Cutting Machine

Cricut Maker 3

User Guide

MMPL Makerspace

Mississippi Mills Public Library

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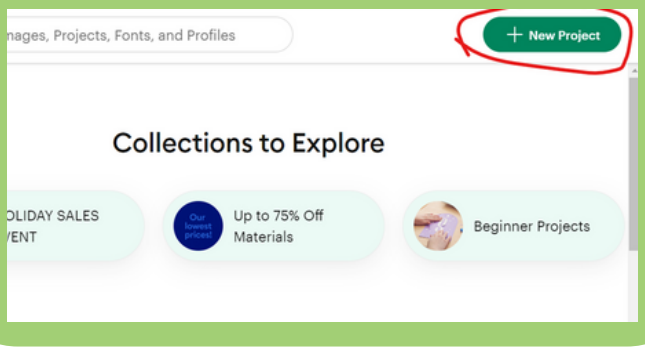
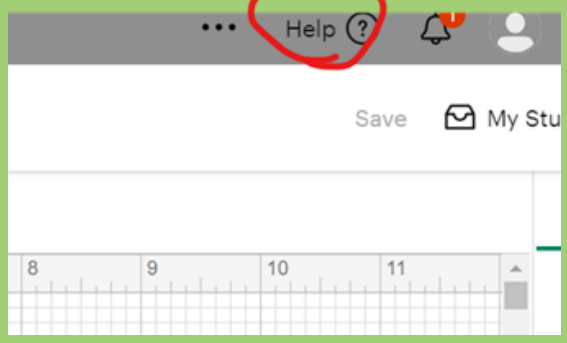
Create Your Design

Open Design Space

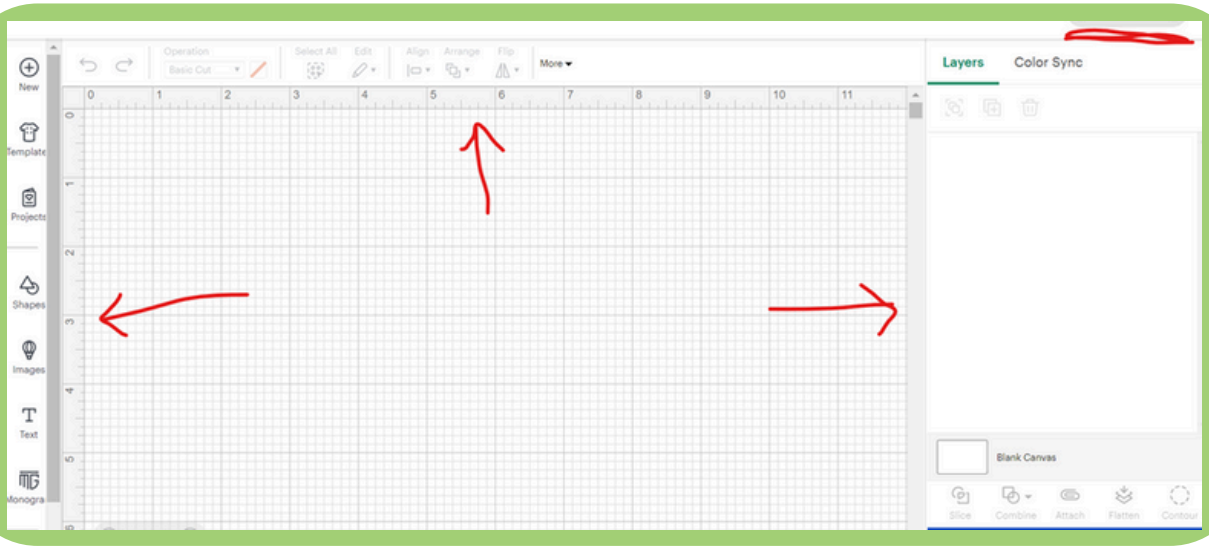
Open Cricut Design Space and start a new project



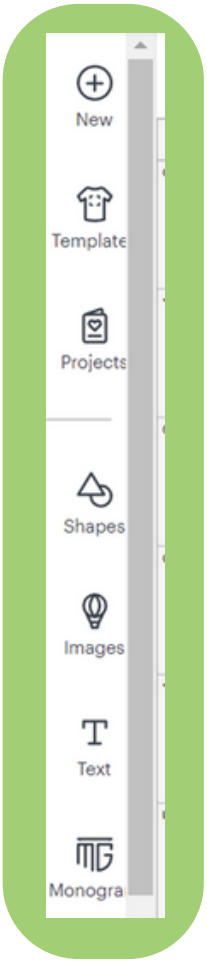
Welcome to your design space! Click the Help button at the top for How-To Videos, Cheatsheets, and the Online Help Centre.



Here we are on the canvas! There is a left toolbar, top toolbar, and right toolbar to help you create your design. You will typically use the left toolbar and top first, and then sometimes adjust things using the right toolbar. Let's take a tour of the buttons.



The Left Toolbar



New (plus sign):

Click here to open a new project/canvas. You can only have one canvas open at a time, so this is only for when you have completed & saved a project, and want a new fresh canvas.

Templates (t-shirt):

This tool allows you to browse a selection of pre-made templates for common objects you may want to create a design for (i.e. an apron, a banner, etc.). These templates are only for reference purposes on your canvas, they do not become part of your design.

Projects (card):

This tool allows you to browse projects in the Cricut database – a great place for inspiration! You can select a project and make it as is by following the instructions, or customize it to make it your own! A very easy way to make something great with minimal design on your part.

Shapes (triangle & circle):

This tool allows you to browse a selection of pre-made simple, common shapes to use in your design.

Images (hot air balloon):

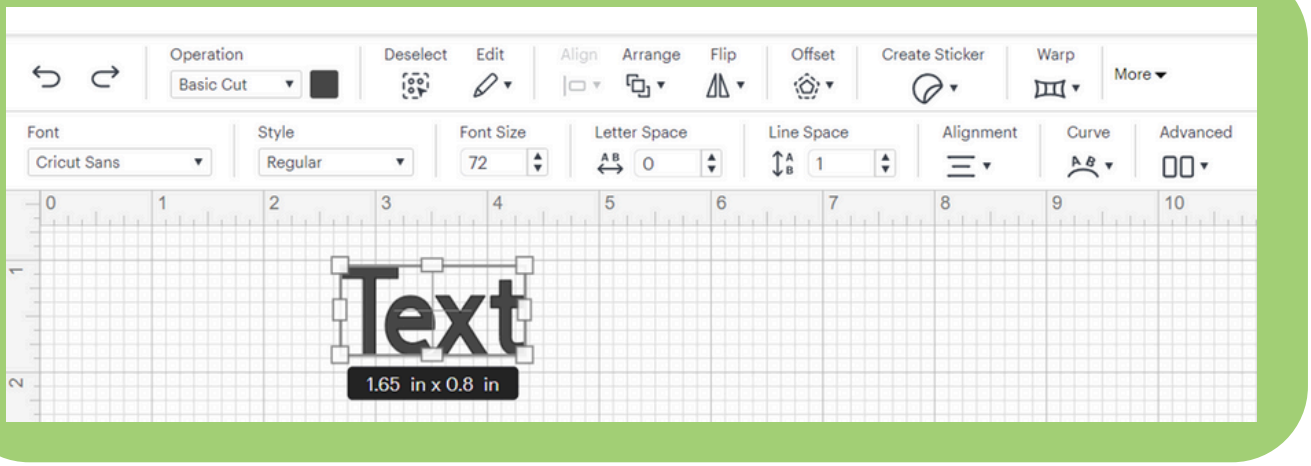
This tool allows you to search the database of more complex objects, rather than just simple shapes. This tool is one of the most frequently used if you are designing something from scratch.

Text (capital T): This tool allows you to insert a text box into your design.

Monogram: This tool allows you to easily and quickly browse examples of different monogram styles and customize with your own letters.

The Top Toolbar

Here we have an example text box. With this object selected, our options on the top toolbar become visible.



1. Operation

Where you tell the machine what to do with the object. "Basic Cut" will be the most common setting – but "Draw" and "Print then Cut" are also available options.

2. Object Colour

By clicking on the black box beside "Operation", we can change the colour of our object. The colour of your object does not matter when cutting objects from one type of material – you can leave it black. But, it does matter when you are using the "Print then Cut" option, or when you are cutting objects from multiple different materials in the same project.

3. Deselect

Deselects the object currently selected.

4. Edit

Basic editing options such as Copy and Paste.

5. Align, Arrange and Flip

Allow you to change the positioning of your object in different ways - experiment!

6. Offset

Allows you to create a border slightly offset from your original object. Play around with this to see how it changes your object! This can be handy if you want to quickly create a white border around coloured text, for example.

7. Create Sticker

A tool that will allow you to quickly adjust your object so it can be made into a sticker. This function also makes it easier to choose cut settings later.

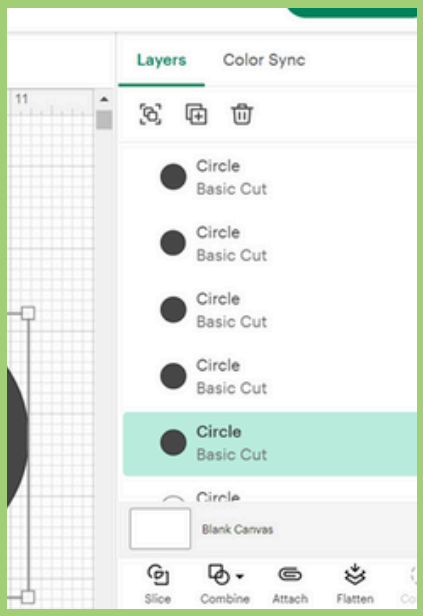
8. Warp

Allows you to warp your text with angles or curves that would be otherwise difficult to achieve.

The second toolbar beneath is specific to text editing. Here you can change the font, style, size, spacing, alignment, and curve of your text.

The Right Toolbar

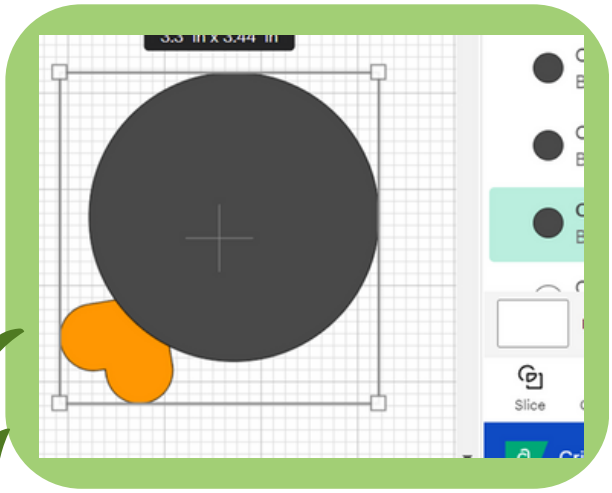
On to the right toolbar! Here we can adjust the layers (which objects are on top or on the bottom), and tell the machine how the layers will work together.

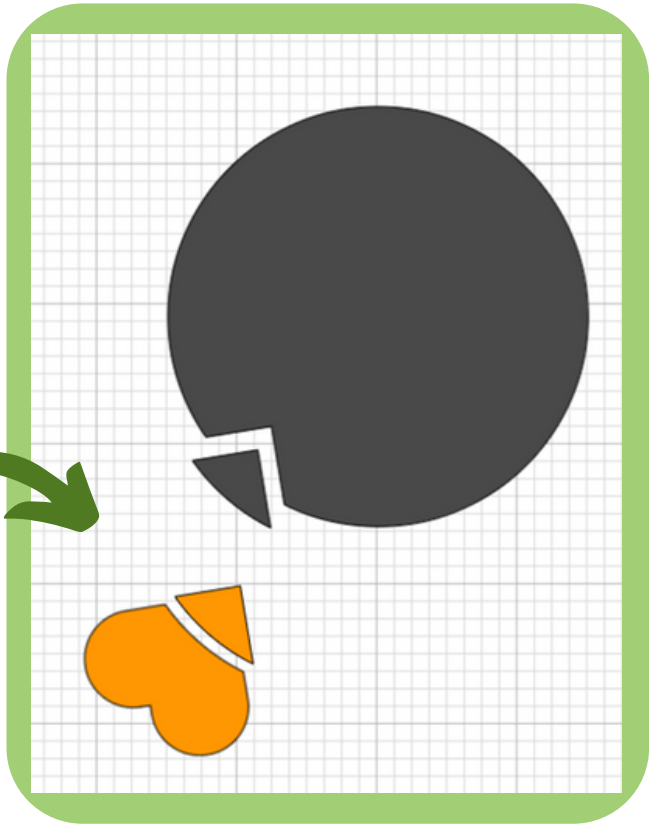


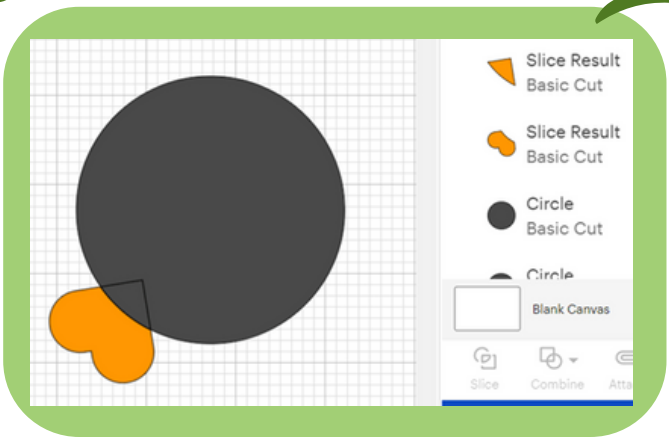
At the bottom of the right toolbar we have Slice, Combine, Attach, Flatten, and Contour. Contour is less likely to be used in most projects, so a video tutorial or article explaining how the function works is the best method to learn, if you are interested in using it. It allows you to hide cut lines in your project if you don't want the machine to cut them.

Slice:

If multiple shapes are layered over each other, the slice tool will create separate shapes anywhere they are overlapped. This is handy if you want to make a unique shape of your own – you can subtract pieces from a starting shape until you have the shape you want. See example below:

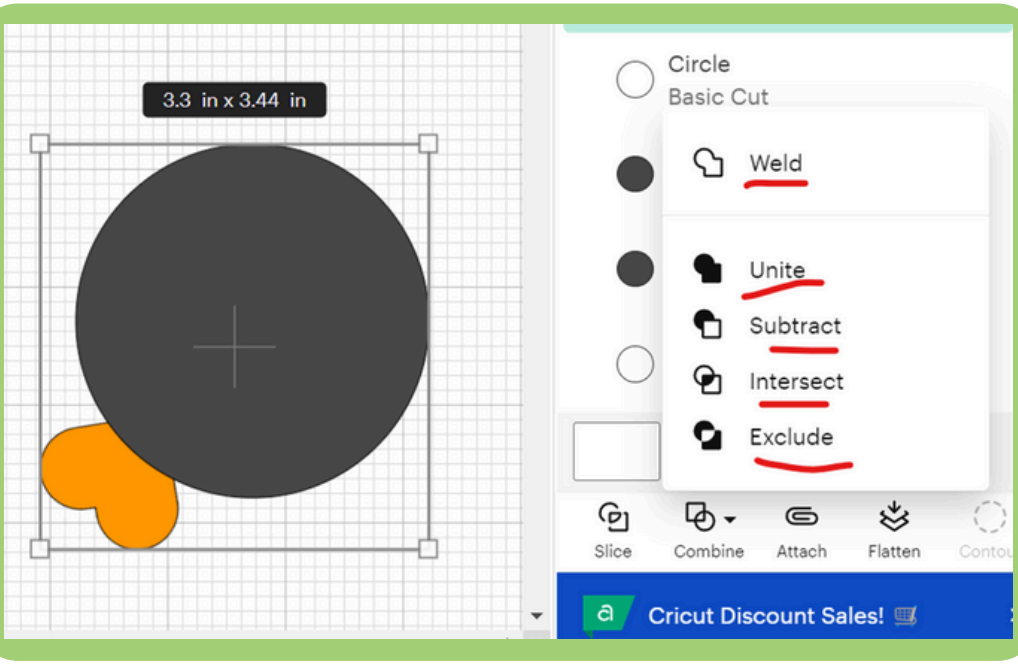


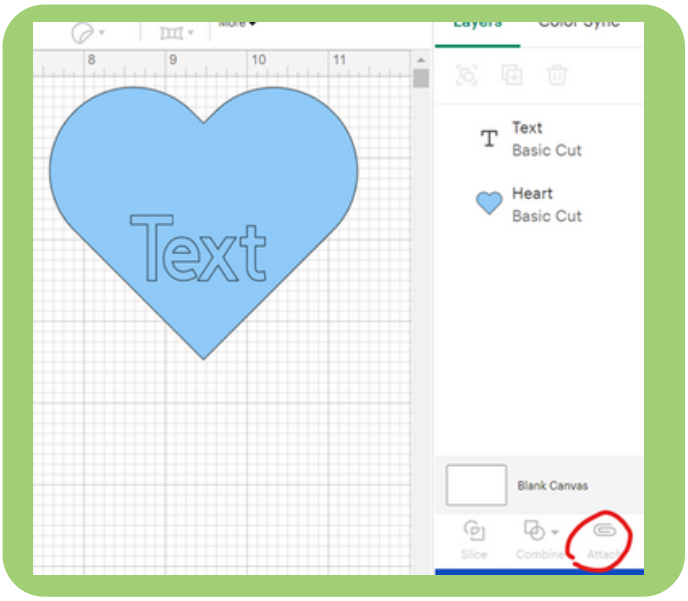




Combine:

When multiple shapes are layered over each other, the combine tool has different options for how the shapes can affect each other. The best way to understand how the tool works is to test it out! Don't be afraid to try it – you can always press the undo button.

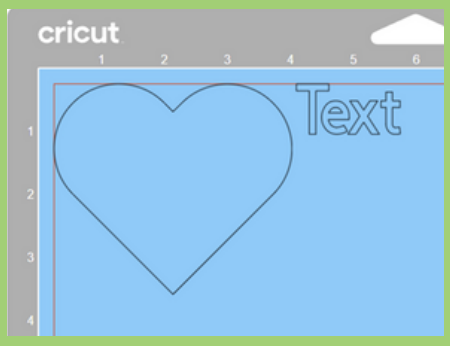




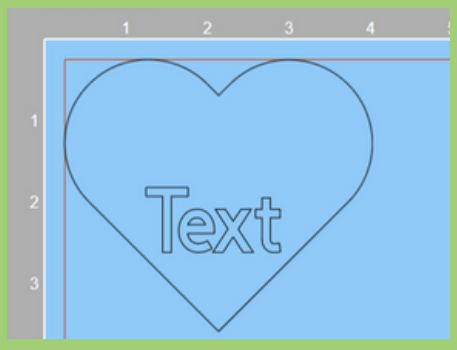
Attach:

A very important tool is the "Attach" tool. In this example , if we want the heart and text to stay where they are when the Cricut is cutting, we will have to attach them. If we do not attach them, the Cricut will consider them separate objects that can be moved around and cut anywhere on your material. It will alter your design and position the objects separately.

Not Attached



Attached

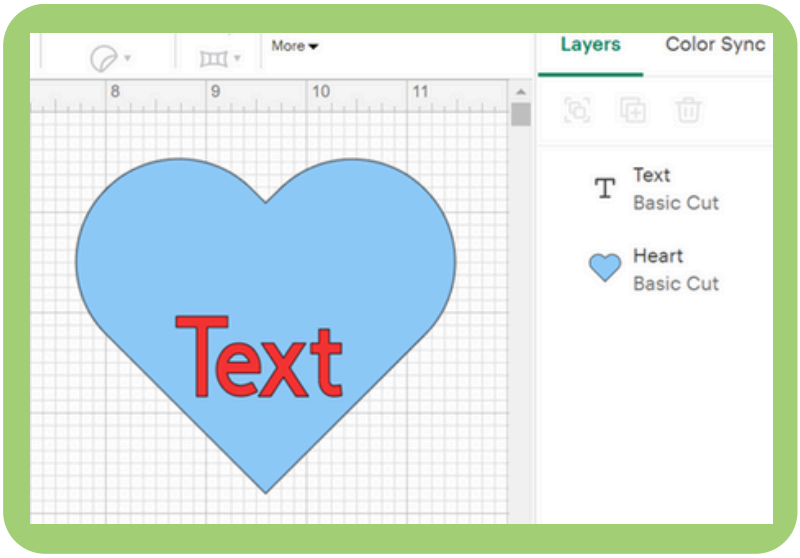


Flatten:

Flatten works similarly to the "Attach" tool, by combining objects together into one design. However, it does not leave the parts of your design as separate (but locked) objects, as the Attach tool does. It creates an "image" that can be used with the "Print then Cut" function. This is useful for images you want to design from scratch, print, then cut out on the Cricut. It is especially applicable to making custom stickers, or custom printable heat transfer vinyl designs for a T-shirt or bag.

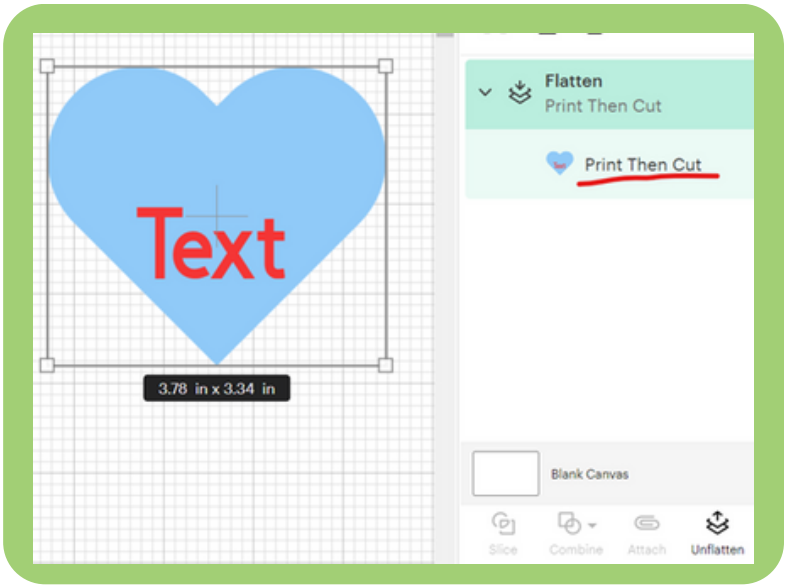
Notice on the below example that once the Flatten tool was used on the design, the black borders around the text and heart have disappeared. They have become one "flat" image without the text having its own recognizable borders. The printer can then print this image, and the Cricut can cut around the border of the image (the heart).

You will also notice that when we look at the layers on the right toolbar, rather than the Text and Heart appear as separate layers, they are now one layer, and have automatically been changed from "Basic Cut" to "Print Then Cut".



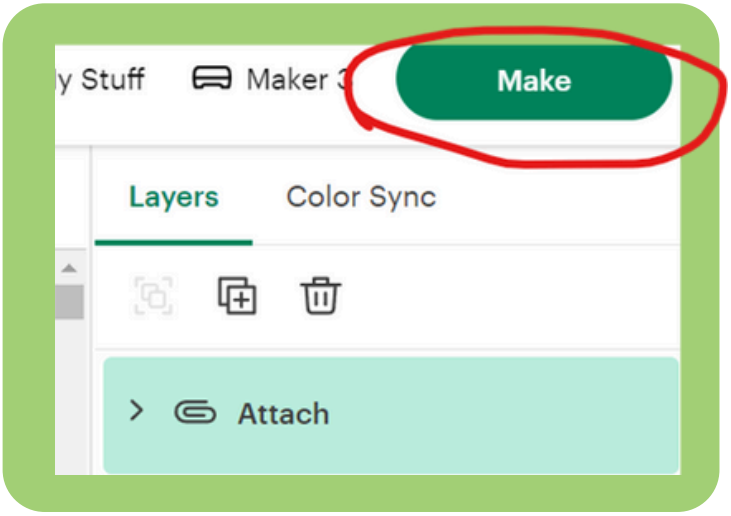
Not Flattened

Flattened

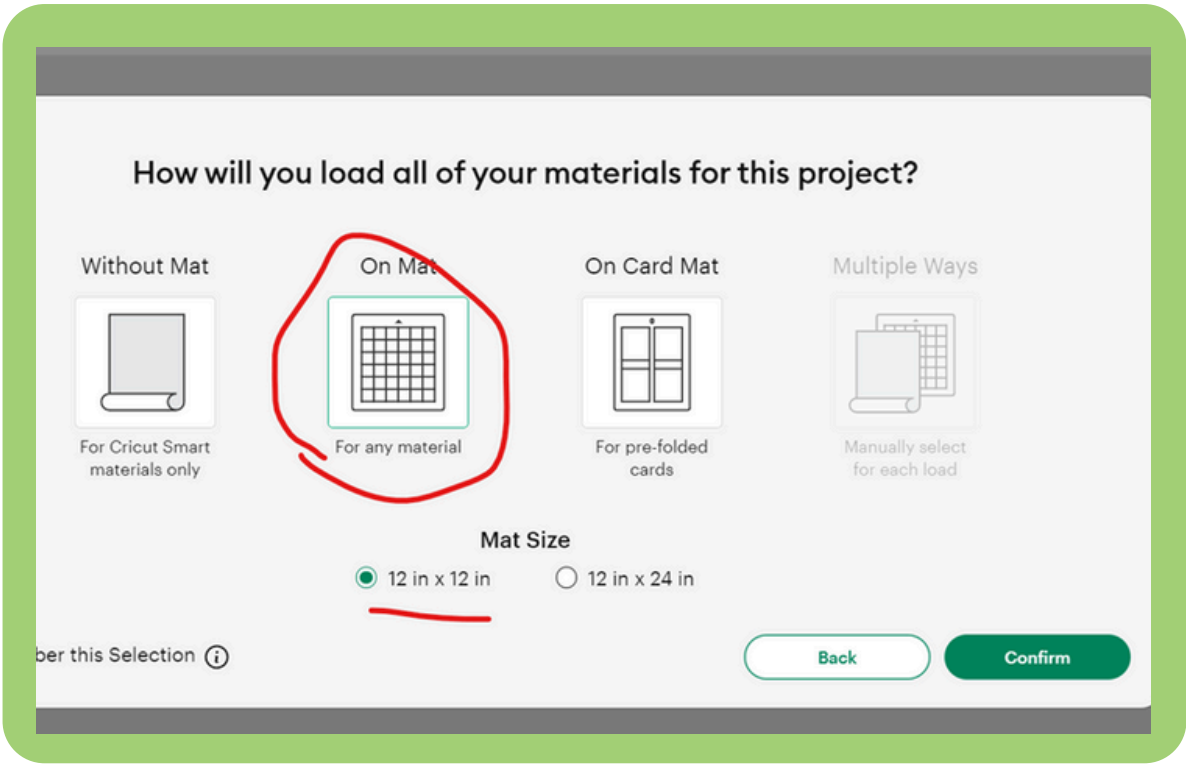


Mat & Cut Settings

Once you have completed your design, you're ready to hit the green Make button!

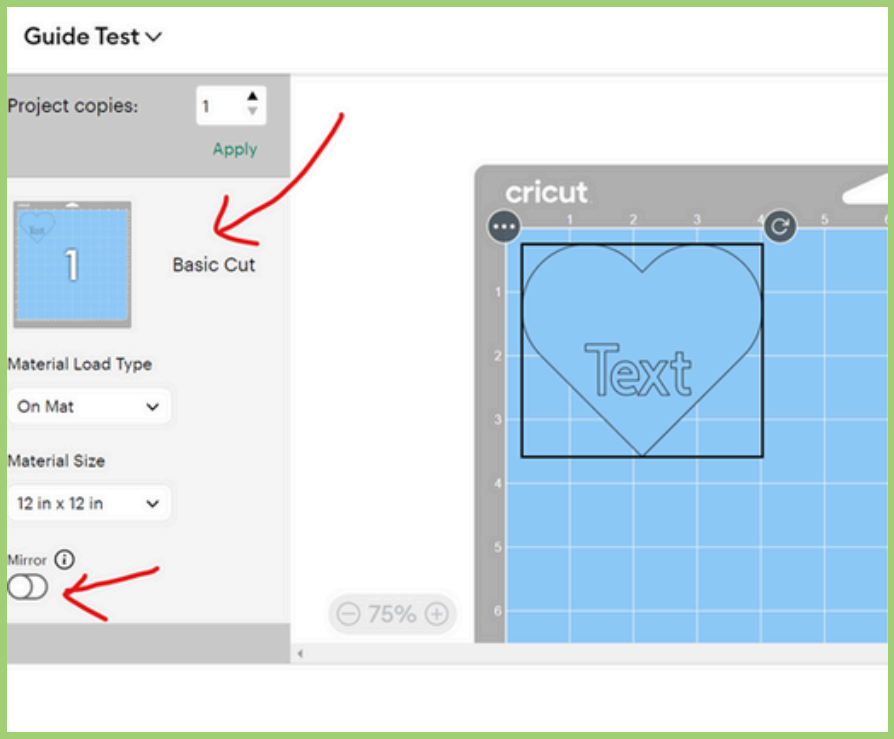


You will see a pop up window that asks you how you will be cutting your material. In most cases you will choose "On Mat", 12 x 12 in. Hit Confirm.



Now you will see where your design will be cut out in relation to your mat. You may need to move your design around to line up with where you have placed material on your mat.

For example: say we have 5x4 scrap piece of cardstock we would like to cut this design on. We would make sure to position our cardstock flush with the top left corner of the grid on our mat, and ensure our design is placed so that it will not go past the edge of our material. This screen is very handy and important for ensuring your design ends up in the right place on your material – do not speed past it!

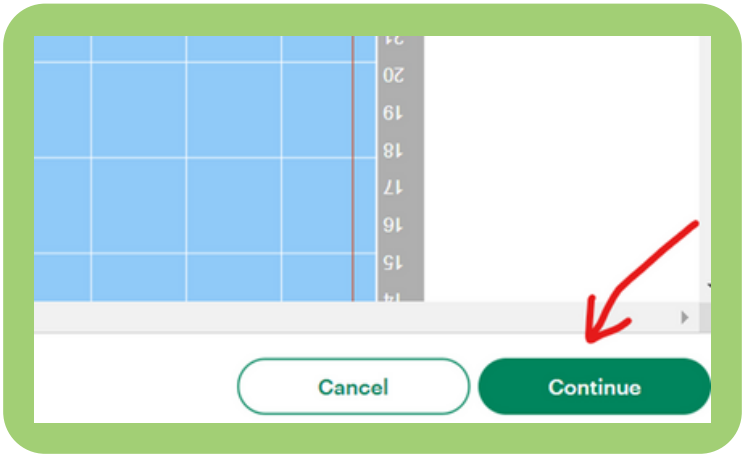


On the left, you can see some options.

Copies: How many copies we would like to make for this project. If we were cutting out many shapes from cardstock for a group craft, for instance, we can create one design – then on this page, increase the number of copies to be duplicated. The software will then show a preview and let us know how many sheets of material we will need for that number of copies.

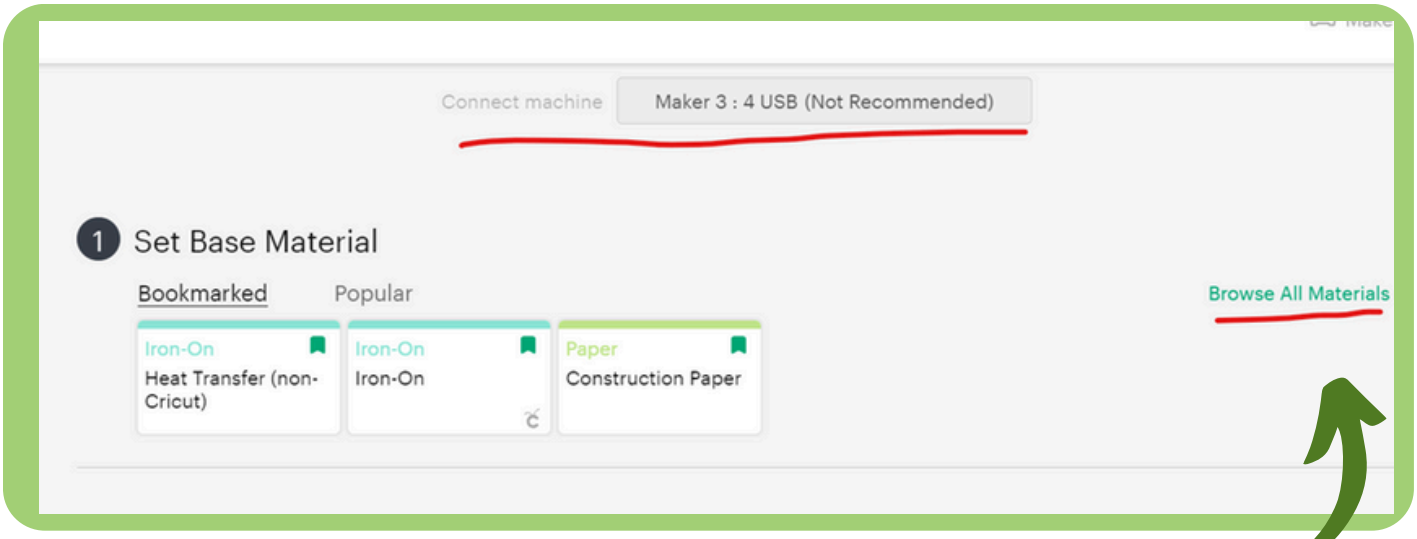
Material Size: Set the size of the material you are working with here. If we were cutting our example design on a regular piece of construction paper, we would set the material size to 8.5 x 11. If we were cutting on a scrap piece of paper, setting this wouldn't matter – only where we position our scrap piece on the mat matters.

Mirror: this allows you to mirror your design. This is often important when working with heat transfer vinyl – it needs to be cut out backwards so that it can then be flipped over and heat applied to your item. If you're working with a symmetrical shape like a heart, this wouldn't matter – but of course does matter when working with text!

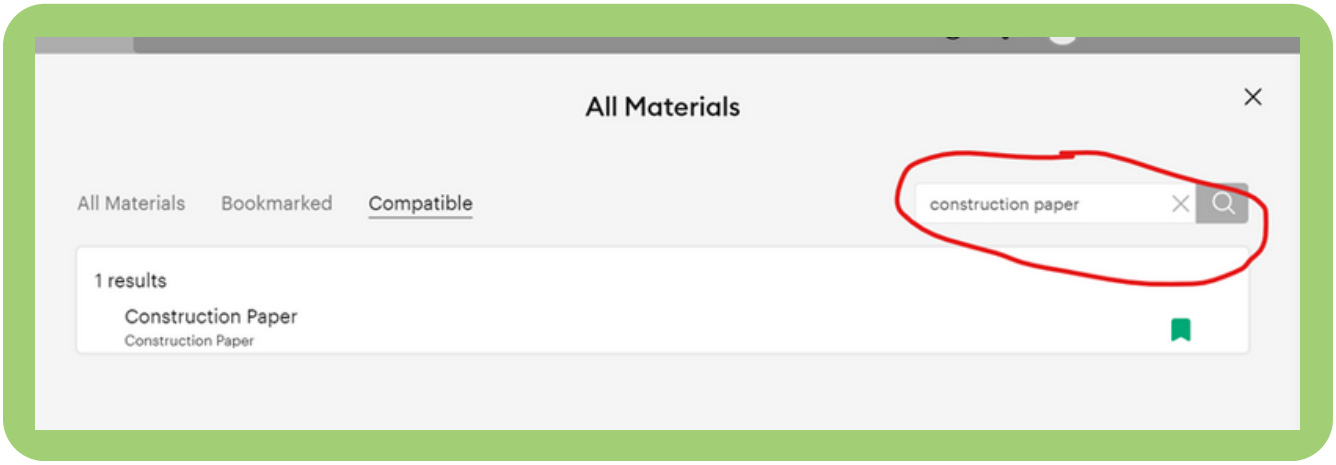


Next we can press the Continue button to move on to the cut settings!

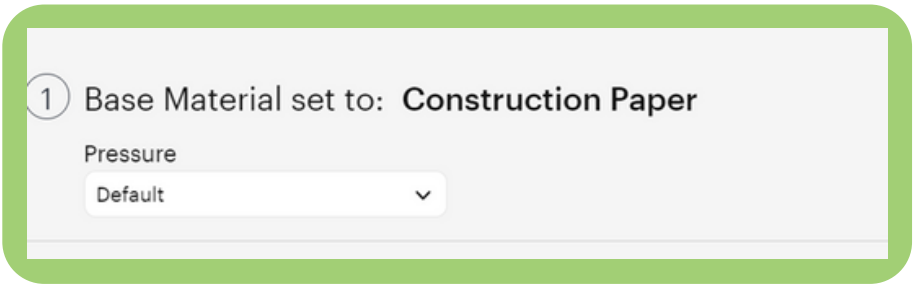
At this stage, we have to connect to our machine. Open the Cricut and press the power button. Plug the USB cable into your laptop. Click the dropdown menu beside "Connect machine", and choose Maker 3 USB. You may also connect via Bluetooth (no cable), if the option is available for you.



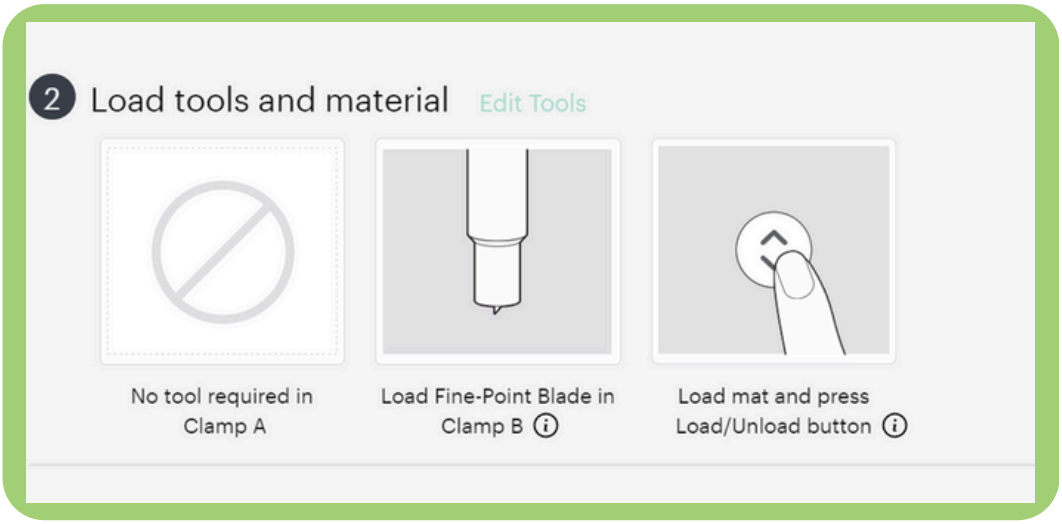
Next, set the material you are working with. If it is Cricut brand material, click "Browse All Materials" and search for the material. If you are working with off-brand material, you will have to research what setting to use. Off-brand material meant to be compatible with Cricut machines will usually include directions for which settings to use. For this example, we will use "Construction paper".

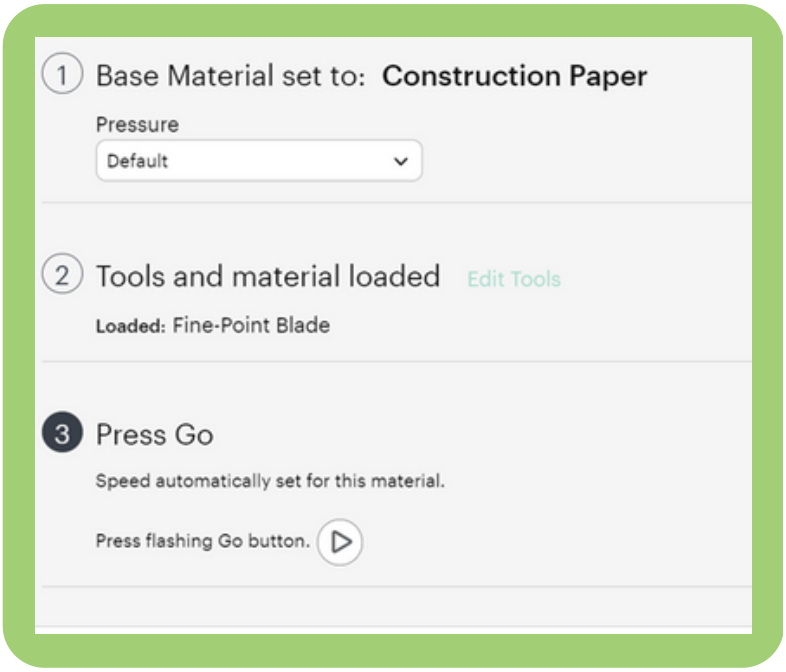


Once you have your material selected, you will see a dropdown menu for Pressure. Usually you will leave it set to Default. If you have tested this setting before and found it needs a slight adjustment, you can choose "Less" or "More" on the dropdown.



You will now see Step 2 become visible. The software will guide you through this step. By default, the fine-point blade will already be in Clamp B. Ensure your material is correctly placed on your mat and load it into the machine, making sure the corners of the mat are under the white guide clips and touching the grey rollers. Then press the Load/Unload button.





The Cricut will load the mat and measure the mat. Once it is finished, the "Go" button (looks like a Play button) will start flashing. If you are ready, press the "Go" button. The machine will now auto cut your project.

Once it is finished, the machine will stop and the Load/Unload button will start flashing again. Press the button and the machine will eject your mat. Now you can weed your material and use it in your project!

Weeding Tips

Weeding is the process of removing the excess bits of material that you don't need for your project. Here are some examples of weeding and next steps you will have take for a few different common materials:

Paper Crafts

Simply peel your paper off the mat and dispose of or save the excess pieces you do not need. Proceed to craft with your cut out pieces.

Adhesive vinyl

- Weed away the excess material using a weeding pick tool or tweezers.
- Carefully remove the cut vinyl pieces from the backing and stick to your material, or if you have a design with many pieces you want to keep together (like a word), use transfer tape.

If using transfer tape, leave your cut vinyl on its backing.

- Cut a piece of transfer tape slightly larger than your design, and carefully stick it on top of your design. Use the scraper tool to apply pressure to the transfer tape so it sticks well to your design.
- Peel away the backing from the vinyl, ensuring your design sticks to the transfer tape.
- Next, position your design over the object you are adhering it to, and stick it on. Burnish it using the scraper tool again to ensure your vinyl sticks to the object.
- Lastly, carefully peel away the transfer tape, and your design will be left behind on the object!

Heat transfer vinyl

- Weed away the excess material using a weeding pick tool or tweezers.
- Leave the cut vinyl on its backing.
- Pre-heat your material using the heat press
- Position the design over your object (tshirt, bag, wood slice, etc.), and press it on firmly
- Place parchment paper over the entire object
- Press the design to your object using recommended time and heat settings