



Inkscape Tutorial 3: Text Styling



Goal

The following tutorial will attempt to illustrate a simple set of techniques and tools to stylize text. It will attempt to demonstrate how simple, quick, and effective it is to modify text stylings in Inkscape.

Variations

Obviously there are hundreds of approaches to end up at a particular style. The chosen approach is based upon a commonly seen technique utilized in children's magazines or pop culture presentations. Feel free to apply the techniques to whatever style you desire.

Technique


Step 1: Choose your font and add the text.

Whenever you are working with decorative text, a heavier font is easier to shape into a useful product. This tutorial uses [OliJo](#), but Arial Black is another good choice.

We will start with the place that a typical person might stop -- choose a font and type the text (see below the picture for instructions on how to add text). Let's use your name. Here we have a sample.

Mr.

Howard

To add new text, click the  Text Button on the left toolbar. I found the font selector kinda goofy, so if you have problems changing the font, use the Font Properties button on the top toolbar. Make sure you pick a font that is 'Fat' and make your text large.



Step 2: Space and rotate the individual characters.

Now we are going to change the position of the characters to fancy up things a bit. In Inkscape, we have a simple keystroke to accomplish manual left and right spacing within a text block. First using the Text Tool, select a letter. Then *Alt-Right* or *Alt-Left* will apply a shift of one unit left and right. *Shift-Alt-Left* and *Shift-Alt-Right* accomplish the same except move it ten units.

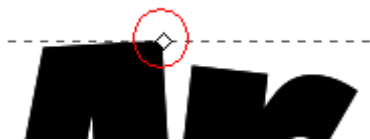
Rotation can also be easily accomplished with *Alt-[* and *Alt-]* for counter and clockwise rotation about the lower left character anchor point. The *Shift* modifier will increment the adjustment as above.

Adjusting the height of the character is accomplished via the *Alt-Up* and *Alt-Down*.

We will use these two techniques to adjust the composition of our base layer as shown below. Go crazy and try some jazz on your own.

Step 3: Add a text border.

Now we will add a decorative border. First select your text using the Select Tool (the arrow). Then choose Path > Linked Offset from the menu. This will create the single handle on the top of the text to drag outward. Move it up slightly to expand the border, then change the new border to a color of your choosing.



Now select the original base text using the Select Tool (the arrow) and convert it to white. The easiest way is to pick one of the color swatches on the bottom of the screen.



Your text now should look like:



MR
HOWARD

Step 4: Add some flair to text, and polish with two drop shadows.

Select the entire object (there should be two dotted lines around the text – one for the text and one for the border) and give it a stroke via a *Shift-LeftClick* of a color from your swatch bed. You also can select the stroke by selecting Object > Fill and Stroke to display the Fill and Stroke window. The example uses a darker valued version of the fill color for the stroke fill and a stroke style width size of 4.



MR
HOWARD

Select the base text object change/add a stroke of another color that works with your palette. The example uses a yellow with a stroke width of 2.5.



The image shows the text "MR. HOWARD" in a bold, rounded, bubbly font. The letters are white with a thick yellow outline. A vibrant green glow surrounds the yellow outline, creating a neon-like effect. The text is arranged in two lines: "MR." on top and "HOWARD" below it.

Once again, select the base text object and choose "Linked Offset". Choose black, and roll your mouse wheel or the slider to a blur of your liking (the example uses a blur of 2.0). With the blurred black object selected (you may have to alt-click to pick the blurred shadow), move it down and right slightly using the arrow keys.



This image is identical to the one above, but it includes a black drop shadow. The shadow is positioned slightly below and to the right of the main text, giving it a three-dimensional appearance. The shadow is blurred, matching the instructions in the text.

For a final time, select the base text object and choose "Linked Offset" tool from the "Path" menu. Make the object black by choosing it from your swatch list and drag it out so that it covers the lower envelope object. Hit "Page Down" twice -- once to lower it below the text base drop shadow and once more to lower it below the envelope object. Adjust the blur to a value of your liking (I used a width of 6 and a blur of 2). Finally, as above, choose the "Select and Transform Object" tool (the

arrow) from the palette (you may have to alt-click to get the right object) and use the arrow keys to translate the object down and right.



Mr.
Howard

In Closing

As you can see from the above attempt, adding style and flair to your headings isn't a difficult task with Inkscape.

NOW ADD YOUR NAME, PRINT OUT THE IMAGE, AND TURN IT IN.