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Draw shapes

[Photoshop User Guide](#)

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Note:

The shape tools provide an easy way to create buttons, navigation bars, and other items used on web pages. For an overview of all drawing features in Photoshop, see [About drawing](#).

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Draw shapes in Photoshop

New Features and Enhancements in the Photoshop CS6 Vector Shapes Tool



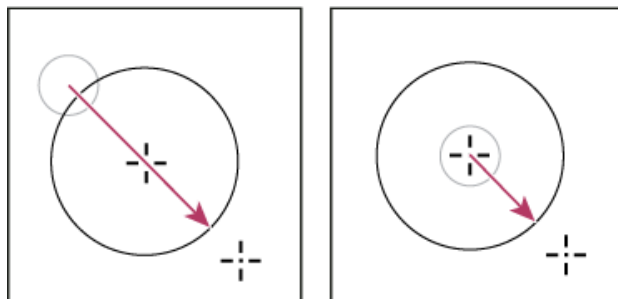
Julianne Kost

Create a shape on a shape layer

- 1 Select a shape tool or a Pen tool. Make sure Shape is

chosen from the menu in the options bar.

- 2 To choose the color of the shape, click the color swatch in the options bar, and then choose a color from the Color Picker.
- 3 (Optional) Set tool options in the options bar. Click the inverted arrow next to the shape buttons to view additional options for each tool. (See [Shape tool options.](#))
- 4 (Optional) To apply a style to the shape, select a preset style from the Style pop-up menu in the options bar. (See [Apply preset styles.](#))
- 5 Drag in your image to draw a shape:
 - To constrain a rectangle or rounded rectangle to a square, to constrain an ellipse to a circle, or to constrain the line angle to a multiple of 45 degrees, hold down Shift.
 - To draw from the center out, position the pointer where you want the center of the shape to be, press Alt (Windows) or Option (Mac OS), and then drag diagonally to any corner or edge until the shape is the desired size.



Drawing from the corner (left) and drawing from the center (right)

Note:

Drawing from the center out is the default behavior of the Star tool in Illustrator and the Polygon tool in Illustrator and Photoshop.

Videos | Create, edit, and work

Photoshop team member **Jeanne Rubbo** shows you how to create, edit, and work with shape layers in a series of informative videos. Learn how to:

- [Create a shape layer](#)
- [Edit the stroke and fill of a shape layer](#)
- [Edit multiple shape layers](#)
- [Drag shape paths between layers](#)
- [Combine shapes](#)
- [Work with subpaths](#)
- [Order subpaths](#)
- [Align subpaths](#)

For more information, see [Drawing and type tools gallery](#).






Draw multiple shapes in a layer

You can draw separate shapes on a layer, or use the Add, Subtract, Intersect, or Exclude options to modify the current shape on a layer.

- 1 Select the layer to which you want to add shapes.
- 2 Select a drawing tool and set tool-specific options (see [Shape tool options](#)).
- 3 Choose one of the following in the options bar:
 - Add To Shape Area** Adds the new area to the existing shapes or path.
 - Subtract From Shape Area** Removes the overlapping area from the existing shapes or path.
 - Intersect Shape Areas** Restricts the area to the intersection of the new area and the existing shapes or path.
 - Exclude Overlapping Shape Areas** Excludes the overlap area in the consolidated new and existing areas.
- 4 Draw in the image. You can easily switch between drawing tools by clicking a tool button in the options bar.

Draw a wheel shape

You cut out a shape within an existing shape so that the layers underneath show through. This procedure shows you how to create a doughnut shape, but you can use this technique with any combination of the shape tools, including custom shapes.

- 1 Select the Ellipse tool  in the toolbox. It may be hidden by one of the other shape tools or the Line tool .
- 2 Make sure Shape is chosen from the menu in the options bar.
- 3 Drag in the document window to draw the shape. Hold down the Shift key while dragging to constrain the ellipse to a circle.
- 4 In the options bar, select the Subtract From Shape Area button .
- 5 Drag within the new shape to create the cutout. When you release the mouse, the image underneath the new shape shows through.
- 6 To reposition either shape, click the Path Selection tool  in the toolbox (it may be hidden by the Direct Selection tool ) , and select the path. Drag it to its new location or use the arrow keys on the keyboard to nudge it a pixel at a time.


Note:

Shift-click to select more than one path.

Draw a custom shape

You can draw custom shapes by using shapes from the Custom Shape pop-up panel, or save a shape or path to use

as a custom shape.

- 1 Select the Custom Shape tool . (If the tool isn't visible, hold down the Rectangle tool near the bottom of the toolbox.)
- 2 Select a shape from the Custom Shape pop-up panel in the options bar.
If you don't find a shape you want in the panel, click the arrow in the upper-right corner of the panel, and choose a different category of shapes. When asked to replace current shapes, click either Replace to view only the shapes in the new category or Append to add to the shapes already displayed.
- 3 Drag in your image to draw the shape.

Save a shape or path as a custom shape

- 1 In the Paths panel, select a path—either a vector mask for a shape layer, a work path, or a saved path.
- 2 Choose Edit > Define Custom Shape, and enter a name for the new custom shape in the Shape Name dialog box. The new shape appears in the Shape pop-up panel in the options bar.
- 3 To save the new custom shape as part of a new library, select Save Shapes from the pop-up panel menu.

For more information, see [Work with the Preset Manager](#).

Create a rasterized shape

When you create a rasterized shape, you're drawing and rasterizing a shape and filling it with the foreground color. You cannot edit a rasterized shape as a vector object. Raster shapes are created using the current foreground color.

- 1 Select a layer. You cannot create a rasterized shape on a vector-based layer (for example, a type layer).
- 2 Select a shape tool, and click the Fill Pixels button in the options bar.
- 3 Set the following options in the options bar:

Mode Controls how the shape will affect the existing pixels in the image. (See [Blending modes](#).)

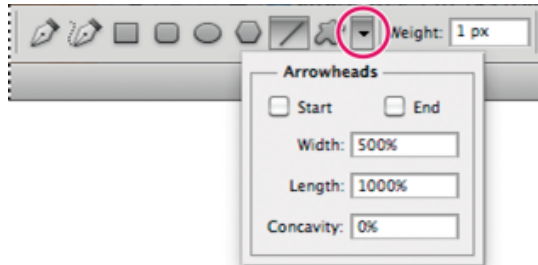
Opacity Determines to what degree the shape will obscure or reveal the pixels beneath it. A shape with 1% opacity appears nearly transparent, while one with 100% opacity appears completely opaque.

Anti-Aliased Smooths and blends the edge pixels with the surrounding pixels.

- 4 Set additional tool-specific options. See [Shape tool options](#).
- 5 Draw the shape.

Shape tool options

Each shape tool provides a unique subset of the options below. To access these options, click the arrow to the right of the row of shape buttons in the options bar.



*Accessing shape tool options in the options bar
(Line options shown)*

Arrowheads Start And End Adds arrowheads to a line. Select the Line tool and then select Start to add an arrow to the beginning of the line; select End to add an arrow to the end of the line. Select both options to add arrows to both ends. The shape options appear in the pop-up dialog box. Enter values for Width and Length to specify the proportions of the arrowhead as a percentage of the line width (10% to 1000% for Width, and 10% to 5000% for Length). Enter a value for the concavity of the arrowhead (from -50% to +50%). The concavity value defines the amount of curvature on the widest part of the arrowhead, where the arrowhead meets the line.

Note:

You can also edit an arrowhead directly using the vector selection and drawing tools.

Circle Constrains an ellipse to a circle.

Defined Proportions Renders a custom shape based on

the proportions with which it was created.

Defined Size Renders a custom shape based on the size at which it was created.

Fixed Size Renders a rectangle, rounded rectangle, ellipse, or custom shape as a fixed shape based on the values you enter in the Width and Height text boxes.

From Center Renders a rectangle, rounded rectangle, ellipse, or custom shape from the center.

Indent Sides By Renders a polygon as a star. Enter a percentage in the text box to specify the portion of the star's radius taken up by the points. A 50% setting creates points that are half the total radius of the star; a larger value creates sharper, thinner points; a smaller value creates fuller points.

Proportional Renders a rectangle, rounded rectangle, or ellipse as a proportional shape based on the values you enter in the Width and Height text boxes.

Radius For rounded rectangles, specifies the corner radius. For polygons, specifies the distance from the center of a polygon to the outer points.

Sides Specifies the number of sides in a polygon.

Smooth Corners or Smooth Indents Renders a polygon with smooth corners or indents.

Snap To Pixels Snaps edges of a rectangle or rounded rectangle to the pixel boundaries.

Square Constrains a rectangle or rounded rectangle to a square.

Unconstrained Lets you set the width and height of a rectangle, rounded rectangle, ellipse, or custom shape by dragging.

Weight Determines width, in pixels, for the Line tool.

Note:

To change stroke width for other shape tools, choose Layer > Layer Style > Stroke. (See [Apply or edit a custom layer style.](#))

Edit shapes

A shape is a fill layer linked to a vector mask. You can easily change the fill to a different color, a gradient, or a pattern by editing the shape's fill layer. You can also edit the shape's vector mask to modify the shape outline, and apply a style to the layer.

- To change the color of a shape, double-click the shape layer's thumbnail in the Layers panel, and choose a different color using the Color Picker.
- To fill a shape with a pattern or gradient, select the shape layer in the Layers panel and choose Layer > Layer Style > Gradient Overlay.
- To change stroke width, select the shape layer in the Layers panel, and choose Layer > Layer Style > Stroke.
- To modify the outline of a shape, click the shape layer's vector mask thumbnail in the Layers panel or Paths panel. Then change the shape using the Direct Selection and pen tools.
- To move a shape without changing its size or proportions, use the Move tool.


For more information, see [Adjust path components](#) and

[Transform freely.](#)

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