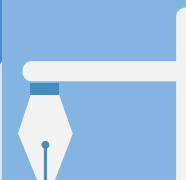




# OCHA

## GRAPHICS STYLEBOOK

### CHAPTER 3: HUMANITARIAN ICONS



# 01

# HUMANITARIAN ICONS DESIGN GUIDELINES

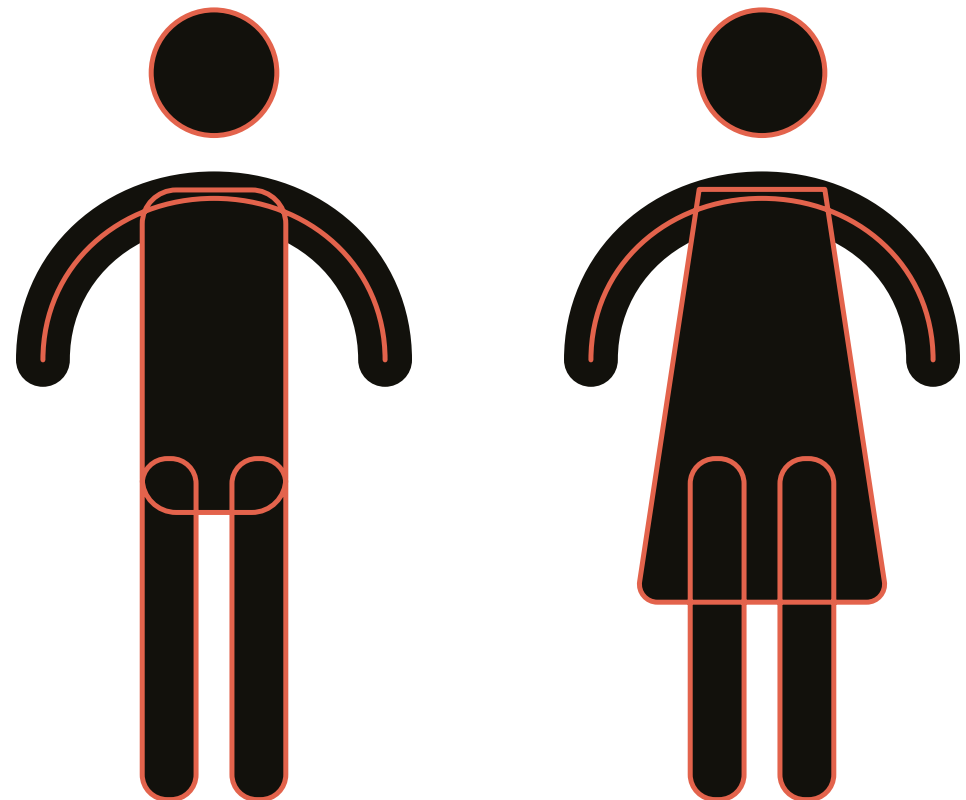
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“An icon is a small picture on a computer screen that represents a program or function.” *Merriam Webster Dictionary*

# INTRODUCTION

These guidelines will give you some basic guidance on how to create humanitarian icons. The guidelines are not intended to be restrictive or to limit creativity; they are simply to help establish some rules for all designers so that there is consistency across the icon family.

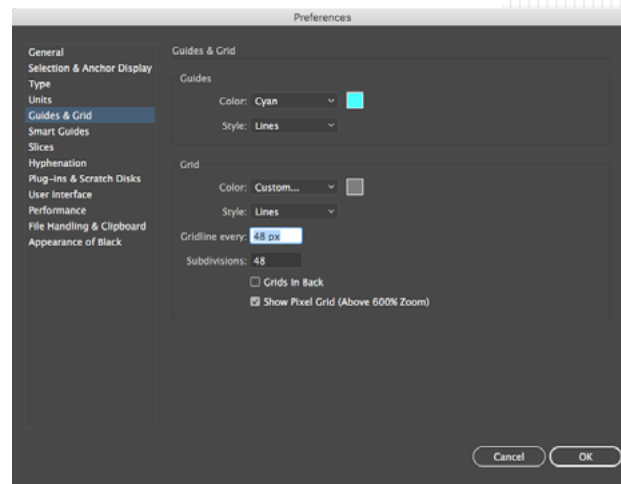
Humanitarian icons can always be modified and adapted to a specific context. Their use is not mandatory.



# CREATE A SIMPLE GRID

Use a grid of 48px by 48px.

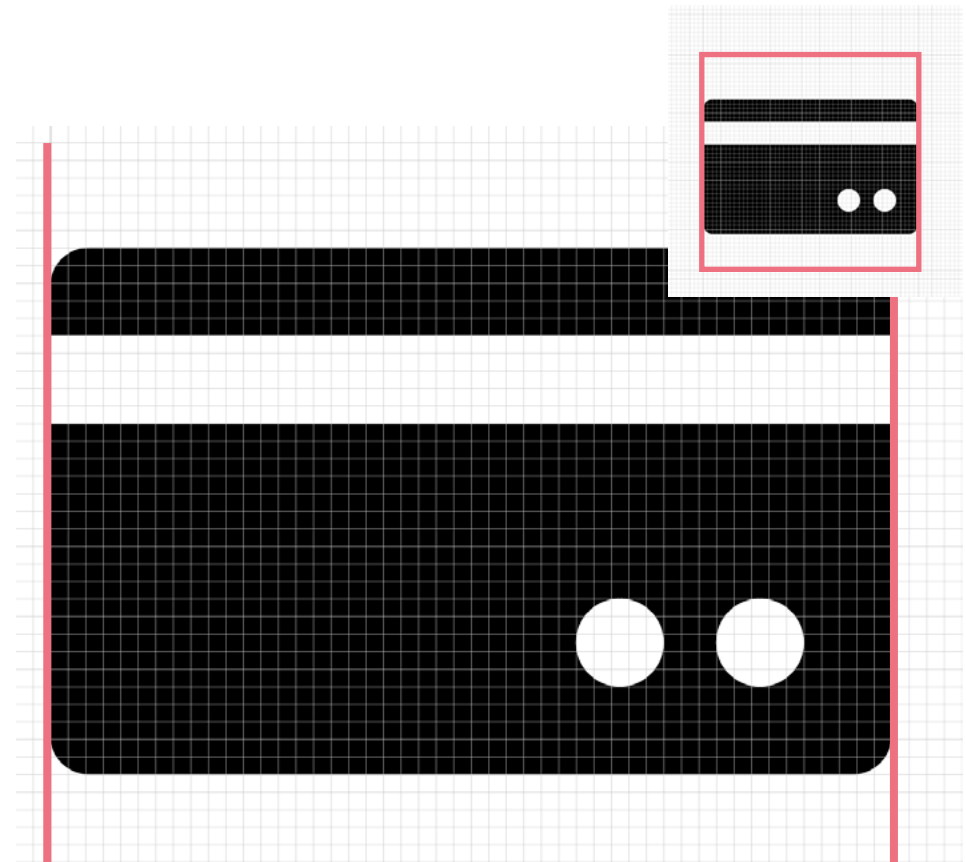
This will help you keep the icons within a square boundary and maintain consistency across the entire set.



# ADJUST THE ELEMENTS TO THE EDGE OF THE GRID

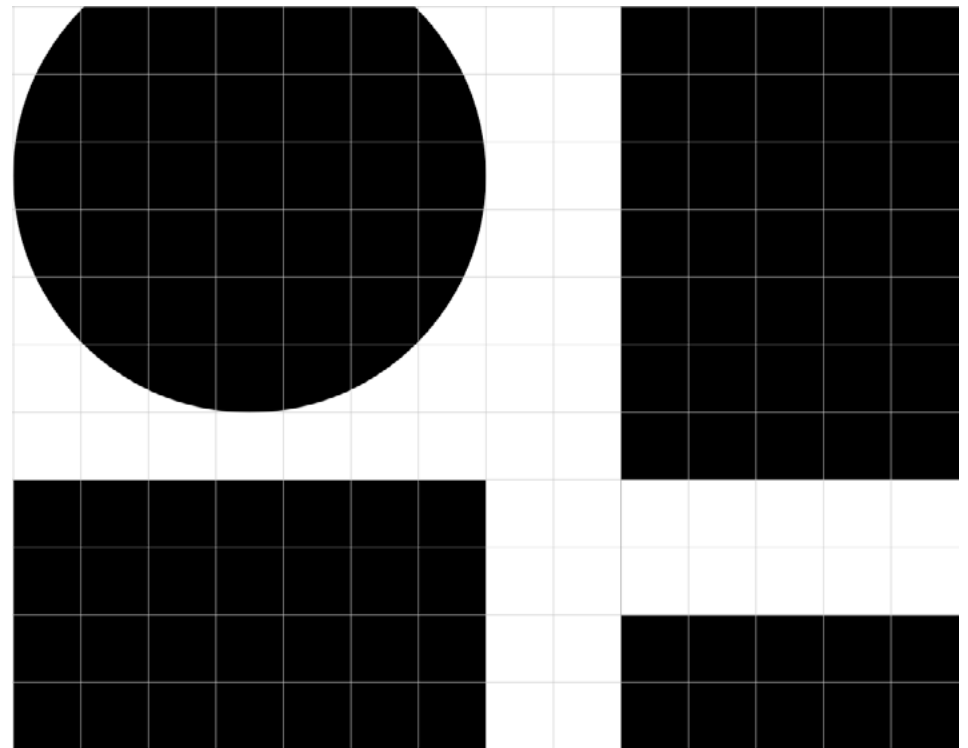
Every icon is constructed within a square boundary. This doesn't mean that every icon made should fill the square, but it does mean that your icon should touch the square either horizontally or vertically.

*Note: this rule does not apply when the icon has a shape very close to the square. See the 'Balance Sizes' rule below.*



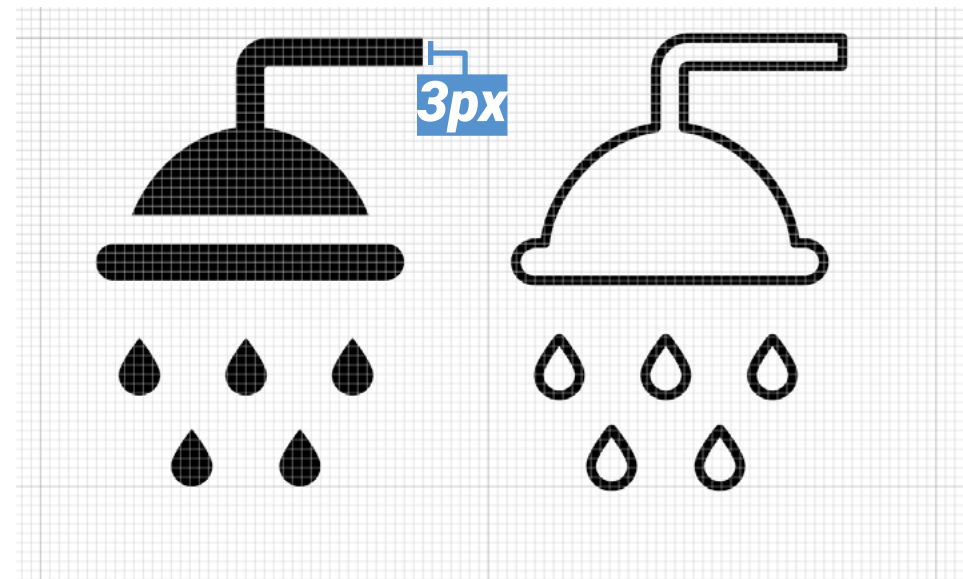
# BE PIXEL PERFECT

As much as possible, stick to the squares of the grid (1 pixel size) to create your design, make crisp final icons and avoid creating a blurry mess.



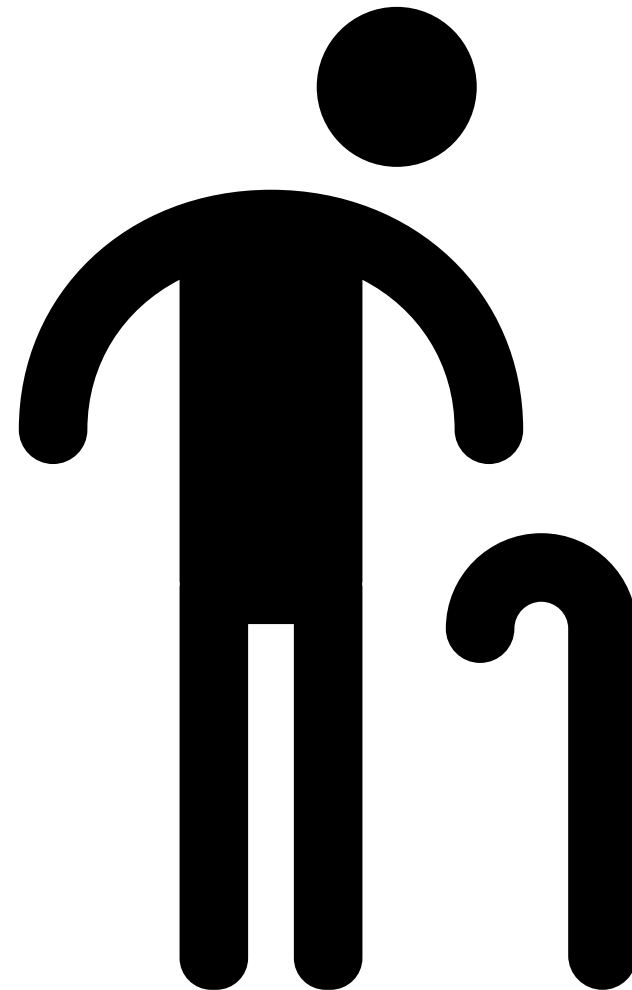
# USE THE SOLID FILLED STYLE

Create the icon using solid filled-in shapes. If you have to use strokes, they should be at least 3px (3 squares) thick.



# NO DETAILS

Avoid using too much detail. Keep it simple.  
Remember that the icons are designed to work in small sizes. The less detailed, the sharper the look.

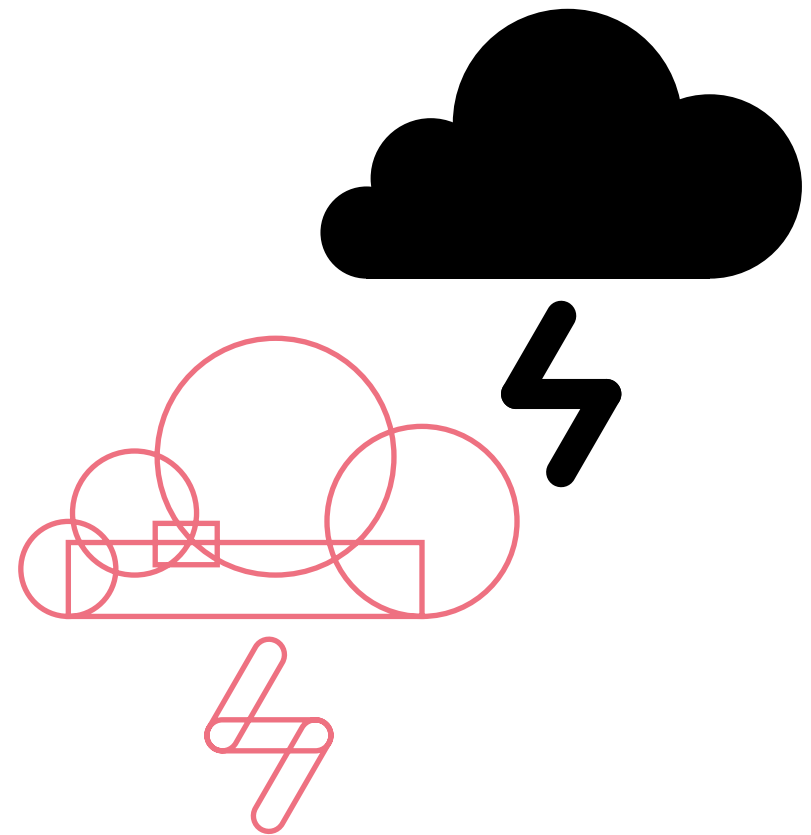




# BE GEOMETRIC

When designing the humanitarian icons, combine simple shapes, such as circles, squares and triangles.

Avoid organic shapes and using the Pen Tool.

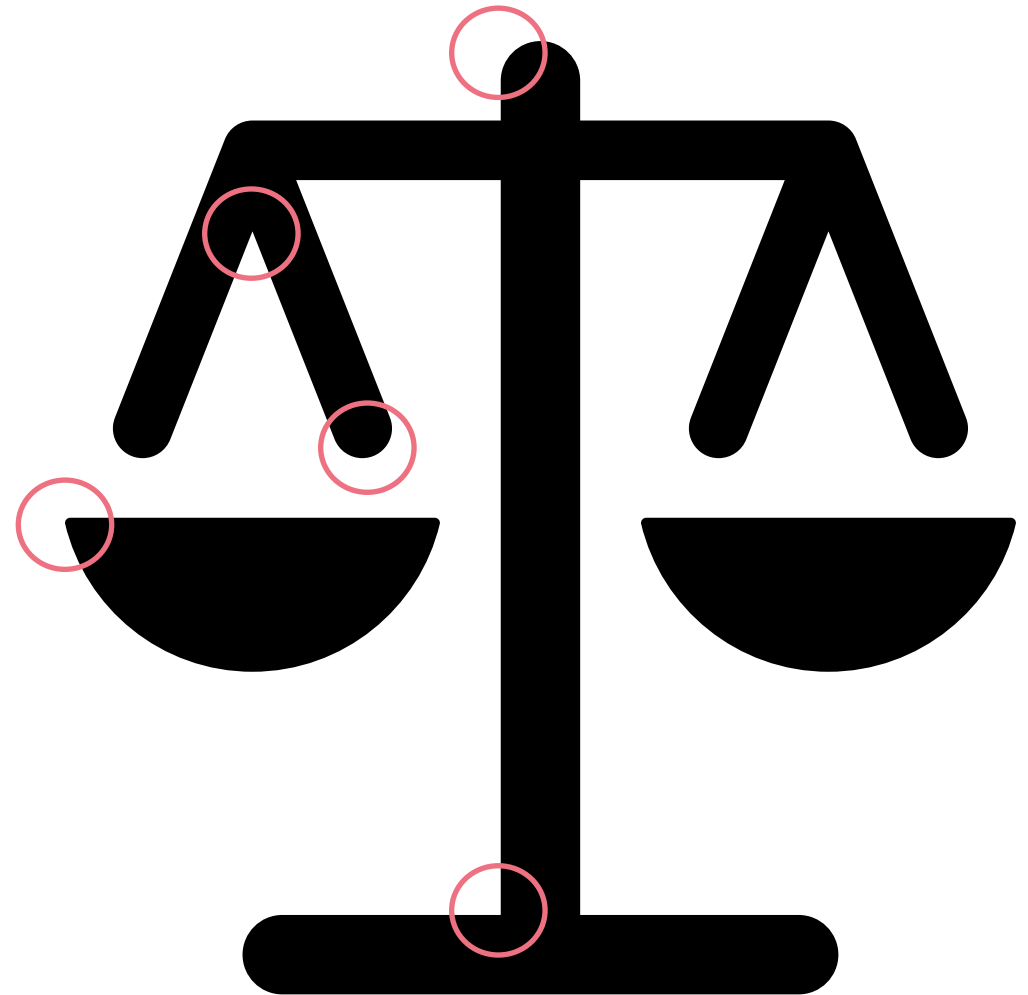


# ROUND CORNERS

Use rounded corners of 1 or 2px. If it looks too rounded, try 0.25 or 0.5px.

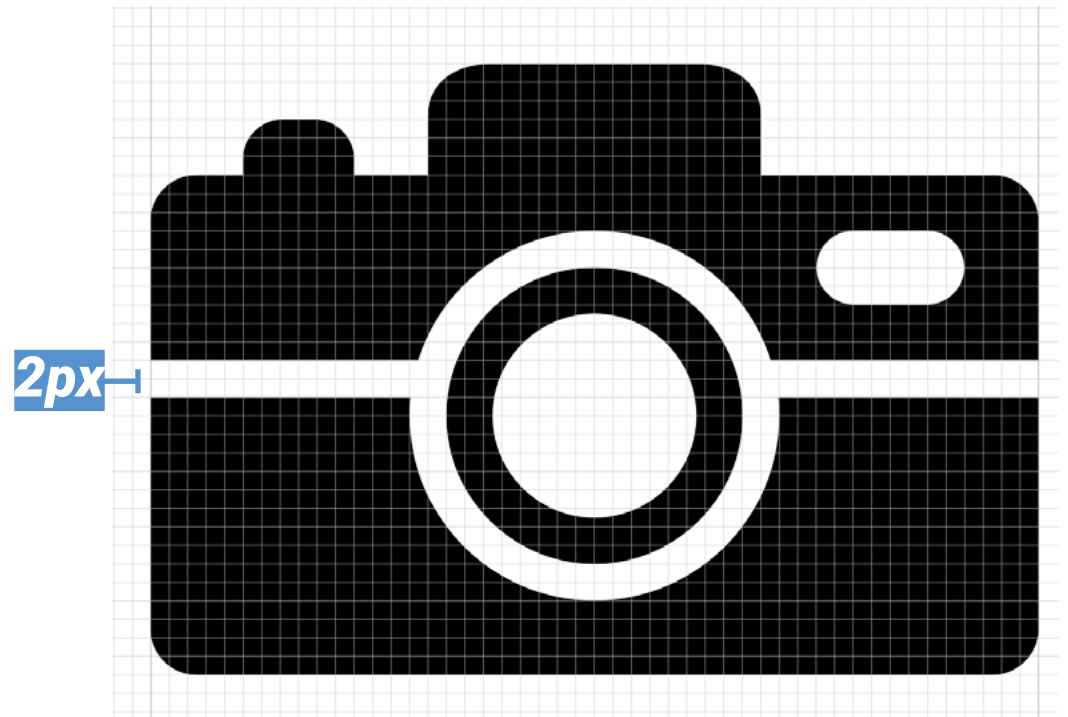
However, keep straight angles for intersections.

Tips and ends should be fully rounded.



## 2PX MINIMUM WHITE SPACE

The space between shapes should be at least 2px (2 squares of the grid).



# NO 3D/PERSPECTIVE

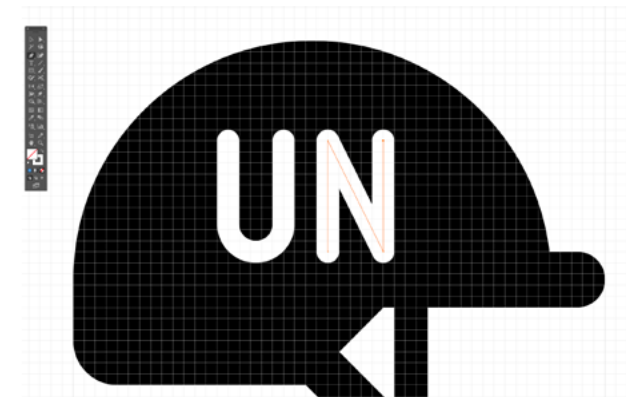
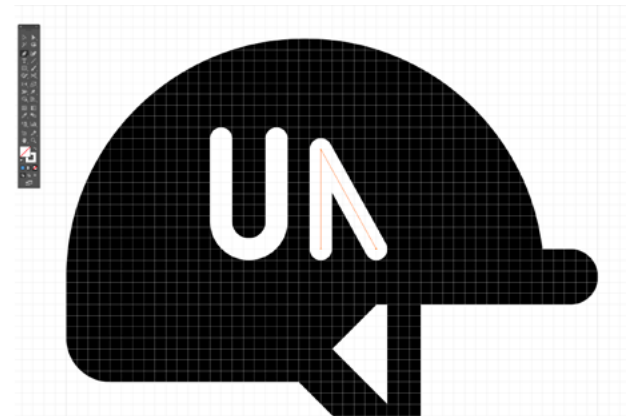
As a general rule, design in 2D (flat), unless it is necessary to understand the concept.



# PIXEL PERFECT FONT

If you need to include text in the icon, such as acronyms, use lines to create your pixel perfect font. You can use the Pen Tool for this.

Your strokes should be at least 2 pixels thick and the corners and caps must be rounded. Leave at least a space of 2 pixels between letters.

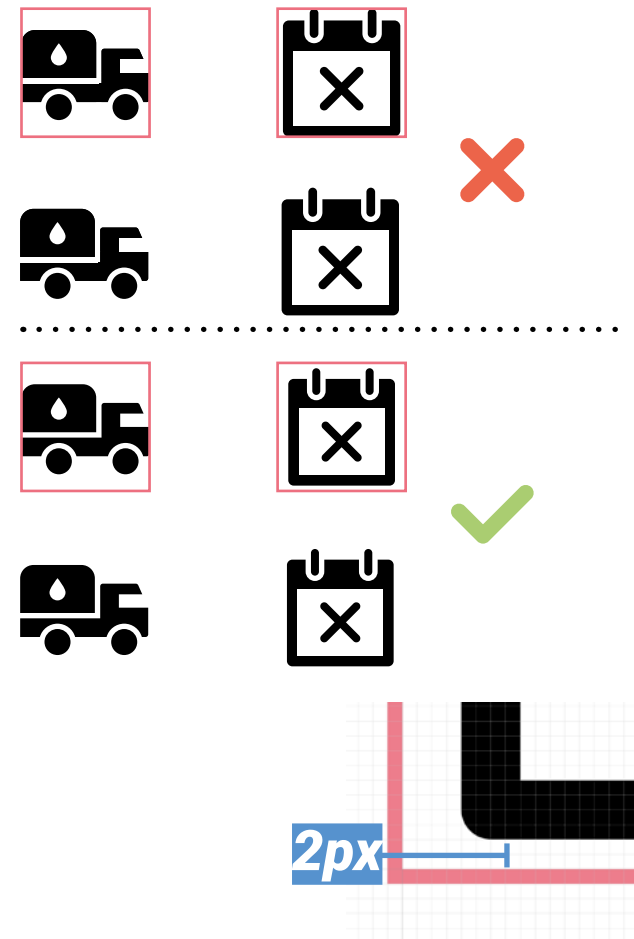


# BALANCE SIZES

When the shape is very close to a square and is filling most of the area, add at least 2 pixels of the inner margin to balance the size with the rest of the icons. Otherwise the icon will look huge next to those with a more rectangular shape.

This is one of the most subjective and difficult parts of the icon-design process. It depends on the 'eye of the designer', but it's very important in order to make icons work properly together.

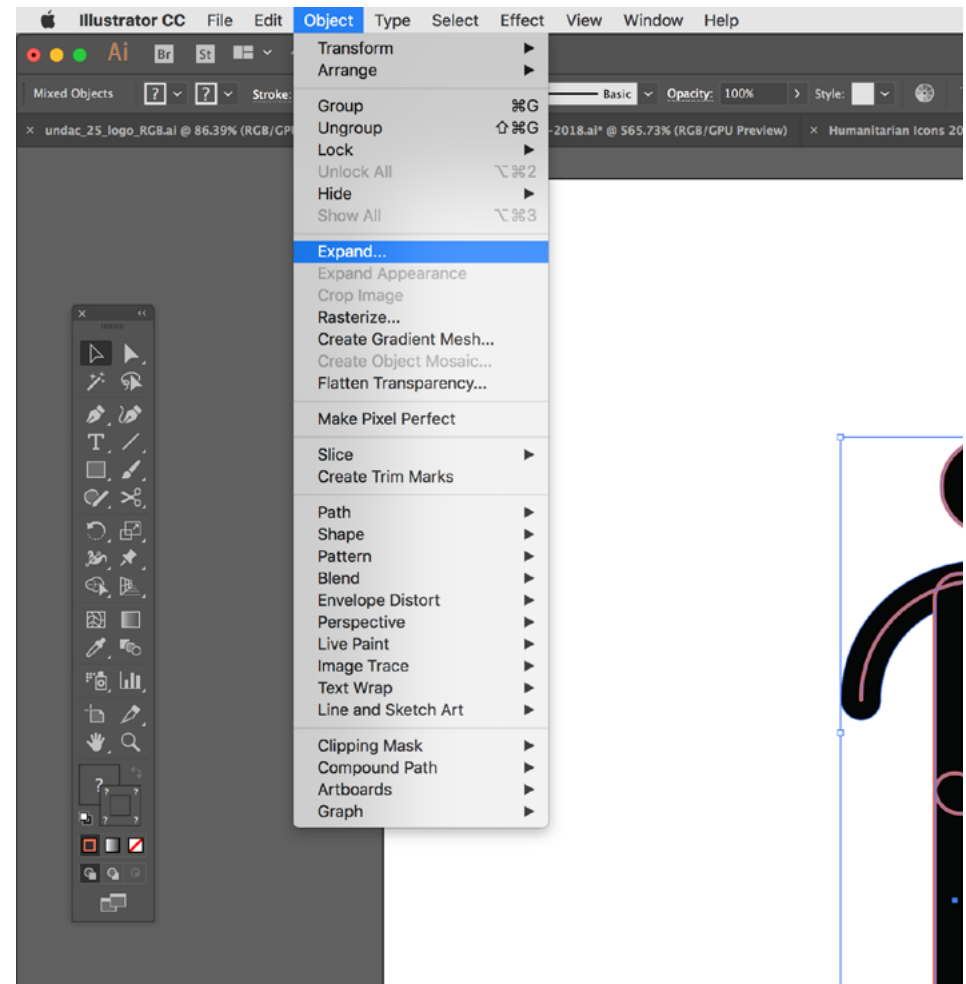
To balance sizes, put several icons with different shapes together. You will see which one needs an inner margin to compensate. Typically about 2-5 pixels inner margin is needed for certain icons.



# EXPAND FOR DISTRIBUTION

Once the icon is finalized, expand it before distribution (Object>Expand).

Always keep a non-expanded version of the icon for future edits, or for reusing some parts for other icons.





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