

— Silhouette 101 —

# 12 QUICK HOW-TOS

A dozen must-try ways to use your Silhouette cutting machine

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# Introduction

Once you've got the paper cutting down, you should take a look at Silhouette's line of creative materials. With these materials, you'll be making one-of-a-kind projects in no time!

So what kinds of materials does Silhouette offer? Great question! In this eBook, we're going to show you not only what kinds of materials are available but also how to use them. Some materials you'll feed directly into your Silhouette machine, and others just act as embellishments for your projects. Most of these materials even have starter kits, which include all of the tools you need to complete your project.

This eBook will help you navigate the nuances of creating projects with even more materials and give you the step-by-step instructions you need to succeed. So let's dive in and see what we can create!

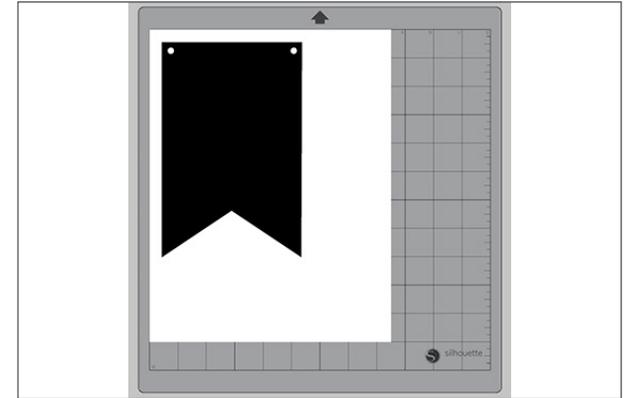
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## Adhesive Materials

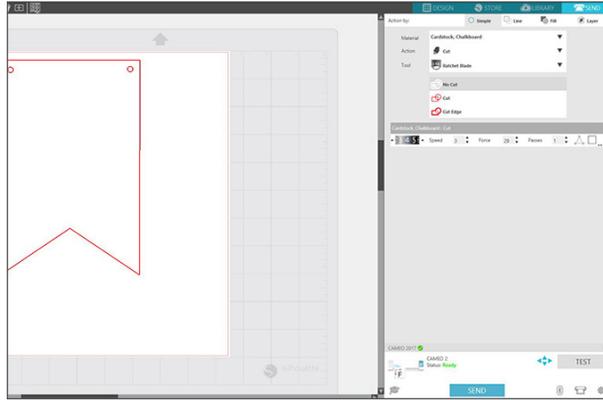
The Silhouette machines can cut materials with an adhesive backing. This makes creating your paper-related projects super easy because you can cut what you want, and then it's ready to go—no need to worry about extra glue.



1. Open design in Silhouette Studio®.



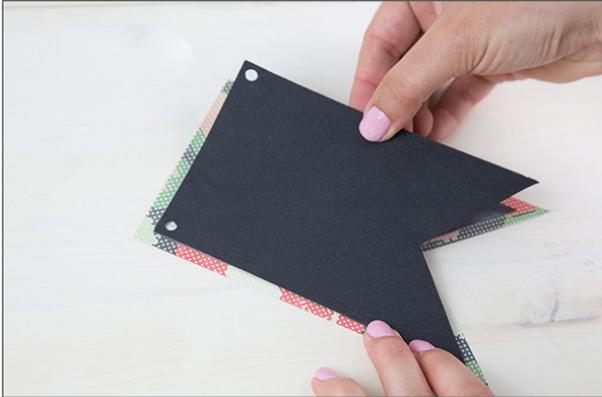
2. Place the adhesive-backed material (in this case, chalkboard cardstock) on your cutting mat.



3. Load the cutting mat with the material into your Silhouette.

4. Select your media in the Material menu in the Send panel, manually adjust your blade accordingly, and proceed to cut out your design.

5. After your design is cut, remove the project from your Silhouette and carefully pick up the pieces of your design.



6. Apply the design to your project.



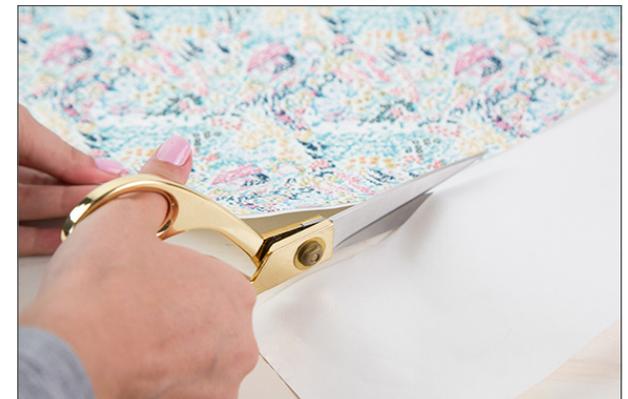
## Cutting Fabric

Did you know that you can make the perfect fabric cutouts with your Silhouette? It's pretty amazing, and it will revolutionize your fabric projects. Get a precision cut every time. You'll never want to go back to using scissors again!

To cut fabric, you will need to apply some type of fabric stabilizer. Fabric is not rigid enough on its own to cut, even with a cutting mat. We offer three types of fabric stabilizers — clean cut, cut and sew, and wash away.



1. Open design in Silhouette Studio®.



2. Cut a piece of fabric that is larger than your design. Cut a piece of fabric stabilizer that is the same size as your material.



3. Iron together the back side of the fabric with the rough side of the fabric stabilizer.



4. Let your fabric and stabilizer cool. Trim off any excess fabric on the edges.



5. Put your fabric on your cutting mat with the right side of the fabric facing up.



6. In the Send panel, choose "Fabric" as your material type. Send your design to your Silhouette. Use a fabric blade to get the cleanest cut.



7. Unload your design and remove it from the mat.



8. If you used Fusible Fabric Stabilizer, you can now iron your cut fabric onto whatever surface you are working with. If you used Cut and Sew fabric stabilizer, your fabric is ready to sew. If you used Wash Away, wash your fabric with soap and water and then let it dry.

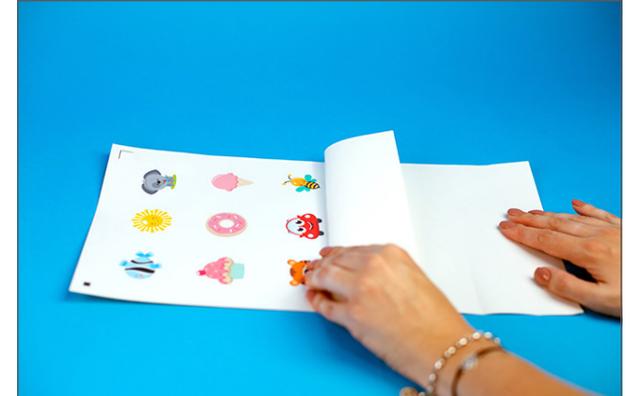


## Doming Stickers

If you're looking to add a fun, 3D effect to add to your stickers, look no further than Doming Stickers. Once you print your stickers, you'll add a special epoxy over the top of the stickers that hardens. And voila! The perfect customized stickers that everyone will be admiring.



1. Open or create a design in Silhouette Studio® and print it with registration marks turned on. Allow the ink to dry before proceeding.



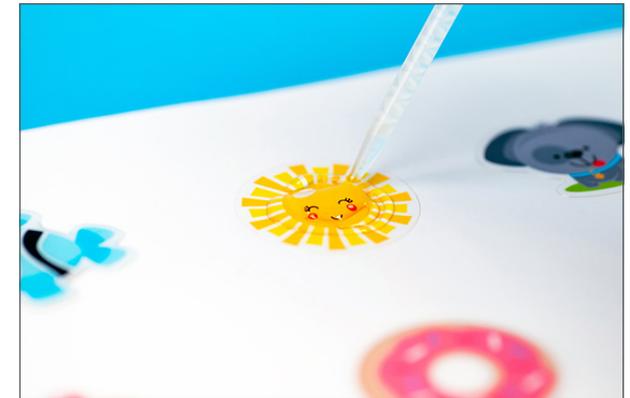
2. **Apply a laminate sheet over the printed page if using white sticker paper.** Use a scraper tool to carefully smooth the laminate sheet as it is applied to prevent bubbles or creases.



3. Proceed to cut your project using the appropriate cut settings. (Keep in mind that you need to increase your blade depth by one if you applied a laminate sheet to your page.)

4. Weed away the excess material from around your designs, leaving just your cutout stickers on the sticker backing.

5. Set your sticker sheet on a flat surface.



6. Fill the A and B syringe chambers with equal amounts of the corresponding A and B epoxy resin solutions.

7. Attach the syringe tip and prime your syringe by squirting out a small amount of epoxy resin (about 1 inch in diameter) onto a scrap piece of paper. This ensures that your syringe will apply an equal mixture of the A and B solutions.

8. Slowly apply the epoxy resin onto the surface of your cutout design, starting from the outer edge and moving toward the inside of the design. Be careful not to over-apply the resin as the resin may overflow off the edge of your cutout design.

Use the provided toothpicks to spread the resin for more complicated designs and also to remove excess air bubbles.



9. Allow the resin to set for 12 hours to fully cure and harden.

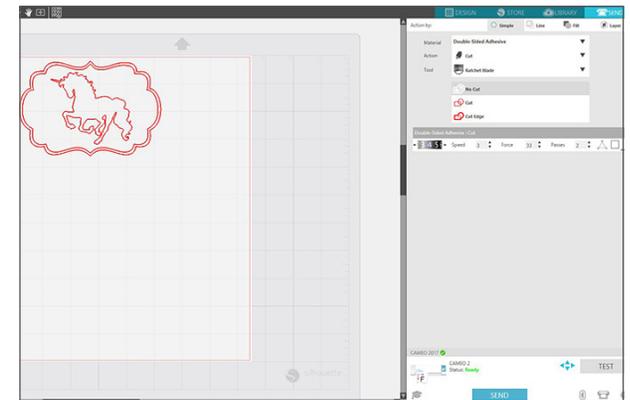


## Double-sided Adhesive and Glitter

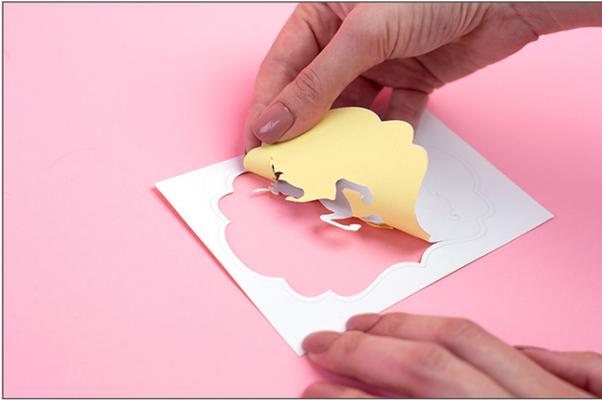
To create your own intricate glitter or flocked designs, use the double-sided adhesive. Simply cut your design out of the double-sided adhesive, place it on your chosen surface, and add the glitter or flocking powder. When your design is ready, you can add it to a scrapbooking page, a card, or any other project you can think of!



1. Position a double-sided adhesive sheet onto your cutting mat with the white side up and feed it into the Silhouette.



2. Open the design in Silhouette Studio®. In the Send panel, select "Double-sided Adhesive" as your material. Adjust the blade as indicated (unless you use an AutoBlade) and click "Send."



3. Remove your project from the cutting mat. Make sure that all excess internal pieces are weeded out.



4. Remove the yellow liner from the back of the design. Make sure not to remove any adhesive from the white liner.



5. Carefully place the design into position with the white liner facing up and press into place. Be careful, because double-sided adhesive forms a very strong bond and should only be used for permanent applications.



6. Remove the white liner, making sure that all the adhesive transfers cleanly.



7. Liberally apply glitter (or flocking powder) to cover the adhesive design.



8. Gently brush away excess material. You can brush the glitter right back into the jar.



9. The adhesive is very strong so use your glitter on a variety of projects.



## Fabric Ink

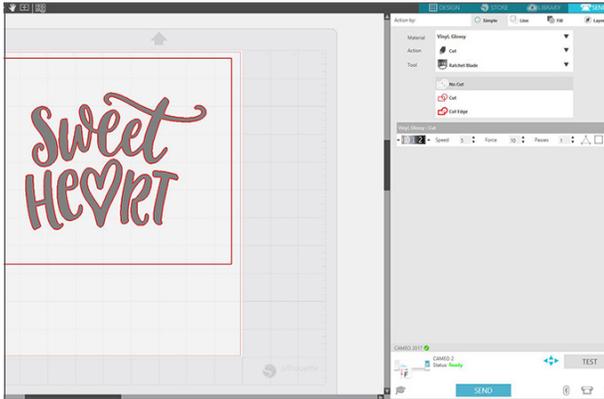
Make your own t-shirts and other custom designs to put on fabric surfaces. All you need is stencil vinyl and some fabric ink! Silhouette's Fabric Ink resists cracking and peeling, is soft once it is dry, and won't wash away.



1. Open your design in Silhouette Studio®. Remember that you are using this design as a template, so you might want to draw a rectangle or square around your design to make it easier to weed out the design and leave the negative space.



2. Feed the stencil vinyl directly into the Silhouette cutting machine. Make sure you go to the Page Setup panel in Silhouette Studio® and choose "None" as your mat option. You can also use a cutting mat to cut the stencil vinyl.



3. Under the Send panel, select "Vinyl, Glossy" as your material type. Adjust the blade if necessary, and click Send.

4. Weed the design (or remove the unneeded vinyl) to create the stencil. Remember not to remove the negative part of the design or the centers of any letters.

5. Apply transfer tape on the weeded stencil vinyl and remove it from its backing.



6. Place the vinyl on your project. Press down firmly and carefully remove the transfer tape.

7. Place a thick piece of cardstock under the material you are going to apply fabric ink to in order to prevent ink from bleeding through. Apply regular Silhouette fabric ink on the design. Use a paint brush or sponge to apply the fabric ink. When you are applying ink, be careful and not go over the stencil borders. Let the ink dry.

8. Remove the stencil vinyl.

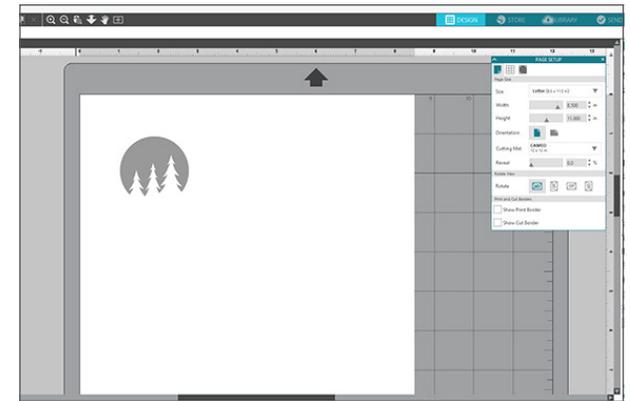


9. Place a piece of cloth on the top of the fabric ink design and iron on top for a couple of seconds to set the ink.

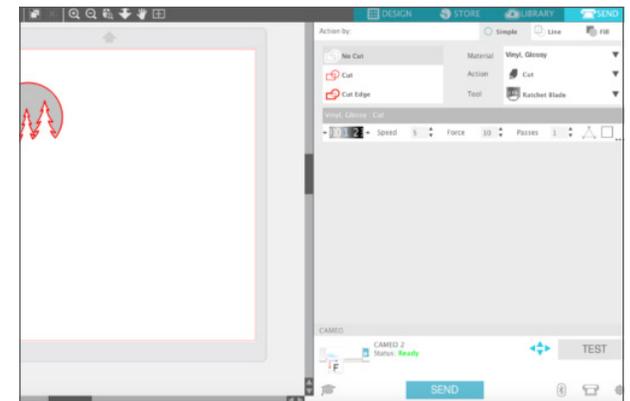


## Glass Etching

If you're looking to etch designs onto glass, mirrors, porcelain, or ceramic, you can make that happen with stencil vinyl and glass etching cream. All you have to do is make your stencil using your Silhouette machine, add that design to your surface, and use the glass etching cream to etch the design. It's really easy!



1. Open design in Silhouette Studio®. Make sure you have plenty of room on the sides of your design to protect the surrounding glass. (If you don't, you can place painters tape around the outside of the vinyl to prevent any etching cream from getting onto the glass.)



2. Load the stencil vinyl into your Silhouette. Select "Vinyl" from the Material drop-down menu in the Send panel, adjust the blade to the suggested settings, and click "Send."



3. With the Silhouette hook tool, carefully remove the design from the vinyl, creating a stencil from the negative space. It can be tricky, but be sure you think “backwards” and remove the actual design.

4. Apply transfer tape over your design and use the scraper to remove any bubbles. Remove the vinyl backing. Make sure all the pieces of the stencil adhere to the transfer tape.

5. Apply the adhesive side of the vinyl to your clean, dry glass. Smooth the vinyl over the glass with the scraper tool, removing any bubbles.



6. Once you have the vinyl really secure, peel away the transfer tape. Make sure all the pieces of the stencil remain on the glass.

7. Using a cotton swab or the scraper tool, apply a thick and even layer of etching cream to the exposed glass. Let the cream set for 30 to 60 seconds. Wear protective gloves when working with glass etching cream and don't get it in your eyes!

8. Carefully scrape the remaining cream back into the bottle. Wipe away any residual etching cream away with a paper towel and wash the glass thoroughly.



9. Peel the vinyl off the surface of the glass.  
Remove any fingerprints with glass cleaner.



## Heat Transfer

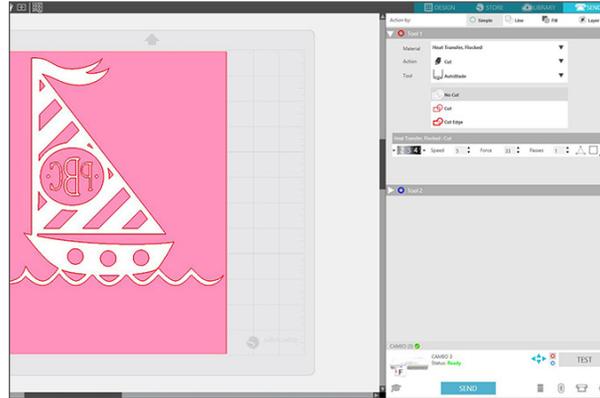
With heat transfer, you can customize any fabric surface you want! It's great for t-shirts, bags, pillowcases, and even tea towels. Silhouette has lots of different types of heat transfer for any projects you'd like to do, and the great thing is all of them have the same basic cutting and application processes.



1. Open design in Silhouette Studio®.



2. Load your heat transfer into your Silhouette. Heat transfer is lined, so if your piece is large enough, there is no need to use your mat. But, if you have a smaller piece, place it on your cutting mat and load.



3. Before you send your design to your Silhouette, make sure to MIRROR IT. Don't forget or all of your text will be backwards. The easiest way to do this is right-click your design and select "Flip Horizontally."

4. Choose "Heat Transfer" in the material drop-down menu located in the Send panel and manually adjust your blade, if necessary, to the recommended settings shown. Send your design to your Silhouette.

5. Once your design is cut, unload it. Weed your design. That is, peel off the extra vinyl and leave your mirrored design on the clear backing.



6. After the design is weeded, place it on your desired surface. Use an iron (or a heat press) to adhere the vinyl. We recommend using a piece of light-weight fabric between the iron and the vinyl.

7. Peel off the transfer sheet.

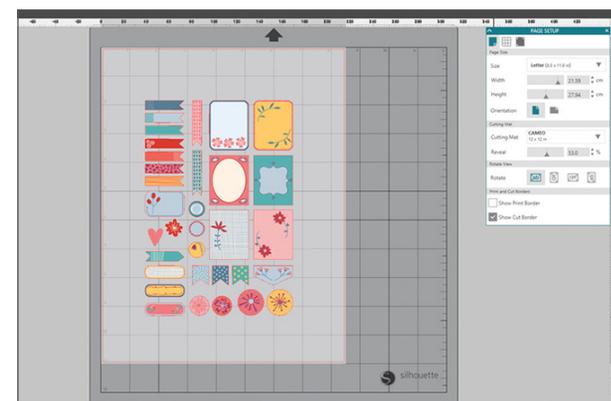
8. That's it! If you placed it on something you are going to wear, make sure to turn the garment inside out when you machine wash it.



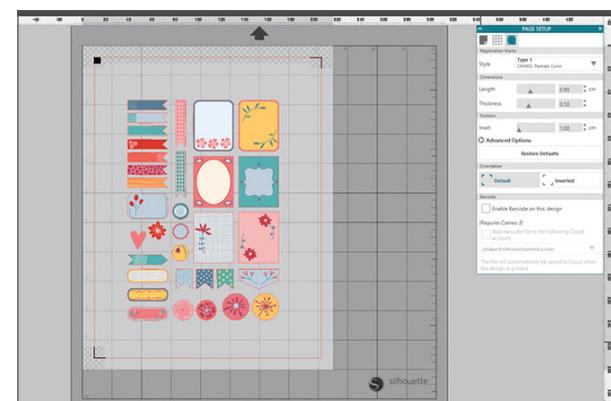
## Print & Cut

A Print & Cut image has two parts: a design you will print with your home printer and corresponding cut lines you will cut with your Silhouette. Though the cut lines will show in Silhouette Studio®, they will not be printed.

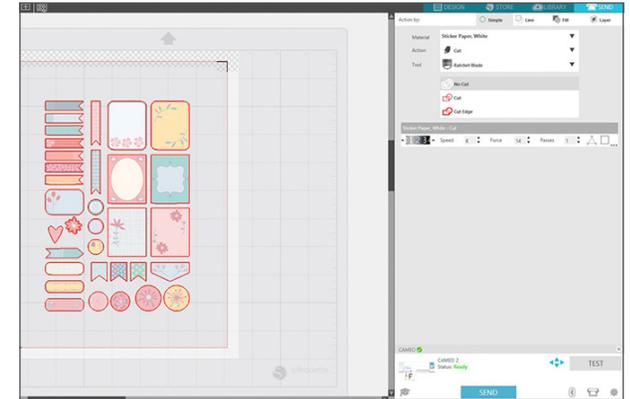
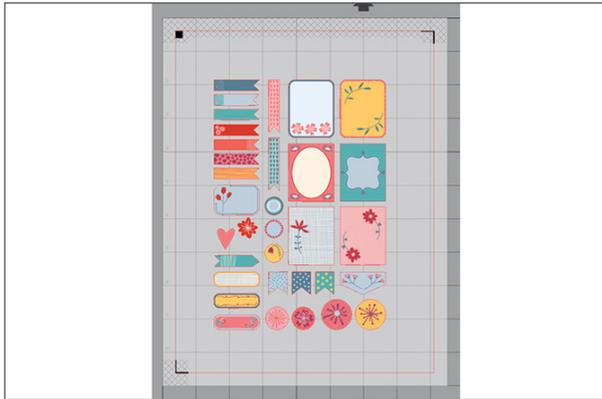
In addition to regular printer paper and cardstock, there is a large selection of Silhouette materials that can be used with the Print & Cut feature, including printable heat transfer material, printable foil, printable sticker paper, printable magnet paper, printable tattoo paper, printable cotton canvas, and printable adhesive kraft paper.



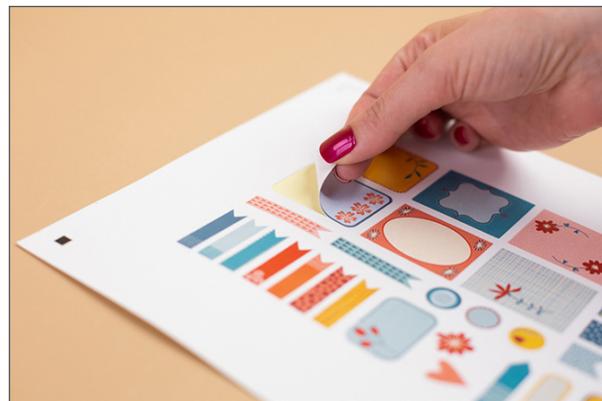
1. Open your Print & Cut design in Silhouette Studio®. Make sure your workspace matches the size of paper you will be printing on.



2. Click on the Registration Mark icon located along the upper right-hand toolbar and select the style of registration marks. Type 1 is standard (which is what you will most likely use), and Type 2 is for older machine models.



3. You will note that there are now crosshatched areas on three corners of your workspace. Make sure that your design does not overlap into the crosshatched area, or your Silhouette will have trouble reading your registration marks.
4. Once your design is ready to go, print your job to your regular printer by clicking on the Print icon in Silhouette Studio®. Make sure you have loaded your material into your home printer correctly, whether it is cardstock or a specialty material. Here we are using printable foil.
5. Load your printed material into your Silhouette using a cutting mat. Select the appropriate material from media list of the Cut Settings panel and adjust your blade accordingly.



6. Click "Send" and your Silhouette will begin scanning the page for the printed registration marks. After the registration marks are found, the Silhouette will proceed to cut as usual.
7. Unload your material and complete your project.

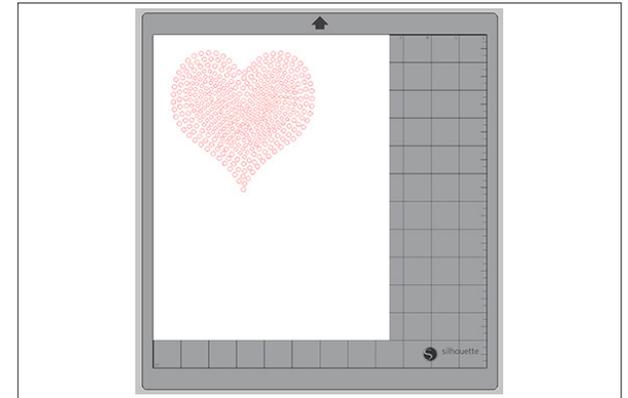
**Silhouette Pro Tip:** Are you using metallic materials for a Print & Cut? We suggest leaving the registration marks at the default settings and increasing the force to the max.

**Silhouette Pro Tip:** If your machine fails to read your registration marks, you can choose to "retry manually" in the Send panel. Use the arrows to position the carriage above the marks and select "Register." After the machine registers the mark, it will cut like usual.



## Rhinestones

If you have Silhouette Studio® Designer Edition or higher, you have the option to create rhinestone designs using your Silhouette machine. All you need to do is cut your design out of the template material, add your rhinestones, and transfer the rhinestones to your fabric. It's really easy to add some sparkle!



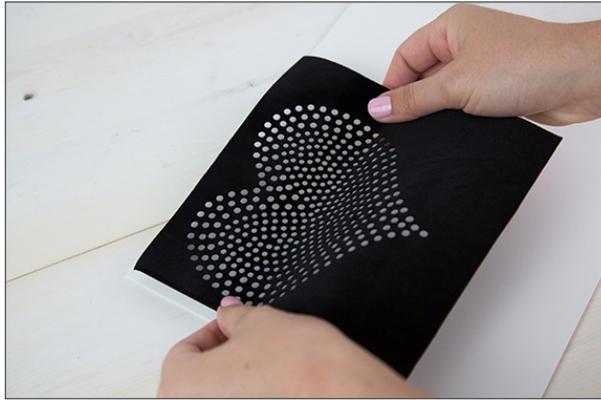
1. Create your design in Silhouette Studio®.



2. Load your template material into your Silhouette. In the Send panel, choose "Rhinestone Template Material." Cut out your design.



3. Peel the black material off of the white. It works best to do it quickly.



4. The black material is your template. Add it to your rhinestone backing board.



5. Pour your rhinestones onto your design.



6. Gently brush the rhinestones into the template holes. Use the Pick-Me-Up® tool to place individual rhinestones.



7. Once you have all of your rhinestones positioned face-up in your template, cover the design with a piece of transfer tape. Press firmly to adhere all of the rhinestones.



8. Lift your rhinestones attached to the transfer tape and position them on your project.



9. Place a cloth over the design and iron your rhinestones into place. Your iron should be on the “wool” setting and you should hold it for 45-60 seconds.

10. Remove the cloth and the transfer tape.

**Silhouette Pro Tip:** Turn your project inside out (if you can) and iron the back side of your design. It will help your glue stick better.

Do not resize rhinestone designs. Each tiny circle will fit an individual rhinestone.

Depending on your version of Silhouette Studio®, you will have different rhinestone options. With Basic Edition, you will need to use a rhinestone design from the Design Store. With Designer Edition, you have options to create your own design using the Rhinestone icon. With Designer Edition Plus, you have access to Advanced Rhinestones, which opens up many more possibilities.



## Shrink Plastic Sheets

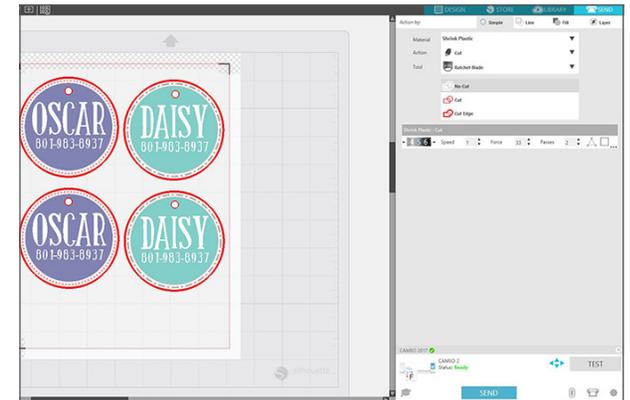
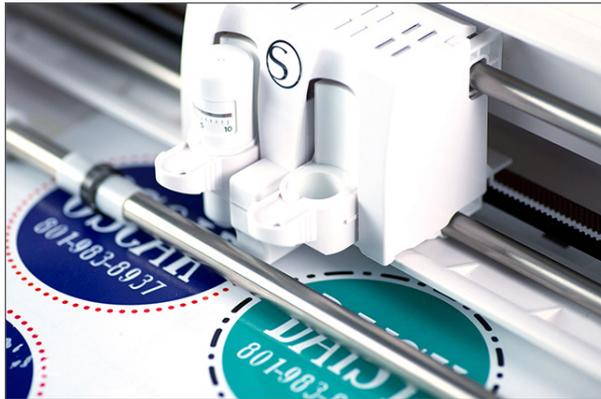
Using shrink plastic sheets is an easy way to create custom jewelry, key chains, cupcake toppers, and more! Create and cut your design using the Print & Cut feature and then bake the plastic so that it shrinks and becomes thicker.



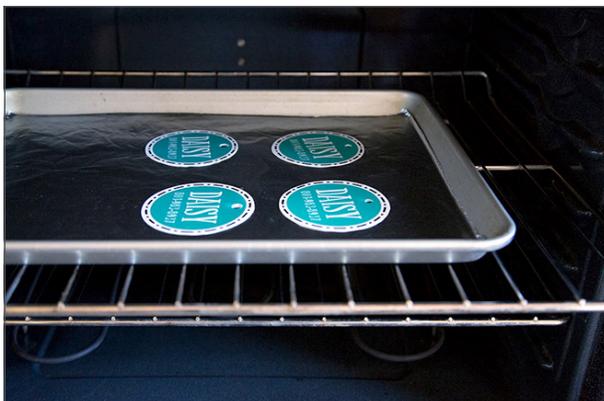
1. Open or create your designs in Silhouette Studio®. Resize them. Keep in mind that a baked piece will be approximately three times smaller than a printed one, as shown above.



2. Add a circle to each design for the jump rings to go through. If you are using shrink plastic for the first time, add a couple of extra designs that you can use as test items. Also, make sure to turn on the registration marks (found in the Page Setup panel).



3. Feed the shrink plastic sheet into your home printer. (Tip: For the best results, print your design using the low-quality printing settings to lighten the designs and prevent them from becoming too dark after they are baked.)
4. Place the printed sheet on your mat and feed it into your Silhouette machine.
5. In the Send panel, choose "Shrink Plastic" as your material type. After cutting the designs, remove the designs from the cutting mat.



6. Preheat the oven to 290–325° F (140–160° C). The baking process takes about 2 minutes. When you see that the plastic is small and flat, quickly remove the baking sheet from the oven, and immediately press the plastic down with a flat tool.
7. Remove the piece from the cookie sheet and repeat each process with each piece you have.

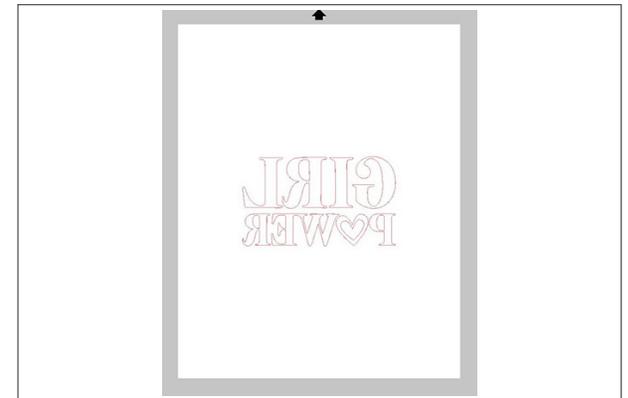


## Silkscreen Printing

With the Silkscreen Printing materials, you can create templates out of silkscreen material and heat transfer that you can use to apply fabric ink to fabric surfaces. The best thing about the silkscreen printing is that you can use the silkscreen templates over and over again, so it's a great option if you're looking to make a lot of prints with the same design.



1. Assemble the frame by aligning the numbers in each corner and securing with the provided fasteners. Be sure that the frame insert groove faces out.



2. Make sure to mirror the design in Silhouette Studio® before cutting it.



3. Cut out your design from the heat transfer sheet. It is recommended that you center the design on the heat transfer sheet and ensure that your design measures 7.5 by 10.5 inches or smaller in order to fit the frame properly.

4. Weed away the design (not the negative space) from the heat transfer material in order to create your stencil.

5. With the heat transfer material glossy side down, place the silkscreen sheet on top and then iron for 20–30 seconds using the standard cotton setting.



6. Once cooled, remove the glossy heat transfer liner.

7. Cut a 2-by-2-inch square from each corner to allow the stencil to be secured in the frame.

8. With the silkscreen side facing down, place the frame on top of the completed stencil and secure it into place by folding the edges upward around the frame and securing with the frame inserts.



9. Place the frame with the silkscreen side facing down onto your fabric. NOTE: You should always practice on a spare piece of fabric before you commit to your final project to ensure proper technique and ink usage.

10. Apply a line of fabric ink horizontally above the stencil spanning the width of the design. For best results, be sure to use enough ink to avoid having to make multiple passes. Some practice may be required.

11. Using the squeegee tool, spread the ink down the stencil in a top-to-bottom direction using a smooth, uninterrupted motion. For best results, spread the ink in a single pass. If repeat passes are required, spread the ink in the same direction.



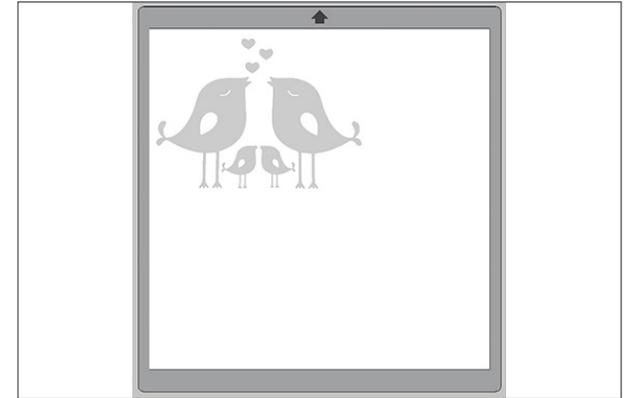
12. Lift the frame and the stencil off your fabric. Allow the fabric ink to dry and then set the ink by ironing.

Rinse the stencil with water or wipe it with a damp cloth every 5-10 uses as needed in order to avoid clogs in the silkscreen. When finished, rinse the stencil and store it in a dry location for repeated use.



## Vinyl

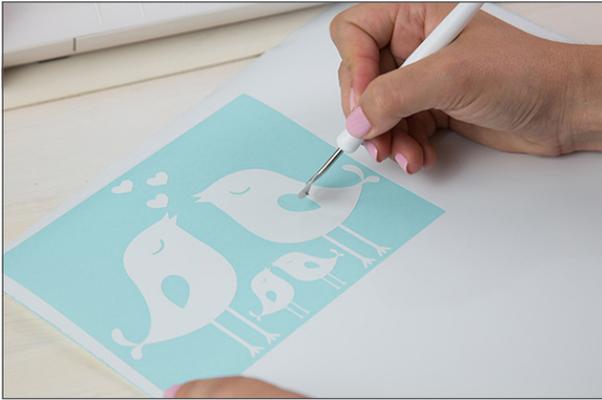
If you've been looking for the be-all and end-all material when it comes to cutting machines, it's vinyl. You can use vinyl on home decor signs; as vinyl decals to put on cars, jars, mugs, or phone cases; or as stencil material for painting or glass etching. Silhouette has all types of vinyl for you to try out, so you'd better get started! Don't forget to pick up some transfer tape to help you apply all that vinyl!



1. Open design in Silhouette Studio®. Select "Vinyl" in the Material tab in the Send panel.



2. Load the vinyl into your Silhouette. A cutting mat is not necessary. However, if your vinyl piece is smaller than what the rollers can adjust to you will need to use a cutting mat. Click "Start."



3. After your image is cut, remove the vinyl from your Silhouette. Weed (peel away) the negative space, so all that remains on the vinyl backing is your design. Now to get it onto your project. See instructions below.

### Applying vinyl with transfer paper and the hinge method

1. Start by cutting your design out of vinyl. Weed your design.

2. Cut a piece of transfer paper or tape big enough to cover your entire design.



3. Remove the backing from your transfer paper. Using a Silhouette scraper, apply the transfer paper to the vinyl. Press it down hard so it evenly adheres to the transfer paper.

4. Move your vinyl to your project and place it where you want. Place a piece of tape down the middle of your project. This will act as the "hinge."

5. Gently pull up one side of your design. Remove the vinyl from the adhesive backing.



6. Use scissors to cut away the adhesive backing from that one side.



7. Press your vinyl onto the surface. Use a scraper to press out any bubbles.



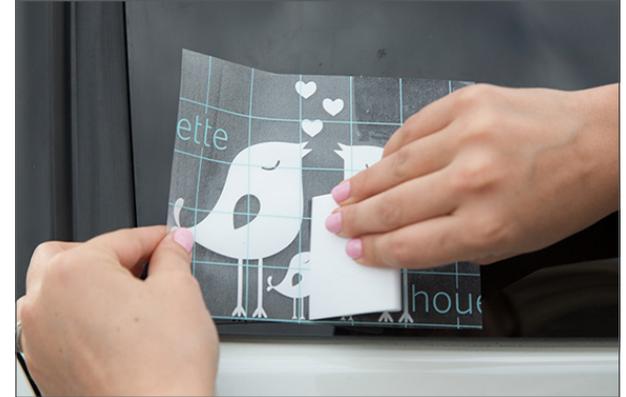
8. Remove the tape from the middle.



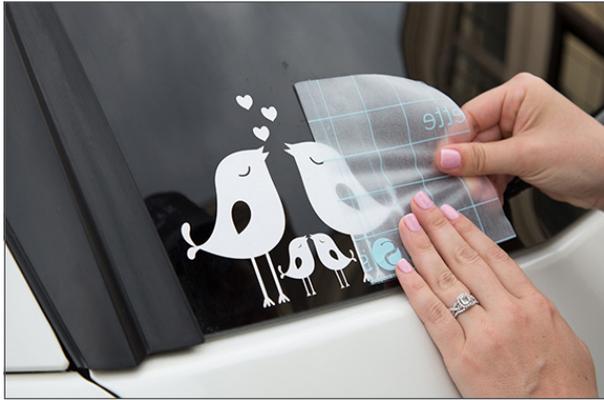
9. Gently fold back the other side of your design.



10. Remove the adhesive backing from that side.



11. Press that side down onto your surface. Use a scraper to adhere it and press out bubbles.



12. Remove the transfer paper. Be careful to make sure all of the vinyl sticks to your surface.



13. You perfectly aligned your project.

**Silhouette Pro Tip:** If you have a small design, you don't need to use the hinge method to apply your vinyl. Simply place your design on your project like a sticker and peel off the transfer paper.

## Conclusion

Now that you know what kinds of materials Silhouette offers, you can expand your creative horizons in the best way possible. Before you know it, you'll be creating new projects like there is no tomorrow, and you won't want to stop!

If you'd like to learn more about how you can use these materials or if you'd like to be inspired, don't forget to follow Silhouette on our social media channels. And don't forget to check out [Silhouette101.com](http://Silhouette101.com) for project or software how-tos to help keep yourself in the know!