

Advanced Tips & Tricks for Inkscape:

Once you are comfortable using the basic tools in Inkscape, here are some handy tips & tricks to extend your creativity.

T Text fonts

By clicking the capital 'T' icon, located on the right hand side of your screen, it will bring up a window with a preview of your text in different font styles.

Scroll through the *font family* window to see the different fonts available. Use the *style* table to change the font properties (bold, italic, heavy, normal, etc.).

When you find a style of font you would like to use, click the *Apply* button. This will automatically change the text located on your canvas.



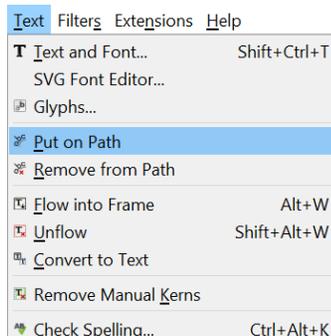
Curved Text/ Text on a Path



To curve text in Inkscape, you will only be using three main tools. Start by using the text tool to create some text on your canvas.

Next, create a curved line using the *Bezier* tool (or you can create any shape you would like using the other shape tools). To draw a curve, place nodes on the canvas by left clicking. Delete the top two nodes to create a curved line.

Select both the text and your object, by holding *shift* and left clicking on each item. Go to the **Text** menu, located at the top of the screen, and select **Put on Path**.



Curve my text

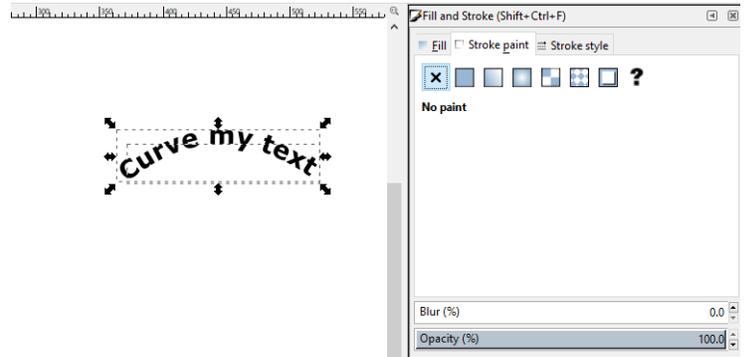


Curve my text



Your text should now be curved and can be moved anywhere on the page. However, you'll notice that your curve remains on the page and can be used to adjust the curve, size and rotation of the text. If the curve is deleted, you'll notice that your text will lose its curve. In order to change this, you'll need to take away the stroke of your curve. To do this, select *Object* from the top menu and select *Fill and Stroke*. Click on the X under *Stroke Paint* to remove the curve.

You can also mirror and rotate your text using the tools below.



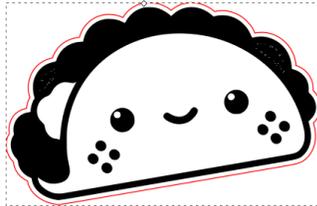
Creating an Inset or Offset Outline

This option in Inkscape will allow you to create a border (cutline) around your object. Inkscape can expand and contract shapes not only by scaling, but also by offsetting an object's path. After you have imported your image and converted it to a vector, you can then create an inset or offset outline.

Example: No Cut line



Offset

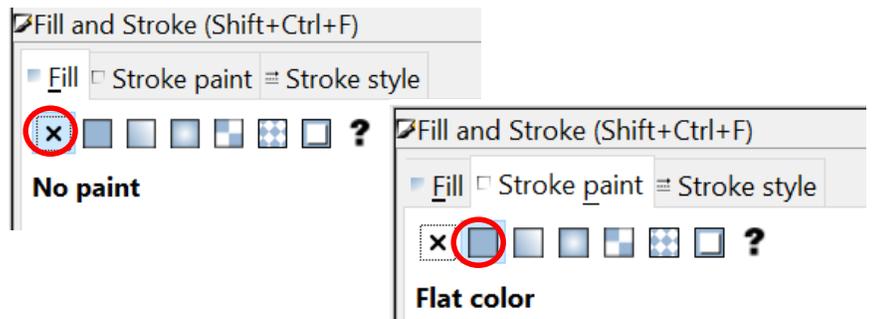
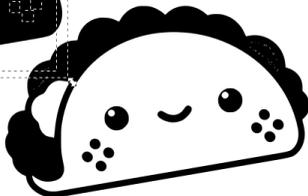
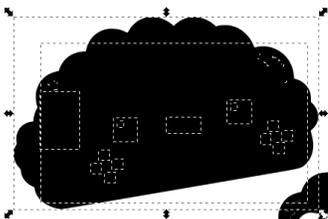


Inset

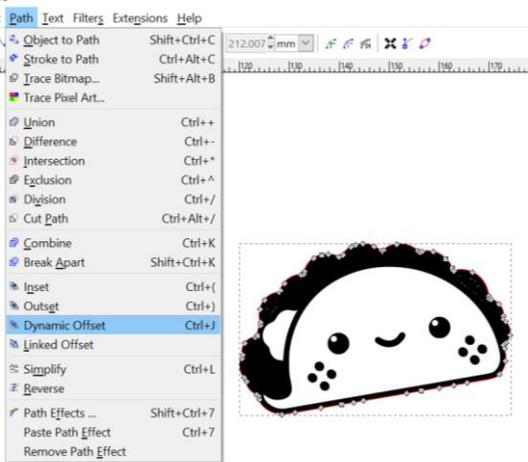
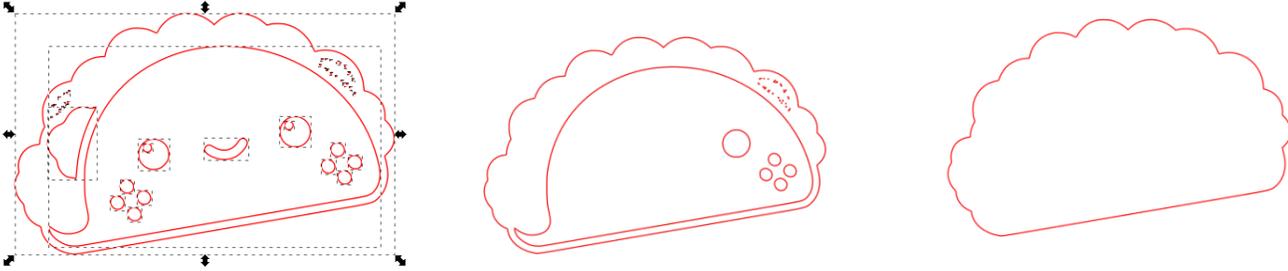


Creating an Inset or Offset Outline

Make a copy of your original object (right click on the object and select duplicate). Go to the *Path* menu and select *Break Apart*. Go to the *Fill and Stroke* menu, located under *Object*, remove the *Fill* and add a *Stroke*.

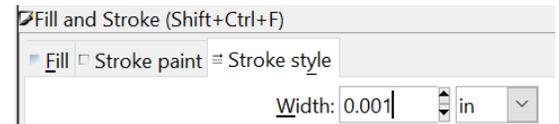


Your object should look like the image below. Next, click and begin removing all the small objects located within the large outline until there is only an outer line left.



Take your outline and drag it overtop of your other image. Go up to the *Path* menu and click *Inset* or *Offset*. If you want to control the amount of offset, click the *Dynamic Offset* option. A little node will appear (usually at the top of your image) where you can click and drag it to size the outer line. You will notice that this is extremely sensitive and you will only require a small amount of movement.

Afterwards, set your cutline to *0.001* in the *Stroke style* menu. Group the two objects together so that they move together.

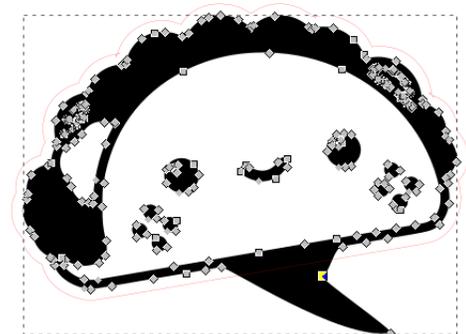
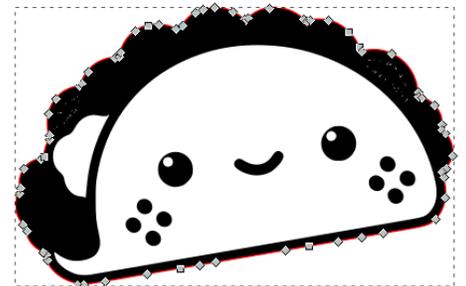
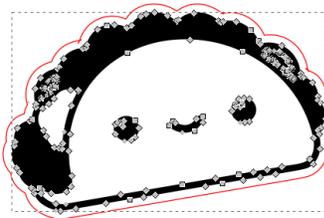
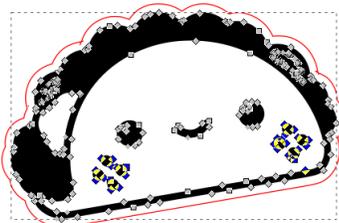


Editing Nodes

What are nodes? Nodes are the small grey dots that appear when you click on the *Edit Path* tool and select your object.

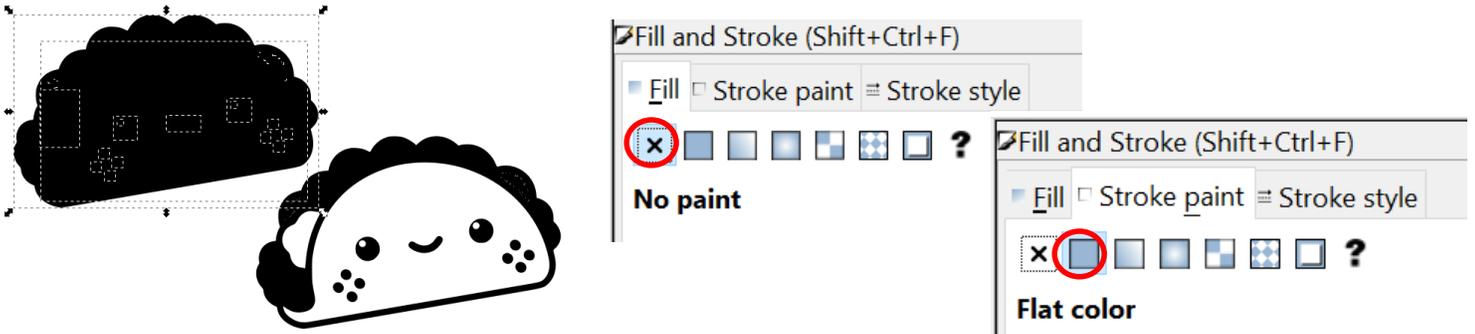
What do nodes do? Nodes allow you to edit a vector image. You can click and drag them to stretch parts of your image or you can delete them to remove certain parts of your image.

For example, you can remove the freckles on the image of the taco. Select all the nodes on the freckles and click delete. The freckles will be removed from your image. You can do this to any part of a vector image.

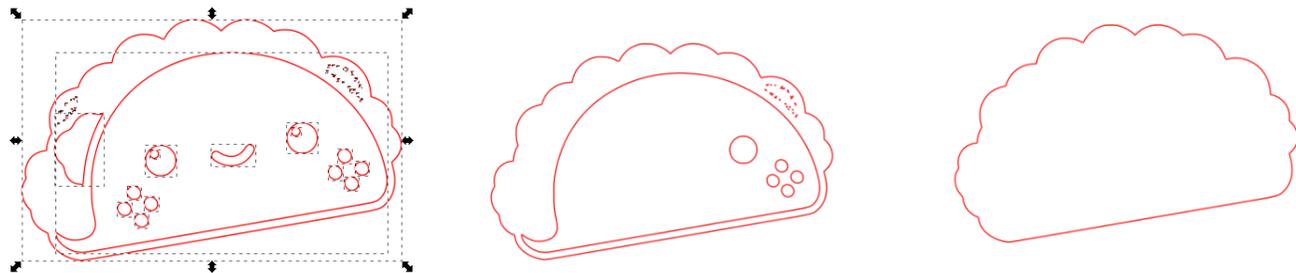


Creating a Mask

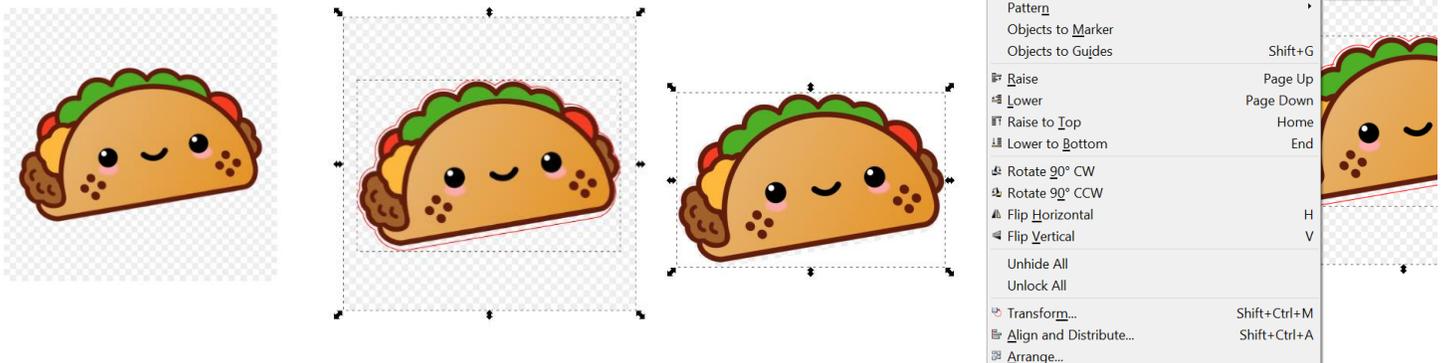
Inkscape allows you to create a mask allowing you to remove the background on your image. This can be useful when using colored images with a background. Trace your original image using *Trace Bitmap*. Go to the *Path* menu and select *Break Apart*. Go to the *Fill and Stroke* menu, located under *Object*, remove the *Fill* and add a *Stroke*.



Your object should look like the image below. Next, click and begin removing all the small objects located within the large outline until there is only an outer line left.



Overlap your coloured image and the outline of the image. Hold *Shift* and left click on each image, selecting both images. Select *Object* from the top menu and click on *Clip*. Select *Set*. The background of your image will be removed.



Saving your File

You will need to save the file as an *Inkscape SVG*, as well as a *PDF (Portable Document File)* for the laser cutter to read. The laser cutter likes to think that it is a printer and will only read PDF files.

It is always useful to save booth version. If you run into a problem with the laser cutter not cutting, or the vinyl printer not printing, you can then use the SVG to find the problem and correct it.