Creating DVD Covers

Figure 1: DVD Case.

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This document is designed to provide instructions for creating 7mm DVD case cover inserts using LibreOffice Writer. These cases are available in white, black, and other colors. Measurements must be adjusted for other size DVD cases.

The cases have a clear plastic layer on the outside that accepts a printed insert. The working dimensions for the DVD cover insert are 10 ¼ (10.25) by 7 ¼ (7.25) inches.

The insert can be divided into 3 sections; front, back, and spine. The front and back panels are 4.875 inches by 7.25 inches and the spine is 0.5 inch by 7.25 inches.

Figure 2 shows a sample DVD case insert. The front and back panel graphics in the sample have a black frame for use with black cases. When the insert is trimmed the black frame will blend with the black case. If inserts are being designed for white cases, the graphic borders should be white.

The first step is to create a new LibreOffice Word document and set the page properties.

Figure 2: A sample DVD cover insert.

Format the Page

- ✔ Open LibreOffice, and create a new **Writer Document**.
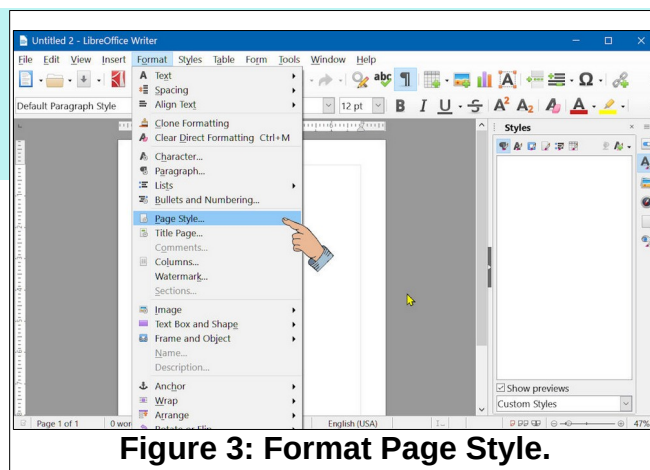- ✔ From the *Menubar*, select **Format, Page Style**.

Figure 3: Format Page Style.

✔ In the *Page Style* dialog box, select **Landscape**.

✔ In the *Page Style* dialog box, set the *Left* and *Right* margins to **0.375**, and the *Top* and *Bottom* margins to **0.625**. (The system will round off the settings to two decimal places).

✔ From the *Menubar*, select **File Save As** and enter *DVD Cover base* as the file name.

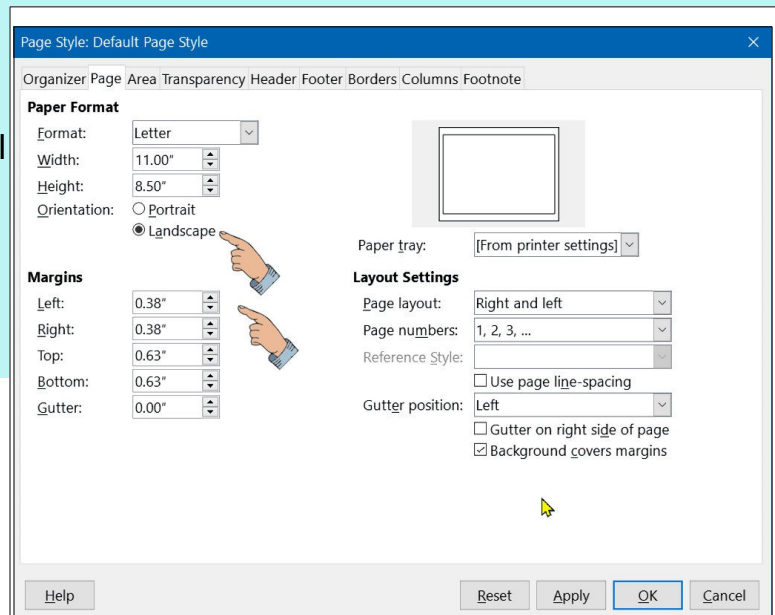Figure 5 shows the new document with the page format set to Landscape.

Figure 4: Setting the Page Style.

Now that the *Page Style* has been set, a rectangle will be added to represent the *Back*, cover of the insert.

✔ If the *Drawing* toolbar is not on the display, from the *Menubar*, select **View, Toolbars**, and toggle the *Drawing* option **ON**.

✔ From the *Drawing Toolbar*, select the **Rectangle** tool, then drag out a rectangle. Don't worry about the size, that will be set in the next step.
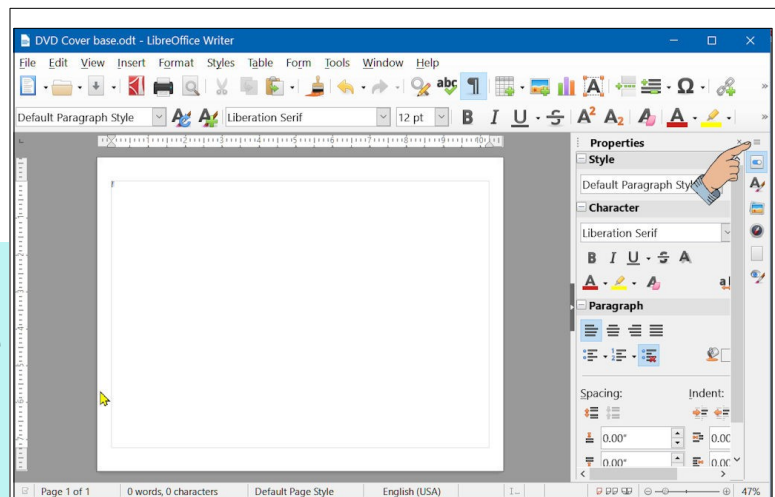

Figure 5: New Landscape format document.

- ✔ With the rectangle selected, and the *Properties Sidebar* open, use the *Position and Size* options to adjust the rectangle settings.
- ✔ Toggle the *Keep Ratio* option **OFF**.
- ✔ Set the *Width* to **4.875** and the *Height* to **7.25**.
- ✔ Set *Align* to **Left** and **Top**.

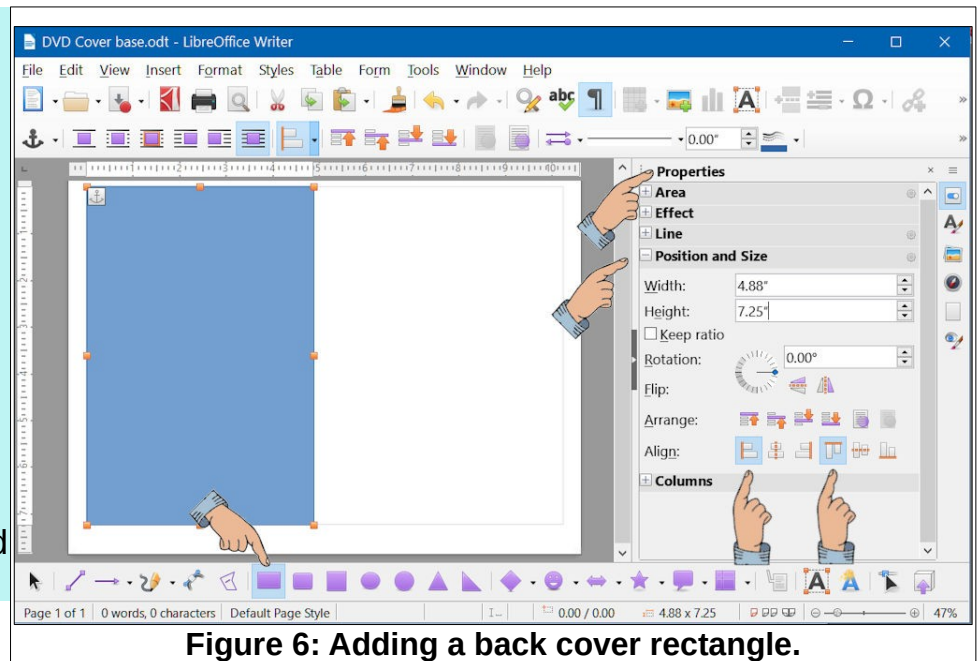**Figure 6: Adding a back cover rectangle.**

Next, a rectangle will be added for the *Front* cover.

- ✔ From the *Drawing Toolbar*, select the **Rectangle** tool, then drag out a new rectangle.
- ✔ With the rectangle selected, toggle the *Keep Ratio* option **OFF**.
- ✔ Set the *Width* to **4.875** and the *Height* to **7.25**.
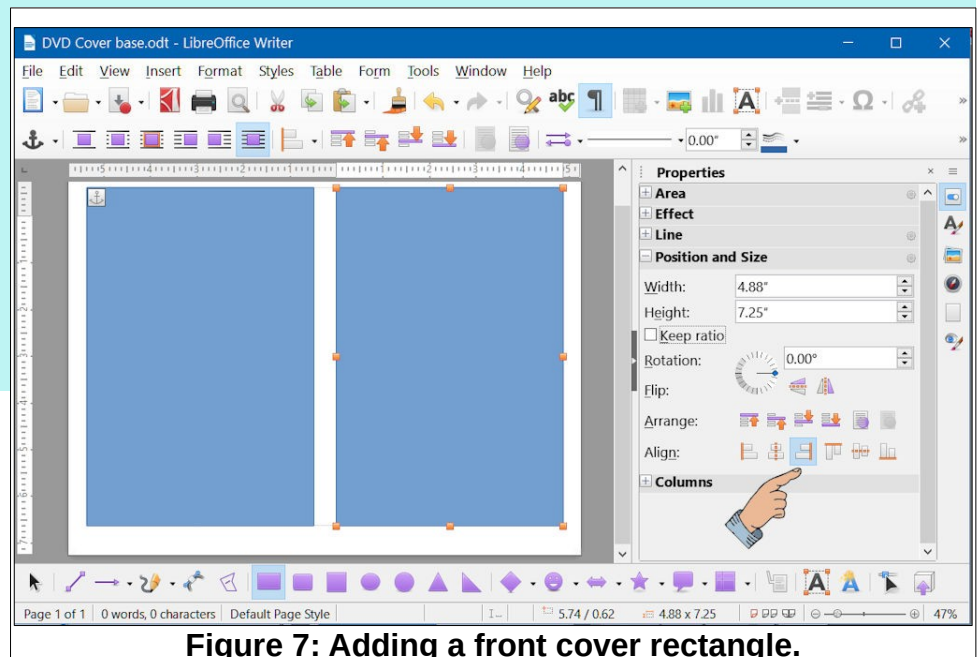- ✔ Set *Align* to **Right** and **Top**.

Next, a *Text Box* will be added for the DVD cover spine.

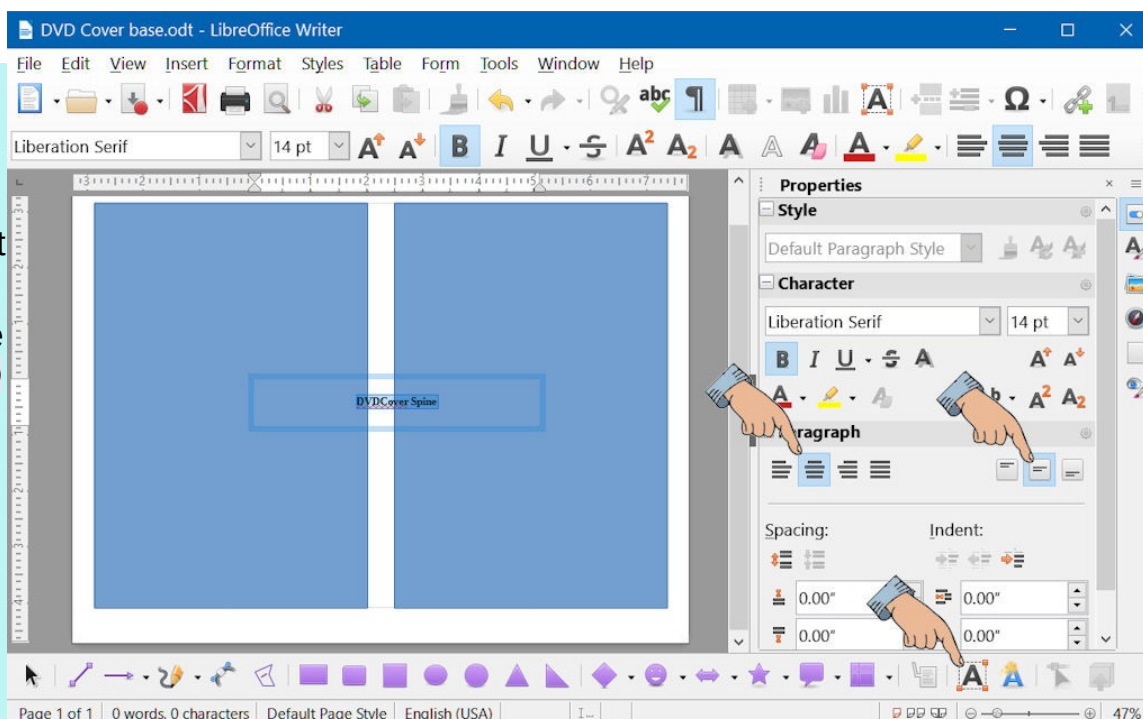**Figure 7: Adding a front cover rectangle.**

- ✔ Select the **Text Box** tool and drag out a text box.
- ✔ Enter the text **DVD Cover Spine**.
- ✔ Set **Alignment** to **Center**.
- ✔ Select **Center Vertically**.
- ✔ Adjust the **Font style** and **size**. (The example uses **Liberation Sans, 14pt**.)

The Font Color depends on the color of the DVD case. In this example a black case is used. The Font color will be set to Yellow. The Text Box Fill color is set in a later step.

- ✔ Set the Font **color**.

Next the Text Box Position and Size will be adjusted.

- ✔ Select the **Text Box border**.
- ✔ Toggle the **Keep Ratio** option **OFF**.
- ✔ Set the **Width** to **7.25** and the **Height** to **0.50**.
- ✔ Set the **Rotation** angle to **270**.
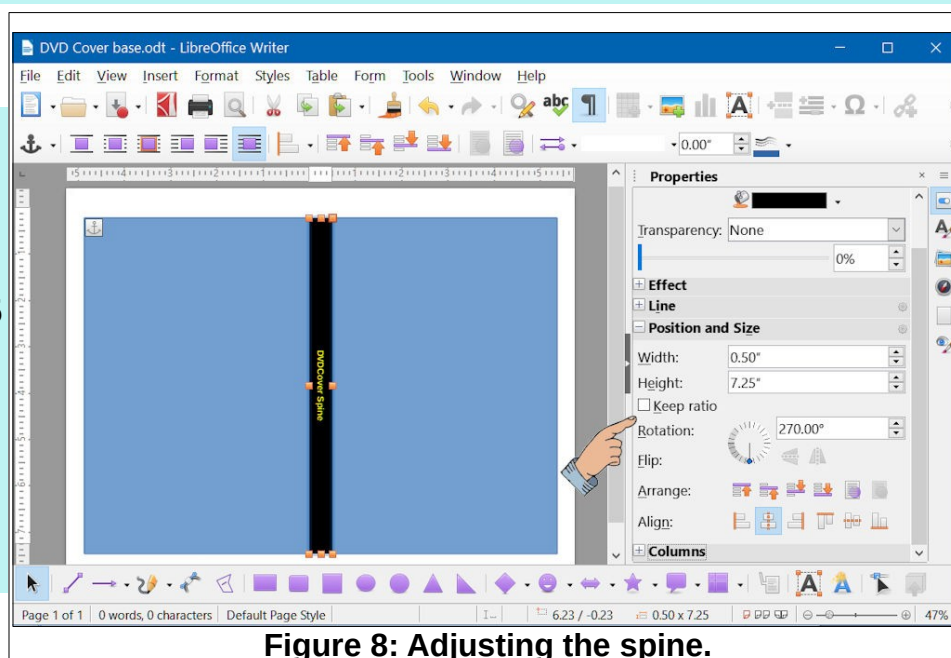- ✔ Set **Align** to **Center** and **Top**.

Now all that remains is to design the Front and Back insert.

Figure 8: Adjusting the spine.

I have created graphic images to use in place of the back and front rectangles. Figure 9 shows a sample cover image. (This was created using Paint Shop Pro, my favorite program for creating and modifying images.)

The resolution of the sample image is 1436 x 2100. This is the same size and aspect ratio as the cover rectangles.

Figure 9: Sample cover image

Here is how to replace a rectangle with a graphic image of the same size.

- ✔ Select a rectangle.
- ✔ Select the **Insert Image** tool.
- ✔ ***Double click*** on the desired replacement image.

Figure 10: Replacing rectangles.

It's likely that a replacement image of the proper size might not be available. Not to worry. Any graphic image can be used.
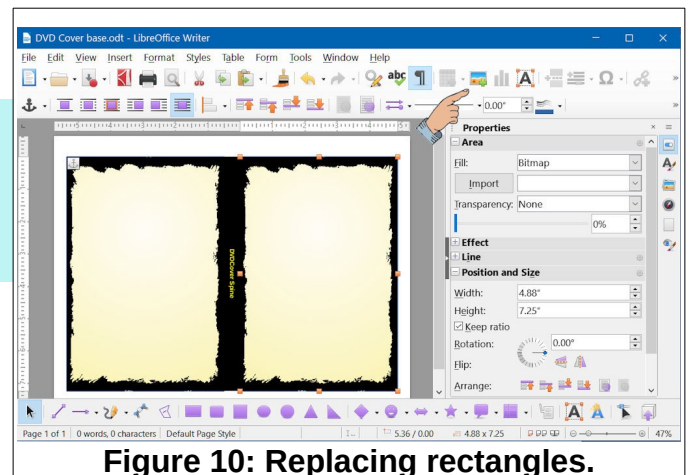
Here is a trick for using a background image from a Google search.

✔ Open a web browser (Firefox was used in the example) and search *images* for *background textures*.

✔ Select an image and then in the image information panel, *right click* and select **Copy Image**. (This puts the image in the Clipboard.)

✔ In the DVD cover document, delete the rectangle to be replaced.

✔ Press **Ctrl+V** to paste the image from the clipboard.

Figure 11: Google image search.

✔ With the new image selected, use the *Position and Size* options to set the Width, Height and alignment of the new image to **4.875, 7.25, Right** and **Top**.
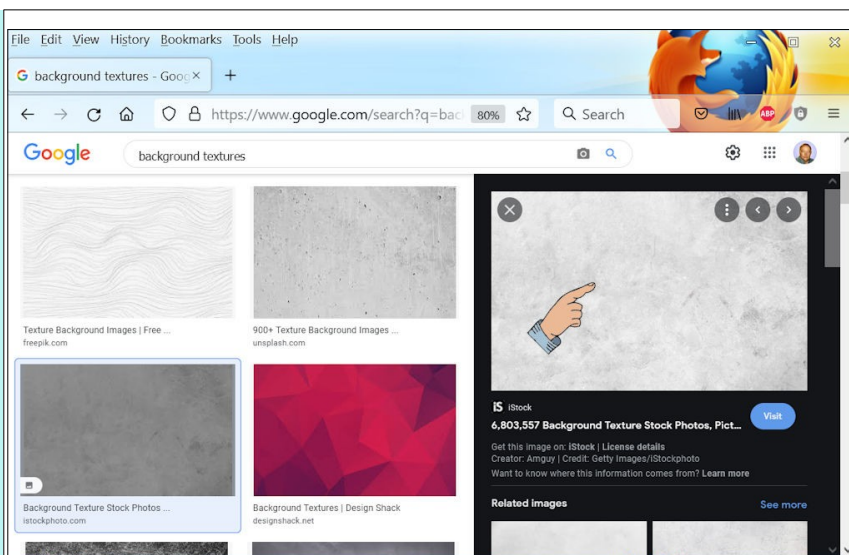
NOTE: This same **Copy** and **Paste** trick can be used to add other images to the DVD cover insert.

Once the document page format is set, and the back, spine, and front DVD cover insert areas have been established, all that is left is to add additional text boxes and graphic images to your DVD cover insert designs.
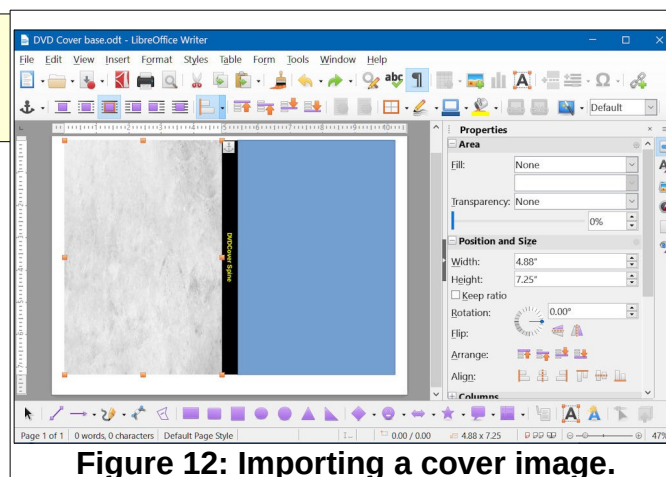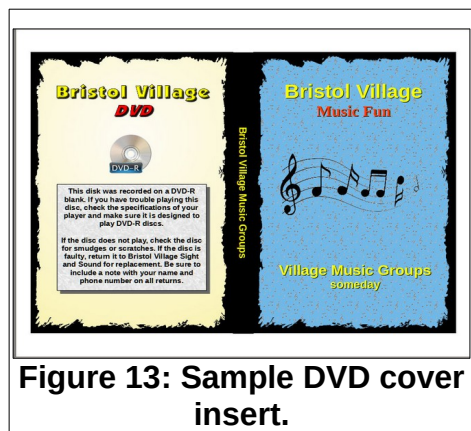

Figure 12: Importing a cover image.

Figure 13: Sample DVD cover insert.

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