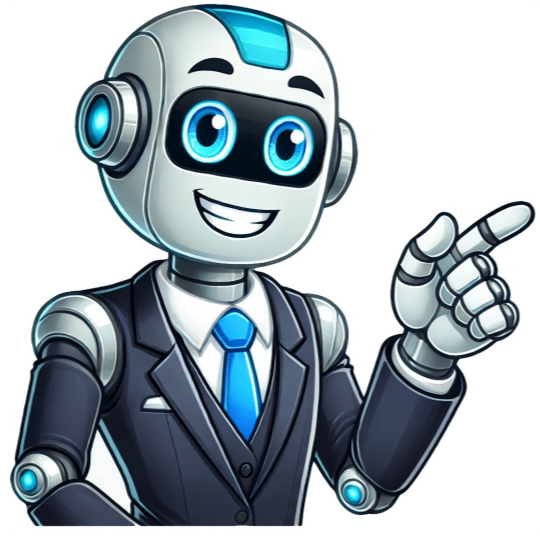


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Vectorizing text basically means converting text to a vector shape. Depending on how you created the text, there are different ways to vectorize text in Adobe Illustrator. In this tutorial, you'll learn how to vectorize text in Adobe Illustrator in three ways. Some of you probably already know how to outline font, but keep reading anyway because there are some extra steps you can do to finalize the outlines. Note: All screenshots from this tutorial are taken from Adobe Illustrator CC Mac version. Windows or other versions can look different. The most common way is to convert text into outlines, but there are other ways, for example, you can use the Shape Builder Tool to turn paths into text vectors, or even trace handwriting from paper using the Pen Tool. Before converting the text to an outline, I highly recommend duplicating the text because once you create an outline, you won't be able to change the character style or font. Now follow the steps below to vectorize text. Step 1: Select the text you want to vectorize. Step 2: Use the keyboard shortcut Shift + Command + O (or Shift + Ctrl + O for Windows users) to outline the font/text. If you're not comfortable with using shortcuts, you can also right-click on the selected text and choose Create Outlines. When you create outlines, the live text becomes a shape. You'll see anchor points if you select them with the Direct Selection Tool. That means you can edit the text as you would edit a shape. If you use brushes to create text in Adobe Illustrator, they are already vectorized, but they are strokes, so you'll need to convert them to shapes. Follow the steps below to see how it works. Step 1: Select the strokes (text) you created using the brushes and go to the overhead menu Object > Path > Outline Stroke. And you'll see that the path became outlines but there are overlapping shapes in between the strokes. Now it's time to use the Shape Builder Tool to combine shapes. Step 3: Select the outlines and choose the Shape Builder Tool from the toolbar or activate it using the keyboard shortcut Shift + M. Simply draw through the highlighted shapes until all overlapping areas are gone. In the end, the text should look like this, without overlapping outlines. Now yes, you've successfully created the text vector. Now if you want to vectorize handwritten text, that's another story because it's more complicated and it takes a lot of time. Follow these steps to vectorize your handwritten text in Adobe Illustrator. Step 1: Scan your handwriting and open it in Adobe Illustrator. If you don't have a scanner, you can take a picture too. As long as you have the handwriting outlines very clearly, it will work because the idea is to trace the handwriting using the Pen Tool. Step 2: Choose the Pen Tool from the toolbar or activate it using the keyboard shortcut P. Start tracing the letters you need one at a time. If you're not familiar with the Pen Tool, feel free to look at my Pen Tool tutorial where I talked about the steps and tracing tips. Step 3: Once you finish tracing the letters, you should get a closed path, and you've already vectorized the text. You can finalize the text using the Shape Builder Tool to combine the overlapping areas and add a fill color. The cool thing about this method is that you can vectorize your handwritten text and make your own custom font, but you need to use one of the font design tools to create fonts. Depending on what you have in hand, choose the method according. For example, if you have typed text, use Method 1, if you created text using brushes, use Method 2, and if you want to vectorize text from handwriting, Method 3 is the go-to. As a graphic designer, you may need to create files in a format suitable for use with a Cricut machine. The open SVG (Scalable Vector Graphics) file format is one of the best formats to create content for a Cricut. So how do you make SVG files for Cricut in Adobe Illustrator? You first need to open Illustrator and start a new document. After this, you should add text, create outlines and unite the text. When you're done, save the SVG file and after that, you should upload it to your Cricut design space. In this tutorial, I will walk you through creating an SVG file from scratch using Illustrator. Once you have completed this tutorial, you can create SVG images for any project you want. Here is a step-by-step guide to creating an SVG file in Illustrator. The first step is to open Illustrator. You can choose File > New to create a new document or open an existing one. Once your file is open, you can start creating your design. The new file should be a 12 x 12 square canvas with a resolution of 300 dpi. This will give you the optimal size and quality for your final vector image. Once your canvas is open, you can begin adding text to it. You can use any font or style that you want for this step. Adobe will use your system fonts but you can also upload a fancy cursive font. When creating an SVG file, the most important thing is to make sure that your text is editable. This means it must be converted to outlines. To convert the text to outlines, you can select it and then choose Create Outlines from the Type menu. Alternatively, you can press Command + Shift + O on a Mac or Ctrl + Shift + O on Windows. This will ensure that your text is editable as a vector object in the SVG file. The next step before saving your SVG file is to unite the text. The unite tool is the first top-left option under shades modes. This step is important because it will ensure that all text is combined into one object. This will help to keep your final SVG file organized and clean. Now you're ready to save your file as an SVG. To do this, choose File > Save As from the top menu bar. Then, select SVG from the list of formats and save your file. Once you have saved your SVG file, you can upload it to your Cricut Design Space. This will allow you to use your design in any projects you create with a Cricut machine. Using this method you'll be able to create text cut files. But, you can use these same steps to create image files too. I get commissions for purchases made through some of the links in this post. There is no extra cost to you. See my full disclosure here. Adobe Illustrator is a popular design software but there are different ways to create digital files. For example, if you prefer to use a mobile device to design, you can see my post on 7 apps for making SVG files for a variety of options. There are even some online programs like Canva that let you save as an SVG file type. What is the best way to convert a PNG to SVG? The best way to convert PNG files to SVG format in Adobe Illustrator is to simply upload the file. PNG images will automatically be converted to SVG designs. It's a good idea to save your new project so that you can use it again later. Fonts are one of the easiest ways to make SVG files! In this tutorial, you'll learn how to make an SVG from a font, which fonts work well (and which ones don't!), and how to prepare your files so they cut on a cutting machine. Text There are two easy ways to change the size of your text. Holding the shift key (this will keep your sizing proportional), click and drag on one of the corner anchor points to increase the size. See my post on paths, anchor points, and handles for more information. Or increase the font size either in the Control Panel at the top or in the Properties Panel if you have that open on the left. Just make your text large enough that you can easily work with it. Remember that vector files can be resized to any size without losing resolution, so the actual size isn't super important here. Now you can choose a font using the font dropdown in the . You will know it's a font because it has a blue underline, instead of an outline around it. For this tutorial, I'm using the Luckily font, which is part of the Font Bundles Plus subscription. I have an absolutely bonkers number of fonts on my computer. Check out my post Where to Find Cheap and Free Fonts for the Cricut to find more fonts to work with. Lately, I've been loving both the Font Bundles and Creative Fabrica subscriptions for fonts. Both memberships are inexpensive and you get access to tons of great fonts. Now if we tried to export this file as is, you wouldn't be able to upload it to Cricut Design Space or another design software. That is because the font is still, well, a font. And you can't upload fonts to cutting machine software. We need to outline the font to turn it into a shape. Make sure you have your text exactly how you'd like it and you have no typos because you outline your fonts, there's no editing your text. Note: before you do this step, scroll down to the section on saving your SVG. I like to save a version of my file with the fonts un-outlined so I know what fonts I used in my file. You may want to do this too. Choose the Select tool (V) and click on your word. Then use the Create Outlines shortcut shift+control+O (PC) / shift+command+O (Mac). You can also go to the menu bar at the top and go to Type > Create Outlines. Now when you click on your text, you'll see a thin blue outline around each letter. Each individual letter is now a shape. If you double-click on one of the letters, it will isolate and you can move it individually. Sometimes I do this to help my kerning (well talk about this next week!) or change up the design a bit. To get out of isolation mode, double-click on the artboard. Now if we exported our image as is and uploaded it to Cricut Design Space or another cutting machine software, our letters would still be individual letters in the Layers Panel and would cut as individual letters on a mat, as you see below. Yes, you could weld or unite within Cricut Design Space, but it's much easier to make your image correctly in Illustrator so you don't have to do these sorts of edits in the cutting machine software. In the workspace overview, I talked about the Pathfinder panel. If you went through that lesson, your Pathfinder panel should be on the right side in the Panels menu (go back to that lesson and add it if not). It looks like two overlapping squares. Click on that icon to open the Pathfinder panel. From here, click and select your word (V) and then choose the first icon in the Pathfinder panel that looks like two combined squares. If you hover over this icon it will say unite. Click the icon and Illustrator will unite your word into a single image. The final step in the design is to create a compound path. In my lesson on paths, anchor points, and handles, I mentioned how compound paths are important to SVG design. This is one of the ways that we keep all of the parts of a design together so they cut on the same mat properly. For some simple designs, this step isn't necessary. But for many designs it is, so its good to get in the habit of creating a compound path now. Select your word (V) and use the keyboard shortcut control+8 (PC) / command+O (Mac). You can also go to Object > Compound Path > Make in the menu bar at the top. The look of your shouldnt word change in this instance, but you'll see the image is now a compound path in the Layers panel, as you'll see in a few. Sometimes you'll create a compound path and it will look like your image disappears (especially if you skip the uniting step). Really, its just filled with no color. You should still be able to click on the image using the Select tool (V) and then you can use the color picker to change the color back to something you can see. I have a full tutorial on color coming soon! Before we export our file, I like to look in the Layers panel to make sure everything looks correct. I always check the Layers Panel because it can show you if you have issues. You can click and drag the left edge of the Layers panel to make the panel wider so you can see the names of the layers. In the Layers panel, you can see that we have a single layer that has our compound path text shape. This is what we want for a single-layer SVG. If we had more layers, we'd expect to see them here as compound paths as well. If you see anything other than the single compound path, you can investigate. Maybe you have other text on your artboard or in the gray area outside your artboard. Maybe you didnt make the compound path properly. Maybe you have a stray anchor point or line. If you click the circle to the right of the layer, it will select that object on your canvas so you can investigate. You can also rename your layers. This is not necessary but can be a nice step, especially once we get into making multi-layer SVG files or if you want to share or sell your files. Just click on the name of the layer and type your new name. Then when you upload your SVG to your software, the name of the layer will appear in the Layers panel. Its time to export our SVG! Heres my process. You can skip the first step if you'd like, but I find it helpful. Before I outline my text, I save my project (control+S (PC) / command+S (Mac)) as a basic .ai file (this is the default and stands for Adobe Illustrator). For this one, I named it hello.ai. This way, because my text is still in font form, I will always know what fonts I used for my SVG. Once its outlined, you lose access to the font name. And I cant tell you how many times people have asked me what font is that? or Ive wanted to use a font a second time and had no idea what font it was. Having the .ai file with the un-outlined font is so helpful to remember. Once you have the .ai file saved, you can Save As (shift+control+S (PC) / shift+command+S (Mac)). From the dropdown, choose the SVG file type (.svg). Give your file a name and hit Save. In the next screen, you'll see some options. Dont mess with any of them. Just hit OK and your SVG file will save! Now you have a working SVG file that you can upload to your cutting machine software. An important note about using fonts (or any elements!) in your SVG design. Cricut and Silhouette machines prefer simple artwork. And by this I mean that the machine software prefers fewer anchor points. Again, if you skipped last weeks lesson, go back because theres important information in there about anchor points! These machines can cut incredibly intricate designs, but the more mathematically simple they are (the fewer anchor points they have), the better. The easiest way to see your fonts anchor points is by looking at your font once youve outlined it (see above for outlining instructions). You'll see that the Luckily font I used is simple and has a reasonable number of anchor points. But if I choose a rough font, like Midnight below, you'll see that it has TONS of anchor points! Your cutting machine is really going to struggle with something this complex! It will chew up your material as it tries to turn and cut at all of these anchor points. This is just something to be aware of when youre working with fonts. You want smooth, easily cuttable fonts. Stay away from fonts with rough or grunge and sometimes even brush in the name. Always check your anchor points after youve outlined to make sure your font is a good one for cutting. If you do have a font that isnt super rough but it still has a lot of anchor points, theres a slider that you can use to help remove some of those anchor points while maintaining your font shape. This makes for faster, easier cutting. For example, I have the font Author here. When outlined, its a bit anchor-heavy, so lets simplify it. Select your image (V) and then go to the top menu bar and go to Object > Path > Simplify. This will give you a small slider that you can slide back and forth to simplify your font. Slide to the left and you'll have fewer anchor points, slide to the right and you'll have more. You want to try and find the point on the slider where your font looks the same as it does originally, but with fewer anchor points. You dont want to slide the slider so far to the left that it starts to distort your font in the simplification. If you click on the three dots on the right, you'll get some more advanced options, but I like that you can see here how many anchor points you started with and how many you have now. Its just interesting information! I started with 249 points and ended with 82 points and my text looks the same. Amazing, right? For todays lesson, practice making an SVG with a font! Make a bunch of them! Also try outlining different fonts you have to see how many anchor points they have. You may want to start a spreadsheet of good and bad fonts that you can refer to so you're not constantly choosing the same font and finding out its not going to work as a cut file. And thats it for todays font lesson! Next week, were going to dive deeper into fonts. Were going to talk a bit more about good font design, processes and elements like kerning, ligatures, and line spacing, as well as creating multi-layer font SVG files. Its going to be fun! Scott Falkner Community Expert Jan 28, 2022 Jan 28, 2022 Text is a vector, but fonts cant be embedded in SVG files. You can save as PDF or convert text to outlines then save as SVG. It would help to know what you plan to do with the file. What format do you need it to be in? What will be done with the file? Jump to answer Home Tutorials How to Create SVG file in Adobe Illustrator Before we create SVG file, lets review the use case! What is an SVG file, and how to use it? SVG files, which stand for Scalable Vector Graphics, are essential for website design as they provide high-quality, scalable images that can be resized without losing quality. This format is handy for your websites logos, icons, and illustrations. SVG files also have a smaller file size than other image formats, resulting in faster loading times for your web pages. Additionally, using SVG files can improve your websites accessibility and search engine optimization (SEO) by following the guidelines provided by the search engines. What Tools do I need? Creating an SVG file for your website can be done with vector graphic software like Adobe Illustrator, Photoshop, or Corel Draw. If you are comfortable and experienced with coding, you can code it yourself through your preferred code editor software. Okay, lets get to Illustrator and create SVG file like a pro! Tutorial: Create SVG file in Adobe Illustrator Step 1: If you are looking to create SVG file and use it on your website, then open up any logo/illustration in a .ai or .eps file. Keep in mind, just because you can do something on Illustrator or even Photoshop, doesnt mean that the SVG file will also be able to do it. If youre working with a wide variety of blend modes, gradients, or highly unusual fonts, it may not work in SVG. The first thing to do is click on File > Save As. Decide where you want to save it on your computer and give it whatever name you choose. Next, in the Format box, choose SVG. Then, click Save. After you save it, a dialog box will pop up to give you various options. Click on the button in the lower left-hand corner labeled More Options to see the entire range of options to set up the file. Ensure that your SVG Profiles say SVG 1.1, and under Fonts > Type, the default will always be SVG since that is what you are creating. The next option, Fonts > Subsetting, has several choices you can decide on. If you want to, you can select the default to System Fonts, which will provide you with replacement fonts in the system. In the above screenshot, you can see that there are other choices as well for Fonts > Subsetting. If you choose Only Glyphs Used or All Glyphs, this will take the fonts that you have used and put them within the SVG file (however, this wont always work). To try to combat that, you can go back to the Type section, and instead of selecting the default, you can choose Convert to Outline. This is an alternative choice to embedding the font. However, it does make the file less accessible because it will no longer be in a text form. It can also make it into a larger file size. Note: If you want to make your SVG file more accessible, read our tutorial on How to Make Your SVG File Accessible for Screen Readers. Step 3: Next, to keep it simple, in the Advanced Options > CSS properties, choose Presentation Attributes. Also, check the Responsive option. This is hugely important because this selection deletes the width and height in the XML code of your SVG file. Turning on Responsive allows the file to be responsive to any screen size and ignore the image width and height properties. Click OK in the lower right-hand corner to create a size-responsive SVG file. After finalizing, its a good practice to go back and double-check. So, open the file and double-check that its how you want it to be. And thats all there is to it! Once you have created an SVG file, the only issue is that it wont be fully optimized, coming right out of whatever program you created. So, the next step is to optimize it properly. To do that, read our step-by-step tutorial on optimizing an SVG file to load your file faster. Want to make your own SVG cut files? One of the most important steps is to convert text to outlines and save as a vector file. Ill show you how to Vectorize Text in Illustrator in just a few easy steps! Soon, you'll be making your own SVG files for Cricut and Silhouette machines! How to Vectorize Text in Illustrator If you want to learn how to vectorize text for crafting, you will love this easy tutorial! I use these exact steps nearly every day to create all of my SVG files. I will show you how to place text in Illustrator, convert it to a vector file, and share easy tips for creating quality SVG files! What is a Vector Graphic? Vector graphics are an important part of creating your own cut files for your Cricut or Silhouette. A vector file uses mathematical formulas to create shapes with lines and curves. In comparison, a raster graphic is comprised of tiny little squares called pixels. What are the Differences Between a Raster File and Vector File? The image quality of raster files is dependent on the number of pixels per square inch (resolution). Raster images are used for detailed digital artwork, photography, or images used for display only. The quick way to visualize how they are made is to take a very small raster image and make it very large. It will become blurry! A raster file is saved as .jpg file or .gif file, among others file types. In contrast, vector graphics can be resized up or down without a loss of quality. They do not depend on the resolution of where they are displayed. Because of this, they are used for line art graphics. RELATED POST: How to Upload Fonts to Cricut Design Space For the best results, you will want to use vector graphics to create cut files. They are smaller files, which are smaller for everyone to download and store on their computers. Vector graphic elements are usually saved as an AI file, SVG file, EPS file, or DXF file. What is a SVG File? A SVG file, or scalable vector graphic, is a type of vector image that is used by Cricut Design Space and Silhouette Studio. Additionally, Silhouette Studio performs well with .dxf files. You can even use SVG files for laser cutting machines such as the xTool M1. Its my new favorite (affordable!) laser machine for crafts! These design programs tell your electronic cutting machine what to cut based on the SVG design. As you change the size, the integrity of the design will remain the same. Plus, SVG files maintain separate layers so that your Cricut or Silhouette knows which color to cut different design elements from! When you design a SVG file with fonts, you will need to vectorize the text. You will create outlines of the text to convert the font into vector format. If you're new to using SVG files with your Cricut machine, make sure you read my full post on How to Upload an SVG to Cricut Design Space. How to Create Text Outlines in Illustrator Adobe Illustrator is the premier professional design program for graphic designers and cut file designers. And theres a Free Trial for it over at Adobe! There are other design programs out there (including a couple of free ones), but their capabilities are limited in comparison to Illustrator. Dont worry, you can turn fonts into a vector object with a simple process! Its the first step to designing your own SVG files, and I will show you how easy it is in this step by step tutorial. First, open a new document. If you are creating an SVG file, I would recommend a 1212 art board. That is the size of a standard cutting mat for a Cricut or Silhouette machine. Use the type tool to create a text layer. The text tool will create an editable layer of text you can change the text, font size, or font style as much as you want. To turn the text into a vector shape, select all of your text using the Selection Tool (V, Open Arrow). Your text elements will be surrounded by a blue line box. The next step is to go to the top menu and click Type > Create Outlines. The keyboard shortcut to create outlines of text in Illustrator is: Shift + Command + O for Mac; Shift + Control + O for PC. With those simple steps, your text characters are vectorized! To see the anchor points in your text outline, use the Direct Selection Tool (A, Closed Arrow). Repeat steps for additional text. Tips to Convert Text to Outlines in Illustrator If you are planning to create cut files with your text, here are some tips you should follow: 1. Some fonts are more appropriate to use for vector cut files than others. The best way to verify how well your text will cut is to use the Direct Selection Tool. 2. The number of dots, or anchor points, that a font has is directly correlated to the number of cuts or corners that your Cricut or Silhouette will make. Fewer anchor points = less corners and smoother cut. More anchor points = more cuts and more detail. 3. You can usually tell if a font will translate well to a cut file by looking at the edges of the letters. For example, a watercolor brush font will never cut as cleanly as a font with clean edges (as in Times New Roman). Font designers that design fonts to be used with cutting machines will be aware of this. Nearly all fonts in Design Space or Silhouette Studio will cut cleanly, but if you use your own fonts you will have to check the outlines manually. 4. If you can, definitely choose a font with fewer anchor points. You will be guaranteed a clean cut, which is especially important when cutting small letters and details. 5. Once you have vectorized your text, you will have editable paths but NOT editable text. You can not change the font after you create outlines. You can however change the size as much as you would like. Remember your font is now powered by math! You can enlarge it without losing any quality. 6. If you plan to cut all or some of your text from one material or color, I recommend taking this process one step further to create a more user-friendly file. Select all of the text that will be the same color and in the same area (a whole word or phrase). Then create a compound path by selecting Object > Compound Path > Make (Command + 8 or Control + 8). Then select the new path and fill color if needed. 7. When you have finished your vector outline, you can save your Illustrator in SVG format to cut. I usually keep two files: one as a working Illustrator file, and the other as a SVG file type that is ready to cut. You now have your own design file from text to use with your cutting machine! Pin How to Create a Text Vector File

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