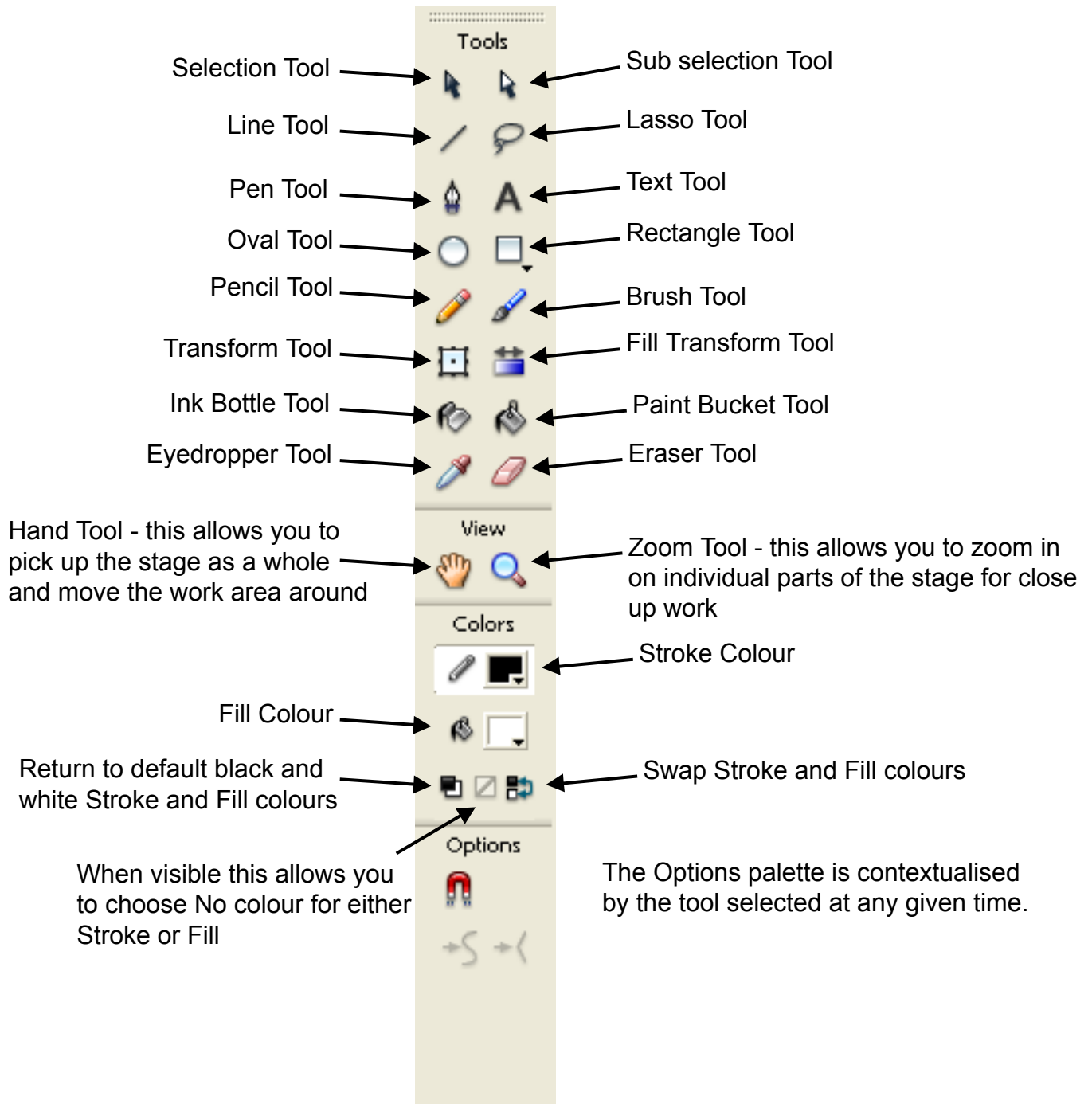
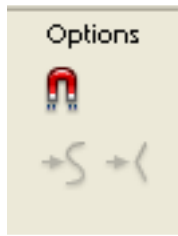
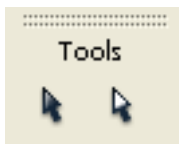


## Introduction to Flash - Drawing and the Tools

Use this as a guide to the tools available as the video tutorial in this section will give you more information about their functionality. The main tool bar although visually quite simplistic is a very effective Vector drawing kit. The main role of Flash is to create 2D animation and the drawing tools reflect this by offering only linear imaging capabilities, you can compare the varying techniques in Fireworks. First lets look at the tool bar as a whole and then we can break each one down to its component parts.

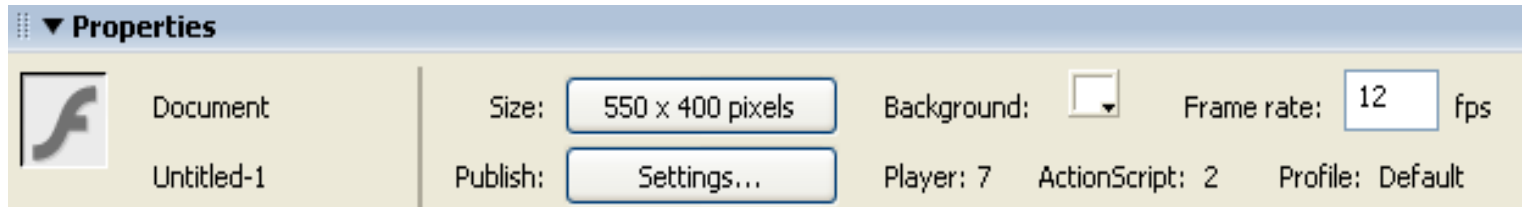


The most important tool is the Selection tool which allows you to move objects around and create animation quickly and skillfully the rest combine to create complex and detailed layout or graphics.



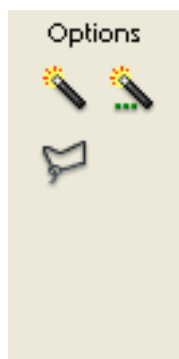
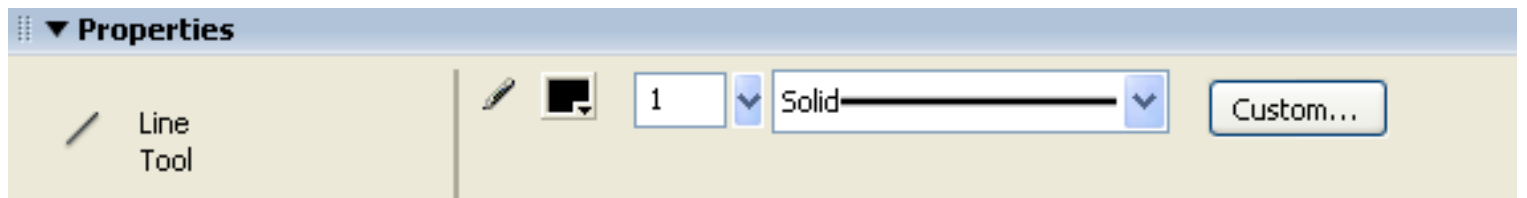
Each tool on selection offers number of Options and Properties bar extras. The Selection and Sub selection tools offer a limited but important selection. By selecting the Black arrow or Selection tool you can pick up and move objects around on the stage but you can also align and lock objects with the Magnet shown in the Options palette.

The Sub selection has no further options other than the fact that it allows the selection of complex shapes on the stage.

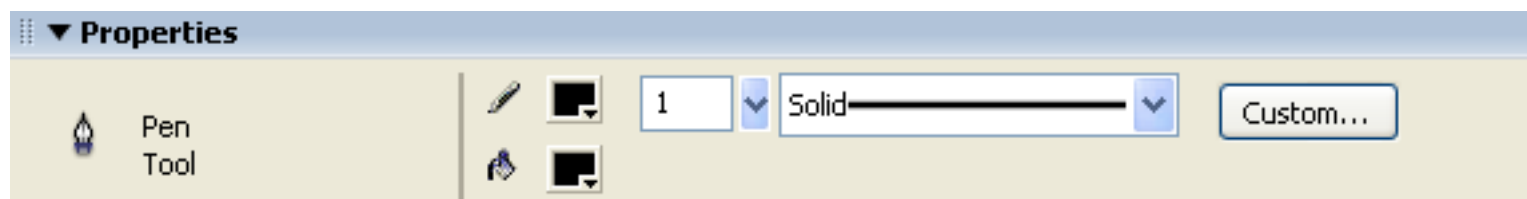


Either of these two tools selected also allows access to the Stage Properties bar at the bottom of the screen. This is the only opportunity you will get to set the Dimensions or Size of the Stage or working area, the background colour can be chosen from the 256 web safe colour palette and the Frame rate settings can also be altered here. Please see the Timeline tutorial for more information on this.

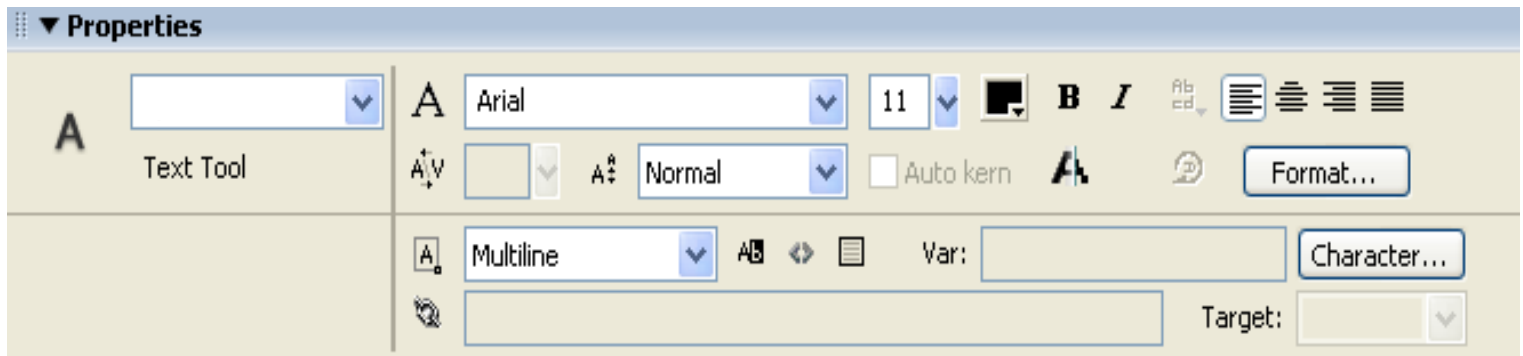
The line tool is the next down the bar with extra options. The Options palette again offers the Magnet as the Selection tool did but the Properties bar is contextualised this time for the drawing capabilities the line tool offers. As you can see you can make choices on the colour of the line, thickness, up to 10 pixels thick, and style from the drop down menu. Once your selection has been made click and drag to create a line on the Stage.



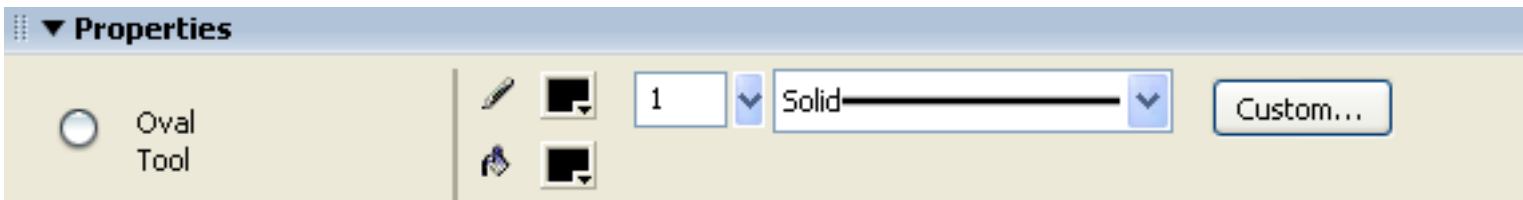
The Lasso tool is a selection tool, click, hold and drag around an object to pick it up. The Lasso tool has a number of extra selection tools stored in the Options palette, if you have completed the Fireworks training then some may be familiar. The top two tools are variants to the Magic wand in Fireworks allowing you to grab similar colours for example. The angled lasso or Polygon Lasso allows you to create multi point pick up tool which works by a series of clicks to form a shape to pick up, remember to return to the first point made to end the selection area.



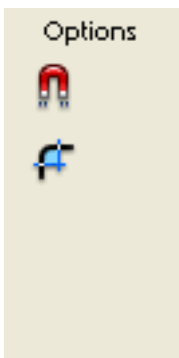
The Pen tool has no extra options but the Properties bar is contextualised when selected. The Pen tool allows you to create multi point shapes and therefore the Properties bar allows you to chose Line or Stroke colour, Fill colour and line style. To use the tool click and move, click again and repeat until the shape is formed.



The Text tool has no extra options but the Properties bar is contextualised to reveal a simple text editing palette. Use as you would the Properties bar in Dreamweaver. To start typing simply click to select a point on the stage to type and begin typing. Also be aware of a spell checker in the File menu at the top of the screen as well Text > Check Spelling...

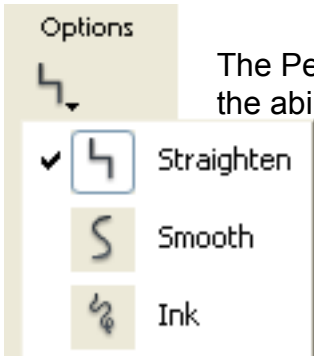
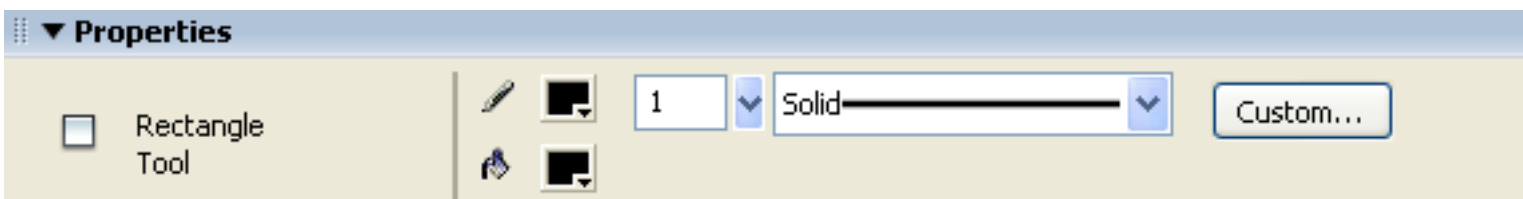


The Oval tool again has a limited set of extra options, only the magnet again, but the Properties bar allows you to select the Line or Stroke colour and Style as well as the Fill for the shape you are about to create. To draw an oval click and drag to draw or hold Shift, click and drag to create a perfect circle every time.



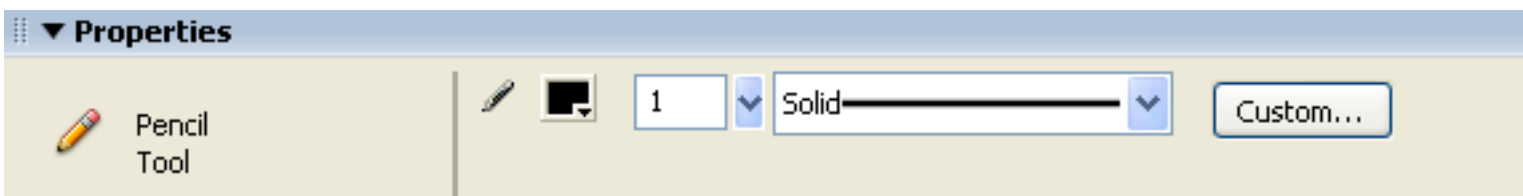
The Rectangle tool has a little more to offer. The options palette has a new tool. The Bevel edge option allows you to create what is sometimes referred to as the Lozenge shape or soft cornered square. To activate click the tool and enter a number to indicate the curve in the box which opens, click Ok and click and drag in the same manner as the Oval tool to draw a soft or otherwise edged rectangle, holding the Shift key down produces a perfect square as well.

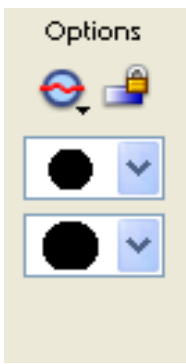
The Properties bar is the same as it was for the Oval tool.



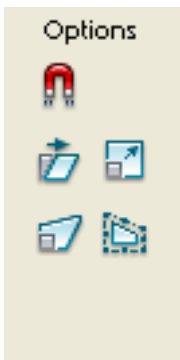
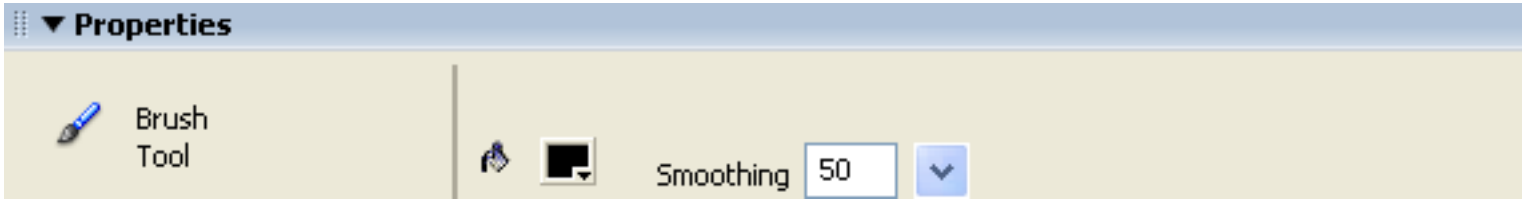
The Pencil tool can get quite fancy if you have the right equipment. The Options palette offers the ability to link in a drawing tablet or a steady mouse hand. By selecting the Ink option you can draw free hand on the Stage and create some really nice animation this way. Straighten with tighten your softly drawn lines and Smooth will make hard edged lines flow with soft bends.

The Properties bar is the same as the Line tool.



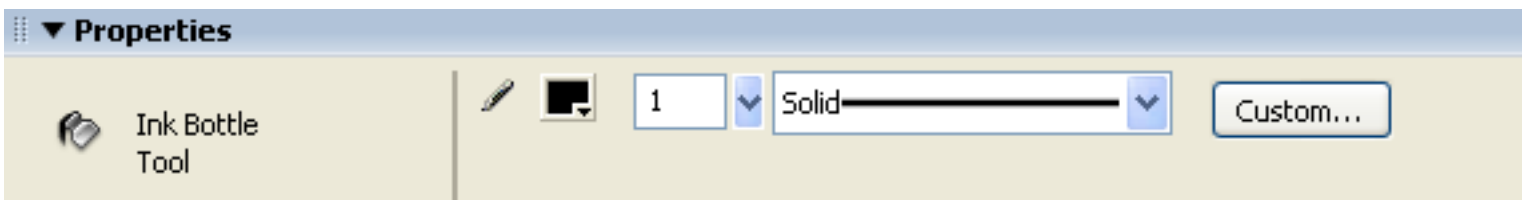


The Brush tool is for all purpose free hand painting but it has some nice free hand styles you can select in the Options palette. The first drop down menu offers a choice of brush width and the second drop down menu allows you to change the brush type from block to line and calligraphic styles. The Properties bar contextualises offering colour choices and a smoothing option to soften the edges of the painted elements as you click and drag.

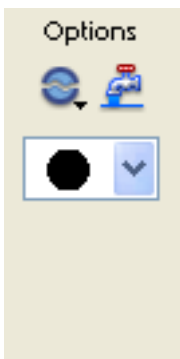
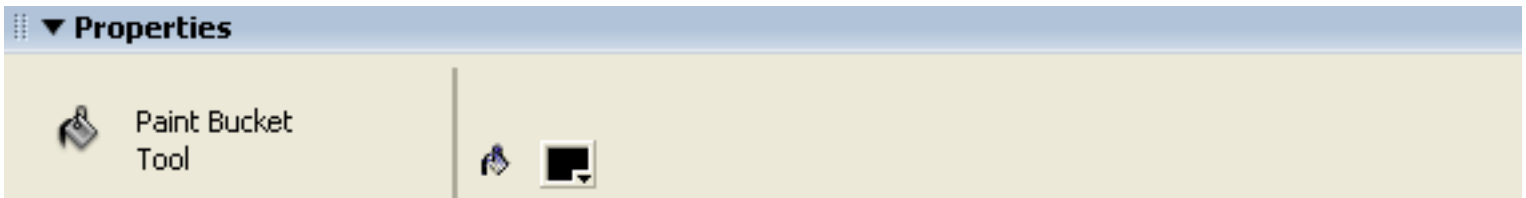


The Transform tool is not a drawing tool as such, but more of a selection tool used to resize and skew existing objects you have drawn or imported. The extra options available allow you to skew, enlarge, reduce and slice any object you click on with the transform tool selected.

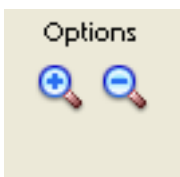
The Ink Bottle tool has no extra options but does have a contextualised Properties bar shown below, allowing you to re-colour, change thickness of, or re-style any Line already on Stage. To do this choose your styles etc and then click over any lines on stage to make a change.



The Paint Bucket tool works is exactly the same way as the Ink Bottle allowing you to re-colour at a click any object on the Stage. The only difference here is that you can only change the Fill colour.



The Eraser tool is quite simple and allows you to erase objects drawn on screen by clicking and dragging over them with the mouse however, you can customise the eraser tip with the drop down menu given in the Options palette.



The Zoom tool offers options to Zoom in and Out but Shift "+" and Shift "-" will do the same job if you want to use the short cut keys.