How to draw a glass button in eight steps

Thise drawings ware made on a Pi, by Steve Royd Marker, using the RISC Operating System and Artworks by MWSoftware as the drawing application.

www.riscos.com | www.riscosopen.org | www.mw-software.com | www.markerdesign.be

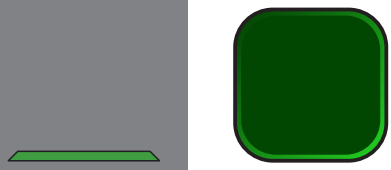
Top view *Front view*

Step-1

To start your drawing, draw your shape with a background colour (somewhat darker than the desired colour) and give it a graduated fill from the darkest to the lightest colour you'll be using. This will already determine where the light is coming from. *(The darkest side is the site where the light comes from and the lightest side is where the light shines upon).*

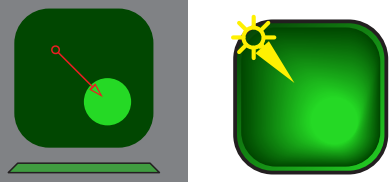
Step-2

Copy the shape again and make it somewhat smaller, so the button can appear to have a chamfer on its sides. Use the darkest colour of the previous shape and make it a solid fill. Also, remove the line colour.
(The button will also appear well without the shape of step 1, it all depends on the purpose of your button - your choice).



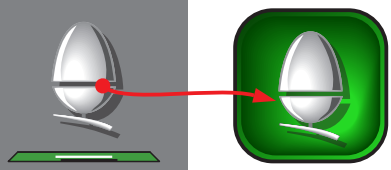
Step-3

Then you draw in the lens effect a rounded glass button has, when the light gets concentrated on one part of the background of the button. This is at the opposite side of the light entrance. Draw in a round shape, give it the lightest tint and blend it with the background shape in about 50 steps. If your button (or logo) is very large you may need more steps to avoid banding.



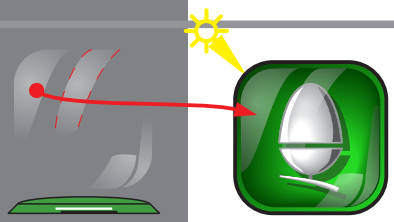
Step-4

Copy the object that you whish to display into the button and give it a shade, so it looks like it is not completely stuck at the back of the button. Giving it a shadow you need to be aware of the light to set it the same direction as step 3. The light angle will be more and more important when drawn in further light and reflection effects making the button look more like glass.



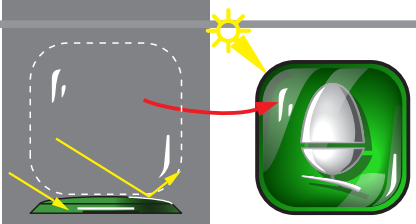
Step-5

To give the button it's round appearance, draw in reflections. It's important to bend the sides of the vector shape to do this. The curve really determines the top shape of the button... Make it straight and the button will appear flat. The reflections are made out of parts of the original button shape, with a Graduated fill from black to white and the transparency set to 75% bleach.



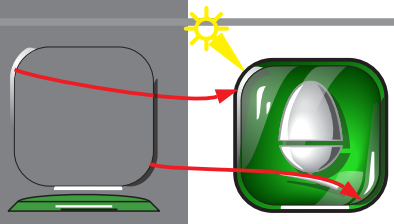
Step-6

To give the button a more life-like appearance you can draw in a hard reflection, made from previous shapes. Give it a solid white fill and much smaller in size. The light that has been reflected in step 5 and 6 on the button surface can no longer shine on the background leaving a shadow. Therefore reflections always sit on top of the darkest parts of the button.



Step-7

You may want to draw in side reflections, to bring more attention to the chamfer (if you have one)... Make a shape to fit the chamfer with a graduated fill from black to white. Be aware where the light comes from. At the opposite side (close to the lightest side of the button) it's the same, but with a solid black fill and 30% transparency, giving the button extra depth.



Step-8

Sometimes, reflections are so intense that they tend to take more visual room than their actual physical sizes. This is especially so with photography whare the CCD or traditional film can get over-exposed. Depending on the size and the purpose of your button you may wish to leave out steps 7 and 8. The smaller and/or more functional your button the less detail is required.