Project 2: CD labels with Draw

Create CD labels with OOo Draw

Build your confidence with OOo's vector graphics application.

There can't be many things much simpler than creating a CD label, right? Well, you would be surprised – getting the label to print out how you want it and where you want it can be trickier than it might seem at first. The trick to doing it right is preparation.
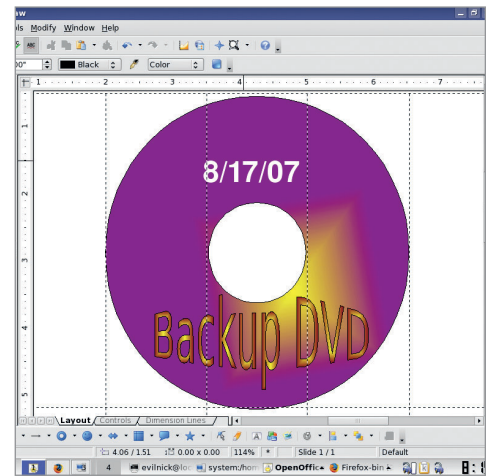
There are plenty of label companies that give away downloadable templates for their labels, but they are often in strange formats that you can't use without having to depend on some arcane proprietary software. However, there is nothing to stop you making your own template if you have a sample of the paper and a ruler! Actually, the specifications annd dimensions for most labels are supplied with the package or in dimensions on a website in the case of a lot of Free Software companies, so maybe even the ruler isn't necessary.

You could create a boring label in *Writer*, using an *MS Word* template for the purpose, but then you would be missing out on some of the more useful features that *Draw* has to offer. With many different decorative shapes and the *Fontworks* text gallery to peruse, you could probably do a much more visually attractive design job than we have here in our example.
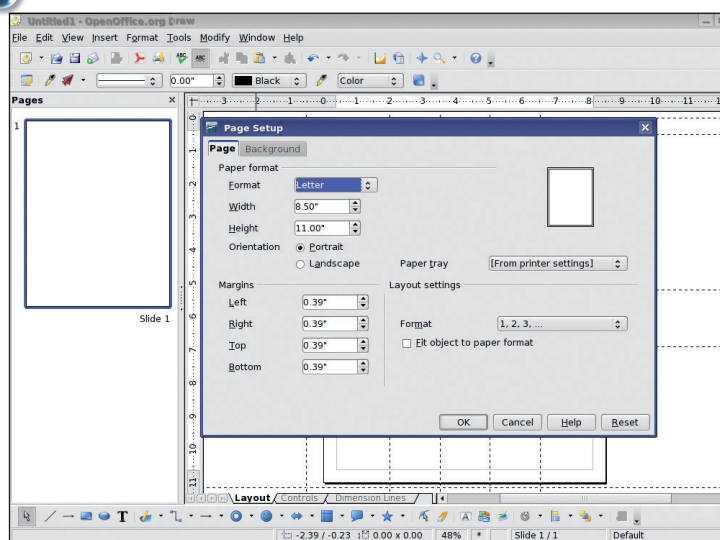
Once you have saved your finished work, you can use it as the basis for any future labels after all, so it is only effort you will have to put in just once. Go on, you know you want to!

> **"Don't miss out on the vector features that Draw offers."**
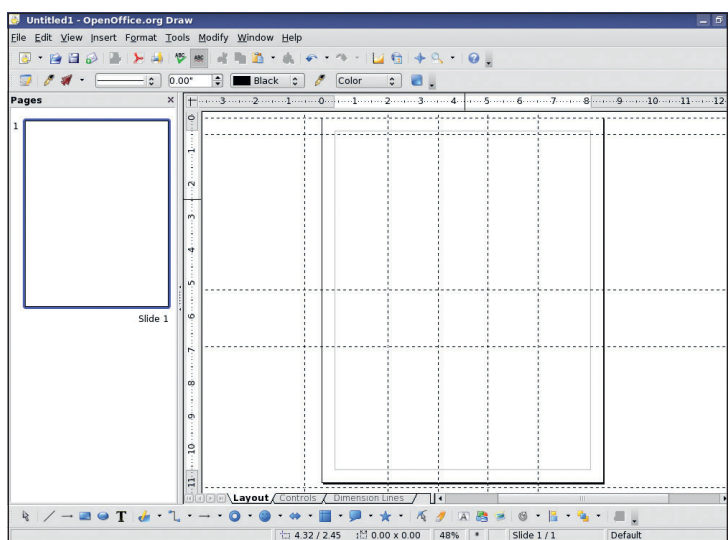

❯ **Create CD or DVD labels in *Draw* and take advantage of some special features.**

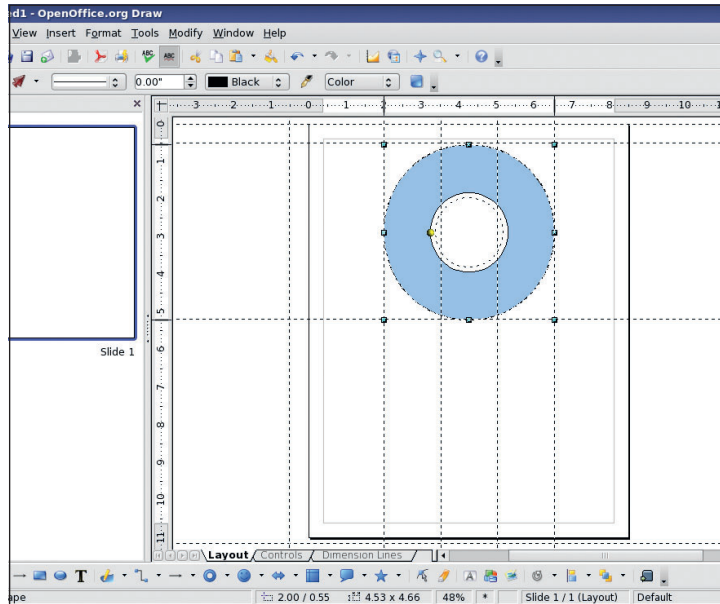## Draw: create a CD label

1 Set up the page
Standard labels are often based on the Avery 5824 label; usually produced on US Letter-sized paper: a top margin of 0.5" and a side margin of 2". The labels themselves are 4.5". Adjust these sizes to fit whatever labels you are using. Whatever the paper size, the labels themselves are usually between 4.5" and 4.7" across. Set the page size to suit in the Format > Page dialogue.
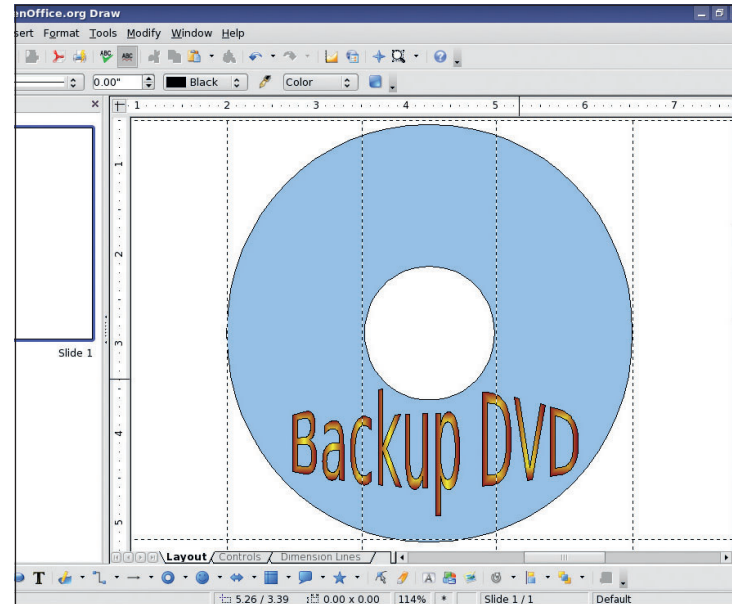

2 Draw a template
Square the areas of the page that have the circular label inside. Right-click the rulers and change them to inches. Place guides by clicking in the ruler and dragging out lines. Right-click on the guides to position them exactly. They need to be 2" from each side and so on, so it is straightforward. Also measure the distance to the hole in the middle. It normally has a diameter of 1.5"
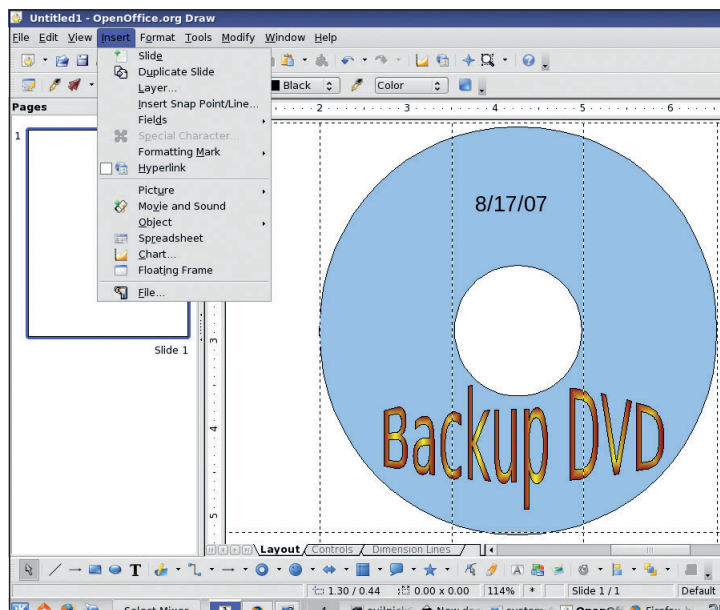
3 IN the centre

With the construction lines in place, all we need to complete the template is to use the SimpleShapes tool to draw a ring. Click in the top right of the squared out area and drag to the bottom left and we should have the perfect outline. Click on the yellow control point to resize the inner circle to fit the dimensions we want. It doesn't matter if you overlap the guides a little, as this provides a buffer for printing errors anyway.
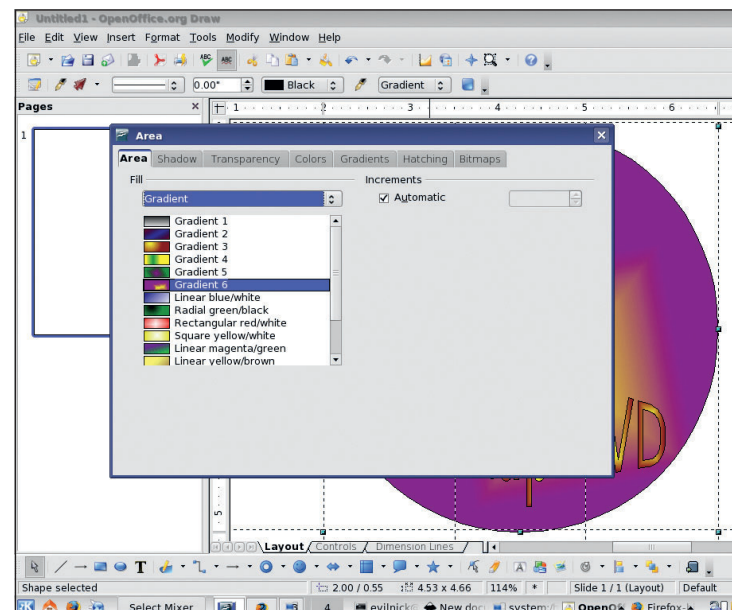
4 Text on the label

To give your CD a snazzy label, we can apply some *Fontworks* text. Click on the Fontworks gallery tool and choose something suitable. You can always edit it and muck about with the rendering settings (see the *Draw* tutorial elsewhere in this magazine) later. When it is in place, double-click on the object to get the editable text string and add your own text.

5 Add a special field

We can make use of *OOo Draw*'s features borrowed from other parts of the suite to add a special field. It's always nice to put a date on things, and with the special fields, you don't have to type it out yourself each time. Choose Insert > Field > Date(variable). A date string will appear in the design and you should move it somewhere appropriate. The date will update itself when you open the document each time.

6 Apply a background and output

You may want to have a background for your DVD label instead of the default blue one, or you may opt to leave it blank, which masks problems when the paper doesn't feed right. Select the ring object, right-click and choose Area to get the dialogue for changing the background. Now all you have left to do is print it out! **LXF**