

In this tutorial, you will be making a very simple Holly leaf with berries. You will be using the Pen Tool, Node Tool, Noise, and a 3D effect.

EASY HOLLY LEAVES

LET'S GET STARTED

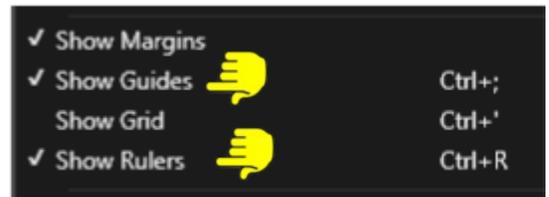
This is a VERY basic tutorial for new users and is designed to help you learn how to create vector graphics. This image is 100% vectors. Don't let the word "vectors" scare you because they are really easy to work with!



SETTING UP

Select **File\New** on the top menu and create a new document in a size of your choice. 600px by 600px works well. You may work on either a white or transparent background.

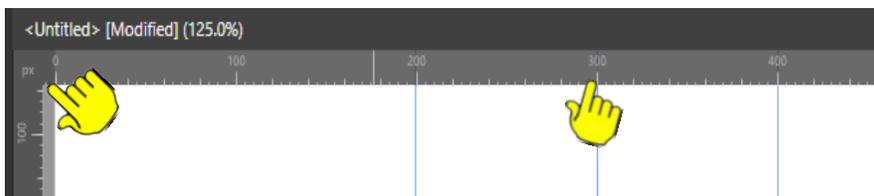
On the top menu, select **View** and ensure that **Show Guides** and **Show Rulers** are checked.



On the **Stroke** panel Set the **Stroke** color to black, **Stroke Size** 1.5 pixels, and the **Fill** color to white.

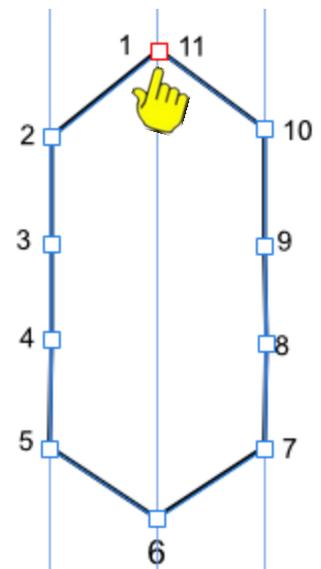


On the **left side** and **top edge** of the document window, you will see the horizontal and vertical rulers. Check the upper left corner of the ruler to make sure it says **PX** (pixels). Place your mouse cursor over the vertical ruler and while holding down the mouse button, drag a guide to the 200, 300, and 400 mark on the horizontal ruler.



MAKING THE LEAF OUTLINE

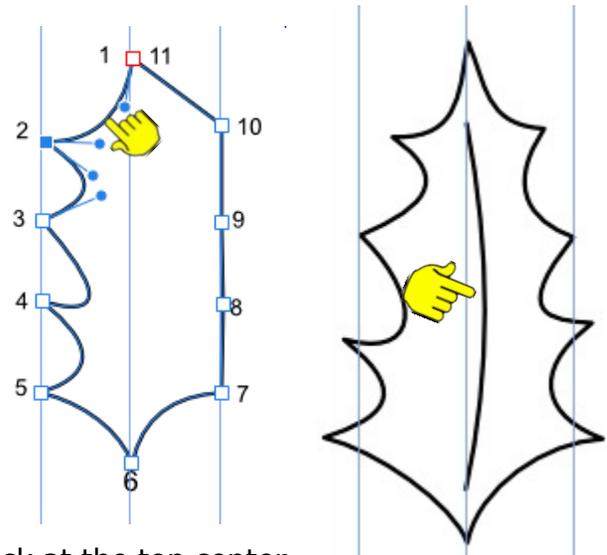
Select the **Pen Tool** from the left toolbar, click near the top of the **center** guide to set a node there (#1). Click to add more nodes to the left and right guides as shown in the diagram. When you get back to the beginning (the red node), you can either double-click on that node or click the **Join Curves** icon on the **Context** toolbar.



SHAPING THE POINTS

Select the **Node Tool**  from the left toolbar. Position the **Node Tool** in the center of the line between nodes one and two and drag the line inward to create a curve. Repeat all the way around until there are no straight lines left.

Spend some time shaping the curves the way you want them. You can push and pull the nodes and move the handles to get the end result you want. There is no right or wrong. Drag the upper nodes inward just a bit to create a narrower tip on the top of the leaf and pull the lower nodes outward to make the bottom of the leaf wider.



Select the **Color** panel and set the white **Fill** color to none. Using the **Pen Tool** again, make a single click at the top center of the leaf and a double-click at the bottom to form a straight line.

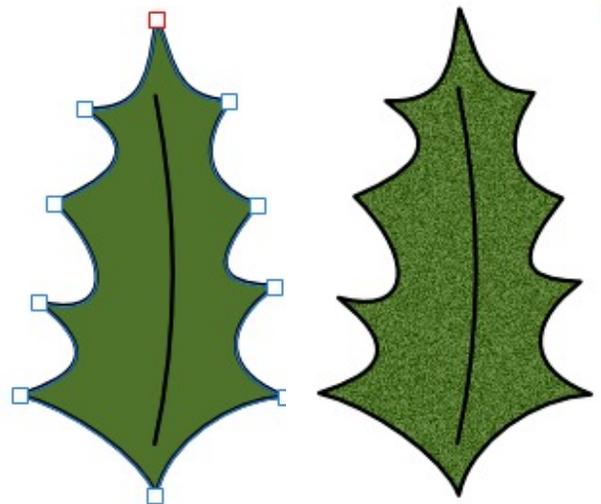
Use the **Node Tool**  to slightly curve the center line. This completes our basic holly leaf. It would be a good idea to save your work at this point. Go To **File\Save** on the top menu. Give your file a name. It will save with an **.afdesign** file extension. Be sure to save often.

If you want to remove the guides, go to **View** on the top menu and uncheck **Show Guides**.

COLORING THE LEAF

With the leaf selected, click the **Swatches** panel. Change the white fill color to a green of your choice.

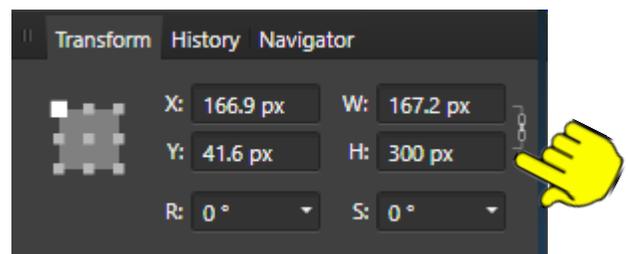
Select the **Color** panel, then click the little dot under the word **Opacity** to change it to **Noise**. Slide the indicator up to 100%. You now have a nicely textured holly leaf. You can change the look by turning the line color off or by applying a **Stroke** profile, which is beyond the scope of this tutorial.



RESIZING THE LEAF

On the top menu, click **Select\Select All**. Click the **Transform** panel on the lower right side of the screen. Make sure the little chain icon that links the **Width** and **Height** is active. It will have tiny little "arms" that link the two values.

Change the **Height** to 300 px. The width should automatically adjust when the two values are linked.

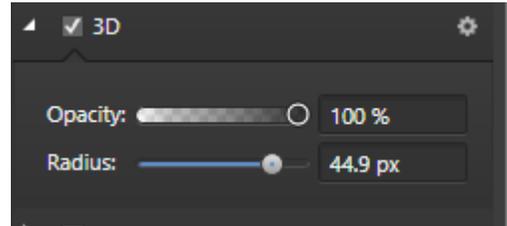


THE HOLLY BERRIES

Unselect your leaf. On the **Stroke** panel, set the **Stroke** color off and set the **Fill** color to a nice shade of red. Select the **Ellipse** tool from the left tool bar. While holding down the **Shift** key, draw out an ellipse that is about 50x50px. You can also change the size by going to the **Transform** panel.

Select the **Effects** panel and check **3D**. Slide the **Radius** over to around 44-45. This will put a little shine on the berry.

If you want your berry to look more authentic, you could put a tiny black circle on the bottom of the berry.



PUTTING IT ALL TOGETHER

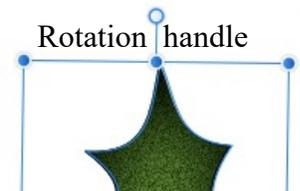
Duplicate the berry by holding down the **CTRL** key and dragging the berry to create a new berry in another location. Repeat to create one more berry. Optionally, you can copy your berry and paste it two times. Select the **Move** tool  and drag a box around your leaf and spine. **Right-click** and select **Group** from the pop-up menu.

Make a duplicate of your leaf. You should have two leaves and 3 berries.

With the Move tool  place one leaf on top of the other. Rotate the leaves slightly by dragging the **Rotation** handle (one to the left, the other to the right). Move the berries to the bottom of the leaves and arrange them as shown. Make sure the last berry is on the top.

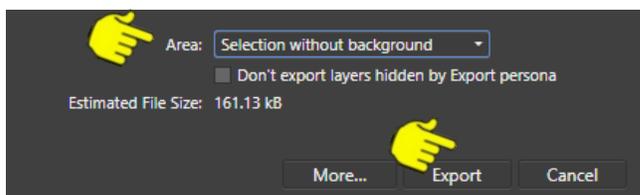
If you know how to stylize a line, you might want to do that with your leaves.

Now that you have a basic leaf, you can add more lines to it, color it with a gradient, add a drop shadow effect, etc. The possibilities are endless. The main purpose was to show you how easy it is to make an image using straight lines as the base.



SAVING YOUR IMAGE

Save your image for a final time. Use the **Move** tool  to drag a "box" around your entire image to select everything. On the Top menu, select **File\Export**. On the **Export Settings** dialog box, select the **PNG** format, then change the **Area** to **Selection without Background**, then click **Export**. Give your file a name and save it to your hard drive.



Leaves with Stylized lines and Inner Shadow Effect with Radius set to 100.

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