Welding Letters to a Shape in Inkscape
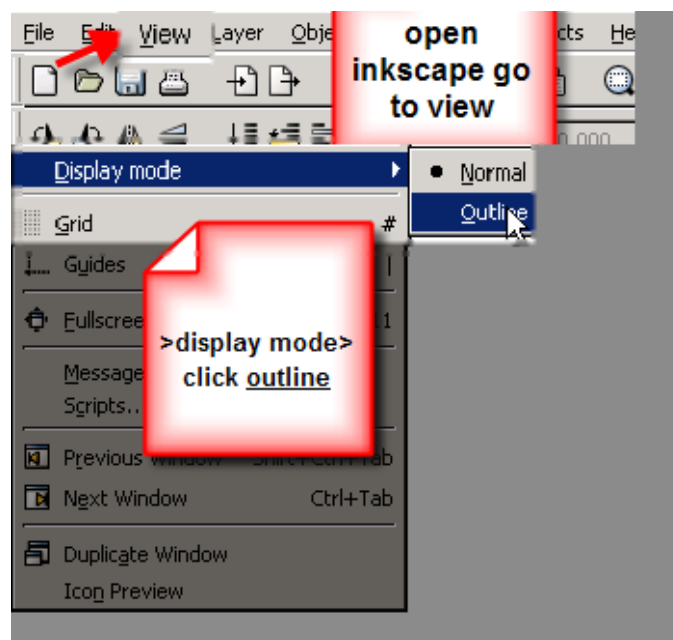
By Carrie Schwartz
Carrie's Creations

Once you learn some basic steps welding letters to a shape is really an easy task that you can use over and over again in creating some awesome files!

In this tutorial I will show you just how to do that and you will also learn a fundamental   step in art or design. When creating anything from scratch they have basic foundations that should be learned. If you look around you with the eyes of an artist you will see that every form is made up from shapes. Think of a cat, his eyes are the shape of squinted ovals, it's ears like triangles it's head an oval and so on. Once you begin to sketch out these shapes you can then bring them all together to get one form, the cat. This is like laying a foundation and the beginning of design. When you start to look at items in this way you can begin to create just about anything.

 In this tutorial not only will you start from the very basics in creating a form you will also learn how to edit the path to get that form to look just the way you want it to.
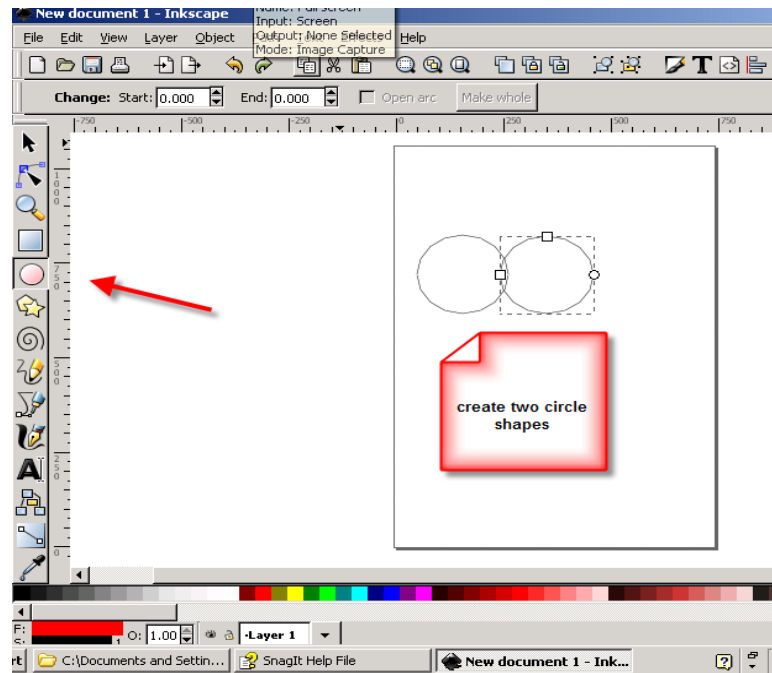
So let's begin with some basic shapes to create a simple form. We are going to make a heart from some circles and a triangle then we will merge the words "love " to the heart. This will be a nice embellishment that you can use on a card, layout or project.

Open Inkscape we are going to create our shapes as outlines to avoid a solid form you need to change the mode of the shape. Go to **View** on the toolbar**>display>outline**. Check **outline.**
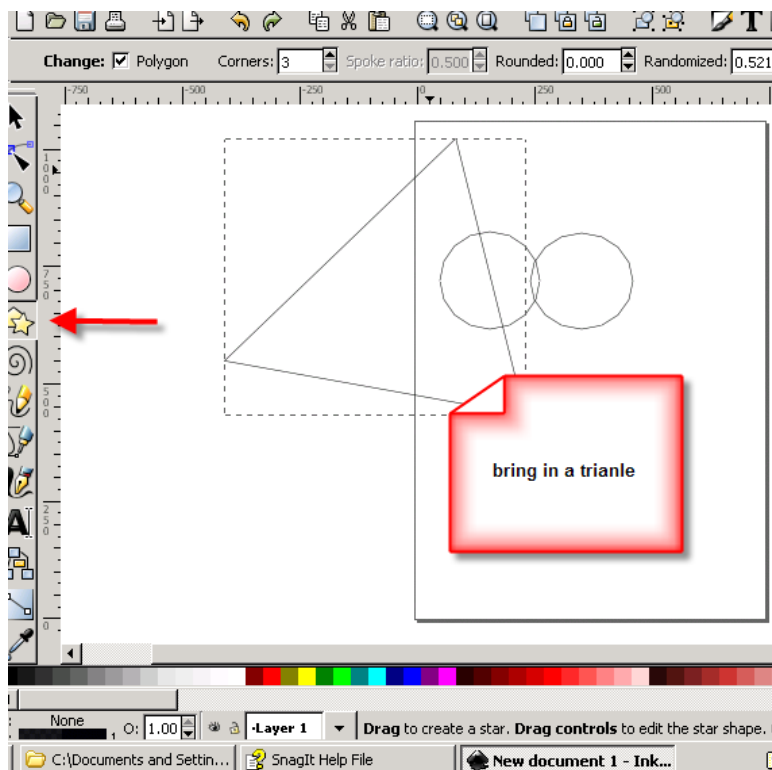
Access the circle tool to create two circles on your art board.
Overlap the two circles this is the top of your heart. Play with the look to get the type of heart that you want. The circles can line up to create a nice rounded heart or one can be slightly lower then the other to make a country heart.
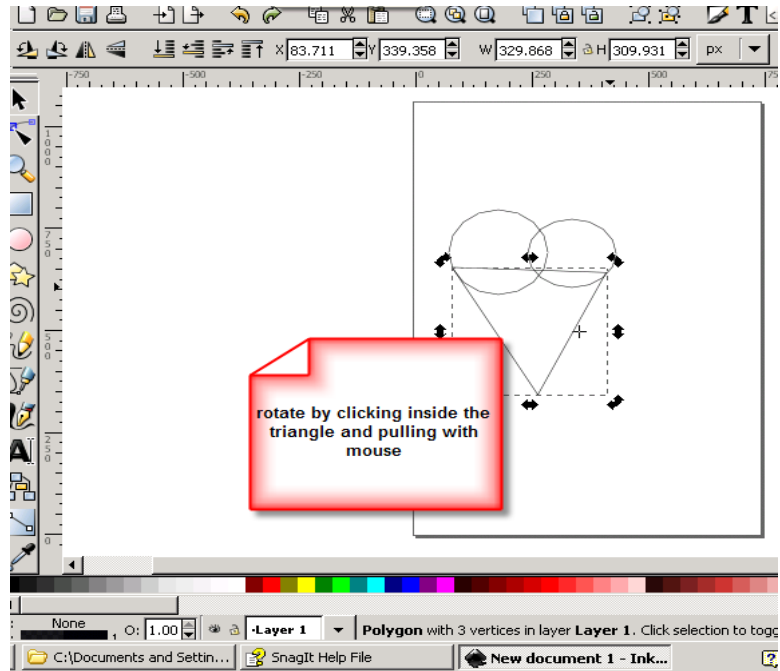

Next select the stars and polygons button and bring in a triangle. Notice my settings on the toolbar (they are above the side toolbar in the screen caption below). **Polygon checked, corners 3, rounded O, randomized 0.521**
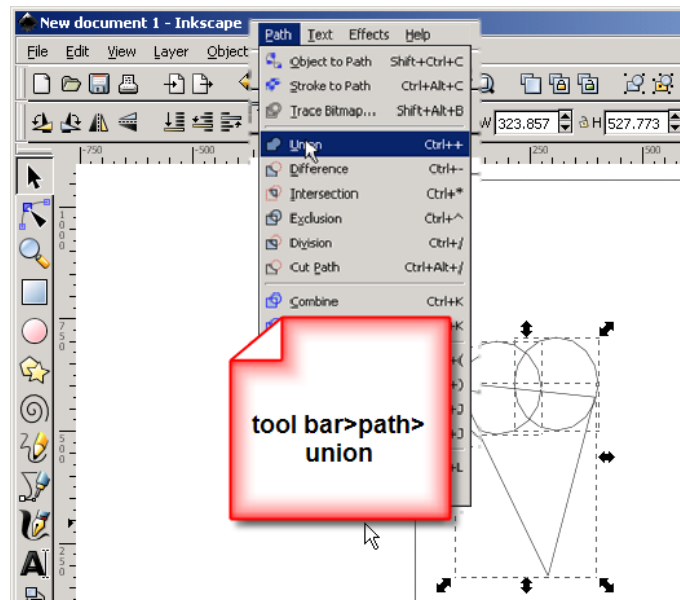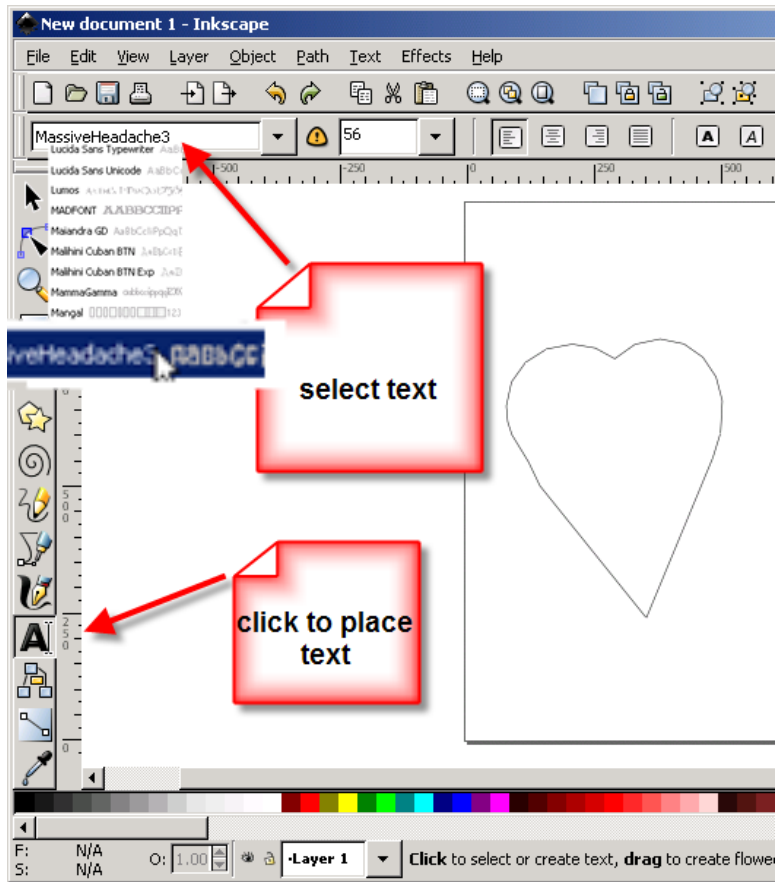These settings will give you a nice triangle.

Rotate your shapes by clicking on them notice the arrows
will change direction. Once you get the triangle turned place it
over the two circles.

rotate by clicking inside the
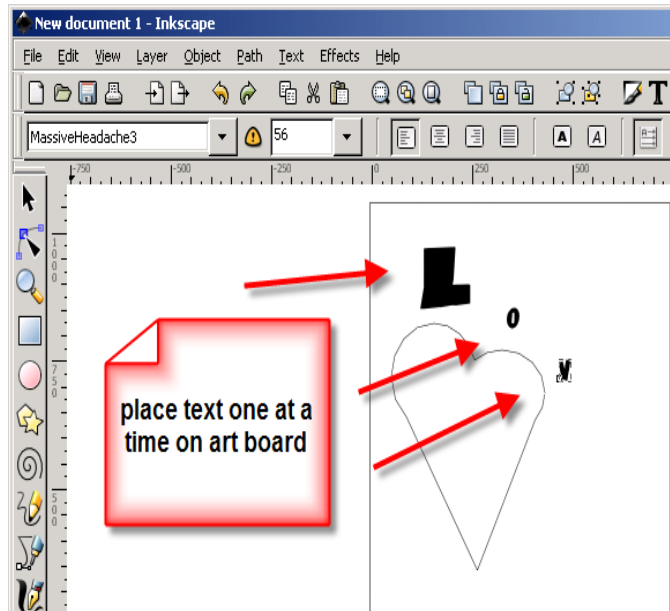triangle and pulling with
mouse

With your selection tool (the arrow at the top of your tools sitting on the right) click to the left of the
three shapes and bring the tool over the three shapes and let go. At the top of your tool bar select **path>
union** your shapes will merge into a heart. *You can undo and change the position of each one of the
circles or the triangle to get the right shape for the heart.* Then go to path>union till you get what you
want.

tool bar>path>
union

Now let's add some text! First click on the text button on the lower right of your program you will see the letter **A**. Up in the tool bar you will have the choice to choose your text. I used Massiveheadache3 for my text selection. If you don't have this text any bold text will do.
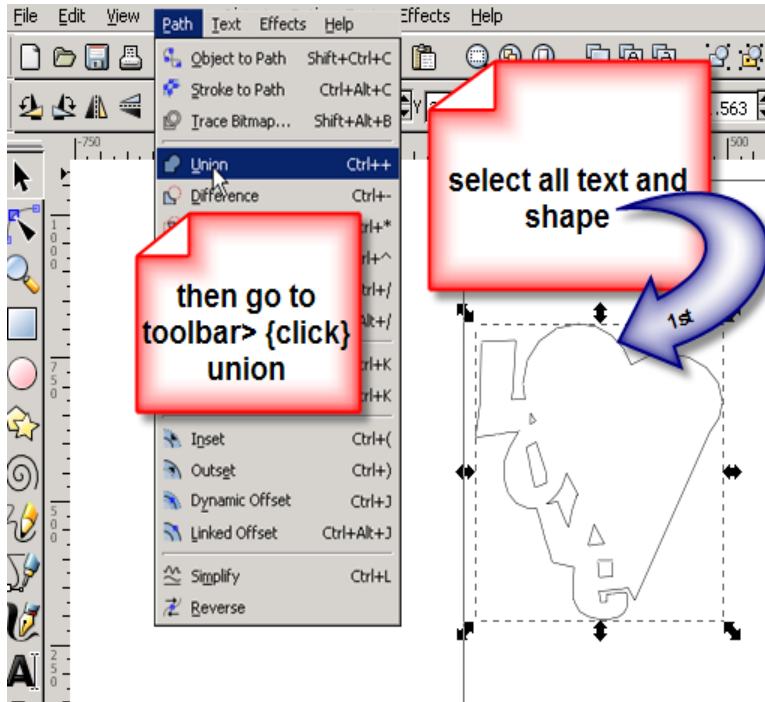

Make the letter "L" by clicking on your art board and typing the letter "L". Hit the selection tool button once to release that "L", then select the letter tool again. Make the letter "O" and continue brining in the letters one at a time so they are separated. Resize the letters with the selection tool.
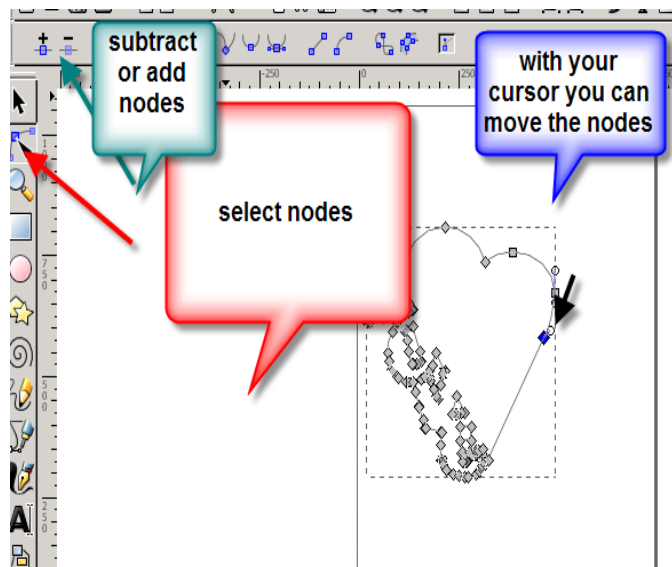

Bring your letters to the left of the heart and place them by overlapping the letters and the heart. You can resize the letters or turn them till you get the position similar to the illustration below.

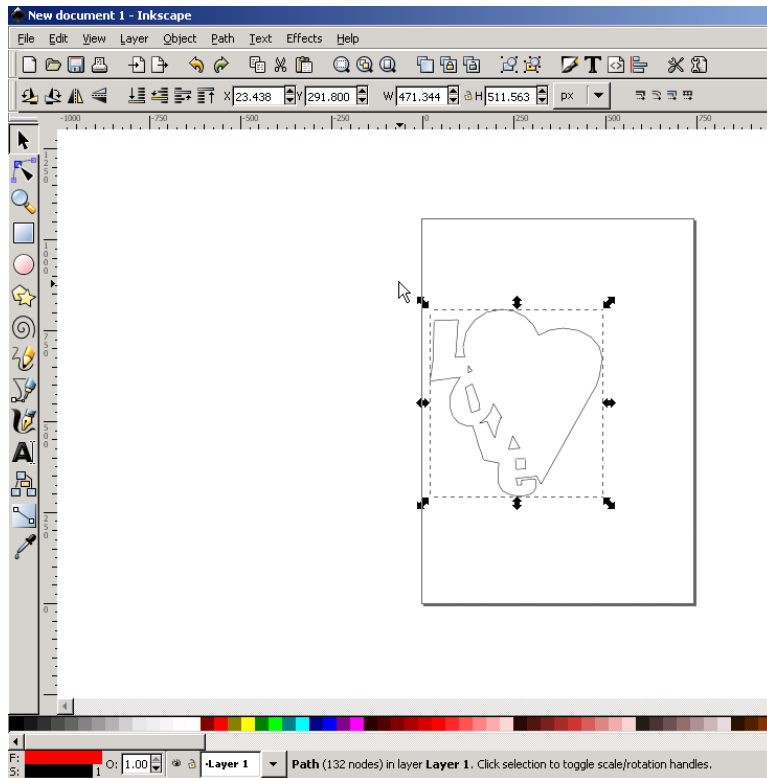**SELECT** all letters and shapes go to **Path>UNION**

My heart is to straight on one side so I'm going to edit the path.
You can do this by going to the button below the selection tool you will see your heart change to where the nodes are visible on the path. All I had to do was grab one node at a time to move it. You can experiment here by subtracting or adding some nodes. Don't be afraid to try you can always click on undo!

Here is what it looks like now that I edited the path.

Now it's ready to save! If saving for your Robo Master or Wishblade you will want to save the file in .dxf format. If you are saving your work for KNK you will need to save the file as .eps. Consult tutorials for bringing these files into your program that came with your cutting machine.

Here is our finished product.

Tutorial submitted by Carrie Schwartz
Carrie's Creation Exclusive Designer for Paperthreads