

Corel Concepts

Putting Things in Perspective

Here we continue our 'shape-up' program with a look at the Perspective Effect.

What Is Perspective?

Perspective refers to the phenomenon where an object appears to shrink as it moves off to the horizon. In **Figure 1**, I've created the 'classic' example-railroad tracks that seem to disappear into the sunset. In **Figure 2**, I show perspective in two planes: the wall has a perspective in the vertical plane while the sidewalk has a perspective in the horizontal plane. Note that in the vertical perspective, the vertical lines are maintained while in the horizontal perspective, the horizontal lines are maintained.

You'll see that the Perspective Effect is very similar to the Envelope in its application. There are two main differences:

- The Perspective Effect is applied through a menu, whereas Envelopes are applied with the Interactive Envelope tool. However, once the Perspective Effect is invoked, you will work interactively onscreen. For some reason, Corel has not converted this effect to an interactive version.
- The reshaping of the Perspective Effect is such that it creates a vanishing point into which the object appears to disappear.

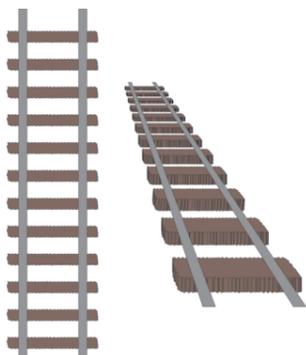


Figure 1

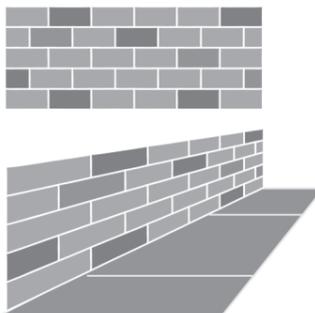


Figure 2

Applying a perspective

There are few things in CorelDRAW that are simpler. Open up your CorelDRAW and I'll take you through an exercise.

1) On a new screen, using the Text tool, type in the word 'TEXT'. Set it in an available heavy font such as Eras Blk BT or Futura XBlk BT at 100 pt.

2) Choose **EFFECTS/Add Perspective**. A dashed grid (similar to an Envelope) with control nodes appear on the text. Not as obvious, the Shape tool becomes selected. (**Figure 3**)



Figure 3

1) Now just play a bit. Drag the lower left node straight down. (What key would you use to pull it straight down? The **Ctrl** key, of course.) Release the mouse. You should note two things:

- The text reforms to appear as if it's coming out of the page.
- As you pull down the left node, a 'vanishing point' (as an X) appears on the right. The vanishing point represents the point where all the perspective horizons would meet. (**Figure 4**)



Figure 4

1) Now drag the vanishing point to a different location. Note that you can use the vanishing point or control nodes to edit the perspective. Distort the object as much as you want until you get a feel for it.

A few observations:

- Using the **Ctrl** key on any node allows you to introduce a pure horizontal or vertical perspective (more on this in the next section).
- When you use the nodes, you can distort the text freely in any direction, essentially producing a mixed plane per-

spective. This will yield a warped object. (**Figure 5**). Note that the true vertical lines are lost (compare this to Figure 4).



Figure 5

- When you move the vanishing point, you control two nodes simultaneously.

1) Undo the perspective by choosing **EFFECTS/Clear Perspective**.

Modifier keys

As usual, the **Shift** and **Ctrl** keys have an effect. As you have already seen, by itself the **Ctrl** key plays its usual role. It constrains a control node or vanishing point to either the horizontal or vertical. By itself, the **Shift** key has no effect, but when used with the **Ctrl** key it imposes a symmetry with its partner vertical or horizontal node-that is, two nodes move away or toward or away from each other.

Perspective on more than one object

Check out **Figure 6**. Be aware that you will never see this in CorelDRAW because you can only apply a perspective on one object at a time. In Figure 6, there are three objects shown with their control nodes and vanishing points revealed simultaneously. I did this to demonstrate the application of perspectives on more than one object. Note also a series of guidelines in Figure 6. Guidelines provide a valuable tool for matching perspective effects.

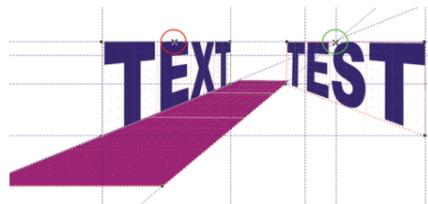


Figure 6

Figure 6 shows two text objects with a vertical perspective and a third rectangular object with a horizontal perspective. Additionally, I have highlighted the vanishing points.

Scenario 1: Matching horizontal and vertical perspectives. To give a sense that the rectangle and sidewalk are coming from the same point, they should share a common location for their vanishing points. The green circle in Figure 6 actually represents two vanishing points superimposed. Sharing a common vanishing point is easily accomplished. After applying a perspective on one object (usually the more critical one, in this case the text), locate a horizontal and vertical guideline which cross at the vanishing point. Then, simply turn snap to guidelines on by choosing **VIEW/Snap** to guidelines and drag the vanishing point on the other object to the same point.

Scenario 2: Matching two vertical or two horizontal perspectives.

This is a little trickier, although after a detailed description, I will give you a shortcut. The vanishing point highlighted by the green circle is for TEXT while the red circle is the vanishing point for TEST. Furthermore, all of the reflecting nodes match their positions. So...

1) Locate the vertical and horizontal guidelines at each control node. This takes a bit of time.

2) Drag the perspective control handles on each object to the guideline intersections as shown in Figure 6.

A Handy Shortcut

Perform the following exercise to learn an easy way to accomplish the same thing.

1) Place two separate blocks of text on your page, for example TEXT and TEST, and set them in a nice heavy font as we did in an earlier exercise.

2) On the first block of text, apply a vertical perspective.

3) Now here's the trick: Horizontally mirror the second block of text. You can do this in a number of ways.

- While selected, choose the horizontal mirror button from the Property Bar.

- Or using the Pick tool, with the **Ctrl** key held, simply drag a side handle across its opposite side partner to 100% mirror.

1) With the second block of text selected, choose **EFFECTS/Copy Effect>Perspective From**. When the arrow appears, click on the first block of text. This copies the applied perspective from one object to the other.

2) Horizontally mirror the second block of text again to return it to its original orientation.

3) Align the objects appropriately.

I hope this gives you a clear perspective on how the Perspective Effect works!

Please send your comments and questions to questions@retlabgraphics.com. Pradhan Balter has taught CorelDRAW since it was invented. He lectures frequently at the regional and national ARA shows. His training manuals are available through ARA at www.ara.org/products.

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