

myriaCross editor - Lesson 9 : Creating a picture charm library

What is a picture charm ?

A picture charm is an object containing a picture. Creating such an object is a good way to define commercial charms with a realistic look.

What is a picture charm library ?

A charm library is a collection of charms. This is the only way to implement charms for use with the program.

Using the new picture charm library creation tool

⚠ This tool, introduced in version 1.56, will be explained at the end of this lesson.

Creating a picture charm

Though you can use *My charm* dialog, you may want to have full control over the creation process and thus get more precision.



First **select a picture** (photo) of the actual charm. Avoid using poor resolution pictures : 96 pixels per inch gives poor results while 300 or 600 pixels per inch gives excellent results even when zooming the pattern in or printing the pattern. There is no need to use an integer count of pixels per inch since the program will scale the picture to the provided linear sizes.



Next, **define transparent areas** by changing the pixels in these areas to magenta (red=255, green=0, blue=255).



Trim useless transparent borders around unless you get an erroneous picture scaling.

Then save your picture file. Avoid using *JPG* file format for your charm picture since it is a lossy format. Prefer *BMP* that compresses quite good and generates smaller pattern files or use *PNG*. Finally, define your charms library.

Defining a library containing only one charm

Open a new empty text file using Notepad or any text editor and copy these instructions :

```
$CATALOG$  
NA,<charm name>  
CO,000000  
  
$SHAPE$  
UN,MM  
SP,0,0,<half width>,<half height>,<charm file>
```

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This is the minimum requirement to define a library containing only one charm. Explanations follow :

<charm name> identifies your charm, this information will appear as a tooltip when you move over the charm in the library panel and when you move over this charm once inserted in a pattern.

<half width> and *<half height>* are half the width and half the height of your charm in millimeters ; provide as much decimals as required. Should you want to define size in inch, replace instruction *UN,MM* with *UN,IN*.

<charm file> is the charm picture filename with no path (example : *mycharm.bmp*).

Save this text file to the name of your library (example : *mycharms.mcclb*).

Both the picture and the library files should be saved to folder *<current user application data>\myriaCrossEdt\Charms*. Launch the program, you should now find your charms library in the list.

Under **Windows XP**, save to :

C:\Documents and Settings\<username>\Application Data\myriaCrossEdt\Charms.

Under **Windows Vista** or **7**, save to :

C:\Users\<username>\AppData\Roaming\myriaCrossEdt\Charms

Defining a library containing more than one charm

Create picture files for additional charms then edit the library text file to get something like this :

```
$CATALOG$
NA,<charm 1 name>
SH,1
CO,000000
NA,<charm 2 name>
SH,2
CO,000000

$SHAPE$
UN,MM
SP,0,0,<half width 1>,<half height 1>,<charm 1 file>

$SHAPE$
UN,MM
SP,0,0,<half width 2>,<half height 2>,<charm 2 file>
```

Add as much definitions to the *catalog* and *shape* sections as required.

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You could also create this simplified library information :

```
$CATALOG$
NA,<charm 1 name>
DF,<charm 1 file>
DC,<half width 1>,<half height 1>
CO,000000
NA,<charm 2 name>
DF,<charm 2 file>
DC,<half width 2>,<half height 2>
CO,000000

$SHAPE$
UN,MM
SP,0,0,@CO1,@CO2,@FIL
```

This simplified version defines only one *shape* section containing size and file as parameters. Adding charms later will be easier : simply add entries to the *catalog* section.


For an easier maintenance, you can also put all picture files in a sub folder and change information as follows :

```
DF,<sub folder name>\<charm 2 file>
```

Using your charms library

Launch the program, start a new pattern or open an existing one, click on the charm tool icon then select your library in the panel. Obviously, your charms library is unknown to other users.

Additional instructions in the library file

Possible addition is for instance a hidden editable text (HT) that will appear in the tooltip when moving over an inserted charm. You can also specify a general URL (WS) to launch your site from the charms panel by clicking on button  or a specific URL for each charm. Please read file *Syntax for charm files.txt* that is in folder *<installation folder>\Advanced*. You can also find this file from *Start menu, Programs, myriaCross software, myriaCross editor, Advanced user information*.

Since version 1.56, you can use **32-bit transparent pictures** to define charms (TP instead of SP) ; here is a sample charm library definition file :

```
$CATALOG$
WS,www.myownsite.com
BY,My company
AS,My description for charms

NA,Sample charm 1
DF,Bag_Sample\Sample1.png
```

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DC,10,11

DH,Here is 1st sample charm\ndemonstrating how to create a library\nusing 32-bit pictures of your charms.

CO,000000

NA,Sample charm 2

DF,Bag_Sample\Sample2.png

DC,10,11

DH,Here is 2nd sample charm.\nLibraries can contain a lot of charms.\nAt the expense of the loading time !

CO,000000

NA,Sample charm 3

DF,Bag_Sample\Sample3.png

DC,10,11

DH,Here is 3rd sample charm.\nAnother 32-bit picture.

CO,000000

NA,Sample charm 4

DF,Bag_Sample\Sample4.png

DC,10,11

DH,Here is 4th sample charm.\nThe last one in this sample library.

CO,000000

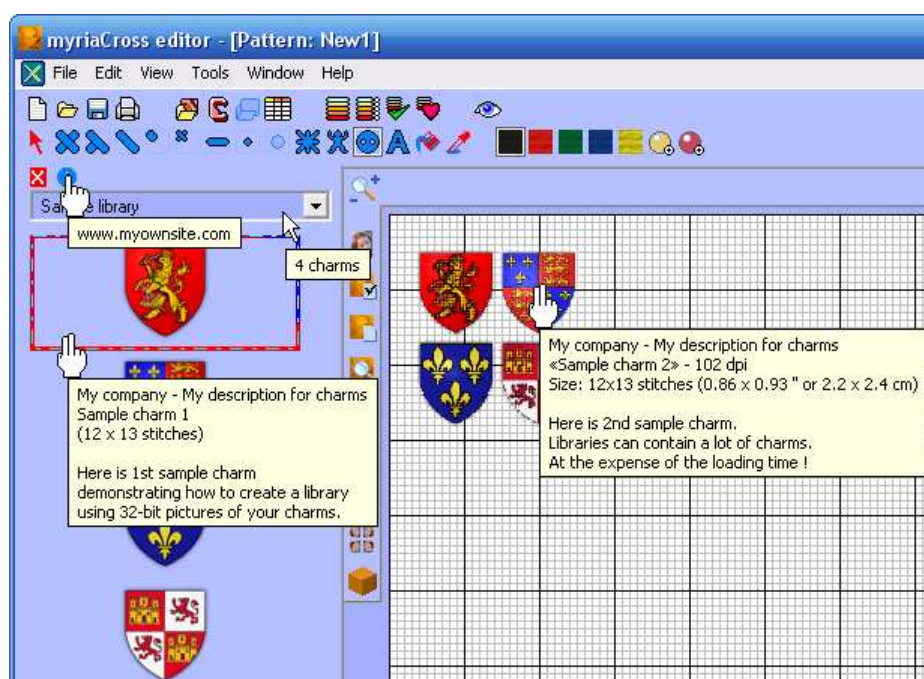
\$\$SHAPE\$

UN,MM

HT,@TIP

TP,0,0,@CO1,@CO2,@FIL

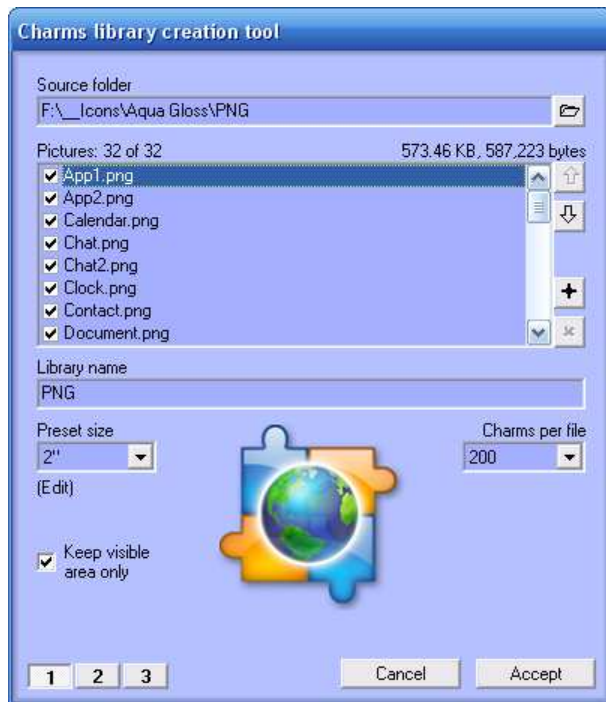
What you see when loading this sample charm library



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New picture charm library creation tool

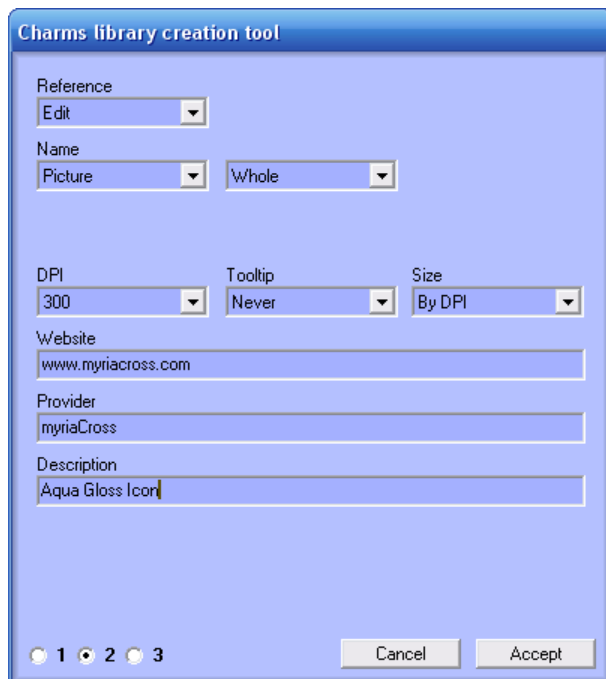
Launch this tool from menu *Tools/Charms library creation tool*.



Step 1 : select pictures

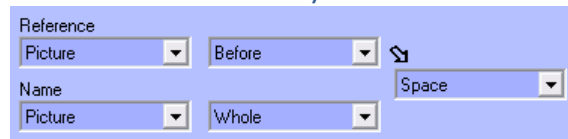
First enter the folder containing your pictures or select it using button. No more than 200 picture files (*bmp, png, psd, tga or tif*) not greater than 1200 x 1200 pixels will show in the list below. Uncheck those you do not want to include in the library. Pictures up to 24 bits per pixel use magenta as transparency colour (red=255, green=0, blue=255). 32 bits per pixel pictures contain the transparency information as alpha channel. Then enter a name for the library ; selected folder name is the default name. Then select a size for all charms that will be used if you choose to edit each charm size. Optionally choose to crop pictures. You can move pictures using the buttons and

duplicate some pictures using the button ; duplicates only can be removed from the list using the button. You can also specify the maximum count of charms per file. Finally click on 2 to go to step 2.



Step 2 : adjust global settings

Choose how to set the reference and the name of each charm : either edit values or use picture filename (*Whole, Before or After* specified delimiter character)...



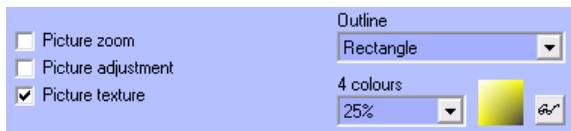
... or *Auto* for name only :



Choose the resolution in dots per inch (DPI), when to add a tooltip and the size method : either edit value or compute it to meet the DPI. Enter the site where to purchase charms, the

provider and the description (singular).

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If at least one picture has less than 32 bits per pixel, following options appear ; check those you want to get in the charms context menu.

You can also choose a default outline shape and a default 4-colour gradient. Finally click on 3 to go to step 3.



Step 3 : adjust settings for each charm

Set the size method : either (setting) for method set at step 2, by DPI or edit.

Set the DPI : either (setting) for value set at step 2 or 96 to 600. Input size : default is preset size set at step 1.

Enter a reference if you set *Input* at step 2.

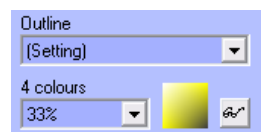
Enter a name if you set *Input* at step 2.


Enter an URL if not the one set at step 2.


Enter a tooltip if you did not set *Never* at step 2.


Use the slider to select previous or next charm.

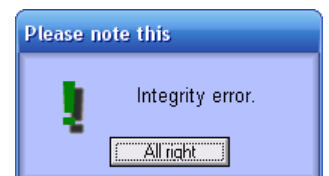
Should current picture have less than 32 bits per pixel, you could also choose an outline shape and a 4-colour gradient.




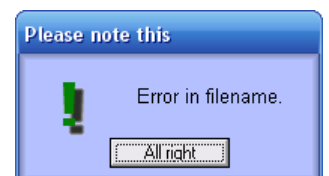
Finally hit *Accept* button, the library will then be created. Click on the charm icon  to see, check and use your library. Right click on a charm in the panel to rename or delete this library or to create a library installer in the event you want to share it with friends or customers.


 Consider naming your pictures so that this tool retrieves the charm reference and name. Example : « 12500-Charm 1.png » ; at step 2, set the reference as *Before*, the name as *After* and the delimiter as *Minus*.

 You should never edit *#library-name.mcclb* files created with this tool since they could no more be exported and following message would appear :



 You can rename such files using *microsoft file explorer* assuming you follow these rules : the *#library-name* part of the filename should not be longer than 41 characters and should not contain characters @, # or ! except leading character # that must remain, unless following message appears :

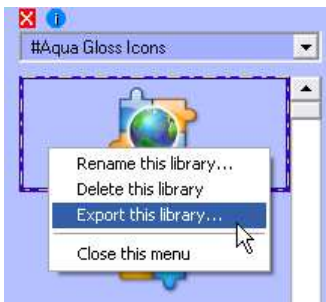


 When loading a 32-bit picture, this tool automatically converts it to 24-bit when all pixels have the same alpha value. Using a 32-bit picture having a constant transparency is a nonsense. This conversion gains memory and offers more options for inserted charm.

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Creating a charm library to share your charms

Your charm library have leading character # to tell the program you can share it. Open the charms panel, select your library then right click on a charm.



The context menu allows you to :

- Rename this library (character # cannot be removed)
- Permanently delete this library
- Export this library in order to share it

Exporting a charm library



The preview shows first 4 or 16 charms. ⚠ Background colour is the same as current pattern fabric colour.

Then appear the library name (no # character) and the count of charms. You can optionally enter your name or company name in the *Author* field, enter your website address in the *Website* field and enter any information you desire in the *Notes* field.

Once done, press this button then specify a folder and a name for the library installer ; a *.mccli* file will then be created, this is your library installer file.

Importing a charm library

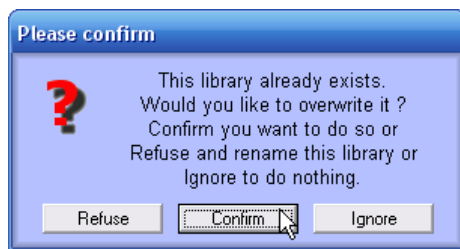


Open a *.mccli* installer file the same way as a pattern (set file type as *Supported cross stitch files* or *myriaCross libraries*). All show the same as during the export process except you can modify nothing. To launch specified website with your default internet browser, press the arrow button.

Press this button to install the library.

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⚠ If the library file already exists, following message appears :



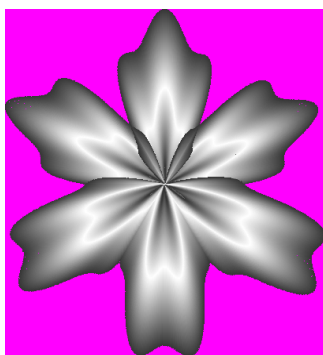
Confirm : existing library is destroyed, current library is installed.

Refuse : the library is installed with a different name : library name(1).

Ignore : the library is not installed.

Duplicating to create a family of charms

Should you want to define charms with different colours and/or sizes using the same picture, first define a greyscale picture, duplicate it as many times as required then adjust the gradient colours and the size for each instance of this picture. Example :



Base picture



Blue, 300 dpi



Orange, 600 dpi

⚠ Only the base picture will be used, leading to a smaller library installer files.

Remarks

- Installed libraries have leading ! character ; you cannot edit them but you can delete them.
- This feature allows you to easily share charm libraries with friends ; it also allows professional designers to create and sell installable charm libraries. Further versions may include a *Check for update* and *Automatic update* system.
- Obviously, preset libraries cannot be renamed, deleted nor exported.

Note to manufacturers and sellers

- The program could easily implement all your charms. As stated above, customers can launch your site from the panel or from inserted charms edition menu. Each charm can have its own purchase page URL or all charms can use the same URL.
- You can specify your company name as provider and a description for all charms in the library ; this information appears in both the library panel and the inserted charms as tooltips.
- Each charm can have its own reference number (your reference), it will appear in the library panel below the charm preview and in the inserted charm as tooltip. Each charm can also have its own predefined tooltip text. A list of inserted charms can be included in printouts with previews and quantities.