortcut buttons on other styli can be configured once the pen has been connected. Buttons can be configured to: No Action, Undo, Redo, Select Last Item, Show Layers, Show Color Wheel, Tool Setup and Show Objects. Read [Using a Stylus](#) to learn more about different styli.

Gestures

Under the *Gestures* tab, you can choose how you want to interact with the app controls. First, find information on one- and two-finger actions. Under One Finger, you'll also find a checkbox - if checked, this allows touches to display on screen when presenting on another screen via AirPlay. This doesn't affect the regular use of Concepts on your iPad or iPhone in any way.

The default setting for Two Fingers is canvas rotation. If you want your canvas to maintain its angle at all times, you can disable canvas rotation by unchecking the second box. If you still need to rotate it every now and then, but don't want to go back and forth from the menu, you can *tap+hold* on the degree value in the upper right corner of the status bar to enter the rotation via keyboard.
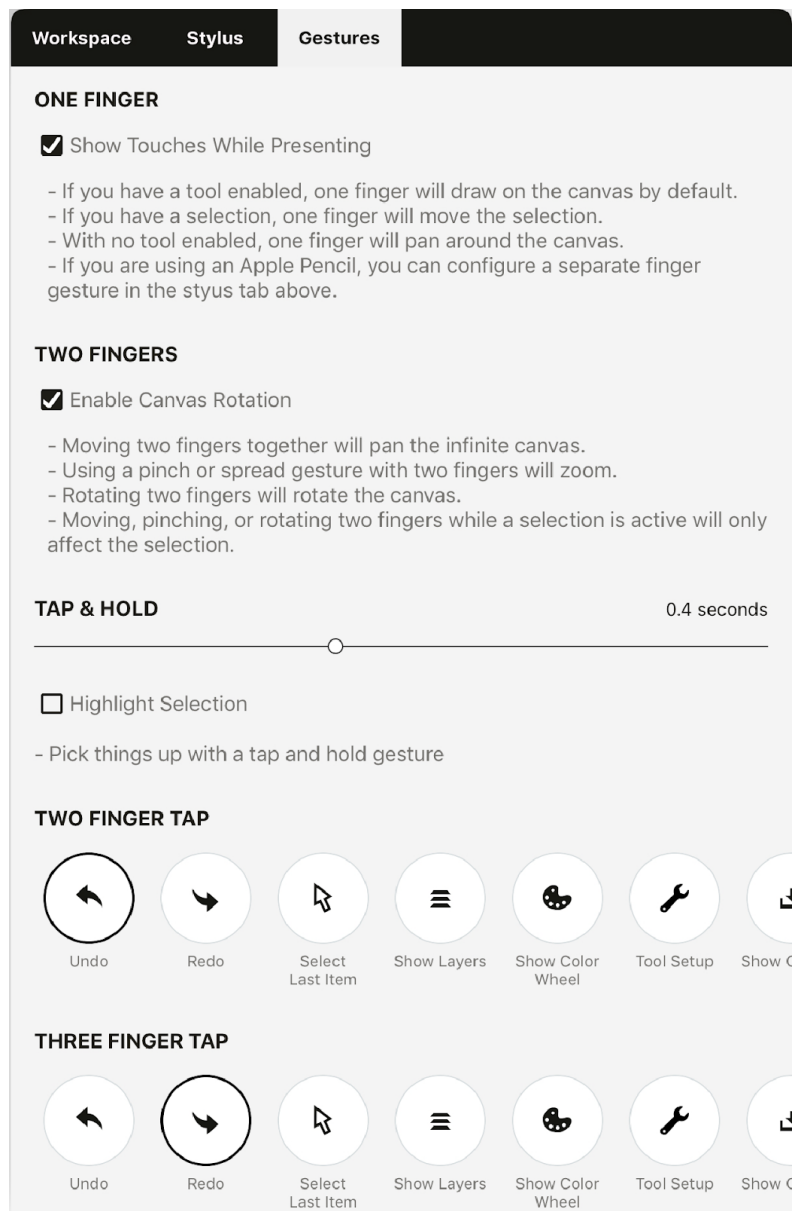
Tap+hold delay can be set according to your preferences. If you'd like tap+hold to react faster, just drag the handle left to make the delay shorter, or if it feels too fast, just drag the handle to the right.

[**Highlight selection.**](#) Concepts is set to automatically highlight the selection by graying out everything else. You can disable that here by unchecking the box.

Two-finger tap and **three-finger tap** are wonderfully useful for faster workflow. There are nine options to choose from for each gesture: undo, redo, select last item, show layers, show color wheel, tool setup, show objects, toggle shape guide and toggle interface. Play with these options to find the ones that are most useful for you.

Team Features
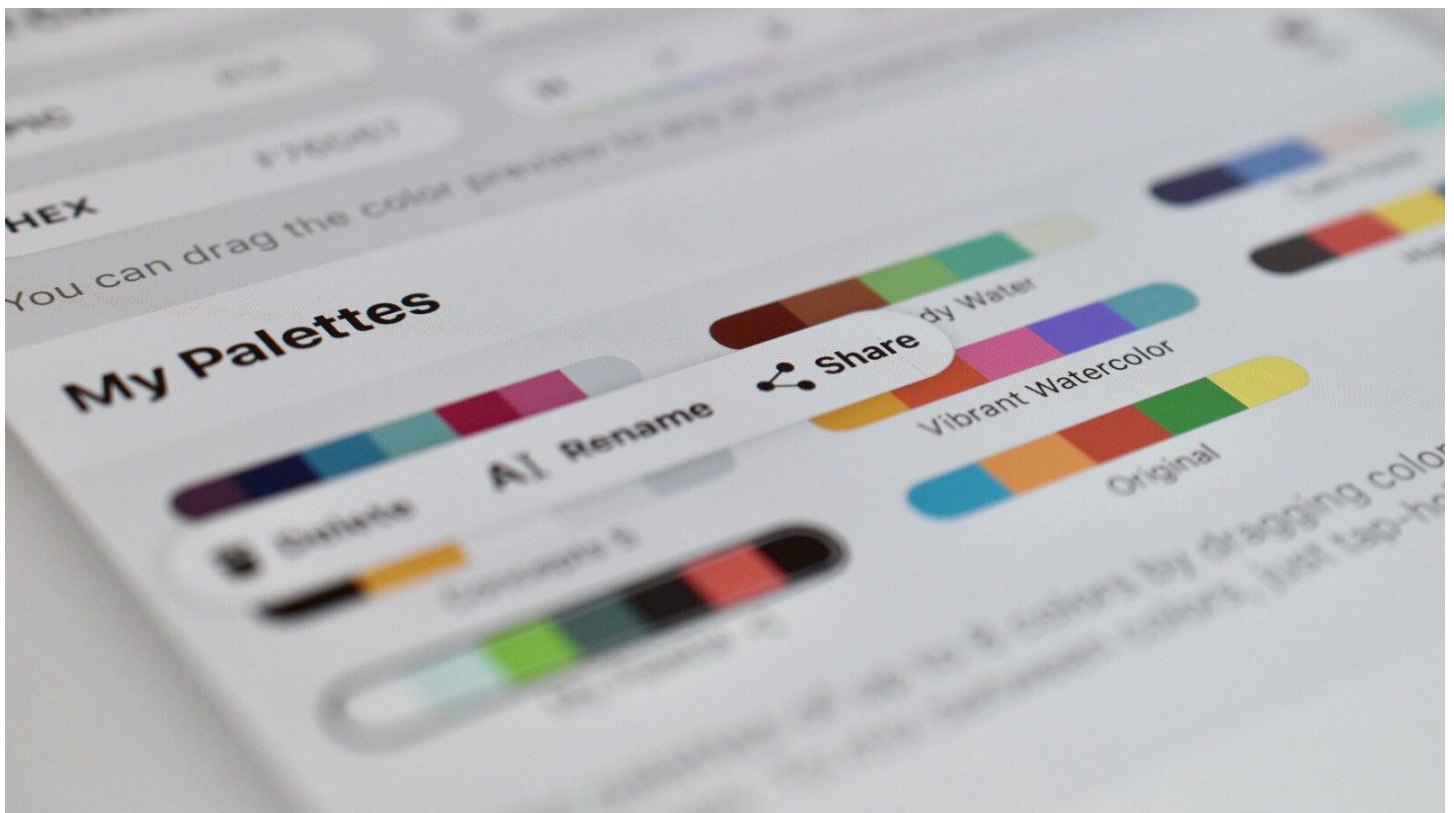
Live Assets Sharing is our newest Team feature, you can share personal object libraries, color palettes and brushes with your teammates or colleagues when you subscribe to our **Everything+** package. Share your most important assets, make edits, and watch them sync live on your colleague's devices. These shared libraries are Read-Only and are subject to our Terms of Service. **Let us know** if you'd like things to be arranged differently.

Read how to share your color palettes **here**.

Read how to share your object packs **here**.

Read about sharing your brushes **here**.

The Pro Shop

Basic

Concepts comes as a free, solid sketching app when you download it from the App Store. You can enjoy it this way for as long as you'd like. We feel like everyone deserves a solid sketching app whether they can buy one or not, so enjoy our basic tools, responsive feel, colors, customizable layout, infinite canvas and basic exports with this free package.


The Essentials

Upgrade to the Essentials. We created this toolset especially for professionals, and is the same Pro Pack we've traditionally offered. You get a long list of features, including our powerful ability to select, move and adjust your vectors, an editor to create and customize your own brushes, the Basic Shapes object library for fast-and-furious design, and most of our high-res and vector exports. It's a really beautiful package.
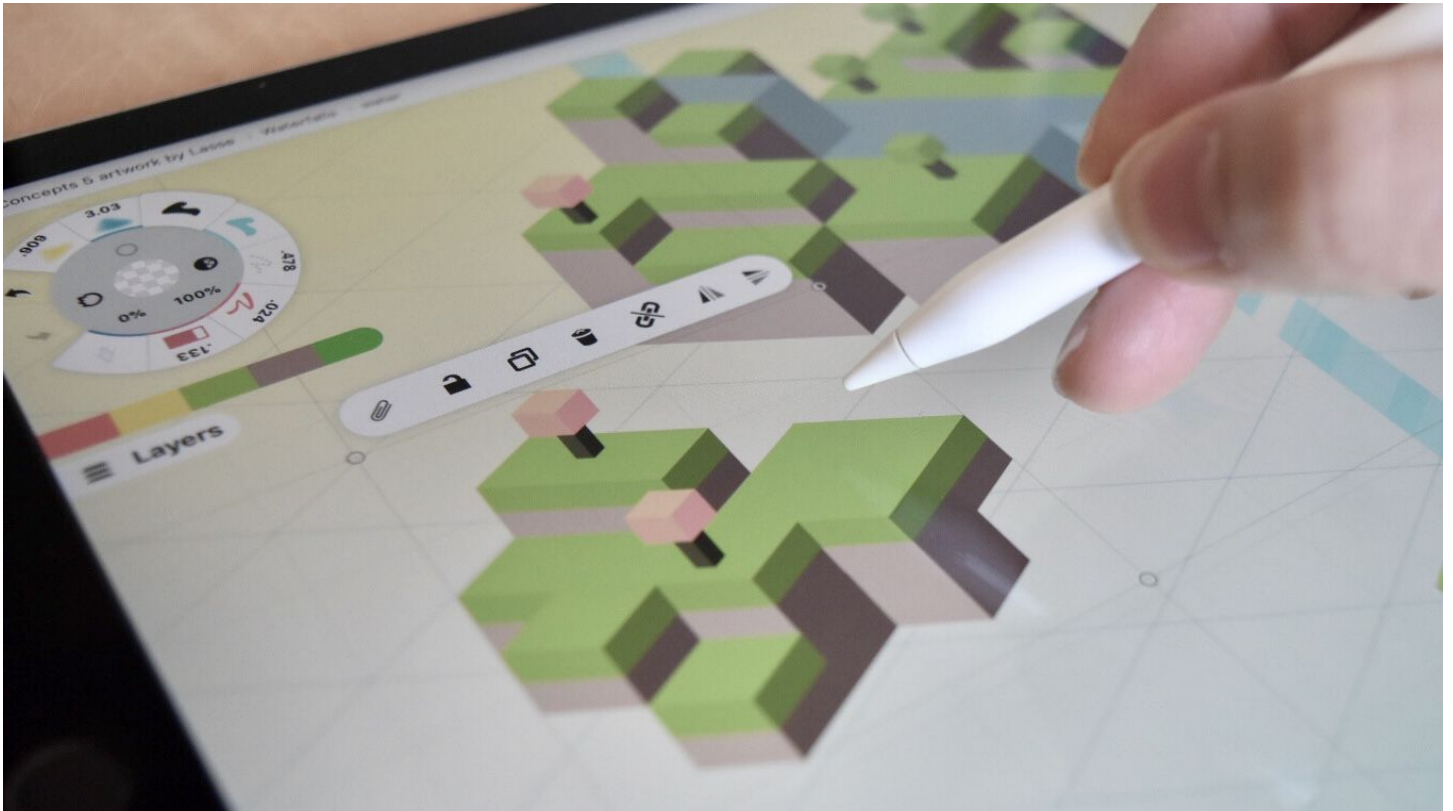
Pick Your Favorite Features

Pick what you need from the A-la-carte bar. You might decide you need **PDF** Import / Export, an object pack or two, or some additional artistic brushes. Feel free to choose just what helps your work along.
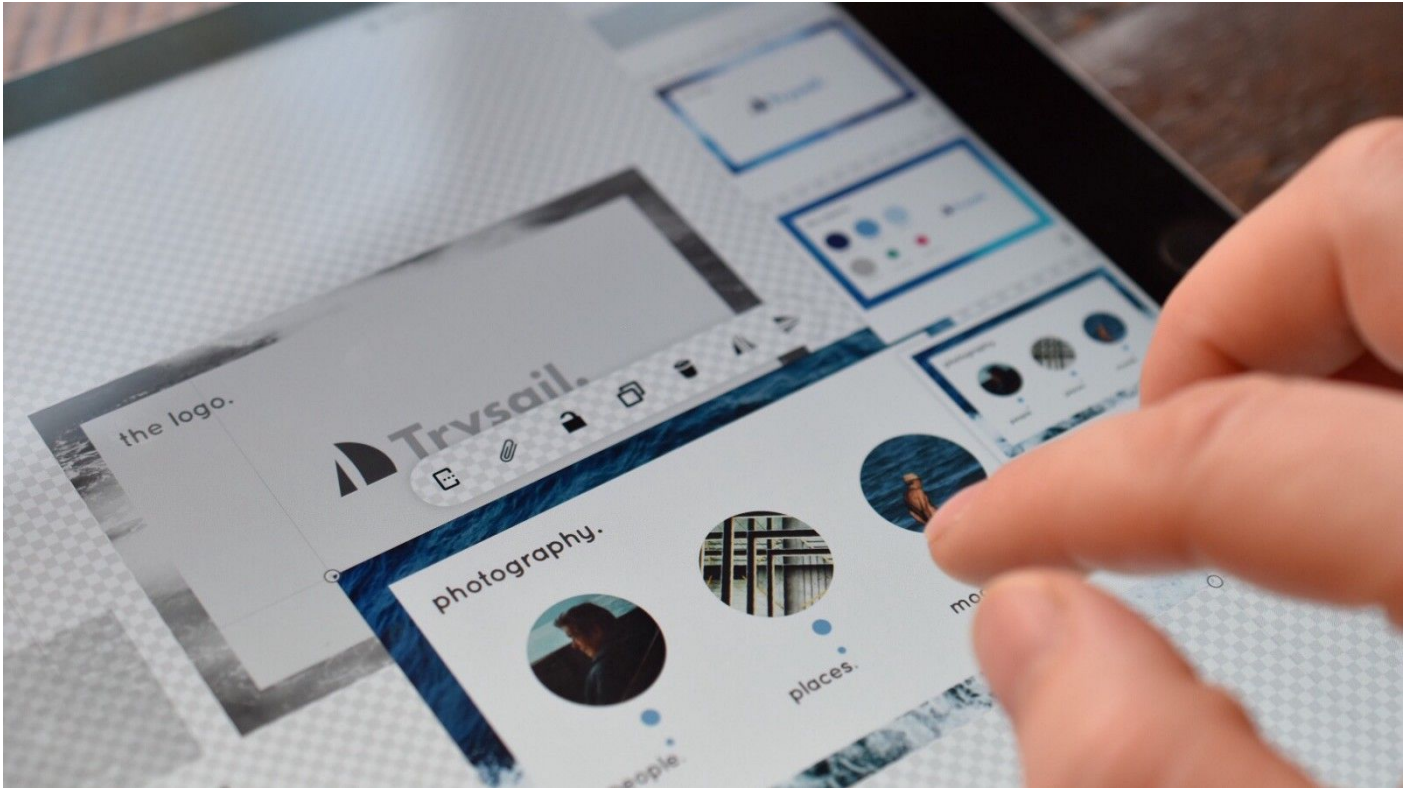
Our **PDF** editor is a deep feature requested by our deeper pros. Tons of functionality including crystal clear readability no matter how far you zoom, the ability to make mark ups, and to create transparent or standard exports in vector or high-res flattened formats. We didn't include it with the Essentials so cost could stay low for the majority of our users.

Our royalty-free, customizable vector **Object Packs** are a win for making your design-work efficient yet elegant. Discounts for 3, 5 and 10 packs in the Pro Shop give you more choice and flexibility. When you buy bundles, you'll have **Credits** applied to your account. You don't need to use them all at once, they'll remain on your account until you redeem them.

Make Your Own Objects (MYOO) is admittedly addictive for storing your one-of-a-kind, hand-crafted objects, so you can add a quick, unique touch to your projects. Create infinite libraries with infinite objects using this feature.

In the Brushes Market, we've crafted some **beautiful brushes** that add artistic elements to your drawings - brushes like pastels, chalk, paint and other dynamic pens and pencils. Purchase these brush packs with Credits, just like you do with objects.

Subscription Gives You Everything Plus Sharing

Our newest option gives you everything at once, going forward. This includes every export, every feature, every brush and object library.

The extra bonus here is the powerful new sharing capability that makes syncing and working with others as simple as doing things yourself. Securely share your personal libraries and color palettes between teammates and colleagues (or anyone, for that matter), and look forward to future open libraries like sharable custom brushes and Google fonts. Subscribing opens up the ultimate in design capabilities both for you and for us — you get great tools, and we get to keep building them.

Thanks for all the support. You make a world of difference to us - in fact, you are our entire world. We appreciate you.

Best of successes to you,

The Concepts Team @ TopHatch

Again, Help Doesn't End Here

While this manual has detailed information on specific features, we write and publish how-tos and interviews with industry experts almost weekly on [Medium](). If you're a visual learner, you might appreciate our video tutorials and workflow videos on [YouTube](). If you still can't find what you're after, find us on your favorite social channel, email us at [concepts@tophatch.com](), or tap *Ask Us Anything* in app for some lovely, direct conversation.