

# How to Make a Contour Cut Outline in Illustrator program?

## **Step 1**

Load your artwork into Adobe Illustrator. Convert it to vector format with the LiveTrace functions if you need to; the default "Black & White" setting is nearly ideal for this.

## **Step 2**

Remove any excess parts of the artwork by selecting them and deleting them.

## **Step 3**

Click on the "Layers" palette and click on the icon at the bottom edge of the palette to make a new layer.

## **Step 4**

Select all of the artwork elements and copy them to the second layer.

## **Step 5**

Click on the "Pathfinder" palette and hold down the "Alt" key while clicking on the "Add Shapes" icon in the leftmost position of the top row. This will convert everything into one shape with a single fill and stroke.

## **Step 6**

Select the "Swatches" palette and create a new color swatch; consult the manual for your vinyl cutter to see if there's a recommended color for your swatch here, but if there isn't, select CMYK values of 0-10-20-0, which will give a bright orange color. Name this swatch "ContourCut" with no spaces. Computerized vinyl cutters will look for that specific name in the underlying Postscript they use to guide the knife.

## **Step 7**

Click on the shape on the second layer and set its interior to "no fill" and set its stroke to the "ContourCut" swatch you just defined. Set the stroke to 1 point.

## **Step 8**

Click on the "File" menu and save the file as a PDF.