

# Tutorial 12: Creating Multiple Map Layouts from an ArcMap Project

## Tutorial Content

- 12.1. How can I use the same data layers to create more than one map for printing? And what is a 'layer file'?
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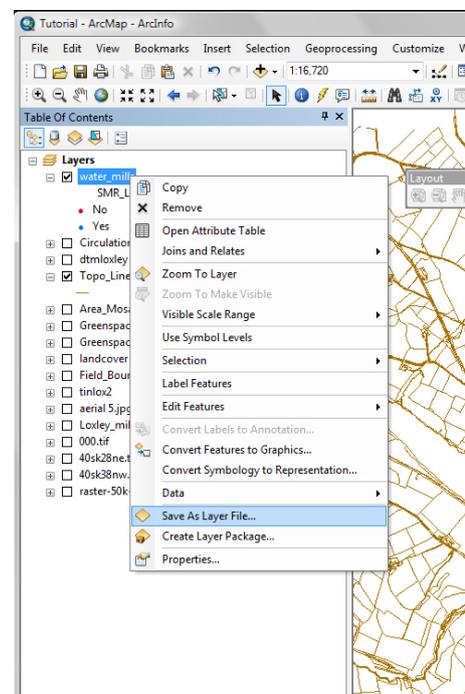
### 12.1. Creating Layer Files

One solution which can be used to solve the problem of not being able to create multiple layouts in a single ArcMap project is to make map **layer files (.lyr)**.

Map layer files save information about a layer's symbology and can be used to quickly recreate multiple .mxd projects.

Create an .mxd project with all the data layers that you want. Set the symbology for each layer in the .mxd project.

To create the 'layer file', right click on the layer name in the table of contents. Select **'Save As Layer File. . .'** from the drop down menu. The .lyr file saves the symbology information about the layer.



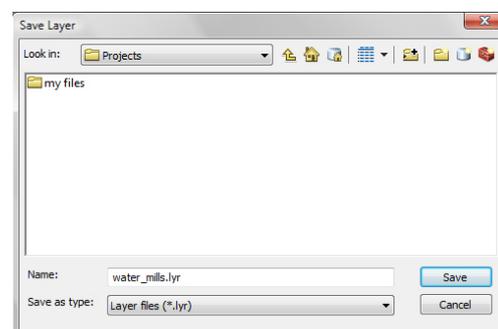
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The **'Save Layer'** window will open.

The .lyr file must be stored in the same folder as the shapefile it refers to, otherwise the link to the shapefile will be broken and the .lyr file will not work. Navigate to the folder where the shapefile is stored.

The shapefiles will not be shown in the folder, but you can check that you have the correct folder by navigating to the folder using 'My Computer'.

The default layer name will use the name of the shapefile with the file ending .lyr. Accept the default name. Click **Save**.



Repeat the process to save a .lyr file for each data layer, with layer symbology (all vector layers).

Once you have saved a .lyr file for each vector layer, you can 'Save As' your .mxd and give it a different name. This allows you to save a different .mxd project for each map layout you want to create. All data layers with a .lyr file should have a consistent symbology in each .mxd project.

If you have already set up a map in the 'layout view' this will also be saved and can be updated / modified in the new .mxd projects to create a series of layouts, by adding and deleting (or turning off in the table of contents) data layers in the 'data view' as required. You might also have to zoom and pan in the data frame (map layout view) to update the map area displayed.

### Important: Updating Layers

You can still make changes to a layer's symbology in the original .mxd project file. Just make the changes and then resave the .lyr file for that layer using the 'Save as Layer File' command. Save the new .lyr file to replace the old one. The layer will automatically update in the other .mxd projects that you have created. The layers (if they are switched on in the 'data view') will also update in the 'layout view' of that .mxd project.

## 12.2. Sharing Layers

Creating a .lyr file also allows you to share shapefiles that you have created and know that the shapefile has been displayed in the correct way with the symbology that you intended.

A shapefile with a .lyr file is displayed with a yellow diamond symbol

