

Beginner's guide to Inkscape for sewing

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Beginner's guide to Inkscape for Projector Sewing

[Introduction](#)

What is Inkscape and why should I learn to use it? Inkscape is a free and open-source, drawing and vector-editor program, for computers (Windows, Mac or Linux). It is **not** necessary to learn Inkscape to be a projector sewist, but for those who want to use tools to alter pattern to make fitting or ...

[Read more](#)

Part A: First steps to install, open files and get to know Inkscape

The very basics to get going with Inkscape in just a few minutes: Installing, opening files, making the workspace simple so the tools you need are easy to find, and calibrating in Inkscape (if needed).

1.0 Install and Open Inkscape

Section 1.0 Install: Inkscape 1.3 works with computers running: There is no Inkscape version for iPad/iPhone/Android/Chromebook. On iPad, the Affinity Designer app is a paid software (one-time payment, not subscription-based) that is a vector editor/drawing app with very similar functions as Inkscape. The Affinity Designer for Pattern Design and Alterations Facebook group is a very helpful resource for learning ... [Read more](#)

2.0 Importing/Opening PDF patterns

To add a PDF to the current document, select File > Import. To open a PDF as a new document in Inkscape, select File > Open. When you open or import a PDF, this dialog box with multiple options shows up. For beginners, you don't need to learn what all these options mean, as you ... [Read more](#)

3.0 Saving file in SVG format and exporting to PDF

Inkscape cannot yet save in layered PDF format, can only save unlayered PDFs, so to save any changes you make to a PDF pattern file, you will need to save the file in SVG format, which will preserve layers. (SVG stands for Scalable Vector Graphics, and is used across many software). Inkscape SVG format will ... [Read more](#)

4.0 Finding your way around the workspace

“What are all of these things around my pattern?” is the first question that comes up when using Inkscape. For projector sewing, we can hide most of the toolbars as we only use a few key parts of the workspace features. One of the advantages of Inkscape over Adobe for projecting is that we can ... [Read more](#)

5.0 Infinite scrolling and micro-scrolling

One of the major advantages to using Inkscape over Adobe Reader for projecting patterns, is that Inkscape has infinite scrolling in all directions, so we never run out of scrolling room. (“Running out of scrolling room” creates problems for projecting because it limits where we can move the PDF around the screen and get pieces ... [Read more](#)

[6.0 Status bar features for projector sewing](#)

Specific parts of the workspace that are used for projector sewing include the bottom right corner of the screen, which has these items on the status bar: Page: here you can change pages if the file has multiple pages X and Y: coordinates of where the mouse is on the canvas/page. Beginners don't need to ... [Read more](#)

[7.0 Calibrate in Inkscape \(only if projecting from Inkscape\)](#)

With the new auto-calibrating softwares available, such as Pattern Projector (which like Inkscape is free), for most people it will be easiest to export from Inkscape any modified file as a PDF and then continue to project from Pattern Projector because the calibration is so easy and almost automatic in that software. But if you ... [Read more](#)

[8.0 How to access size layers, and change layer colour/thickness](#)

In the menus Layer > Layer and Objects will open the Layers panel in the docking area on the right side of the window. In the Layers panel, when layers are on/visible, there won't be any icon on the line for that layer, until you hover over it. When you are hovering, you will see ... [Read more](#)

[9.0 Full Screen Mode](#)

In menus View > Fullscreen (all the way at the bottom of the menu list), will remove some of the workspace toolbars and panels, to make more room to view the pattern. To remove additional tools to make more room for patterns, remove each of these items in the View > Show/Hide menu that ... [Read more](#)

[10.0 Now we can project and cut!](#)

For readers who are already have experience cutting using Adobe with their computer and projector, you can now proceed to Part B. If you are new to cutting with a projected pattern, this is a good time, to start cutting a first small pattern, and putting in practice the information just learned in the previous ... [Read more](#)

Part B: Tools for digital pattern adjustments

Once you feel comfortable projecting from Inkscape, the following sections give info on other features in Inkscape useful for making digital pattern adjustments.

[11.0 Moving pieces, rotating, mirroring and scrolling](#)

11.1 Selecting entire pattern pieces: To proceed with the steps in the next sections you have to be able to select entire pieces, in your pattern file, using the Select tool (mouse arrow icon). On some patterns, you can uncheck layers you don't need and then entire pieces can be selected without further steps. For ... [Read more](#)

[12.0 How to improve visibility of lines](#)

First and easiest method is to use the menus View > Display Mode > Enhance Thin Lines. This makes a noticeable difference, and may be all you need for patterns that don't have projector files with thicker lines. Second method is to use the Stroke options and panel. When specific size layer is selected, each ... [Read more](#)

[13.0 Grouping and Ungrouping Objects](#)

From: Grouping Objects — Inkscape Beginners' Guide 1.0 documentation (inkscape-manuals.readthedocs.io)

[14.0 Pages: adding, deleting, changing size and orientation](#)

Toolbox icon to bring up Pages tool is a bottom of Tool box (yellow arrow in this image). Then Tool Control Bar with additional page tools will show up at top (in yellow circled area). Page navigation tools in status bar are in lower right area (also circled in yellow). This image shows the function ... [Read more](#)

[15.0 Extra hints and shortcuts](#)

From The Selector Tool — Inkscape Beginners' Guide 1.0 documentation (inkscape-manuals.readthedocs.io):

[16.0 Videos to learn pattern adjustments in Inkscape](#)

Now that you know the basic functions of Inkscape, you can expand your learning to use advanced functions to make pattern adjustments. Marta G. – @techiesewing on YouTube has many videos to help you learn. These videos on Marta's channel are very helpful: Sheredith H.'s channel Projector Sewing on Youtube has a video that shows ... [Read more](#)

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