

nwgi - cut vinyl graphics

how to prep your file

Is cut vinyl right for your project?

Cut vinyl graphics are used for projects with designs that are solid shapes and text. Multiple vinyl colors can be used side-by-side to create a dynamic design with two, three, or four colors, but not gradients or shades of color. If your design contains photographic elements or raster graphics, like .jpg, .gif, or .tif, then your project cannot be produced with cut vinyl and a full color printing method will be the way to go.

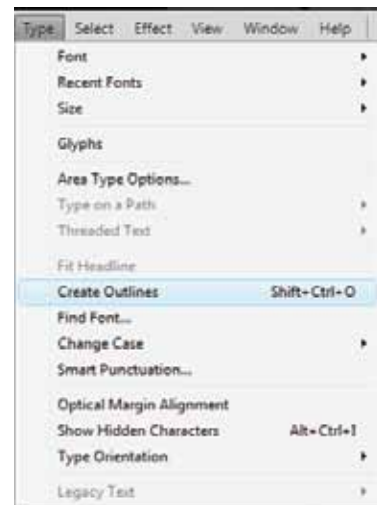
What type of file should I submit?

Your file must be submitted as an Illustrator or EPS file. THE FILE CAN ONLY CONTAIN VECTOR DATA (NO RASTER DATA).

How do I set up my file?

Type Requirements:

Type cannot be smaller than 0.5" high for sans serif, 1" for serif. All fonts must be CONVERTED TO OUTLINES -- Select all the text with the black arrow selection tool, and use [Type > Create Outlines].



Graphics Requirements:

The graphics for cut vinyl projects need to be simple. If they are too complex the vinyl cutter may have trouble cutting out the graphics, or we may not be able to weed your file.



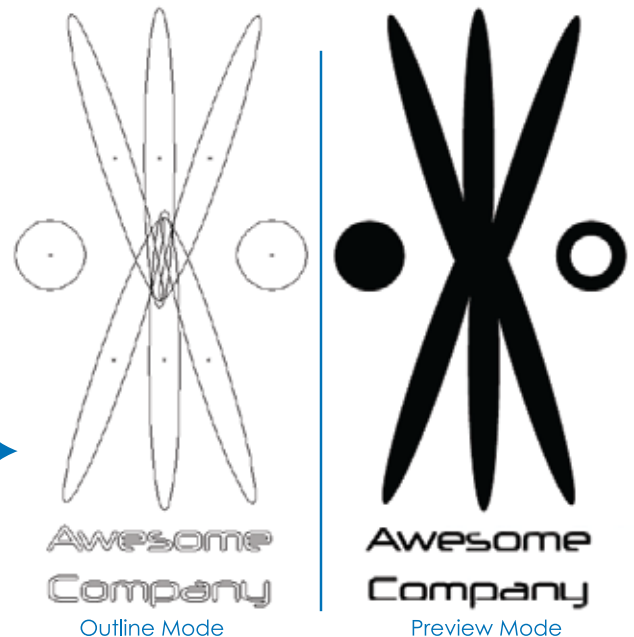
Simple good



Complex bad

Because the vinyl cutter will cut along every vector line in your file, and only where there are vector lines, it's important to look at the outlines in your file and clean up extra lines. To see this, use [View > Outline], which will show everything in outline-mode. Everywhere you see a line, the vinyl cutter will make a cut, no exceptions.

To see everything in regular mode again, use [View > Preview]



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Convert Strokes to Outlines

Strokes that you see as thick lines in Preview Mode but not at all in Outline Mode (the circle on the right in our example) need to be converted to outlines. Select the part of your design with strokes and use [Object > Path > Outline Stroke]



Unite Overlapping Shapes

Next, overlapping shapes need to be united into one shape. To do this, you'll need the Pathfinder tool. If it's not already open, use [Window > Pathfinder] to open the Pathfinder tool pallet. With the graphic selected choose: [Unite] in the Pathfinder Pallet. Then double check everything in outline mode to verify that all the shapes are present without extra overlapping lines.

Finally, save as an Illustrator file, or an EPS.

