

Edible Machine Cutting 101

So you have edible printing down pat, or you're getting better at it with every project. What's next? Take your decorating to the next level by entering the realm of machine cutting! Cutting out an edible image by hand is easy—but can be time consuming—especially with shapes other than rectangles and circles. By adding a Cricut Explore from Icing Images to your decorating workflow, and a little practice, you will blow yourself away with the possibilities of what you can create. Cricut Explore is the best way to get started because you need zero graphic design skill to get amazing and precise results. In this Live, we will tackle the question that turns many decorators onto edible machine cutting, “How the heck do I decorate several dozen cookies or cupcakes with the client's logo without losing my mind?” Today we are going to put the tools in your hands to answer this question and push your decorating skills further!

The [step-by-step guide on the last page](#) is perfect for reference! If you don't have one already, start a binder with cheat sheets like (and the [other ones](#) I have provided for you). You will be amazed at how much information you will have at your fingertips right when you need it if you start!

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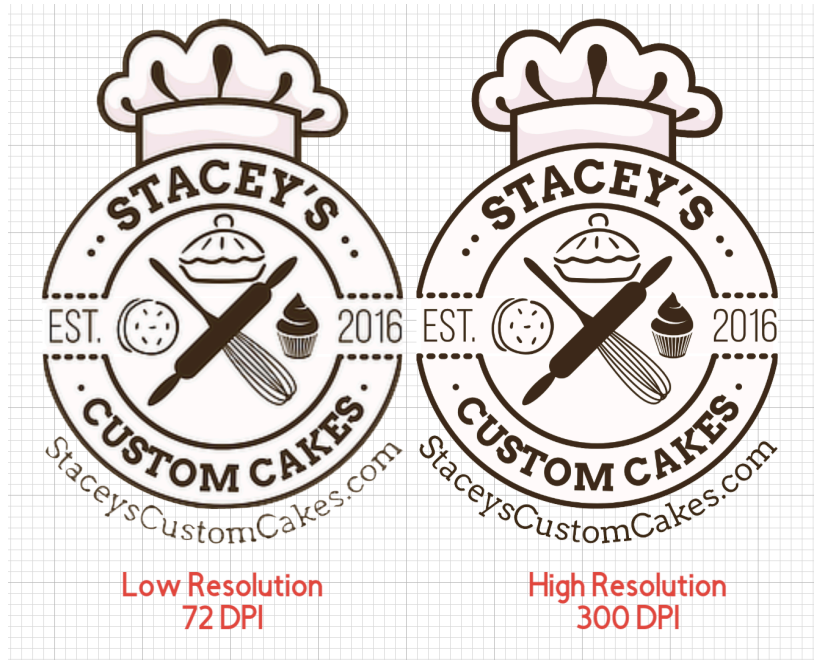
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What Makes a Good Edible Image?

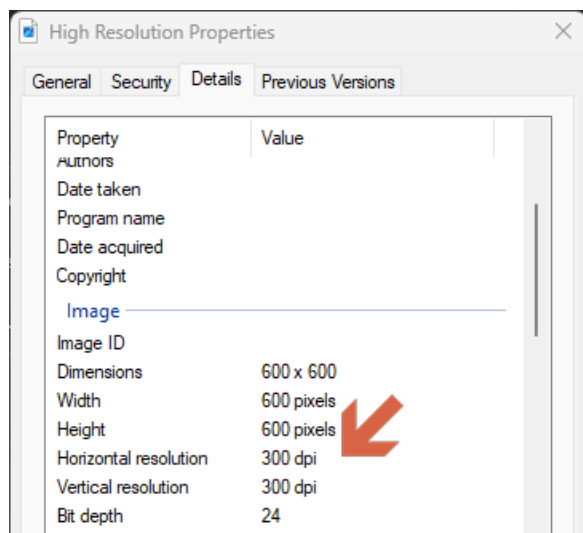
The Image Must Be High Resolution

1. Anything greater than 200 DPI (Dots Per Inch) is ideal, but 300 DPI is even better.
 - You must avoid 72 and 86 DPI, these only look good on screen!

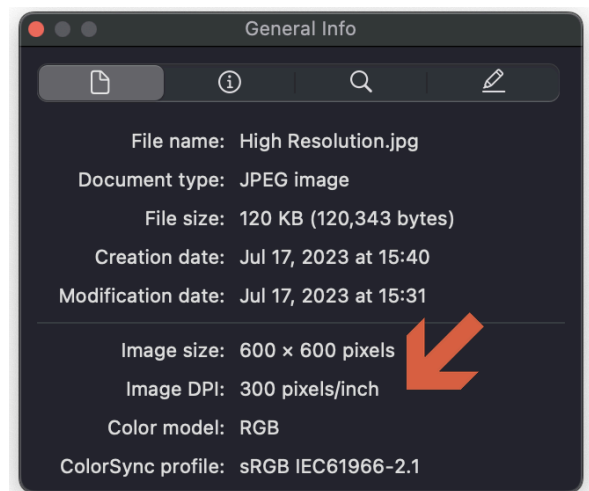


Note how “crunchy” the text looks on the low resolution version!

2. Not sure what the resolution is? You can open the file in your favorite image editor (Affinity Photo, Photoshop, GIMP, etc.) to find out, or you can view the file properties.
 - **Windows 11**: right click the image filename, and select **Properties**. Look under the **Details** tab in the properties dialog.
 - **macOS**: open the image in Preview, and select **Tools** > **Show Inspector**.



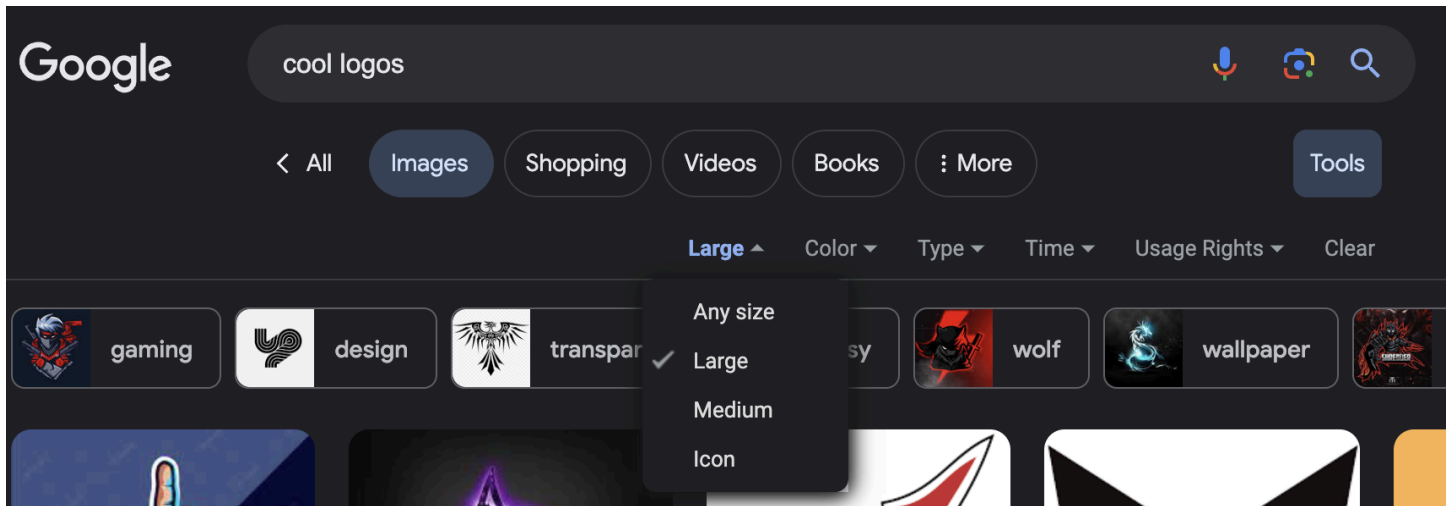
Windows 11, file properties dialog showing a 300 DPI image (called horizontal/vertical resolution).



macOS Sonoma, General Info dialog showing a 300 DPI image in the Preview app.

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3. When using Google Image search, select **Tools**, and set image size to **Large** to help filter out low resolution images.
 - You can also set **Type** to **Clip Art** or **Line Drawing**, but I suggest using this if you cannot find what you are looking for just by setting the image size to large first.
 - Other image search engines such as Bing also have similar options for filtering search results.



Using the Tools menu when doing image searches can be a huge help!

Raster vs. Vector

1. **Raster images use individual pixels** to store the data in the image, similar to a cross stitch or diamond painting artwork.
2. **Vector graphics use mathematical equations** to store the image data.
3. The key difference is vector images may be scaled up and down infinitely without any loss of quality!



Image filetype makes a big difference, too!

1. Cricut Design Space supports many filetypes, but not all are ideal for edible printing.
2. Some images contain transparent areas.
 - When viewing an image with transparency in a web browser, you may see a light or dark background. In an image editing program, the transparent areas may have a checkered background.
 - Transparency can range from 0% (fully transparent) to 100% (fully opaque), and can create interesting designs when layered on top of other images.
 - For the purposes of edible printing, think of transparent and white as the same thing. There is no white ink, so the printer will ignore these areas!
3. Raster images should not be scaled larger than 100%, it can make the print blurry.
4. Vector images can be scaled an unlimited amount up or down!

Filetype	Raster or Vector?	Transparency?	Ideal for edible printing?
JPG and JPEG	Raster	No	Yes, when high resolution
PNG	Raster	Yes	Yes, when high resolution
SVG	Vector	Yes	Always!
HEIC	Raster	Yes	Yes, when high resolution
GIF	Raster	Yes	No

How You Print the Image is Critical!

1. Do **not** use word processing programs like Microsoft® Word or presentation software like Microsoft® PowerPoint.
 - These programs are not designed for printing high quality images, and may downgrade your image quality automatically without you even knowing it.
2. Icing Images edible printers work really well with Canva.
3. Icing Images also has iPrint available on their website.
 - If you have trouble using iPrint with Google Chrome, try using Firefox.

You can avoid all the hassle of printing when using Cricut Design Space! Cricut Design Space was created for printing high quality images, and produces great results.

Making Great Cuts Using Cricut Explore

Make sure you are using the correct media size!

1. Cricut Explore is pretty smart, but it cannot tell what size media you load into it.
2. Use this chart to make sure you have the correct size selected.

Material	Size	Comments
Premium Icing Sheet	Letter, A4, A3	Platinum and Little Blue printers may use Letter and A4 Genesis , Big Blue , and Big Blue XL printers required for A3
Premium Wafer Paper	A4	Same settings for AD and DD types
SmArt Sheet	A4	
FlexFrost	Letter	
CelloSheet	A4	

Graphic art skills are helpful, but not at all necessary!

1. If you want to create your own images, apps like Canva can be very helpful. Just be careful to keep in mind the maximum Print Then Cut size Cricut Design Space can handle:

Media Size	Max. Print Then Cut Size when using Cricut Design Space
Letter	6.76" x 8.11"
A4	6.72" x 8.06"

2. Don't be afraid to make test cuts!
 - 2.1. An easy way to check your design (and save a couple dollars) is to print your image using regular paper. You can then cut the image out to make sure it will look the way you want.

Not using your Icing Images edible printer this week? Get a jump start on your next project by using plain paper to test your print. Remember that you want to use your printer at least once a week, printing a color-rich image that covers 40% or more of the page to avoid printhead clogs!

Step-by-Step Guide to Print Then Cut using Cricut Design Space

To help you find your way easier, specific menus and commands are formatted like this.

1. Start a new project.
2. Select **Upload** from the toolbar on the left.
3. Select **Image** from the two options at the top.
4. Select **Upload Image**.
5. You can drag and drop the image into Cricut Design Space, or you can click **Browse** to locate the image.
6. You will now see a preview of the image.
 - a. The checkered area indicates transparent portions of your image.
 - b. Select image type allows you to tell Cricut Design Space how to treat your image.
 - i. The descriptions are quite helpful.
 - ii. For most Print Then Cut designs, I use Complex.
 - iii. If you don't like the result, you can always start over.
 - c. Select **Continue**.
7. **Background Remover** helps you define where the background is.
 - a. If you are working with high resolution graphics, this should be easy as the graininess or noise in the background of low resolution graphics will not be an issue.
 - i. The border where the checkered area meets the image is where the image is cut.
 - ii. If you regularly work with photographs, you may want to consider subscribing to Cricut Access. The automatic background remover is quite excellent and almost magical.
 - b. If you have a PNG with a transparent background or SVG image file, this will bypass almost all issues you are likely to encounter with the background.
 - c. Select **Apply & Continue**, even if you haven't made any changes.
8. Select **Print Then Cut Image**, give it a name, optionally add to a collection, then finally click **Upload**.
 - a. The **Cut Image** preview is a great way to make sure your background removal achieves the look you want.
9. Select your new image, then select **Add to Canvas**.

Rule of Thumb: Cricut Design Space will import your image at its maximum size. You can safely scale an image down, but you cannot safely scale an image up unless the image is a SVG!

10. Make duplicates of the image if you need more than one, or add other images to be printed. When you are ready, select **Make It**.
11. Select the options relevant to your project
 - a. Material sizes based on Icing Images products:
12. Select **Continue**.
13. Follow the step-by-step instructions to print your image, then cut it out.
14. Tips and tricks for applying the final image to your food were discussed in a previous Live, and you can watch the replay on my site [here](#).