

# VINYL CUTTING FILE SETUP & SUBMISSION GUIDE

This is a guide for submitting files to be cut on the vinyl cutter at the Design Lab. The vinyl cutter at the lab is the Roland GR-420.

A vinyl cutter is an industry-standard machine for creating vinyl decals and stencils for small to large-scale signage. Its primary purpose is to cut adhesive vinyl. Adhesive vinyl is applicable to most smooth surfaces and is used commonly on drywalls and glass for signage. The vinyl cutter is also suitable for cutting Heat transfer vinyl and fabric-transfer vinyl for garment decal design.

At the lab, we provide

- **adhesive vinyl | 15" / 24" roll**
- **low adhesive stencil vinyl | 15" roll**
- **heat transfer vinyl | 12" / 24" roll**

used to cut out submitted files. Students can submit their vinyl to be cut on the machine to be vetted by a technician. Once approved, it can be used to cut as part of your submission.

This is only a cutting service. Students will need to weed, which is removing excess vinyl from the substrate, then apply the transfer tape themselves. For heat transfer types of vinyl only weeding is required, but application will require a heat press which you can access at the L9 Dye Lab. Guides and assistance are provided at the lab for you to complete the process.

1. Set up your file on **Adobe Illustrator**

When setting up your file, you will need to decide the vinyl size you will be cutting on. This will affect the artboard size you will create in Illustrator to submit. The machine uses rollers to pinch the vinyl to itself, which will take up at least 1 inch of the vinyl on either side.

For rolls, this will mean that if you plan to submit a file for the 15-inch heat transfer vinyl roll at the lab, you will need to make your artboard 13 inches in width, but since you are cutting on a roll, you will not need to subtract from the height. The max cut height is 63 inches. (anything beyond that will require a consultation to be approved)

For sheets, this will mean that you will need to subtract an inch from all sides. If your vinyl sheet is 8.5" x 11" then your artboard will need to be 6.5" x 9". The smallest sheet size you can cut is 8.5" x 11".

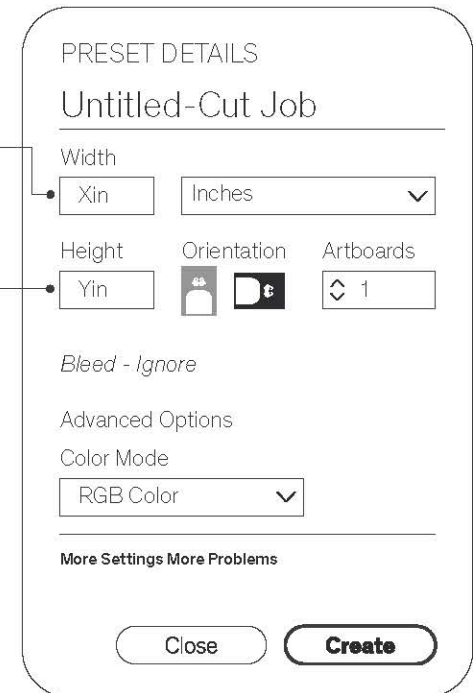
Create an artboard with the

**Width of X in**

**Height of Y in**

- **X being your vinyl width minus 2 inches**
- **Y being the height of your design, you can change this later**

If your file exceeds 63 inches in length, split your design and make a new artboard in the same file.



# FILE SETUP

## 2. Making Paths

Once you determine your artboard size, you will make your design as a vector. The machine will follow the paths on your file to have the blade follow on the machine. To make weeding easier, we recommend students place boxes surrounding each design. This will make more sense when you are weeding.

You can easily create vector designs using: Type / Shapes tools / Pen tools / Image Trace Tool

**Type**  
**CLICK LINK**



**Shape Tool**  
**CLICK LINK**



**Pen**  
**CLICK LINK**



**Image Trace**  
**CLICK LINK**



**3.** Once you've finished your design

Stroke Thickness  
When you have finished making your design, you will select all the vectors, remove the fill color, and give it a black stroke of 0.001. This will ensure that a single path will not double cut.

Optimize Vinyl  
Now you need to optimize your design on the artboard, not to waste vinyl and your money.

**Make sure your designs are placed at the bottom of the artboard.**  
**Make sure to place your design close to each other.**  
**Make sure you have no fills and everything has a 0.001 stroke in black**

Bottom of Vinyl

# SAVING & SUBMITTING

## 4. Label your file :

Lastname\_date created (MM.DD.YY)  
i.e : Blake\_08.27.1795

When Illustrator options appear make sure to :

- **Choose version Illustrator CC (Legacy)**
- **Check Include Linked Files**

Everything else should be left as their Default.

## 5. Once your file is setup

Submit file through Submission form below

**CLICK LINK**



### After Submitting...

Wait for your file to be approved

**If your file is incorrect you will be asked to correct it**

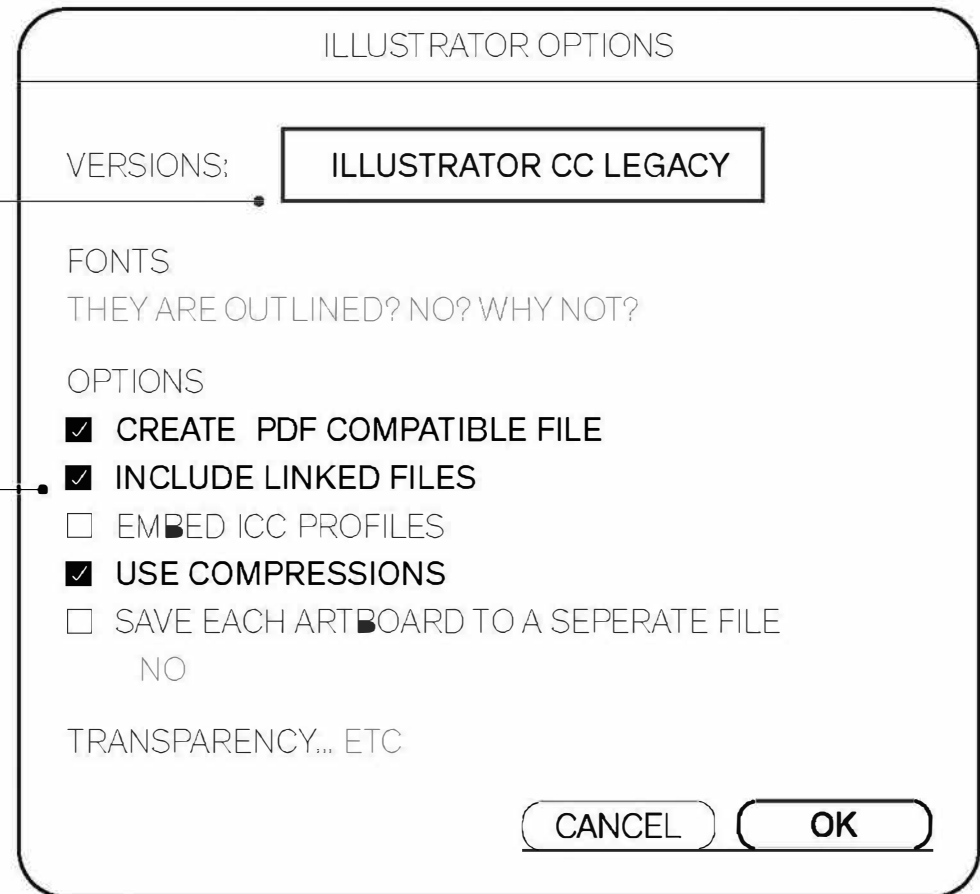
### Payment will be determined by the height of your artboard

A link with the amount to purchase will be sent to you once your file is approved

Once payment is confirmed your job will be placed on the queue

An approximate completion date will be sent to you

**It may take from 1-5 business days to cut**



## 6. Job Finished

You will receive an email informing you when your vinyl has been cut. A guide to weeding and placing transfer tape will be included in the email. **Please review the tutorials before picking up the vinyl since you can only apply transfer tape at the Design Lab.**

For heat transfer vinyl, you can choose to weed anywhere but to apply your design, use a heat press.