

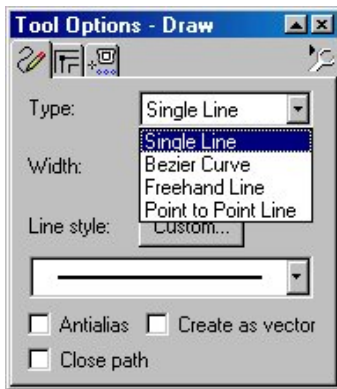
PSP 7 Draw Tool

The Draw and Preset Shapes tools can be used in either vector or raster mode. Using these two tools, you can create just about any outlined graphic you want with little effort.

Draw Tool

The draw tool is used to create straight lines, bezier curves, freehand lines and point to point lines. This tool can be set to either vector or raster. Since vector graphics are adjustable, I recommend you always create lines with the vector option selected.

The following graphic illustrates the Tool Options palette for the Draw tool:



The Type box allows you to select the type of line you want to draw.

The Width box allows you to enter the width of the line.

The Line style is just that, the style of the line. This tool comes with numerous preset line styles from dashed or dotted lines to lines with arrows at each end. You can even create your own custom line styles.

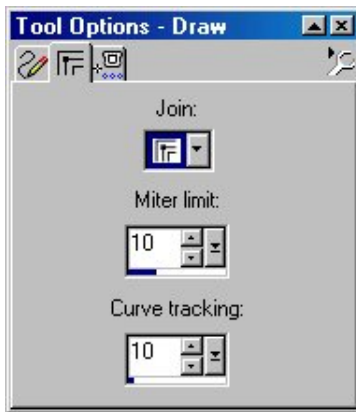
Antialias - Check this box to antialias your lines. If you are creating a line in any shape other than a straight line, you will probably want to have antialias checked. The following graphic illustrates a freehand line drawn with antialias on (left) and antialias off (right):



Vector - Check this box to create your line as vector. This has the advantage of being able to edit the line you have drawn instead of starting over if you don't like the results.

Close Path - When this box is selected, the start and end points of your line will be connected when you release the mouse, assuming that your line is curved in some way so that the ends can connect.

The second tab on the Tool Options palette contains three other settings for the draw tool:



Join - The Join choices are Miter, Round and Bevel. These options only apply to the Point to Point draw tool. They determine the shape of the join where two segments of the line meet. The following graphic illustrates the Miter (left), Round (middle) and Bevel (right) joins on a point to point line.



Miter limit - This control again, applies only to the Point to Point line, and is active only if a Mitered Join is used. This setting determines the maximum value allowed for the Miter length to the line width. The Miter length is defined as the length in pixels from the inside edge of the join to the outer point. If the ratio is less than the Miter Limit, the result is a normal Mitered Join. If the ratio exceeds the Miter Limit, the tip of the Miter is cut off at the limit, giving something that resembles a Bevel Join. The highest allowable Miter Limit is 30. It is best to keep the Miter Limit at the high end, otherwise some of your Mitered Joins may be truncated.

Curve Tracking - This option is located on the second tab of the Tool Options palette. This only effects the freehand line type. Curve tracking determines the distance between the nodes used to create your curve. The closer the nodes are the better the curve will be defined. Therefore, lower values allow you to create tighter curves without distortion. If you want smooth curves, though, you will want to keep the Curve Tracking numbers in

the higher range. The following graphic illustrates a freehand line drawn with Curve Tracking set to 1 (left) and 30 (right).



The type of line you draw depends on how you have your Color Palette set. For a simple stroked line, turn off the background color and leave the Foreground color active. For a stroked line, have both color swatches active. If you are drawing a curved line, you will want to have only the stroke (foreground color) active since you probably don't want the curved line to be filled with a color. The following graphic demonstrates a bezier curve line with stroke only active and with stroke and fill active:



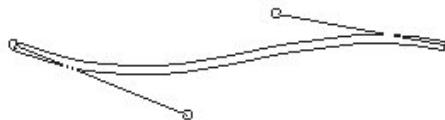
Single Line

Fill has no effect on the Single Line setting. It always draws with the stroke color only. Single lines are used to create straight or angled lines. If you hold down the Shift key while drawing single lines, you will end up with smooth edges on your lines, even if you don't have Antialias set on. If you don't constrain the lines, you will end up with jagged edges.

Bezier Curve

Bezier curve is used to draw smooth flowing lines. To create a bezier curve:

1. Open a new graphic large enough to hold your curved line.
2. Set the stroke line to a solid color and the fill (background) off.
3. Set the line width (usually a small number) and turn on Antialias. Set to Vector.
4. Draw a straight line from left to right (hold down the Shift key to constrain the line).
5. Click once below the line and once on top of the line to create the curve.



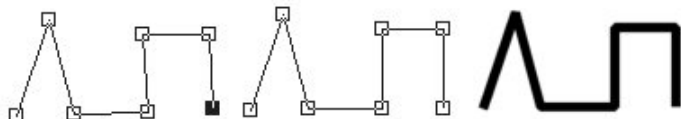
6. Release the mouse.
7. You can edit the curve of the line by clicking on the Object Selector tool then on the curved line. Choose Node Edit.



8. To increase the curve of the line, pull out on the round handle. To decrease the curve, push in on the round handle.

Point to Point

To create a line drawing using Point to Point, simply click on the graphic where you want your point to be. Keep clicking until you are done. This will probably result in crooked lines. But, do not despair. This is very easy to click. Until you right click and choose Quit Node Editing, you can fix the lines (you can even fix them afterwards by editing the nodes). Hold down the Shift key and cycle through the nodes until you hit the one you want to straighten. Then hold down the Ctrl key and hit an arrow key in the direction you want to go to fix the line. Continue on through the nodes until you have all of them fixed. Then right-click and quit node editing. You can use this same technique to fix lines created when you are not in Vector mode, but you will not be able to go back later and work on the lines again. Since it is so easy to convert your vector lines to raster, I recommend you always create your line drawings in Vector mode. The following graphic illustrates a line drawing with jagged lines (left), the nodes edited to fix the lines (middle) and the final drawing (right).



Create a Pill Button Shape Creating a pill button shape with the Line tool is a piece of cake:



1. Activate the Draw tool, Single Line, Width 50, Antialias and Vector checked.
2. Choose the Line Style Round.
3. Holding down the Shift key, draw a short line.
4. Using the Vector handle on the right, pull the line until it is the length you want. You will not be able to expand the height of the graphic, only the width.
5. Choose Selections>From Vector Object and save the selection to an Alpha Channel (Selections>Save to Alpha Channel).
6. You now have a template for a pill button.