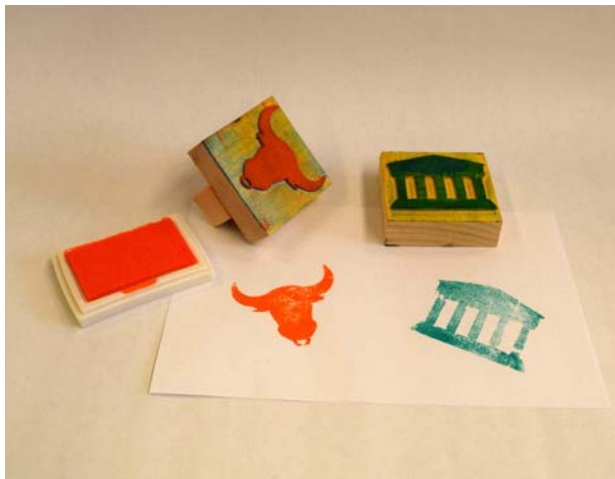# Foam Stamps

Maker Project

Shapes cut from foam sheets become the part of the stamp that's traditionally made with rubber.

Glue the foam to a block of wood, press it onto an ink pad and make your mark wherever you like!

Use this project in any academic area

Station Activities

Storytelling

Acknowledge Achievements

Foreign Language

Scavenger Hunts

Unit Conversions

Parts of Speech

??

MIT

MAKE

Passport Stamps

Use online resources to represent real-life objects through a stamp

Make my Mark

Turn unique hand-drawn images into personalized stamps

Foam Stamp Materials

- Craft foam 1/16" (1.5mm) thick

- Sturdy base (wood block)

- Paper and a bold marker

- Glue or other strong adhesive

- Ink pads

- Tape

cricut

Cricut Design Space

- Vinyl Cutter

  - Cricut Explore Air 2 (select *Cricut Explore Family* in the design space)

  - Deep Cut blade

- Cricut Design Space software

  - *available on Windows, Mac, iOS, and Android*

Foam Stamp Steps

1
Create a shape

by hand or using online resources

2
Cut the shape out

in craft foam
using a vinyl cutter

3
Attach to a sturdy base

like a wood block
using an adhesive

Foam Stamp Steps

Create a shape

A. Passport Stamps

Use **online resources** to represent real-life objects through a stamp

B. Make My Mark

Turn unique **hand-drawn images** into personalized stamps
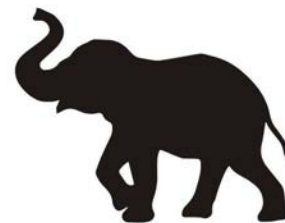
Passport Stamps - Find Image

Find a shape from an online resource

- Use royalty free images for anything that will leave the school environment
- Add "**royalty free**" to your image searches
- Look into educator accounts on resources like **The Noun Project**, **Adobe Express**, and **Canva**

Download the shape in almost any format

- Cricut Design Space takes all common image types
- JPEGs, PNGs, SVGs, and more

✅ Shapes must be:

- **Easily recognizable**

- **Solid shapes work best.**
    - Try adding "silhouette" to your search terms
    - Images don't have to be black and white

- **Able to be cut on the vinyl cutter**
    - Features should be at least 1/10" (2mm) thick
    - Overall size should be about 2"sq (5cm sq)
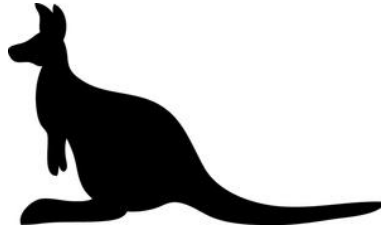
🚫 Avoid:

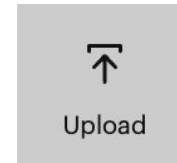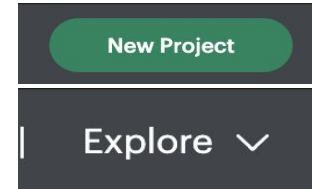- fine details that will be difficult for the machine to cut from foam

Which is more likely to cut well out of foam?

Import Image into Cricut Design Space

Upload your shape into Cricut Design Space

1. Create a **New Project** and ensure the program is set for the model of machine you're using: *Cricut Explore 2 (select Cricut Explore Family)*

2. Upload your image (left side menu), and move through Cricut image processing steps
    -   Image type: **SIMPLE**
    -   Click to remove backgrounds (or use REMOVEBG.com)
    -   **CUT** image (rather than Print then Cut Image)

3. then Add to Canvas and adjust as needed

1. Hand-draw or trace a solid image in bold marker

2. Take a photo of the image with a phone or webcam

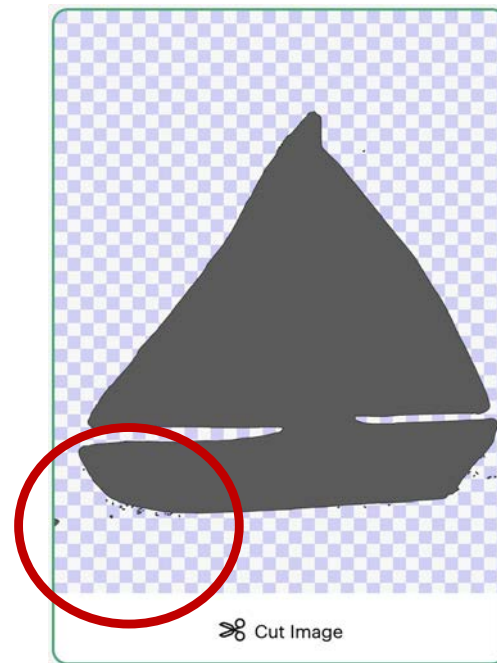3. Import into Cricut Design Space (see slide 11)

Make My Mark - Create Image

The Cricut image processing software is always improving, but isn't perfect.

Clean up imperfect images by turning them from pixelated images to SVGs (scalable vector graphics)

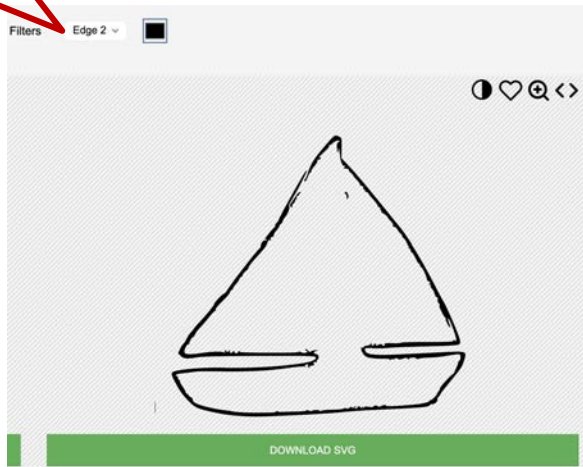Lots of online resources to convert images - we like PICSVG.com

Cut Image

Convert Images to SVGs

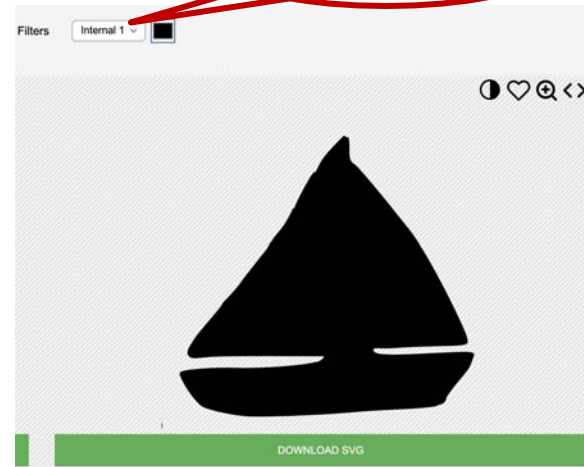Try the different filters to see what works best for your image.

- **The *internal* filters work well to create solid shapes.**

Then, download the SVG and upload into Cricut (see slide 11)
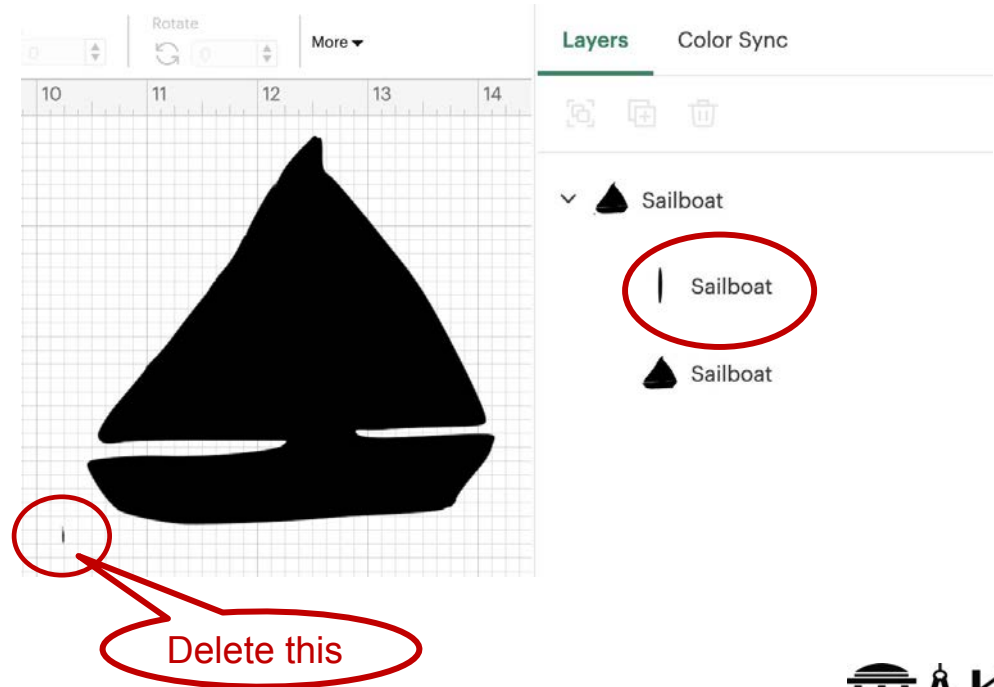

k12maker.mit.edu

Edit SVGs in Cricut

Now that your file is an SVG, you can edit each piece individually!

A few options:

- Right click to UNGROUP

- Edit or delete shapes in Layers Menu

- Resize, rearrange, realign, or remove on Canvas

When your shape is ready to go, hit **Make It**

Make It

Rotate

More ▾

Layers   Color Sync

Sailboat

Sailboat

Sailboat
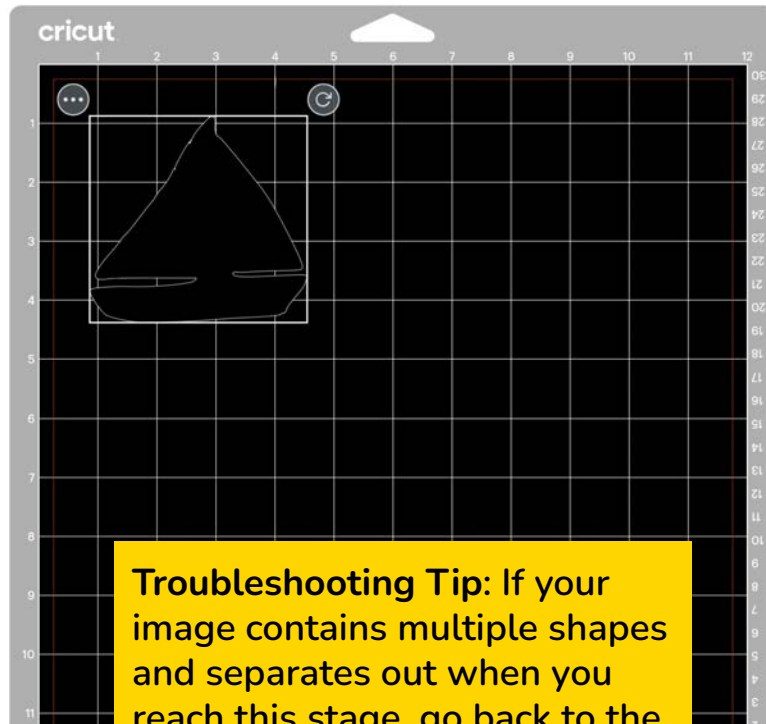
Delete this

k12maker.mit.edu

Make It!

Once you've hit Make It, a virtual cutting mat will appear.
(You may have to select "On Mat" to get here)

Arrange your object on the virtual mat where it should be cut out in real life.

It's best to avoid edges. When using foam, your images should be at least about an inch from the edges.
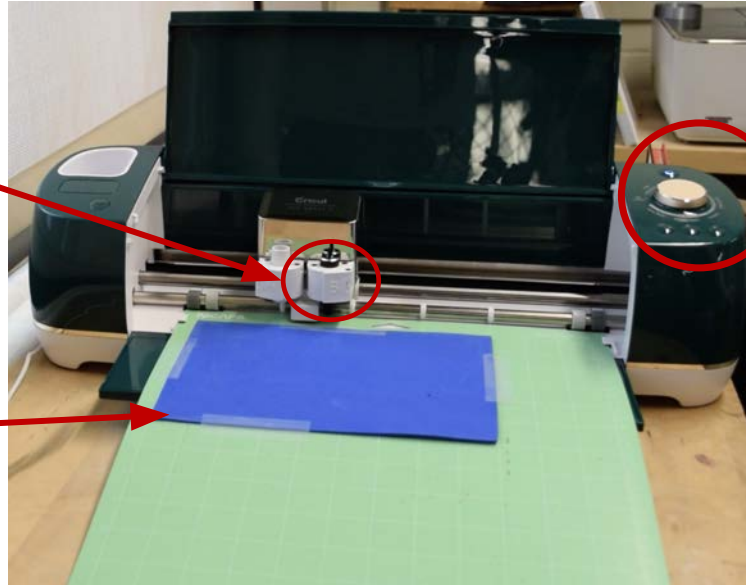

Troubleshooting Tip: If your image contains multiple shapes and separates out when you reach this stage, go back to the canvas, select all, and ATTACH objects.

k12maker.mit.edu

Cut out Shapes in Foam

Set up the Cricut machine and cutting mat...

Insert the DEEP CUT blade

Adjust the pressure dial to FABRIC

for some machines, this is a setting in the Cricut Design Space

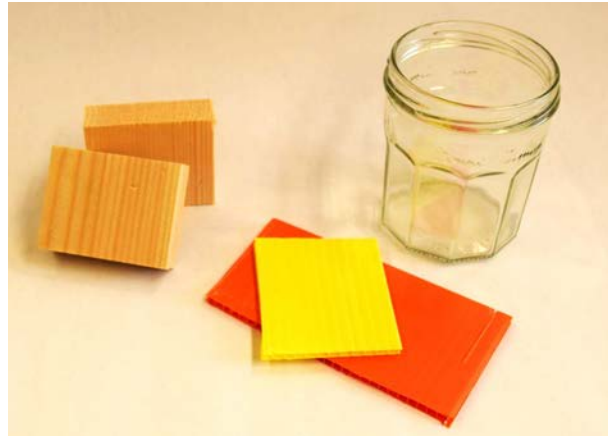Tape the foam in place on the cutting mat to prevent squishing or bunching

... then follow the flashing lights! LOAD ↕ and START

Attach Cut Out Shape to Base
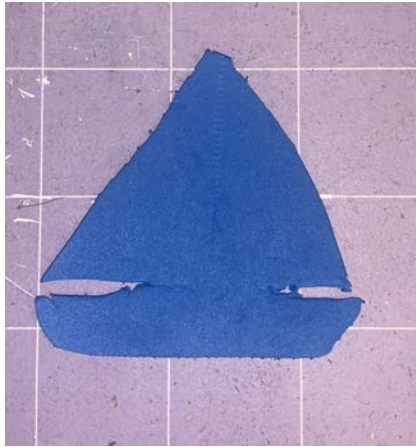
Foam shape

+

Mounting block

+

Adhesive

= STAMP!

k12maker.mit.edu
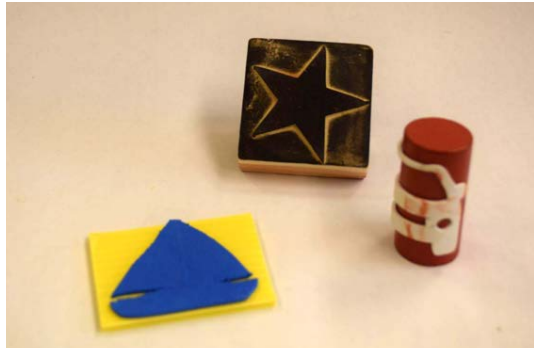
Let's see yours!

What we love about this project

- It incorporates graphic design and hand fabrication skills *into one project*

- Students must think critically to convey their intent through graphics

- It's collaborative

  - Many stamps can come together to create an intentional or spontaneous graphic display

- They're reusable

  - Students can create objects that can be used again and again for a variety of purposes in the classroom