



Design a flyer with Scribus

***a free, cross-platform
desktop publishing application***



*a do-it-yourself guide
from Iffy Books*



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PHILADELPHIA, PA 19107*

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Scribus is a free program you can use to design flyers, zines, and books.

Distributing flyers is a great way to promote your cause. They're cheap to produce, they look cool, and they reach people who aren't in the same online spaces as you.

You can design a flyer with a word processing program (LibreOffice, Word, Google Docs, etc.), but there are limits to what you can do. You can't rotate things at odd angles, or make two text boxes overlap. You can't adjust the space between letters. Tweaking the location of text and images is difficult. And for complex designs, printing can be unpredictable.

Because word processors don't cut it, professional designers use **desktop publishing** programs when they design for print. The most popular desktop publishing program is Adobe InDesign, followed by QuarkXPress. These programs are useful, but they're very expensive.

Scribus, on the other hand, is free! Here are some other reasons to use Scribus:

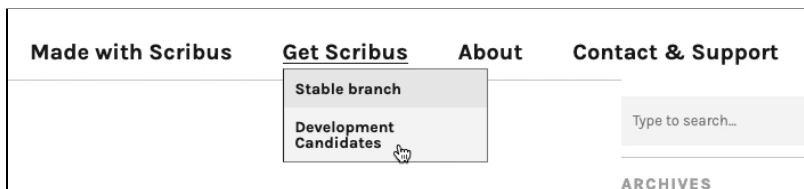
- ▶ You can share files across macOS, Windows, and Linux operating systems.
- ▶ Scribus doesn't rely on cloud services, which is helpful for privacy.
- ▶ Scribus runs well on old/slow computers.
- ▶ Scribus files are stored using XML, so if a file gets damaged you can probably fix it.

→ Install Scribus (macOS)

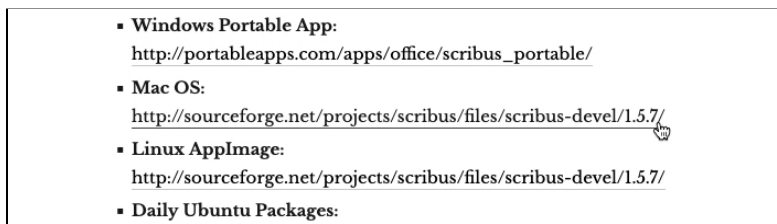
To download Scribus, visit the following URL:

<https://www.scribus.net/downloads/>

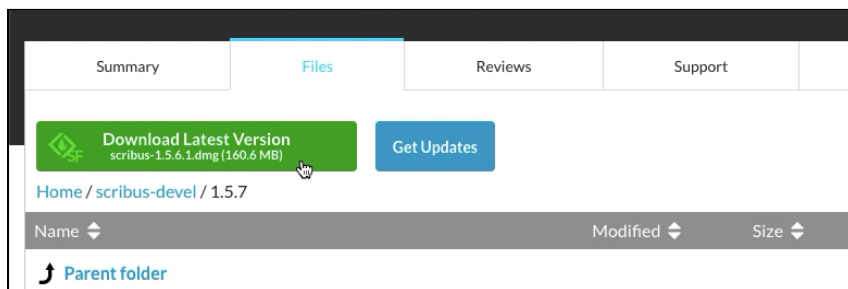
Move your mouse cursor over the **Get Scribus** link and you'll see a dropdown menu. Click on **Development Candidates**. (As of October 2021, the stable branch of Scribus doesn't work on macOS 11.)



Click the link under **Mac OS**, which will take you to SourceForge.net.



Click **Download Latest Version** to start downloading the .dmg file.



Open the .dmg file you just downloaded and drag the Scribus application file to your **Applications** folder.

You're all set! Go to **Applications** and double-click **Scribus** to open it.



Install Scribus (Windows)

To download Scribus, visit the following URL:

<https://www.scribus.net/downloads/>

Move your mouse cursor over the **Get Scribus** link and you'll see a dropdown menu. Click on **Development Candidates**. (If you have trouble running the development version, you can try the stable branch instead.)



Click the link under **Windows 64 Bit**, which will take you to sourceforge.net.

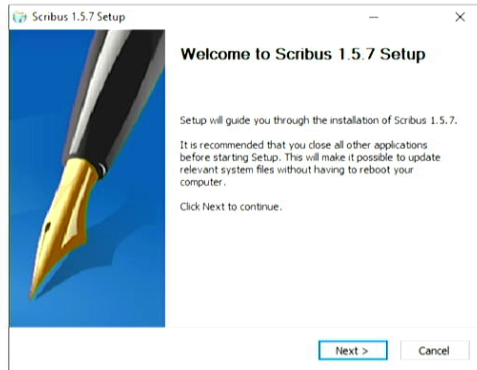
- Windows 32 Bit (7, 8, 10):
<http://sourceforge.net/projects/scribus/files/scribus-devel/1.5.7/>
- Windows 64 Bit (7, 8, 10):
<http://sourceforge.net/projects/scribus/files/scribus-devel/1.5.7/>
- Windows Portable App:
http://portableapps.com/apps/office/scribus_portable/
- Mac OS:

On the SourceForge page, scroll down and click **scribus-1.5.7-windows-x64.exe** to start downloading the Scribus installer.

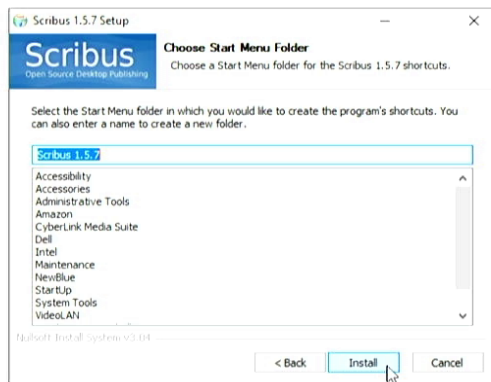
scribus-1.5.7-linux-x86_64.AppImage	2021-04-25	136.7 MB	72	
scribus-1.5.7.dmg	2021-04-25	166.5 MB	69	
scribus-1.5.7-windows.exe	2021-04-25	104.2 MB	97	
scribus-1.5.7-windows-x64.exe	2021-04-25	109.9 MB	898	
Totals: 14 Items		1.1 GB	1,507	

Double-click the .exe file you just downloaded. You'll see an alert window asking if you want to allow the app to make changes on your device. Click **Yes**.

When the Scribus installer wizard appears, click **Next** to continue.



Click through the installation wizard, adjusting the settings as needed. At the end, click **Install**.



When the installation is complete, click **Finish** to close the wizard and launch Scribus.



Install Scribus (Linux)

You can install Scribus with any major package manager (yum, synaptic, etc.). If you're using a Debian-based version of Linux (e.g., Ubuntu or Arch) you'll use APT.

If you want the latest development version, run the following command to add Scribus's personal package archive (PPA) to your list of APT repositories. (If you're not sure, you can skip this step.)

```
sudo add-apt-repository ppa:scribus/ppa
```

Run the following two commands to update APT and install Scribus:

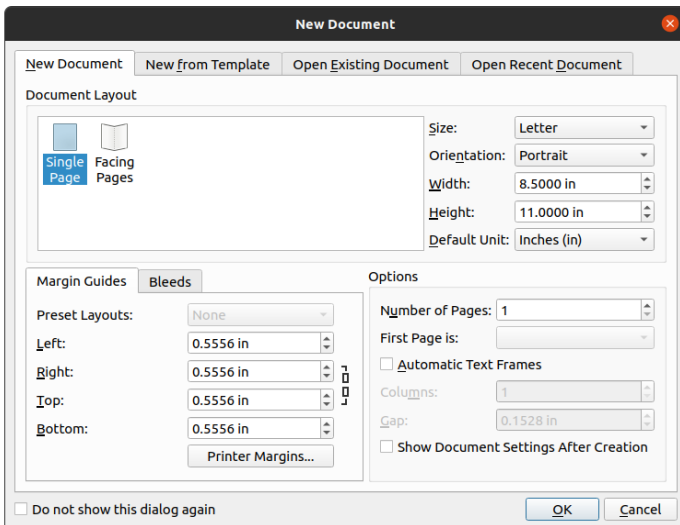
```
sudo apt-get update
sudo apt-get install scribus
```

Now run the command **scribus** to launch the application.

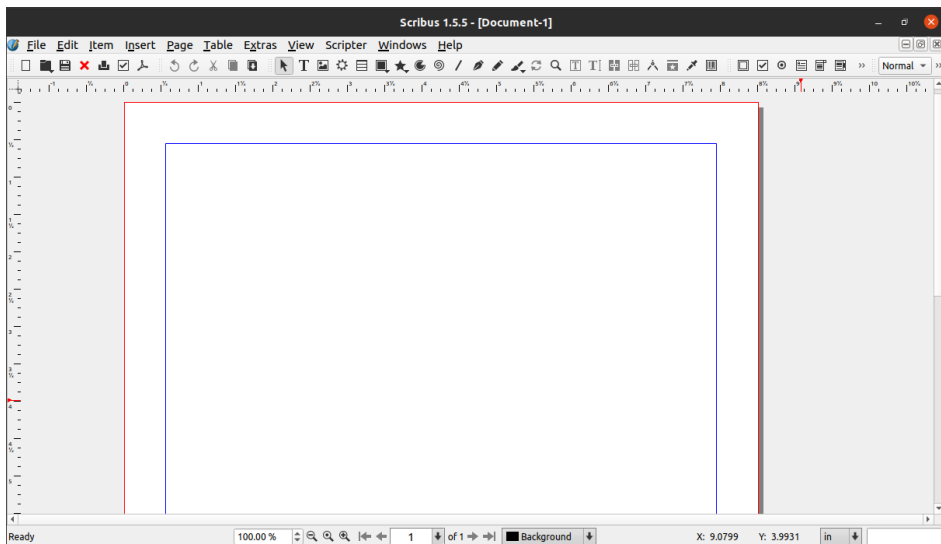


Create a new document

When you launch Scribus, you'll see the **New Document** window. The default page size is 8.5 in. x 11 in, which is what you want for this project. Click **OK**.

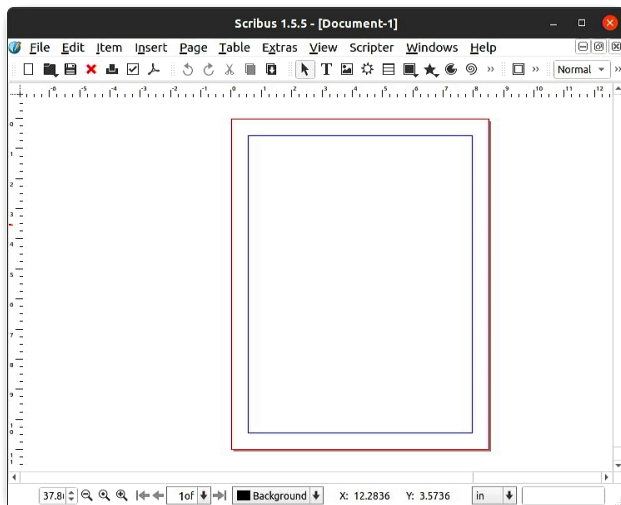


Your new document will look like the example below. The large white rectangle represents a page, and the blue line inside indicates the margin. When you print/export your document, the margin lines won't be visible.

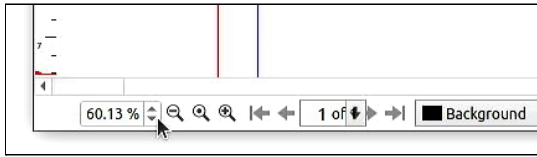


Zooming

To zoom out and see the entire page, press **ctrl/cmd + 0** (zero) or select **View > Zoom > Fit to Height** in the menu bar.



To zoom in or out, you can use the zoom settings at the bottom left corner of the window.

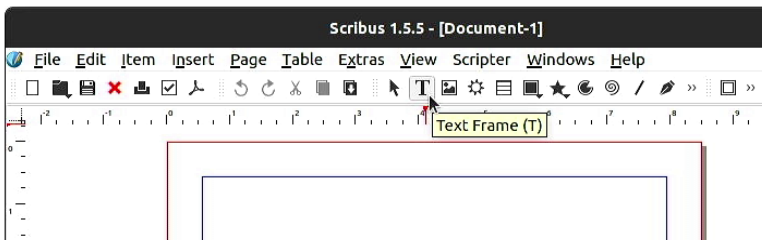


The magnifying glass icon in the middle will zoom to 100% of the print size. You can also use **cmd/ctrl + 1** to do the same thing.

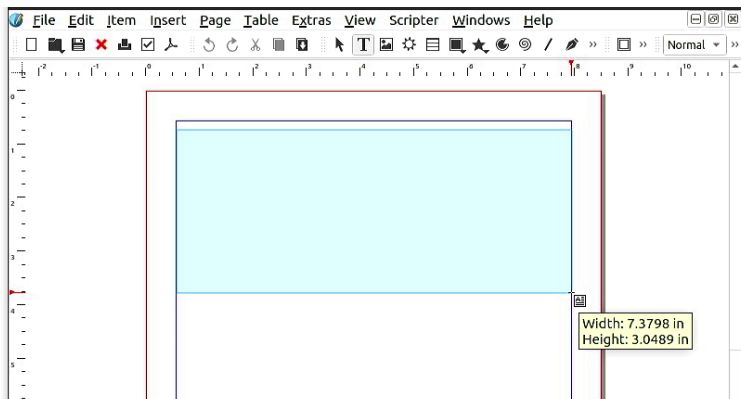
When you're zoomed in, you can move around the document by scrolling with your mouse, using the arrow keys, or clicking and dragging on the scroll bars.

Create a text frame

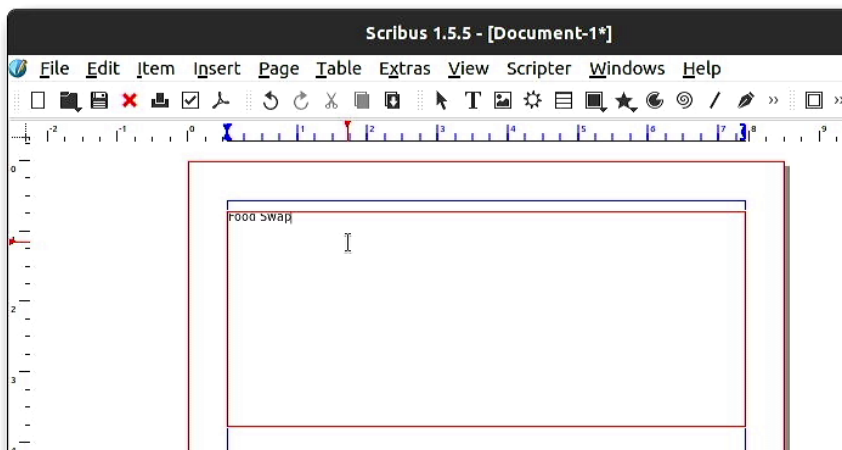
Click the **T** icon in the toolbar to start using the **Text Frame** tool.



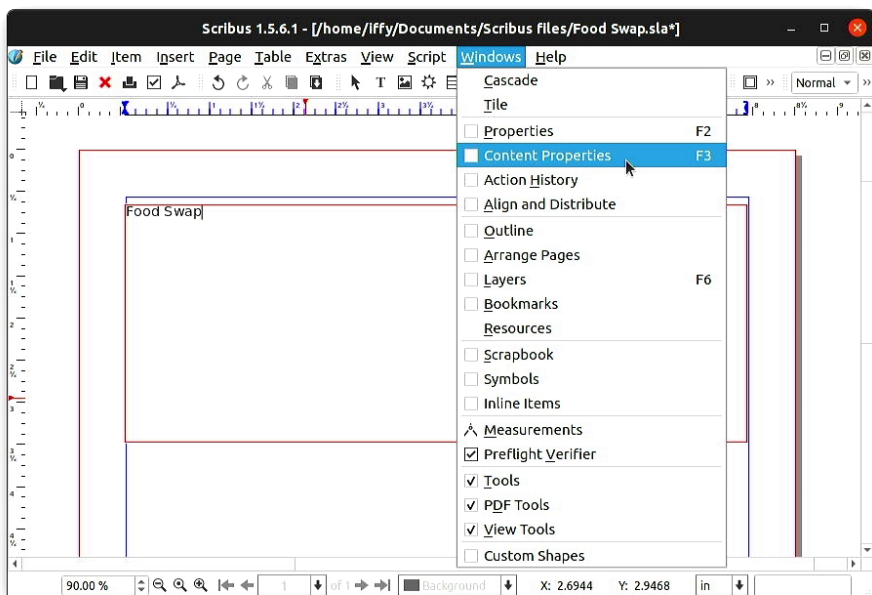
Click and drag on the page to create a text frame.



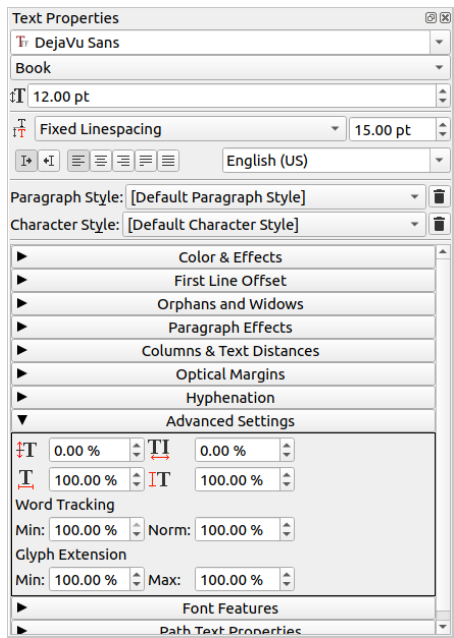
Double-click inside the text frame and start typing. The text will be tiny.



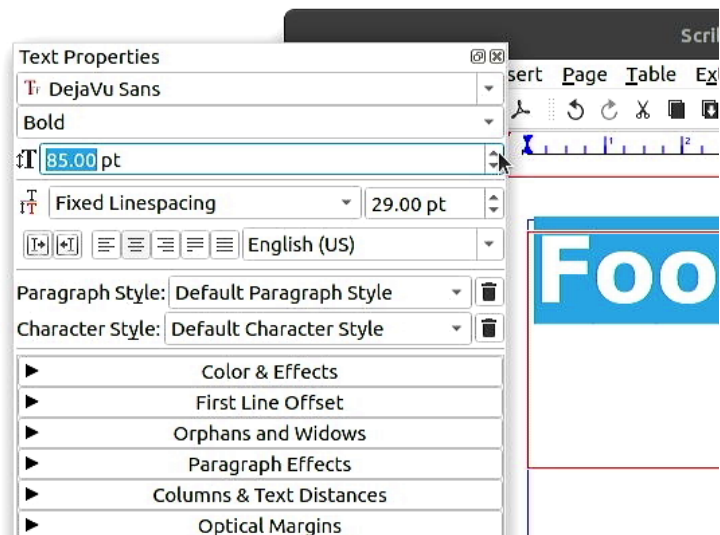
To change the font size, go to the menu bar and select **Window > Content Properties**. (If you're using Scribus 1.5.5 or earlier, use **Window > Text Properties** instead.)



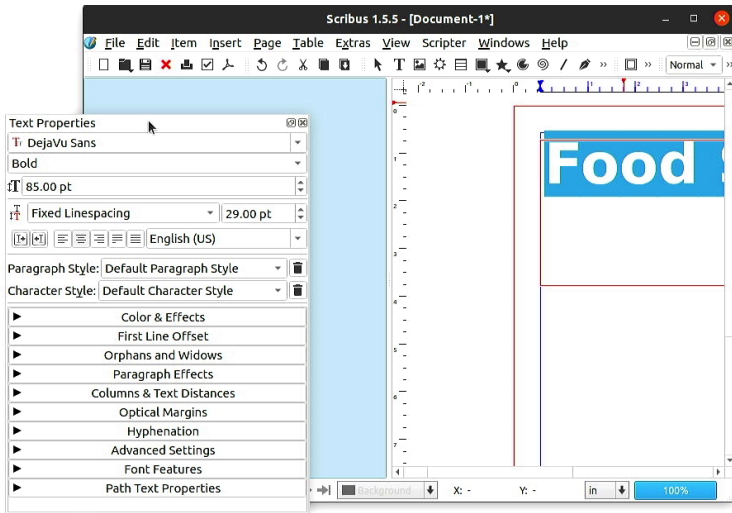
You'll see a window called **Text Properties** that looks like this, with numerous font formatting options. At the bottom of the window, you can click on the title of a submenu to view its contents. If the Text Properties window is empty, click on your text frame to select it.



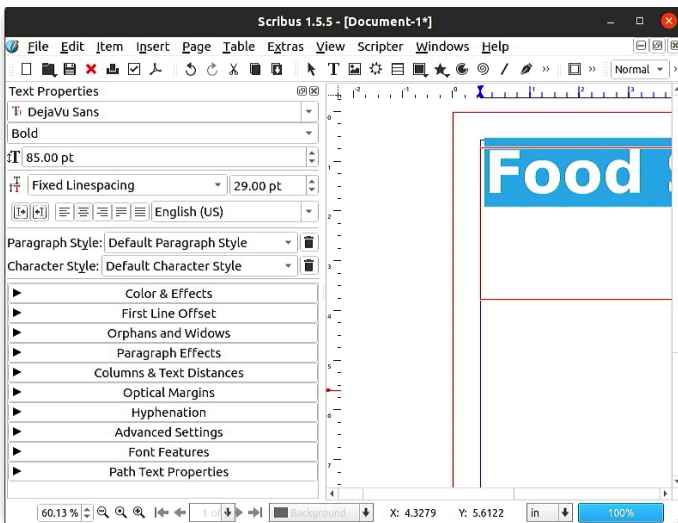
In the Text Properties window, increase the font size to about 85 pt. Then click the "center" icon below to center your text.



If you want, you can dock the Text Properties window within your Scribus window. Click the title bar of the Text Properties window and drag it over the left (or right) edge of the window. The document window will slide over and a shaded space will appear.



Release the mouse button to dock the window.

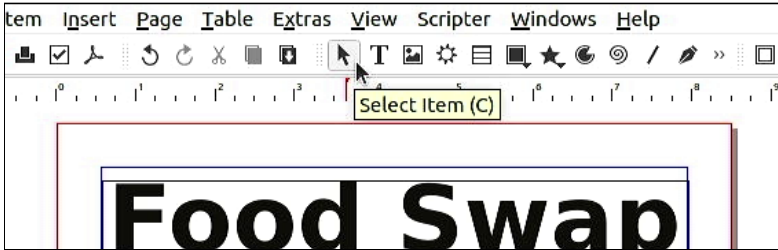


When you're done with the **Text Properties** window, click the **X** icon in the top right corner to close it.

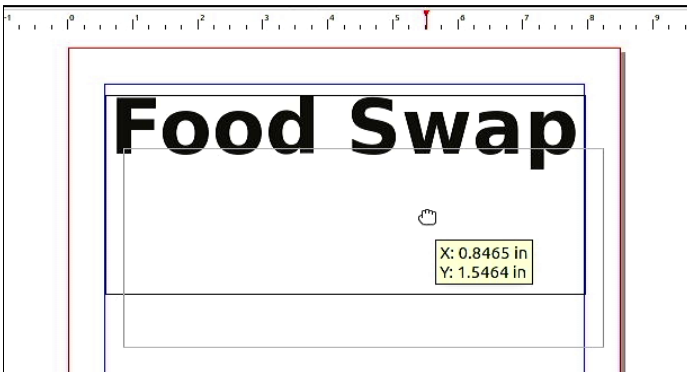


Move and resize a text frame

Check the toolbar to make sure you're using the **Select Item** tool. If another tool is selected, click the **Select Item** icon or press **C** on the keyboard.



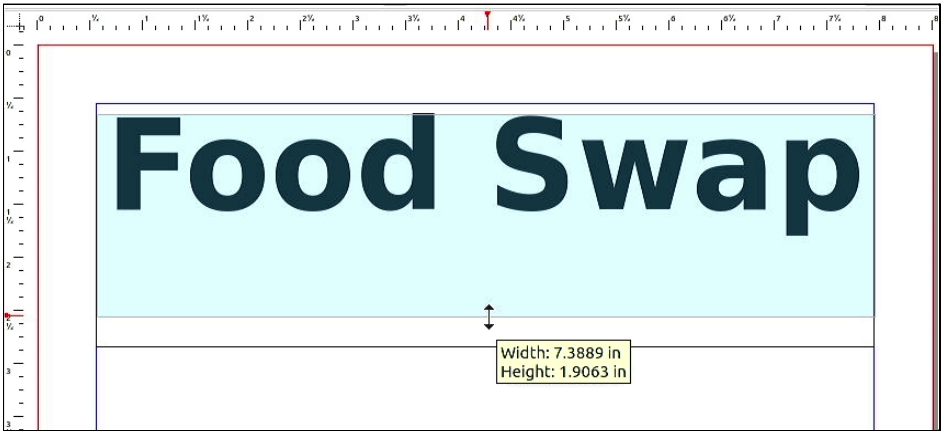
When you move your mouse cursor over the text frame, it will turn into a fist icon. Click and drag to move the text frame to a new location.



You can click on a content frame to select it, or click somewhere else to deselect it. When a frame is selected, you'll see a small square on each corner and edge. You can use the arrow keys to move a content frame when it's selected.

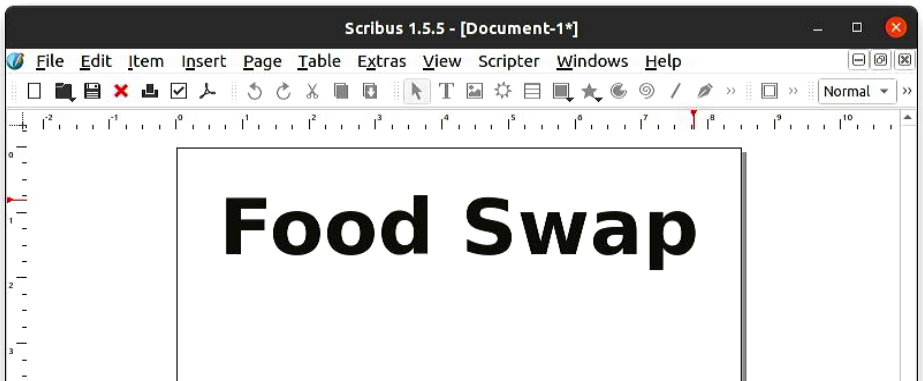


When you move your mouse cursor over one of the small squares, your cursor will turn into a double-sided arrow. Click and drag to resize the frame.



Hide frame borders with preview mode

You can toggle Preview Mode to see your design without frame borders. Use **View > Preview > Preview Mode** or press **Ctrl/Cmd + Alt + P**.



You won't be able to edit your document while you're in preview mode. **View > Preview > Preview Mode** or press **Ctrl/Cmd + Alt + P** again to switch back.



Download fonts

The following websites have lots of fonts you can download and use for free. Or just search the web for "free fonts."

<https://fontlibrary.org>

<https://www.fontspace.com>

<https://www.fontsquirrel.com>

Here are some font examples to get you started!

[Anton](https://www.stockio.com/free-font/anton) | <https://www.stockio.com/free-font/anton>

Quick waxy bugs jump the frozen veldt.

[Permanent Marker](https://www.fontsquirrel.com/fonts/permanent-marker) | <https://www.fontsquirrel.com/fonts/permanent-marker>

QUICK WAXY BUGS JUMP THE FROZEN VELDT.

[Alata](https://www.fontsquirrel.com/fonts/alata) | <https://www.fontsquirrel.com/fonts/alata>

Quick waxy bugs jump the frozen veldt.

[Source Sans Pro](https://www.fontsquirrel.com/fonts/source-sans-pro) | <https://www.fontsquirrel.com/fonts/source-sans-pro>

Quick waxy bugs jump the frozen veldt.

[Libre Caslon Text](https://fontlibrary.org/en/font/libre-caslon-text) | <https://fontlibrary.org/en/font/libre-caslon-text>

Quick waxy bugs jump the frozen veldt.

[Libre Bodoni](https://fontlibrary.org/en/font/libre-bodoni) | <https://fontlibrary.org/en/font/libre-bodoni>

Quick waxy bugs jump the frozen veldt.

[Libre Baskerville](https://fontlibrary.org/en/font/libre-baskerville) | <https://fontlibrary.org/en/font/libre-baskerville>

Quick waxy bugs jump the frozen veldt.

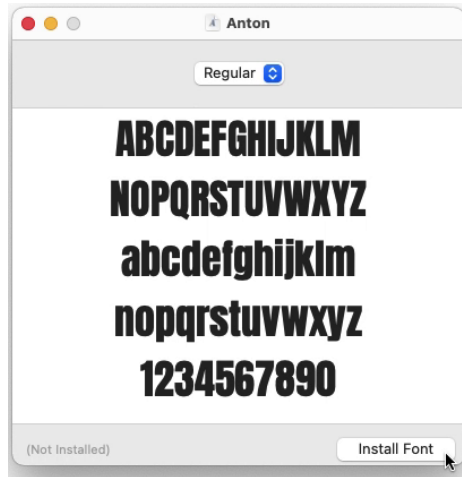
The example flyer uses **Anton** for the large text and **Alata** for the small text.



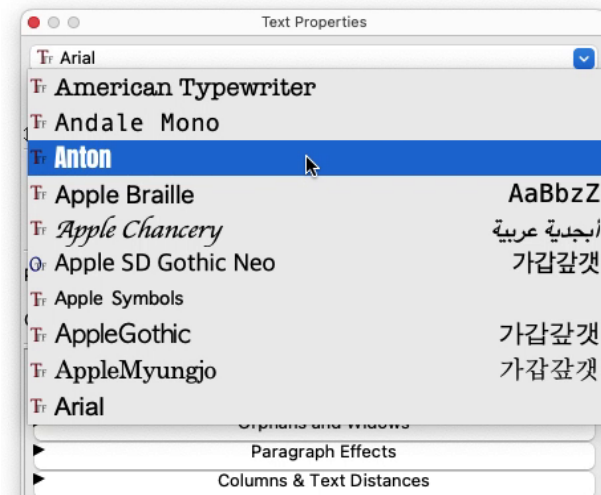
Install fonts (macOS)

First, double-click the **.zip** file you just downloaded to expand it.

Double click a font file (ending with **.ttf** or **.otf**) and the **Font Book** application will launch and show a preview of the font. Click **Install Font**.



Save your document and close Scribus. When you reopen Scribus, the font(s) you just installed should be available.





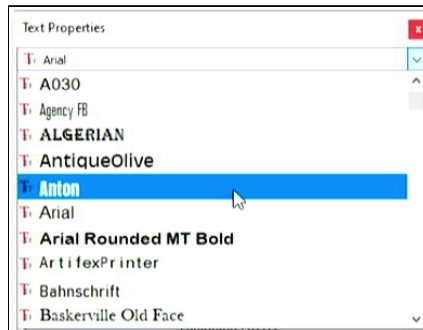
Install fonts (Windows)

Double-click the **.zip** file you just downloaded and select **Extract all...** to extract the files.

Double-click on a font file (ending with **.ttf** or **.otf**), and you'll see a preview of the font in a new window. Click **Install** to install the font.



Save your document and close Scribus. When you reopen Scribus, the font(s) you just installed should be available.



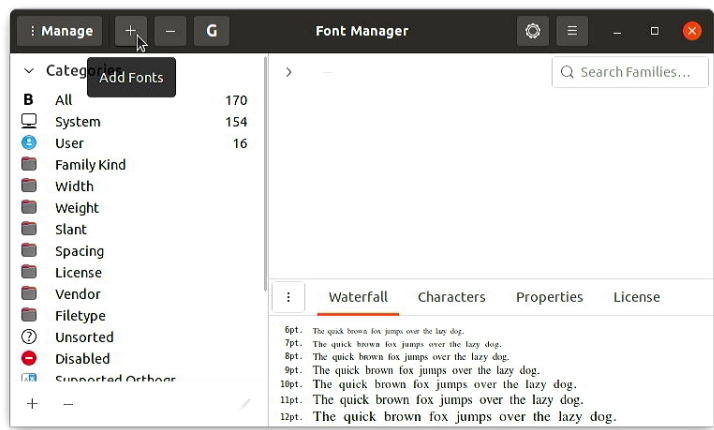
Install fonts (Linux)

First, double-click the **.zip** file you just downloaded to expand it.

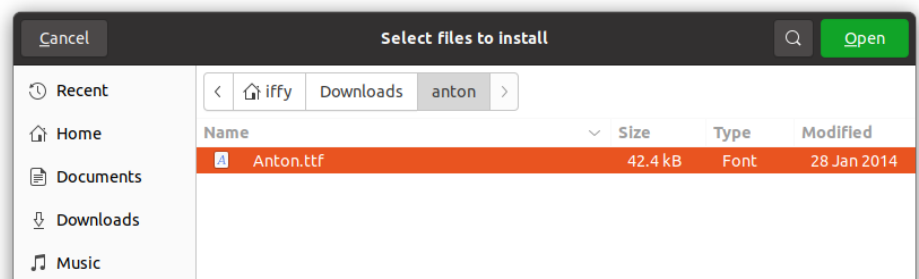
Next you'll install the **Font Manager** application. Open a terminal window and use APT (or your package manager of choice) to install it.

```
sudo apt update
sudo apt install font-manager
```

Run the command **font-manager** to launch the application. To add a new font, click the **+** button at the top left corner of the window.



Navigate to the font files you just downloaded. Select all the **.ttf** or **.otf** files in the font directory, then click **Open**.



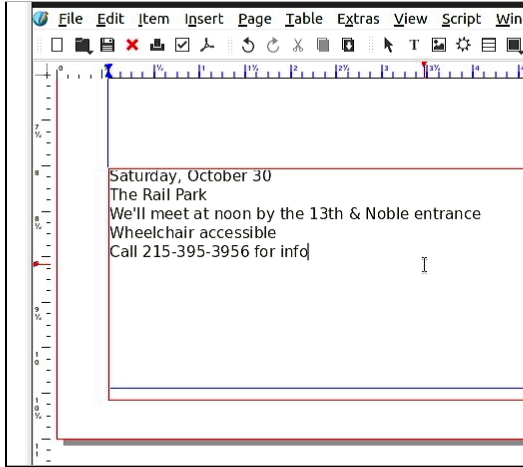
Save your document and close Scribus. When you reopen Scribus, the font(s) you just installed should be available.



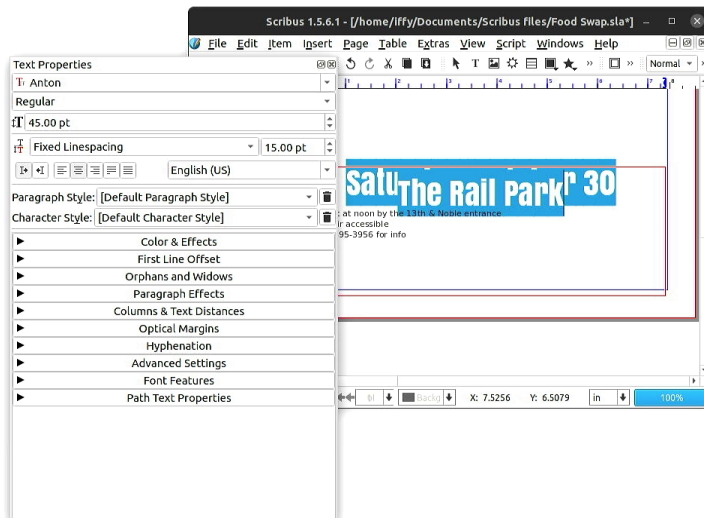


Adjust line spacing

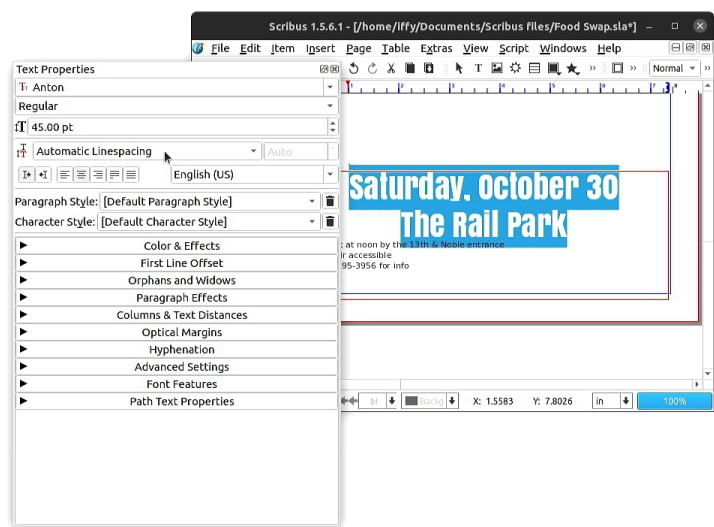
Next you'll add some additional details at the bottom of your flyer. Use the **Text Frame** tool to create a new text frame, then double-click inside it and start typing some text.



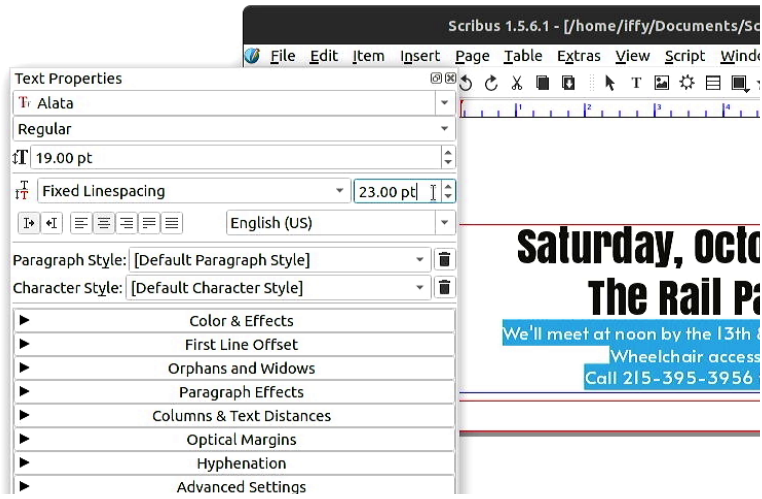
Highlight the text you want to resize. Then go to open the **Text Properties** window (**Windows > Content Properties**) and change the size to 45 pt. or so. You'll notice that the font size changes, but the line spacing stays the same.



When you create a new text frame, Scribus uses fixed line spacing set at 15 points. In the **Text Properties** window, click the dropdown that says **Fixed Linespacing** and switch to **Automatic Linespacing**.



Highlight the rest of your text and use the **Text Properties** window to adjust the font and size. If automatic line spacing doesn't look right, switch back to **Fixed Linespacing** and adjust the line spacing value by hand.

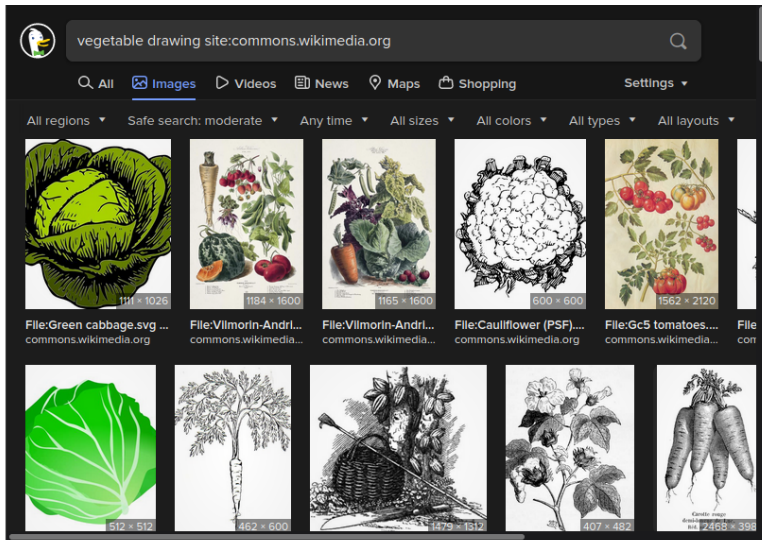




Find an image for your flyer

To find a picture for your flyer, try searching for an image with DuckDuckGo. The example below uses the following search string:

vegetable drawing site:commons.wikimedia.org



The **site:** option in the search string above limits the image search to a specific domain. The site **commons.wikimedia.org** hosts public domain and open-licensed media files for Wikipedia, and they often have high-resolution versions available.

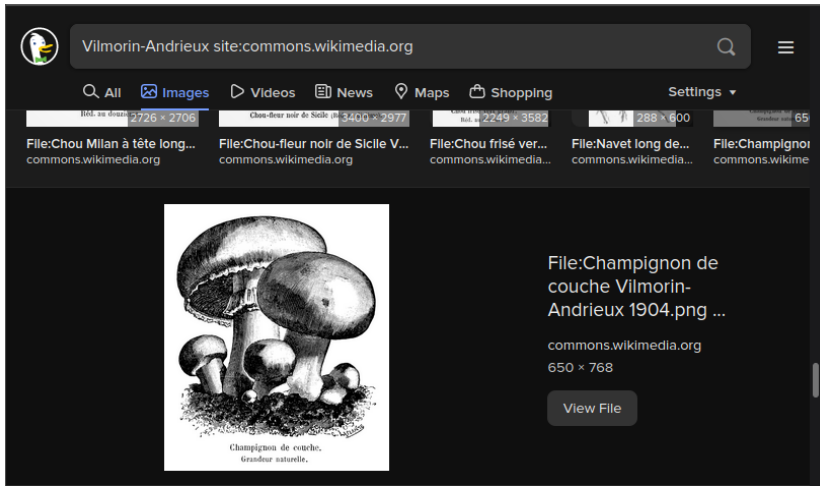
I liked the illustration of carrots in the search results above, so I followed the link to commons.wikimedia.org. I noticed the image was created in 1904 for a French seed company called Vilmorin-Andrieux & Cie.

Summary [\[edit \]](#)

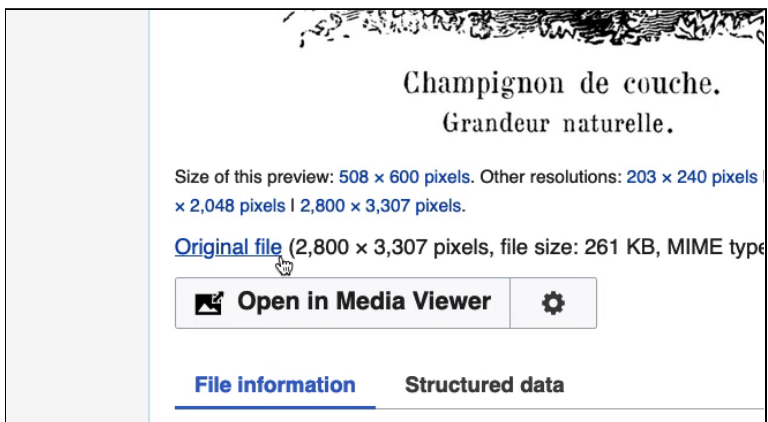
Description	English: red half-long Luc carrot
Date	30 July 2012
Source	Vilmorin-Andrieux & Cie, 1904. Les plantes potagères. Description et culture des principaux légumes des climats tempérés. ed. 3. Paris, Vilmorin-Andrieux. fig., XX-804 p.
Author	Unknown author

Vilmorin-Andrieux site:commons.wikimedia.org

I liked the illustration of mushrooms below, so I followed the link to commons.wikimedia.org.



On the Wikimedia page for the image, you can find an **Original file** link under the image.



Click the **Original file** link and your browser will take you to the full-size image.

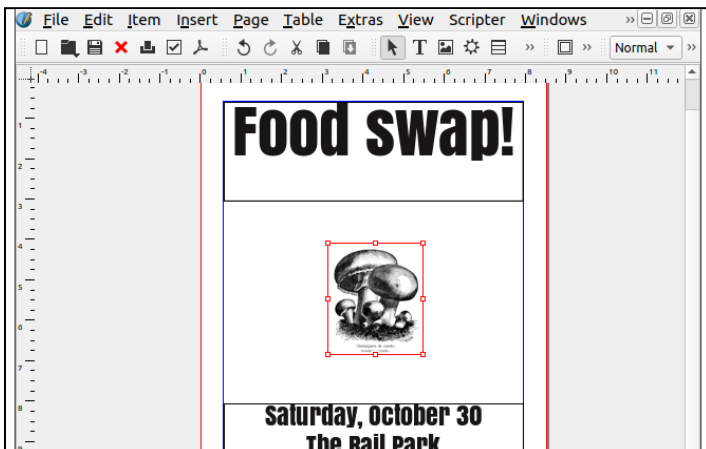


To save the image to your computer, right-click it and select **Save Image As...**, or press **Ctrl/Cmd + S**.

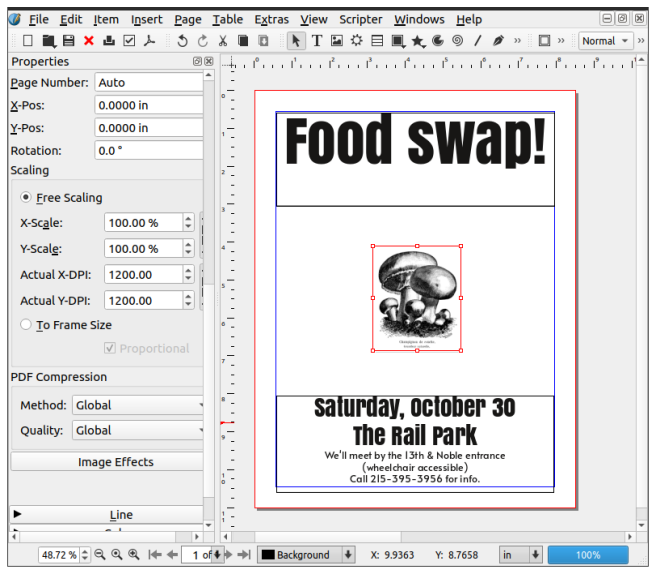


Insert an image in your flyer

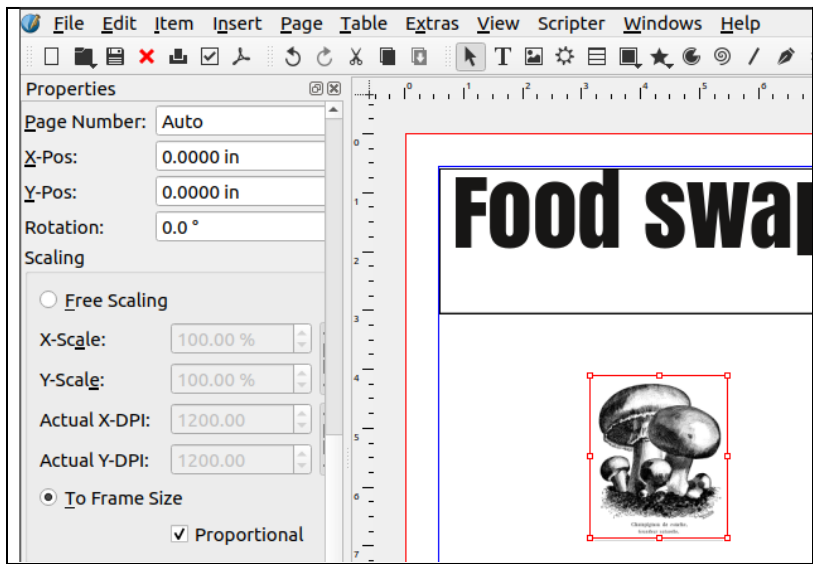
To insert an image into your design, click the file's icon in your Finder/File Explorer and drag it onto your Scribus window. Your image will appear on the page.



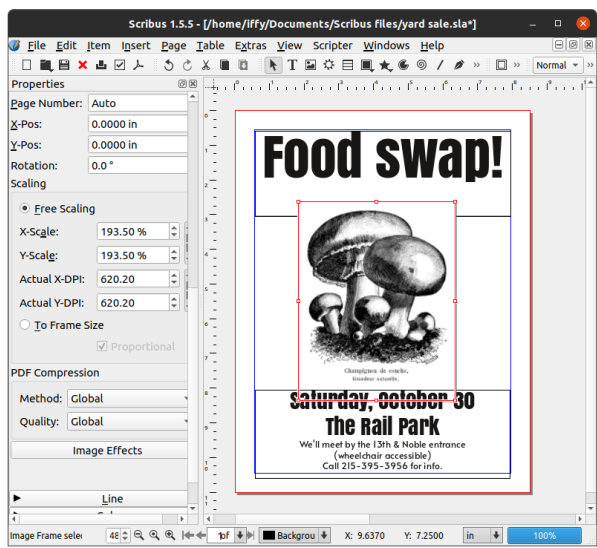
You'll most likely need to resize the image. Go to **Windows > Properties** in the menu bar, which will open the **Properties** window.



In the **Properties** window, under **Scaling**, click the radio button next to **To Frame Size**. Now when you resize the image frame, the image will scale with it.

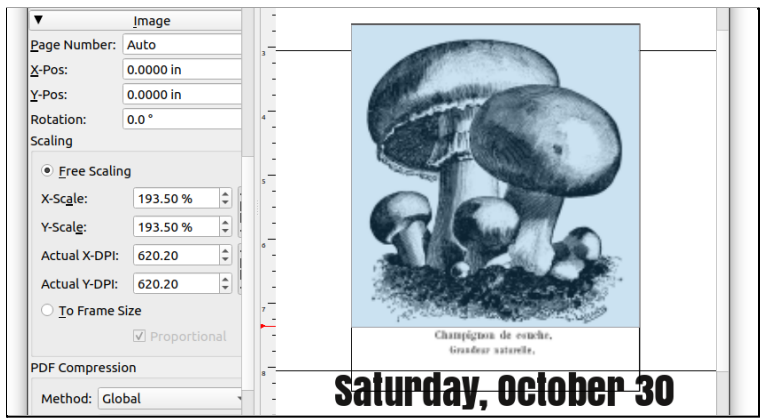


Click a corner of the image frame and drag it to resize the image. Then move the image into the position you want.

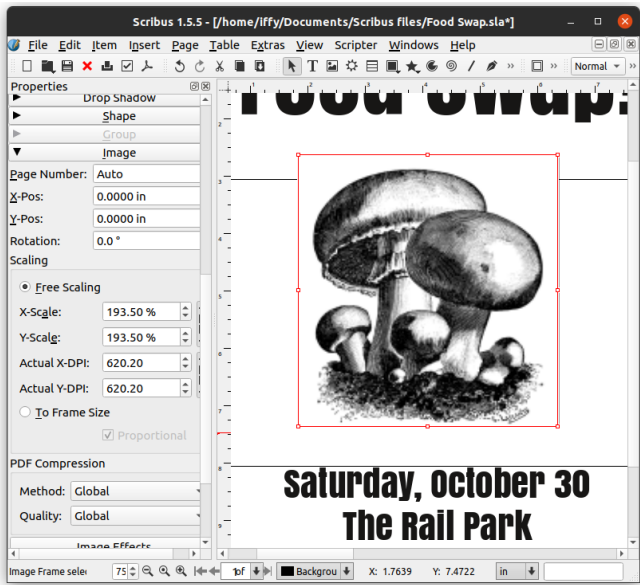


Your image may appear to be low-resolution in Scribus, but don't worry. When you print/export your document, you'll see the full-resolution version.

The example image contains some text at the bottom, which you might want to crop out. In the **Properties** window, under **Scaling**, click the radio button next to **Free Scaling**. Now click the square at the bottom of the image frame and drag it up to crop the image.

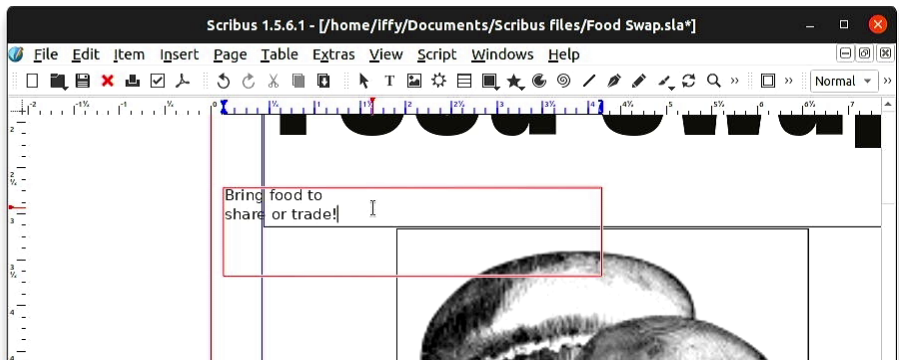


Here's what the cropped image looks like:



Rotate a text frame

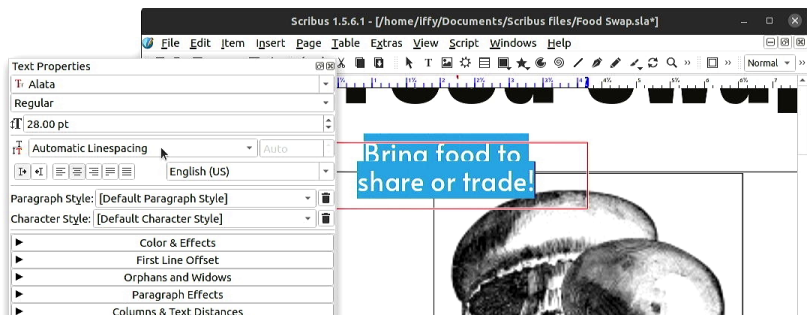
Next you'll add some rotated text. Use the **Text Frame** tool to create a new text frame. Double-click inside the text frame and start typing some text.



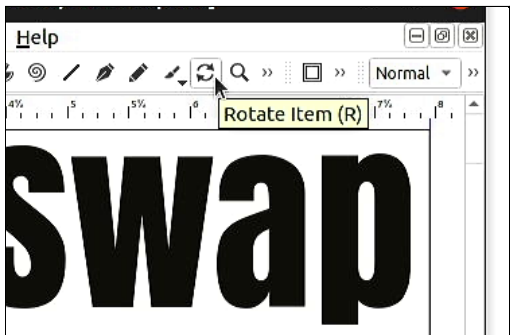
In the menu bar, select **Windows > Content Properties** to open the **Text Properties** window.

Highlight your text, then select the font and size you want in the Text Properties window. (The example uses Alata at 28 pt.) If you have more

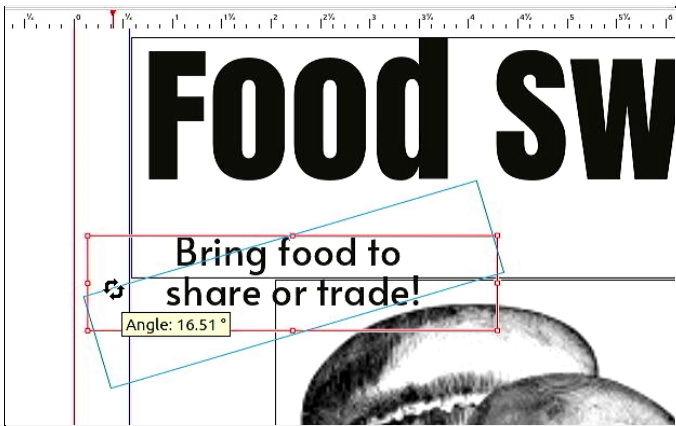
than one line of text, you'll want to turn on **Automatic Linespacing**. Then click the "center" icon to center your text.



While the text frame is selected, click the **Rotate item** icon in the toolbar.



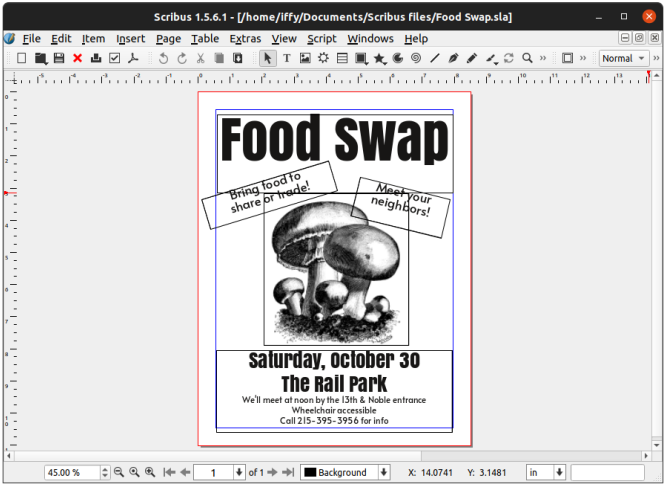
Move your mouse cursor over the edge of the text frame and your cursor will change to a rotation icon. Click and drag to rotate the text frame.



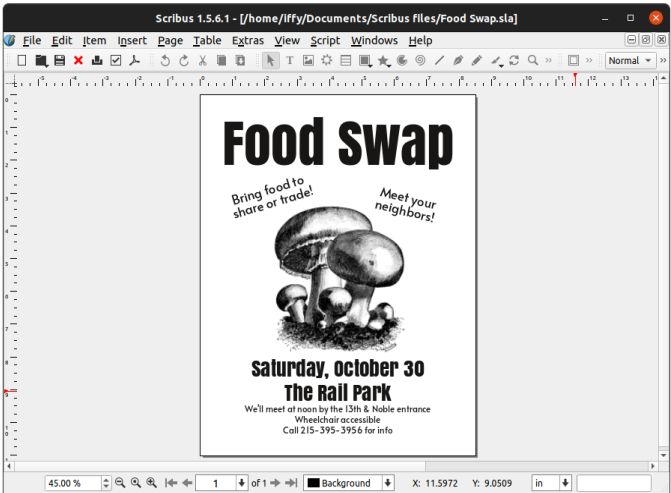
If you want, repeat the process to add more rotated text.



The example flyer is now complete!



To toggle Preview Mode, use **View > Preview > Preview Mode** or press **Ctrl/Cmd + Alt + P**.

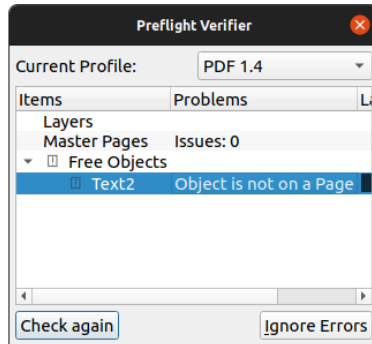




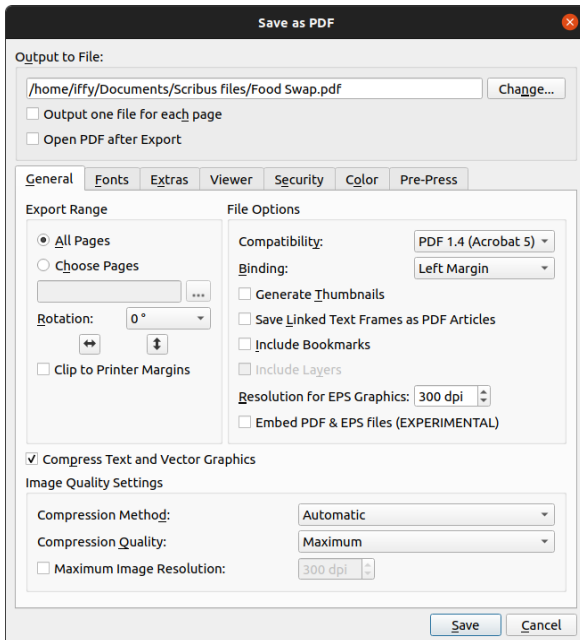
Export a PDF document

To export your flyer as a PDF, select **File > Export > Save as PDF...** in the menu bar.

If your design has text and images outside the page, you'll see an alert like the one below. Just click **Ignore Errors**.



Adjust the filename and PDF settings as needed. Then click **Save** to save your PDF file.





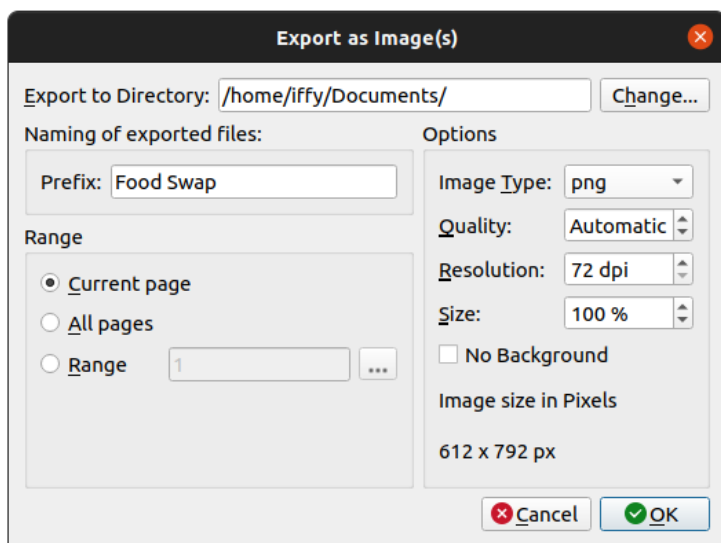
Export a PNG image

In the menu bar, select **File > Export > Save as Image...**

Adjust the filename and image settings as needed. You'll probably want to set the **Image Type** to **PNG**, because they're web compatible and the edges of text will look crisper than in a JPG file.

You'll want to use **72 dpi** (dots per inch) resolution if you're posting the image on the web. If you plan to print your image, the resolution should be at least 300 dpi.

Click **Save** to save your file.



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