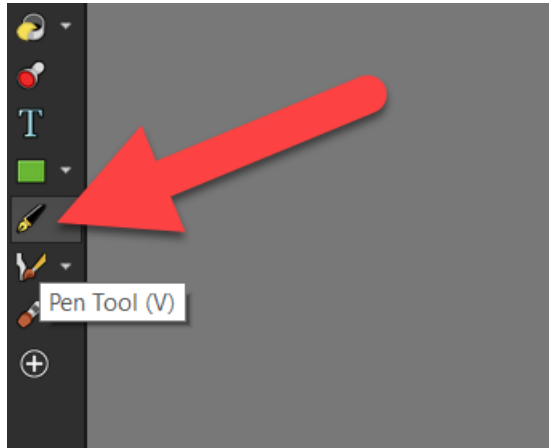


How to Use the Pen Tool in PaintShop Pro

In this tutorial, you'll learn how to use the **Pen** tool to create lines and curves, how to use the three different line modes, and explore various settings on the **Tool Options** palette.

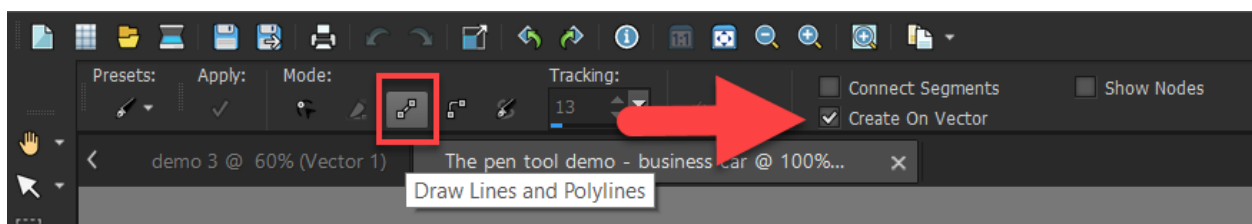
What is the Pen Tool?

We use the **Pen** tool to draw straight lines, freeform lines and connected line segments. To use the **Pen** tool, click on the **Pen Tool** icon on the **Tools** toolbar or press **V** on your keyboard.

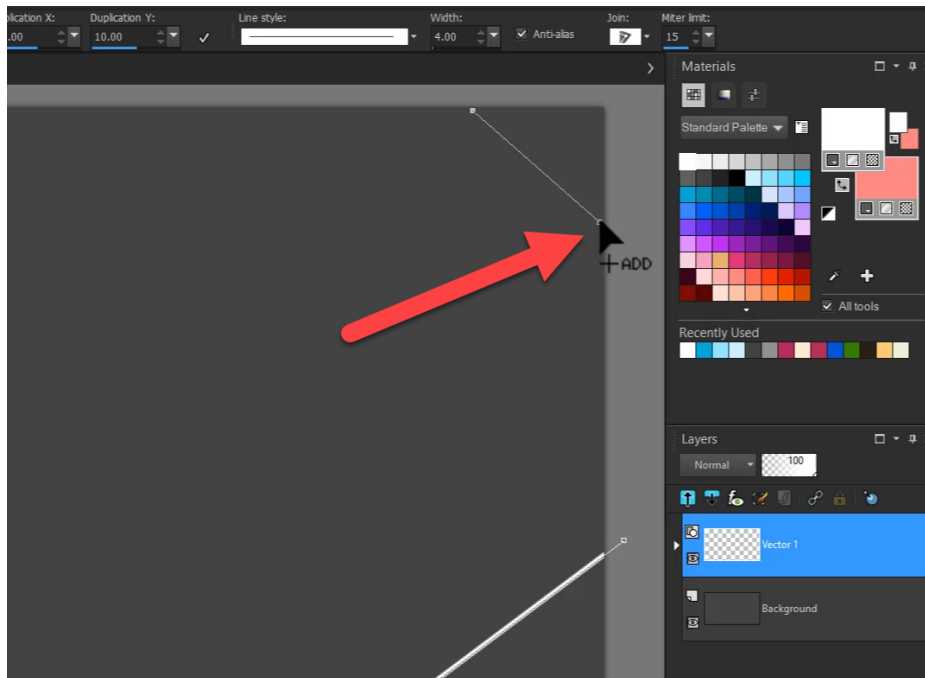


Using the Lines/Polylines Mode

- On the **Tool Options** palette, select the **Lines/Polylines** mode.
- Mark the **Create on Vector** check box if you want to draw a line segment on the current vector layer. If no vector layer exists, marking this check box creates one for the line segment.
- If this check box is unmarked, the line segment is placed on a raster layer. Placing a line segment on a vector layer makes it easier to edit, so I recommend keeping this enabled.



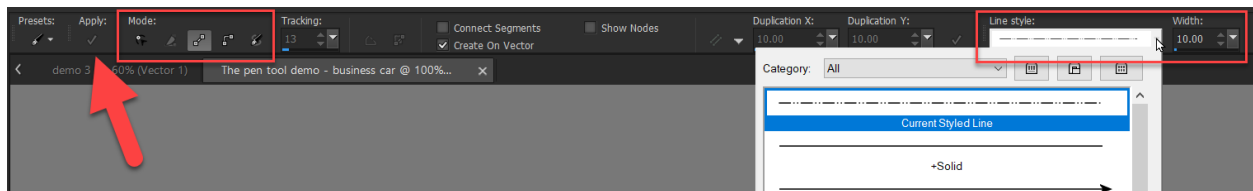
- Select your line color from the **Materials** palette.
- To draw a line, simply click and drag your starting and ending point. Alternatively, you can click and release your mouse to create your line starting point, and click and release where you want the line to end.



TIP: hold down the **Shift** key while dragging to constrain to a straight horizontal, vertical or 45-degree line.

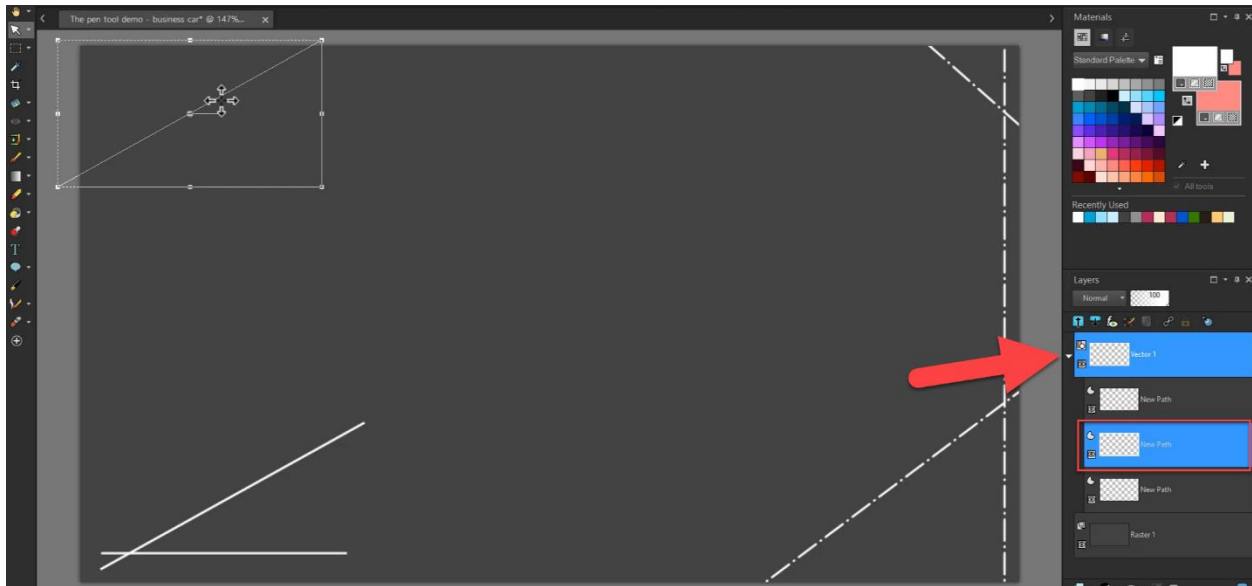
There are many customization options on the **Tool Options** palette. You can change the **Mode**, **Line Style**, and the **Width** of the line.

We also have the **Apply** checkmark at the beginning of the **Tool Options** palette.

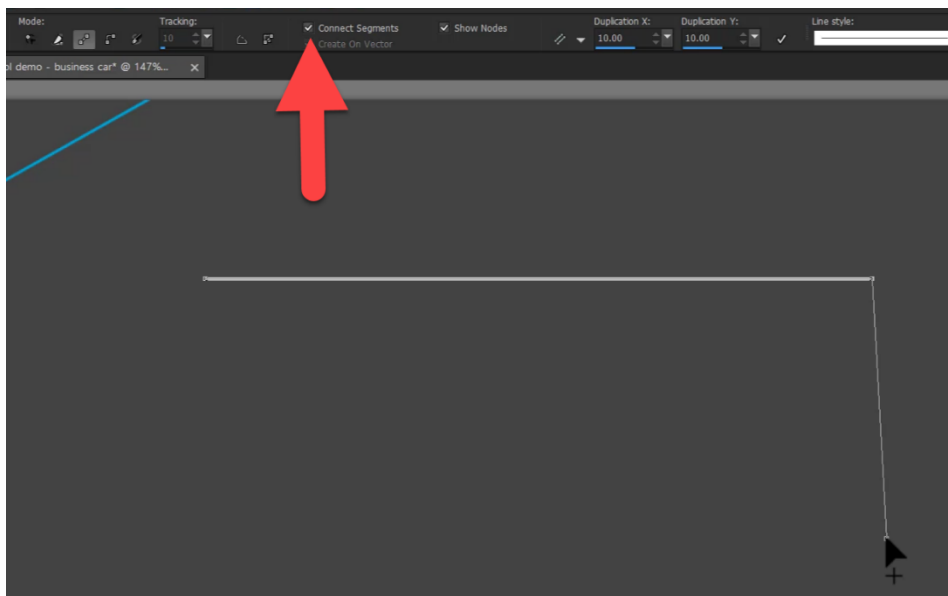


NOTE: If you draw a series of multiple line segments and don't click **Apply**, all of the lines will be grouped together onto the same path when you click on the dropdown arrow beside the Vector layer in the **Layers** palette. When using the **Pick** tool, you will move all of the lines simultaneously.

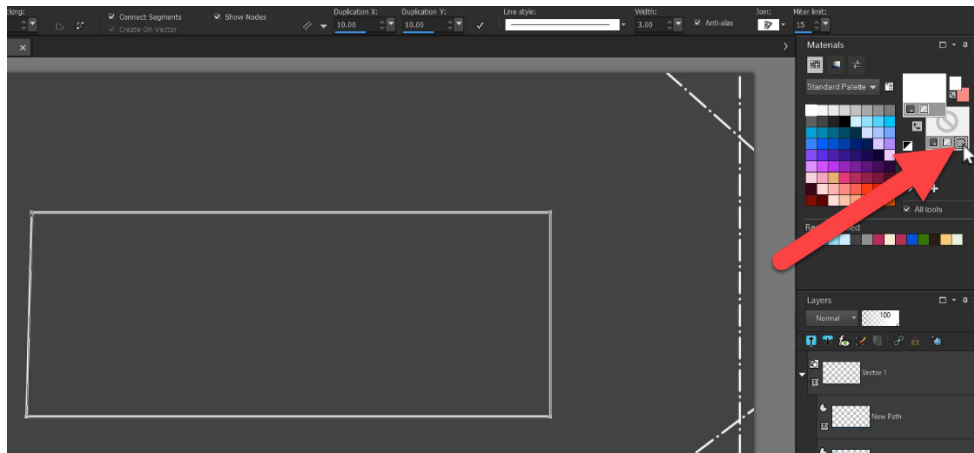
However, if you click **Apply** after drawing each individual line segment, a new path layer will be created for each line segment. You can use the **Pick** tool to individually, resize, reposition, or rotate any of the line segments you have drawn.



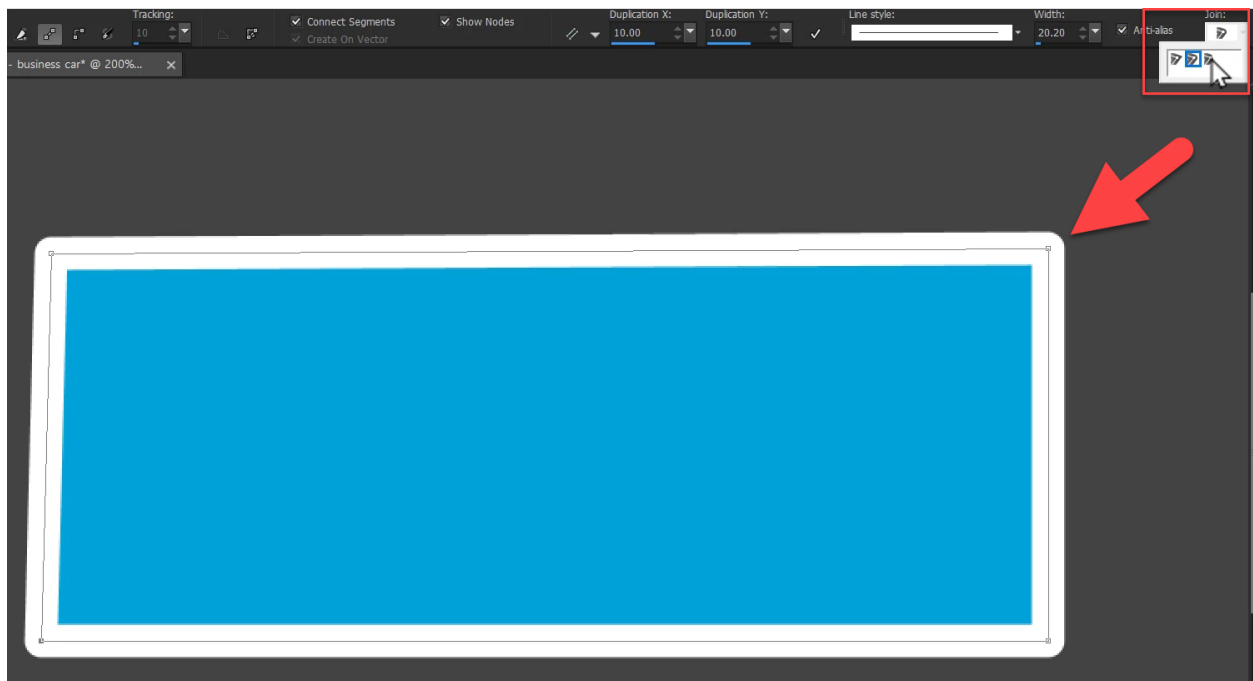
- Mark the **Show Nodes** check box if you want to view the object's nodes while drawing.
- The **Connect Segments** option allows you to draw connected lines. Simply click your starting point, and keep clicking to create connected lines.



NOTE: Make the background swatch transparent by clicking on the Transparent square under the **Background Properties** swatch in the **Materials** palette if you wish to avoid having a fill between lines.

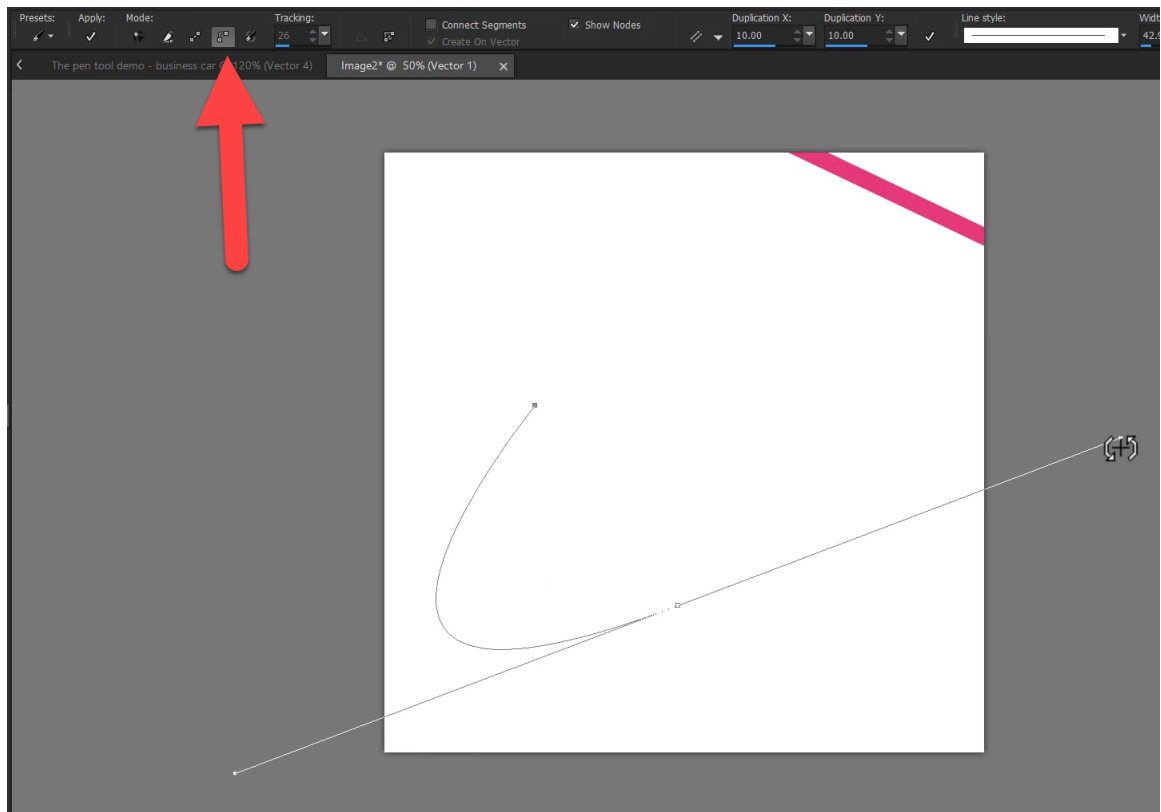


- Change the shape of the corners of connected segments by selecting either **Miter join**, **Round join**, or **Bevel join**.

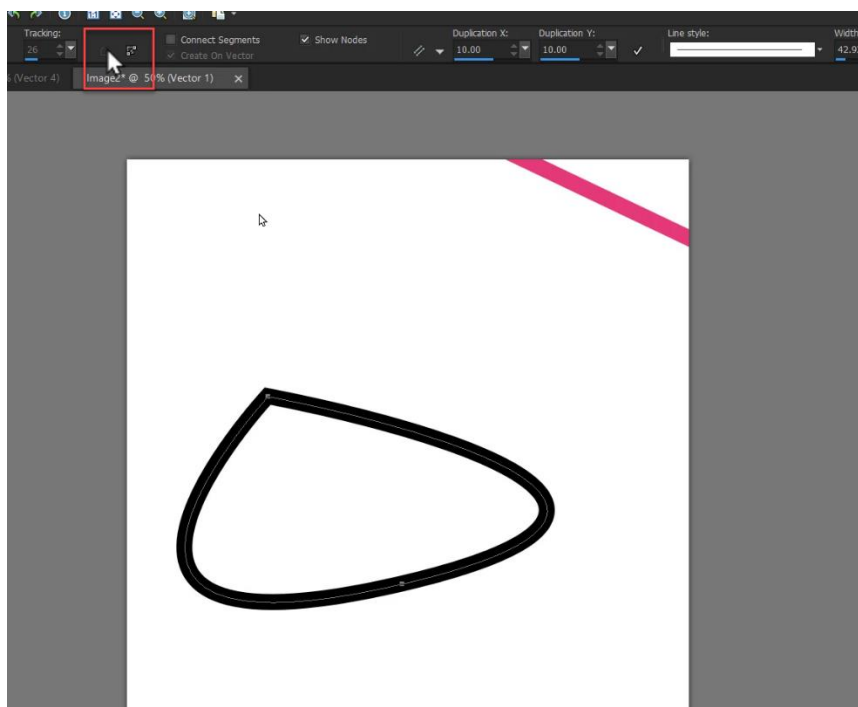


Using the Point-to-Point Mode

- On the **Tool Options** palette, select the **Point-to-Point** mode.
- To create a straight line, click once, and then click again where you want the next node.
- To create a curved line, click once to create your starting point, and then click and drag to create a curved shape. Release the mouse button once you're happy with the curve.

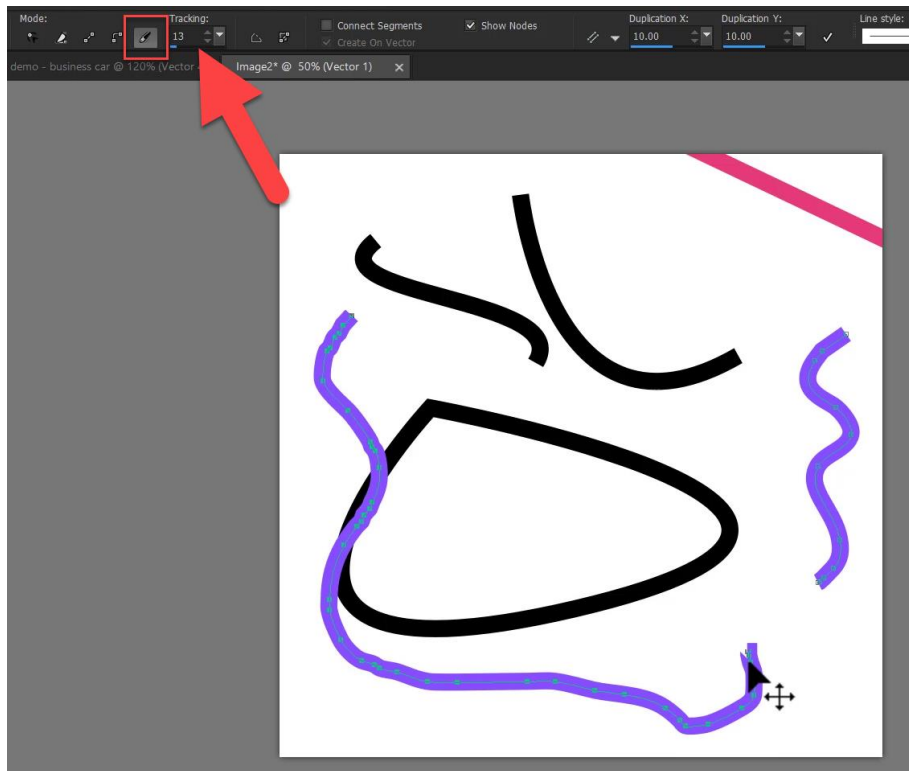


Choose to **Start a New Contour** on the **Tool Options** palette to create an open shape where the first and last segments are not connected or click the **Close Selected Open Contours** button to create a closed shape where the first and last segments are connected.



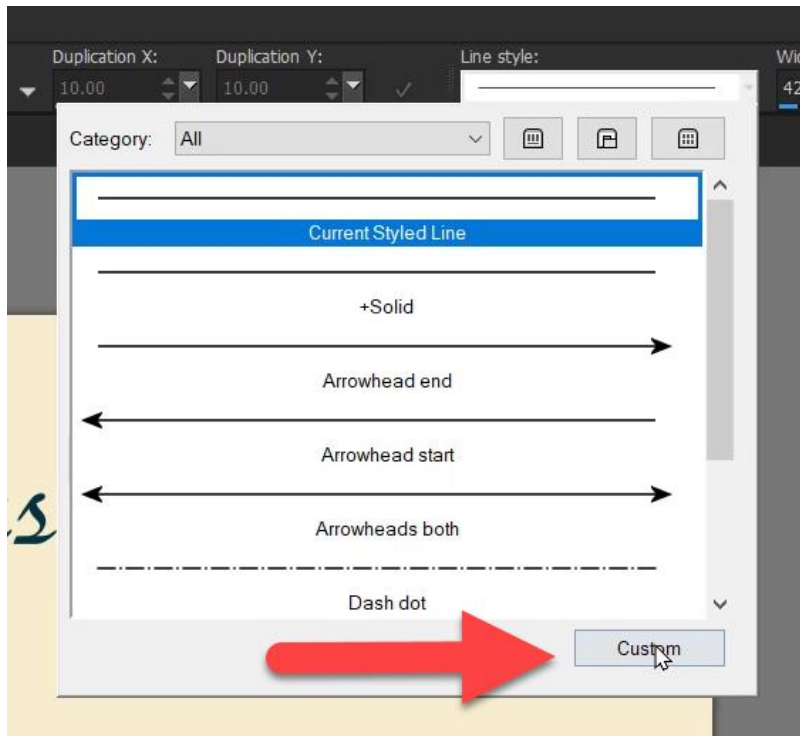
Using the Draw Freehand Mode

- On the **Tool Options** palette, select the **Draw Freehand** mode to draw a free-form line.
- Click and drag out your line on the image window.
- Mark the **Show Nodes** check box to display the curve's nodes. Then type or set a value in the **Tracking** control to set the distance in pixels between nodes.
- A higher **Tracking** value will create smoother, less precise lines with fewer nodes, while a lower value will create more segmented, precise lines with more nodes.
- Drag to create the freehand line or curve and click the **Apply** button.



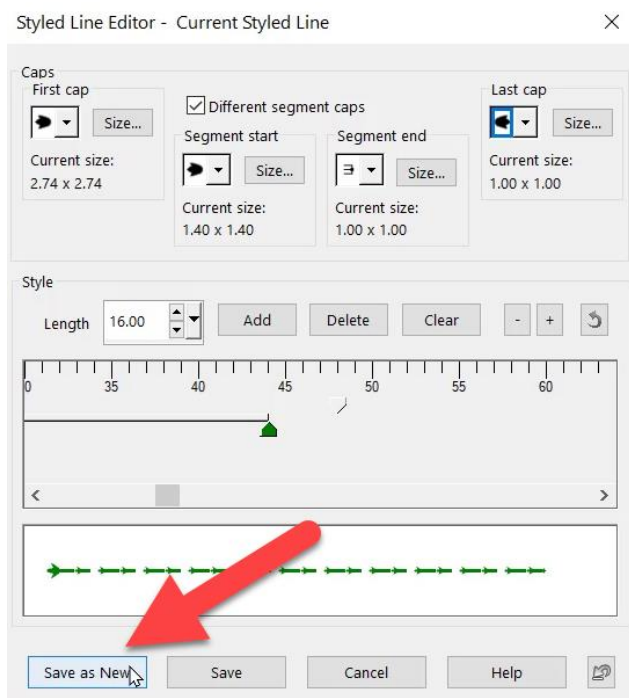
How to Create a Custom Stylized Line

You can create your own stylized line by clicking on the dropdown menu from the **Line Style** category on the **Tool Options** palette and choosing **Custom**.



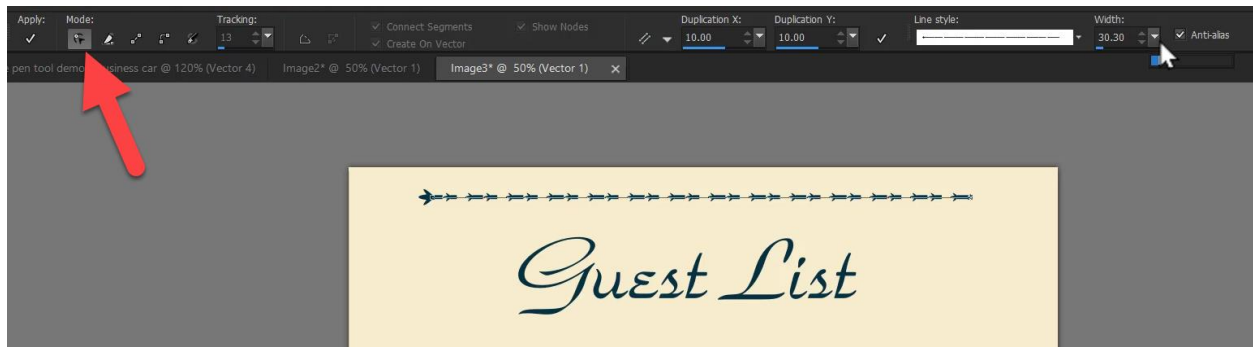
This opens the **Styled Line Editor** window. First, clear what's there by pressing the **Clear** button.

- Add segments, adjust their lengths, and add any desired segment caps.
- When finished, click **Save as New**, assign a name, and now your new custom style will appear on the list ready for you to use.



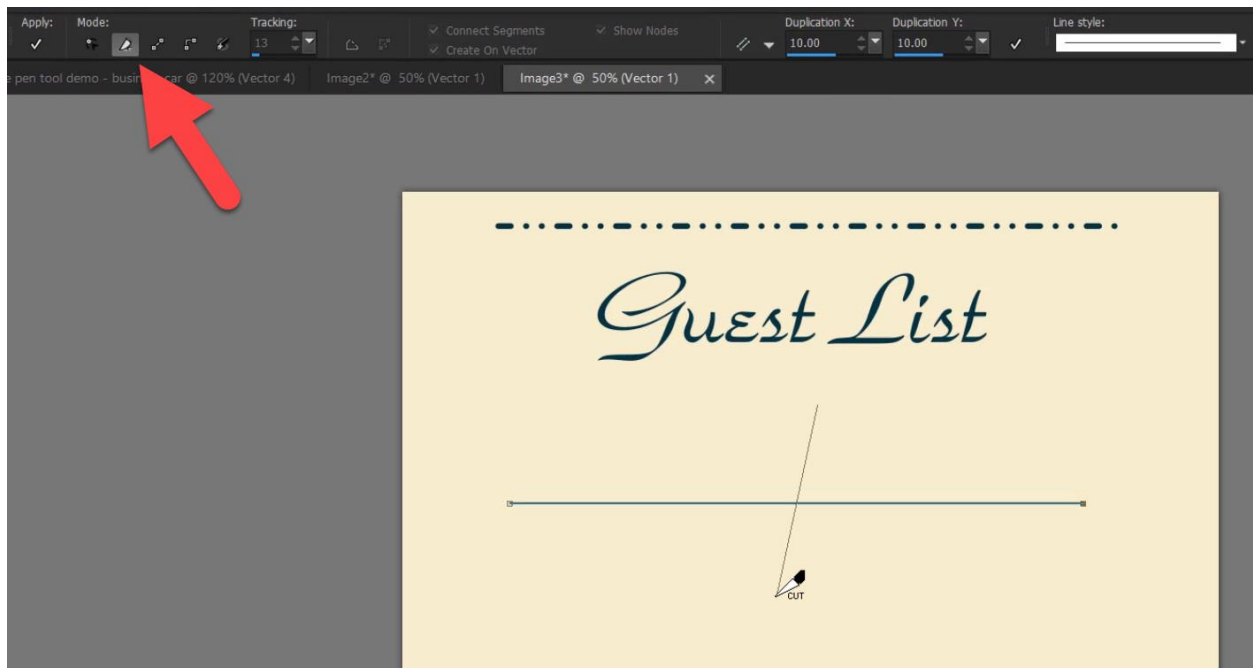
Using the Edit Mode

- Click on the **Edit** Mode on the **Tool Options** palette to make customizations.
- Click on an existing line and then change the various options on the **Tool Options** palette such as adjusting the **width**, **style**, **color**, and moving the nodes.



Using the Knife Mode

Click on the **Knife** Mode on the **Tool Options** palette to cut a line segment. Simply drag across the line where you want to cut it.



Then click and drag a node to separate the line segment into two.



Have fun experimenting using the **Pen** tool to create designs and vector graphics in PaintShop Pro!