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
- Scavenger Hunts
- Acknowledge Achievements
- Parts of Speech
- Unit Conversions
- Foreign Language
- ??
Sample Projects

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

- 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
Create a shape by hand or using online resources

Cut the shape out in craft foam using a vinyl cutter

Attach to a sturdy base like a wood block using an adhesive
Foam Stamp Steps

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
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
Passport Stamps - Find Image

✅ 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
Import Image into Cricut Design Space

Which is more likely to cut well out of foam?
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
Make My Mark - Create Image

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)
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
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)
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

[Image of a sailboat with a rectangle marked for deletion]
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.
Cut out Shapes in Foam

Set up the Cricut machine and cutting mat...

- Insert the DEEP CUT blade
- Tape the foam in place on the cutting mat to prevent squishing or bunching

Adjust the pressure dial to FABRIC for some machines, this is a setting in the Cricut Design Space

... then follow the flashing lights! LOAD ↑↓ and START 🎉
Attach Cut Out Shape to Base

Foam shape + Mounting block + Adhesive = STAMP!
Voila!

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