Sticker Maker Guide

"I only have my image and no clue what to do!"

Before You Start

- Ensure your image is saved on your computer or accessible via:
    - Google Drive
    - USB flash drive
    - Attached in an email

Setting Up Your File in Adobe Illustrator

1. Open **Adobe Illustrator** **Ai**
    1. Select library computers and [computers in one of these labs](#) provide Adobe Creative Cloud.
2. Sign in using your **ACE account**.
3. Create a **New Document**.
    1. Select **New File** from the top-left menu.
    2. Select the following the **New Document** window:
        - On the right side, change the **Units** from Points to **Inches**.
        - Set **Width** to 18 inches.
        - Set **Height** to 12 inches.
    3. Select **Create**.
4. Place your image.
    1. Go to **File → Place**.
    2. Select the image file from your computer.
    3. Click and drag on the blank page to position your image.
5. Resize your image (if needed)
    1. If the image is not the correct size:
        - Select the image.
        - Hold **Shift** (to keep proportions) and drag a corner handle to resize.

3 Ways of Cutting

Red = cut line

Anything outside the lines will be cut off.

1: Shape Tool

Most simple!

Can be a:
- rectangle
- circle
- oval
- hexagon
- star

2: Pen Tool

Some coordination required.

You trace over the design.

Has a little learning curve.

3: Image Trace

Most number of steps.

May not work for some designs.

Works best if design already has a border or is transparent.

Note: the line color will be changed later. Red is only used here for demonstration.
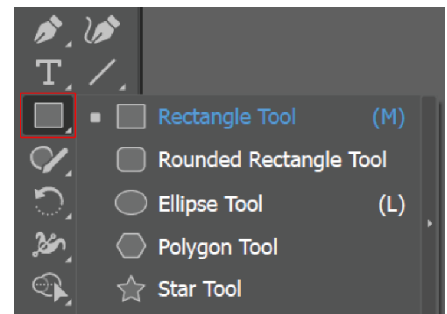
Making Cut Lines

The most important but also complicated part.

Using the Shape Tool

1. On the left toolbar, select the **Rectangle Tool**.

    - To choose a different shape (like an ellipse or polygon), right-click on the **Rectangle Tool** to see more shape options.

2. Click and drag over your design to draw the shape.

    - Hold **Shift** while dragging to keep the shape perfectly proportioned (e.g., a perfect square or circle).

3. When the shape looks the way you want, release the mouse.

4. To make adjustments:

    - Select the **Selection Tool** (the black arrow at the top of the left toolbar).

    - Click and drag the edges or corners of the shape to resize or reposition it.
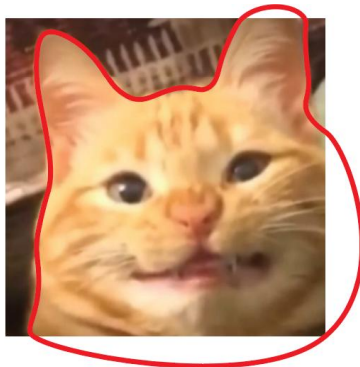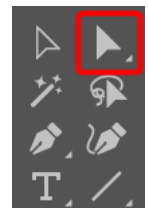
5. Continue to Page 6.

Using the Pen Tool

1. On the left toolbar, select the **Curvature Tool** (curvy line).
2. In the right toolbar, select the **Fill Color** square.
    - Select the **red slash icon** to remove the fill so the picture is fully visible.
3. Use the **Curvature Tool** to create points by clicking along the edge of the image.
    - Closer points = more accurate outline.
4. When back at the starting point, click again to close the shape.
5. To adjust the shape:
    - Select the **Direct Selection Tool** (white arrow) from the left toolbar.
    - Click and drag points to reposition or fine-tune the outline.
6. To straighten a section of the line:
    - Switch back to the **Curvature Tool**.
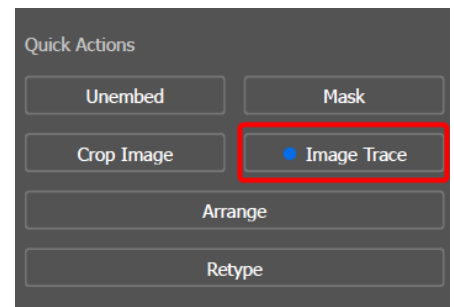   - Hold **Alt** and click the points you want to straighten.
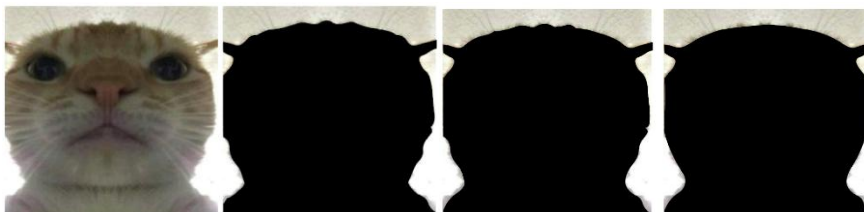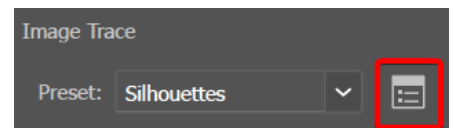
7. Continue to Page 6.

Using the Image Trace Tool

1. Select your image.
   - Copy (**Ctrl + C**) and Paste in Place (**Ctrl + Shift + V**).
2. Select the top image.
   - In the **Properties** panel, under Quick Actions, select **Image Trace**.
   - From the **Image Trace** options, choose **Silhouettes**.
   - This converts the image into a solid shape.

3. Fine-tune the shape in the **Image Trace** pop-up menu:
   - If the settings aren't open, select the icon next to the dropdown menu (right side panel).

4. Adjust the **Threshold slider** until the shape looks correct.
   - Once you're happy with the shape, select **Expand**.
5. To smooth out rough edges:
   - Select the **Smooth Tool** (under the **Paintbrush Tool**).
   - Hold **Alt** and drag over bumpy areas as needed.

6. To remove unwanted inner shapes:
   - Double-click the shape until the inner shape is selected.
   - Press **Delete**.
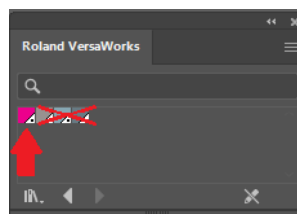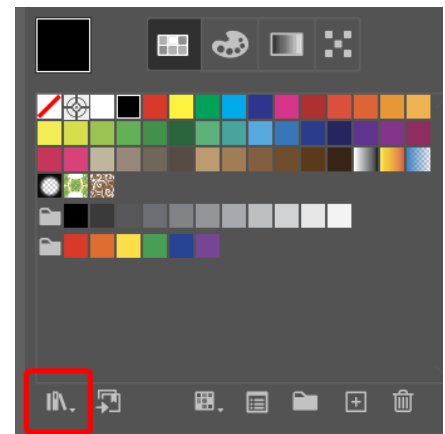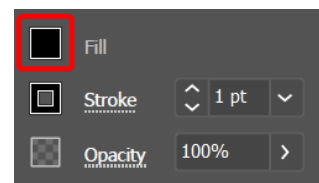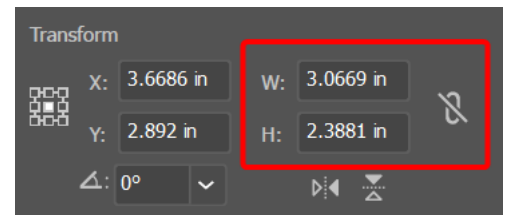7. Continue to Page 6.

Finishing Touches: Size Check and Cut Line Color

Almost there!!

Your sticker might look something like this.

1. Check sticker size:
   - Select the shape.
   - In the **Properties** panel (top right), check **W:** and **H:** values (most stickers are ~2–3 inches).
   - To resize, select both the shape and image, then drag a corner handle or enter new values.
2. Remove fill color:
   - With the shape selected, select the **Fill Color** square in the right panel.
3. Load the cut line color swatch:
   - In the **Fill Color** panel, click the **Swatches Library** menu icon (small books icon).
   - Select **Other Library**.
   - Navigate to **Local Disk (C:)** → **Illustrator Swatches** folder → select **Open**.
4. Apply the bright pink cut line color:
   - In the **Swatches** panel, select the bright pink (magenta) color swatch.
   - Swap **Fill** and **Stroke**:
   - In the left toolbar, click the **Swap Fill and Stroke** arrow icon.
   - Your sticker should now have a bright pink outline (cut line) around it.

Creating Multiples and Saving Your Sticker File

You've got the cut lines!

1. Select both the image and cut line:
   - Using the **Selection Tool** (black arrow), click and drag a box around both the image and the cut line.
   - Alternatively: Select the image, hold **Shift**, then select the cut line.

2. Group the items:
   - In the **Properties** panel (right side), select **Group**.
   - This ensures the image and cut line move together.

3. Duplicate the sticker:
   - While holding **Alt** (Option on Mac), click and drag the grouped sticker to create a copy.
   - Repeat as needed to make multiple copies.

4. Save your file:
   - Go to **File → Save As...**
   - Choose a location **ON YOUR COMPUTER** (not the cloud).
   - Change the file format to **PDF**.
   - Select **Save**.