

Stencils

Dynamically updated figure stencils

Master Stencils

A master stencil is one that is private to your project and, if the master stencil is updated, then those changes are immediately broadcast and applied to instances of the stencil.

If you're familiar with the app Sketch then master stencils are similar to that app's *symbol* support, where you can change a symbol, say for an elaborate UI component, and throughout your document all instances of that component are updated to reflect the new changes.

Note that while a style only defines the look of a figure, a stencil can be made up of several figures and include text and images, as while as the style information associated with each item. When you use a stencil then you are essentially creating and using an exact copy of the original figure stencil.

Sample Workflow

1. Create a text figure that you'll use as a note figure with a special flag adornment, coloring, font, freeform size, and placeholder text.
2. Right-click on the figure and save the stencil as a master stencil named "Note".
3. Using the Stencils shelf or the Insert > Styled Shape or Stencil gallery, insert that Note stencil onto idea spaces throughout your project.
4. Edit the stencil either by right-clicking on an instance of the stencil on the idea space, or on the stencil itself in the Stencils shelf or insert gallery, or by finding the stencil in the new Masters Organizer, discussed below.
5. Change the look and contents of the stencil then click Done at the top of the Masters Organizer.

Instantly the changes to the stencil are broadcast throughout the project to any instances.

Overrides

You can make some changes to your stencil instance and they won't be replaced when you change the master.

- Figure Position — Changes made to the positions of individual figures within a complex master stencil are not broadcast to instances.
- Figure Size — Changes made to the size of a master stencil are broadcast and applied to instances, unless you manually change the size of an instance. This is handy if you need to change the size of an instance to accommodate more text, for example.
- Figure Text — Changes made to the text contents of figures on the master stencil are broadcast to instances, unless you manually change the text of an instance.
- Figure Style — Changes made to the style of figures on the master stencil are broadcast to instances, unless you manually change the style of an instance including font and font size.

Limitations

While figure stencils are quite powerful they do have some limitations:

- If you delete a figure from a complex master stencil then instances are removed elsewhere in the project. However, if top-level figures are added to the master then those new figures do not suddenly appear elsewhere in the project.
 - Key Exception: if you delete a figure within a *grouped* figure then that change is reflected elsewhere.
- Newly added or removed items found within collection figure stencils, such as nodes within a mind map, will not be broadcast to instances.
 - Key Exception: if you add a figure within a *grouped* figure then that change is reflected elsewhere.

Using the Masters Organizer

Click the new Masters button in the Organizer header to view the Masters Organizer. The Masters button looks like a broadcast symbol since changes to a master are broadcast throughout your project.

The header area will change so you see the blue masters header and Done button. Underneath is pair of buttons you can use to switch between your master idea space templates and your master figure stencils.

You can make changes to any of your stencils then click the Done button when you're ready to broadcast the changes throughout your project.

In general working in the Masters Organizer is similar to the normal Organizer, but here are some notes:

- Master templates and stencils can be rearranged, renamed, and deleted, but they cannot be indented or color-coded.
- Right-click to copy, paste, duplicate, rename, or delete a selected item.

Using the Stencils Shelf

The Masters option also appears in the Stencils shelf so you can see the stencils available in that pseudo-repository.

Other style inspector shelf changes related to masters include:

- Copy to Masters — Right-click on a stencil that's not in the Masters repository and choose Copy to Master Stencils.

Using the Galleries

When you click the Insert toolbar button and go into the various figure galleries, you'll find a Masters pseudo-repository there which contains all master styles and stencils. Select a master stencil and click the Insert button to insert a new instance of that master into your idea space. If you later update the stencil then this instance will be updated as well.

Other gallery changes related to masters include:

- Copy to Masters — Right-click on an idea space template, figure stencil, or style that's not in the Masters repository and choose Copy to Masters.
- Drag and Drop — Drag-and-drop an idea space template, figure stencil, or style from another repository into the Masters repository folder to make a copy. You can also drag from Masters to Personal if you wish.
- Delete — Right-click on an idea space template, figure stencil, or style in Masters repository and choose Delete. You may also simply press the Delete key. Existing instances of a template or stencil will remain as-is.
- Edit — Right-click on a master idea space template or stencil and choose Edit Template / Edit Stencil to switch the Organizer to masters, select the appropriate master item, and display the template or stencil in the main viewing area for editing. Click the Done button in the Organizer header area to end editing.