



# *Slice it Up*

Procedural and non-destructive way  
to slice your footage in After Effects

manual for v1.5

# Slice it Up

with a click of a button

## Installation

Follow these two simple steps to install script:

1. Unpack the archive you have downloaded and copy/paste files (both “Slice it Up.jsx” and “Slice it Up Help.pdf”) to “ScriptUI Panels” folder:

- Windows: **Program Files\Adobe\Adobe After Effects <version>\-Support Files\Scripts**

- Mac OS: **Applications/Adobe After Effects <version>/Scripts**

If folder **ScriptUI Panels** does not exist, create a folder and name it “ScriptUI Panels”. Then paste the copied files into it.

2. Allow script to access network to avoid unnecessary problems while loading GUI. This option is under **General** tab of After Effects **Preference** pane:

- Windows: **Edit > Preferences > General**

- Mac: **After Effects > Preferences > General**

Once Installation is finished run the script in After Effects by clicking **Window > Slice it Up**

# Interface

The Interface is divided into two parts:

1. Generating slices;
2. Manipulating existing data;

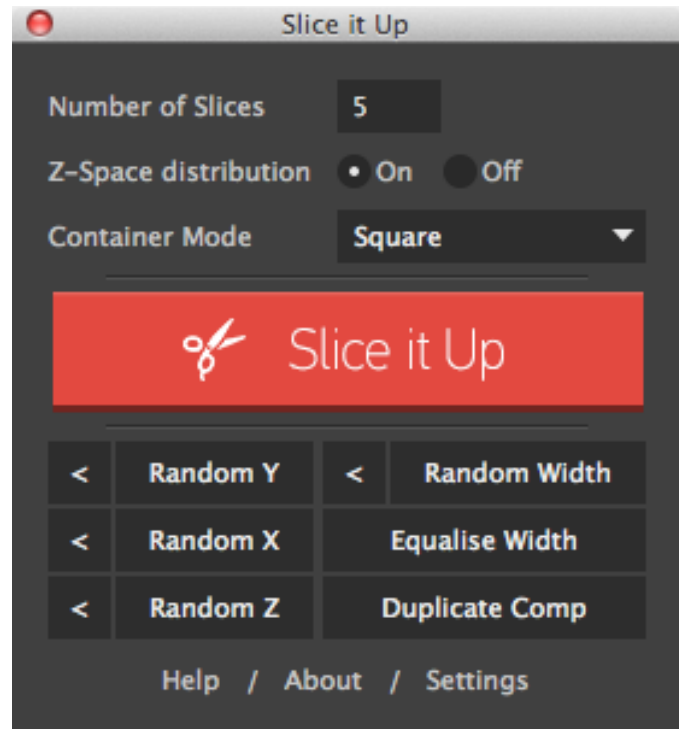
## Generating slices

First comes **Number of Slices** input field, where you enter the value for how many slices you wish to have. You can go from 2 to infinity. After Effects might get slow with lots of layers, so keep that in mind.

**Z-Space distribution** is an important option. If it's OFF, your slices will be distributed in flat space (X and Y). You will not have access to move them in 3D space, unless you redo the process from the top. Setting it ON will add Z space distribution to each slice.

Next option (and hardest to explain) is **Container Mode**. Think of it as a geometric representation of a single full slice (bounding box) in the composition your footage is in. There are 3 possible options: **Square**, **Circle** and **Rectangle**. Your choice must be made depending on *which way* and *how* you will be slicing/animating. Each of these options have its pros and cons, so please refer to the examples at the end of the document.

And, of course, main **Slice it Up** button that starts the slicing process.



## Manipulating existing data

If you are unhappy the way your slices look (horizontal proportions that is), hit **Random Width** button a few times to get a different look. This will not add new slices but will regenerate random seed and will give different width for each slice.

**Random Y / Random X / Random Z** buttons control the random seed for the position of the slice. Effect is seen once you change any of randomisation slider values in compositions effects panel.

**Z Space** randomising option will be available *only* if you had **Z-Space distribution** enabled during initial slicing.

While these buttons regenerated a new seed for width or position, button **<** will take one step back and regenerate previous seed value. This way you are free to skip through possible options and find a look that fits you best. Think of it as an “undo” option.

Randomising functions are available at any time, even after closing and opening a project.

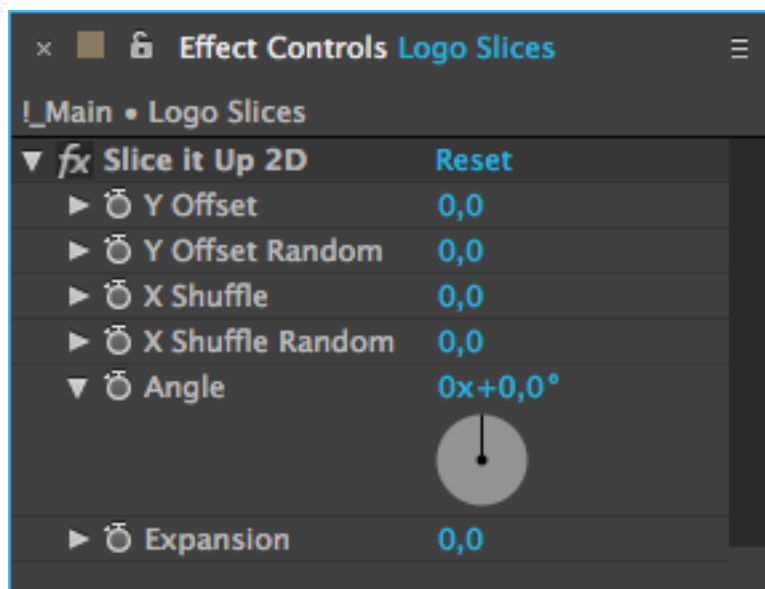
By default slices have random width. **Equalise Width** will make slice width equal.

**Duplicate Comp** will create a copy of selected composition that holds all the slices and update all expressions linked to it.

## How to Slice it Up

Workflow is straight forward: select a layer you wish to slice, enter desired value for slices, check/uncheck **Z Space distribution** option, select **Container Mode** (more info at the end of document) and hit **Slice it Up**. The script will get to work.

You won't get much visual feedback right away - you need to adjust some values in effects panel to see script in all its glory. So select the pre-sliced composition (script did the job of precomposing your layer in case you need to adjust something to the source later) and navigate to effects panel.

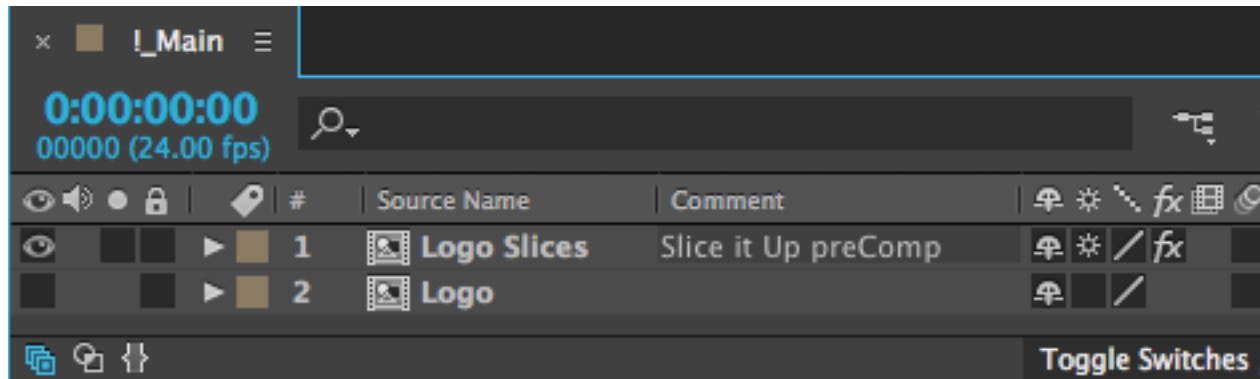


Depending on whether you had **Distribute in Z-Space** enabled or not, you will see 6 to 8 controls that will manage the slices. Movement on X, Y, and Z is presented in two states - linear and randomised. Slices will move in linear fashion using first option, and will be offset randomly when using the second.

If slices get too far from each using randomised way and there isn't much of randomness seen, try lowering down the first (linear) value to compensate the movement. Tweak both of these values to get desired look. If randomness does not get the desired effect, go back to GUI and regenerate X, Y or Z respectively. Same follows for the random width of the slices - if you are unhappy the way they look you can always regenerate them in the GUI.

**Angle** control sets the rotation of the slices.

**Expansion** control shrinks or grows the bounds of each slice. Pushing slider to the max will result in extraordinary transition of the object.



*NOTE: Script adds a comment "Slice it Up preComp" to a composition that hold all slices. Please do not change/remove this comment, as the script will stop functioning.*

## Settings Window

You can use so called **Pseudo Effects** instead of regular Sliders. Pseudo Effects looks and feels much more intuitive and user friendly and it's easier to navigate through values as they don't clutter the interface.

The down side of Pseudo Effects – you cannot share your project with third parties, as once they open up your project, they will get an error that says they don't have Slice it Up plugin installed. It's not a big deal though, as they can still work with the project, despite that the effect shows up as missing.

**Check for updates on launch** will check if there's an update for the script on aescrpts.com. While this option is useful, it might slow down the launching of the script window.

**Check for Updates now** will report if there's a newer version of the script.

## Container Mode: Square

Pros - Slices will cover entire shape; works perfect on any angle; no clipping. Use this mode if you are unsure.

Cons - Some slices will be empty at certain angles, though rendering unnecessary layers (compositions);

Container for the slices is calculated by the hypotenuse of your layer (the square the length of the hypotenuse equals the sum of the squares of the lengths of the width and hight of your object. *Wikipedia*)

## Container Mode: Circle

Pros - Perfect choice if your layer is perfect circle.

Cons - Some clipping will appear if your image is not a perfect circle.  
Container size is calculated by the largest side of your object.

## Container Mode: Rectangle

Pros - Ideal way to slice layer in (*and only*) vertical way; no empty slices.

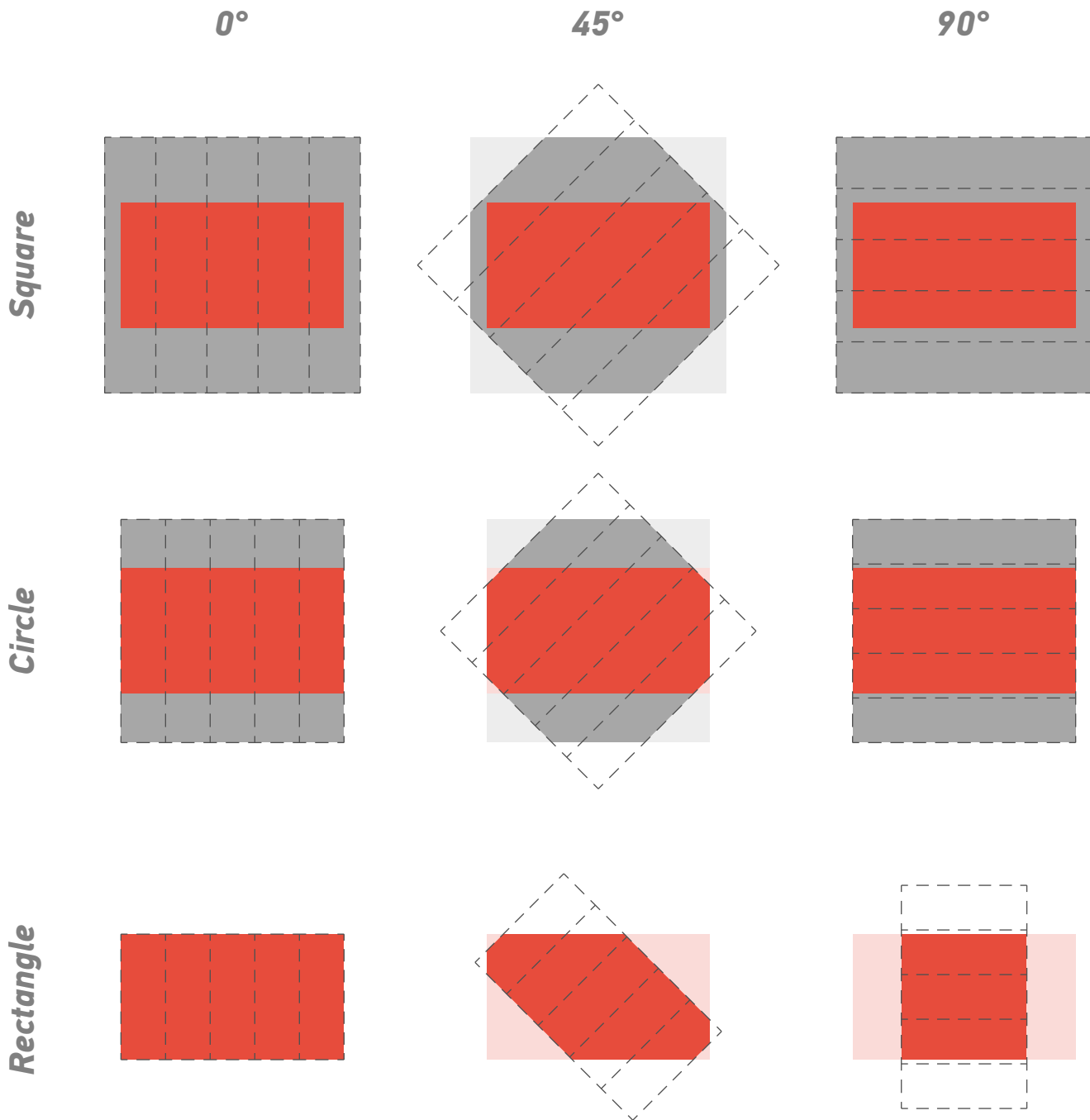
Cons - huge clipping will appear if angle is not at 0 degrees.

Container size is equal to the dimensions of bounding box of your layer.

Following examples demonstrate the use of Square/Circle/Rectangle mode. In each case three different shapes (16x9 frame, perfect circle, and custom shape) are sliced with different mode. Please observe what effect each mode has for every object. In some case you get empty slices, while others produce clipping of your layer.

Shape - 16x9 frame.

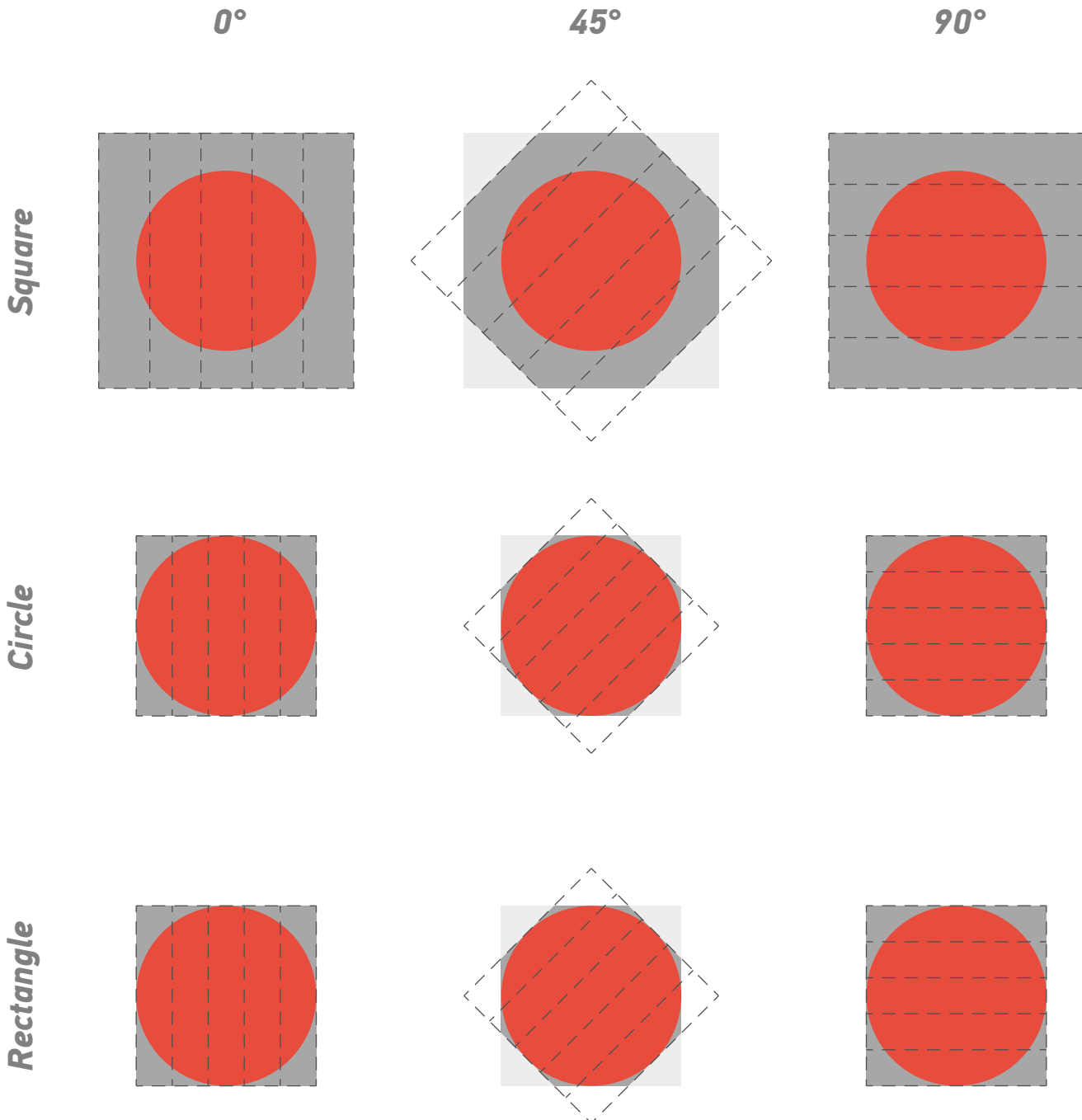
No clipping in *Square* mode, but empty slices at  $90^\circ$  angle. *Circle* mode - some clipping appear on the edges if angle is not  $0^\circ$ ,  $90^\circ$ ,  $180^\circ$ ,  $270^\circ$ . *Rectangle* mode - huge clipping on any angle except  $0^\circ$ .





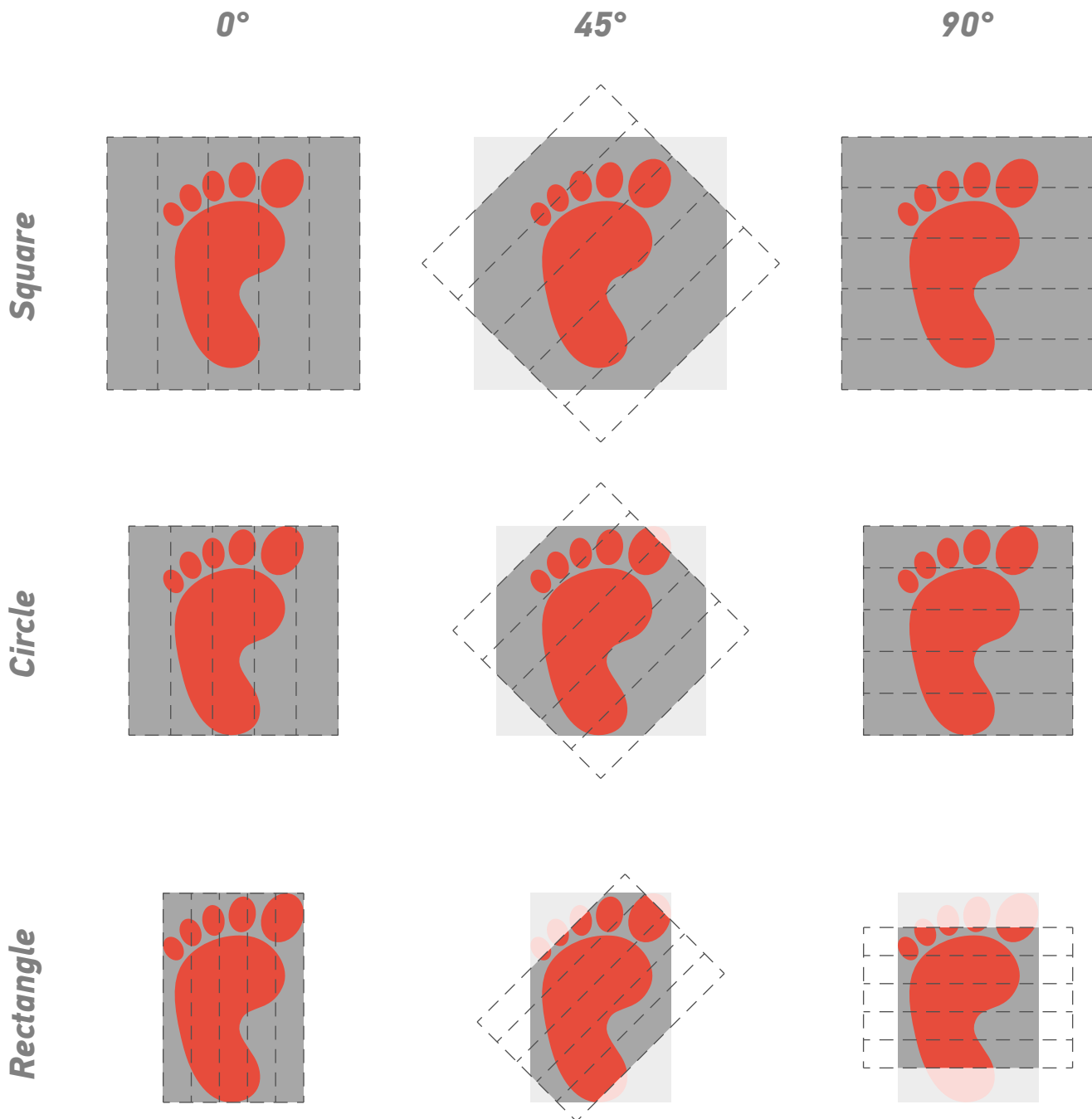
Shape - perfect circle.

No clipping and no empty slices appear at any angle. Perfect **Container mode** for this shape is *Circle*. Slices are evenly distributed along the object. *Rectangle* mode produces same effect as *Circle* mode.



Shape - custom.

Probably best choice - *Square* mode. Empty slices appear, but no clipping at any angle. In this scenario small clipping appears at  $45^\circ$  in *Circle* mode and huge clipping at any angle in *Rectangle* mode.





# ***Slice it Up***

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