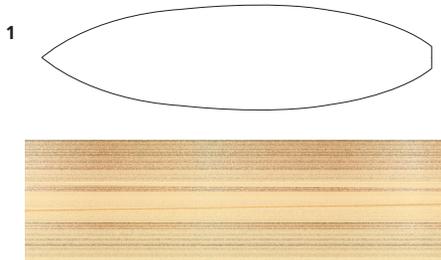


# Simple Masking

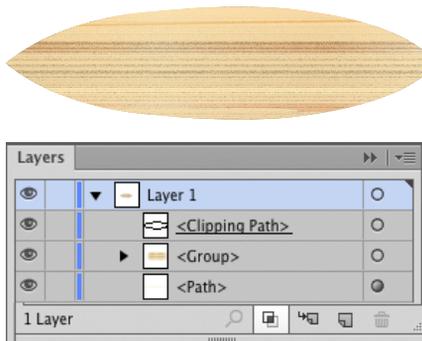
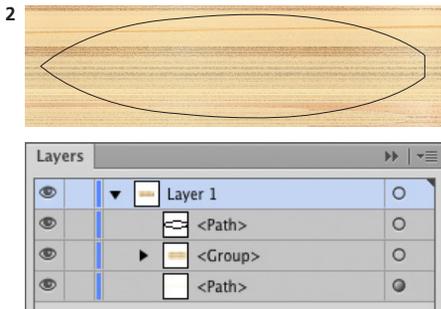
Applying the Basics of Clipping Masks

## Advanced Technique

**Overview:** Create a clipping mask; gather and order objects to clip; use the mask to clip objects; position masked objects, add finishing touches.



The surfboard outline and balsa wood grain created using a variety of Illustrators tools and effects



The stacking order of the two objects used for the surfboard mask, The top most object becoming the <Clipping Path> once the Clipping Mask icon is clicked at the bottom of the Layers panel



This custom surfboard design was created by San Diego based illustrator Aaron McGarry, who finds much of his work inspired by a life tailored to the beach communities and industries of southern California.

**1 Creating the surfboard.** In a new document he used File>Place to place a jpg image of a surfboard, enabled the Template option and clicked Place. He then used the Pen tool to trace the outline of a surfboard which, he would use as a clipping path for his new surfboard design. He then hid the Template layer until his project was finished before deleting it.

To create the balsa wood McGarry used the Rectangle tool to make long planks of wood, using a variety of brown and tan fills. He then used Effect>Textures>Grain on the planks of wood to simulate the wood grain. He adjusted the grain controls for individual planks, he also used Effect>Distort & Transform menu choices to vary the unevenness of the planks. He finally layered planks on top of each other and reduced the opacity, all this was done to create an realistic organic grain finish.

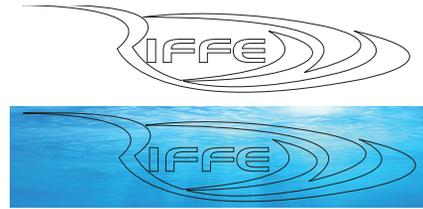
**2 Creating a basic and complex clipping mask.** To create the surfboard mask, he positioned his surfboard outline on top of the wood grain image but on the same layer. He then clicked the Make/Release Clipping Mask button at the bottom of the Layers panel to create the balsa wood surfboard. This clips everything beneath the top most object.

With the surfboard prepared, McGarry then created the logo in a separate document using the Pen tool, Pathfinder panel and text. His completed logo design consisted of two separate paths plus type, all styled initially with

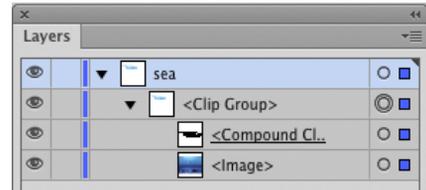
a black stroke and no fill so that his design was visible. Only one path can be used as a clipping path for a mask so he needed to combine the text and the paths of his logo design into either a compound path or compound shape.

Compound paths can only be made using paths so, when working with type, it must be outlined to turn it into a path using **Type>Outline** and then used with other paths to create a compound path using **Object>Compound Path>Make**. To create a compound shape the logo design elements and type can be grouped into a Compound Shape. To do this, chose **Make Compound Shape** from the Pathfinder panel (for this lesson McGarry used the first option because he didn't have the actual font his client used on his home computer so he outlined it to preserve its shape). In his logo document he then chose **File>Place**, selected the underwater jpg image, disabled **Template**, and clicked **OK**. He positioned his logo path on top of his placed image. McGarry then selected both the logo and the image and chose **Object>Clipping Mask>Make** (**⌘-7/Ctrl-7**); this placed all the objects in a clipping group (on one layer). Strokes are automatically removed when a design is used as a clipping path but can be reapplied after the mask is complete.

**3 Assembling the objects and finishing touches.** With both documents open McGarry dragged and dropped his Logo into his surfboard document putting it onto a separate layer above his surfboard. He positioned his logo on top of the surfboard and resized it to fit. To add some finishing details, he used the Paintbrush tool to paint white streaks on the board surface on the surfboard layer so it was clipped too. Finally he made a duplicate of the board outline that he had used as a clipping path and increased the stroke weight. He then, created the light to dark edging around the board using a wood gradient from the Gradient Library and the Gradient panel. In the Gradient panel he clicked the first Stroke box Apply gradient within stroke and then he adjusted the angle in the field below so that the lightest part of the edging was to the top left.



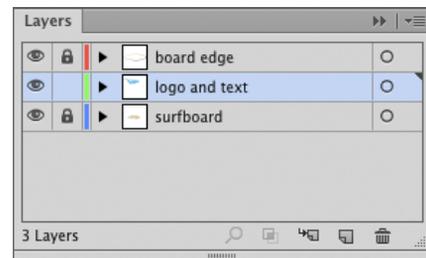
Selecting both logo and image and using **Object>Clipping Mask>Make** to create the mask



The Layers panel showing the objects **<Clip Group>** after applying the clipping mask, the logo (**<Compound Cling Path>**) is above the underwater image (**<Image>**)



The surfboard outline after applying a wood gradient to the edging path



The layers order after completing the project