

## The Designer's Guide to Kiss Cutting

If you have not read the **Designing for Contour Cuts** guide first, please do so. The kiss cutting process is the exact same as the contour cutting process, and the details will not be repeated. This guide will provide the specific information needed for setting up the kiss cut.

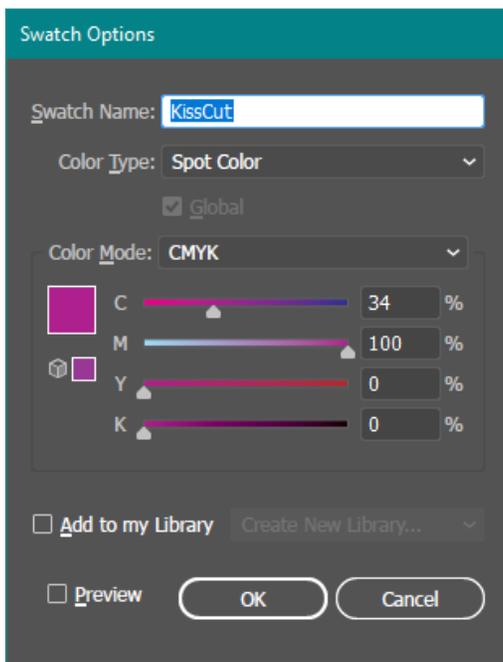
Like contour cutting, kiss cutting uses a computer-guided cutting process to cut around the outer edge of a printed image following the contour of the design. The difference between a kiss cut and a contour cut is that a kiss cut is generally only used for stickers and decals, or any material that will be peeled off of a backing material. The cut does not go all the way through the paper, but only cuts through the layer that will be peeled off.

In most cases, a contour cut would be sufficient for stickers or decals, but let's say you wanted a promotional piece that was a rectangle shape that included printed information, and a removable round sticker, or window decal. That would require a kiss cut. Another example is a variety of stickers or decal designs that need to be kept on a single sheet (the way holiday window decals come in a single sheet with multiple designs).

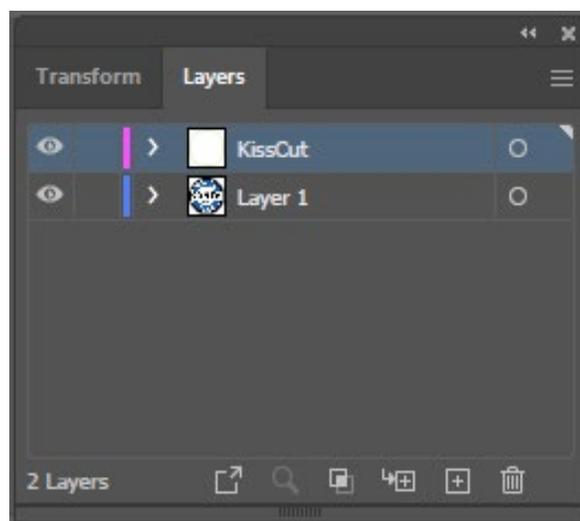
An outline for the kiss cut must be a part of the design. The outline must adhere to specific settings for the computer-guided cutter to perform the cut.

The kiss cut file must be created in vector based software, and saved as a PDF. Adobe Illustrator will be used in the examples.

The kiss cut will be defined by an outline with a stroke of 0.10 pt, and assigned a spot color named **KissCut**. It must be on its own layer named **KissCut**, and be the top layer.



Custom Swatch named: **KissCut**  
The **KissCut** swatch can be any color, but it MUST be of a Spot Color type.



Layer named: **KissCut**  
**KissCut** layer must be the top layer.

The kiss cut outline should always be placed inside the graphic so that a bleed is created. The distance from the graphic edge should be a minimum amount of 0.0625 (1/16<sup>th</sup> inch). The ideal amount is 0.125 (1/8<sup>th</sup> inch).

The process to setup a kiss cut is the exact same as for setting up a contour cut. The only difference is, the spot color must be named **KissCut**, and the layer it is on must be named **KissCut**. This guide will not repeat the process. Please refer back to the guide **Designing for Contour Cuts** to review the process if necessary.

You might be wondering if it is possible to use both a contour cut and a kiss cut at the same time. Yes, it is! For instance, you might want to design a triangle shaped pennant that has a removable round sticker on it. In the example below, the **CutContour** outline is in orange, and the **KissCut** outline is in pink. The computerized cutter will cut the triangle shape out, and cut the circle shape just enough to allow the sticker to be peeled off.



When setting up a document for both a contour cut and a kiss cut, the layer stacking order is critical to the cutting process. The **CutContour** layer must be the top layer, and the KissCut layer just beneath it.

If you understand the process for contour cutting, you can apply it in the same way for kiss cutting. Just name the spot color swatch, and layer appropriately. Please refer back to the guide **Designing for Contour Cuts** if necessary.

Just like the **CutContour** outline, the **KissCut** outline will appear in the PDF file, but the wide format printer will not print the outlines. The **KissCut** and **CutContour** outlines will be read by the cutter only.

## Tips:

- Use a stroke of 0.10 pt for the **KissCut** outline.
- Remember you **MUST** use a spot color named **KissCut**.
- Remember the **KissCut** outline **MUST** be on its own layer named **KissCut**, and it **MUST** be the top layer. If a **CutContour** is also being used, it should be on its own layer, and it should be the top layer, with **KissCut** just below it.
- A minimum of 0.125" (1/8") distance should be between the contour cut and the kiss cut.
- In Illustrator use Object > Path > Simplify to remove extra anchor points from the outline. The least amount of anchor points in an outline, the better it will cut.
- Because kiss cuts are used only on thinner material, the kiss cut can have a tighter inside radius than contour cuts.