

# Printing and Cutting : How to prepare files ?

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**C**oupled to Caldera Graphics's powerful print interface, the *VisualCUT* module allows for a fast and easy way to drive cutters. However, for our software to give its best, clear contours must be defined first and foremost.

In its first part, the present document will therefore show you how to create these contours in *Adobe Illustrator CS/CS 2/CS 3* and *CorelDRAW X3*, as well as to add them directly in our *Compose* module.

In the second part, it will explain how to perform the printing and cutting themselves.

## Preparing the cut file

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One thing to keep in mind here, whatever the method and software you'll choose (*Adobe Illustrator, Corel...*), is that naming the contours the right way is essential, and this for two reasons.

The first reason is that Caldera can only use a contour for cutting if it's named "*CutContour*", or at least if its name begins with "*CutContour*". If it's not the case, there are still some ways to use it, but it's more difficult (see section "*VisualCut*" in the Reference Manual).

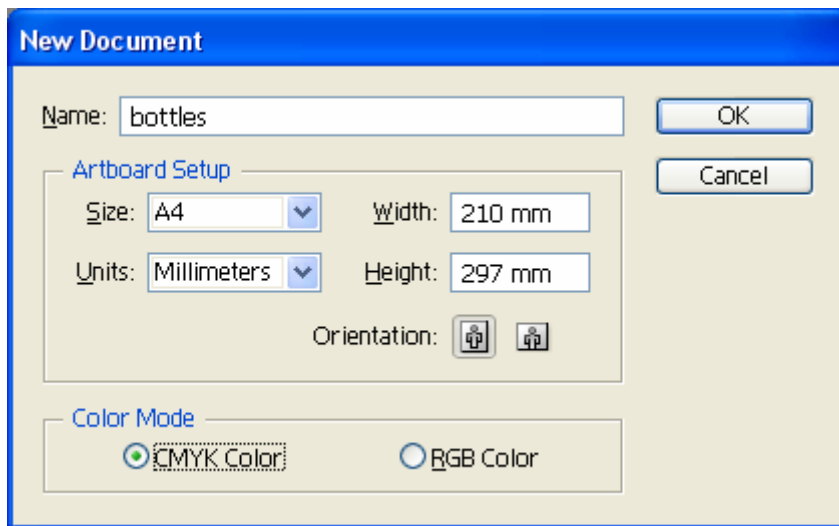
The second reason is that the contours names will also be used during the configuration process of the cutter, and at this step, if you need to create different tool profiles for different kinds of contours, you will also need them to be properly named.

For instance, on a given image, you may want to design a contour that needs to be cut as fast as possible, and a second contour that will need to be cut with extreme precision. You could then name the first contour "*CutContourFast*", and the second one "*CutContourFine*".

## Adobe Illustrator CS/CS2/CS3

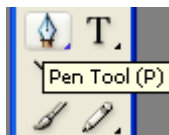
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1. Start *Adobe Illustrator*.  
Two methods are possible here: either you want to add a contour and perform a cut on a vector image, or you want to add a contour to a raster image.
2. If you wish to use an existing vector file, click File > Open, navigate to the file itself, select it, and click *Open*. Then, follow the same procedure as described on step 4 and beyond.
3. If you wish to import a raster image into an AI document to add a contour to it, click File > New, and choose the name, dimensions and color mode you want your file to have.

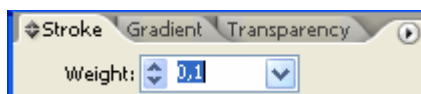


Once this is done, click File > Import. In the file browser that appears, select the image for which you need to create a contour, and click *Import*.

4. In the *Tools* palette, select the *Pen* tool.



5. Draw the contour around the image, exactly where you want it to be cut later on. In order to prevent some exports problem, please give a thickness of 0.1 point to your contour in the *Stroke* panel.



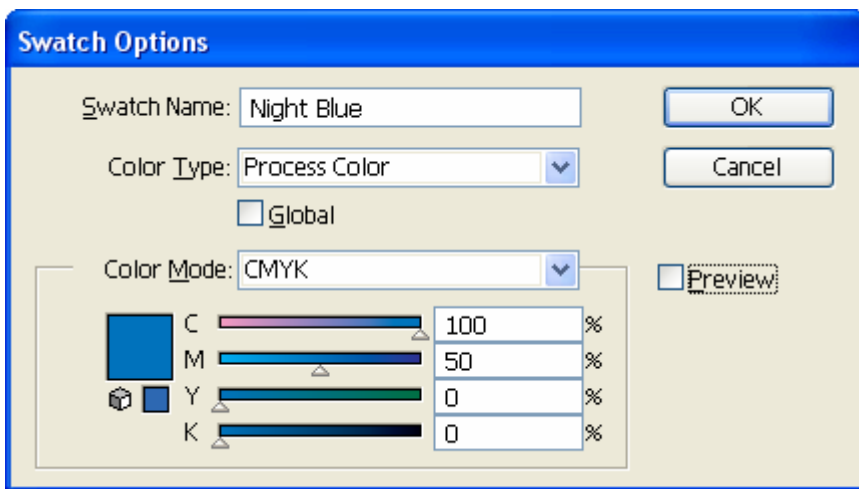
- For the contour to be taken into account in the Caldera Graphics software, it MUST be given a color. Therefore, make sure that the Background color icon is deactivated, and that the Contour icon has been given a color, as in the following screenshot:



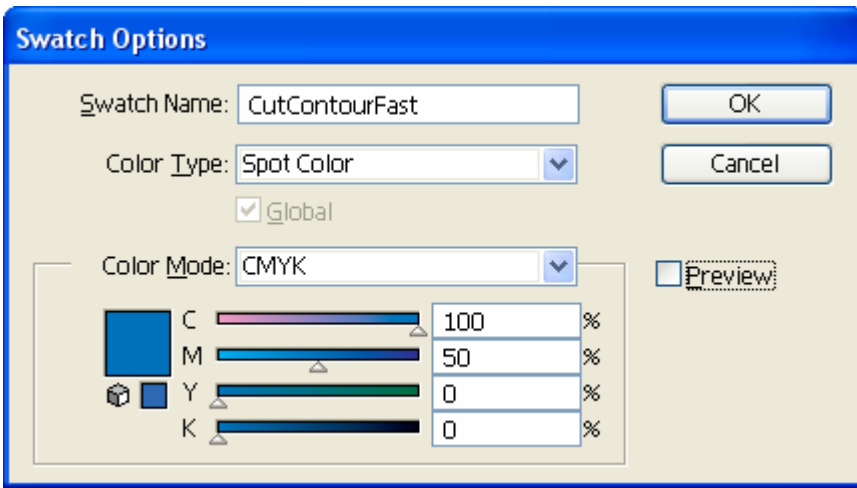
To give a color to the contour, you can either set it in the *Colors* palette, or pick one among the color patches.



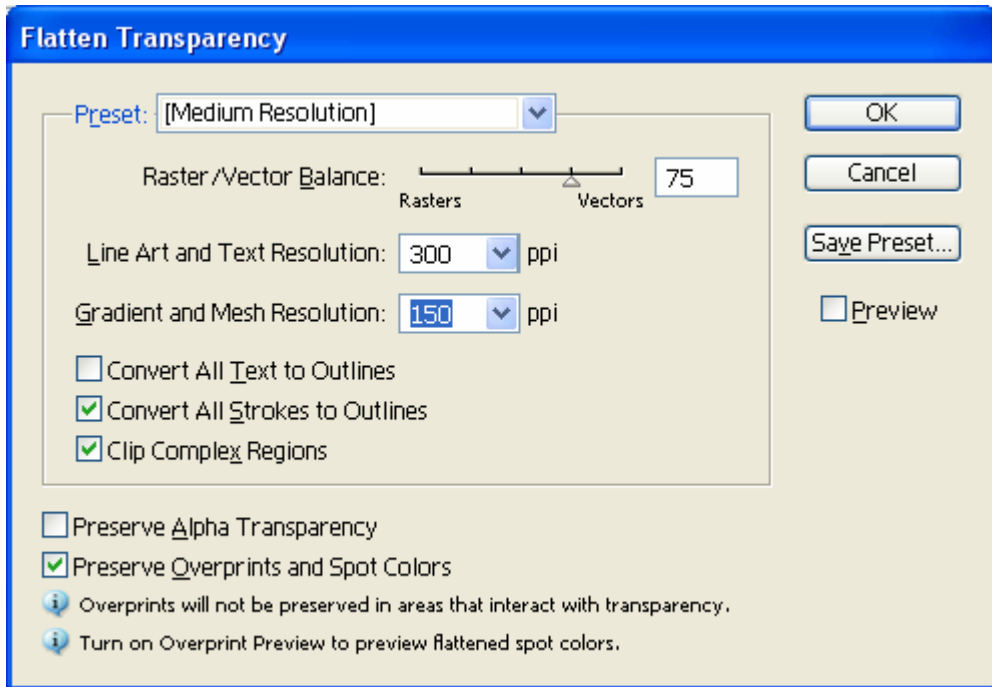
- The next step is to name your color. To do so, double-click on the corresponding patch of color in the palette to edit it. The *Swatch options* window will then appear:



- For the contour to be recognized in the Caldera Graphics software, its name must start with "CutContour" (for instance, "CutContourFast"). It MUST also be defined as a spot color:



9. Once this is done, click "OK".
10. Since there are reported problems with Adobe Illustrator software when attempting to export a file with spot colors and transparency, it is important to flatten all transparent shapes before the export step. If you have used transparency in your document, click Object > Flatten Transparency... choose an appropriate preset (Low Resolution, Medium Resolution, High Resolution or a custom preset) and let the "Preserve Overprints and Spot Colors" enabled.

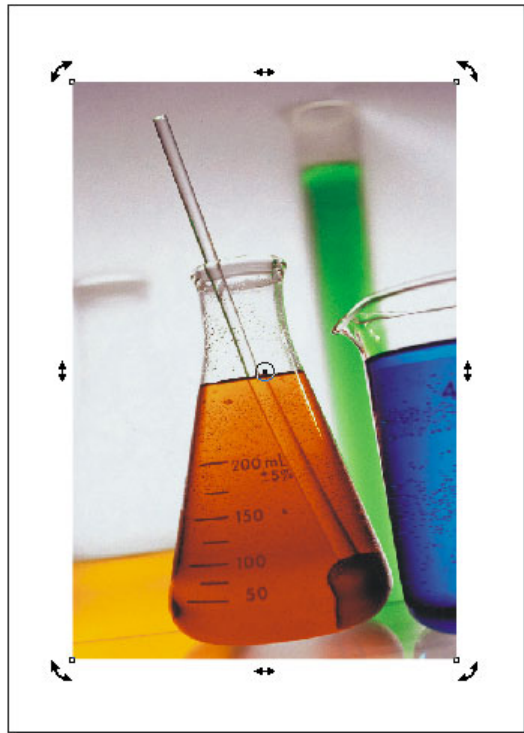


11. Click File > Save as..., and choose EPS or PDF for the file format. Your image is now ready to be opened in your Caldera Graphics software.

CorelDRAW X3

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1. When you open *CorelDRAW*, choose to create a new document (File > New).
2. Click File > Import, navigate through your directories until you find the image to use, select it, and click "Import" in the window.
3. Paste the image on the blank canvas.



4. In the *Tools* palette, pick the *Bézier curves* tool.

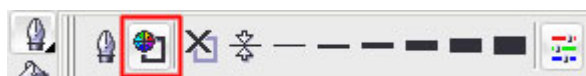


With this tool, you can draw the contour around the part of the image you wish to cut:

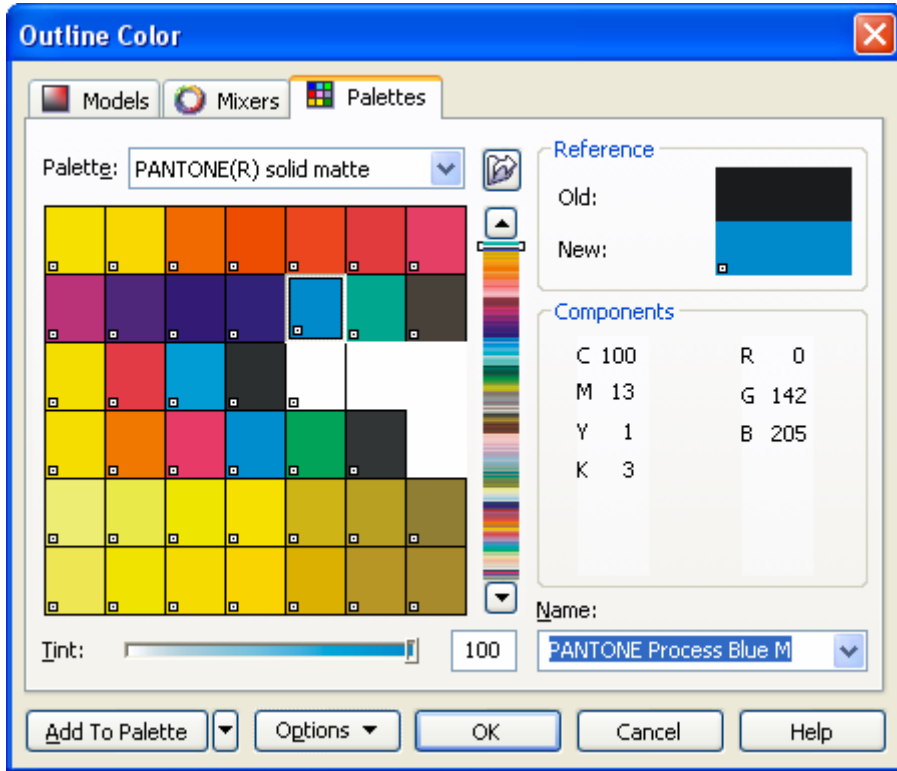
5. Again in the palette of tools on the left, and while keeping the drawn contour selected, choose the *Pen* tool. This tool allows you to set options for your contours.



6. Click the Contour color icon to open the associated dialog box, and choose a color for your contour.



You need to click the *Palettes* tab, and pick one of the named colors (use the drop-down menu to select in which library you wish to choose a color).

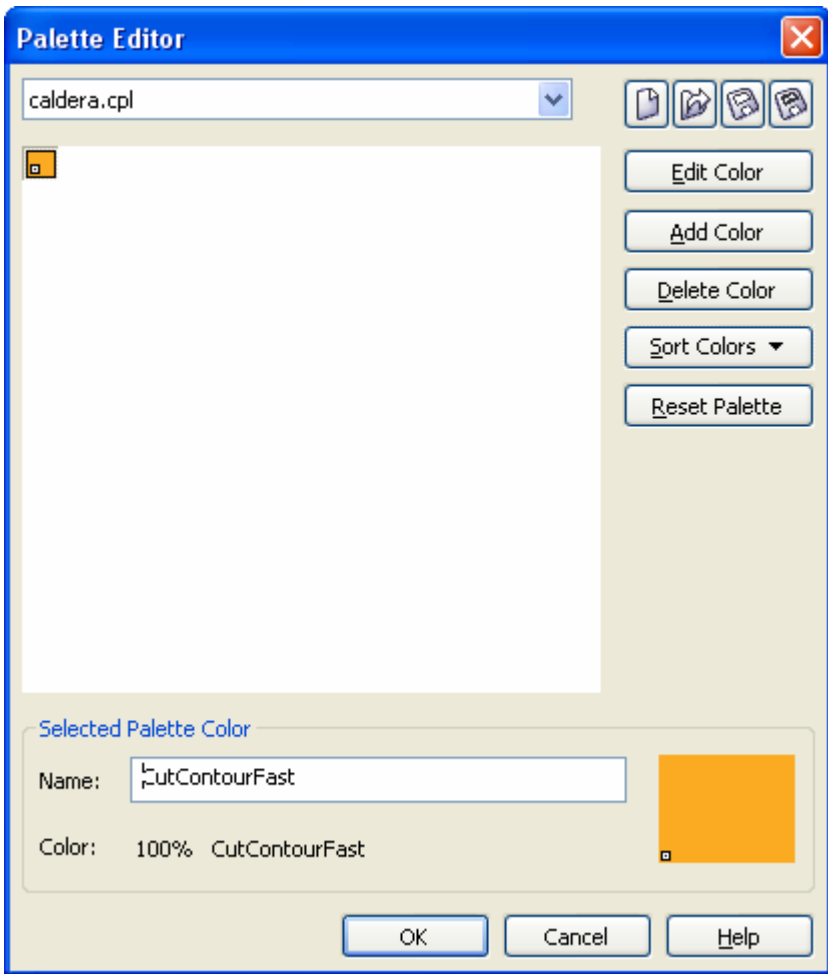


7. At this point, since *CorelDRAW* allows an easy creation of customized palettes, we suggest you create one for your contour colors; this will make their use more convenient for other images to come, when you need to create contours for them as well.

To do so, keep the contour selected.

In the main menu bar, click *Window>Palettes>Create a palette from selection*. The newly created palette appears as a vertical bar containing one color, on the right part of your screen.

8. Right-click the symbol above this palette, and choose *Modify > Editor*. In the window that appears, select the color of the contour, and, in the *Name* field, rename it "*CutContourFast*". When this is done, click "*OK*".



9. Click File > Export, and save the file as an EPS.  
You can now open it in your Caldera Graphics software.