

# CREATING CUT PATHS FOR RASTER IMAGES IN ADOBE® ILLUSTRATOR®

## GETTING STARTED

This document will teach you how to create a cut path and an offset cut path around a raster image using Adobe® Illustrator®. Once your cut path is created, it can be imported into Wasatch SoftRIP® and used with the Cutting Options feature to create custom pieces.

### STEP 1

Open your raster image in Adobe® Illustrator®.

### STEP 2

Select the image (Illustration 1).

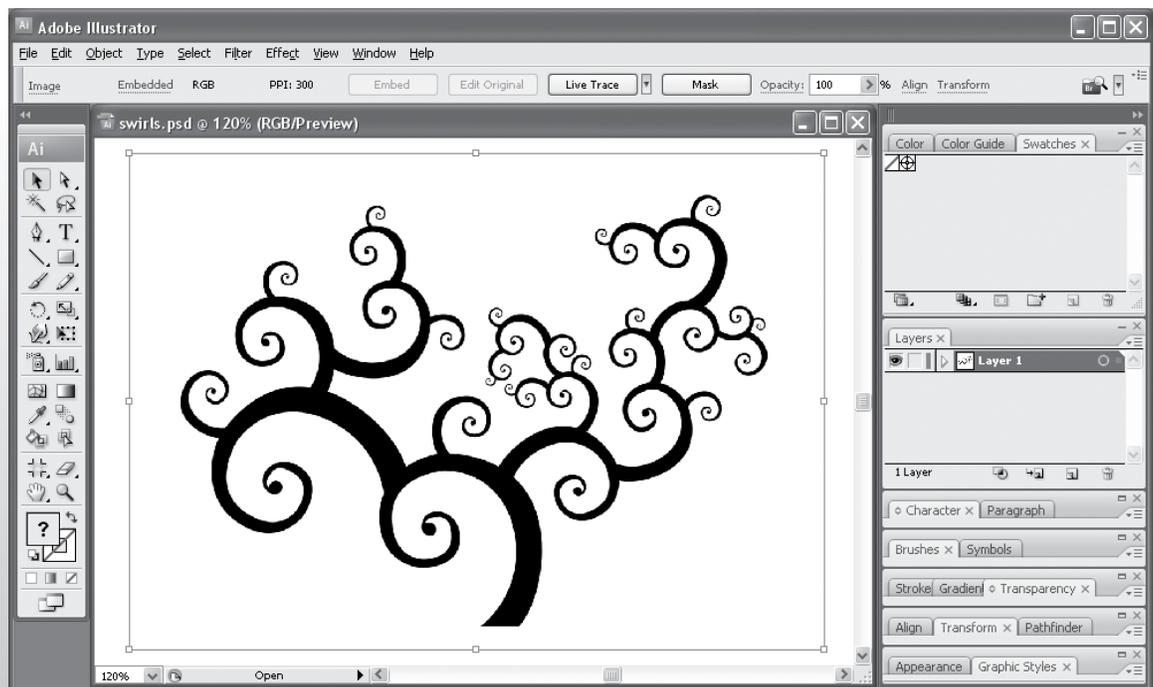


Illustration 1

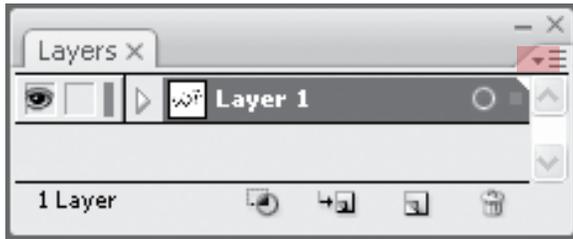


Illustration 2

**STEP 3**

Go to Window > Layers or the Layers tab in your workspace palettes.

**STEP 4**

Go to the drop down menu located on the upper right side of the Layers tab (Illustration 2). Select Duplicate "Layer 1" to create a copy of Layer 1. You will create your cut path from this copied layer.

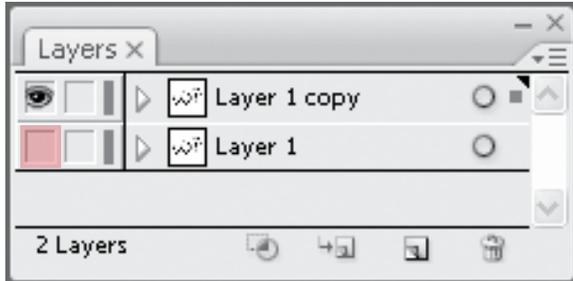


Illustration 3

**STEP 5**

Hide Layer 1 by clicking on the Visibility button so that the box on the far left is empty (Illustration 3). This will make it easier to work with the image on the copied layer.



Illustration 4

**STEP 6**

Select your image. In the Properties bar that runs along the top of the document, click the drop down menu next to the Live Trace button (Illustration 4) and select Tracing Options. You can also go to Object > Live Trace > Tracing Options.

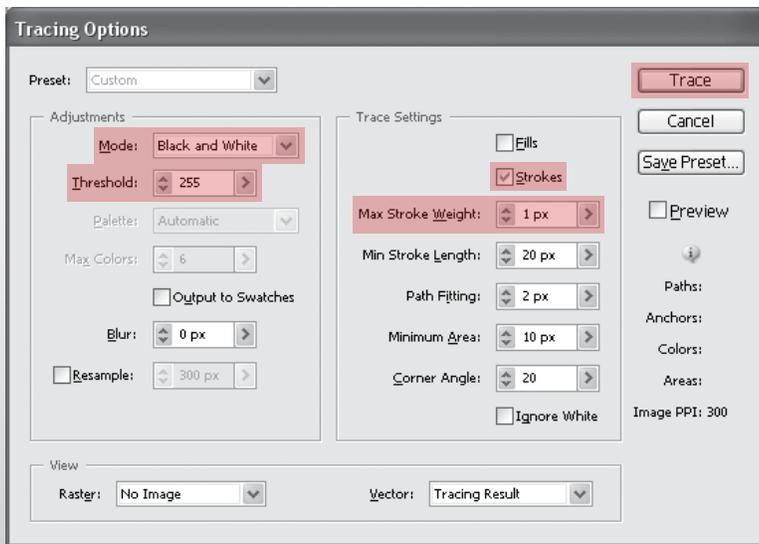


Illustration 5

**STEP 7**

(Illustration 5)

1. Under Mode, select Black and White.
2. Under Threshold, select 255.
3. Under Trace Settings, select Strokes.
4. Under Max Stroke Weight, select 1 px.
5. Click the Trace button.

**STEP 8**

Click the Expand button in the properties bar that runs along the top of the

document (Illustration 6). Your image should now have a stroke around it, as shown in Illustration 7.



Illustration 6

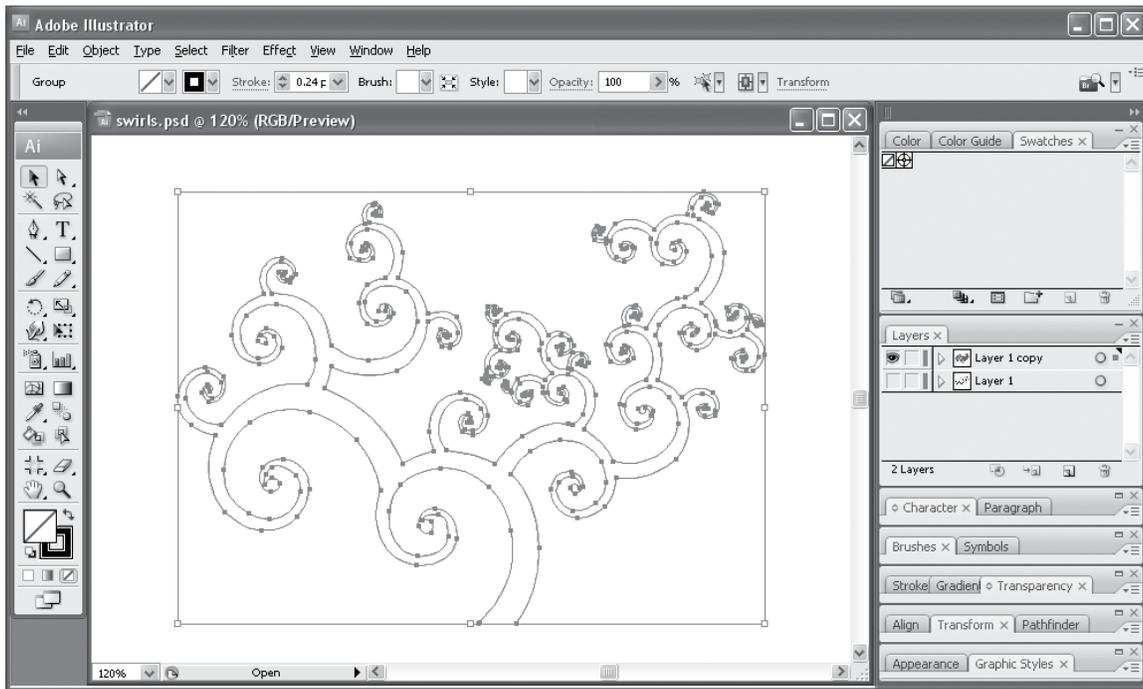


Illustration 7

**STEP 9**

With the path still selected, go to **Window > Stroke** or the Stroke tab in your workspace palettes and change the stroke size to .25 pt.

**STEP 10**

Go to **Window > Swatches** or the Swatches tab in your workspace palettes. Create a new swatch. You can use the drop down menu or the New Swatch button to do this (Illustration 8).

**Note:** The Stroke box must be in front of the Fill box in order to create a new swatch for the path (Illustration 9).

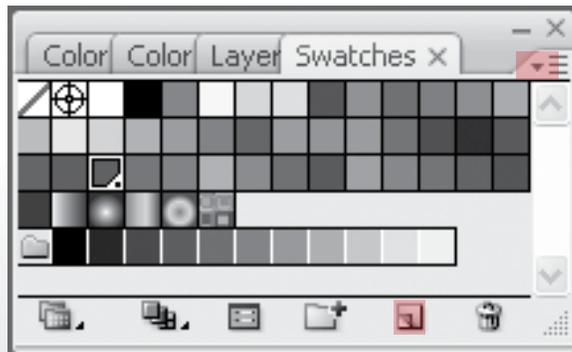


Illustration 8

**STEP 11**

Name the swatch cutpath. Under Color Type, select Spot Color. It does not matter what the Color Mode is (Illustration 10).

**Note:** You must name the file cutpath and select Spot Color as the Color Type. If you don't, SoftRIP will not recognize the cut path.

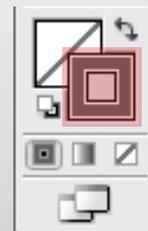


Illustration 9

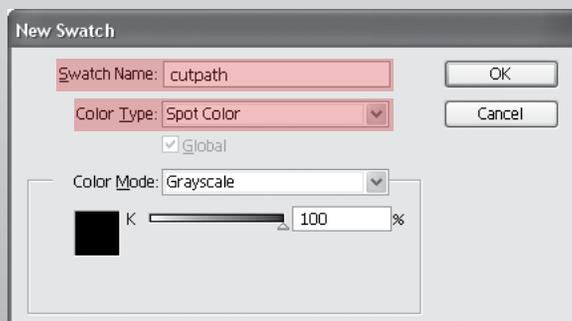


Illustration 10

## STEP 12

Go to Window > Layers or the Layers tab in your workspace palettes. Show Layer 1 by clicking on the Visibility button so that the box on the far left contains an eye icon. (Illustration 11). Now your original image and your newly created cut path are both visible.

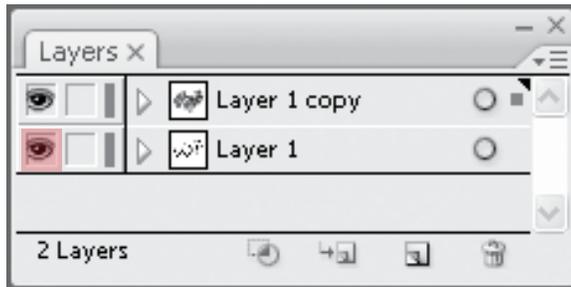


Illustration 11

## STEP 13

Save the file as an .eps or .pdf.

## STEP 14

Your cut path is now ready to be used in SoftRIP.

## CREATING AN OFFSET CUT PATH

An offset cut path is useful when you need to create white space around your finished piece or when you are using a bleed. To create an offset cut path around a raster image using Adobe® Illustrator®, complete Steps 1 - 9 above. Once those steps have been completed, follow the instructions below.

### STEP 1

Go to Window > Layers or the Layers tab in your workspace palettes. Show Layer 1 by clicking on the Visibility button so that the box on the far left contains an eye icon. (Illustration 1). Now your original image and your newly created cut path are both visible.

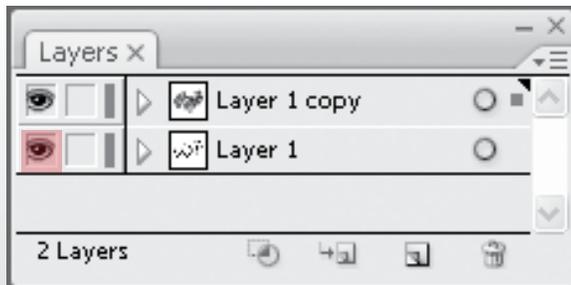


Illustration 1

### STEP 2

With your stroke still selected, go to Object > Path > Offset Path and adjust the Offset value. In our illustration, we've used an Offset of 3 pt (Illustration 2).

The results of this offset can be seen in Illustration 3.

### STEP 3

The offset path does not replace your original path, so the original path needs to be deleted. Go to Object > Ungroup or SHIFT+CTRL+G.

Select your original path and delete it.

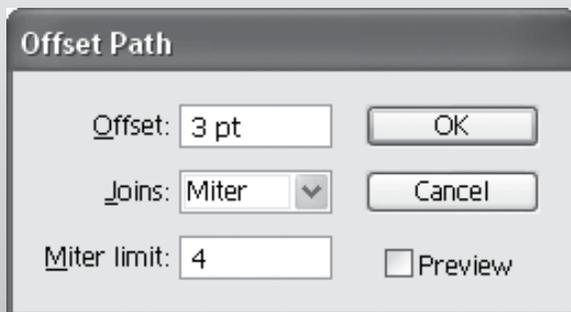


Illustration 2

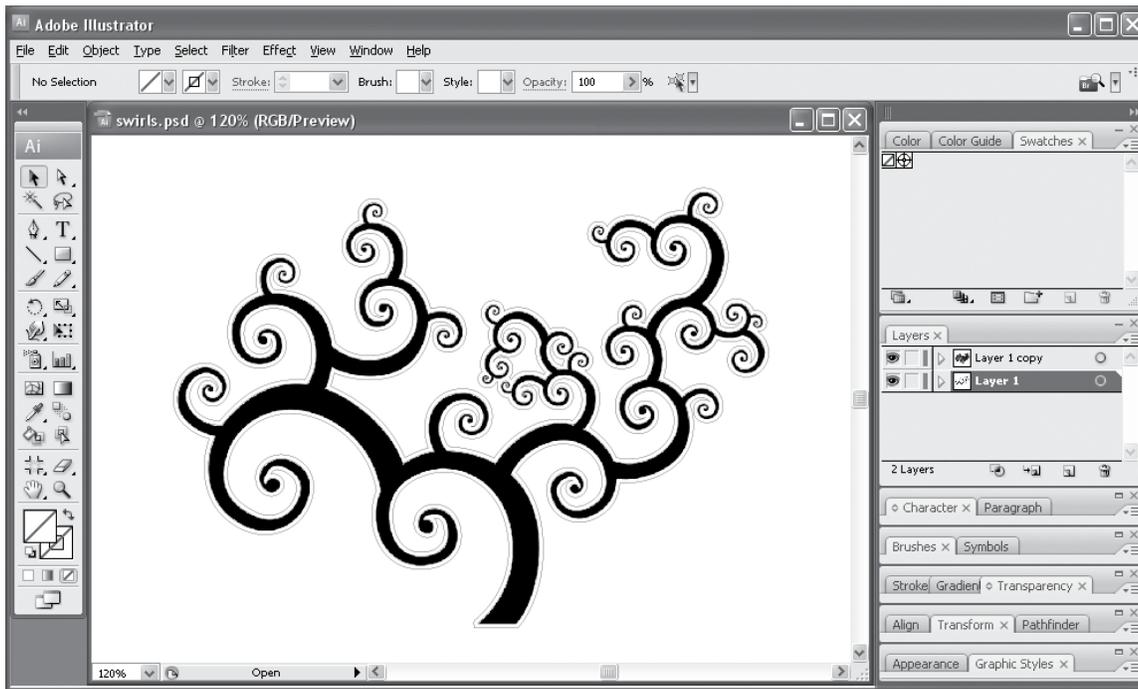


Illustration 3

**STEP 4**

Select your offset path. Go to Window > Swatches or the Swatches tab in your workspace palettes. Create a new swatch. You can use the drop down menu or the New Swatch button to do this (Illustration 4).

**Note:** The Stroke box must be in front of the Fill box in order to create a new swatch for the path (Illustration 5).

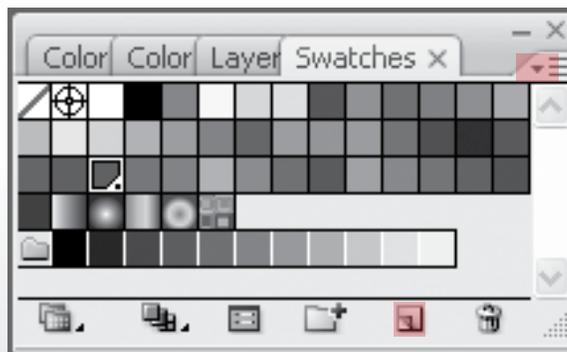


Illustration 4

**STEP 5**

Name the swatch cutpath. Under Color Type, select Spot Color. It does not matter what the Color Mode is (Illustration 6).

**Note:** You must name the file cutpath and select Spot Color as the Color Type. If you don't, SoftRIP will not recognize the cut path.

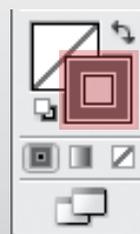


Illustration 5

**STEP 6**

Save the file as an .eps or .pdf.

**STEP 7**

Your cut path is now ready to be used in SoftRIP.

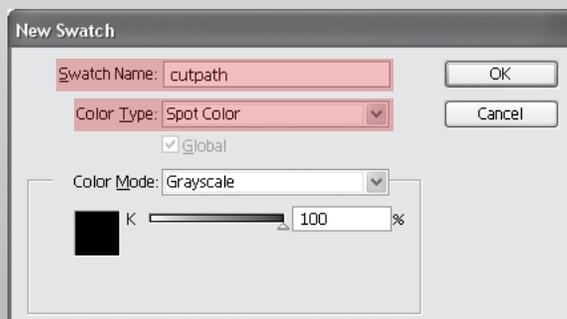


Illustration 6