

Cricut User Guide

Cricut User Guide



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Table of Contents

Introduction to the Cricut.....	2
Cricut Specifications.....	2
Cricut Tools.....	3
Fine Point Blade.....	3
Deep Point Blade.....	3
Knife Blade w/ Drive Housing.....	4
Rotary Blade w/ Drive Housing.....	4
Engraving Tip w/ QuickSwap Housing.....	6
Scoring Wheel Tips for QuickSwap Housing.....	7
Hand Tools.....	8
Changing the Blades.....	9
Step 1.....	9
Step 2.....	9
Step 3.....	10
Step 4.....	10
Preparing & Loading the Mat.....	11
Step 1.....	11
Step 2.....	11
Step 3.....	11
Software.....	12
File Types.....	12
Last Steps.....	12

Introduction to the Cricut

The circuit is a precise, but limited, cutting tool for paper, fabrics, and other flat materials. With a sharp knife, it is able to cut uploaded patterns onto the material of your choice, similar to having a printer print on paper of your choice. When properly used, prints are quick, clean, and repeatable. When not, hours of frustration and wasted material are to be expected. While the Cricut is not a particularly dangerous machine, as opposed to our laser cutter, good etiquette is important to ensure longevity of both the machine and your sanity.

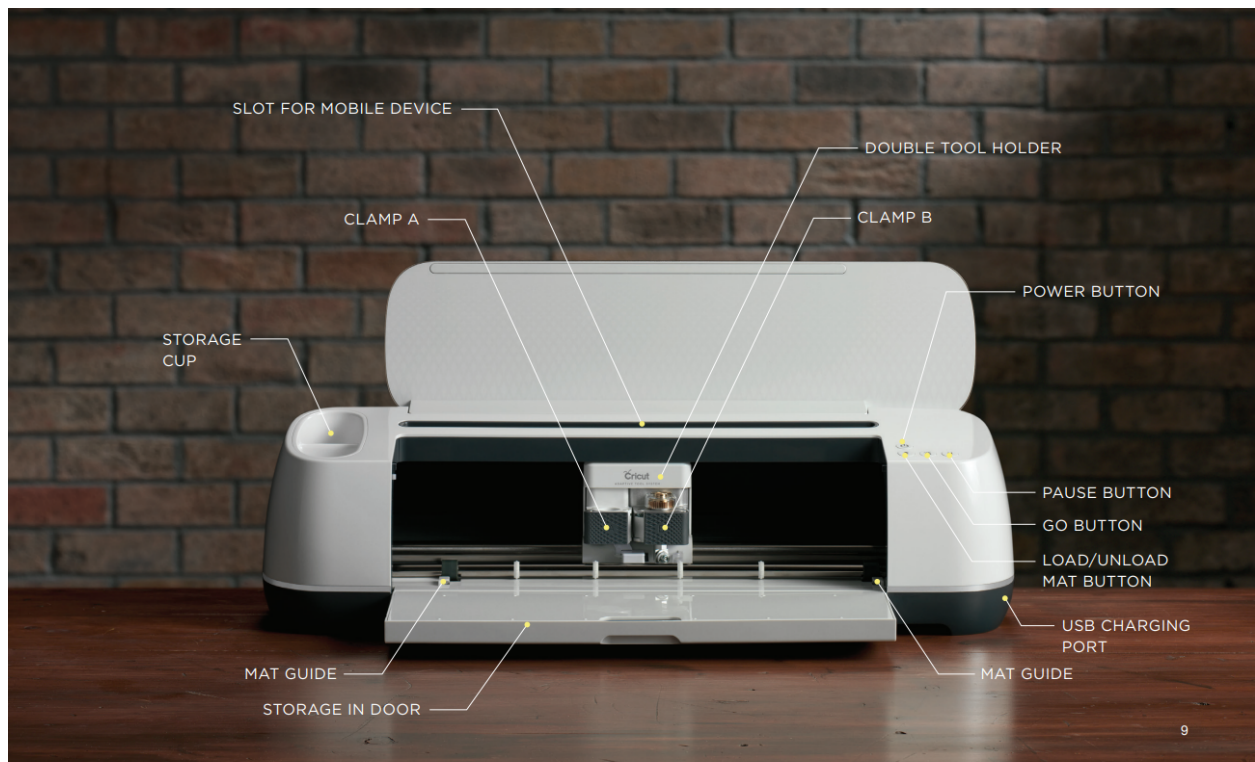
Cricut Specifications

Our machine: Cricut Maker 3

Cutting/Engraving Area: 12"x12", or 305x305mm

Max resolution: 144 DPI

Max material thickness: 3/32", or 2.4mm



Cricut Tools

For the purpose of this guide, we will define a *blade* as the tool that cuts, engraves, or otherwise makes an impression on your material as the machine cuts. Our machine, the Maker 3, comes with 5 different blades.

Fine Point Blade

The Fine Point Blade is the default blade that you will normally find installed in the Cricut. It will cut most light- to medium-weight materials.

Appropriate Fine Point Blade materials include:

- Cardstock
- Vinyl
- Faux leather
- Iron-on
- Poster board



Deep Point Blade

The Deep Point Blade cuts most material up to 1.5 mm thick.

Appropriate Deep Point Blade materials include

- Magnet
- Chipboard
- Stamp material
- Thick cardstock
- Stiffened felt
- Foam sheets
- Cardboard



Knife Blade w/ Drive Housing

The heaviest of the cricut blades, the knife blade is suitable for thicker projects such as balsa wood, leather, and craft foam. Think of making puzzles, leather goods, and assembled 3D toys. Due to its strength, it is not recommended for details smaller than $\frac{3}{4}$ ". Keep in mind that this blade *absolutely cannot* cut materials over $\frac{3}{32}$ ", save for basswood. For thicker projects, we recommend you use our laser cutter instead.



Appropriate Knife Blade cutting materials include:

- balsa wood, up to $\frac{3}{32}$ "
- basswood, up to $\frac{1}{16}$ "
- tooling leather, up to 7 oz
- garment leather, up to 5oz
- Cricut® Chipboard, 2mm
- matboard, 2-ply or 4-ply
- craft foam, up to 3mm

Rotary Blade w/ Drive Housing

The rotary blade is used for cutting fabrics. Due to the wheel design, it can also cut delicate materials such as tissue paper. Avoid going smaller than $\frac{3}{4}$ ", as smaller images than this may cause the blade to scrape on sharp turns, leading to gouges in the mat and blade.



Appropriate Rotary Blade materials Include:

- Cotton
- Corduroy
- Felt
- Flannel
- Fleece
- Jersey
- Nylon
- Terry-cloth
- Cashmere
- Velvet
- Silk
- Satin
- Faux fur
- Taffeta
- Tweed
- Sailcloth
- Lace
- Chintz
- Chiffon
- Crepe
- Tulle
- Mesh
- Tissue paper
- Burlap
- Canvas
- Denim
- Suede
- Flex Foam
- Khaki
- Monk's cloth



Engraving Tip w/ QuickSwap Housing

The engraving tip is used for engraving material.

Appropriate Engraving Tip materials Include:

- acrylic (Under 1/8")
- aluminum pet tags & sheets (Under .5mm)
- copper (40 gauge)
- anodized aluminum
- leather
- poster board
- vinyl records
- heavy watercolor paper



Note: The engraving tip CANNOT be used on glass.



Scoring Wheel Tips for QuickSwap Housing

This tool creates smooth and clean creases in your material to allow for easy folding. Best for origami and other 3D paper crafts. For thinner materials, use the single wheel, marked by “01”; it will create one line. For thicker materials, such as cardboard, 80lb cardstock or bristol board, utilize the double scoring wheel tip, marked by “02”; it will create two.



Appropriate Scoring Wheel materials Include:

- wrapping paper
- foil paper
- cardstock
- vellum
- cereal boxes (*use the double wheel*)
- craft foam (*use the double wheel*)
- cardboard (*use the double wheel*)



Hand Tools

Beyond the blades available, we also have a supply of cricut-branded hand tools that can assist you on your project.



Spatula: Carefully remove materials from your cutting mat.



Weeder: Poke out tiny cuts, or pierce small holes.



Scoring Stylus: Score fold lines for paper crafts.



Seam Ripper: Cut and remove small stitches.



Thread Snipper: Quickly cut threads.



Tweezers: Lift small and delicate pieces of material.



Scraper: Clean off scraps of paper off of the cutting mat after job completion.

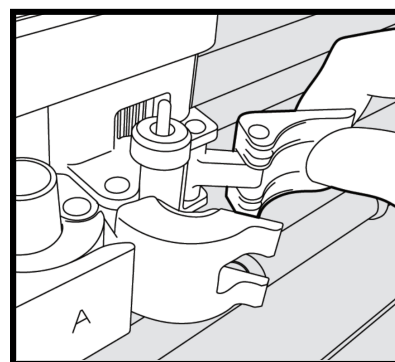
Changing the Blades

By default, the Fine Point Blade, our most versatile one, will be loaded in the Cricut. If your project requires a different blade, ask a consultant for assistance or carefully follow these instructions.

You'll find the collection of blades in the yellow cabinet beneath the Cricut in a labeled bin.

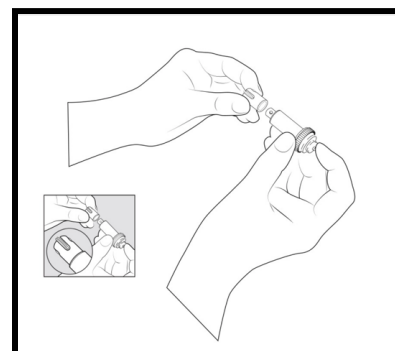
Step 1

Open Clamp B and remove the existing blade. Put it back in the bin, taking care to ensure it is properly protected from damage.



Step 2

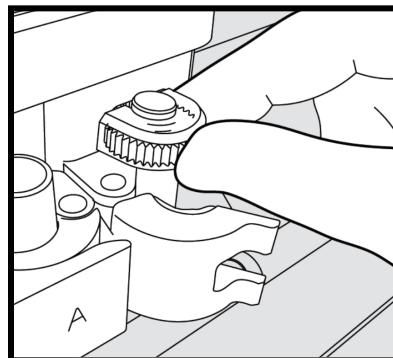
For #01 Scoring Wheel, #02 Double Scoring Wheel and #41 Engrave Tip only, Locate the QuickSwap Housing. Press and hold plunger on top of the Housing to release the existing tip, if there is one.



1. Gently remove tip.
2. Locate the one you'd like to use
3. While pressing plunger, align flat areas inside with flat sides of housing, then slide tip into place. Ensure tip is firmly seated against the housing.
4. Release plunger to secure tip in place.

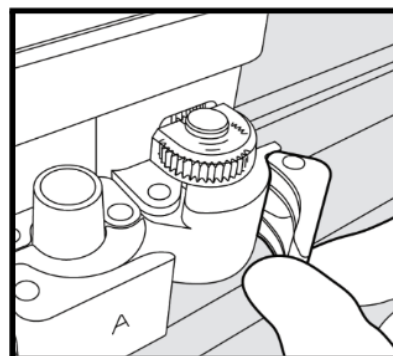
Step 3

Place your chosen blade in Clamp B, ensuring that the housing is seated on the top surface of the clamp. For Rotary, Knife and QuickSwap blades, make sure the gears fit together.



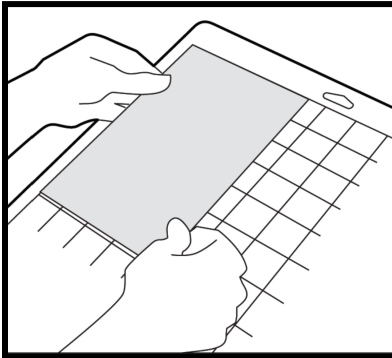
Step 4

Close the clamp. You are now ready to go!



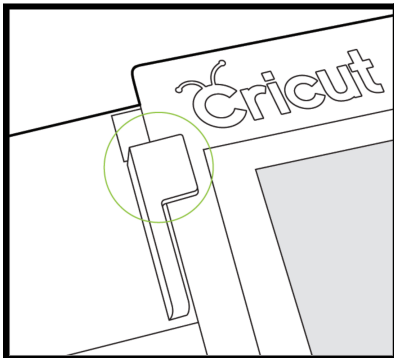
Preparing & Loading the Mat

The Cricut mat is key to ensuring your materials do not slip during cutting. Its sticky surface provides a surface for your material to adhere to. If there is not one already loaded, here's how.



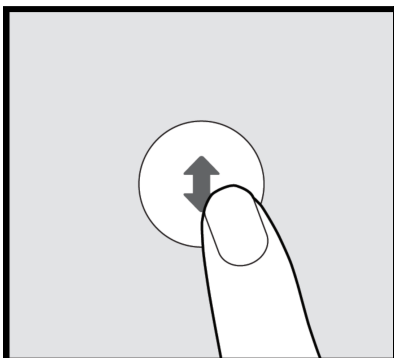
Step 1

Place material on the mat inside the grid. For fabric, roll it with a brayer to ensure that it's held down smoothly and securely



Step 2

When prompted, position mat underneath mat guides.



Step 3

Keeping the mat pushed firmly against rollers, press the flashing Load/Unload button.

Software

You will be using Cricut's own software to prepare your print, Cricut Design Space. It can be found and downloaded at design.cricut.com. It will need to be downloaded on your own laptop that you then plug into the Cricut with the available USB cable

File Types

Design Space gives you the ability to upload your own images and convert them into cuttable shapes. It can accept unprepared, full color images and convert them to black and white for cutting. There are two different types of uploaded images: Basic and Vector.

- Basic images, also known as raster images, include **.jpg, .bmp, .png, and .gif file types**. These files are uploaded as a single layer, and you can edit the image during the upload process.
- Vector images include **.svg and .dxf files**. These cut ready images that upload as designed. Files designed with layers will automatically be separated into layers after uploading and saving.

Because Design Space includes lightweight design features, it is not necessary to use outside programs. However, if you would like to design your cut further, Adobe programs such as Photoshop or Illustrator are free for students to use.

Last Steps

After ensuring the correct blade is installed, preparing your file, and loading your material, you can hit print. As always, if you need any assistance, any of our consultants can help you. Enjoy the Cricut!