

# Tips of the Day Related to CREATE

July 4, 2022

## Contents

Tip of the Day – 12/10/21: The Style Panel’s Cut Line Type Options .....	3
Tip of the Day – 12/13/21: Design Space vs StarCraft CREATE Terminology.....	3
Tip of the Day – 12/14/21: Silhouette Studio versus StarCraft CREATE Terminology .....	3
Tip of the Day – 12/17/21 CREATE Files versus SVG Files .....	3
Tip of the Day – 12/23/21: Using OPF (Open Path Fonts) .....	4
Tip of the Day – 12/24/21: Resizing Text While Typing.....	4
Tip of the Day – 12/25/21 and 12/26/21: CREATE User Manual and Hot Keys.....	5
Tip of the Day – 12/27/21: Putting Text on a Circle.....	5
Tip of the Day – 12/28/21: Zip Files from Dreaming Tree (3DSVG) and SVG Cuts .....	6
Tip of the Day – 12/30/21: CREATE’s Eraser and Stencil Bridge Tools .....	6
Tip of the Day – 12/31/21: Filling Open Shapes .....	7
Tip of the Day – 1/1/22: Resize Windows for Better Viewing .....	7
Tip of the Day – 1/5/22: CREATE can import MTC files.....	9
Tip of the Day – 1/9/22: Show settings do not affect Output .....	9
Tip of the Day – 1/12/22: Drag and Drop PNG (and other Raster Files).....	9
Tip of the Day – 1/13/22: Check the Node Count in the Trace Image window .....	10
Tip of the Day – 1/16/22: Draw, Draw, Draw .....	11
Tip of the Day – 1/22/22: When Tracing, Raster Size Matters.....	11
Tip of the Day – 1/23/22: Editing Images After Applying Break Apart.....	12
Tip of the Day – 1/24/22: NEW! CREATE File Thumbnails for Windows Explorer .....	12
Tip of the Day – 1/26/22: You don’t have to ungroup shapes in order to edit some of them.....	12
Tip of the Day – 1/27/22: Bridge Warp provides many ways to reshape designs, especially text.....	13
Tip of the Day – 1/28/22: Apply Path>Simplify for faster smoother cutting .....	13
Tip of the Day – 2/1/22: Back up your files! .....	14
Tip of the Day – 2/2/22: Sharing Gradients.....	14
Tip of the Day – 2/4/22: Two Ways to Set Up an Array.....	15
Tip of the Day – 2/5/22: Use Auto Fill to Create an Array.....	16
Tip of the Day – 2/6/22: Use Nest to Squeeze in More Shapes .....	16
Tip of the Day – 2/8/22: No Shapes to Cut? .....	17
Tip of the Day – 2/10/22: Check the Preview in the Cut Settings window.....	19
Tip of the Day – 2/11/22: Don’t Assume “It” Can’t be Done.....	19
Tip of the Day – 2/16/22: Checking Out the Advanced Selection Handles .....	20
Tip of the Day – 2/17/22: Adjusting Arrow and Nudge Increments .....	20
Tip of the Day – 2/21/22: The Importance of Merge.....	21
Tip of the Day – 2/25/22: Other Ways to Select Shapes .....	21
Tip of the Day – 2/27/22: Scaling Multiple Pages in CREATE.....	22
Tip of the Day – 3/5/22: Don’t Be a Registration Victim .....	22
Tip of the Day – 3/7/22: What’s the Cut Line? .....	23

Tip of the Day – 3/8/22: How to Add a Cut Line for a Print+Cut Application .....	23
Tip of the Day – 3/9/22: The Cut Line is a Rectangle?.....	24
Tip of the Day – 3/21/22: Clip Path Exception .....	25
Tip of the Day – 3/24/22: Shortcut for Resizing So the Center Doesn't Move.....	26

## 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 – 12/13/21: 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 – 12/17/21 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><u>Pros</u></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><u>Cons</u></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 – 12/23/21: 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.

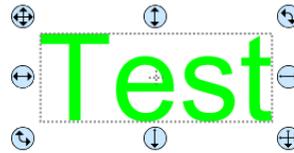
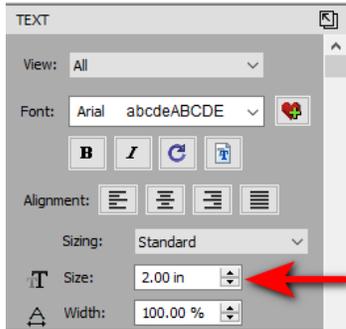
<https://www.singlelinefonts.com/>

*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**



**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.

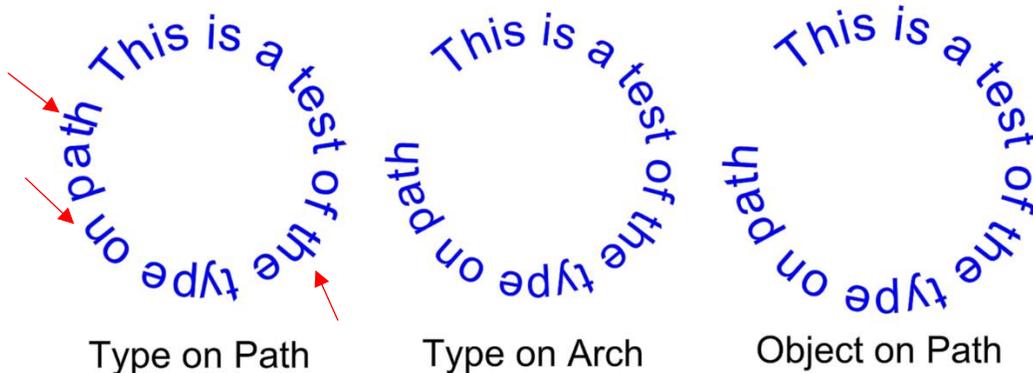
<https://www.iloveknk.com/0um/StarCraft-CREATE/CREATE-User-Manual.pdf>

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.

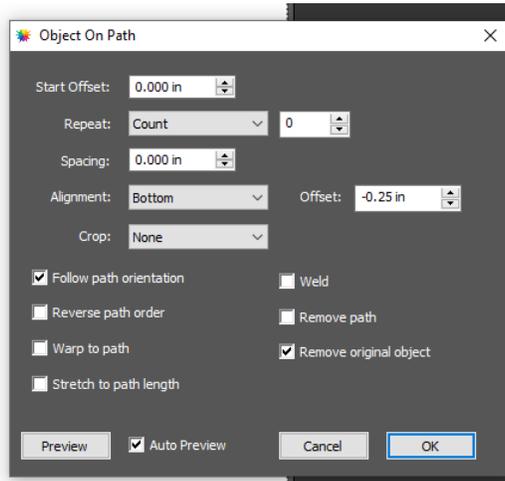


Type on Path

Type on Arch

Object on Path

Object on Path offers more options!

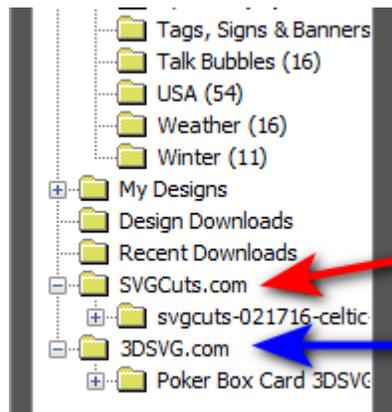


## Tip of the Day – 12/28/21: Zip Files from Dreaming Tree (3DSVG) and SVG Cuts

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).



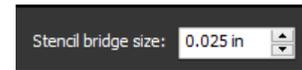
## Tip of the Day – 12/30/21: CREATE's Eraser and Stencil Bridge Tools

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:

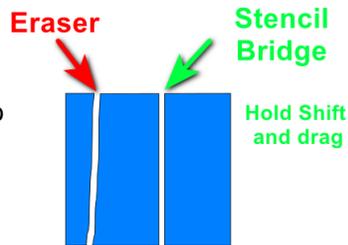
1. You'll notice that when you click the down arrow to decrease the size of either the **Eraser** or **Stencil Bridge** that it stops at 0.10 and you will assume you can't go smaller. But that's not true. Just type in the smaller value that you want.
2. The **Eraser** doesn't have any straight-line control... 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.

- 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.

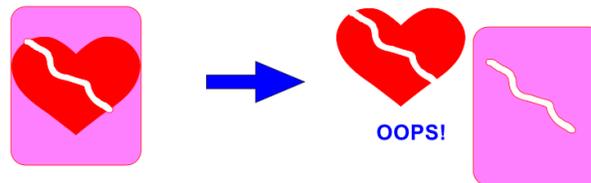
1. You can type in the size you want to use for the **Eraser** or the **Stencil Bridge**



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

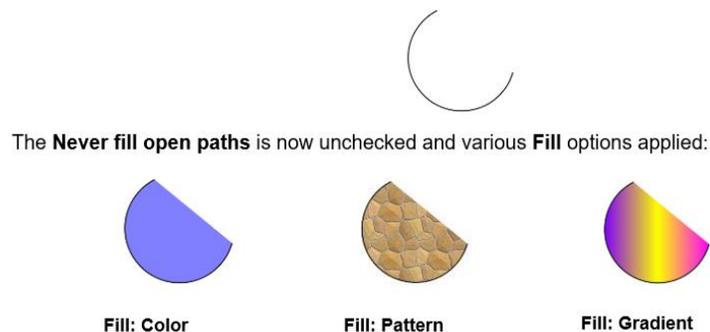


3. Be sure to lock or hide any layers below the shape you're editing



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

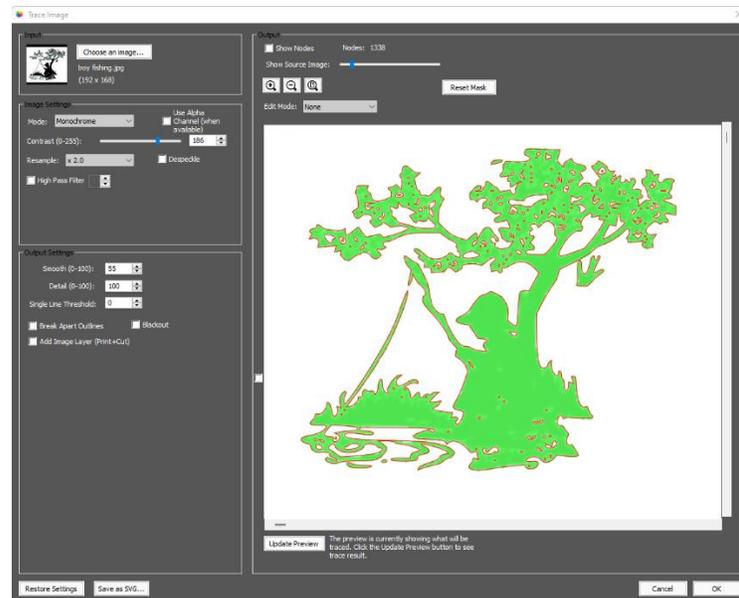
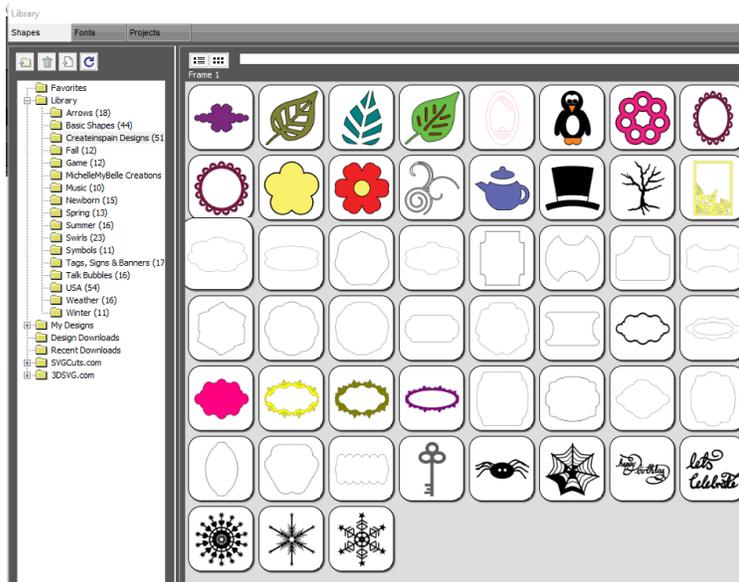
If you go to **Edit>Preferences>Edit** tab and disable the last option called **Never fill open paths**, you can add a **Color Fill**, **Pattern**, or **Gradient** to an open shape as shown below:



## 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:

- 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.
- 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.
- 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 – 1/5/22: 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)

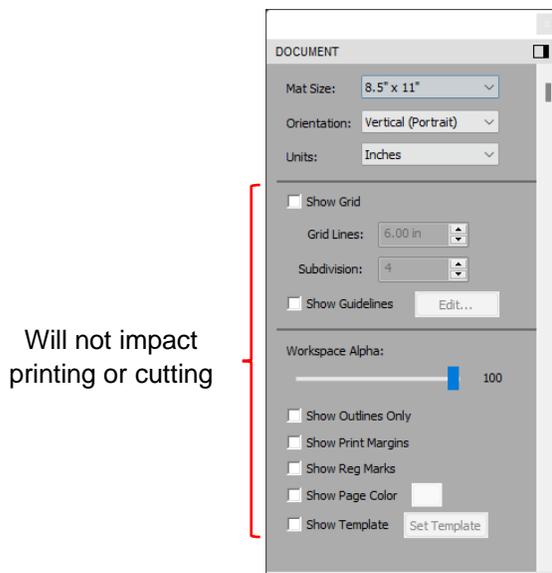
[https://drive.google.com/drive/folders/1cy3BXJXnS\\_FPfrijasudA0L2FDXwwwL601?usp=sharing](https://drive.google.com/drive/folders/1cy3BXJXnS_FPfrijasudA0L2FDXwwwL601?usp=sharing)

## 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**)



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

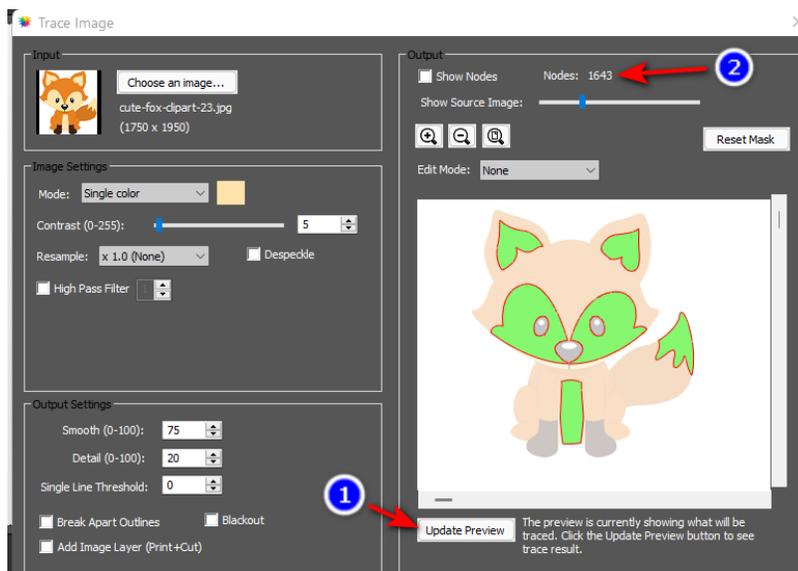
There are 3 different options for importing JPG, BMP, and GIF files. There are 4 different options for importing PNG files. These options produce different outcomes such as whether or not you can import more than one file at a time and, in the case of PNG files, where or not the cut lines are automatically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

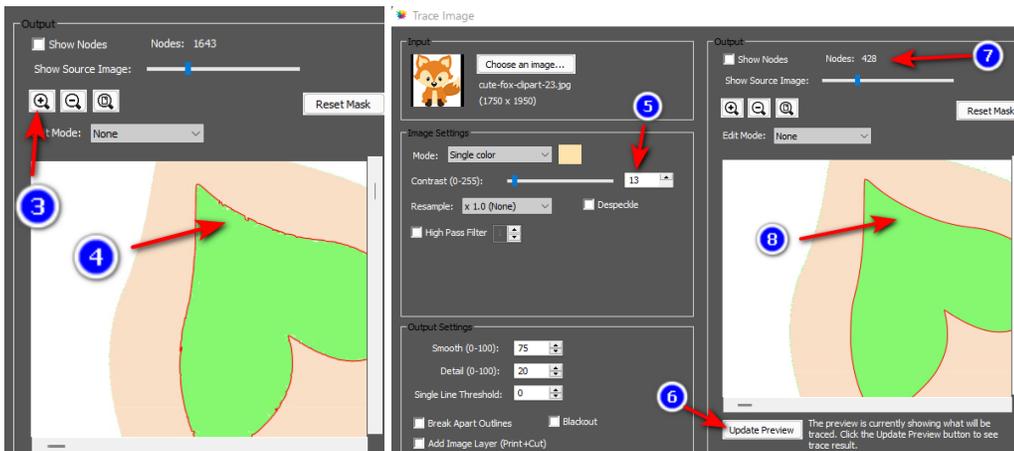
## StarCraft CREATE: Importing Raster Images into CREATE

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 – 1/16/22: 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 – 1/22/22: 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.

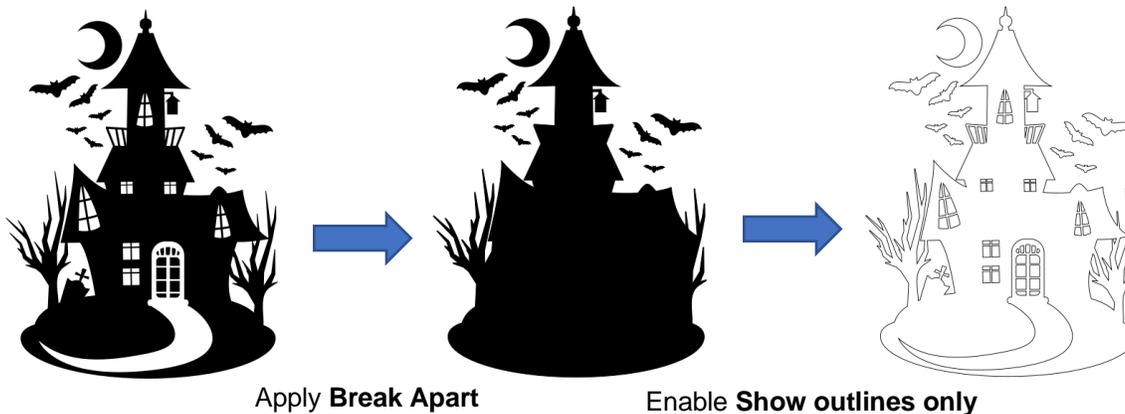
Thus, it makes sense to import the raster using either Option 2 or 3 so that you can adjust an oversized image to more closely match the dimensions you plan to use in your project. Then perform the tracing.

## 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>

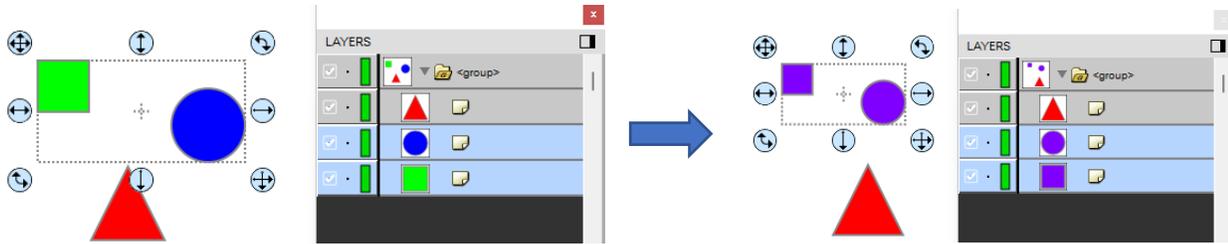
1. Right click on the exe file and select **Download**.
2. Save the file to your computer and run the file.
3. Reboot Windows and then open **Explorer**.
4. Go to any folder where you save \*.create files.
5. Allow the computer a minute or more to generate a thumbnail image for each file.
6. Make sure **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 – 1/26/22: You don't have to ungroup shapes in order to edit some of them

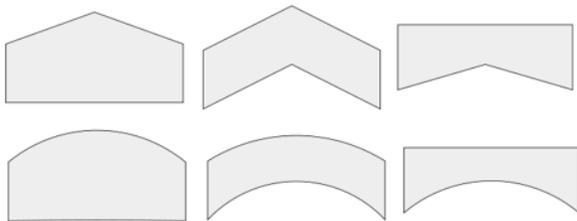
Using the **Layers Panel**, you can open up a group and select one (or using **Shift** key, select more than one) and then apply changes such as color, sizing, and location.

For example, 2 of the 3 grouped shapes are selected and then resized 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.

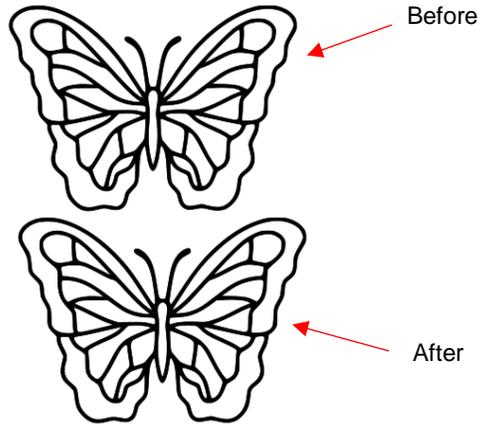
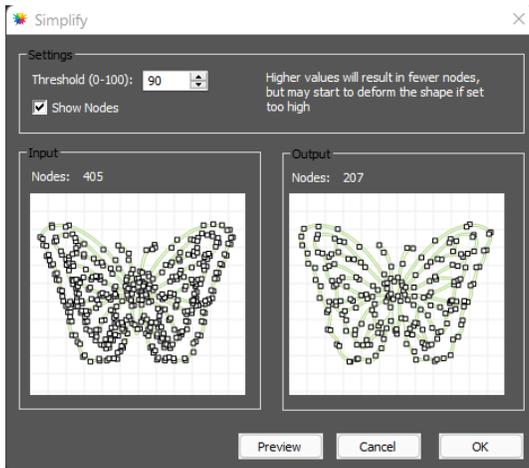


Tip of the Day – 1/28/22: Apply Path>Simplify for faster smoother cutting

**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.

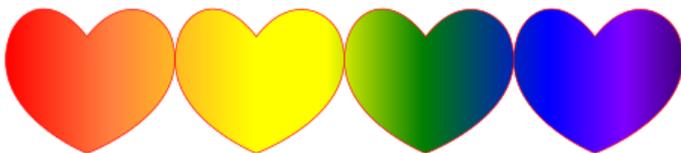
Here’s a list of the CREATE-related files you might want to back up, just in case:

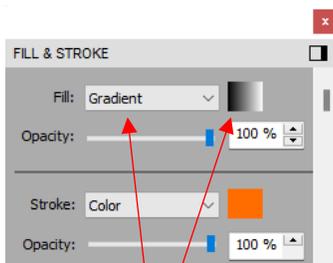
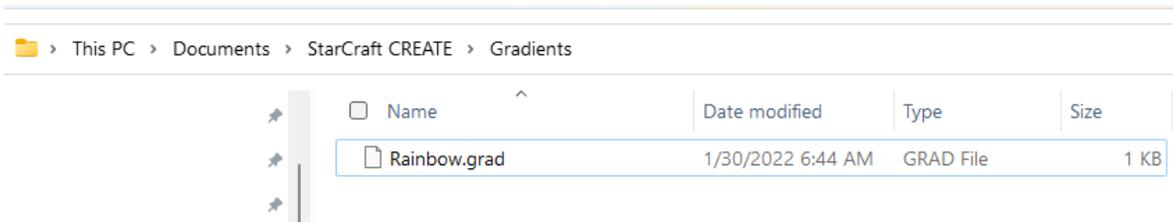
1. Any SVG files you have exported from CREATE
2. Any CREATE files you have saved from CREATE
3. Any PNG, JPG, TTF, OTF, or OPF files you care about using again in CREATE
4. This folder: Document\StarCraft CREATE which contains your cutting presets, any custom patterns, gradients, or mat templates you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

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

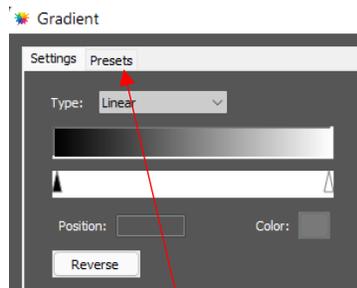
One of the things I love about CREATE is that you can easily share things you design yourself with other users, including gradients. I made a rainbow gradient yesterday and set up a folder where other CREATE owners can download this file and save it to their Gradients subfolder (on either a PC or a Mac). 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>

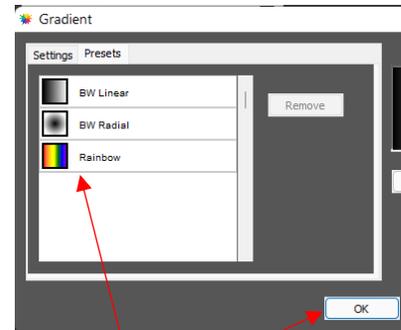




Change to **Gradient** and click on box



Click on **Presets**



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

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

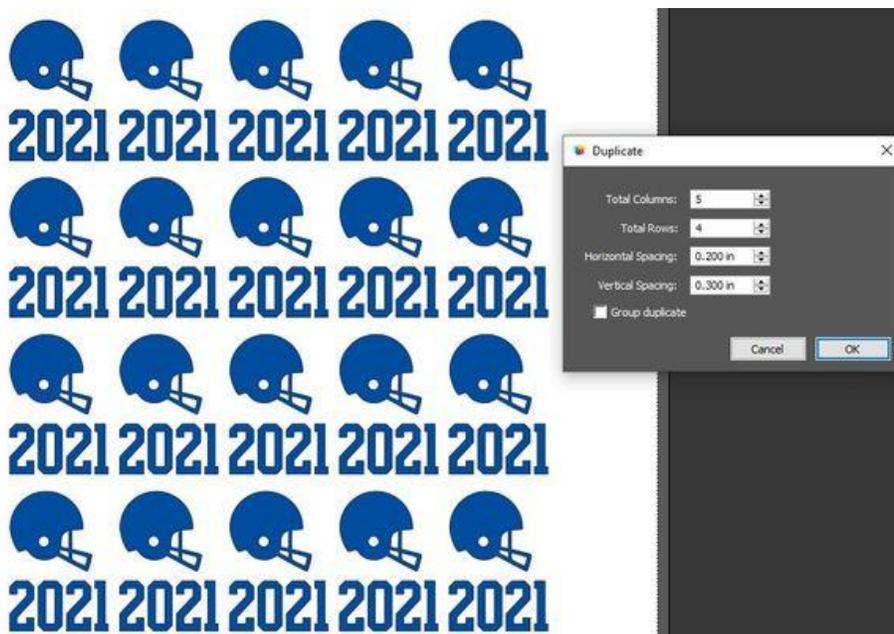
An array of repeats can be done either in the CREATE software or on the control panel of the SOLO itself:

(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.



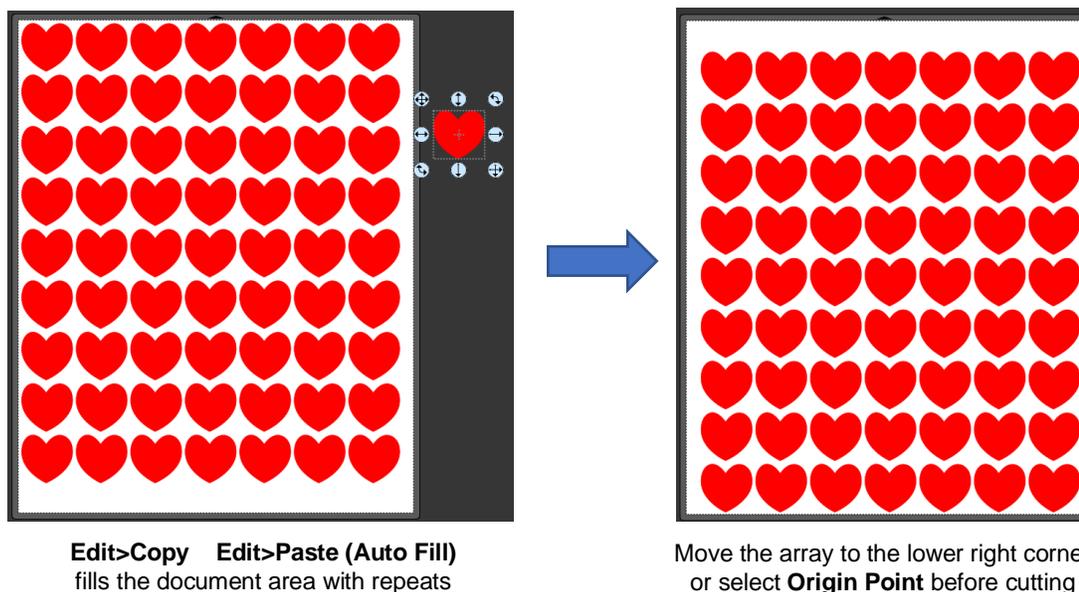
## Tip of the Day – 2/5/22: Use Auto Fill to Create an Array

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. 😊



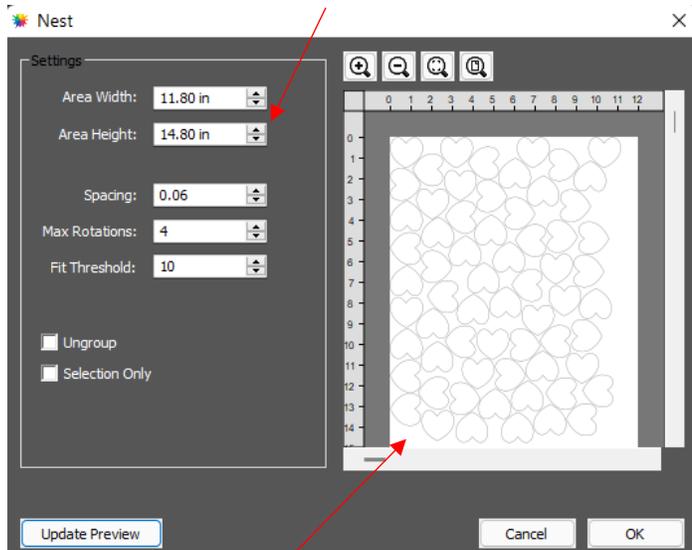
## Tip of the Day – 2/6/22: Use Nest to Squeeze in More Shapes

Yesterday's tip showed how fill your material with repeats. While this is a fast way to set up an array, it doesn't necessarily 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:

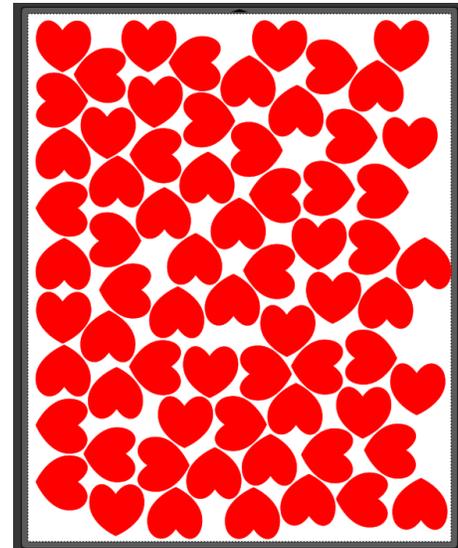
1. Go to **Effects>Nest**.
2. Because you don't want shapes cutting immediately next to the edge of the material, decrease the Material Size dimensions down a bit by clicking on the down arrows.
3. You can decrease the spacing when cutting most thin materials. So, try 0.06" instead of the default of 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 – 2/8/22: 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:

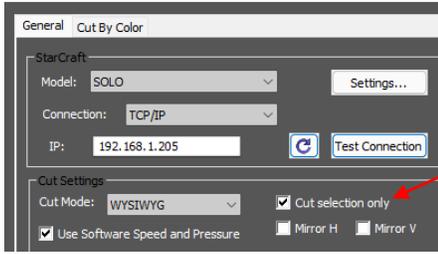
- + It is NOT related to the SOLO itself.
- + It is NOT related to the communication between the computer and the SOLO.
- + It IS an indication that a setting in CREATE is preventing cut shapes from being identified.

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.

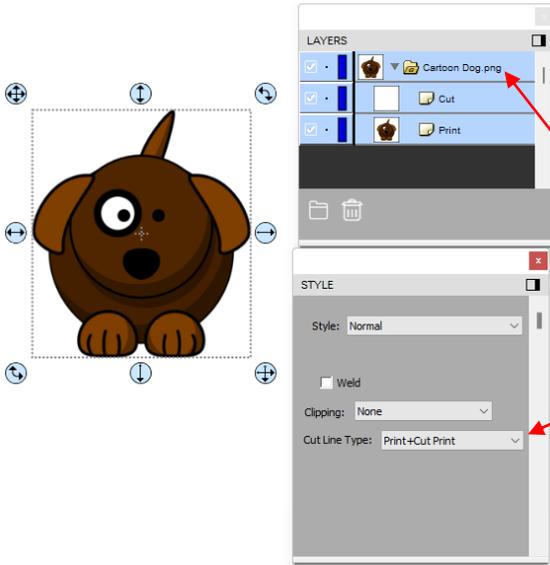
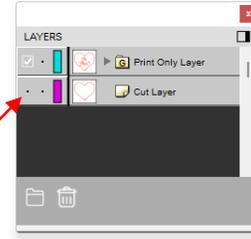
Cut Settings



1. This is marked?

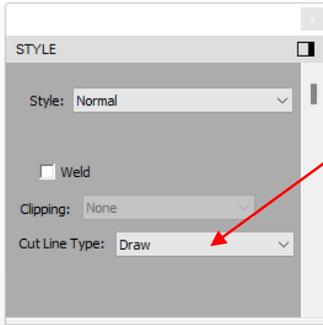


2. This is hidden?



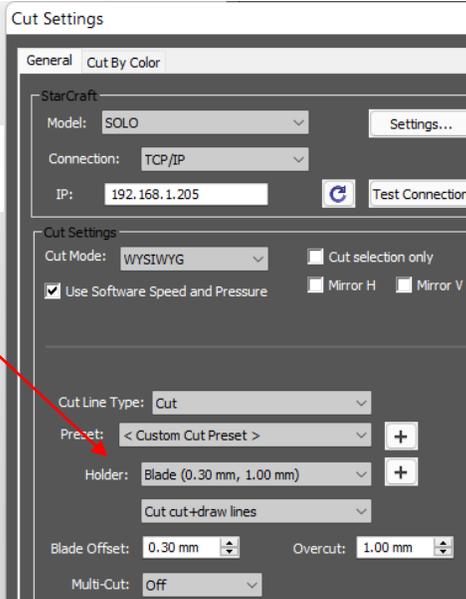
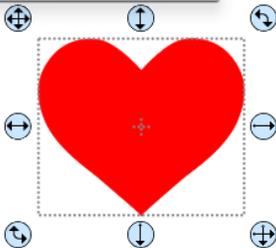
3. All sublayers are selected but...

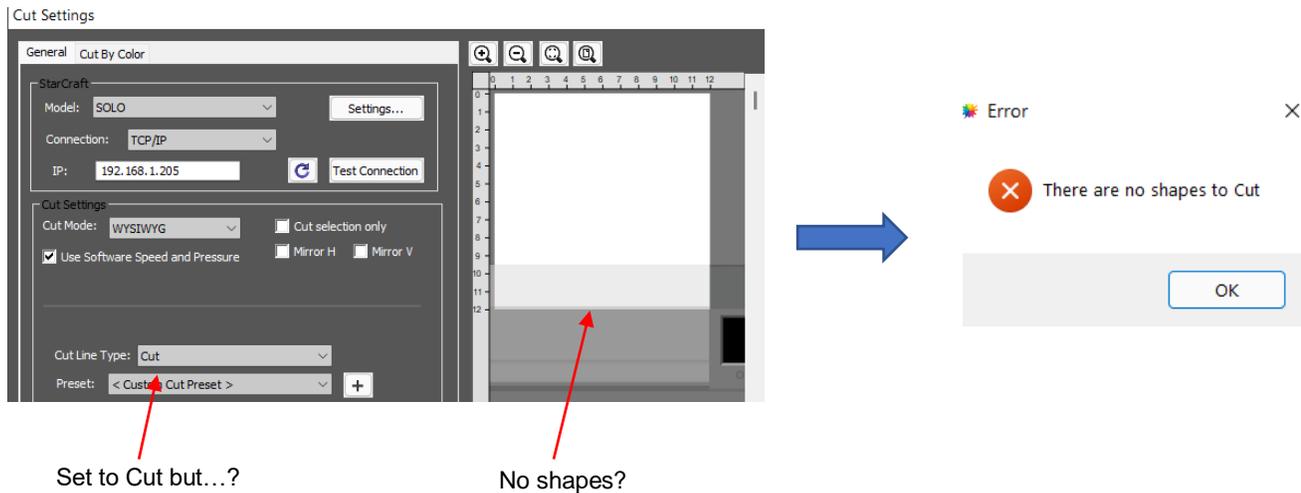
set to Print+Cut+Print?



4. Shape set to Draw but...

Holder set to Blade?

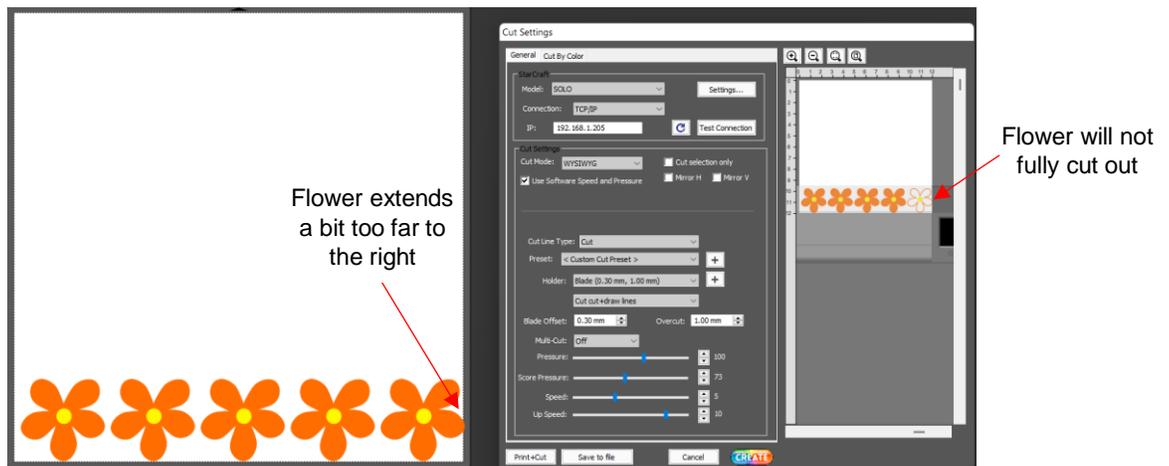




### Tip of the Day – 2/10/22: Check the Preview in the Cut Settings window

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

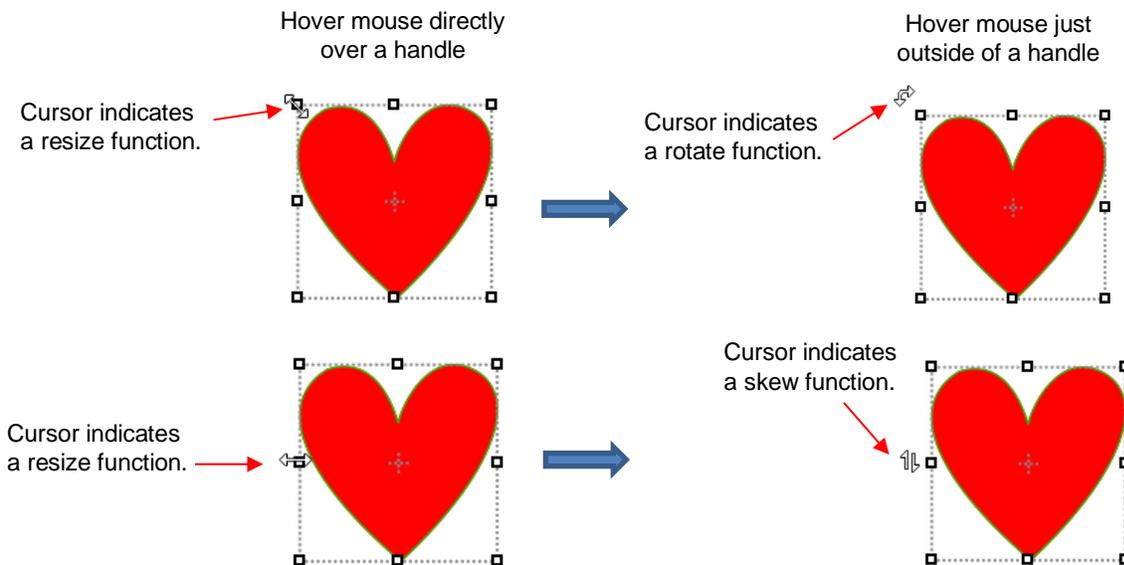
easier, faster, or more successfully. Back and forth we'll keep working an issue until it's figured out. Ah... so satisfying!

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 – 2/16/22: 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:

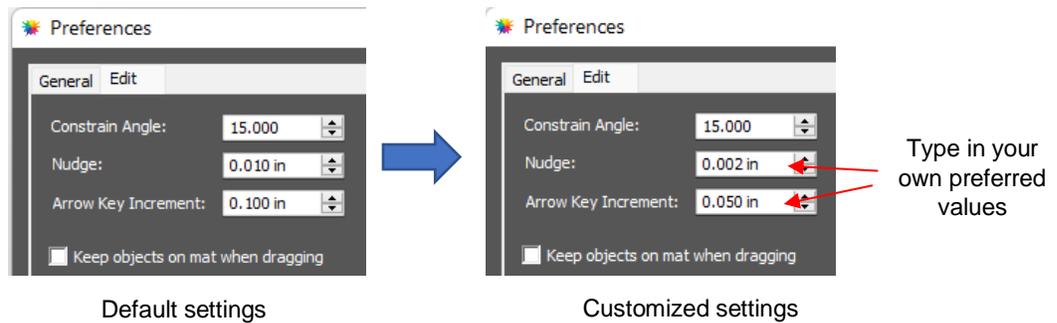
1. You can now resize from any of the handles.
2. You can rotate from any of the 4 corner handles. Hover the mouse slightly outside a corner handle until it changes to a rotate cursor.
3. You can skew the shape from any of the 4 middle handles. Hover the mouse slightly outside a middle handle until it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



### 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**?

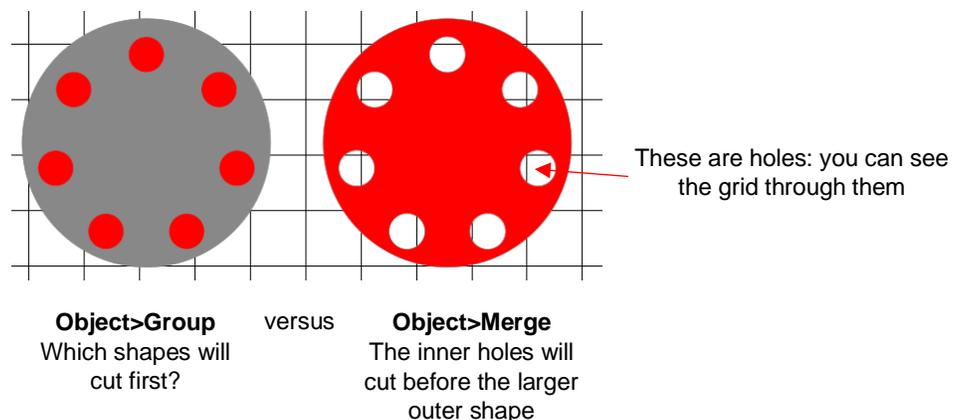
Go to **Edit>Preferences>Edit** tab. Change the increments to the size you prefer. Note that you'll want to type in the values versus clicking the arrows next to the defaults.



### Tip of the Day – 2/21/22: 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 – 2/25/22: Other Ways to Select Shapes

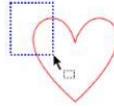
I'm sure most of you have figured out by now the 3 typical ways of selecting a shape in CREATE:

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)

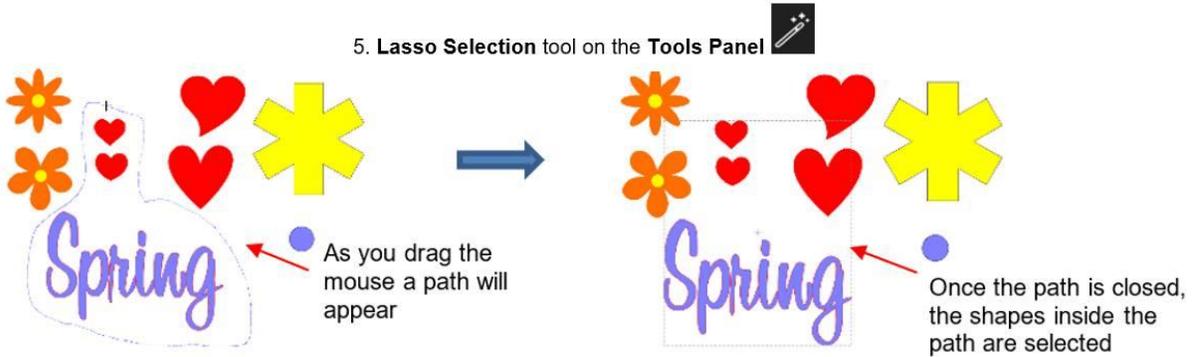
But there are two other ways that can come in handy depending on the situation.

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**

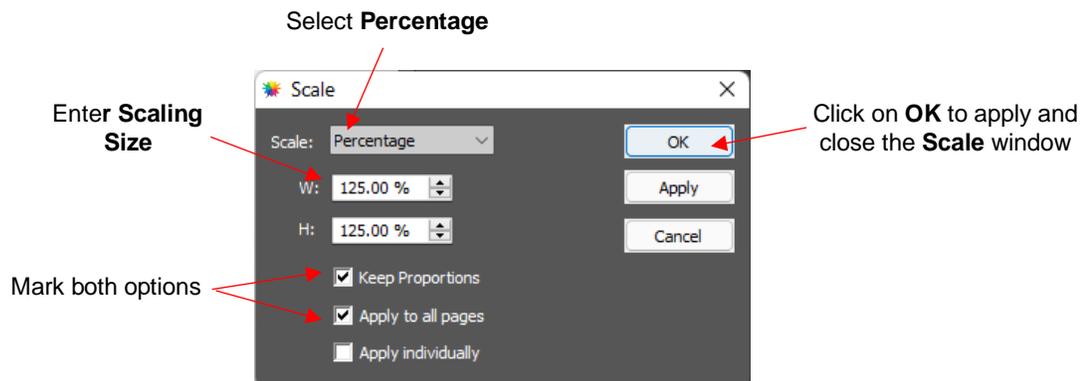


## Tip of the Day – 2/27/22: Scaling Multiple Pages in CREATE

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 – 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 being able to necessarily retrieve 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 – 3/7/22: What's the Cut Line?

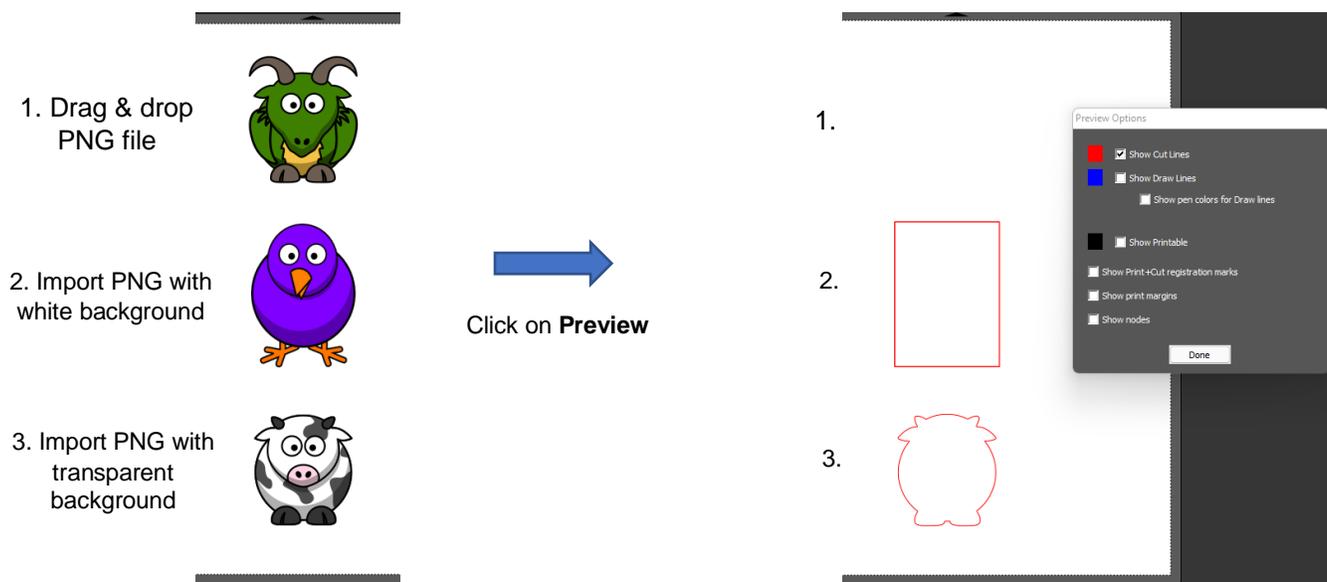
So, the one thing that's often unclear to us when someone asks for P+C help is this: What exactly is the shape part you're wanting to cut out? The print part is typically obvious, but the cut lines can sometimes be:

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.



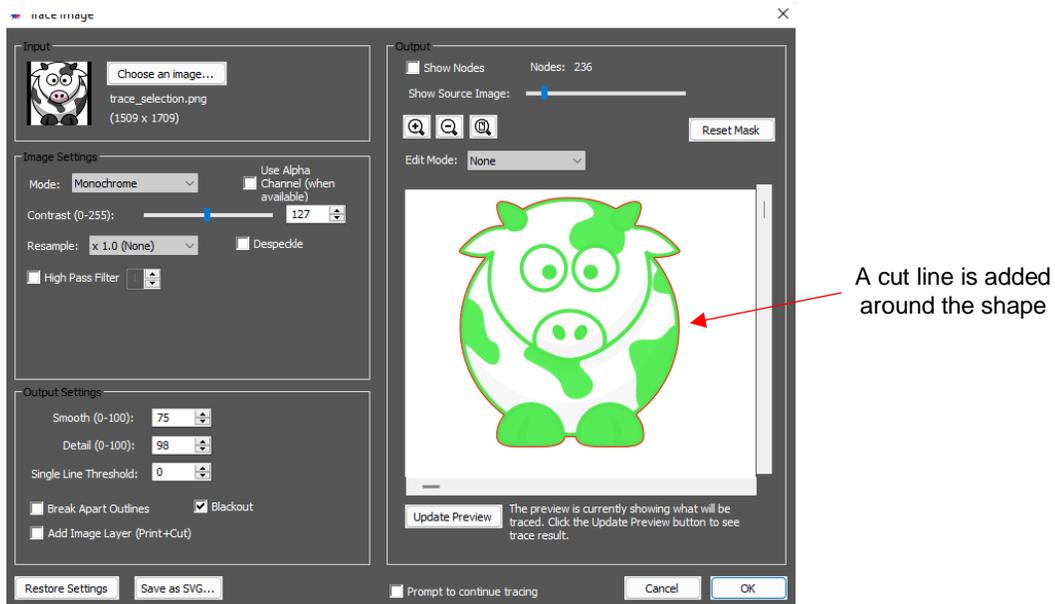
### Tip of the Day – 3/8/22: How to Add a Cut Line for a Print+Cut Application

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.

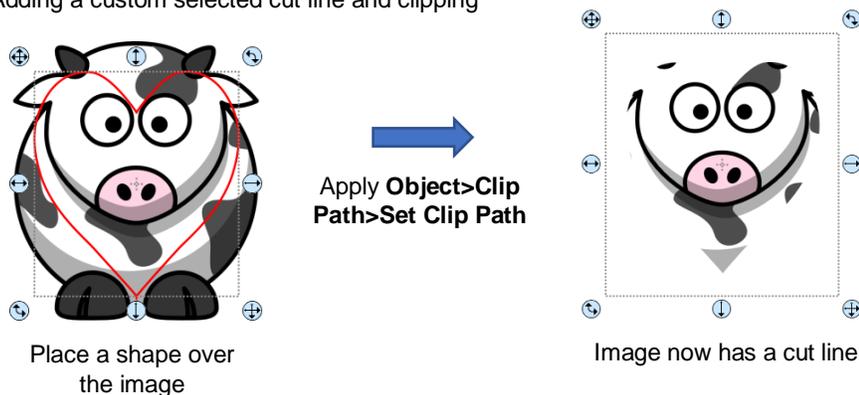
To then add a cut line there are typically two methods used, depending on what you need:

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=PLsXNn0pybwotV4ImR3wnSDI2AI9JqpV0j&index=24>

1. Adding a cut line around the image



2. Adding a custom selected cut line and clipping

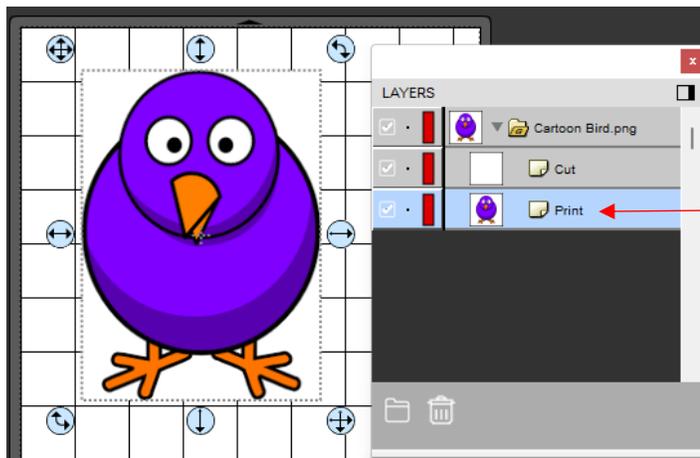


Tip of the Day – 3/9/22: The Cut Line is a Rectangle?

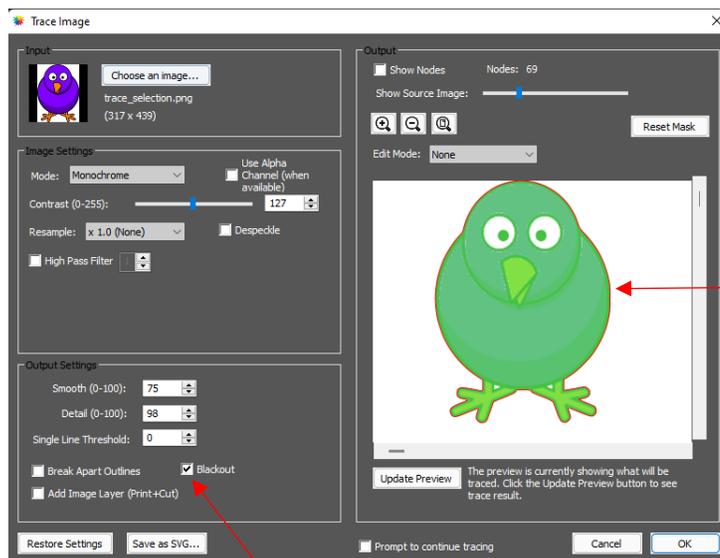
Two days ago, I posted that if you import a PNG file using the **Import** icon (or **File>Import**) and the **Preview** indicates the cut line will be a rectangle, that means the background was not transparent. You have two options at this point:

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.

- 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

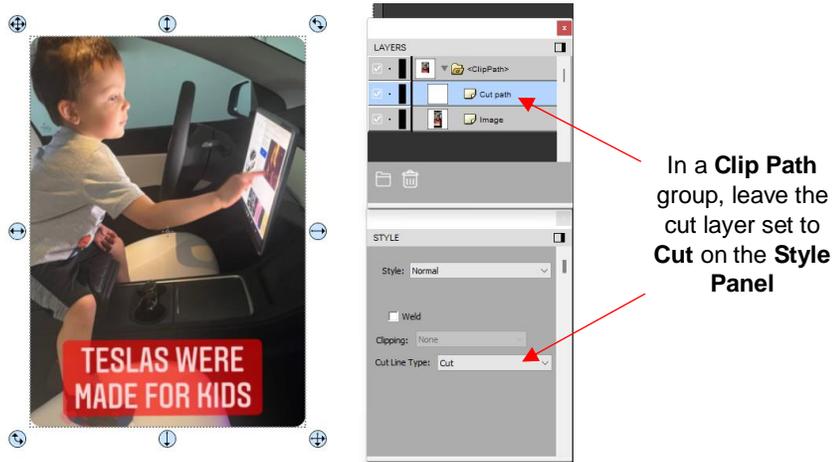


Single trace (cut) line follows the shape of the image

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

### Tip of the Day – 3/21/22: 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)

