

# SOLO/CREATE Tips of the Day

July 9, 2022

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## Tip of the Day - 12/3/21: HTV, vinyl, and copy paper need only the tiniest tip of the blade showing

– about half the thickness of a credit card. Too much blade leads to tearing of the material, lifting off of small cut shapes, and buckling of the material when cutting matless.



## Tip of the Day – 12/4/21: 3 Important Don'ts

1. Don't ever move the blade carriage with your hand when the SOLO is powered on. Use the arrow keys on the Control Panel, instead.
2. Don't pop up the pinch wheel lever in the back. Use your hand to move it up and down with control.
3. Don't use a different power adapter with your SOLO (it can fry the mainboard if the specs are wrong). In fact, you should label your SOLO power adapter just to make sure:

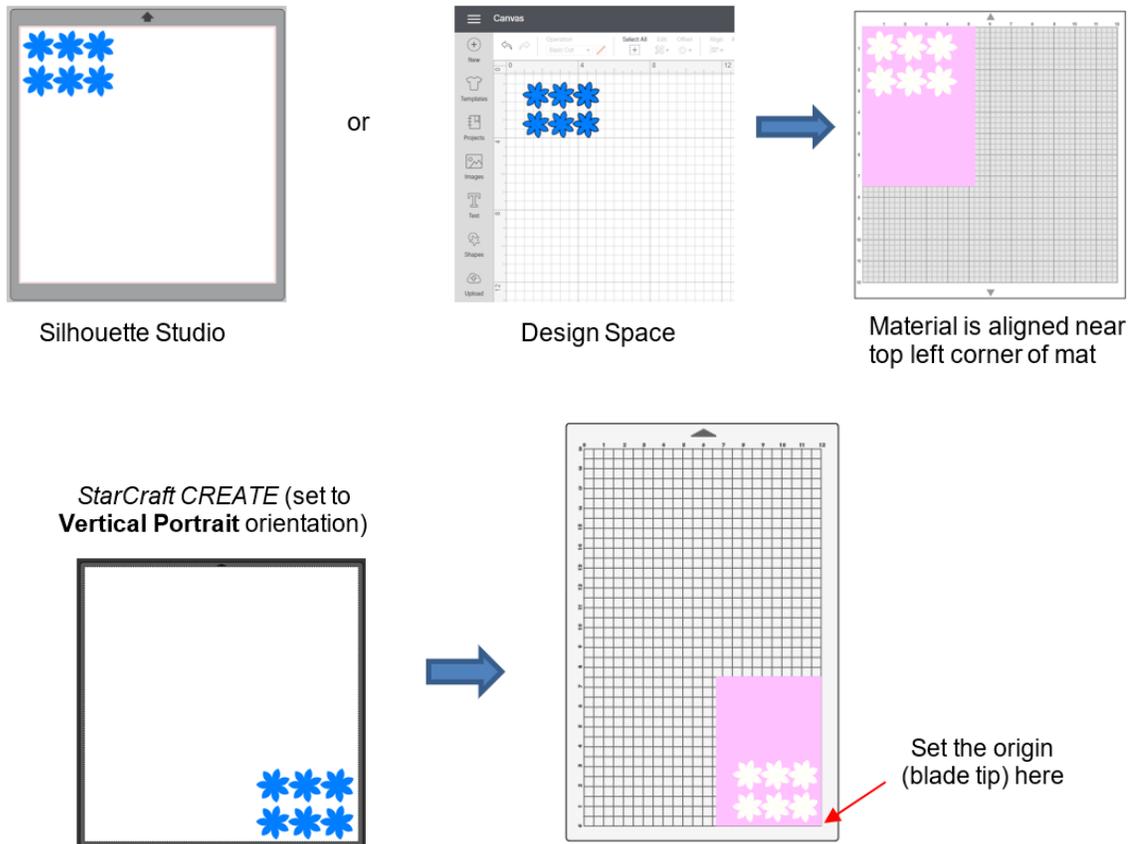


## Tip of the Day – 12/5/21: “Think” Diagonally Opposite

Every cutter brand has a home origin based on one of four possible corners. On a Cameo or Cricut, it's top left. On a Pazzles cutter, it's top right. On a SOLO, it's the bottom right, thus diagonally opposite to that of the Cameo or Cricut.

Because you set the blade tip near the lower right corner of the material instead of the upper left corner, most of the material will be behind the SOLO at the beginning of the cut.

Orient your project the same way in CREATE by having your design near the lower right corner:



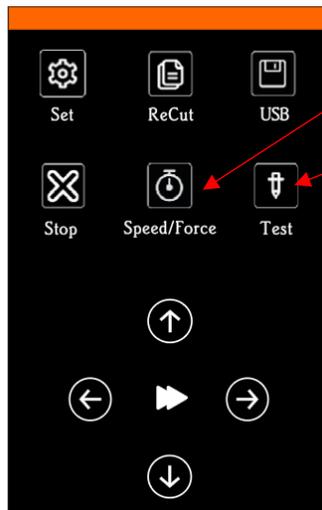
### Tip of the Day – 12/6/21: TEST Button Uses Control Panel F & S

Test Cuts are important: please do them!

When you use the **TEST** button to optimize your force (pressure) and speed, remember that you need to be using the **Speed/Force** screen on the control panel. What you have set in CREATE's window will not be sent for that TEST. Then, if you have "**Use software speed and pressure**" enabled in CREATE, you should then match the force (pressure) and speed setting you determined in your testing.

Alternatively, you can test directly from the computer by choosing a test shape in CREATE's **Library** to use or create your own. I use the donut/ring shape set to 0.4" in size. Having an internal path in your test shape makes it much easier to see if the cut was too deep, indicating you need to reduce the blade exposure.

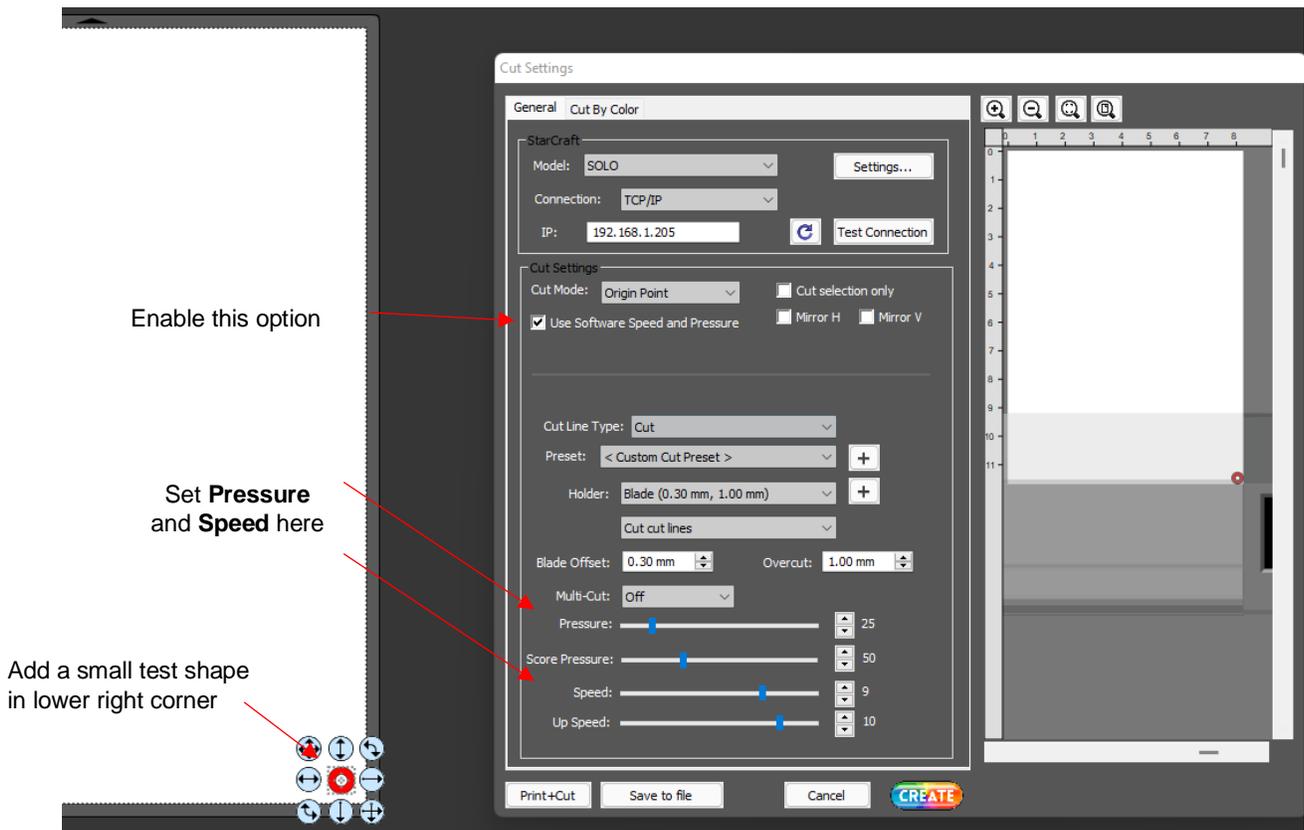
Option A for Test Cut: Control Panel



Set **Force (Pressure)** and **Speed** using this button

Press here to use those settings for the **Test** cut.

Option B for Test Cut: CREATE software



Tip of the Day – 12/7/21: You only need to calibrate the camera ONE time

Repeatedly calibrating the camera doesn't do anything different because the camera takes over and finds the grid center on its own. The only time you might need to recalibrate is after a firmware update (separate from any and all CREATE updates) or if the SOLO has been shipped or otherwise handled roughly during transportation.

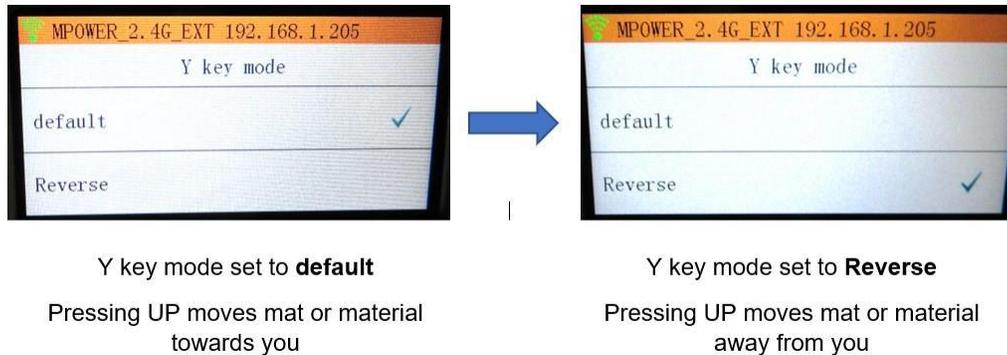
Here is Rhonda's video on the calibration procedure:

[https://drive.google.com/file/d/1Rvbwb3QC8UeNyn\\_P98bhYet6JZrg84Sk/view?usp=sharing](https://drive.google.com/file/d/1Rvbwb3QC8UeNyn_P98bhYet6JZrg84Sk/view?usp=sharing)

There is a way to adjust the calibration, if it's off. Refer to Tip of the Day – 1/7/22

### Tip of the Day – 12/8/21: Don't get frustrated, change that arrow setting!

If you find that you're continually pressing the wrong up/down arrow key on the Control Panel, you can reverse the direction. To do this, press Set>Advanced Settings>Y Key Mode and switch from "default" to "Reverse":



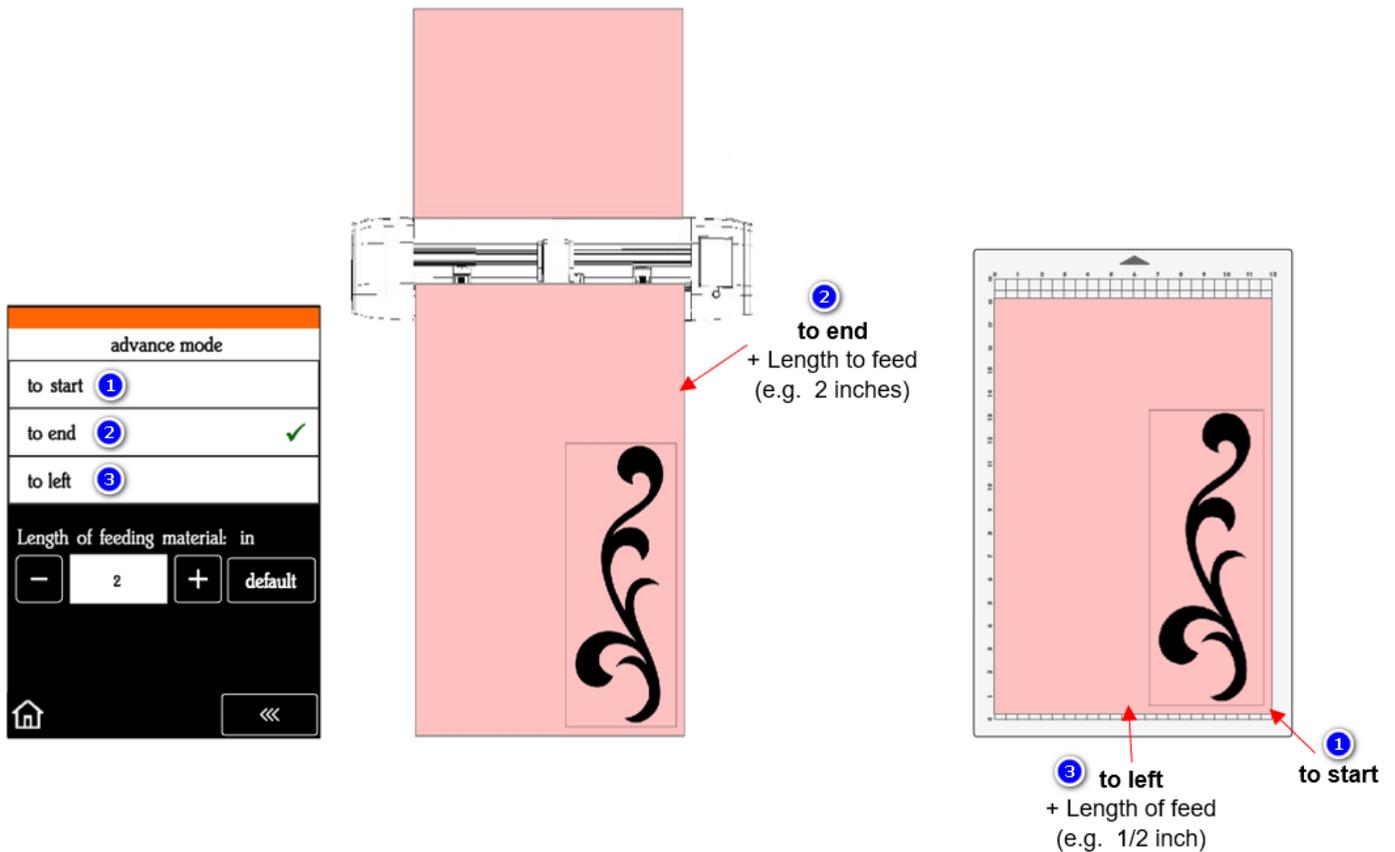
### Tip of the Day – 12/9/21: Controlling where the blade moves after the cut

On the control panel, select **Set** and then **Advance Mode**. There are 3 options which allow you to control where the blade holder moves after the cut is completed:

**To start:** the blade holder returns to the origin (where it was positioned before the cut began). This one is very important in the event you are doing a two-stage process where you need the SOLO to pause for a tool/pen changeout before processing the next part.

**To end:** the blade holder moves to end of the project and can advance by whatever amount you have entered. For example, in the screenshot, I have 2 entered and because I've also set the **Units** to be inches on the control panel, the blade holder moves to the top part of the project and another two inches is fed forward. This is useful in long vinyl cuts (with no mat) where you probably do not want the entire length of the vinyl to be fed back through the SOLO to the start.

**To left:** the blade holder moves to the left side of your cut project and, like "to end", can be advanced by the distance you entered. I've not personally used this particular option but I could probably make up some scenarios for it.



### Tip of the Day – 12/10/21: The Style Panel’s Cut Line Type Options

Understanding the **Cut Line Type** menu provides you control over how individual layers are handled in CREATE. It’s actually one of the stand-out features compared to other cutter programs I’ve documented.

Especially in **Print+Cut** applications, these options provide you the control you need when choosing what layers will print only versus what layers will cut only versus what layers will do both.

The **SCORE** option allows you to have one or more layers cut at a different pressure. The **Color Alignment** option allows you to have assigned shapes sent to cut with every color during a **Cut by Color** process.

The following table summarizes the information you need for understanding the differences. Please post if you have questions.

### [Cut Line Types](#)

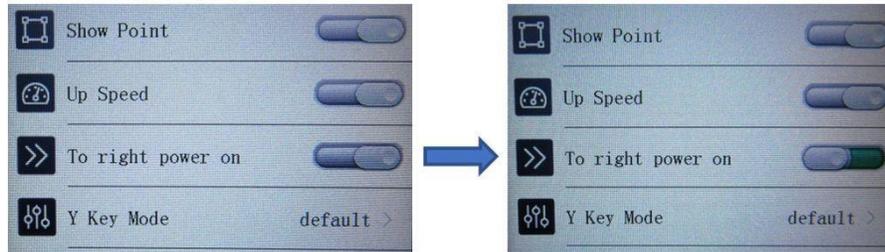
### Tip of the Day – 12/11/21: Options for the Blade Carriage Location when Powered On

Warning: **never** attempt to move the carriage by hand when the SOLO is powered on. Only move it by hand when powered off.

There are two options for what happens with the blade carriage when the SOLO is first turned on. Changing that option is located on the Control Panel. Press **Set**, then **Advanced Settings**, then you’ll see **“To right power on.”**

- (1) The default should be off. That means the blade carriage will remain wherever it was located when you powered off the SOLO. On the other hand, if you move it by hand while the SOLO is OFF, then that’s where it will be when you turn it back on.

- (2) If you make that setting “**to right power on**”, you’ll see the button on the Control Panel turn green. Now any time you power on the SOLO, the blade carriage will move to its **Home** position which is over on the right side, and providing you the maximum 15.6” cutting width range. This is typically near where you would want to start a regular cut on a rolled material such as HTV or vinyl that’s loaded into the cutter. But you can also move the blade carriage to the left, as needed, to place the blade tip at a new starting point on the material. This is called “setting the origin.” However, any distance you move to the left, reduces that maximum cutting width available. So, be aware of your project width versus this remaining available width.



To right power on: OFF

Blade carriage stays in place when SOLO is powered on

To right power on: ON

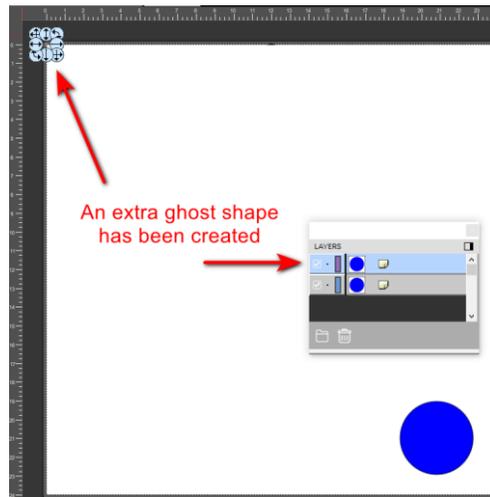
Blade carriage moves to the right side when SOLO is power on

### Tip of the Day – 12/12/21: Causes of Red Light + Beeping

**Right Side:** If a printout for a print-and-cut application is too close to the right side of the SOLO, the cutter will exceed the right-side limit when the camera moves over to photograph the reg mark. The SOLO’s light will turn red and it will begin beeping. You need to press Stop and then move the printout so that the reg mark is about 3” from the right end cap.

**Left Side:** If the same red light and beeping occur when the carriage is on the far-left side, again you’ll need to press **Stop** and make a correction of some kind. The causes of left-side beeping are typically one of the following:

1. You sent a project that is wider than the allowable 15.6 inches.
2. You had the blade carriage moved too far to the left before starting the cut. For example, if your project is 12” wide and you’ve already moved the blade carriage, say, 5 inches to the left before starting the cut, there’s isn’t enough cuttable room remaining.
3. You inadvertently created a teeny tiny “ghost shape” in CREATE, which is easier to do than you might think. For example, if you add a basic shape using the rectangle tool from the left side **Tools Panel** and then left click on it before returning to the **Select** mode, one of these little ghost shapes will be created in the upper left corner of the mat area and will typically also be sent to cut. Because it’s off to the left side, it can then cause the head to exceed the left-side limit depending on the size of your mat and where the blade carriage was located at the start of the cut.



### Tip of the Day – 12/13/21: Design Space vs StarCraft CREATE Terminology

There tends to be similarity in the basic functions available in one cutting program versus another. But the differences in what things are called and their location is what makes learning a new program more complicated than it needs to be. For that reason, I've made this table to help Cricut owners find the same Design Space functions in CREATE.

#### [Design Space versus CREATE Terminology](#)

### Tip of the Day – 12/14/21: Silhouette Studio versus StarCraft CREATE Terminology

For those who use Silhouette Studio, here is a table to help you find the same Silhouette Studio functions in CREATE.

#### [Silh Studio versus CREATE Terminology](#)

### Tip of the Day – 12/15/21: Moving the Pinch Rollers

Reminder that you need to make sure the pinch rollers are clearly over the dark gray grit shafts. You don't want a pinch wheel to be half-on, half-off a grit shaft as it can leave a tracking mark in vinyl AND it can throw off the accuracy of a Print+Cut project.

Also, if you are struggling to move them, I have found that they are easier to pull or push towards or away from you versus trying to slide one left or right as you face the SOLO. Thus, I stand at one of the endcaps and use one hand to grasp the pinch roller in the front and the other hand to grasp the pinch roller assembly in the back and then I just tug or push.

#### [My Quick Video](#)

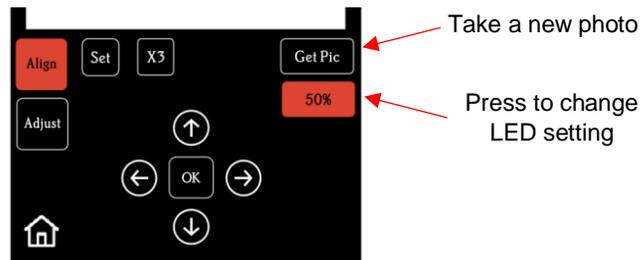
## Tip of the Day – 12/16/21 Adjusting the LED on the Camera

In a typical well-lit room, the camera will not have issues successfully identifying sharply printed black registration marks on a white paper printout. But the SOLO's camera can "see" so much more! The factory has successfully tested transparent materials, slightly mirrored materials, glossy materials, and light-colored reg marks on dark materials (mark the Inverse option under **Set>Camera>Align>Set**).

Glossy materials and certainly slightly mirrored materials can have an issue with the **LED** reflecting too much light. A low light room or darker materials may need more light.

Thus, you'll see that the **LED** button on the camera screen has 4 options: LED (light is off), 20%, 50%, 100%.

You can press each one and see the light change under the blade carriage. Thus, if you are having issues with the camera failing at one or more reg marks AND it appears from the photo on the screen that perhaps the lighting is too dark or too light, then try adjusting the **LED** setting first. You can then press the **Get Pic** button to have a new photo taken at that same location.



## Tip of the Day – 12/17/21 CREATE Files versus SVG Files

The two most common file formats for saving files in CREATE are (1) .svg and (2) .create. It's important to understand the differences so that you can choose the more practical for your own work flow. Personally, I urge users to choose **File>Save** (the .create format) because, at the same time, I urge users to take advantage of the fact you can have multiple pages in a CREATE project making it very convenient when designing, keeping a project organized, and even arranging shapes for cutting. But, as I often say, I don't argue with success. So, choose which is better for you, but also choose based on fully understanding the differences:

## Saving as SVG versus CREATE

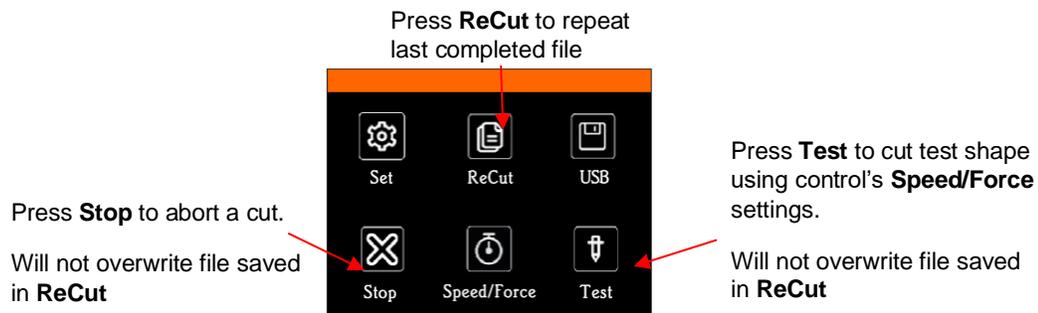
	<u>Save as .svg</u>	<u>Save as .create</u>
<b>Pros</b>	1. Ready to be imported into other programs	1. Saves all pages into one file
	2. Ready to be saved to the My Designs folder of the Library (Shapes tab)	2. Saves more project information (e.g., location on mat, settings on Style Panel, Stroke color, Fill patterns)
	3. Ready to be imported into the Set Template window	3. Recent saves appear upon opening CREATE, making it faster to reopen current projects
		4. Ready to be saved to the My Projects folder of the Library (Projects tab)
<b>Cons</b>	1. Must remember to export each page if using multiple pages	1. Redundant saving if you also need SVG format available for another program
	2. If you inadvertently have Selection only enabled and forget to highlight the shapes you want saved, the SVG file will contain nothing	2. Can result in a corrupt file if you save and then close CREATE too soon
	3. If you need help, valuable information may be missing such as Style Panel assignments, location of project in Document Area, etc.	

### Tip of the Day – 12/18/21: How the ReCut function works

The **ReCut** / Repeat function on the control panel retains the last completed cut sent from CREATE or loaded and cut from the flash drive, even after being powered off.

This saved cut will not be overwritten by a test cut using the **Test** button on the control panel, nor will it be overwritten by a cut that had to be stopped before completion.

The **ReCut** also works on Print+Cut applications. After loading a new printout and setting the blade tip over the lower right reg mark, press **ReCut** and a new scan will begin.



## Tip of the Day – 12/19/21: Borderless Printing Caution

Borderless printing CAN be used in SOLO print-and-cut applications. However, most printers by default will expand the printing towards the borders of the printout, resulting in the reg marks being in the wrong location relative to the software (i.e., CREATE). When that happens, the auto-scanning will fail because the camera is not close enough to the printed reg mark.

The solution is to understand your printer's properties windows so that you can locate a second setting which may be a scroll bar called **Extension** or **Expansion** or **Overspray** or something else (differs with the brand of printer) or, in some cases, can just be a checkbox to enable or disable. Usually, these settings do not appear until you activate **Borderless**.

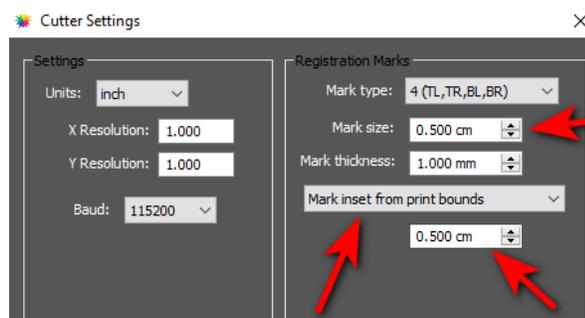
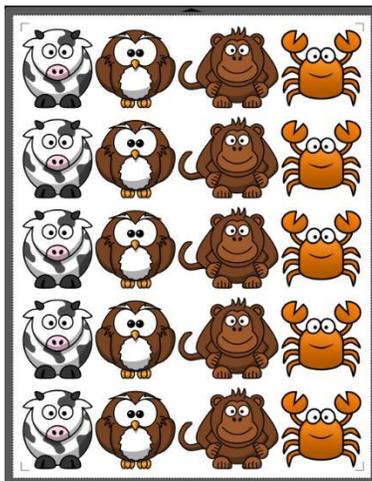
Here's a document in case you want more info on where you might find this setting on an Epson, Canon, or HP Printer:

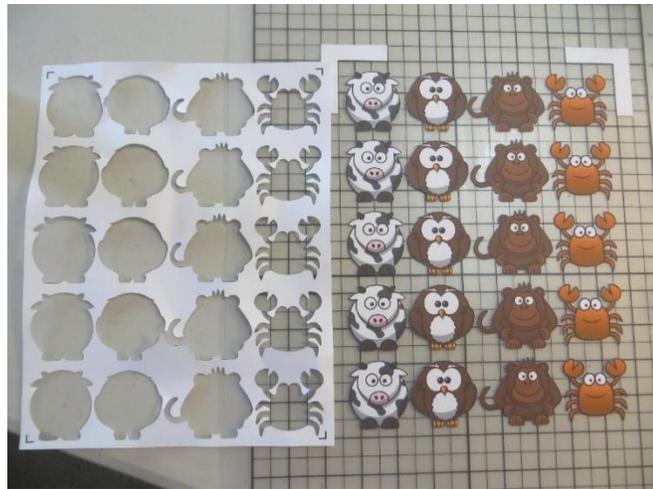
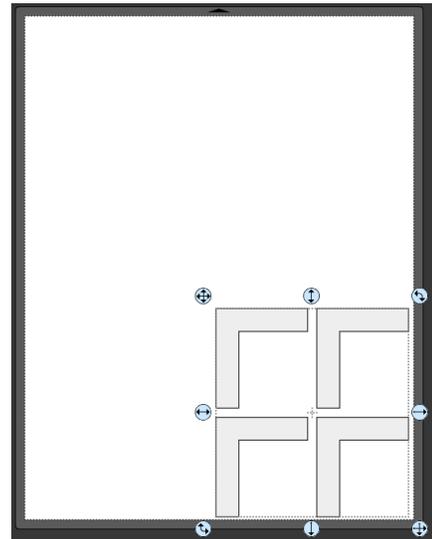
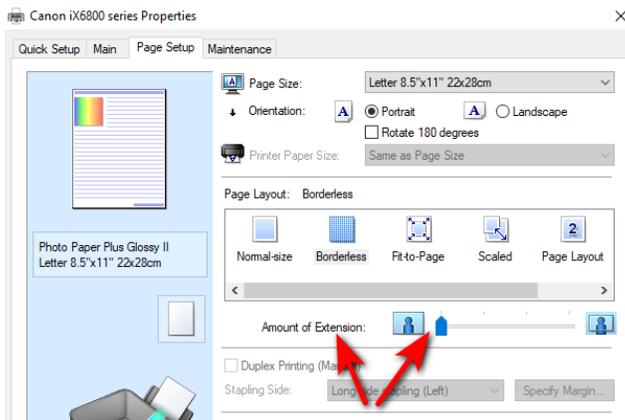
[Solving Borderless Printing](#)

## Tip of the Day – 12/20/21: Reg Mark Settings – Fitting More Shapes onto a Sheet

You can change the reg mark settings to make them based on the location on the printout versus around the design. Because the reg marks were so close to the edges, I had to turn on **Borderless** printing AND minimize the **Extension** setting in my Canon printer properties to the minimum extension (as I covered in yesterday's tip).

Also, because of the reg marks being so close to the edges of the printout, the camera can sometimes confuse them with the corner of the paper or even the mat itself. Solution? Add some L-shaped cutouts for any corners that might have issues (and keep these same cutouts for future projects). You can go ahead and do all 4, but I knew the camera was only having a problem once it reached the 3<sup>rd</sup> mark. After placing the cutouts in the 3<sup>rd</sup> and 4<sup>th</sup> corners, I ran again with successful scanning and perfect results:



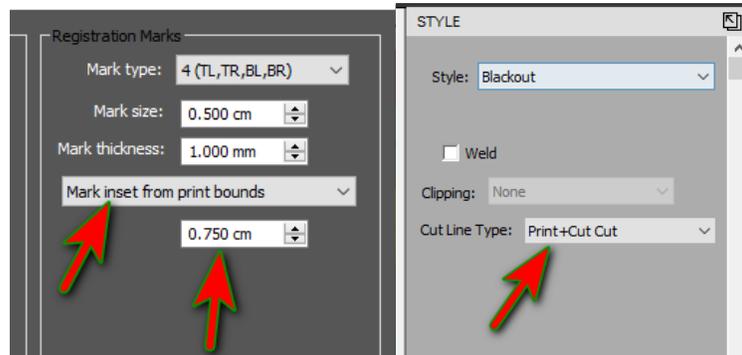
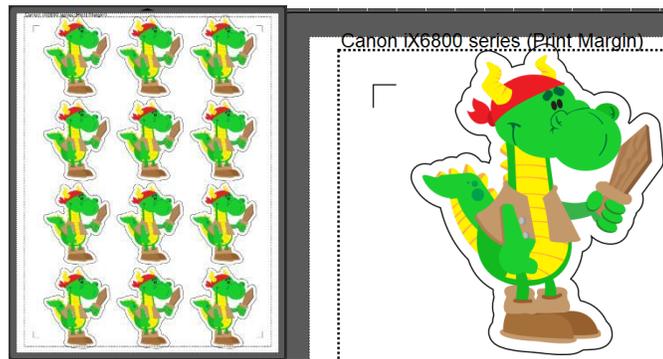


## Tip of the Day – 12/21/21: Extending Beyond the Reg Marks

In a Print+Cut application, the printed shapes AND the cut lines can extend beyond the reg marks. The cut lines can even extend beyond the print margins.

Related to yesterday's tip, the Print+Cut options for the SOLO, in combination with the CREATE software, give users more space for contour cutting applications. When setting up the project, keep in mind the following:

- Set up the reg mark settings (**Cutter>Cutter Settings**) as shown in the screenshot so that the placement will be related to the print margins (or "inset from page bounds" is another option if your page dimensions are set equal to the print dimensions). Do not use the "around design" option.
- Make sure the cut line is assigned as (**Print+Cut**) **Cut Only** on the **Style Panel** so that it won't be sent to the printer.
- Always set up and group the first design before making the duplicate copies (**Ctrl+D**). That way you do not have to individually assign each cut line on the **Style Panel**.
- On the **Document Panel**, enable **Show Print Margins** and **Show Reg Marks** to verify that the printed part of the project is inside the printer's margins. Again, the cut lines can extend beyond that, if needed.

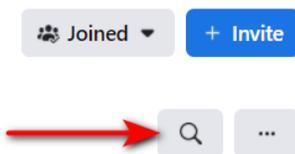


### Tip of the Day – 12/22/21: Try Getting Help using the Search button

When you want to see if a question has previously been asked on a Facebook group, use the search function to enter a word or words related to what you need to know. For example, if you are having issues cutting a particular material or need help calibrating the camera or can't figure out how to move the pinch wheels, type in a few related words and see what comes up.

Some examples: “holographic”, “calibrating”, or “move roller”

While I don't personally mind answering the same question two days in a row, starting with the search function will often generate the needed answer or solution faster than waiting for someone to reply.



### Tip of the Day – 12/23/21: Using OPF (Open Path Fonts)

For those of you who may not be familiar with this file format, OPF fonts (not to be confused with OTF fonts) are true single line fonts used for cutter applications such as drawing with a pen, engraving with a scratch engraver, and the WRMK Foil Quill. Unlike other thin fonts in OTF or TTF format, the OPF fonts have only a single curve passing through the letters, and thus take less time to draw and never need a fill. One particular web site has some beautiful ones at reasonable pricing and both the OTF versions and the true single line, OPF versions, are sold there. Note that this is NOT an affiliate link. I just wanted you to know that the CREATE software supports this format.

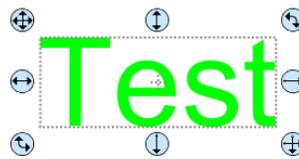
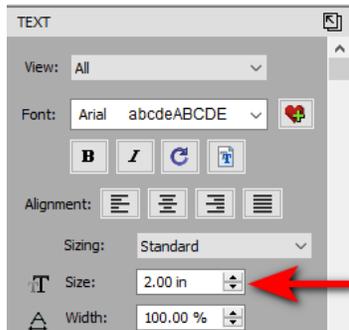
<https://www.singlelinefonts.com/>

# Single Line Fonts

## Tip of the Day – 12/24/21: Resizing Text While Typing

The **Text Panel** on the right has a **Size** setting you can change before you click on the **Type Tool** icon, on the left-side **Tools Panel** to begin entering text.

However, sometimes you'll realize the **Text Size** is larger (or possibly smaller) than you want after you begin typing. No problem! Press the **Ctrl** and **Shift** keys and sizing handles will appear that you can use to resize the text. After resizing, release the **Ctrl** and **Shift** keys and you can continue typing at the new size.



**While in Type Tool mode, press and hold Ctrl+Shift keys**

Test of new size

**After resizing, added text will be entered at the new size**

## Tip of the Day – 12/25/21 and 12/26/21: CREATE User Manual and Hot Keys

1. Besides the SOLO User Manual, I also wrote a CREATE User Manual covering the many functions and features of this amazing software. Use it as a reference manual to look up the purpose of various icons or menu functions.

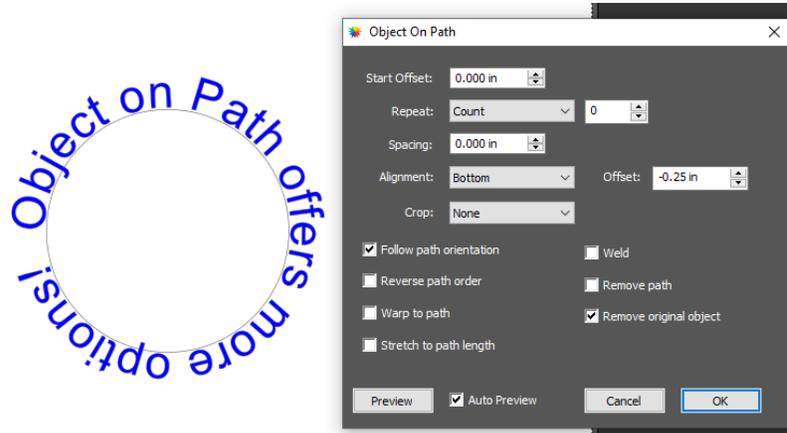
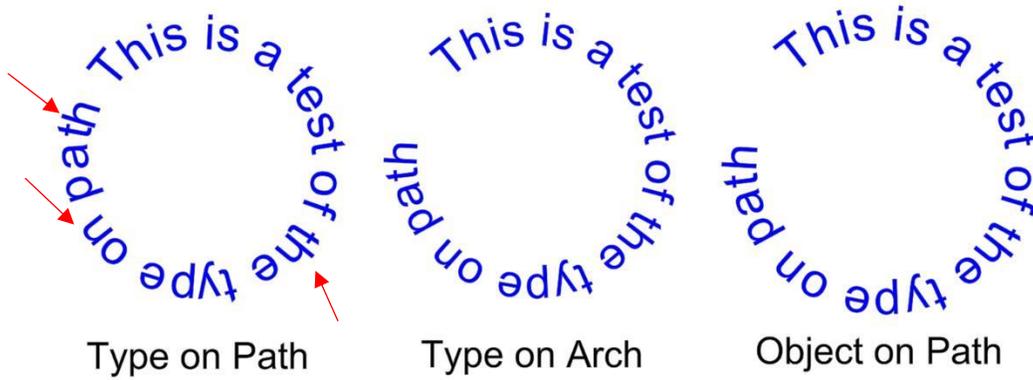
<https://www.iloveknk.com/0um/StarCraft-CREATE/CREATE-User-Manual.pdf>

2. Also, here is a link to the icons and shortcut keys preset in CREATE. If you happen to discover one not in this list, do let me know and I'll get it added:

[https://starcraftvinyl.com/files/downloads/free\\_downloads/StarCraft\\_CREATE\\_Shortcuts\\_08-22-21.pdf](https://starcraftvinyl.com/files/downloads/free_downloads/StarCraft_CREATE_Shortcuts_08-22-21.pdf)

## Tip of the Day – 12/27/21: Putting Text on a Circle

There are 3 ways in CREATE to put text on a circle, however one way (Type on Path) is NOT recommended because of how some letters get tilted/rotated a bit and the spacing isn't quite even, either. If you study the 3 examples shown in the screenshot, the one on the left clearly has some letters not properly aligned to the path. Thus, use either **Type on Arch** or **Effects>Object on Path** for this kind of designing. I personally prefer **Object on Path** because it offers many other settings and options.

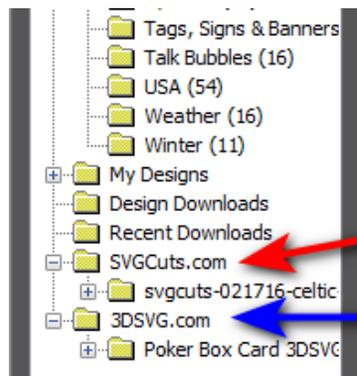


Tip of the Day – 12/28/21: Zip Files from Dreaming Tree (3DSVG) and SVG Cuts

Hello Paper Crafters! For those not familiar with these two very popular online paper crafting stores, they sell projects that are somewhat complex, thus the zips often have MANY SVG files contained within each one. Because they provide downloads with their respective store names in the name of each zip file you purchase, the developer of CREATE set up the software to automatically unzip and place each folder of files into the **Library**.

When you drop one of these zips onto CREATE's main document area, you won't observe anything happening. However, if you open up the **Library**, you'll see a new folder has been added with the files immediately ready for use.

Note the contents of the zip are extracted into the following locations: **Documents\StarCraft Create\3DSVG** or **SVGcuts** (important to know in case you need any of the PNG or JPG files for printing).



## Tip of the Day – 12/29/21: Use the Cameo’s Auto-Blade as a Guide for Blade Depth

The SOLO is NOT a Cricut, thus do not use the Cricut as a guide for cutting. Cricut uses a different technology for controlling the head on the cutter.

Instead, if you have access to a Cameo’s blade holder, you will be able to more accurately set the SOLO blade holder for cutting vinyl, HTV, and other thin materials.

Why is this important? Using too much blade, offset by low force settings, can result in inconsistent cutting across a material, lifting of small shapes off the backing sheet, and difficulty in weeding.

Here are some photos of the Cameo 4’s Auto-Blade set at the Silhouette recommend **Blade Depth** of 1 for vinyl cutting and set at the recommended 2 for HTV cutting. This matches what you should be using on the SOLO’s blade holder, as well. Then adjust the cutting pressure accordingly.

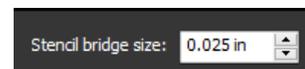
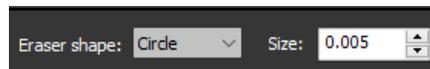


## Tip of the Day – 12/30/21: CREATE’s Eraser and Stencil Bridge Tools

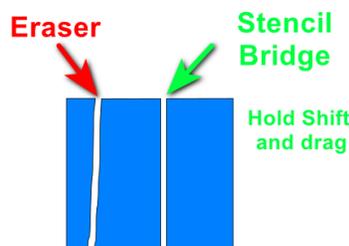
The **Eraser** and **Stencil Bridge** tools, on the left-side **Tools Panel**, can both be used to erase parts of a vector image (and a few more things). A few things to note about them:

1. You’ll notice that when you click the down arrow to decrease the size of either the **Eraser** or **Stencil Bridge** that it stops at 0.10 and you will assume you can’t go smaller. But that’s not true. Just type in the smaller value that you want.
2. The **Eraser** doesn’t have any straight-line control... it’s all freehand. Thus, use the **Stencil Bridge** instead when you need a straight-line erasure. Further, you can hold the **Shift** key and get perfect horizontal, vertical, or 45° erase lines.
3. Both the **Eraser** and **Stencil Bridge** will be applied to all shapes that the tool crosses even if those shapes are not selected. So, be sure to lock or hide any layers below the intended shape or else they, too, will be affected.

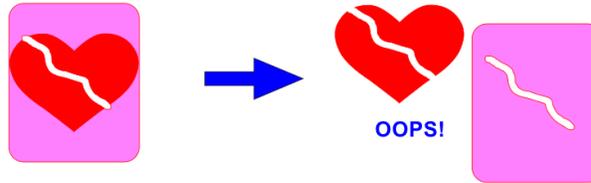
1. You can type in the size you want to use for the **Eraser** or the **Stencil Bridge**



2. **Stencil Bridge** allows you to have straight line erasures

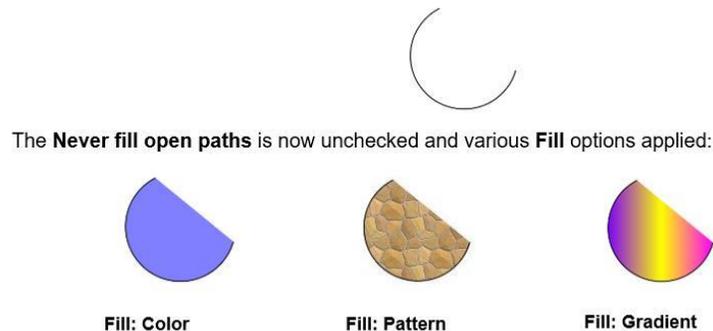


3. Be sure to lock or hide any layers below the shape you're editing



## Tip of the Day – 12/31/21: Filling Open Shapes

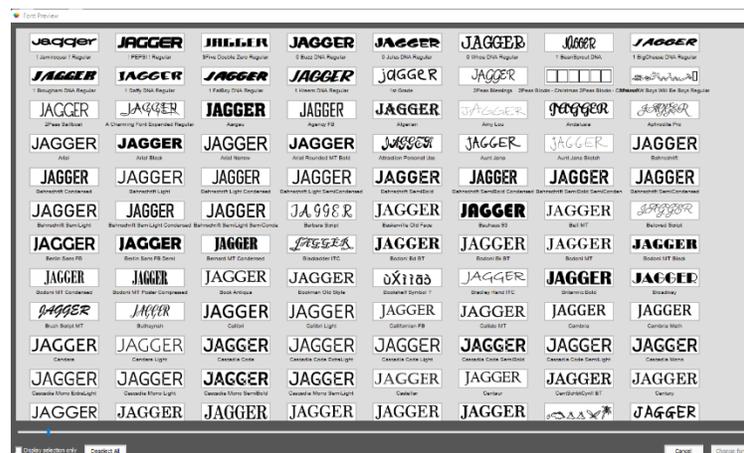
If you go to **Edit>Preferences>Edit** tab and disable the last option called **Never fill open paths**, you can add a **Color Fill**, **Pattern**, or **Gradient** to an open shape as shown below:

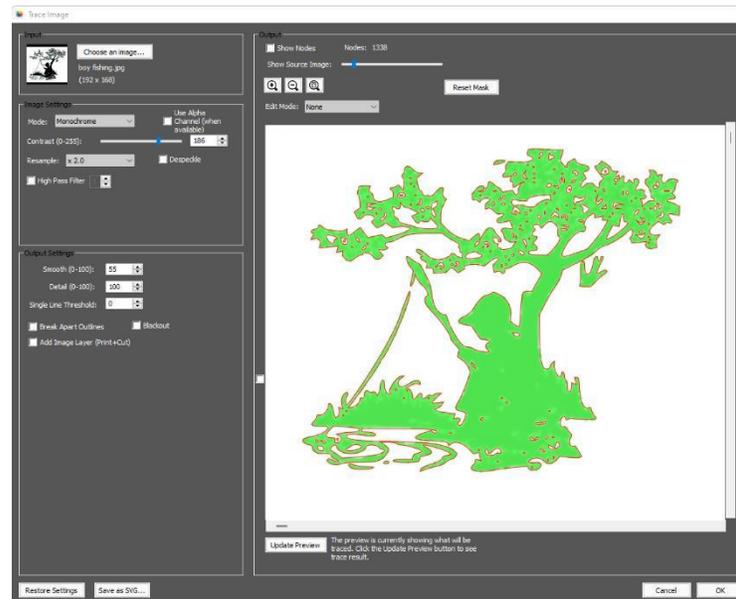
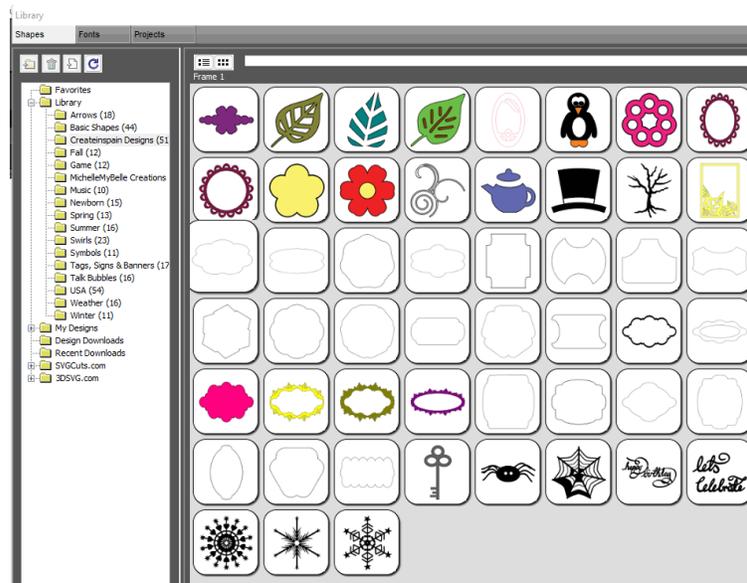


## Tip of the Day – 1/1/22: Resize Windows for Better Viewing

There are several windows in CREATE that can be dragged to make larger, enhancing your experience when using them. Specifically:

1. The **Text>Font Preview** window – by making it larger in combination with scrolling the size bar to the left, you'll be able to see many more font samples at the same time.
2. The **Library** – by making it larger in combination with scrolling the size bar to the right, you'll get a bigger view of many, if not all of the individual SVG files within a folder.
3. The **Trace Image** window – by making it larger, you get a better overall view of the trace lines without needing to zoom in and out on sections at a time.





## Tip of the Day – 1/2/22: Using the Camera to Set the Origin

In cases where you need a very precise setting of the origin (such as engraving on a dog tag), select the “spot” that you want to use as the origin and then use these steps:

- (1) Move the blade (or tool) tip to the approximate location of that origin.
- (2) Go to **Set>Camera** and press **OK** to take a photo.
- (3) Tap the “spot” in the photo and press **OK** again.
- (4) Press **X3** to zoom in, tap the “spot” again and use arrow keys to move the red “+” to the dead center of the “spot”.
- (5) Press **OK** and the blue dashed lines should be centered now with the “spot”. If needed, repeat these last two steps.

(6) Press the **Home** button and the blade (or tool) tip will now be over that “spot”.

In the event I want to do this with the first reg mark for a P+C application, only steps 1-3 and then 6 are needed. The camera will now successfully locate that first reg mark and will proceed from there.

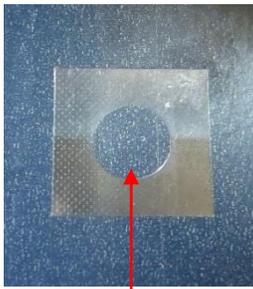
[Set the Origin Using the Camera Video](#)

### Tip of the Day – 1/3/22: Lift Off the Entire Test Cut

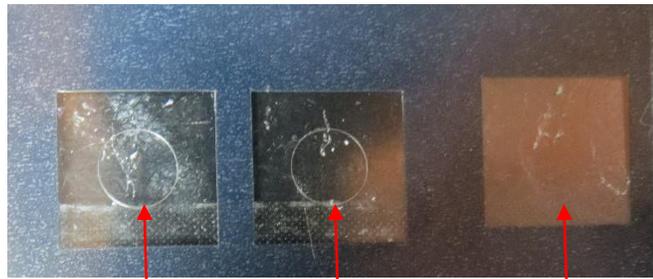
When someone uses the **TEST** button, they tend to weed the outer shape only, without then lifting that inner circle which is equally important in determining the success of the test.

That inner circle indicates if the blade depth / **Force** combination was too aggressive or just right. The goal is to get a clean cut but not to have the blade cutting into the backing sheet (when cutting vinyl or HTV) nor cutting into the mat (when cutting cardstock, fabric, magnetic sheets, etc.).

If you have a very clean test cut and no blade marks at all (or very light marks, as if the blade tip barely grazed the backing sheet or mat), you're good to go! But if the marks are deep enough to feel with your fingernail, reduce the blade exposure and test again. Experience shows that maintaining higher forces with less blade exposure results in more consistent cutting across the material. less lifting of tiny shapes, and less tearing of paper materials in tight corners.



Remove the inner cut circle, as well



Too much blade exposure

Better

Perfect (cut line is barely visible)

### Tip of the Day – 1/4/22: Setting a “Return-to” Origin

The SOLO allows you to set other origins besides the one at the start of the cut. For example, at the end of a cut, you might want to move the material (or mat) forward so that you can examine the cut for completion and then return the material (or mat) to the same location so that you can cut it again.

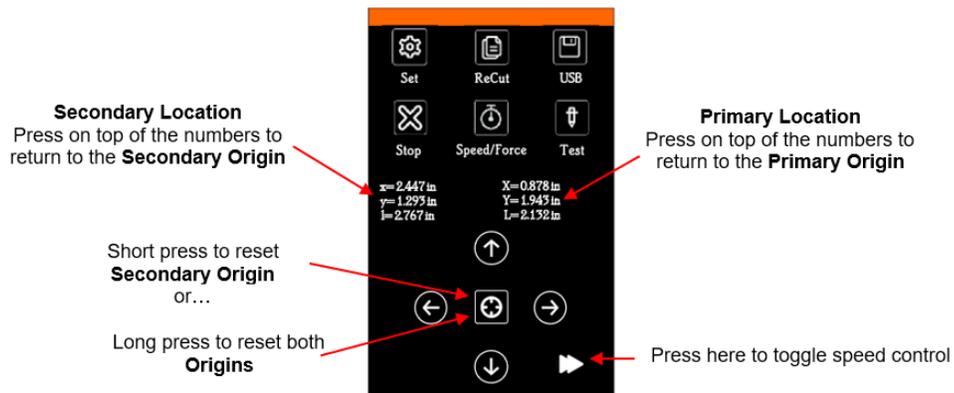
You will need the coordinates showing so go to **Set>Advanced Settings** and activate **Show Point**.

On the control panel, the middle button which is normally used to toggle the arrow button speeds will be moved to the bottom right and replaced with the **Origin Set** button.

**xyI** represents a **Secondary Location** and can be reset by a quick press of the **Origin Set** button.

**XYL** represents a **Primary Origin** and can be reset by a long press of the **Origin Set** button which also resets the **Secondary Origin**.

Either before you start the cut or immediately after the cut, press the middle button to set the **xyI** origin at (0,0,0). You can now move the material (or mat) as needed to examine the cut. If you need to return to the **xyI** origin, press your finger over the **xyI** numbers and the carriage will return to (0,0,0). More about this is covered in Appendix B2 of the [SOLO User Manual](#).



### Tip of the Day – 1/5/22: CREATE can import MTC files

Some of you may have used a program called Make the Cut (aka MTC) that was originally created for owners of the early Cricut cutters before ProvoCraft legally went after MTC and two other software companies. It was a very popular program for not only owners of the early Cricuts, but also early Silhouettes (including Cameo 1 and 2), and a range of other cutter brands in the hobby world (KNK, Black Cat, Pazzles, Gazelle, etc.). Basically, it competed head-to-head with SCAL, offering a lot of tracing and design capability with the added ability to cut directly to those cutters. But after the Cricut lawsuits, the owner of MTC gradually lost interest in his software and abandoned further development and support about 6 years ago.

The MTC program contained a gallery of free user-shared files that have mostly been archived at the following links. So, if you're "hungry" for free cutting files, help yourself!

[https://drive.google.com/drive/folders/0ByDca\\_cRz35gb29GMFpNekhWY3M?resourcekey=0-3QePP6m\\_W8tUSuQWjgDnqw&usp=sharing](https://drive.google.com/drive/folders/0ByDca_cRz35gb29GMFpNekhWY3M?resourcekey=0-3QePP6m_W8tUSuQWjgDnqw&usp=sharing)

[https://drive.google.com/drive/folders/1cy3BXJXnS\\_FPfrijasudA0L2FDXwwL601?usp=sharing](https://drive.google.com/drive/folders/1cy3BXJXnS_FPfrijasudA0L2FDXwwL601?usp=sharing)

### Tip of the Day – 1/6/22: Print+Cut Accuracy – Part 1 of 3

If you're having issues with alignment of the cut shapes with the printed images, check carefully to see which of the following is the actual issue:

- (1) Are all of the shapes off by the same amount in the same direction? That's the calibration but do NOT keep repeating the auto-calibration thinking you'll get different results. There's a way to enter a correction which will be covered in tomorrow's Tip #10.
- (2) Are the initial cut shapes accurate but, as the cut progresses, the shapes become more and more off? That's called drifting and is unrelated to the calibration. There are various factors which can cause drifting which will be covered in Tip #11 (two days from now).



1. Calibration is off



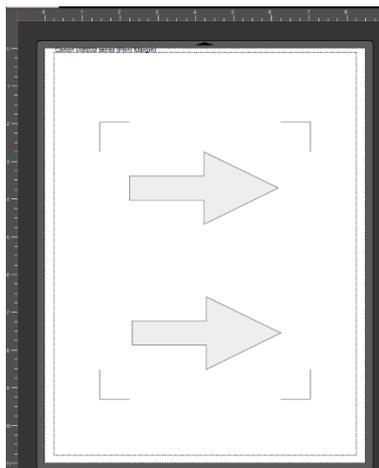
2. Cut is drifting

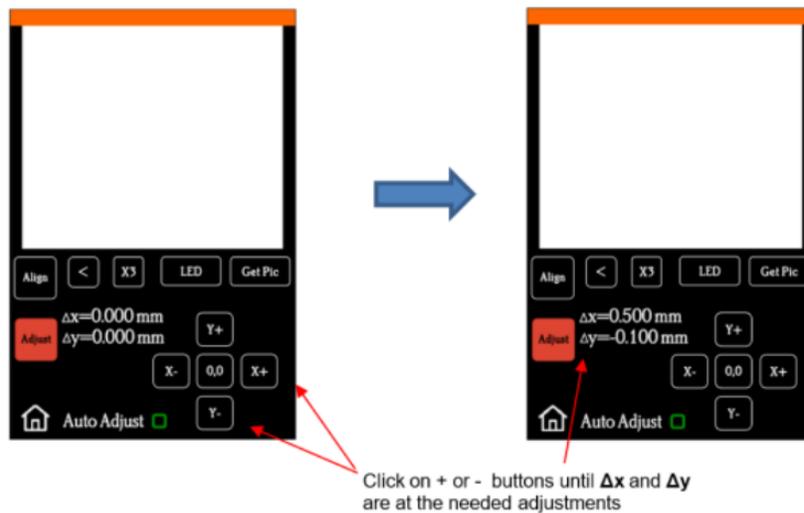
## Tip of the Day – 1/7/22: Print+Cut Accuracy – Part 2 of 3- Adjusting Camera Calibrations When Needed

Yesterday's tip explained that if you see the cut line is off by the exact same amount on every printed shape, then the calibration may need adjustment. Do NOT recalibrate the camera but rather enter a manual adjustment using the following instructions and video:

Do a print+cut test on copy paper using arrows so that you have both horizontal and vertical lines to indicate clearly if you need to tweak in the X direction, the Y direction or both. Remember to also look at the waste area of the printout because the lines might show on it. Then think about what direction(s) does the cut line need to move.

Next, watch this video for the procedure you'll use. Repeating a few times should tweak that calibration to perfection.  
[https://drive.google.com/file/d/1835VAzZCV\\_Dq10G07xuNMpb5kzLvLd\\_5/view?usp=sharing](https://drive.google.com/file/d/1835VAzZCV_Dq10G07xuNMpb5kzLvLd_5/view?usp=sharing)





### Tip of the Day – 1/8/22: Print+Cut Accuracy – Part 3 of 3- Diagnosing Drift

Drift is the term used when a Print+Cut starts out accurate but, as the cut progresses, the cut lines begin to drift further and further away from the printed images. What causes this? Friction. What causes friction in this situation? There can be many culprits so here's a list of the things you need to check. Note that this list applies to other cutters, as well.

1. **Pinch wheels** – Wrong locations for pinch wheels or pinch wheels are not centered over the grit shafts.
2. **Speed** – the faster the material or cutting mat is moving in and out of the cutter, the more likely some slippage could occur. The more shapes being cut, the slower you may need to set the cut speed. Normally, 7 or 8 can be used successfully.
3. **Blade Exposure** – if the blade is cutting into the mat, that will definitely cause more friction because the blade is now being forced to cut into a thick material. Verify from your test cut that any cut lines you are see are very faint as if the blade tip is only grazing the adhesive. Reduce that exposure as needed but maintain or increase pressure to make sure the cuts at still clean.
4. **Stickiness** – any stickiness on the bottom of the cutting mat, on the pinch wheels, and/or on the grit shafts can also cause drag and slippage. Thus, keep all of these very clean.
5. **Thick materials** – similar to the blade cutting into the mat, cutting thick materials can cause dragging which will then throw off the accuracy. Instead of single pass cutting, set Multi-cut to 2 or more passes and reduce the pressure so that the blade isn't being forced to cut a material faster and deeper than it's able to.

You can also add intermediate registration marks so that additional scanning can be performed during the cut. This can greatly assist with drifting issues. Refer to Tip of the Day – 1/21/22.



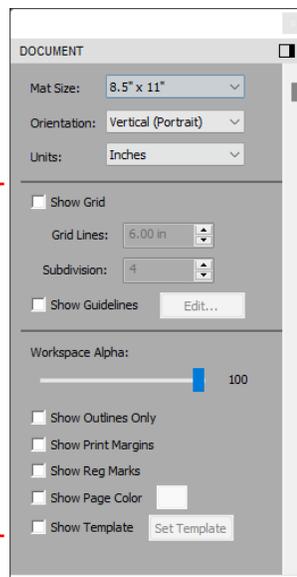
### Tip of the Day – 1/9/22: Show settings do not affect Output

The **Document Panel** has various settings which begin with the word **“Show”** as indicated in the screenshot. These settings are for your viewing convenience and do not change what happens when you print or when you cut. Thus, do not try to fix a cutting or printing problem by changing one of these settings.

Instead, use these in situations like:

1. Designing (**Show Grid, Show Guidelines, Show Template**)
2. Editing (**Show Outlines Only, Workspace Alpha, Show Page Color**)
3. Placement verification (**Show Print Margins, Show Reg Marks**)

Will not impact  
printing or cutting



## Tip of the Day – 1/10/22: Use Score and Cut on Denser Materials

The **Score** assignment in CREATE allows you to cut one or more layers at one pressure and other layers at a different pressure. I decided to test this out by cutting 1/32" basswood on the SOLO.

**Copy/Paste in Place** was applied on the shape so that I could assign one of the copies to **Score** and the other to **Cut**. In the **Cut Settings** window, **Multi-Cut** was set to 2 passes, **Score Force** to 30 and cut **Force** to 90. **Speed** was set to 1. The blue capped 60° blade was used. Right before tightening the front screw on the SOLO, I pulled up on the blade holder to help raise the blade tip above the wood so that it wouldn't scratch it.

The sheet of basswood was brayered well to an extra sticky mat and the outside edges taped. Then the following cuts were made, with really great results:



## Tip of the Day – 1/11/22: Mounting the Blade Holder

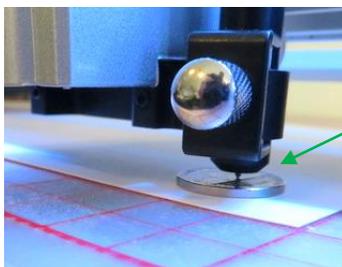
- There are four positions in which one can mount the blade holder into the clamp/blade holder seat on the SOLO:



1. Rim rests on the seat

Normal use without the mat or very thin materials on the mat

*Insert blade holder so that its rim is positioned on the seat before tightening the front screw.*



2. Blade tip rests on a nickel or quarter or use 15 sheets of copy paper (or Post-It notes)

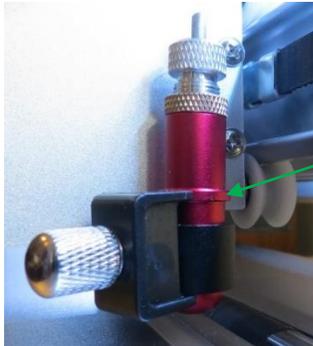
Use this method to prevent scratching of vinyl, copy paper, or when using the test pen, engraver, or scoring tool

*Insert blade holder or other tool and allow it to rest on the coin which itself is resting on the material. Tighten the front screw and remove the coin.*



3. Rim is positioned just below the clamp

Use this method for thick materials and/or to prevent scratching if method 2 above fails. You may need to increase the **Force** by ~5 – 10.



4. Rim is positioned so that it is locked in by the clamp

Use this method for extra-thick soft materials like 2 mm craft foam

*Raise the blade holder up until it is even with the upper blade plate and then tighten the front screw.*

- It's also worth noting the causes of scratching:
  - ◇ The blade exposure is more than what's needed to penetrate the material
    - When conducting a test cut, be sure to check your mat (or the top of a backing sheet) for cut lines after the test. You should be able to set the blade exposure to get clean cuts but with only fine lines or no lines in the mat or backing sheet. If you do see deep cut lines, retract the blade length ~1/8 turn counterclockwise and repeat your test cut.
  - ◇ The mat is drooping so much that there is significant bowing where the blade is cutting (you may need to support the mat)

### Tip of the Day – 1/12/22: Drag and Drop PNG (and other Raster Files)

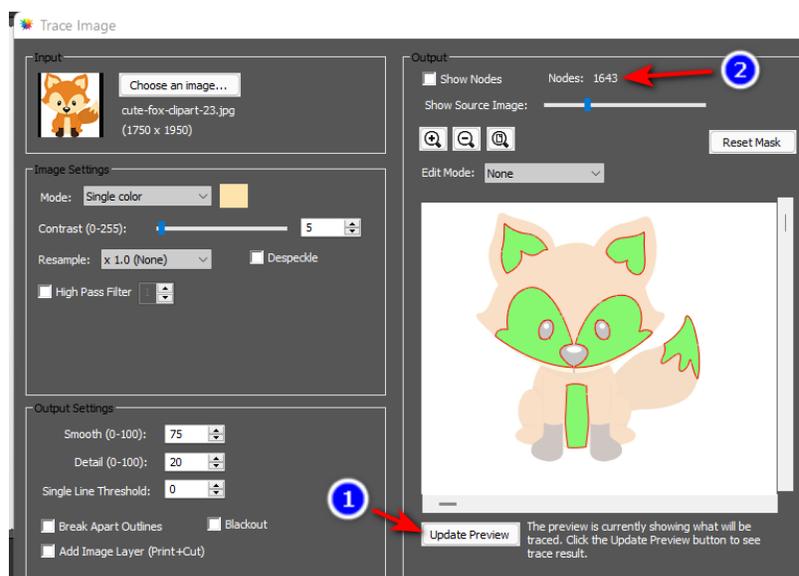
There are 3 different options for importing JPG, BMP, and GIF files. There are 4 different options for importing PNG files. These options produce different outcomes such as whether or not you can import more than one file at a time and, in the case of PNG files, where or not the cut lines are automatically added when the image has a transparent background. The following table shows the 4 options and how they differ:

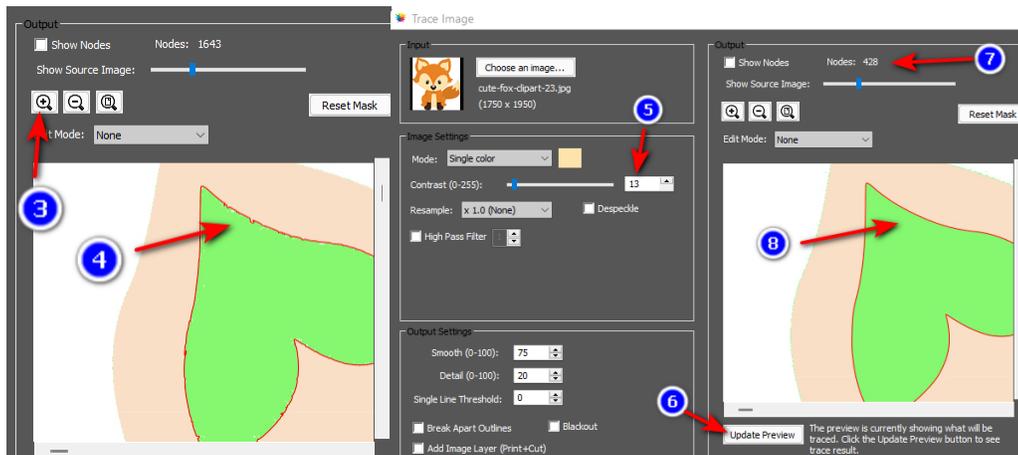
## StarCraft CREATE: Importing Raster Images into CREATE

Import Method	File Types	Comments
File>Import	PNG Only: one file at a time	If PNG has a transparent background, cut lines are automatically added. Otherwise only a rectangular box around the image is the cut line. To trace, select <b>Print</b> layer only and click on <b>Trace Image</b> icon to send image to <b>Trace Image</b> window.
File>Place Image	Used to import JPG, BMP, PNG, GIF: one file at a time	NO cut lines are added at all. Select image and click on <b>Trace Image</b> icon to send image to <b>Trace Image</b> window.
Drag and drop	Used to import JPG, BMP, PNG, GIF: multiples at a time	PNG Files: same as <b>File&gt;Import</b> (pst version 1.015) Other File: same as <b>File&gt;Place Image</b> : no cut lines until you take the image into the <b>Trace Image</b> window.
Trace Image icon on top Toolbar	Used to import JPG, BMP, PNG, GIF: one file at a time	Perform necessary tracing and mark <b>Add Image Layer</b> option. If file is PNG with a transparent background, mark <b>Use Alpha Channel</b> for a quick trace.

### Tip of the Day – 1/13/22: Check the Node Count in the Trace Image window

When tracing an image, clicking on **Update Preview** will provide you the **Node** count at the current settings and can be used as a warning that you haven't optimized the settings. Here's an example of what seems to be a "decent image to trace" but after clicking on **Update Preview**, the **Node** count is at 1643. If one then zooms in closer, you can see that trace line is jagged. By increasing the **Contrast**, the **Node** count drops significantly and the trace line becomes much smoother.



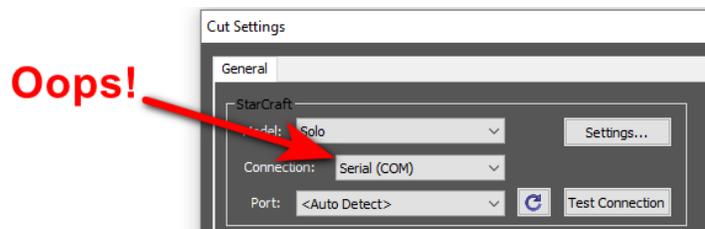


### Tip of the Day – 1/14/22: Lost Connection

If CREATE crashes on you, be sure to verify the **Connection** in the **Cut Settings** window after you reopen. It can revert to a different setting when the software is reopened and it's easy to miss that when you send your next project to cut.

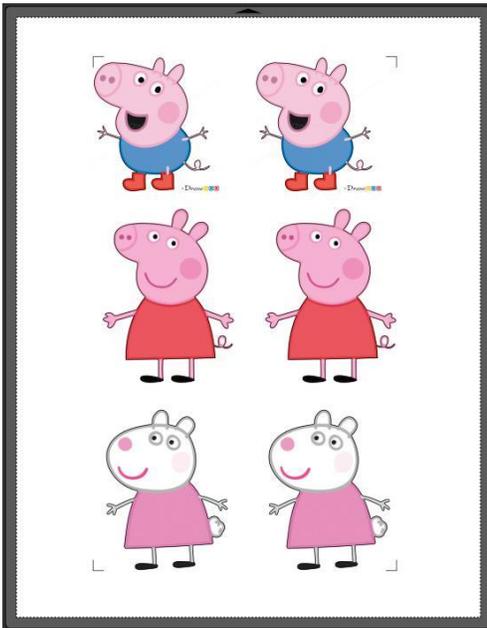
Also remember that if you are using a wireless connection, after you change back to **TCP/IP**, you might need to re-enter your **IP Address**.

If you have ANY issues getting reconnected post for help and we'll get it figured out. Be sure to always include screenshots and photos.



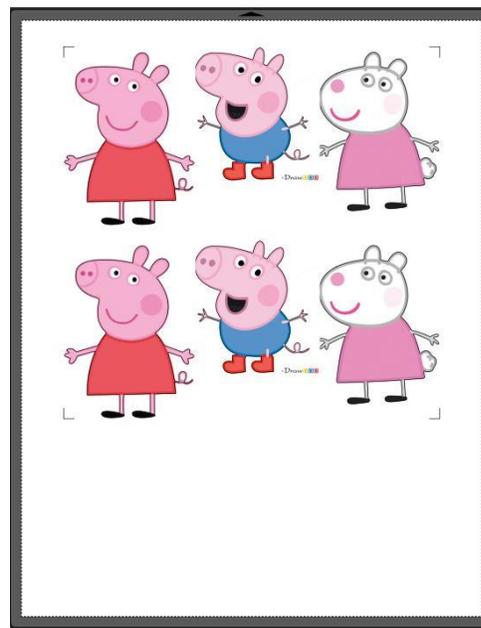
### Tip of the Day – 1/15/22: Counter-clockwise Scanning of the Reg Marks

If you notice your SOLO scanning the reg marks in a counterclockwise order instead of the usual clockwise order, not to worry. The direction changes if the width of the project is wider than the height:



Reg Marks will be photographed in a clockwise order

versus



Reg Marks will be photographed in a counterclockwise order

### Tip of the Day – 1/16/22: Draw, Draw, Draw

Various settings and factors determine where shapes will cut:

1. Orientation: **Vertical/Portrait** vs **Horizontal/Landscape**
2. Cut Mode: **WYSIWYG** vs **Origin Point** vs **Center Point** [Video](#) [Video](#) [Video](#)
3. Origin: Starting location of the blade or tool tip
4. Location: Where shapes are located in the **Document Area** and/or relative to one another

It can take some time to know with certainty where shapes will cut. Utilize the SOLO test pen and copy paper to practice with the settings you need for your projects so that you don't end up cutting off the material.

Also, play with the other settings and test what happens if you move the origin here or there, so that you can understand in what circumstances you might want to make changes.

Finally, check out Section 8.04 of the StarCraft CREATE User Manual for diagrams showing how the various combinations of **Orientation** and **Cut Mode** control where shapes will cut:

<https://www.iloveknk.com/0um/StarCraft-CREATE/CREATE-User-Manual.pdf>

### Tip of the Day – 1/17/22: Think Small... At First

The first time you drove a car, were you out on the freeway during rush hour?

The first time you cooked dinner, was it a Thanksgiving feast for 8?

After starting with a new cutter and new software, it's very easy to make mistakes. In fact, you should be making some mistakes as part of the learning process. Thus, start off with easy materials and small projects. Nothing makes me cringe more than a post from someone who damaged their blade trying to cut chipboard or wasting 6 feet of vinyl on their first cut! Don't do that to yourself!

As I posted in yesterday's tip, I urge the use of pen and paper first to learn how to control where shapes will cut. When you're ready to start cutting, pick something small to cut from an easy and inexpensive material. With the SOLO it also takes some experience to learn how to set a suitable blade exposure and tweak the pressure. You'll get there! Just do it step-by-step and remember, "Don't get frustrated, get help!" 😊

### Tip of the Day – 1/18/22: Un-Du Disarms Mat Adhesives

I jokingly say that my 3 favorite liquids are coffee, wine, and Un-du. No, I do NOT drink Un-du! But I do use it several times a week for various reasons, some of these related to cutting:

- + Temporarily disarm the adhesives used on cutting mats. Squirt some Un-du wherever the material is stuck, allow a second or two for it to sink in and then lift off the material. Be careful not to scrape the mat at all because the adhesive will be temporarily dissolved into the Un-du. But after about 20 seconds, the Un-du will be fully evaporated, leaving behind your adhesive, sticky as ever.
- + Clean your blades, scissors, palette knives and other tools that get sticky.
- + If you are a paper crafter, Un-du is great for removing stickers, glue dots, red line tape, pop dots, and stick-on embellishments.
- + Remove vinyl, postage stamps, mailing labels, and stickers on envelopes, boxes, or hard surfaces such as glassware or metal.

Note that I'm not associated with the manufacturer in any way. Un-du is just a great product and I've been using it for at least 20 years. I thought I'd share it here in case any of you have never heard of it.

[https://www.amazon.com/Original-Formula-Sticker-Remover-California/dp/B003TZQPTS/ref=sr\\_1\\_2?crid=361U9OBVJWAZQ&keywords=un-du%2Badhesive%2Bremover&qid=1642537705&sprefix=Un-Du%2Caps%2C130&sr=8-2&th=1](https://www.amazon.com/Original-Formula-Sticker-Remover-California/dp/B003TZQPTS/ref=sr_1_2?crid=361U9OBVJWAZQ&keywords=un-du%2Badhesive%2Bremover&qid=1642537705&sprefix=Un-Du%2Caps%2C130&sr=8-2&th=1)

### Tip of the Day – 1/19/22: Troubleshooting a Problem

When something goes wrong with a cut, and you're not sure if it's the design, the material, your blade, your blade holder, etc., please try a back-to-basics approach:

1. Repeat the Test Cut you performed before you cut this project to see if you still get a very clean cut without cutting too deeply.
2. Cut a material you've cut before – everyone should have a standard material that they've cut with enough success that they know what settings to use.
3. Cut one or two basic shapes (circle, square) instead of your project. Issues like a chipped blade or a blade that's not swiveling will show up in simple shapes, too, and then you won't waste material by trying a recut of your entire project.
4. Use your test pen to draw the design on paper instead of cutting it. Comparing the drawing to the cut can help eliminate a lot of possibilities.

5. Post photos or videos and explain the issue which isn't always obvious in a photo. Provide details such as the name of the material, a screenshot of your project in the main window and a screenshot of the **Cut Settings** window.
6. Be patient. We WILL help you resolve the issue! 😊

## Tip of the Day – 1/20/22: Use the SOLO and CREATE User Manuals as Reference Guides

Am I a wordy person? Yes, I am.

Do I cover things in great detail? Yes, I do.

Do I get unsolicited compliments on my user manuals by those who “give them a chance?” Often.

I write step-by-step instructions in enough detail that users should be able to follow any given tutorial. Also, the SOLO is loaded with SO much functionality and CREATE is loaded with SO many fun designing features and editing tools that there's just a lot to write about!

BUT... that doesn't mean you need to read it all. Quite the opposite. Download these PDF manuals to your desktop and then use **CTRL+F** (or **Command+F** on a Mac) to search and find all locations for any given word you enter. Also, once saved to your computer, the **Table of Contents** should be linked to the pages making it fast to click and go to particular sections of interest.

Here's a link to my SOLO/CREATE support page with access to the latest versions of both manuals, plus links to other resources, such as videos, look-up tables, cut settings, and more.

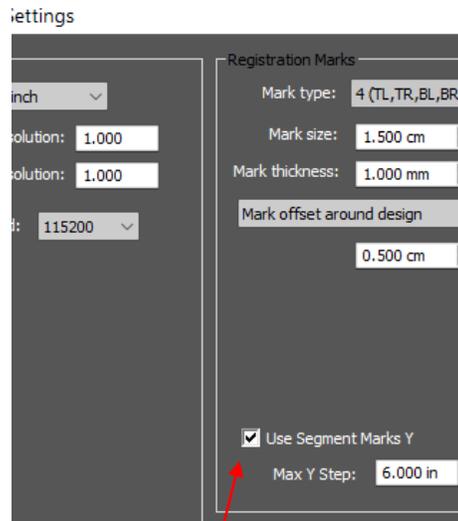
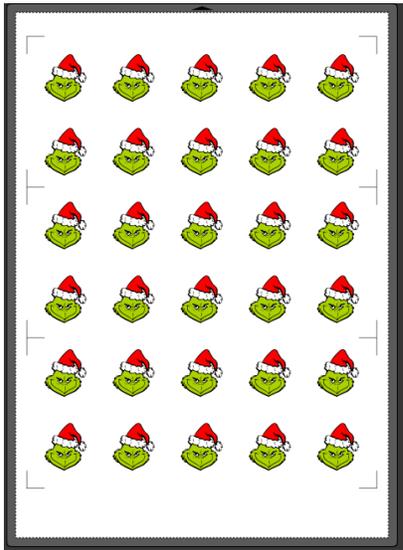
<https://www.iloveknk.com/support/starcraft-solo-and-create/>

## Tip of the Day – 1/21/22: NEW Intermediate Reg Marks!

Surprise! Surprise! Paul Zingah discovered a new addition to the **Cutter>Cutters Settings** window in CREATE 1.008 that will be warmly received by those doing Print+Cut applications on long printed sheets or from thicker materials, such as laminated sheets.

I mentioned in the January 8<sup>th</sup> Tip of the Day that when print+cut projects start off accurately, but begin to drift off course during the duration of the cut, the cause is friction. And it can sometimes be difficult to correct that friction. But the developer of CREATE has added a function that is usually only present in some of the professional (aka expensive) vinyl cutting programs: **Intermediate Reg Marks**.

Just enter the distance at which you want another set of marks added to your project and the camera will only cut up to that distance before scanning the next set of 4 marks. By having repeated scans during the cut, corrections will be made increasing the accuracy as the cut progresses.



## Tip of the Day – 1/22/22: When Tracing, Raster Size Matters

There are three ways to add an image into the **Trace Image** window:

1. Open the **Trace Image** window first and click on **Choose an image**
2. Use **File>Place Image** (or drag and drop) and then send to the **Trace Image** window
3. Use **File>Import** (if the image is a PNG) and then only select the **Print** layer to send to the **Trace Image** window

When using option 1, you don't have the opportunity to resize the image before applying trace settings. The size of the image brought into the **Trace Image** window can greatly affect the number of nodes used in the trace. In other words, larger images will generate more nodes.

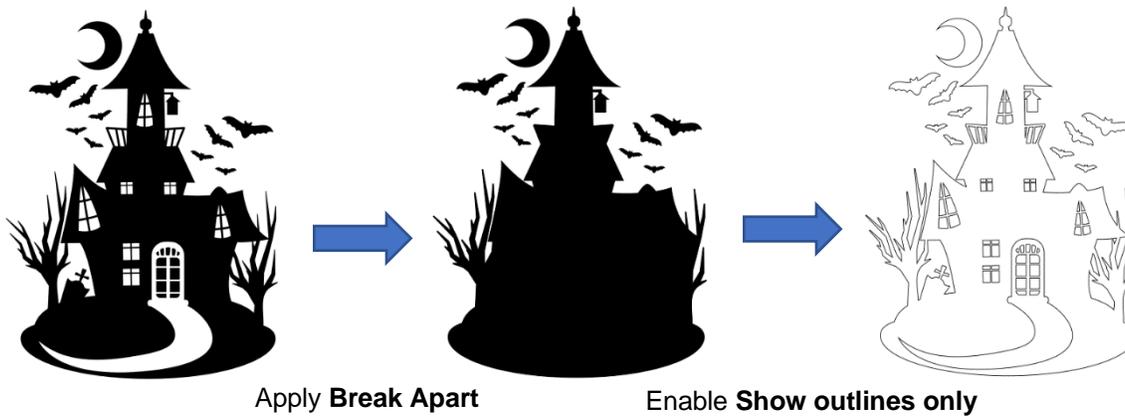
Thus, it makes sense to import the raster using either Option 2 or 3 so that you can adjust an oversized image to more closely match the dimensions you plan to use in your project. Then perform the tracing.

## Tip of the Day – 1/23/22: Editing Images After Applying Break Apart

When you apply **Object>Break Apart** to an image, it's going to fill with color, making it hard (or impossible) to see the inner (child) shapes that you might want to edit or remove. But if you mark the **Show outlines only** option on the **Document Panel**, you can then see all of the parts which make up the design.

The largest outside (parent) shape will be at the bottom of the **Layers Panel** and locking that layer will then also make it much easier to work with the inner shapes and not inadvertently select that large outside shape over and over.

Once you are finished editing, unlock that outer layer, reselect all shapes, and apply **Object>Merge**. Not only is this important so that you can disable the **Show outlines only** to see the filled design again, BUT applying **Merge** ensures that all inner shapes will cut before outer shapes which helps stabilize the cut.



### Tip of the Day – 1/24/22: NEW! CREATE File Thumbnails for Windows Explorer

The developer of CREATE surprised me today with a quick program which will generate thumbnail images for \*.create files in Windows Explorer. You can download it here if you'd like to test it out:

<https://drive.google.com/drive/folders/1OWh6s62jvxVXRDMa-dyxy2bpwgP0nymr?usp=sharing>

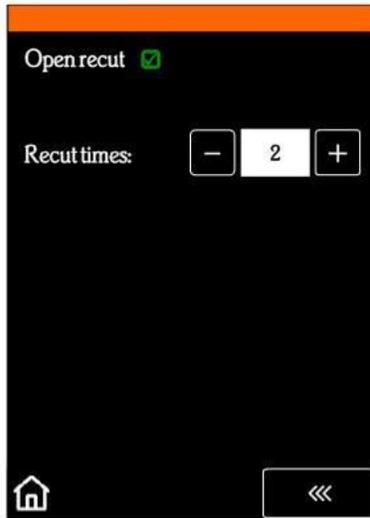
1. Right click on the exe file and select **Download**.
2. Save the file to your computer and run the file.
3. Reboot Windows and then open **Explorer**.
4. Go to any folder where you save \*.create files.
5. Allow the computer a minute or more to generate a thumbnail image for each file.
6. Make sure **Explorer's View** option is set to **Medium icons** or larger.

I asked about a Mac equivalent and was told that the prior Mac O/S “broke” something in the process he used so it'll have to be revisited at some point.

### Tip of the Day – 1/25/22: Activating Passes on the Control Panel

While StarCraft CREATE has the **Multi-cut** option in the **Cut Settings** window, you can also have **Multi-cut** (aka **Passes**) set on the Control Panel, if the need arises. To add it to the Control Panel:

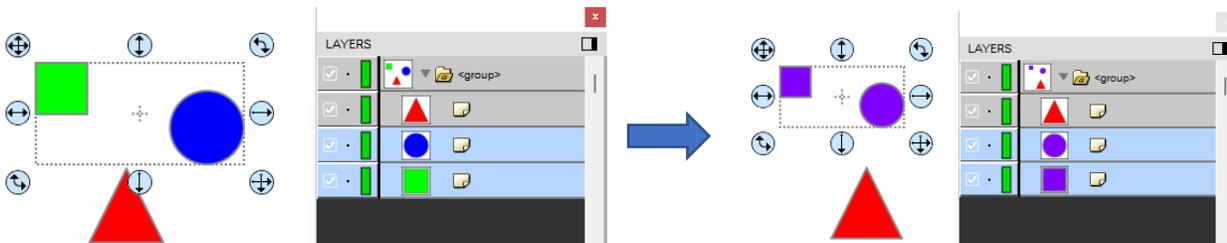
1. Press **Set>Advanced Settings>System Mode**.
2. Press the button labeled **cmd**. Then press **Input**.
3. Input the code **031** and press **Run**.
4. Back on the **Home** screen, press **USB** and you'll now see a **Passes Set** option to press.
5. Mark the option for **Open recut** and then set the desired passes. Unfortunately, the default is 255! So, make sure you change that back to something like 2 before using. Lol
6. Also, note that the **Open recut** option will always default back to off when the SOLO is powered off.



Tip of the Day – 1/26/22: You don't have to ungroup shapes in order to edit some of them

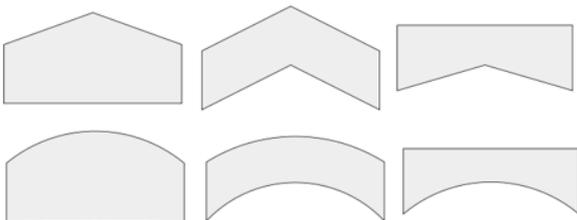
Using the **Layers Panel**, you can open up a group and select one (or using **Shift** key, select more than one) and then apply changes such as color, sizing, and location.

For example, 2 of the 3 grouped shapes are selected and then resize and recolored without ungrouping from the third.



Tip of the Day – 1/27/22: Bridge Warp provides many ways to reshape designs, especially text

These are the basic warping shapes available when you send a shape or text to **Effects>Bridge Warp**:



Just play with the settings so that you can understand how to create any of these available styles. Section 7.20 of the [StarCraft CREATE User Manual](#) presents lots of examples, with settings to help you recreate similar effects with your designs.

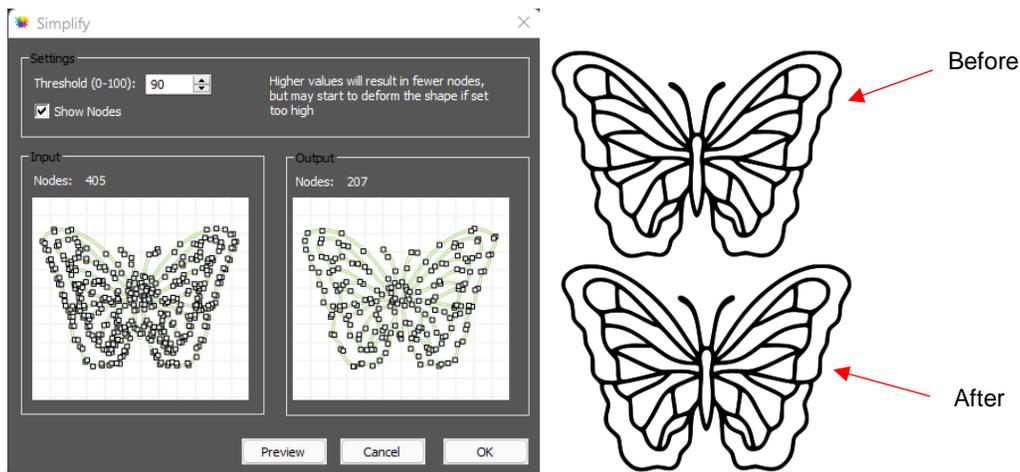
# TEXAS A&M TEXAS A&M TEXAS A&M

## Tip of the Day – 1/28/22: Apply Path>Simplify for faster smoother cutting

**Path>Simplify** can be used to possibly solve the following issues:

1. If you have a file that's taking a very long time to cut
2. If you see inside corners pulling up or the material tearing on tight curves
3. A cut stopping unexpectedly
4. Random cutting occurrence

The **Path>Simplify** window allows you to test different thresholds before accepting (and you can always Undo, if needed). But, in general, you can significantly reduce the number of nodes without compromising the design:



## Tip of the Day – 2/1/22: Back up your files!

The CREATE software is not cloud-based, thus any files and data you save are not automatically saved somewhere else. You are responsible for making sure “your stuff” is secure. I personally use Google Drive but using any cloud service or even a back-up flash or hard drive will help in the event your computer crashes and data is not recoverable.

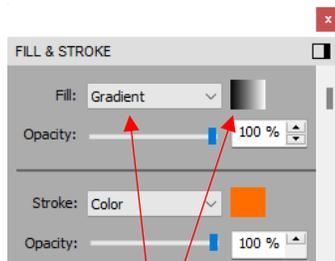
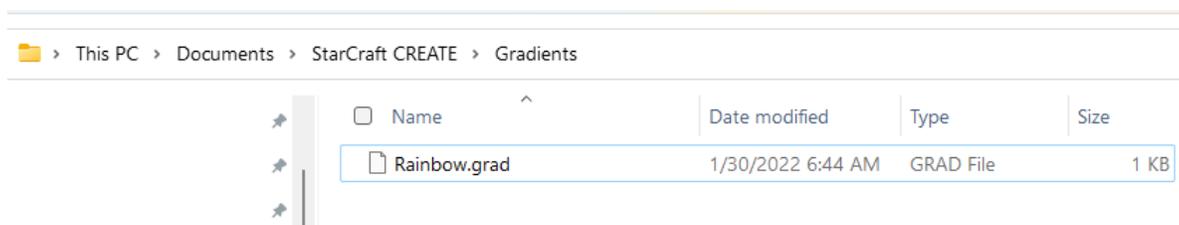
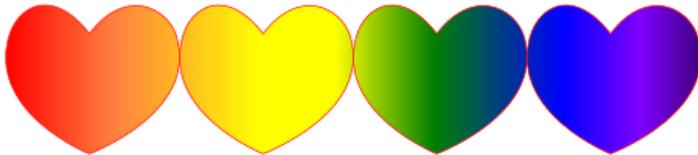
Here's a list of the CREATE-related files you might want to back up, just in case:

1. Any SVG files you have exported from CREATE
2. Any CREATE files you have saved from CREATE
3. Any PNG, JPG, TTF, OTF, or OPF files you care about using again in CREATE
4. This folder: Document\StarCraft CREATE which contains your cutting presets, any custom patterns, gradients, or mat templates you created, and any font, svg, or create files you may have chosen to save there.

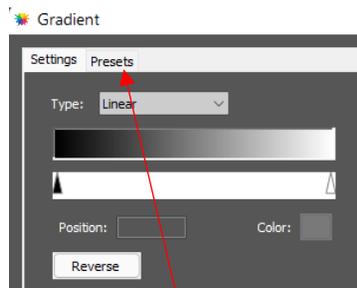
## Tip of the Day – 2/2/22: Sharing Gradients

One of the things I love about CREATE is that you can easily share things you design yourself with other users, including gradients. I made a rainbow gradient yesterday and set up a folder where other CREATE owners can download gradients. To download this file, click on this link and then RIGHT click on the Rainbow.grad file to then select **Download**. Make sure you place the file in the **Documents** folder shown and you'll then have it available to fill shapes after you reopen CREATE.

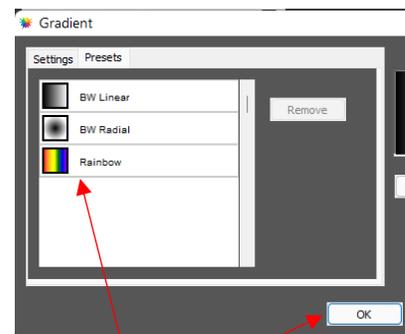
[https://drive.google.com/drive/folders/1JTeh8KD3QT2WYP1PeR-NPnEFU2izt-\\_L?usp=sharing](https://drive.google.com/drive/folders/1JTeh8KD3QT2WYP1PeR-NPnEFU2izt-_L?usp=sharing)



Change to **Gradient**  
and click on box



Click on **Presets**



Select **Rainbow** and  
click on **OK**

## Tip of the Day – 2/3/22: Video on Setting the Blade Exposure

I've posted past Tips of the Day (on 12/3/21 and 12/29/21) regarding blade exposure being an important setting on most drag blade cutters, including the SOLO. While you can attempt to offset too much blade with a low pressure, this can often lead to inconsistent cutting across the material and/or difficulty in weeding.

This video by SignCut Academy popped up on my FB feed this morning and is one of the best I've watched on how to manually test your blade exposure. Note that those cutting paper products can perform the same kind of test by folding the material over onto itself and then cutting by hand to see if the blade cuts into the layer beneath.

<https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=W7GDSMAKcfQ>

## Tip of the Day – 2/4/22: Two Ways to Set Up an Array

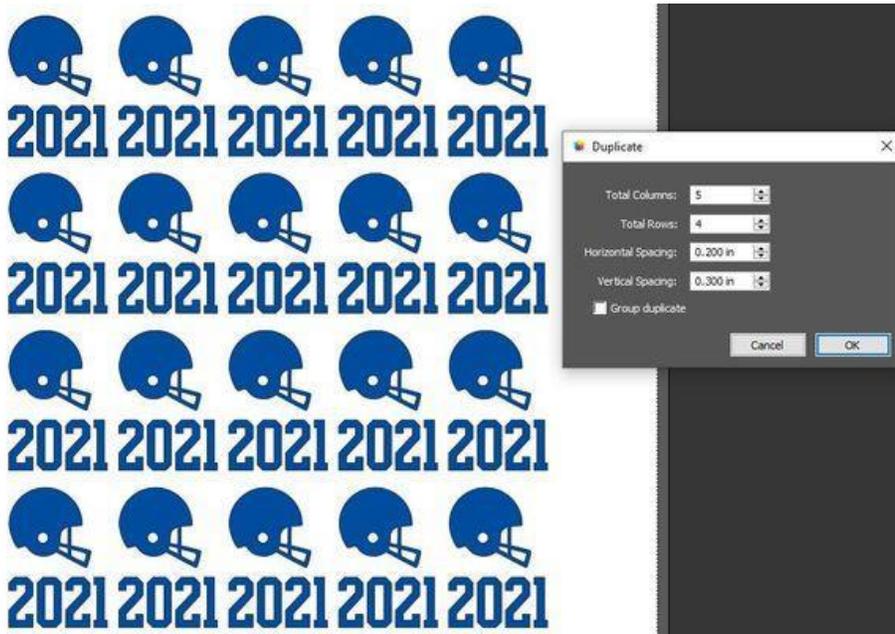
An array of repeats can be done either in the CREATE software or on the control panel of the SOLO itself:

(1) In CREATE, use **Ctrl+D (Object>Duplicate)** to create the array in the software to send to the SOLO.

OR...

(2) On the Control Panel, press **Set>Advanced Settings>Array**. Activating **Array** will open the **Array** screen where the same **Columns**, **Rows**, and **Spacings** can be entered. Then in CREATE, send the single design, in **Origin Point Cut Mode** to the SOLO. The **Array** screen will pop up a confirmation option (**Cut Array**) and the same array will be cut.

Note that it's far more common to use the **Array** function on the Control Panel when loading a PLT design from the flash drive. But the point of this post is to demonstrate the equivalent result with either option.



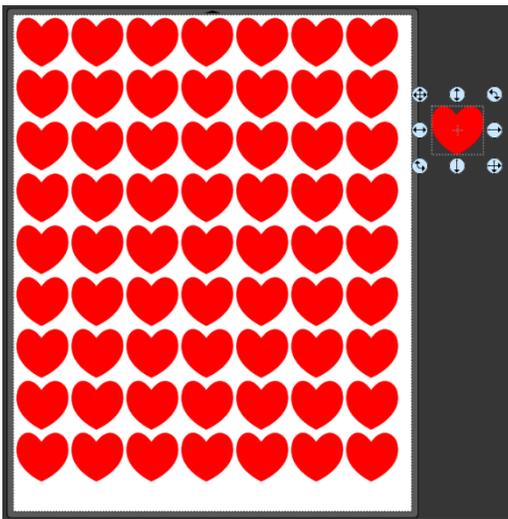
## Tip of the Day – 2/5/22: Use Auto Fill to Create an Array

Yesterday's Tip covered two ways to set up an array of repeats. There's another way, as well, and it allows you to fill your available material dimensions.

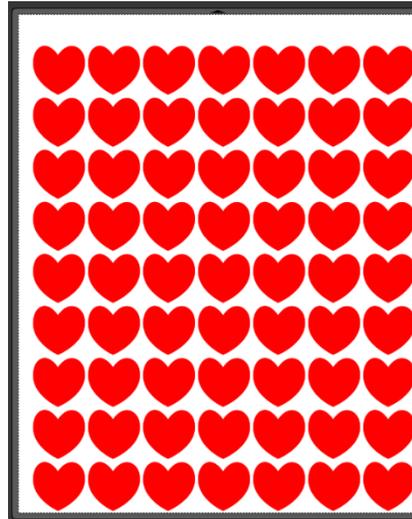
Thus, let's say you have a 12" x 15" sheet of vinyl and you want as many hearts as possible to be cut out:

1. Set up a custom **Mat Size** to 12" x 15".
2. Select the shape and apply **Edit>Copy**, followed by **Edit>Paste (Auto Fill)**. The 12 x 15 document area then fills with the copied shape.
3. It's recommended that you then move the design so that it's aligned with the SOLO's origin and less likely to cut off the material at the outer edges. Alternatively, use **Origin Point** cut mode which will move the design automatically to that corner for cutting.

Stay tuned for tomorrow tip when **Nest** will be used to squeeze in a few more. 😊



**Edit>Copy Edit>Paste (Auto Fill)**  
fills the document area with repeats



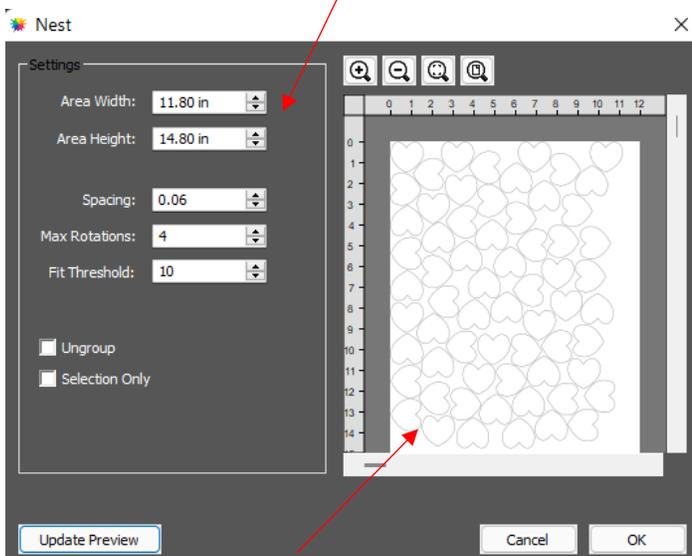
Move the array to the lower right corner  
or select **Origin Point** before cutting

### Tip of the Day – 2/6/22: Use Nest to Squeeze in More Shapes

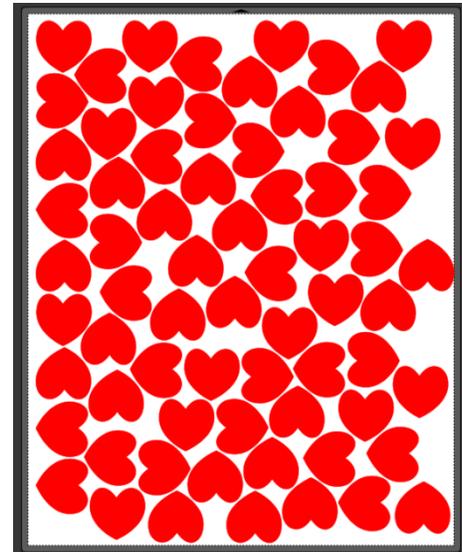
Yesterday's tip showed how fill your material with repeats. While this if a fast way to set up an array, it doesn't necessary maximize the number of copies that will actually fit. After using the **Edit>Paste (Auto Fill)**, try applying **Effects>Nest** to further make room for more copies:

1. Go to **Effects>Nest**.
2. Because you don't want shapes cutting immediately next to the edge of the material, decrease the **Material Size** dimensions down a bit by clicking on the down arrows.
3. You can decrease the spacing when cutting most thin materials. So, try 0.06" instead of the default of 0.10"
4. If the material has a particular pattern such that you want all shapes to remain "vertical", set **Max Rotations** to 0.
5. Otherwise, if rotating the shapes is okay, leave at 4. Using a larger number delays processing and offers little if any benefit. Same with **Threshold**.
6. Click on **Update Preview**. **IMPORTANT:** Rendering time can be quite long with lots of shapes. Don't assume CREATE has locked up. Go make yourself a cup of coffee or tea, answer some emails, etc.
7. Once finished, click on **Update Preview** and then you can hold the **Alt** key and drag one of your shapes to create another to squeeze in

## Decrease **Width** and **Height**



This took over 1 minute to render

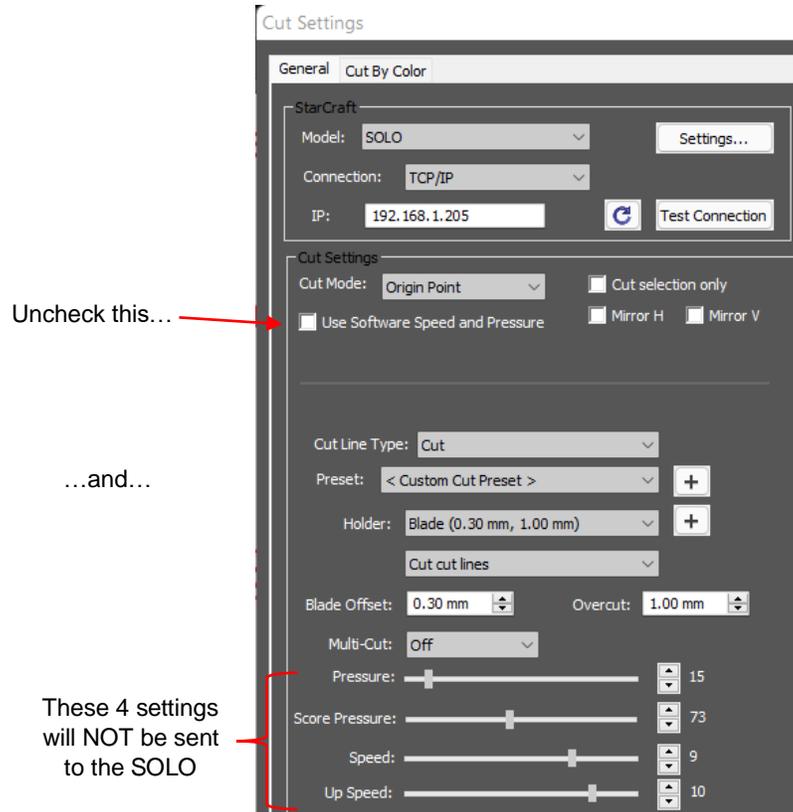


Four more hearts were “squeezed in”  
along the right side

## Tip of the Day – 2/7/22: Reviewing the Control Panel “Biggies”

Today’s post covers a few of the important tips regarding the SOLO’s Control Panel:

1. Always use the arrow buttons to move the blade carriage left and right. Do NOT use your hand to move the blade carriage when the SOLO is powered on.
2. If the up/down arrow key movements seem backwards to you, go to **Set>Advanced Settings>Y Key Mode** and change it.
3. To control whether or not the blade carriage remains in place when powered on versus moving to the right side, go to **Set>Advanced Settings** and press **To right power on**.
4. By default, the blade carriage will advance to the end of the cut when the project is completed. However, many users (including myself) prefer the blade carriage to return to the origin (location before the cut began). Change this by going to **Set>Advance mode** and selecting **To start**.
5. The **Speed/Force** button on the Control Panel lets you set the **Cut Speed** and **Force** (aka **Pressure**) that will be used for a **TEST** button cut plus what will be used if you do NOT have the **Use Software Speed and Force** setting enabled in CREATE.



## Tip of the Day – 2/8/22: No Shapes to Cut?

If you send a project to cut and receive the error message: “*There are no shapes to cut*”, note the following:

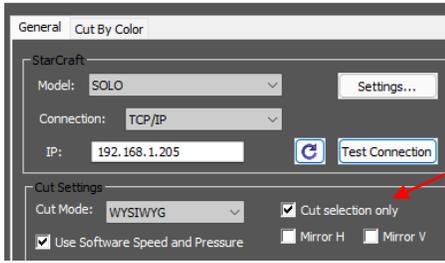
- + It is NOT related to the SOLO itself.
- + It is NOT related to the communication between the computer and the SOLO.
- + It IS an indication that a setting in CREATE is preventing cut shapes from being identified.

What could be the cause?

1. If you have **Cut Selection Only** marked then you need to first select / click on whatever shapes you want to be cut.
2. If your shapes to be cut are all hidden on the **Layers Panel**
3. If you have all of your shapes assigned as **Print+Cut Print** on the **Style Panel**, they can only be printed and not sent to the cutter.
4. If you have all of your shapes assigned as **Draw** on the **Style Panel**, but in the **Cut Settings** window you have **Pen** selected instead of **Blade**.

Remember to check the **Preview** window to see if there’s anything to cut. Nothing there? Check your settings.

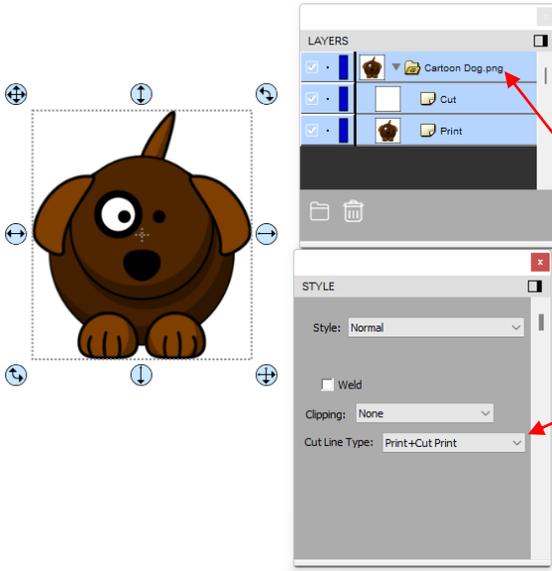
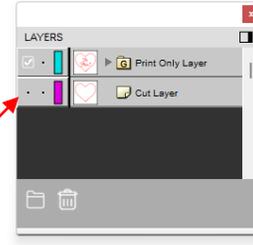
Cut Settings



1. This is marked?

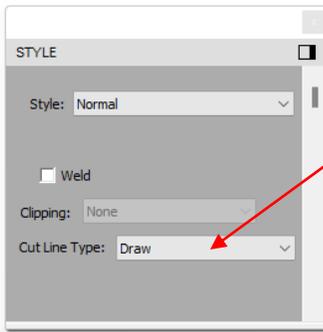


2. This is hidden?



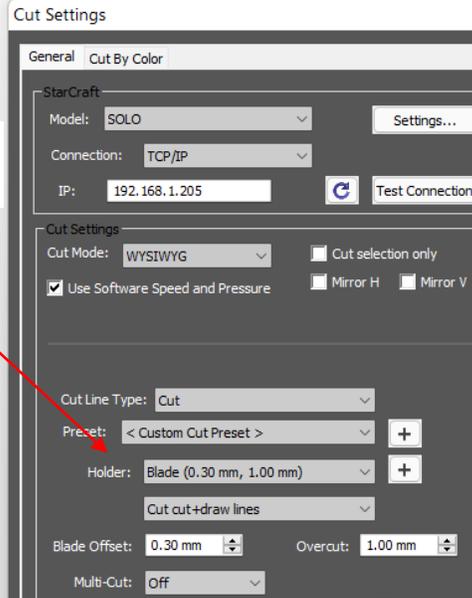
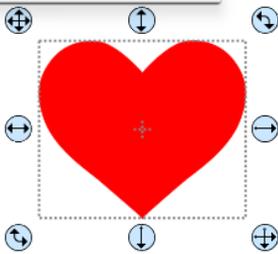
3. All sublayers are selected but...

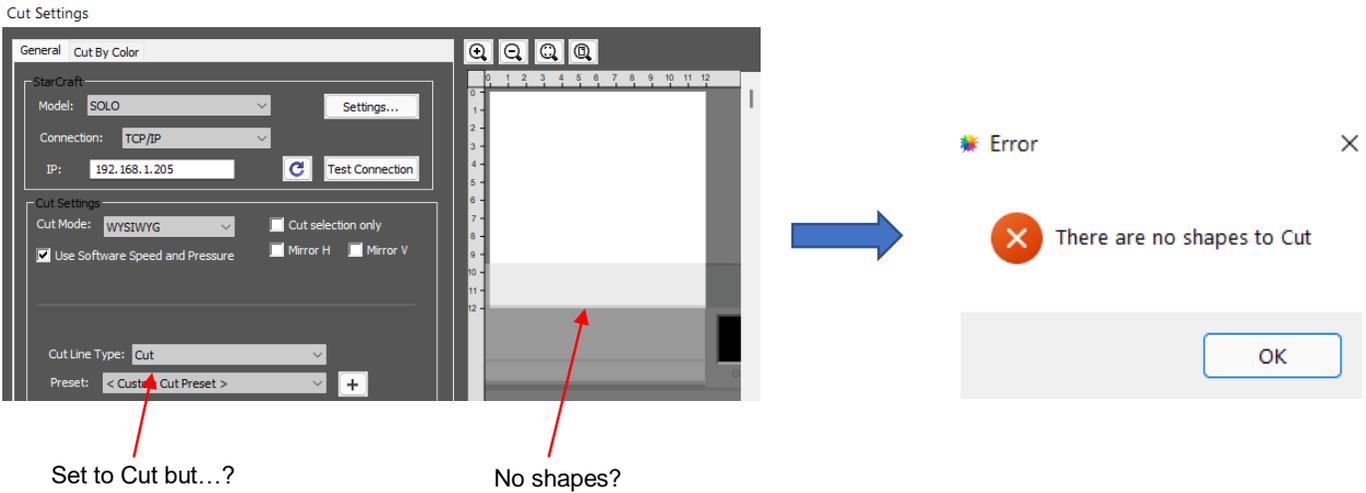
set to Print+Cut Print?



4. Shape set to Draw but...

Holder set to Blade?





### Tip of the Day – 2/9/22: SOLO and CREATE Video Page

I added a new page to my web site dedicated to SOLO and CREATE video links so that I could organize them and, hopefully, make it easier for you to find a video you need. Naturally, this page will be updated as more videos are provided that I find are both accurate and helpful.

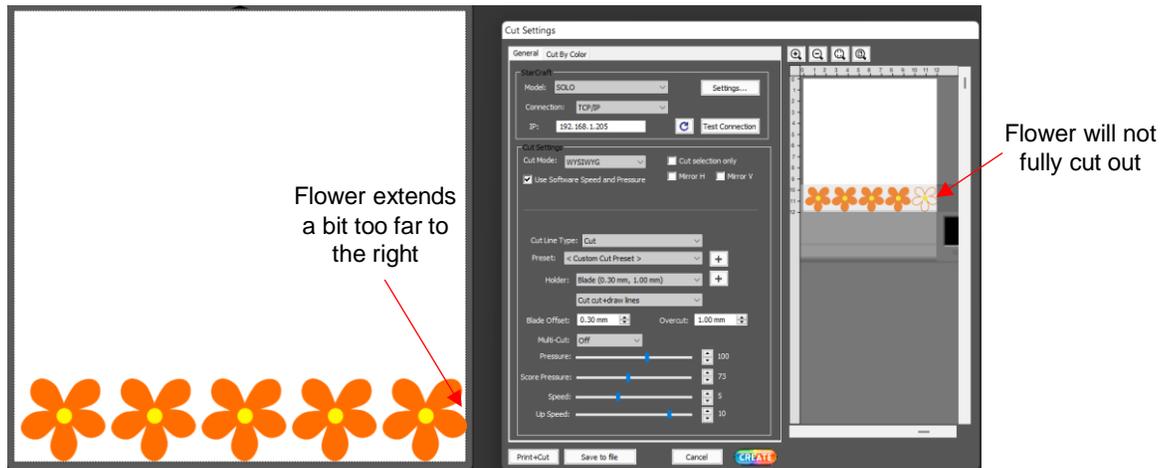
This page is also linked on my SOLO Support page for those accustomed to going there to access the latest user manual version, tables, tutorials, videos, and other information.

<https://www.iloveknk.com/support/starcraft-solo-and-create/solo-and-create-videos/>

### Tip of the Day – 2/10/22: Check the Preview in the Cut Settings window

While the regular **Preview** window allows you to verify **Style Panel** assignments (**Cut** vs **Print** vs **Score**, etc.), the **Preview** in the **Cut Settings** window indicates additional information you should check before sending a project to the SOLO:

1. Which shapes will cut (refer back to the Tip posted two days ago)
2. Where the shapes will cut (which depends on which **Cut Mode** you've selected)
3. **Orientation** of the cut (**Landscape** vs **Portrait**)
4. Are there any shapes that are overlapping the **Document Area** margins - In the screenshots shown, the flower on the right is slightly over the border of the **Document Area** and appears unfilled with color in the **Preview**. This means that part outside the border will not cut.



### Tip of the Day – 2/11/22: Don't Assume "It" Can't be Done

I first met Paul Zingah in 2014 at the MTC forum and quickly realized he enjoys two things as much as I do: 1. Helping fellow cutter owners and 2. Working on challenges. Since that time, Paul and I have taken on quite a few situations where someone wanted to be able to do something and we had to stop and think to ourselves, "Hmm. Is it possible to do that?" If there's ever been a case of "2 heads are better than 1", it's with us. Invariably, we'll approach a problem separately and then begin to compare possible solutions. In most cases, when one of us looks at what the other has started, the light bulb will come on with a new idea to make it work easier, faster, or more successfully. Back and forth we'll keep working an issue until it's figured out. Ah... so satisfying!

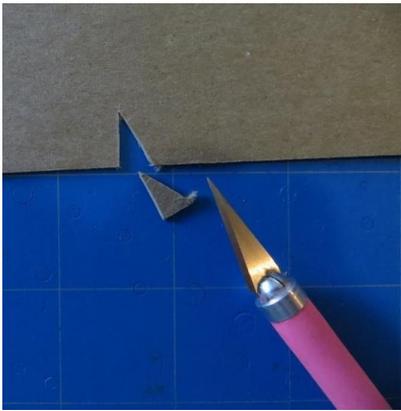
So, if you're wondering about the possibility of the SOLO being able to perform a task or CREATE being able to design a particular kind of file, ALWAYS post and ask. No blue-sky idea will ever be rejected without serious consideration. This is how the cool stuff is born!

### Tip of the Day – 2/12/22: Can the SOLO Cut This? A Litmus Test

There are hundreds of materials that cutter owners ask about cutting. I never mind answering, other than sometimes I'm not really sure because either I've not personally tested that material or I haven't tested the same thickness that the customer is asking about.

So, years ago, I came up with a litmus test that is as close to an accurate determining factor as anything else. Take a craft knife like an X-Acto knife and try cutting it by hand. If you can cut through it in 2 passes, then the SOLO should be able to, as well. For example, I can cut through 0.03" chipboard with two slices of my X-Acto knife but I can't manually cut through 0.06" chipboard in 3 passes.

Now, one of you is going to try it on your SOLO and will be able to use, say, 20 passes at a combination of a score pressure and full pressure, with a speed of 1 to get a slightly wonky Test cut from 0.06" chipboard and then claim victory. Great... go for it if you want to. But don't be surprised if your blade is quite dull by the second project or when you try something larger, the repeated passes start to offset from the prior ones. In other words, I won't argue with your initial test cut success. But I will still urge you to have realistic expectations. 😊



versus



0.03" (0.75 mm) chipboard cut in 2 passes by hand, thus the SOLO can cut this

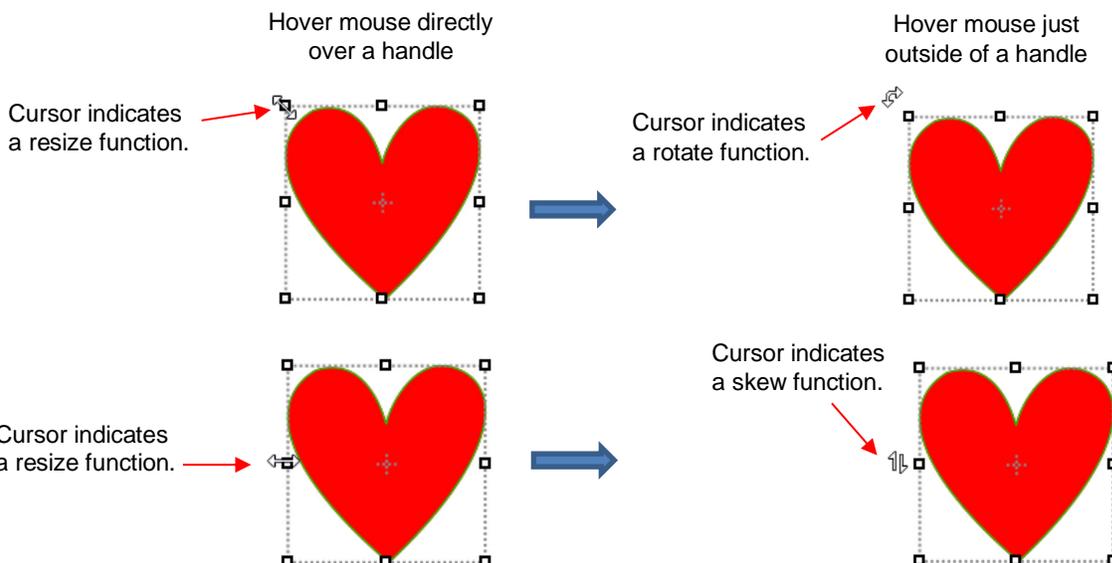
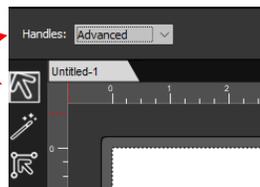
0.06" (1.5 mm) chipboard would not cut by hand in 3 passes. Thus, the SOLO shouldn't be used to cut it either

### Tip of the Day – 2/16/22: Checking Out the Advanced Selection Handles

When in **Select** mode, you have two options for handles: **Basic** or **Advanced**. Since **Basic** is the default mode, most users never realize what **Advanced** mode offers. Try switching modes as a test:

1. You can now resize from any of the handles.
2. You can rotate from any of the 4 corner handles. Hover the mouse slightly outside a corner handle until it changes to a rotate cursor.
3. You can skew the shape from any of the 4 middle handles. Hover the mouse slightly outside a middle handle until it changes to a skew cursor.

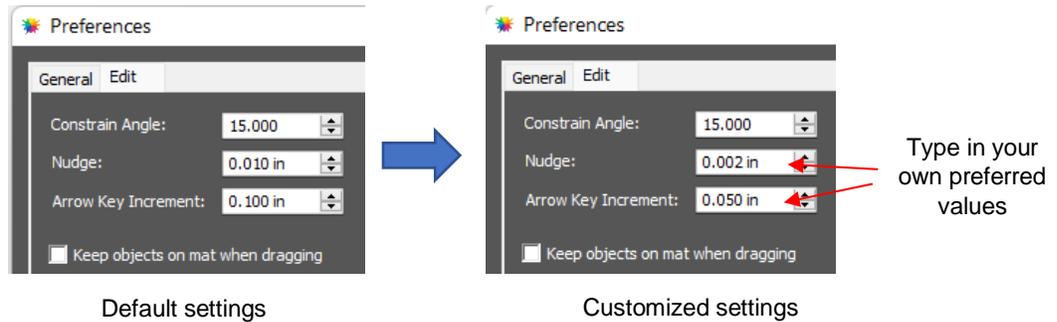
In **Select** mode, switch to **Advanced**



## Tip of the Day – 2/17/22: Adjusting Arrow and Nudge Increments

Need finer control over the distance moved when pressing the arrow key or using the **Nudge** icons on the **Position & Size Panel**?

Go to **Edit>Preferences>Edit** tab. Change the increments to the size you prefer. Note that you'll want to type in the values versus clicking the arrows next to the defaults.



## Tip of the Day – 2/18/22: Origin Point Mode is Easy to Learn and Efficient with Materials

Those coming from the Cameo and Cricuts are not typically familiar with **Origin Point** mode which is the default option (although called by different names) in most professional vinyl cutting programs. It really is simple to learn and a practical choice for “regular cutting,” including cut-by-color projects. The following video explains how it works:

<https://youtu.be/7xvssPVIDvs>

## Tip of the Day – 2/19/22: Finding ALL of the Tips of the Day

If you want to review or search for a tip on a particular topic, here is the link to the PDF that contains them all. I update this PDF every few days and you can also find this link on my SOLO Support page.

<https://drive.google.com/file/d/1GWRV9Vb2Fpdw8U6SYiBsChrwqTph1zZ/view?usp=sharing>

## Tip of the Day – 2/20/22: Center Point Mode – Two Practical Applications

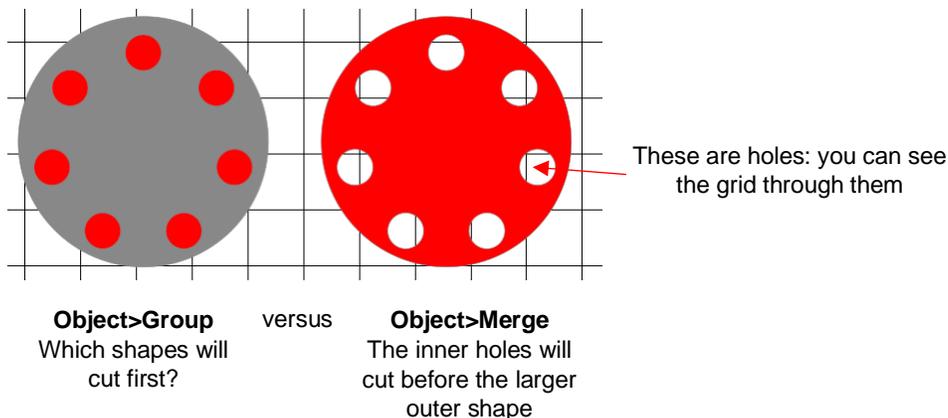
The **Cut Settings** window offers three **Cut Mode** options: **WYSIWYG**, **Origin Point** and **Center Point**. While **Center Point** is not a commonly chosen option for cutting, it can be useful for certain applications as covered in this video:

<https://youtu.be/YrTXmzbP9o8>

## Tip of the Day – 2/21/22: The Importance of Merge

If you're in the habit of applying **Object>Break Apart** so that you can edit or delete the small paths that make up a larger design, remember that it's a good idea to reselect and apply **Object>Merge** before cutting. While **Group** appears to accomplish the same task, it's not the same function.

**Merge** creates "holes" from the smaller shapes inside of larger shapes and cutting programs are designed to recognize and cut those smaller holes before cutting the larger outside shapes. This is far more stabilizing than the other way around.

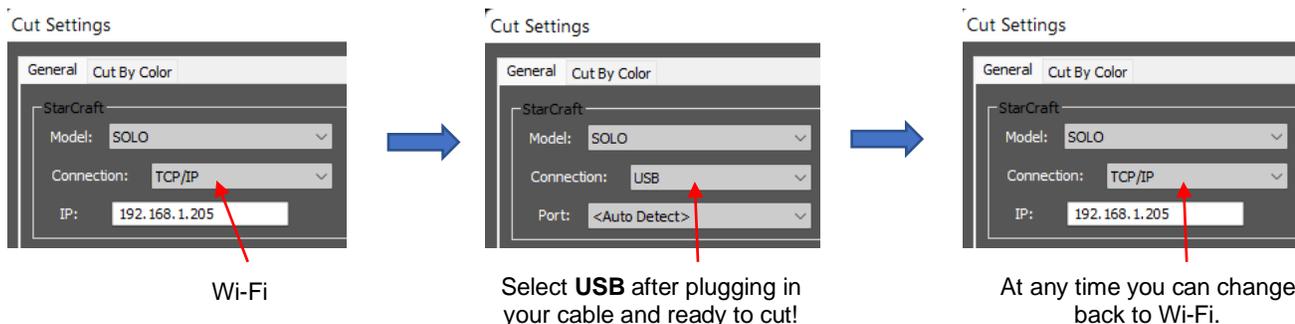


### Tip of the Day – 2/23/22: Switching from Wi-Fi to USB

This question has come up a few times so I thought I'd make a quick Tip of the Day about it.

What all do you need to do in order to switch from Wi-Fi to USB on your SOLO? Answer: not much. There's no "turning off" or reset needed. Just plug in the USB cable and, in CREATE's **Cut Settings** window, switch the connection from **TCP/IP** to **USB**. Done! 😊

Switching back is equally simple. Just make sure that when you go back to **TCP/IP**, the SOLO's assigned **IP Address** is also present. You can even leave the USB cable plugged in, if convenient.



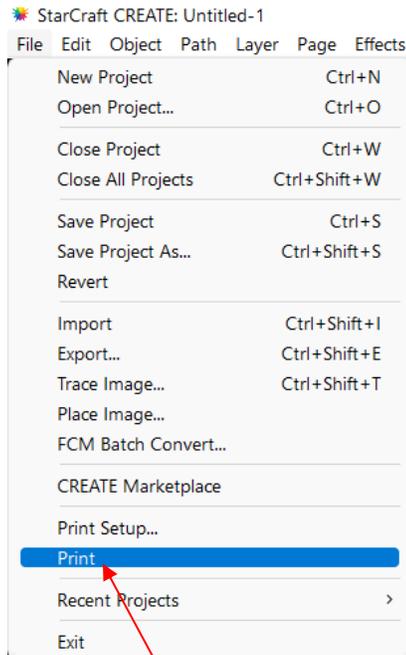
### Tip of the Day – 2/24/22: Two Places for Printing a P+C Project

There are two locations where you can print your projects:

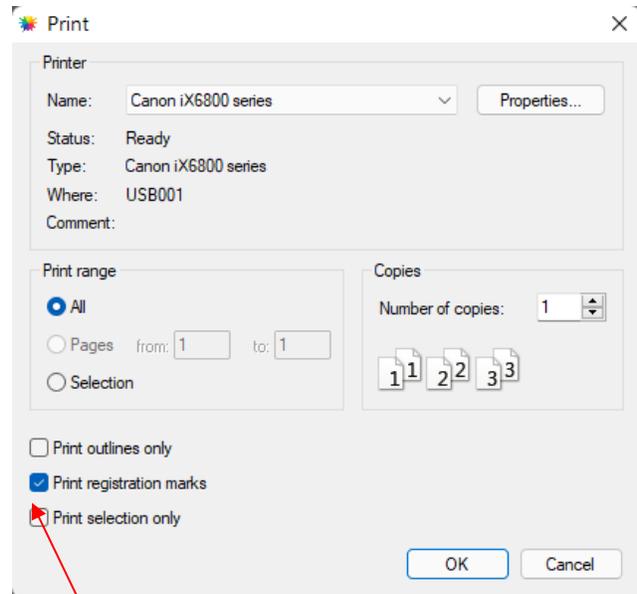
- (1) **File>Print** (from the main window in CREATE). Don't forget to enable **Print registration marks**.
- (2) After you click on the **Print+Cut** button and then click on **Print...**

There is no difference in which one you choose other than the second option will always have **Print registration marks** already enabled for you.

### Option 1: File>Print

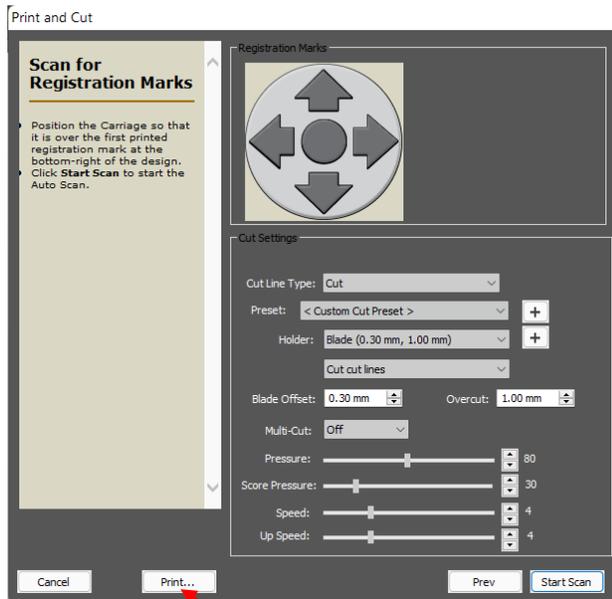


Select Print

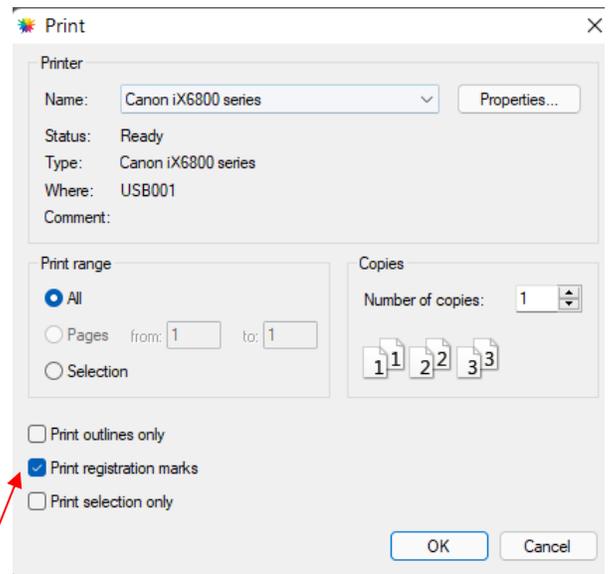


Don't forget to mark this

### Option 2: Click on Print in the Print and Cut window



Click on Print



Should already be enabled

## Tip of the Day – 2/25/22: Other Ways to Select Shapes

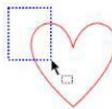
I'm sure most of you have figured out by now the 3 typical ways of selecting a shape in CREATE:

1. Click on the shape (and hold **Shift** to click and add more shapes)
2. Drag your mouse to encompass one or more shapes (aka marquee-select)
3. Find and click the shape on the **Layers Panel** (and hold **Shift** to click and add other layers on the panel)

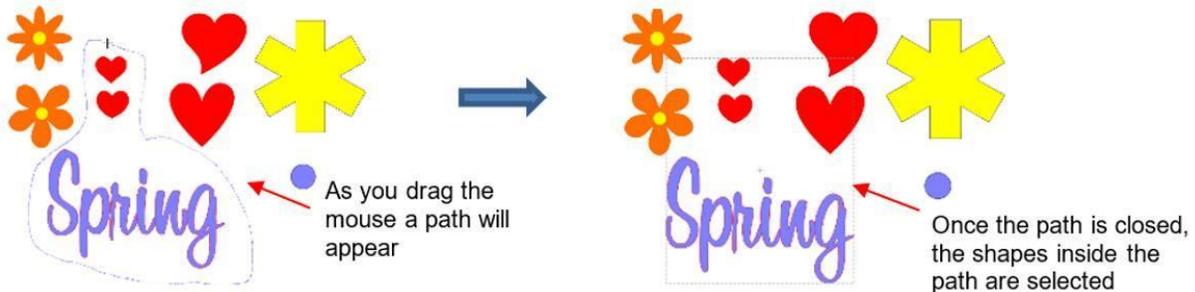
But there are two other ways that can come in handy depending on the situation.

4. Hold the **Shift** key and partially drag your mouse through one or more shapes
5. Use the **Lasso** select tool (2nd icon on the **Tools Panel** and called **Selection**) to freely drag your mouse to form a blue line around the shapes you want in the selection. This is a good one to use when the shapes are near one another but you cannot use the marquee-select type drag.

4. Hold the **Shift** key and marquee-select just a portion of the shape



5. **Lasso Selection** tool on the **Tools Panel** 

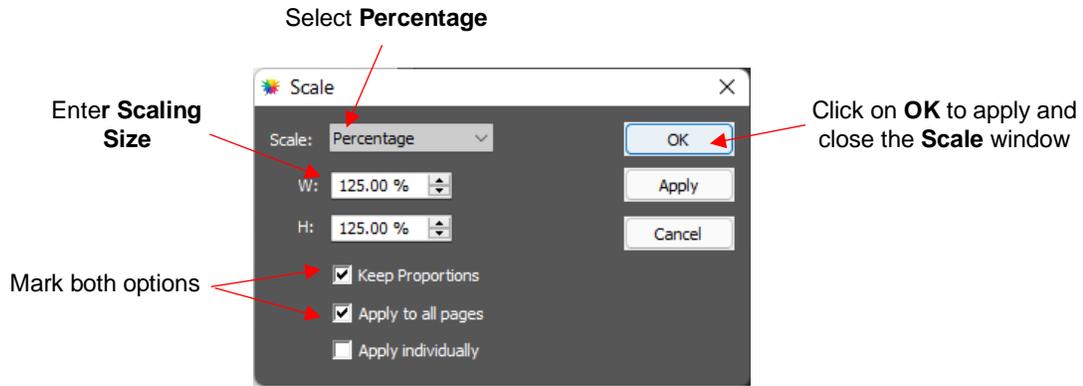


## Tip of the Day – 2/27/22: Scaling Multiple Pages in CREATE

Several times a year at one or more of the FB groups I frequent, someone will ask if there's a way to resize an entire project/file all at once. In CREATE you can not only scale all shapes on the current page but have the same scaling percentage applied to other pages within that same file.

Let's say you want to make a project 25% larger. Use **Ctrl+A** to select all of the shapes on one of the pages and go to **Object>Transform>Scale** (or right click on the screen and select **Transform>Scale**).

Select **Percentage**, enter the desired **Scaling Size** (in this case 125) under either **W** or **H** and then mark the **Keep Proportions** and the **Apply to all pages**, options. Click on **OK** and your entire project will be resized by 125%.



### Tip of the Day – 2/28/22: Print+Cut automatically defaults to WYSIWYG

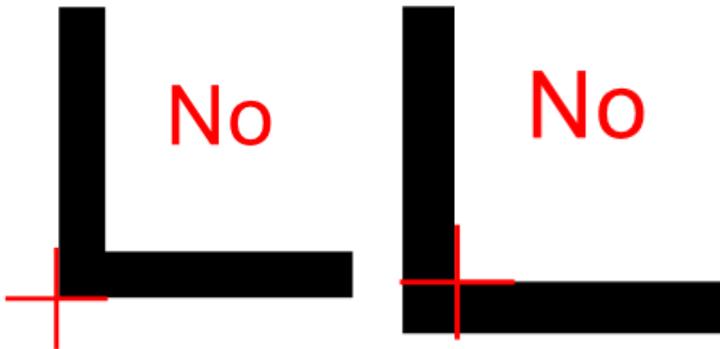
As you know by now the **Cut Settings** window had 3 options in the **Cut Mode** drop-down menu: **WYSIWYG**, **Origin Point**, and **Center Point**. Sometimes I get asked which setting is appropriate for print+cut applications. It actually doesn't matter because the moment you click on the **Print+Cut** button, CREATE resets the **Cut Mode** to **WYSIWYG**, which is the appropriate choice. Just remember that when you go to the **Cut Settings** window for your next project, the **Cut Mode** will be set to **WYSIWYG**, which is why it's always a good idea to check that setting before every cut.

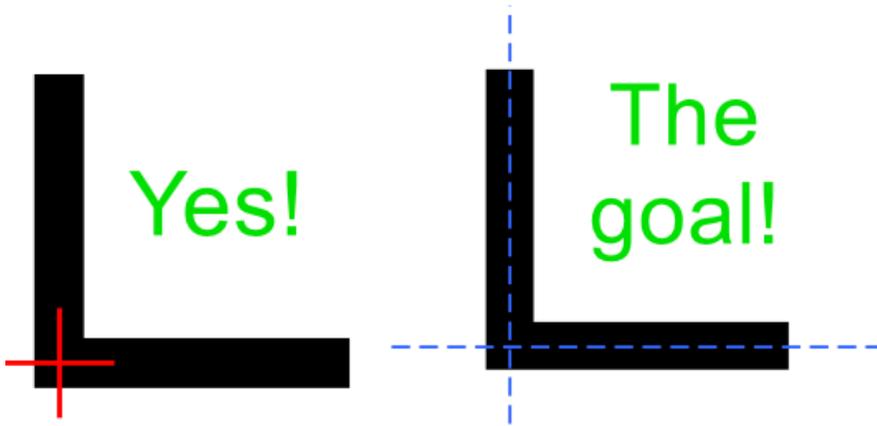
### Tip of the Day – 3/2/22: Manually Setting a Reg Mark

First let me emphasize that I want all SOLO owners able to have the camera successfully scanning all 4 registration marks automatically. If you are having issues, please post and Paul, Rhonda, or I will help you resolve the issue (which is typically a printer setting or driver).

However, in the event that you do need to manually “show” the camera where the reg mark is located, note two things:

1. You can use the arrow keys on the SOLO's camera screen to precisely move the red “+” as close to the center of the reg mark as possible.
2. The center of the reg mark is right in the middle of the black part of the reg mark (versus along the edges), as shown below:





### Tip of the Day – 3/3/22: 7 Reasons Why the Camera’s Auto-Scan Might Fail

The first two reasons are user errors but easily fixed:

**Reason #1** The printout and/or mat are out of alignment with the SOLO. While everything doesn’t have to be perfectly aligned at the start of the cut, it helps eliminate the possibility of the camera missing one or more.

**Reason #2** The reg marks are either too close to the edge of the printout (and the camera is confusing them with grid lines on the mat... refer to 12/20/21 Tip of the Day) or the reg marks are too close to the design.

**Reason #3** The user doesn’t have the tip of the blade over the corner of the lower right registration mark.

The next four reasons are all tied to the reg marks not being printed with the correct spacing, based on CREATE’s settings. One or more SOLO owners have had to do the following in order to correct the misprints:

**Reason #4** Borderless printing has been activated but another setting, sometimes called **Extension** or **Expansion** or **Enlargement** or **Overspray**, hasn’t been minimized or turned off.

**Reason #5** One or more of the printer’s **Settings** is causing the issue such as **Fit to Page**, **Scale to Fit**, **Zoom** to a set %, or other possibilities related to how large the printer will be using for that design. Look for **Actual Size** or **100%** if available.

**Reason #6** An out-of-date printer driver – Use Google to search and find your printer’s model, download and install the latest, reboot your computer and try again.

**Reason #7** The wrong printer driver is in use – Sometimes the Microsoft IPP Class Driver gets control of the printer on a PC and this will lead to printer errors. Here’s the solution:

1. Disconnect the printer connection - unplug the printer or disconnect from Wi-Fi.
2. In **Windows Settings > Devices** - select the printer and choose remove device
3. In **Windows Settings > Apps** - search for anything related to the printer and remove, except those not related to printing (e.g. scanner).
5. Google and find the genuine driver from the printer's support page. Install the driver.
6. Connect the printer and try again.

## Tip of the Day – 3/4/22: Every Customer Counts!

Facebook can be such a pain and has never been my preferred choice for tech support. I worry that someone's post will be missed or, more likely, someone's response or new question will be buried in sublayers of comments. You all know how some threads can turn into quite the disorganized mess.

So, for the record, every single one of you is important. If you have waited longer than ~ 4 hours during the day or longer than ~10 hours overnight without getting a response from someone, definitely start a new thread. If you have sent me a PM and failed to get a response within a day, start a new post and say you've sent a PM. If I said I would get back to you and failed to do so within a day, again call me out in a new post. I will never be upset and I hope you'll realize it's just a matter of me being a bit scattered and often overwhelmed. But my #1 priority is making sure YOU are successful.

Two more things:

Even if you find a thread that's similar to a question or problem you're having, it's a good idea to start a new post (for the same reasons as above).

Also, I couldn't do what I do without having Rhonda, Paul, Liz and Omayra doing what they do. We are all so fortunate to have these highly capable and dedicated individuals who also care about your success.

## Tip of the Day – 3/5/22: Don't Be a Registration Victim

Paul, Liz, and I can't emphasize enough, based on years of supporting a different cutting program, how vitally important it is for YOU, the owner of your CREATE registration number (not your cutter's serial number but the number you copied/pasted in to CREATE), to have that number backed up somewhere safe. We recommend you have it in some kind of text file backed up in several places and also printed out and stored in a file cabinet or whatever.

If your computer crashes and you have to reinstall CREATE, you want to have that number available and not depend on retrieving it online.

I won't go into all of the various situations that can lead to a user losing use of their software. Suffice it to say that in every case, if the user had taken the responsibility of having their registration backed up, it would never have been an issue.

Please do it today.

## Tip of the Day – 3/6/22: Review – Print+Cut Assignments (why you don't need a Flatten function)

CREATE has a **Style Panel** (one of the **Properties** panels on the right side) where you tell CREATE what you want to see happen with any given layer. If you plan to have a lot of repeated designs in your project, please do this **BEFORE** duplicating so that the copies will all have the same assignment.

Select each layer of the design (or select multiple layers at once if they need the same assignment) and choose one of the following in the **Cut Line Type** drop-down menu:

**Cut:** This layer will BOTH print AND it will cut

**(Print+Cut) Cut Only:** This layer will ONLY be sent to cut and anything you see on the screen will not print

**(Print+Cut) Print Only:** This layer will ONLY be sent to the printer and your SOLO will not cut it

In the upcoming week, I will present more example of the projects I'm seeing new SOLO owners create so that it will be easier for you to set up what you need in various types of **Print+Cut** applications. As always, ask questions as you have them. 😊

### Tip of the Day – 3/7/22: What's the Cut Line?

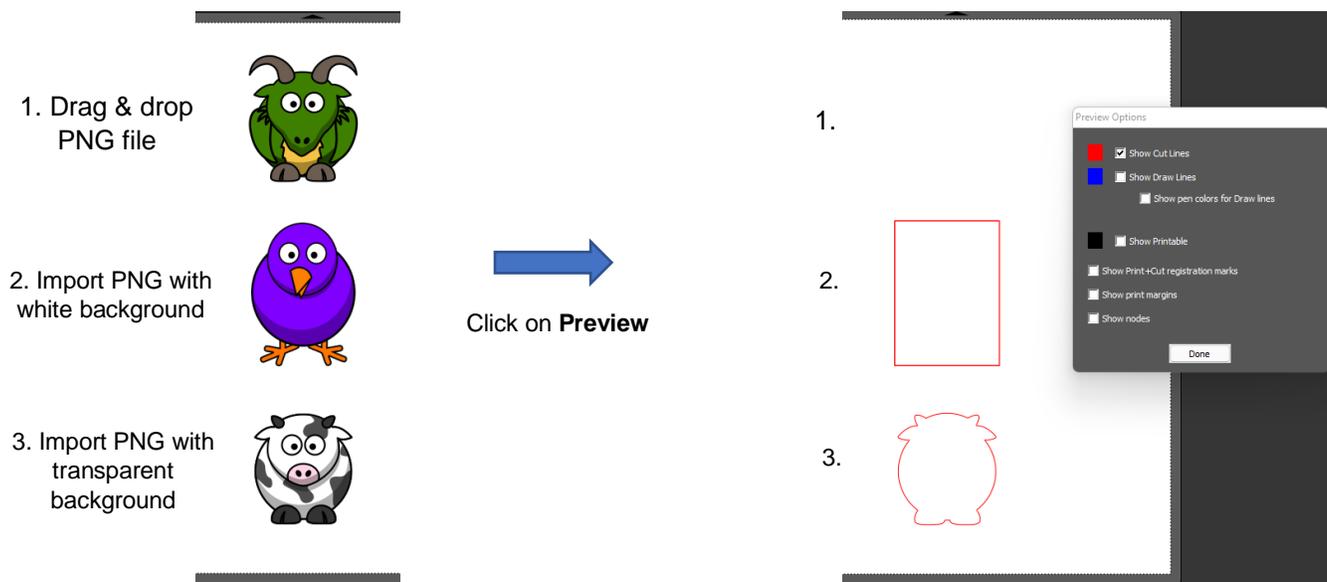
So, the one thing that's often unclear to us when someone asks for P+C help is this: What exactly is the shape part you're wanting to cut out? The print part is typically obvious, but the cut lines can sometimes be:

1. Hidden from view by the print layer
2. Set to **No Fill** and **No Stroke**
3. Not even yet present in the project

The fastest way to check for the cut layer's existence is to click on the **Preview** icon at the top and **ONLY** have **Show Cut Lines** marked, as shown in the screenshot. The 3 examples are the result of the following:

1. A PNG was dragged and dropped into CREATE (or **File>Place Image** was used). In this case, there won't be a cut line present until the image is sent to the **Trace Image** window.
2. A PNG with a white background was imported using either the **Import** icon at the top or **File>Import**
3. A PNG with a transparent background was imported using either the **Import** icon at the top or **File>Import**

Thus, before you reach out for help, do this quick test and include screenshots of what you're seeing in the main window both before and after you click on the **Preview** icon. This will help us know the next questions to ask.



### Tip of the Day – 3/8/22: How to Add a Cut Line for a Print+Cut Application

In yesterday's Tip, I showed that when using **File>Place Image** or drag-and-drop you won't have any cut line added. There will only be the imported raster image present.

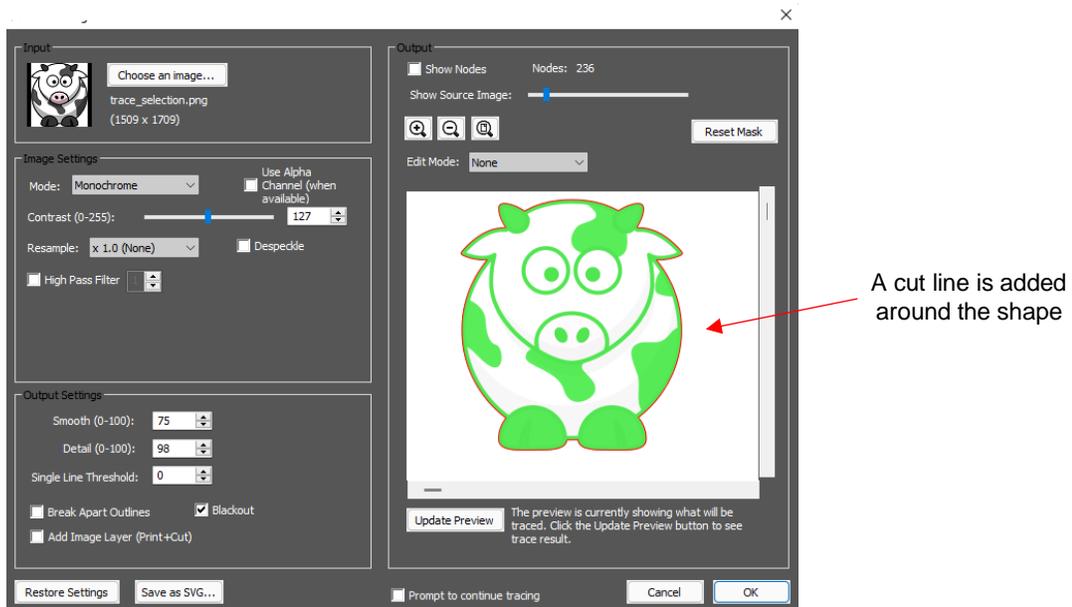
To then add a cut line there are typically two methods used, depending on what you need:

1. Go to the **Trace Image** window, perform a **Monochrome** trace and you have your imported image with cut lines added. If you've not tried tracing yet, Rhonda's videos are here:

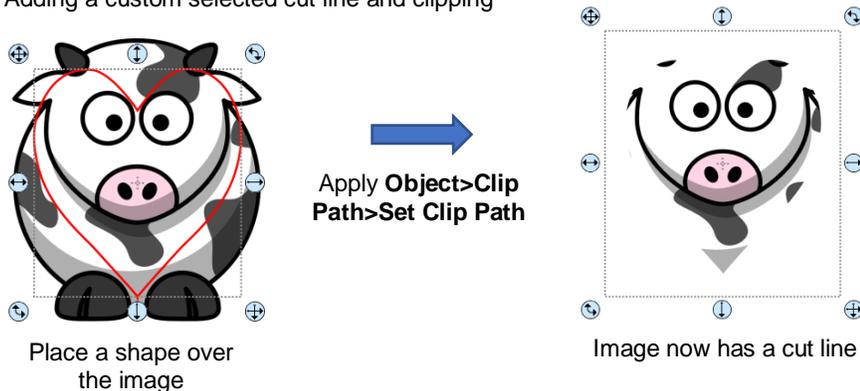
<https://www.iloveknk.com/support/starcraft-solo-and-create/solo-and-create-videos/> (scroll down to the section called Tracing). After you have a trace line, be sure to set the **Cut Line Type** to **Print+Cut Cut** on the **Style Panel**.

2. Add a cut line shape you want to use and then, if you need to crop (clip) out part of the imported raster image, select both and go to **Object>Clip Path>Set Clip Path**. As with the other example, be sure to select the shape you used for clipping and set it to **Print+Cut Cut**. Rhonda's video on this is here: <https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=asBdzMfqivE&list=PLsxNn0pybwotV4lmR3wnSDI2AI9JqpV0j&index=24>

1. Adding a cut line around the image



2. Adding a custom selected cut line and clipping



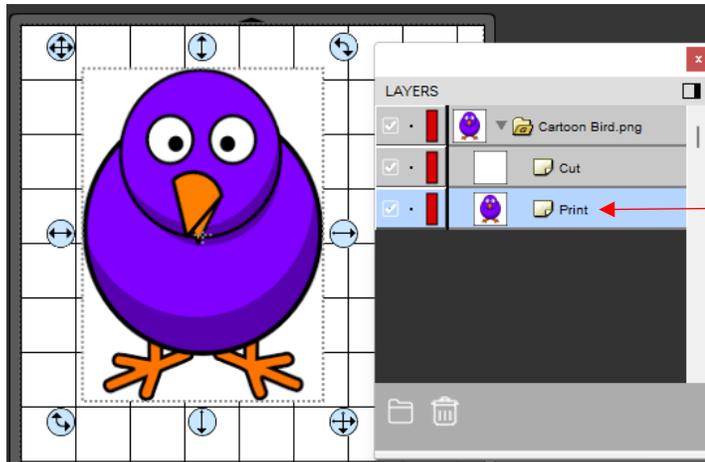
### Tip of the Day – 3/9/22: The Cut Line is a Rectangle?

Two days ago, I posted that if you import a PNG file using the **Import** icon (or **File>Import**) and the **Preview** indicates the cut line will be a rectangle, that means the background was not transparent. You have two options at this point:

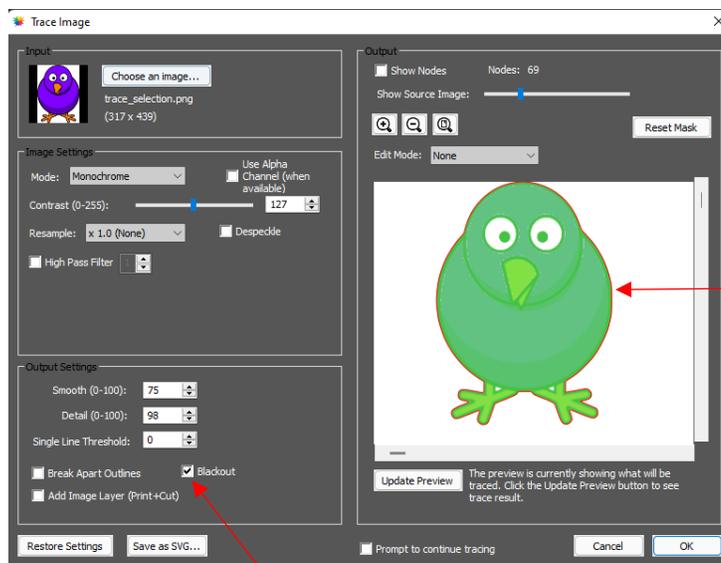
1. Go to the [remove.bg](https://remove.bg) web site, upload your PNG file and it will remove the background for you. It's free and tends to work very well for many images. I'm so glad Corinne Blackstone showed this in one of her videos.

You can also use a free program called GIMP to remove the background and Rhonda has covered GIMP in her videos here: [GIMP Playlist](#)

2. Select **ONLY** the **Print** layer from the **Layers Panel** and click on **Trace Image** icon to create a new cut line that follows the shape of the image. After tracing, be sure to delete the original **Cut** layer as you no longer need that rectangle in your project.



Select the **Print** layer only



Single trace (cut) line follows the shape of the image

Use **Blackout** if you want to omit any internal cut lines, such as around the eyes.

### Tip of the Day – 3/10/22: Pinch Wheel Placements Relative to the Cutting Mat

For those of you who seem to be experiencing early warping of the mat, perhaps try this placement which is about where I place my wheels. Since I often cut from 12" x 12" cardstock, I prefer to not have the wheels pressing on the cardstock which can cause it to stick too well to the mat and be difficult to remove after cutting.

The wheels are most of the way to the outside of the grit shafts but not extending outside at all. Then the wheels are traveling along the outside of the SOLO mat.

If I switch to another brand of mat, then the wheels would need to be shifted inward a bit. But the idea is to keep them closer to the outside edges.



### Tip of the Day – 3/11/22: Adding a Print Bleed to a PNG with Transparent Background

Today's tip: you can add a bleed layer to an imported PNG file in just a few quick steps after importing the file:

1. Ungroup.
2. Select the **Cut** layer and increase its **Stroke** setting.
3. Move the **Cut** layer below the **Print** layer.
4. Regroup the two layers and make duplicates as needed.

Here's the video: <https://youtu.be/ChbnGBpirxU>

## Tip of the Day – 3/12/22: Adding a Print Bleed to an Image with a Colored Background

Today's tip: you can add a bleed layer to an image with a colored background by:

1. Send the image to **Trace Image** to create the **Cut** line along the image's border.
2. Make a copy of that **Cut** layer and then go to **Effects>Shadow** to create the size of bleed desired.
3. Select both the **Cut** line copy and the **Shadow** and apply **Object>Merge**.
4. Select the **Merge** layer and change to **Print+Cut Print** on the **Style Panel**.
5. Regroup all layers and make duplicates as needed.

Here's the video: <https://youtu.be/PzzYBmbRFO4>

## Tip of the Day – 3/15/22: Checking and Tweaking the Camera Calibration

After calibrating the camera using this video,

<https://drive.google.com/file/d/136amVwGJrkuz4gilWLSY8IRKI3XAUqpu/view?usp=sharing>

It's a good idea to do a quick test to verify the accuracy with the blade. Here's a simple file that reveals if you need to move the cut line up or down and left or right in order to have the most accurate results possible:

<https://drive.google.com/file/d/1EQdAdJqM2MR9TzTqHGxHFsefSUfb8yoL/view?usp=sharing>

Download this file, open up in CREATE, print it out on copy paper and then perform the Print+Cut process.

If the arrows are not cut out along the printed lines, then please watch this video. It will help you in knowing how to adjust the cut line and be sure to keep repeating the arrow test as you narrow in on the best settings. Remember that repeating the initial calibration will NOT help you get better results.

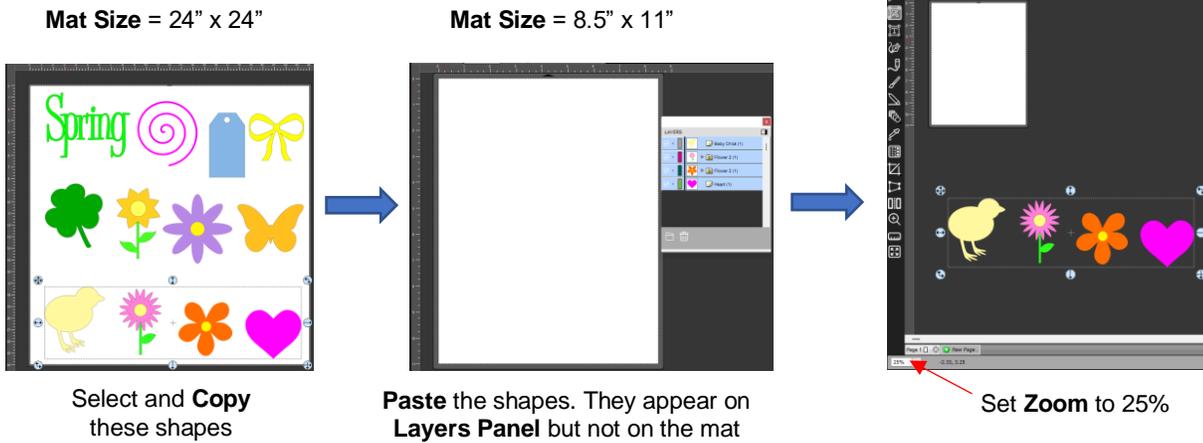
[https://drive.google.com/file/d/1835VAzZCV\\_Dq10G07xuNMpb5kzLvLd\\_5/view?usp=sharing](https://drive.google.com/file/d/1835VAzZCV_Dq10G07xuNMpb5kzLvLd_5/view?usp=sharing)

## Tip of the Day – 3/18/22: Finding Lost Shapes

If you are copy/pasting between two open files and the shapes seem to be missing, even though they appear on the **Layers Panel**, verify that the **Document Area (Mat Size)** might not be different between the two files.

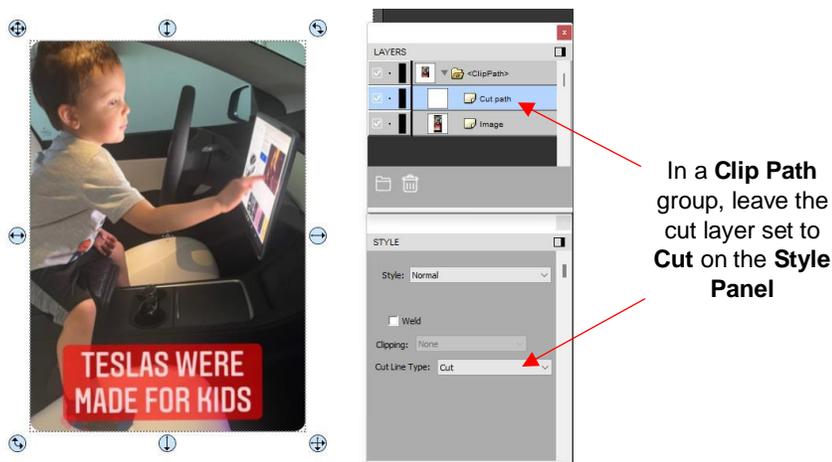
For example, some shapes along the bottom of a 24" x 24" project are copied and pasted into a letter-sized project. But they appear to be missing? Fastest way to find them is to change the **Zoom** setting in the lower left corner of CREATE to 25%. Now you'll find them in the same location as they are in your first file. Alternatively, you can also change the **Mat Size** to match the original.

Note that **Edit>Paste** will offset them ~0.25" from their original location and **Edit>Paste in Place** will place them in the exact same X, Y location.



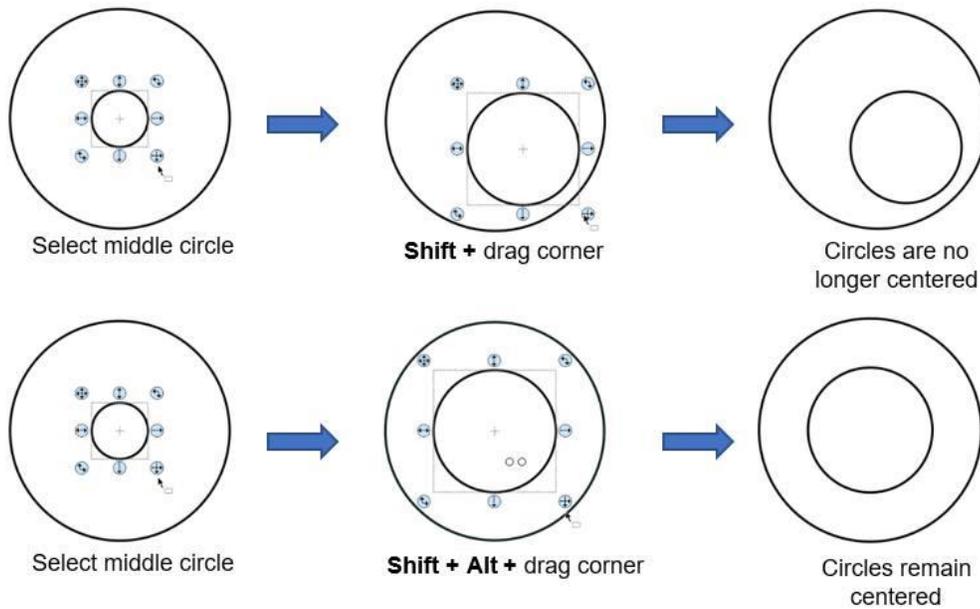
### Tip of the Day – 3/21/22: Clip Path Exception

If you create a clipped path, do **not** change the **Style** assignment on the *Cut* layer from **Cut** to **Print+Cut Cut**. That layer can't display a stroke assignment, anyhow, so it's not going to print a border. And if you change its assignment on the **Style Panel**, your entire image will not print because, with a **Clip Path** in place, the software treats those two layers as one when it comes to printing.



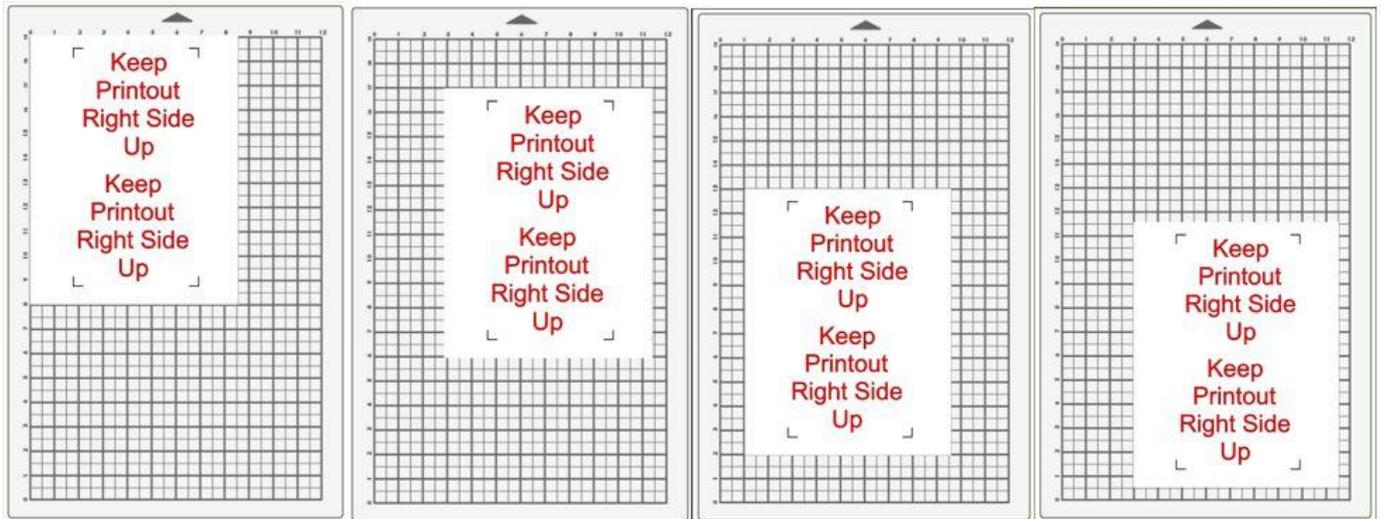
### Tip of the Day – 3/24/22: Shortcut for Resizing So the Center Doesn't Move

This morning I discovered a shortcut that I somehow omitted from the Create table of shortcuts and icons. When you drag the lower right corner to resize a shape, the upper left corner remains fixed. However, sometimes you want the center of the shape to remain fixed instead. Easy! Just hold the **Alt** key while dragging that corner. **Shift + Alt** will maintain the aspect ratio, as well. Note that table has also been updated: [https://drive.google.com/file/d/10C4O8sz-7cUIXbTG-pnJ-n\\_pAYxqTu8W/view?usp=sharing](https://drive.google.com/file/d/10C4O8sz-7cUIXbTG-pnJ-n_pAYxqTu8W/view?usp=sharing)



Tip of the Day – 4/3/22: [Placing Your Printouts onto the Cutting Mat](#)

Regardless of whether you slide the mat from the front towards the back or from the back towards the front, your printout still needs to face the same direction as it looks in CREATE when the **Orientation** is set to **Vertical (Portrait)** on the **Document Panel**. You can also place the printout anywhere you like onto the cutting mat:



As you face the SOLO, your printout needs to match how you see it on the screen in CREATE.

Printout can be located anywhere on the mat.