

Creating quilts with Corel Draw

Lesson One: Do I need to use Corel. or another high end drawing program?

What type of quilt design do you want to create? There are some excellent programs available which have been designed just for quilters. EQ (Electric Quilt) is one I use a lot. I use it whenever I am designing a more traditional quilt layout with blocks and borders. It does a great job.

However, when I wanted to make a pattern for "Gather ye Rosebuds", I needed to be able to individually draw each pattern piece, and then plan the overall layout for the block of the month series. I also wanted to be able to print out full scale patterns, and great diagrams.

In comes Corel Draw!

I use vectors to design. What is a vector?

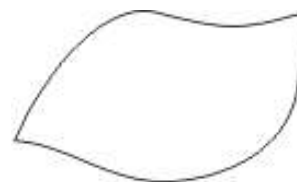
I don't really know the correct technical language, but a vector shows the direction and location of a shape or line, without it necessarily having an outline or colour fill. In other words, it is like a "map" which pinpoints the exact location.

Unlike a bitmap or jpeg, it is not made up of pixels, or little squares. If we were to create a design using one of the more basic drawing packages, we would have the problem of a line which is not really a line but a series of pixels. When we enlarge this, we get a very fuzzy outline which is not suitable for printing. If you have ever tried to enlarge a photo from the web you will know what I mean, as these are usually low resolution, or in layperson's terms - not many pixels!

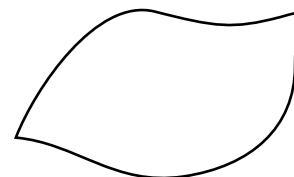
So, by using vectors, we can make the final design any size, and not only that, we can change the line thickness to suit the application, and we can add a fill colour or texture to make a great illustration of our design.

At right, you can see the difference between a simple leaf shape made using a basic drawing program (top) and some of the variations possible using Corel Draw. Note also what happens when we enlarge the designs.

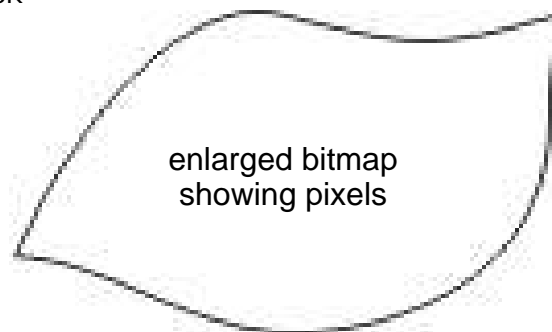
Next: How to make a vector shape in Corel Draw.



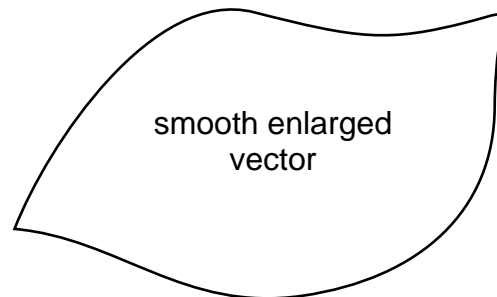
leaf shape created as a bitmap



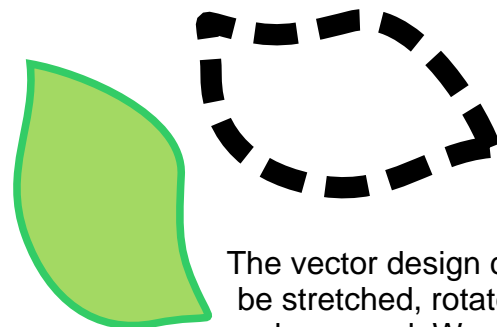
leaf shape created as a vector



enlarged bitmap showing pixels



smooth enlarged vector



The vector design can be stretched, rotated and reversed. We can also change fill and outline attributes very easily.