

*Draw Guide*

# *Chapter 7*

## *Tips and Tricks*

*OpenOffice.org*

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## Place objects with precision

Draw has several tools to help you place objects with precision.

### Use zoom to place objects with precision

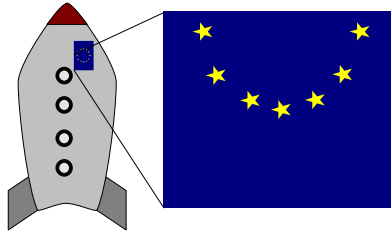


Figure 1: With zoom you can place objects with higher precision.

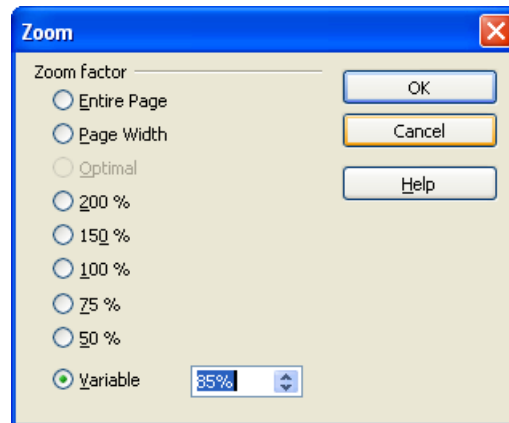
#### Zoom using the status bar

The current zoom value is displayed in the status bar:



Figure 2: Zoom level on the status bar.

Double-click on the zoom value to display the Zoom window. From the Zoom window you can change the zoom factor.



You can enter a zoom value in the Variable box, or you can choose from one of the pre-set zoom values (see Figure 3):

- *Entire Page* displays the whole page on the screen.
- *Page Width* sets the right and left edges of the page to the window.
- *Optimal* sets the zoom so that your drawing just fits in the window.

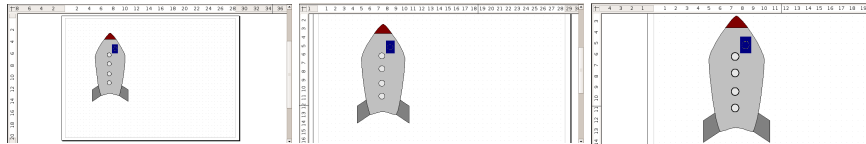





Figure 3: Zoom values: Entire Page, Page Width, Optimal

## Zoom toolbar

The Zoom toolbar provides additional zoom options. On the Standard toolbar (**View > Toolbars > Standard**), click on the downwards arrow of the **Zoom** button .



Click on the **Zoom In** button  and then on an object to zoom into that object. Click on the **Zoom Out** button  to zoom out.

You can also zoom in using the + key on the numeric keypad and zoom out using the – key.

## Use snap to grid to place objects with precision

The grid utility is one of Draw's most useful tools for moving objects precisely. First, make the grid visible with **View > Grid > Display Grid**.

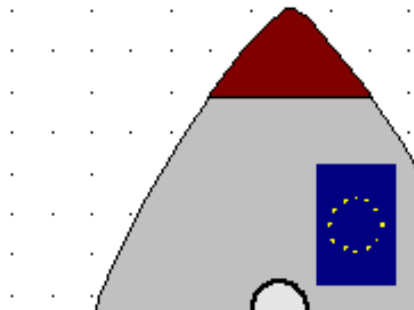


Figure 4: Black dots on the background show the grid.

## I can't see the grid dots!

By default the grid dots are light gray, which can be very hard to see. To improve visibility, go to **Tools > Options**, then **OpenOffice.org > Appearance**.

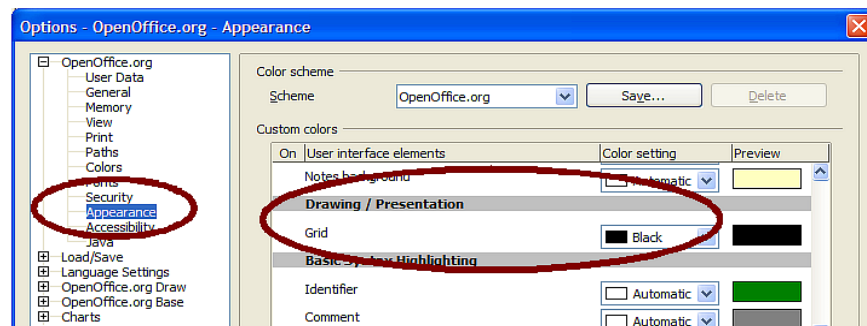


Figure 5: Changing the grid color.

Under **Custom colors**, scroll down until you see **Drawing / Presentation**. Then set the Grid color to a darker color like black.

### Snap to grid

What makes the grid really useful is that you can have objects *snap* to the grid. That is, the object handles are always positioned exactly on the dots of the grid. Choose **View > Grid > Snap to Grid**.

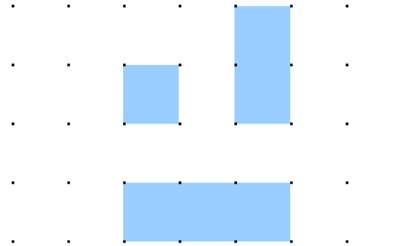


Figure 6: With snap to grid, objects align to the grid precisely.

### Configuring the grid

You can configure several aspects of the grid like the spacing between dots. Go to **Tools > Options > OpenOffice.org Draw > Grid**.

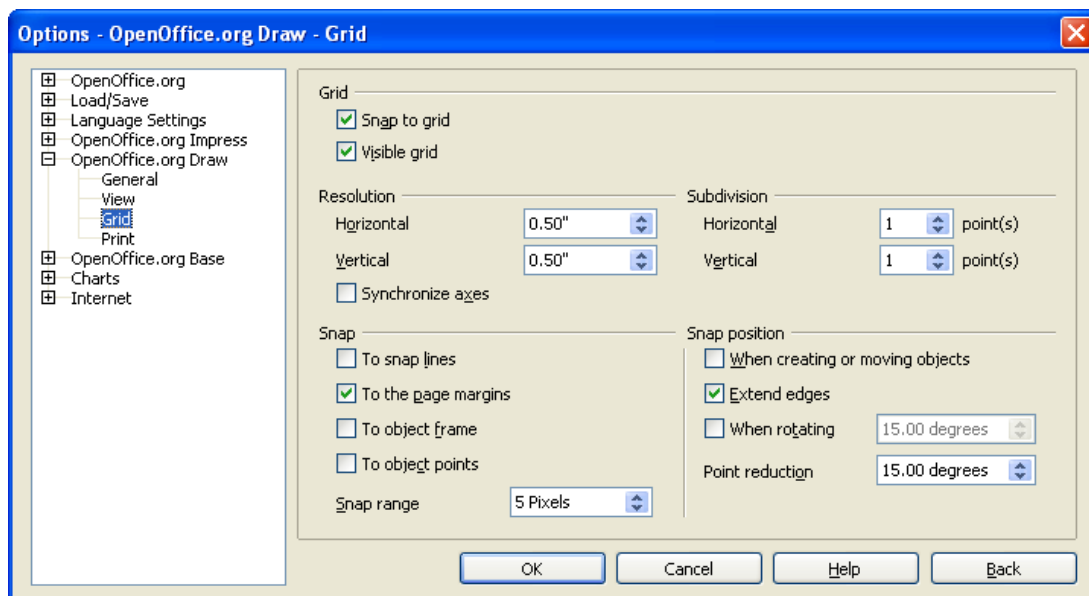


Figure 7: Configuring the grid.

On this dialog you can configure several grid properties.

- Resolution: The width (horizontal) and height (vertical) of the grid rectangles.

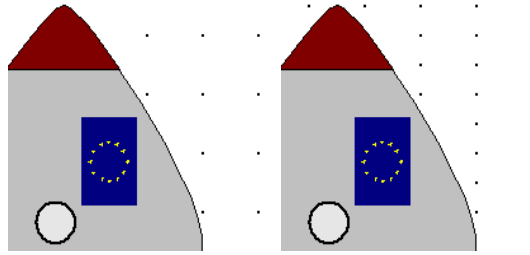


Figure 8: Grid resolution.

- Subdivisions: Additional points that appear along the sides of each rectangle or square in the grid. Objects snap to subdivisions as well as to the corners of the grid.

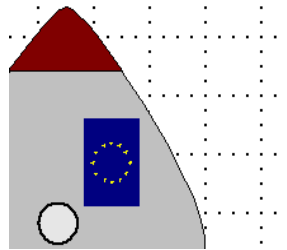


Figure 9: Grid subdivisions.

## Use snap lines to place objects with precision

Guides or snap lines are dashed horizontal or vertical lines to which you can snap objects.



Figure 10: Object snaps to the snap line.

### Inserting a snap line

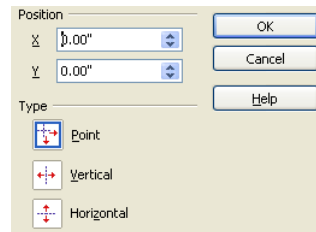
To insert a snap line:

- 1) Hover the mouse cursor over either ruler.
- 2) Click and hold the left mouse button down.
- 3) Move the mouse cursor into the drawing area to drag the snap line.

You can always move a snap line with the mouse. However, moving snap lines will not move any objects that have been snapped to that line.

## Position a snap line with precision

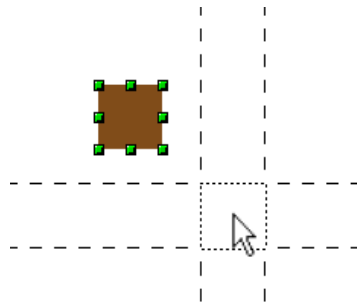
Go to **Insert > Insert Snap Point/Line**. In the following dialog, define the X or Y position of the snap line. You can use this same dialog to create a snap point.



You can also edit an existing snap point or snap line. Right-click on the snap line and choose **Edit Snap Line**.

## Use guiding lines to place objects with precision

You can have OpenOffice.org Draw display guiding lines while an object is being moved. They show more clearly the edges of the object being moved.



*Figure 11: Guiding lines when an object is moved.*

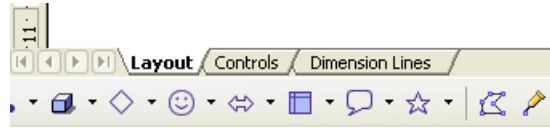
Go to **Tools > Options > OpenOffice.org Draw > View**. Under **Display**, check **Guides when moving**. Now all objects will show guiding lines when you move them.



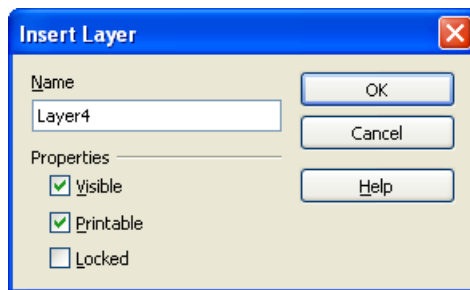
## Make complex diagrams with layers

Layers are like transparencies on an overhead projector. You can create complex drawings by stacking layers together. For example, in architecture you could have the basic plan of a building in one layer and the piping on another layer, and the electrical circuits on another.

In Draw, three layers are always present by default: Layout, Controls, and Dimension Lines.

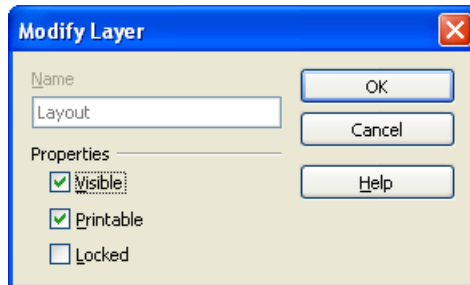


To activate a layer, click on its tab. When you draw something, the drawing is placed on the currently selected layer (usually “Layout”). To create a new layer, select **Insert > Layer**.



Right-click on a layer tab to bring up a menu where you can insert or delete a layer, rename an existing layer or modify it. You can change the names of user-defined layers; the default layer names cannot be changed.

If you choose **Modify**, you will see the following dialog box:



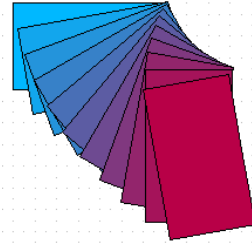
On the **Modify Layer** dialog, you can specify layer properties:

- **Visible:** Whether the layer is visible.
- **Printable:** Whether or not the layer is printed. This is useful for guides or annotations that help you make the drawing but should not appear in the final output.
- **Protected:** Objects on a protected layer cannot be moved. For example, if one layer has the basic plan of a building, you could protect it while you draw the pipes.

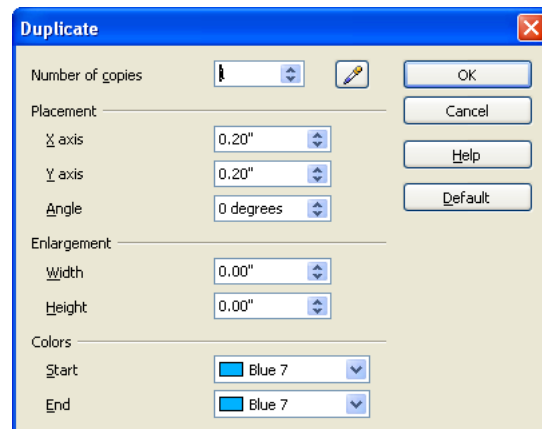
# Cool effects

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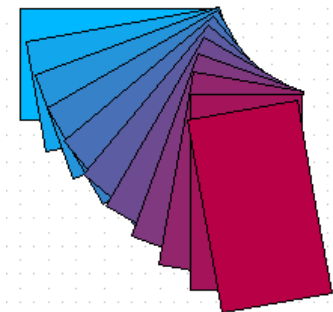
## Duplication



Duplication makes copies of an object while applying a set of changes (such as color or rotation) to the duplicates. To start duplication, click on an object or group and choose **Edit > Duplicate**. The **Duplicate** dialog appears:

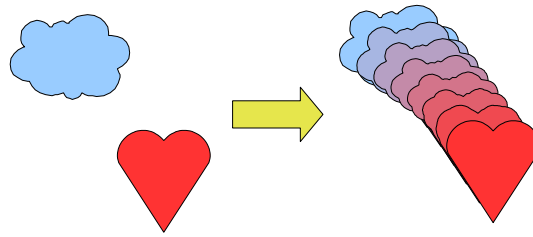


Choose the number of copies, their separation (placement), rotation, and so on. Here is an example of the result.

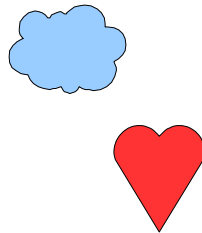


*Figure 12: The duplicate tool in action.*

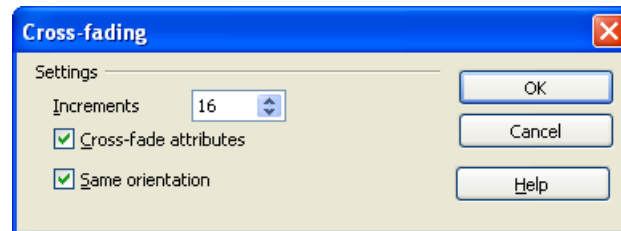
## Cross-fading



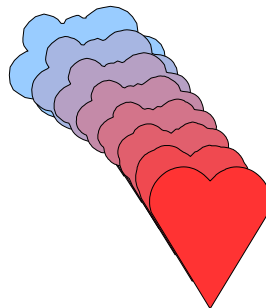
Cross-fading transforms one shape into another. The result is a new group of objects including the two end points and the intermediate steps. To do a cross-fade, select two objects.



Then choose **Edit > Cross-fading**.







On the dialog choose the number of increments (transition steps). You probably want to have *Cross-fade attributes* and *Same orientation* both checked. The end result is shown below.




*Figure 13: Cross-fading.*

## Which object goes in front?

How do I tell OpenOffice.org I want  and not  ?

If you want  then select  (the object we want in front), right-click and choose

**Arrange > Bring to Front.** Or select  (the object we want behind), right-click and choose **Arrange > Send to Back.**