



# A Chaparral grafix tutorial

## *Swirls*

**Software:** Affinity Designer Version 1.5

**Skill Level:** Intermediate

**Materials:** Black Swirl Op X by Krista. Download Large png from <http://www.clker.com/clipart-196707.html>

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**Home Page:** Chaparral grafix  
<http://chaparralgrafix.com>

**Title:** Swirls

**Description:** Swirls can be attractive elements to include in vector designs. This tutorial is intended to demonstrate how to create swirls .

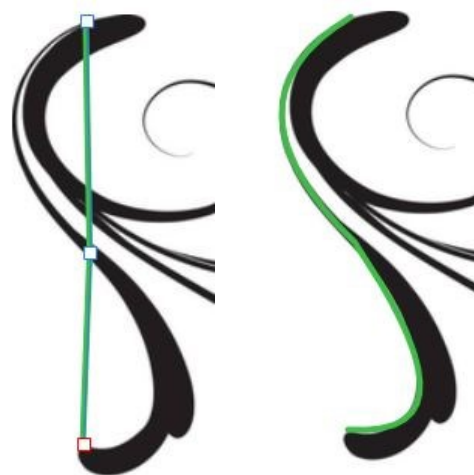


1. Download the Black Swirl Op X by Krista. Copy and Paste it into a folder created for resource images.
2. Open a new document 800x800 pixels. DPI: 72.
3. Open the Black Swirl Op X using the **Place Image** tool, drawing it out to fill most of the vertical space of the drawing. In the **Layers** panel, click on the Lock icon on the far right to lock the layer with the swirl image.

4. Click on the Pen tool, then from **Mode** on the Context menu, click on **Smart Mode**. Set the **Stroke** to 4 pts and the Stroke **Color** to any color.

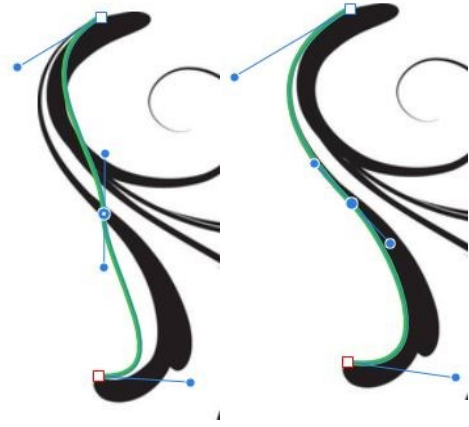
5. Zoom in as desired. Hold down Alt and click on the top of the top left swirl. Still holding down Alt, click in the middle of the first swirl. Finally, hold down Alt and double click at the bottom of the swirl .

6. With the stroke still active, click on the **Node** tool and with the cursor click in the middle of the first segment of the line and move the line to the left until it is on top of the black swirl. Then click on the bottom segment of the line with the cursor and move it to the right.

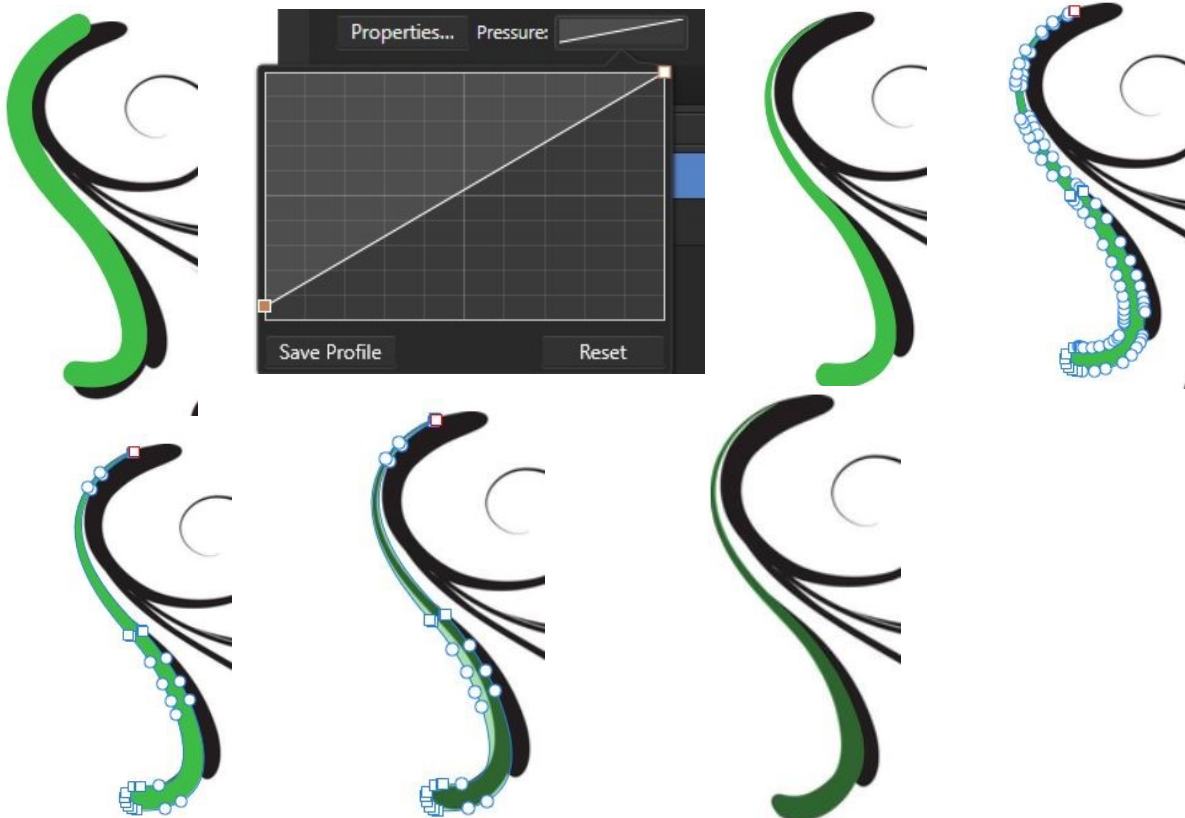


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7. The curve is not smooth at the midpoint of the line. With the stroke and the Node tool still active, click on the middle node and from **Convert** on the Context menu click on **Convert to Smart**. The curves are no longer where they were nudged with the cursor. However, this is easily fixed by adjusting the curves with the handles.

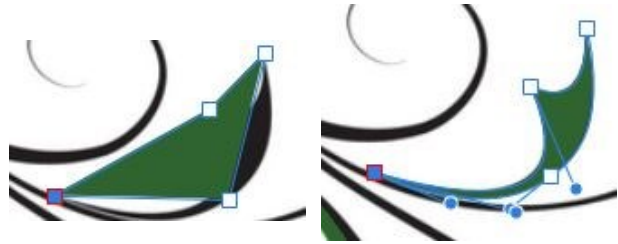


8. The stroke needs a profile. Increase the stroke size to 20 pts. Click on **Pressure** at the bottom of the Stroke panel. Double click on the square at the top left of Pressure and move it almost to the bottom left. This gives the swirl the right profile. Move the bottom node down slightly so that it is directly over the black swirl. The swirl has a Round Cap at the bottom node. To change the bottom of the swirl to match the black swirl, go to **Layer** and click on **Expand Stroke**. Click next on the Node tool. Note the many nodes created when the stroke was expanded to make it a shape. To reduce the number of nodes, go to **Action** on the Context menu and click on **Smooth Curve** several times. At the top of the Layers panel, reduce the opacity of the swirl to 45%. With the cursor, draw a square around the Sharp nodes at the bottom and convert them to **Smart**. Zoom in, remove excess nodes, and move the remaining ones to fit the outline of the black swirl. Return the opacity to 100%.

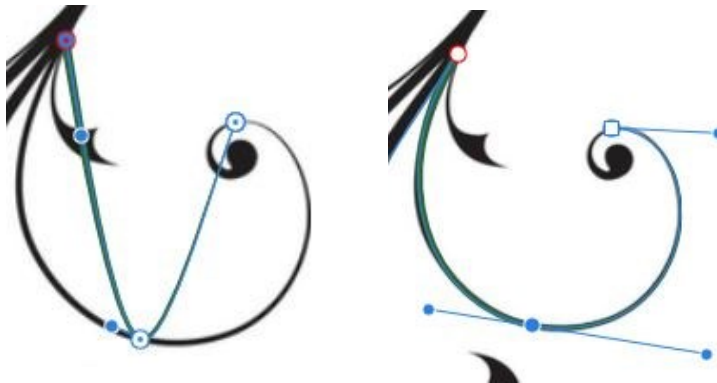


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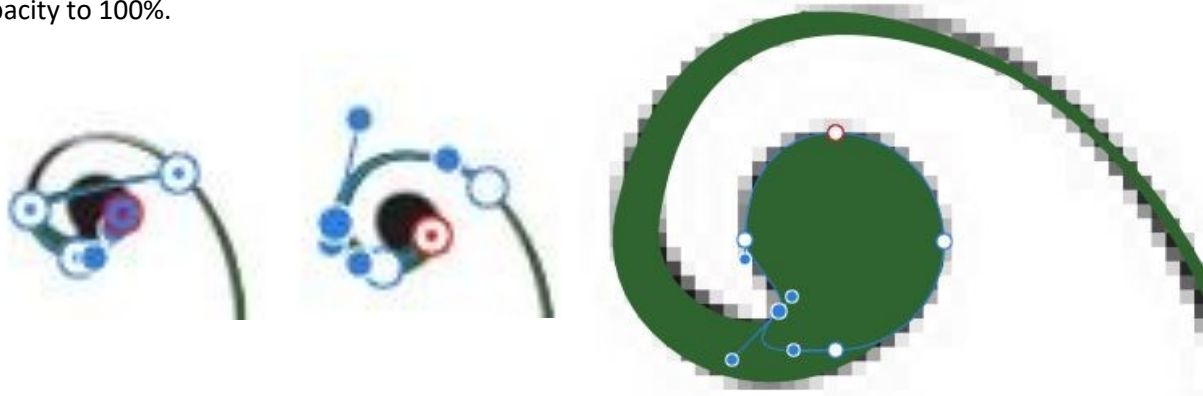
9. To create the swirl at the top middle with two pointed tips, click on the Pen tool, change from stroke to fill, hold down Alt, and click to make four nodes. In the Color panel, reduce the Opacity to 50%, click on the Node tool, and nudge the lines with the cursor into the curves needed. Return the Opacity to 100%.



10. Affinity Designer remembers your last creation. So that when using the Pen tool now to create a stroke, the line will be 20 pts with a Profile, which was the setting for the stroke in Step 8. To create the swirl in the lower right with the apostrophe on the end, click on the Pen tool, hold down Alt, and create three nodes. Reduce the stroke to 7 pts. Switch to the Node tool and pull out the curves with the cursor. Make any needed adjustments with the node handles.



11. Moving on to the apostrophe, use the Pen tool to create a small stroke with three nodes, holding down Alt before clicking. Reduce the stroke to 6 pts. Click on the Node tool and use the node handles to refine the shape of the stroke. Zoom in. Holding down Shift and Control, draw out a circle with the **Ellipse** tool 18x18 pixels. Reduce the Opacity to 50%. Convert to Curves, move the left node in slightly, add a node to the lower left, and use the node handles to shape it like an apostrophe. Return the Opacity to 100%.



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12. Zoom in. In the Layers panel, uncheck the bottom layer with the Black Swirl Op X to hide it. Make any final adjustments to the three shapes. Use Layer, Expand Stroke to make the two strokes into filled shapes, then make them and the ellipse into one shape with the **Boolean** operation **Add**.



13. To recreate the rest of Black Swirl Op X in Affinity Designer, use the techniques employed above. When finished, convert all of the strokes to shapes with fill by going to Layer – Expand Stroke. Then use the Boolean operation Add to combine all of these shapes into one shape. Different colors, gradients, Effects, or Styles may then be applied to the multi-swirl.

Have fun making swirls!

