

TITLE: QUICK START

Software: Serif DrawPlus X8

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Skill Level: Beginner

Supplies: None




Description: In this tutorial we'll briefly cover the QuickShapes tool, Convert to Curves, Clean Curves, and the Shape Builder tool. These tools used together will allow you to make some interesting images the first time you use the program.

LET'S GET STARTED


QUICK SHAPES

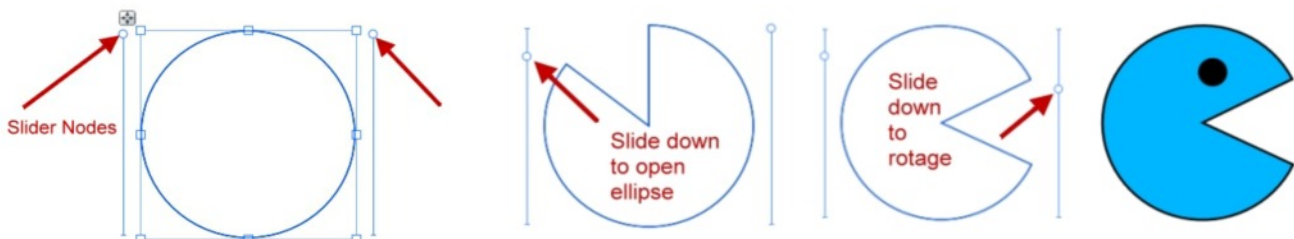
With DrawPlus QuickShapes you can create an unlimited number of new shapes from just one shape or you can easily combine a bunch of shapes to make something totally different.

Open DrawPlus and select the full letter page. If your HowTo window is open, close it for now. With the Pointer tool, select Quick Ellipse from the QuickShapes  on the Drawing toolbar. Hold down the Shift key to constrain the ellipse and drag out a nice circle. As you drag, notice the height and width are displayed so make your circle around 2 inches in size.

Take a quick look at the Context Menu bar at the top of the screen. You can change options at any time. Each shape you use will have different options so be sure to look at what's available to you as we won't be going into detail about each of the shapes.

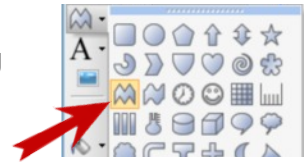


Using the Node tool , drag the left slider downward and see what happens. The circle opens up. Now drag the right slider down and you've got PacMan!

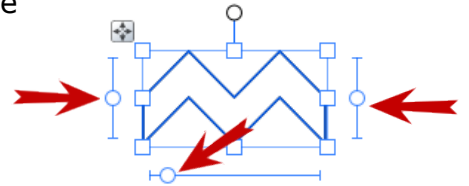


Give your object a color, add single eye using the ellipse, and save in your Gallery.

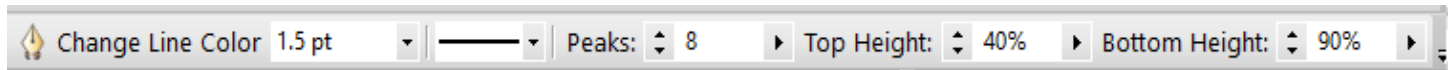
That was pretty easy, right? Let's try something with more attributes to play with. Select the Quick Zigzag from the QuickShapes on the Drawing toolbar.



Drag out a shape - any size. Notice that this shape has 3 slider nodes instead of 2. You can change the top height, bottom height and number of peaks by moving the slider bars or you can change the values on the Context menu bar.



Change the number of peaks to 8, then change the Top and Bottom height to the values shown below.



Your results should look similar to this:



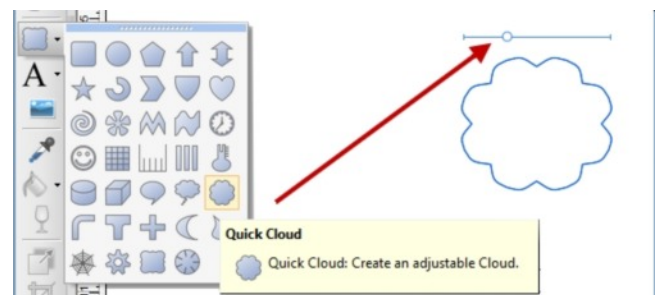
You can play with the QuickShapes for weeks but for now, let's go on. There's more to learn!

CONVERT TO CURVES


The QuickShapes cannot be edited in their current state. You can change their shape by using the slider nodes but you cannot change them in any other way.

However, DrawPlus has proved a way so you can edit the shapes. You can convert them to curves which can then be edited.

Select the Quick Cloud shape from the QuickShapes on the Drawing toolbar.





Draw a simple cloud. Notice it has only one slider node. This allows you to change the number of bulges on the shape. You can either use the slider node or change it on the Context Menu bar at the top of the screen.

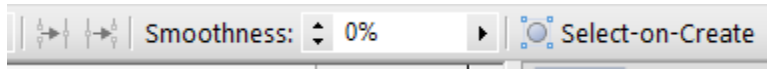
While your object is still selected, go to the menu and select **Tools\Convert to Curves**. Your cloud changed the way it looks. The slider bar is gone. Click on the Node tool  and look at what happened to your cloud. You now have nodes that you can edit and drag in any direction.




Drag a few nodes around and change the shape to something different. All of the Quick Shapes can be converted to curves for more editing. An example is this simple ice cream cone made with a cloud and an upside down triangle.

CLEAN CURVES

Sometimes, when we draw a line or open another vector file, it has way too many nodes in the image so we spend a lot of time deleting them one at a time. There is a better way! Click on the Pencil tool  located on the Drawing toolbar and set the Smoothness on the Context menu bar to zero. Draw a zig zag line (sort of up and down). When finished, click on the Node  tool. Look at all the nodes!



Let's make this line a bit easier to edit. On the Context Menu bar, click the down-arrow next to the Clean Curves  icon. It will let you access a slider to control how much is removed. The higher the number on the slider bar, the fewer nodes.




This is the same line as above but with Clean Curves applied.




To access this tool from the main menu bar, select **Tools\Clean Curves**.

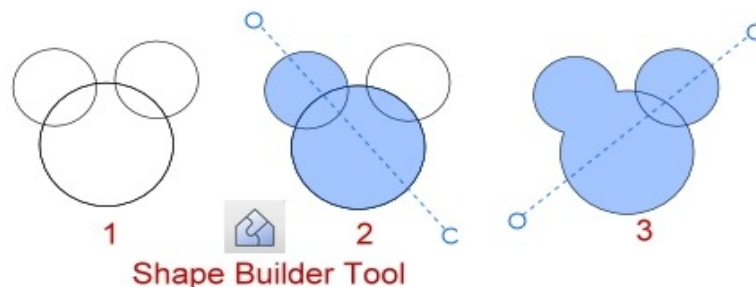
SHAPE BUILDER


The Shape Builder tool allows you to join one or more shapes to create a new shape that can still be edited. You can use QuickShapes, your own shapes, or a combination of both.

Select the Quick Ellipse  from the QuickShapes tool on the Drawing toolbar. Draw an ellipse while holding down the Shift key to constrain the circle.

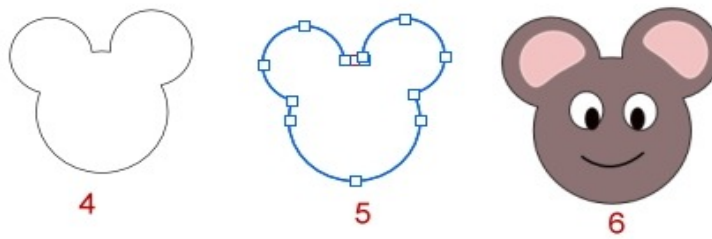
Draw two smaller ellipses and place them as shown in figure 1 below. Using the Shape Builder tool , drag a line across both the small left circle and the large circle (figure 2). They will turn blue to show you what is being combined. When you release the mouse you will see that the circles have been merged into one. Repeat for the small circle on the right - drag the Shape Builder across the large circle and the small one (figure 3).

When you release your mouse, all three ellipses will be joined as one.



It looks sort of like a mouse (figure 4). Using the Node edit tool  , click on your new shape. You can see in figure 5 that your new shape includes nodes that you can edit!

Add some half-circles inside the ears, more ellipses for the eyes and a little pencil line for the mouth and you have created a cute little mouse!



Practice combining different shapes and see what you can come up with. A half-circle with an ellipse under it would make a nice teacup. The possibilities are endless!



For more practice using the QuickShapes, try this [Serif tutorial for modifying shapes to create a penguin, horse, and a few other critters](#). It is for version X6 but it works fine in X8.

[Serif's Modifying Shapes](#)

For more practice on using the Shape Builder tool, here's another [Serif tutorial that will help you](#).

[Serif's Building a Dragon with Shapes Video](#)

And finally, one more that lets you create a cute little cartoon fish using only shapes from the QuickShapes tools.

[Serif's Create a Cartoon Fish video](#)

Enjoy!!

You're invited to join the [PIRCForum](#). This is an active forum for PaintShopPro and DrawPlus users. You'll find a wonderful group of warm, friendly, talented, and knowledgeable people who are ready and willing to share their expertise with you. There are creative activities for all skill levels. This forum is "family friendly", 100% free, and everyone is welcome.

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