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by [David Blatner](#), [Christopher Smith](#), and [Steve Werner](#)

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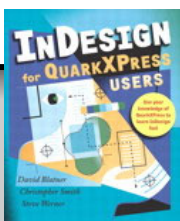
Each of the characters in the fonts we use in page layout is composed of resolution-independent outlines which can be scaled to any size. Sometimes you want access to these character outlines to create special effects with type. Both QuarkXPress and InDesign allow you to convert text to outlines, and to manipulate the character shapes once you have converted them to paths.

## Creating Outlines

To convert text to outlines in InDesign, either select a text frame with the Selection tool, or select characters with the Type tool. Then choose Create Outlines from the Type menu (or press Command-Shift-O/Ctrl-Shift-O). In QuarkXPress, you're limited to converting only one line of type at a time, but InDesign has no limit on the number of lines you can convert.

QuarkXPress, by default, creates the outlines as a separate item, outside of the text box. By contrast, InDesign's default behavior is to literally convert the text into outlines, anchoring them as an inline object within the text frame. (We discuss inline objects in Chapter 69.) If you want to make the outlines a separate copy, hold down the Option/Alt key when choosing the Create Outlines command (or add it to the keyboard shortcut). Then a copy of the type is created on top of the original; use the Selection tool to move it elsewhere.

If you didn't realize that your outlines were an inline object, and you need to remove them from the frame, click on the outlines with the



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Selection tool, then cut the outlined text to the Clipboard and paste it elsewhere.

## Conversion Issues

You can convert PostScript Type 1, TrueType or OpenType fonts to outlines. However, you must be using a font whose manufacturer allows the type to be outlined (some fonts are restricted in their use).

When type is converted to outlines, its hinting (the built-in rules that makes a font look good at small sizes or low resolution) is lost, so outlined text may look somewhat different than the editable original. In addition, if you have applied a stroke around type in InDesign, the program is smart enough to put the stroke around the *outside* of the characters. When you convert that text to outlines, the letterforms become paths, and the strokes are *centered* on the paths (which is true of all PostScript paths). The appearance of outlined text can change dramatically (see Figure 72-1).

**Figure 72-1**

Stroked text converted to outlines alters the appearance because of the way the strokes are applied.



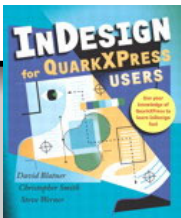
You should also be careful not to convert too much text to outlines at the same time. InDesign allows you to convert many lines at a time, but the resulting paths may not be printable if they are too complex!

## Manipulating Outlines

When type is converted to outlines, the resulting outlines are compound objects. (We discuss compound objects and how to edit them in Chapter 16.) You can use the Direct Selection tool to select the subpaths in the outlines, and use any of the path editing tools to edit the shapes. If you need to work with the individual paths which make up the compound path, choose Release from the Compound Paths submenu (under the Object menu).

After text has been converted to outlines, there are many ways you can use them, including the following:

- You can edit the individual character shapes.
- You can place text or graphics in the outline frame.
- You can use the Paste Inside command as we describe in Chapter 13 to nest another object inside the outlines.



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