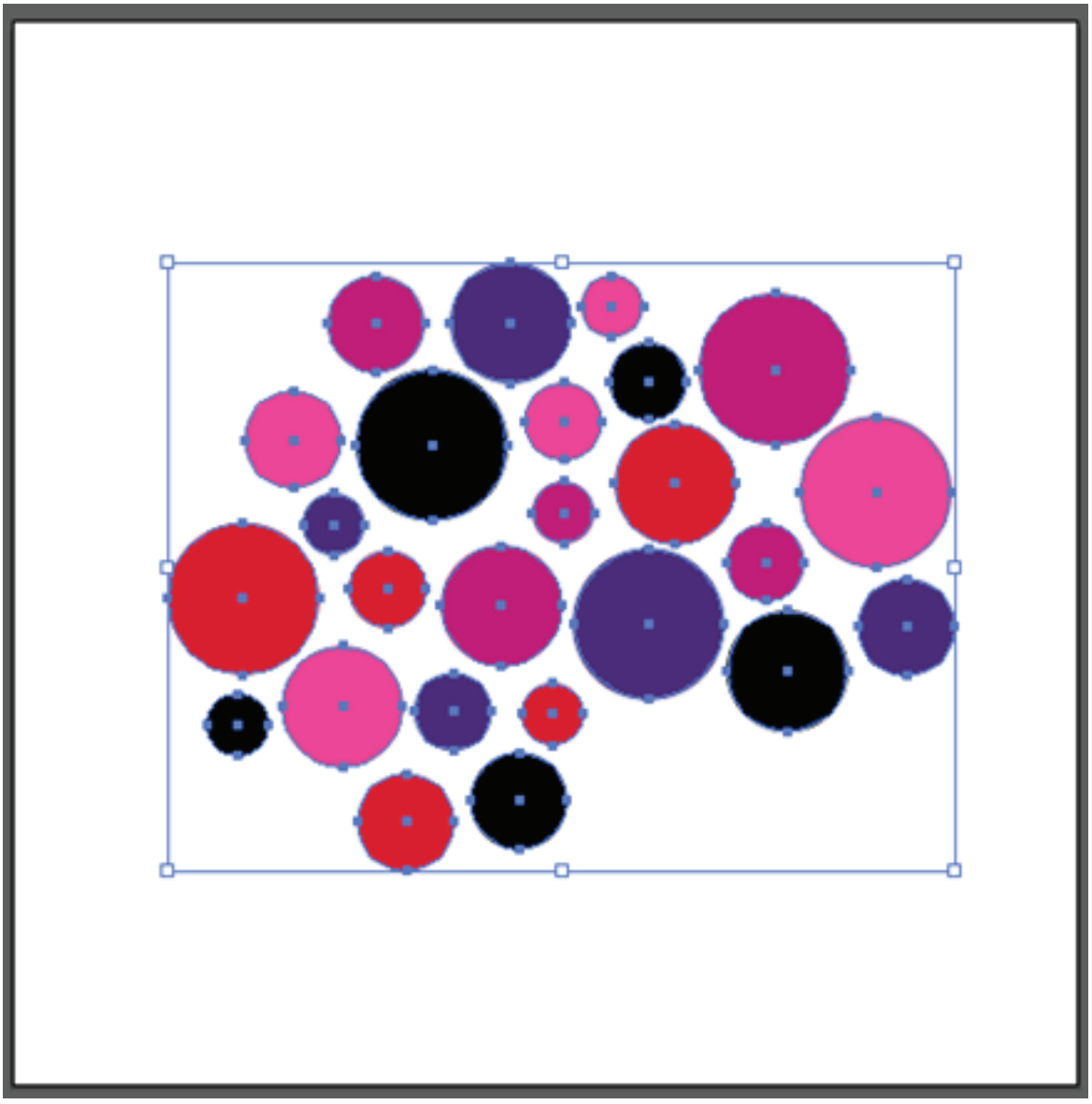
FULL DROP/SQUARE REPEAT IN ILLUSTRATOR

Either open up an existing illustrator file or begin by developing your vector image that you desire to repeat. I have started with a basic spot, varying the size and colour to add variety and this will form the base of the repeat.



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Set up your art board to your desired repeat size. This depends on your end product, but to start off with, work with squares to help with calculations. I have set up my repeat to be 32 x 32 cm. For interested sake, this is a standard*rotary* repeat set up. Place your initial artwork to the top left corner of the art board, letting it hang over the edge.

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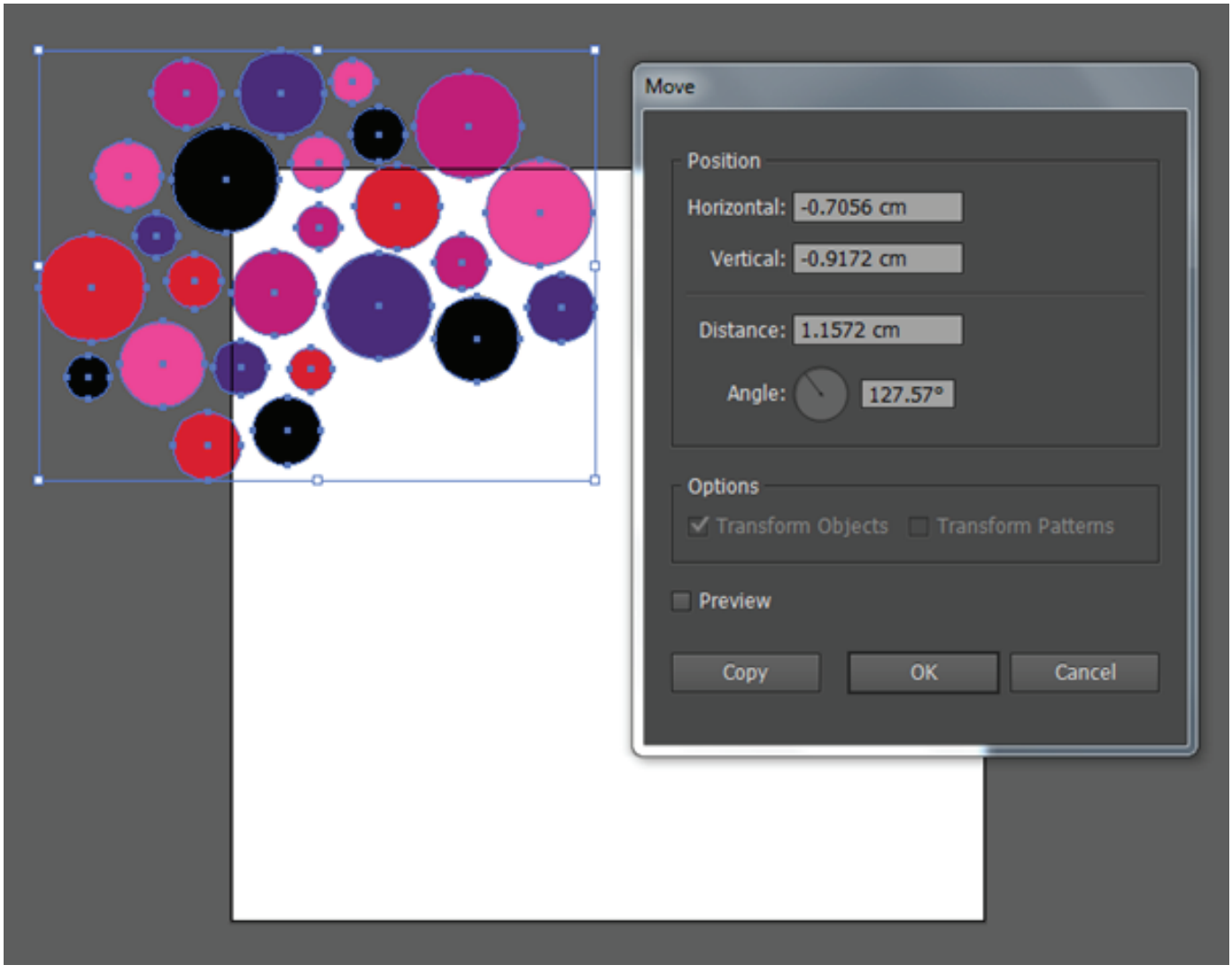
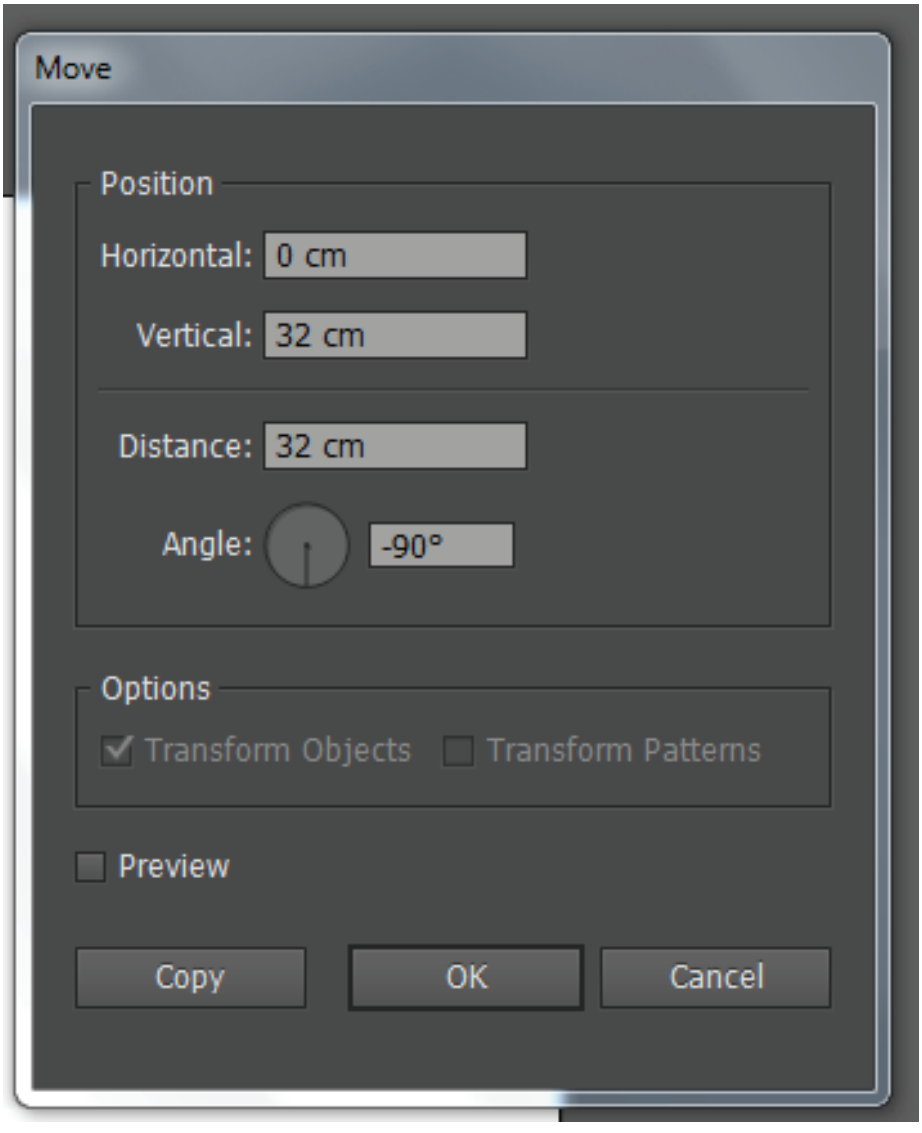
Select all objects (sometimes helpful to group them so you don't miss any when duplicating). Double click on the black selection tool in the tools panel and a dialogue box will appear.



This is how you can move objects an exact amount i.e. the repeat size and know that all objects within that repeat will align perfectly.

First duplicate the selected objects the **repeat size down** or **vertically.** My repeat is 32 cm, so they are moved 32 cm vertically. Make sure the horizontal value is 0. Click COPY.



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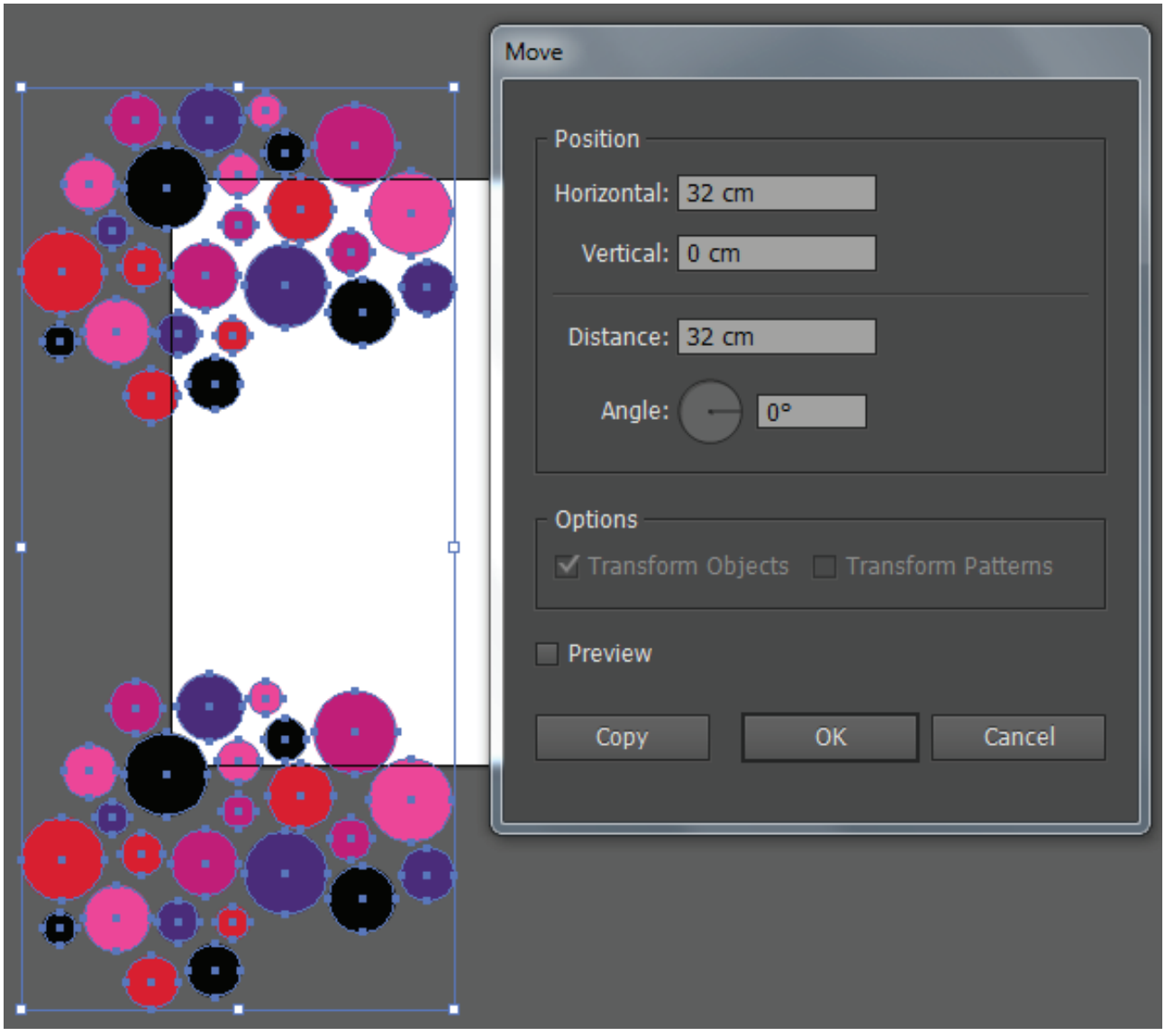
Now repeat horizontally by selecting both groups of objects along the left side. When in the move dialogue box make sure the **horizontal value** is the repeat size and the vertical value is 0. Click COPY.



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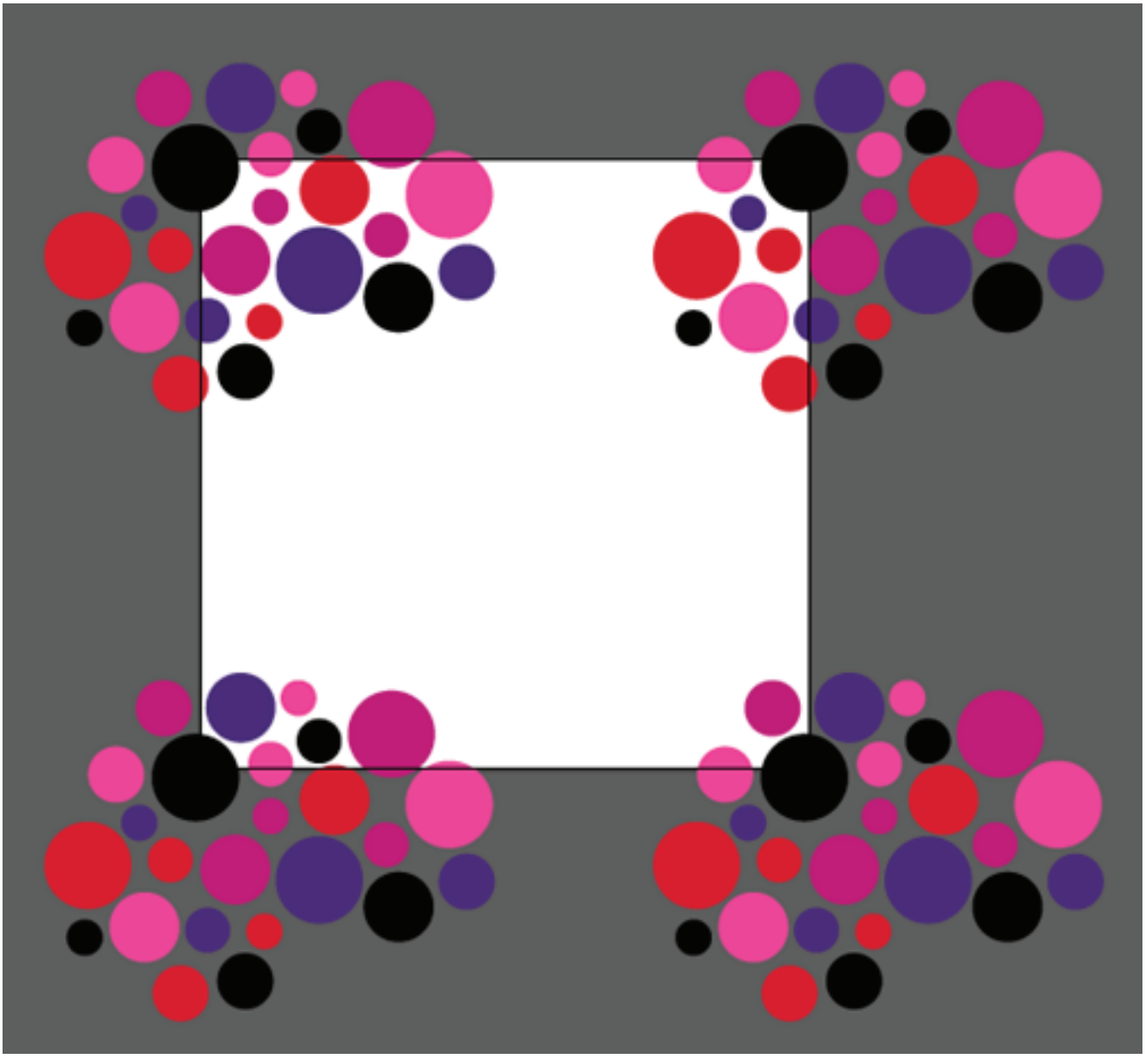

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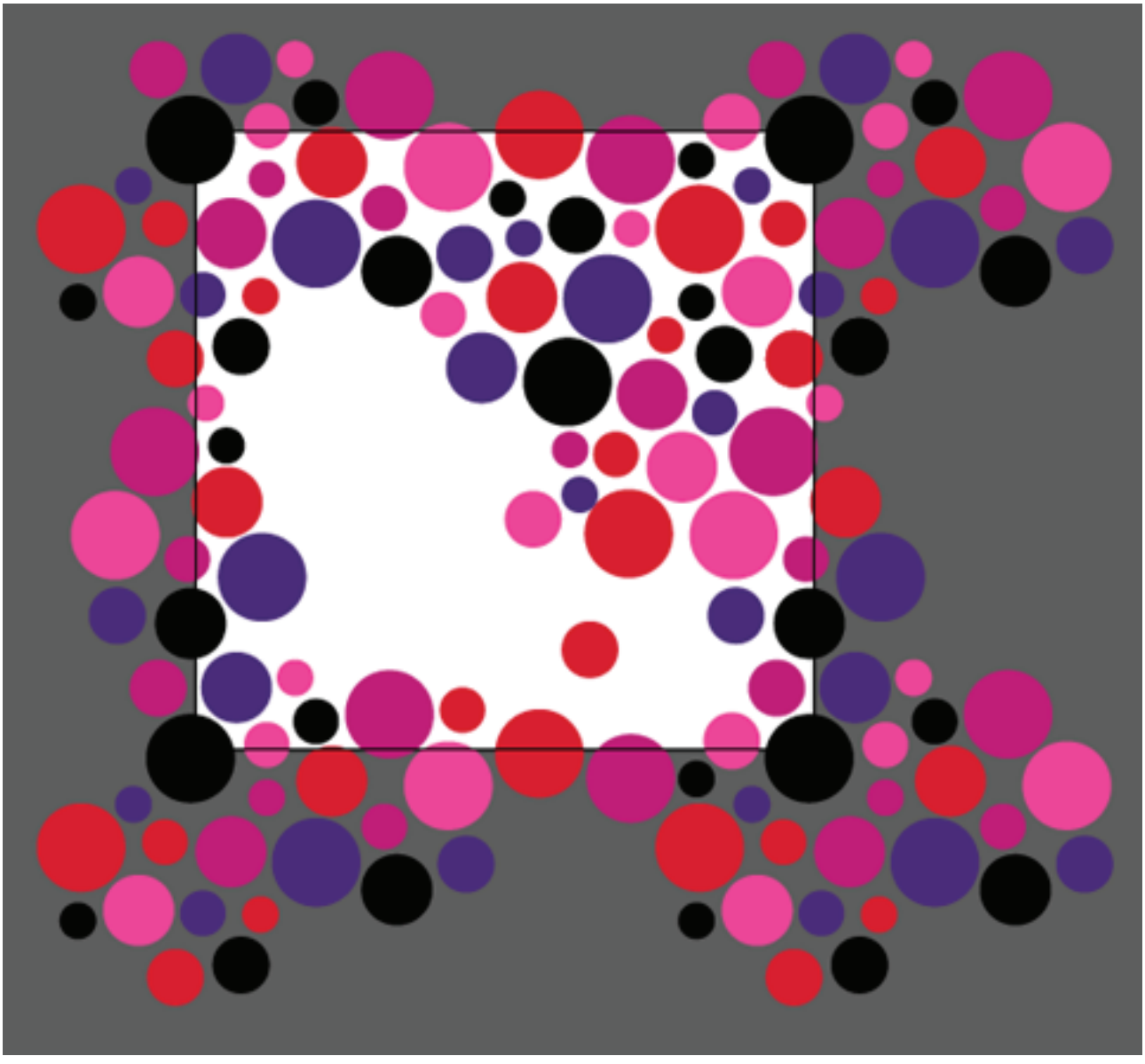
Now is the time to fill in the blank space in the middle with additional objects. Tip: Lock the three extra sides of the repeat or put them on a separate locked layer so they can be easily deleted in a following step. This may require some more advance knowledge of illustrator, but don't let this deter you if you are knew, it could be helpful in mastering the program! The level of difficulty here will greatly depend on the style and type of original artwork you are using and will call into play several design elements and principles such as space, balance and unity. Watch out for anything that forms a definite line or **track mark** through your design. You may need to shift or adjust parts of your original artwork to make the repeat work, in which case is can be a good idea to work in layers (with a copy of the original locked) in case you want to jump back to the beginning.

Work towards filling in the edges, duplicating them down/across to the repeat edges, till all you have is the middle to fill.



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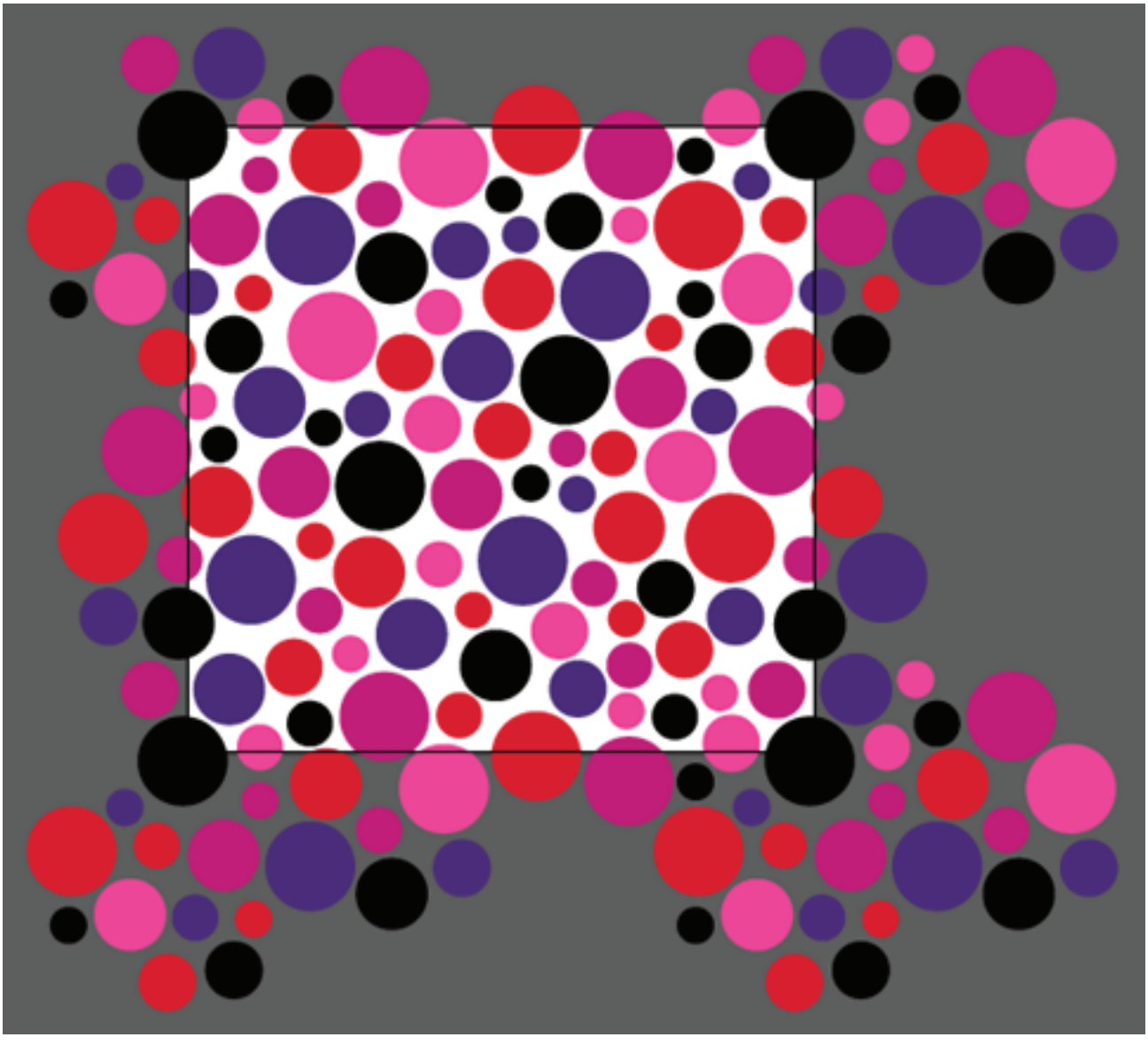
Continue until you are happy with the flow and feel of the design.



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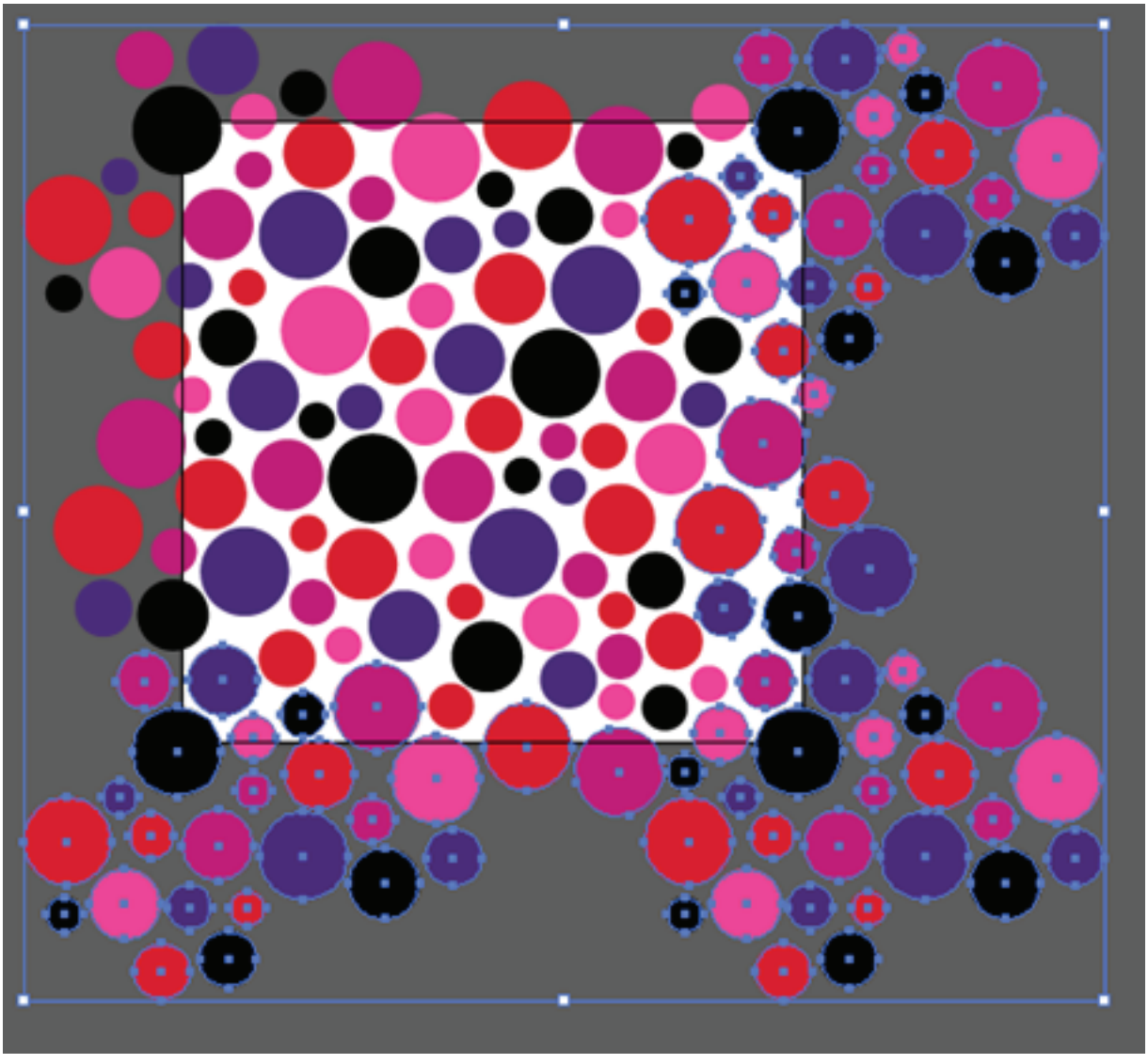
Now delete the three extra sides that were locked in step 6. Then repeat the duplicating sequence with all the added areas of the design. This will help you check anything that may have doubled up or just doesn't look right in the repeat.



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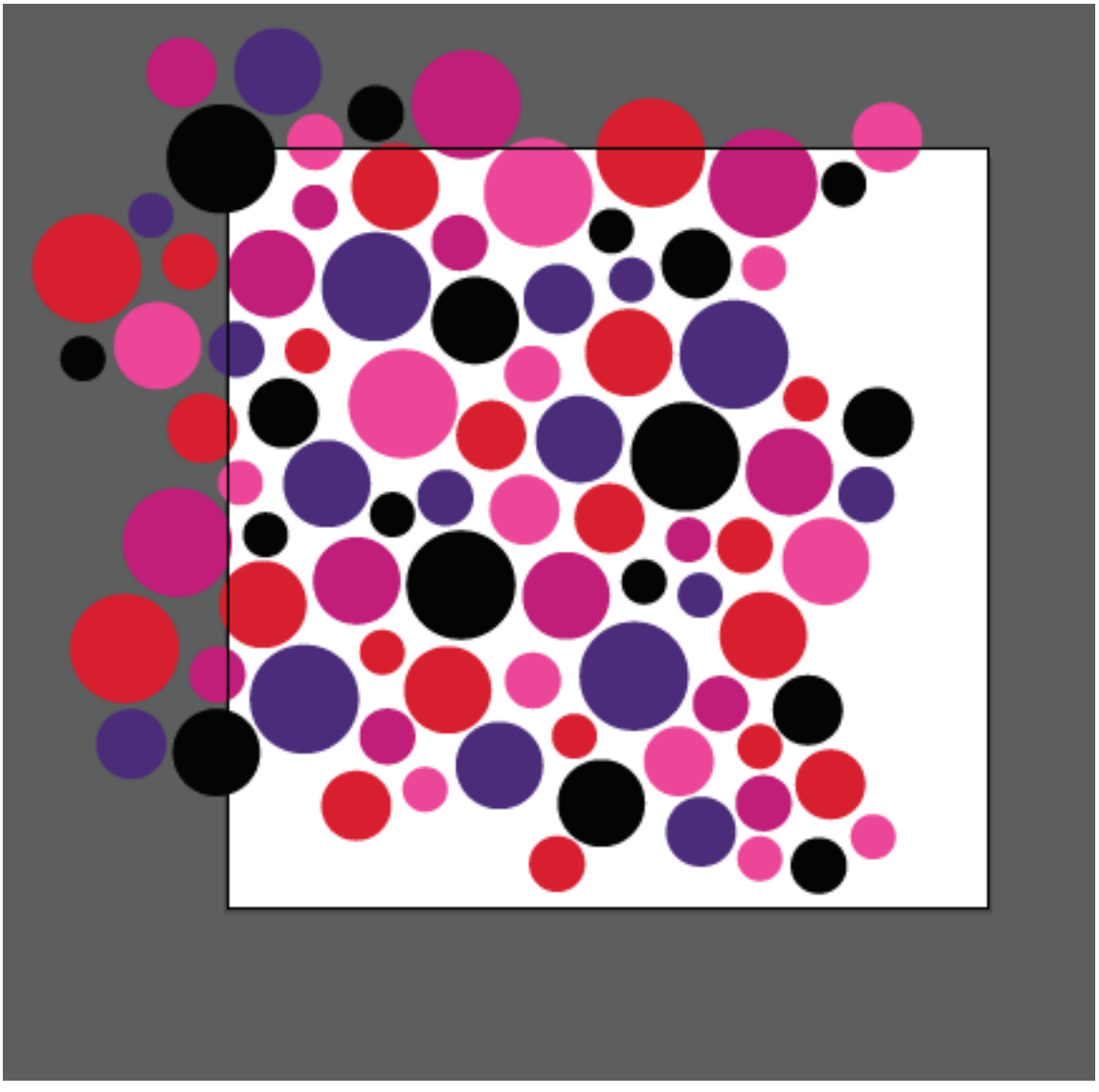

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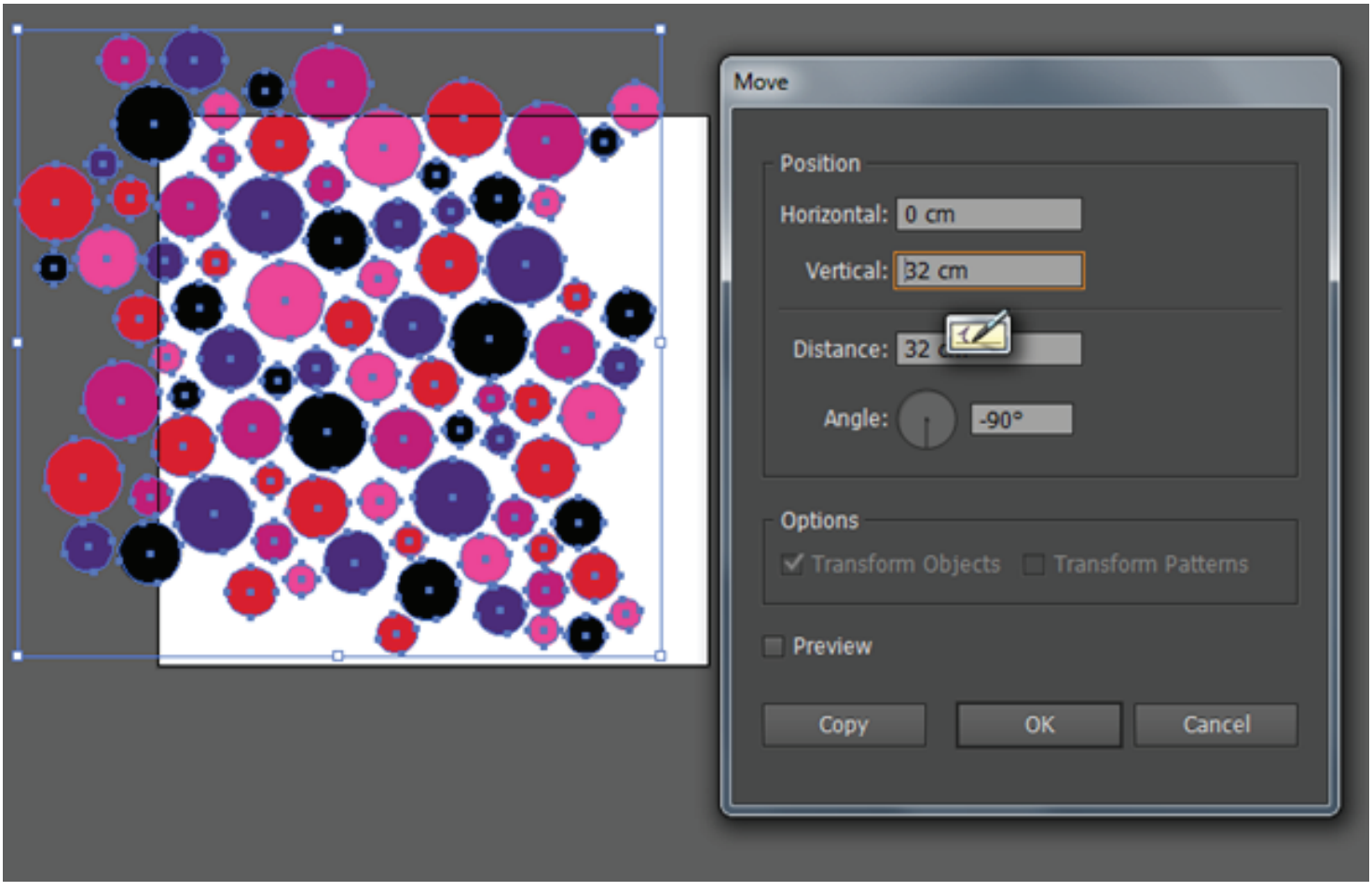

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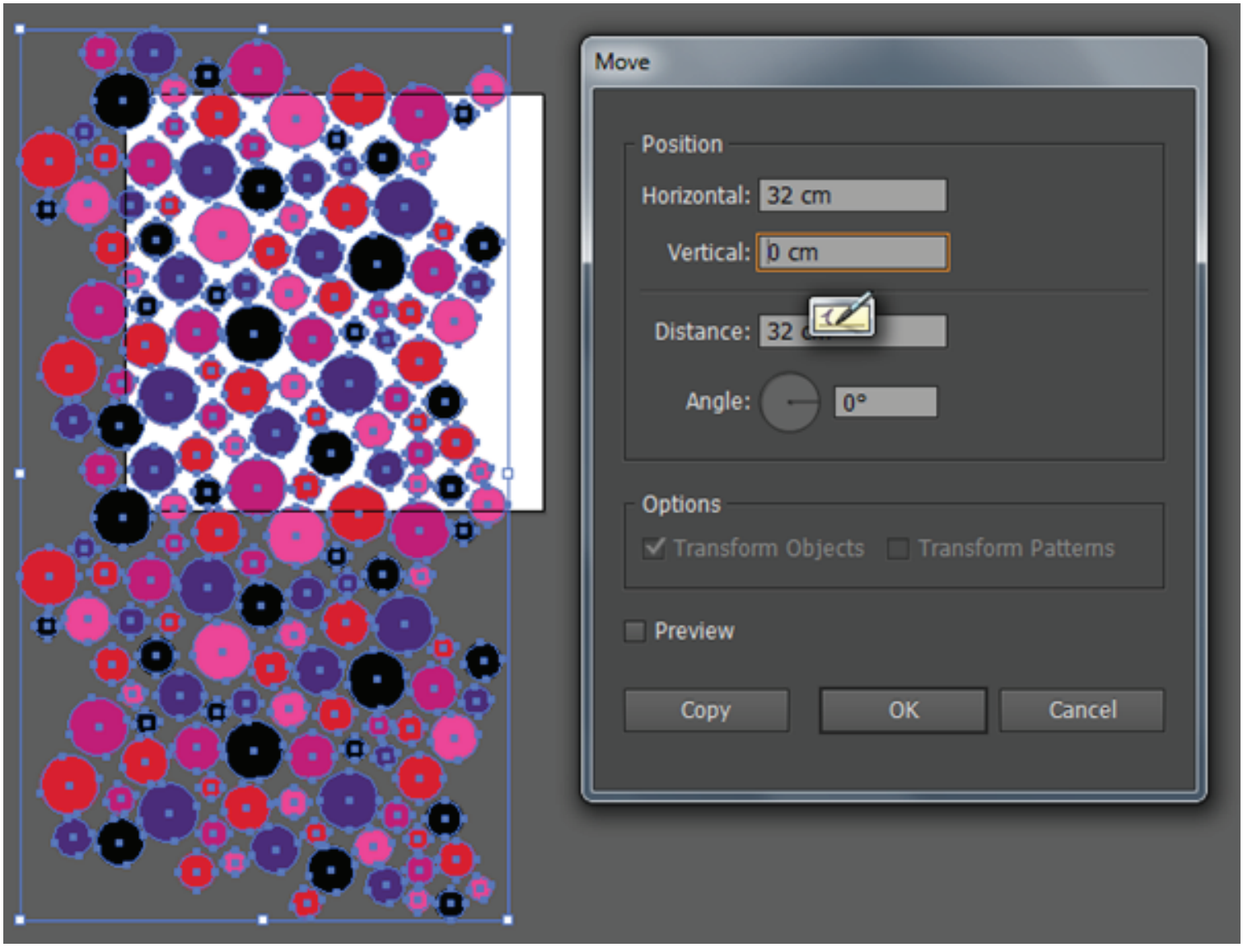

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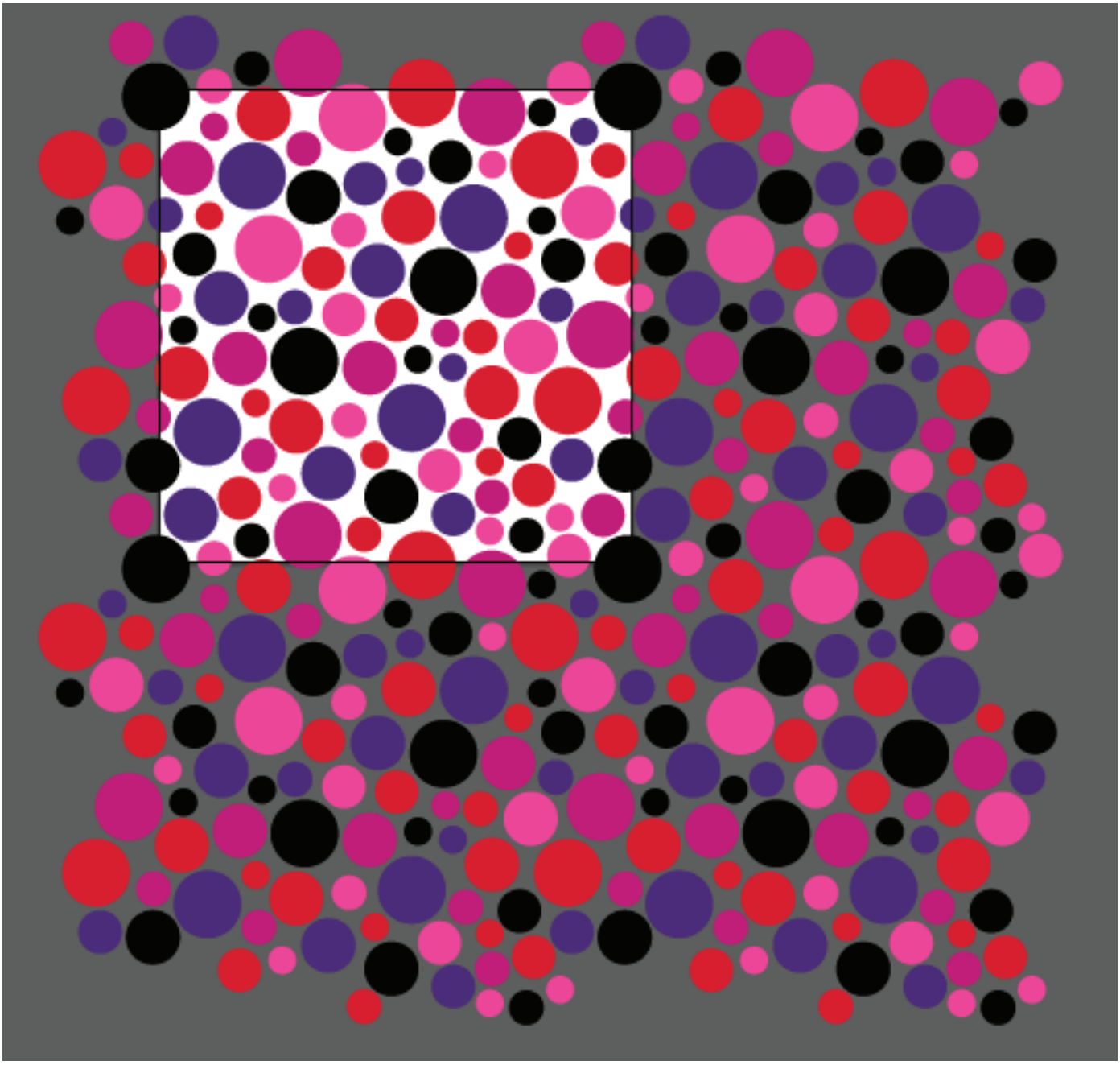

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When you are satisfied with your repeat tile, you can set it up for printing. N.B. the following is relevant for digital printing only. To set this up follow screen printing would involve a few more steps. Position two repeat tiles (vertically) so they hang over the left side of the art board. Increase the artwork **WIDTH** to the width of the fabric (in this case 147cm), keep the **height** of the art board as the repeat size.

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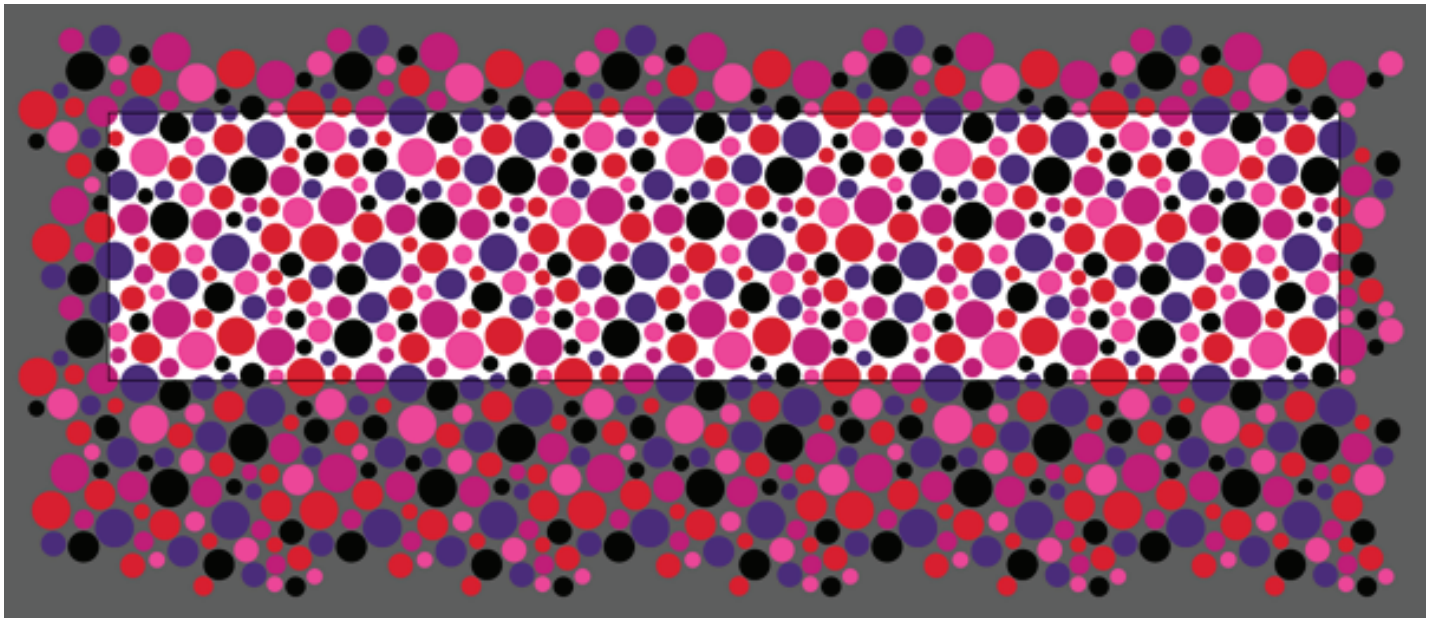
Duplicate the selected objects across the width of the art board so it is covered completely. Tip: Once you have used the move tool to move the exact repeat size and clicked **copy**, ctrl D to duplicate the exact last action.



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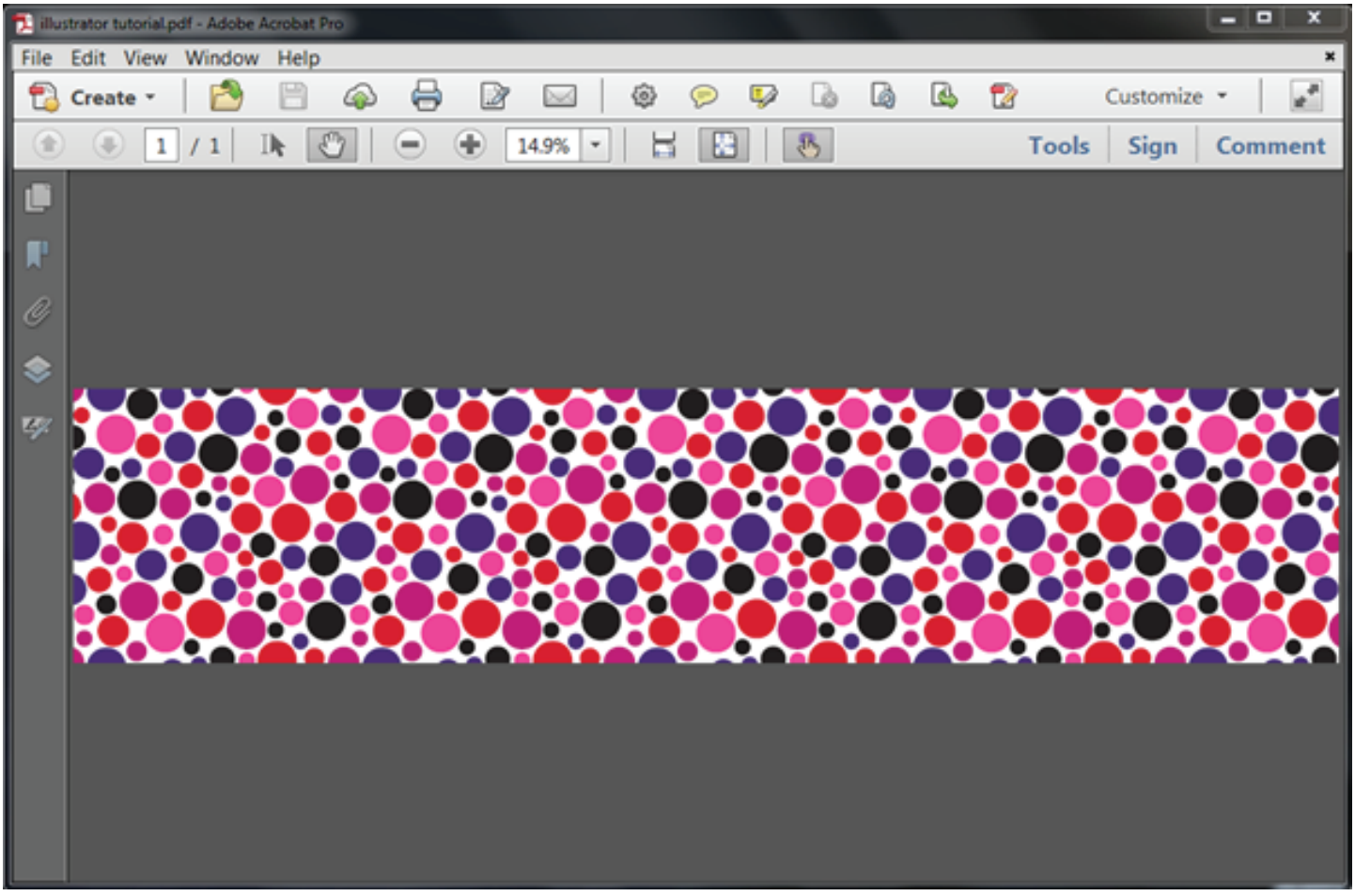
Save As a PDF. Even though there are objects hanging off the edge of the art board, because they have been moved the exact repeat size, they will all meet up when printed seamlessly. This is now your Full Width Repeat Tile which repeats top and bottom.



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