Help For

DIY VINYL DESIGNS

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Here is a super simple starter project to help explain how to use vinyl. I found this small tile at a local hardware store and wanted to add some vinyl to it.

Step 1: Cut your design. When I cut vinyl I use a cutting mat and use the suggested presettings in my machine. If you use a different brand of vinyl, you may have to adjust your settings accordingly. You want to cut through the vinyl but NOT through the backing sheet that the vinyl comes on (Kiss Cut). Cut vinyl side up.

Step 2: Weed the design. A hook tool is very useful to remove the extra vinyl that is not part of your design.

Step 3: Take the vinyl off the vinyl backing sheet. One of the easiest ways to move your design to the project surface is by using transfer paper. Transfer paper is a sticky paper that comes on a roll or in sheets. Cut a piece of transfer paper slightly larger than your design and smooth it over your design. Next, burnish the transfer paper onto the vinyl. You can use a bone folder, scraper, credit card, or the like to burnish your vinyl. This will help the vinyl stick to the transfer paper and help it come off the vinyl backing sheet.

To remove the vinyl backing sheet, turn your design over and work the backing sheet off by folding the backing sheet over on itself. If the vinyl refuses to stick to the transfer paper, burnish from behind and press the vinyl down as you go. You can also use a hook tool to help pick the vinyl off the backing sheet and help it stick to the transfer paper.

Step 4: Applying vinyl to surface. Once the vinyl is on your backing sheet, you can now transfer your design to your surface. Line up your design and then press it down to the surface.

Step 5: Take off transfer paper. Burnish your design onto your surface and then re-move your transfer paper. Fold the transfer paper back on itself as you remove.

Step 6: Let vinyl cure. To finish my design, I cut the i and u from green vinyl and placed it on the tile by hand. A very simple project but oh-so-cute! The final step in any vinyl project is to let the vinyl cure. Leave vinyl alone for at least 72 hours before handing it so the adhesive can fully adhere to the surface.

Step 7 (OPTIONAL)- Heat set your vinyl. While you should let your vinyl cure for 72 hours, you can also heat set your vinyl. I heat my vinyl designs with my embossing gun when done. This helps the adhesive stick better, and helps work out any air bubbles that might form. Just be careful, you can burn your vinyl by doing this, so keep watch!

Common Vinyl Terms Defined

Burnish: To rub over with a bone folder, scraper, credit card, etc. Done to help vinyl stick to surfaces and work out any air bubbles.

Glossy Permanent Vinyl (GP): AKA 651, used for out-door projects, heavily handled projects, cups, etc.

Kiss Cut: To cut through one layer and not another; cutting through vinyl but not the backing sheet.

Matte Removable Vinyl (MR): AKA 631, a lower adhe-sive vinyl used for indoor projects, home decor items or not-heavily handled projects.

**Transfer Paper:** Used to move vinyl designs from vinyl backing sheet to project surface.

Weed: To remove any unwanted portion of design. A hook tool is often used.

What dad wouldn't love tools for Father's Day? And who doesn't love to give or receive a personalized gift? This hammer is easy to make with just a few supplies and -bonus- it's easy on the budget too!

First you'll need a hammer. This can be any hammer- grab a used one from Goodwill or go shopping for a new one at the hardware store- just make sure you pick up a wooden handle hammer. My hammer has seen better days, but it will work perfect for this project!

1) Grab some sand paper and give the hammer a good sanding. You want to take the finish off the handle so your paint will stick. When it doesn't look shiny anymore, you know you're there.

2) Once you've sanded, grab some paint and paint on a thin layer. Just about any brand of paint will do, in this case I used some left over house paint. This step doesn't need to be perfect, just one coat will do. (This is a great step to let the kids help you with!)

1

sand

2
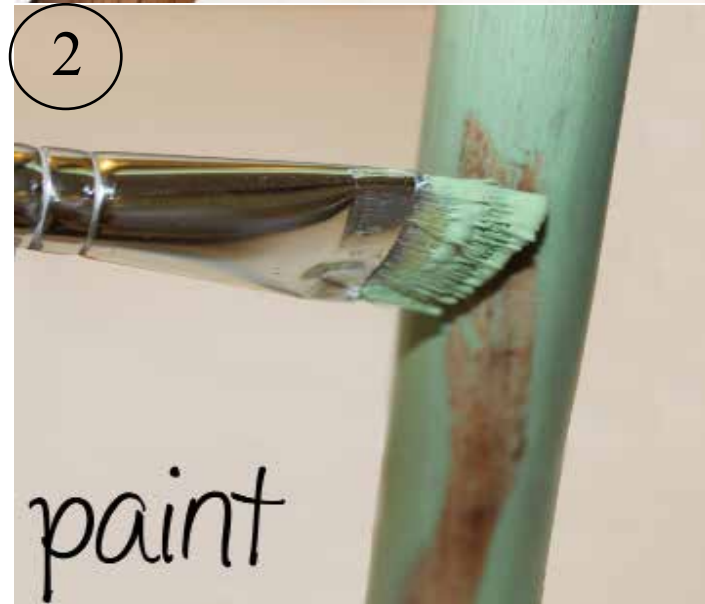
paint

Once you finish painting, let the paint dry overnight and then sand everything with a fine grit sand paper. I was looking for a distressed paint look, but if your gift recipient prefers a less shabby chic look, you can certainly give the hammer another coat of paint at this point and don't sand afterwards. Sanding between coats gives a smooth finish.
Once I was done painting, I measured my hammer. At the widest point it was about 1.5 inches and at the largest end and about 1 inch at the smallest end.
I decided to make my letters 1 inch, but you may need to adjust based on the size of your hammer. You also may need to make the letters smaller depending on the length of the phrase you are adding. Use the grid in your software to make sure your saying will fit on the handle of your hammer.
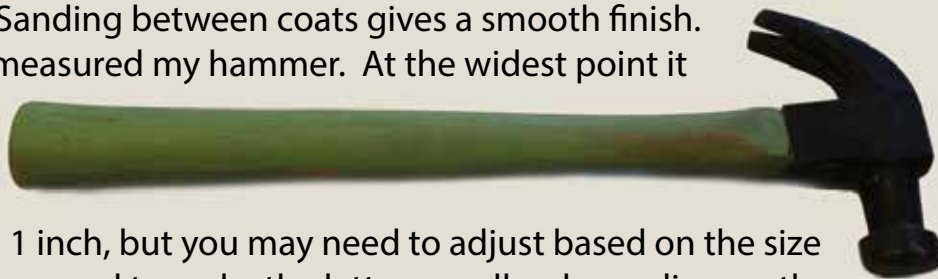
3

LET'S BUILD SOME MEMORIES!

3) I opened my software for my die cutting machine and typed out my saying. I decided on "Let's build some memories!" I used my favorite "manly" font- "Stamp." You can download Stamp from dafont.com for free. (See How to Download New Fonts in the Tips and Tricks Section)

Next use some transfer paper and add the saying to your hammer.

One final step I always do with vinyl is to heat the vinyl with an embossing gun. This will make your vinyl melt into your surface and help it stick better. You can also use a blow dryer or skip this step, but I like the extra hold.

OTHER SAYING IDEAS:
You Nailed It, Dad!
Thank you for helping me build my life!
Best Dad Ever!
Let's Make Stuff!
Happy (1st) Father's Day!
It's Hammer Time!

LET'S BUILD SOME MEMORIES!

4

LET'S BUILD SOME MEMORIES!

← line up your saying

Have you ever made a project and were just not happy with the end results? That is what happened the first time I etched glass.

It etched, but you couldn't see the design that well. So I put it in the back of my head to figure out how to color etched glass... someday. Then I discovered Rub 'n Buff. It's a wax paste that I had seen used to change the color of doorknobs and picture frames... what if I could use it to change the color of the etched glass?

To test out my theory, I decided to make a cute jar to store bath bombs in.

To make the jar, I first measured the front of my jar and drew a square the same size in my die cutting machine software. Next, I typed out the word "{relax}" in Helvetica. I centered the saying in the middle of my box.

Follow the photos on Page 10 with these step by step directions:

1. I cut my design out of vinyl and applied the "negative" to the jar. When you glass etch, you want to remove the design elements you want etched, in this case, I wanted just the word "relax" to be etched.

2. Next I used some etching cream to etch my words on my jar. I painted on an even layer of etching cream using an old trusty paint brush.

3. After letting the etching cream sit for just one minute (it works fast!), I scraped off the extra cream and put it back into the bottle then washed the etching cream off in the sink with running water. You can now peel off the vinyl.

TIP:
Once I applied the vinyl, I heated it up the entire design with my embossing heat gun. I always do this step when using vinyl for painting or etching, it helps to adhere the vinyl and seal up the edges to prevent the paint or etching cream from leaking under the stencil. This gives you nice, clean lines.

4. Dry your jar well. You can see the etching without color, but it's a more subtle look.

At this point I saw that my etching cream didn't etch evenly in all areas. I didn't clean my jar before etching, which likely caused it to not etch evenly.

TIP:
Use rubbing alcohol to clean the surface and remove any fingerprints before etching!

How to Color Etched Glass with RUB 'N BUFF

{relax}

blog.craft-e-corner.com

{relax}

5. Next- I wanted to color my etching to make it stand out more. I used Rub 'n Buff Patina to color the etching. Put a very small amount on your finger and rub it in. A little bit goes a long way.

6. Rub the Rub 'n Buff into the etching in a circular motion. Work quickly, and in sections if you have a large project.

7. Use a soft cloth to wipe away the excess Rub 'n Buff. It will come off the glass surface, but stay in the etched areas! Don't let it sit for too long though or it won't want to come off.

To remove unwanted Rub 'n Buff from your hands, I found that dish soap works well.

8. Fill the jar with bath bombs or relaxing bath salts and give as a gift or display in your bathroom!

I love the way this jar turned out!

Rub 'n Buff can be used on all sorts of surfaces, from wood to metal and more. It's a wax finish that you can use for antiquing, crafting, decorating... you just rub it on, then buff it with a soft cloth to make it shine! This stuff is awesome for updating door knobs, picture frames, lamps, tables, candle sticks- too many places to list!

TIP:
Shake your etching cream well to ensure it's mixed before you use it!

I am a regular at our local hardware store. I am always looking for craft supplies in un-expected places and the hardware store is chock full of crafting supplies, if you learn to look at regular building supplies creatively. On a recent trip, I came across some awe-some tiles. They came on a sheet and are supposed to be used on floors or maybe even a kitchen back splash... but I thought they looked like Christmas ornaments- can you see it too?

The tiles peel right off the backing sheet, with only a little residue left on the back:

Once you have peeled the tiles off the back-ing sheet, you will have a pile of ornaments just ready for decorating! For these orna-ments, I made a template by tracing one of the tiles on sturdy paper. I used an Xacto knife to cut the shape out, which will allow me to align all my vinyl perfectly!

You will want to use the "negative of your ornament template, discard the ornament shape. This will help you align your vinyl.

For these ornaments, I used two colors of vinyl. I found that putting the lighter of the two colors in the background looked better than putting the darker color in the back.

The first layer of vinyl that goes down is the large initial. I placed this on the tile by hand. I just eyeballed it and it worked out just fine.

Now that I have the background letter on, I can add the second layer in a darker color that has the name and the date. For this layer, I used KG Eyes Wide Open for the font, and made sure to weld the letters together before I cut the vinyl (so it cuts as one solid piece instead of several little pieces).

After cutting the name layer, I weeded (removed) any extra vinyl that I did not want on my ornament. A hook tool was ideal for this task.

To transfer the design to the ornament, I used transfer paper to take the vinyl off the backing sheet I cut a square of transfer paper that was big enough to cover my design. Then, to help the vinyl come off the backing sheet and make transferring easier, I burnished (rubbed) the transfer paper over the vinyl, this helped the vinyl come off the backing sheet and stick to the transfer paper:

To remove the backing sheet from the vinyl, I turned the design over so the backing sheet was facing up. Next, I bent the corner of the transfer paper over on itself and worked it off backwards. This allowed me to push the vinyl down as I went. The desired end result is the vinyl sticking to the transfer paper and coming off the backing sheet.

Once I had the vinyl on the transfer paper, I used the template I talked about making earlier. I found that the template made lining everything up so much easier! I laid the template over the transfer paper and lined up my design like so:

I could see that my design was going to end up right where I wanted it on my ornament. Next I lined the tile up with the template. In this case, I lined the bottom of the ornament up with the template before pressing my tile to the transfer paper. After I stuck the tile to the transfer paper, I removed the template while pushing down on the ornament:
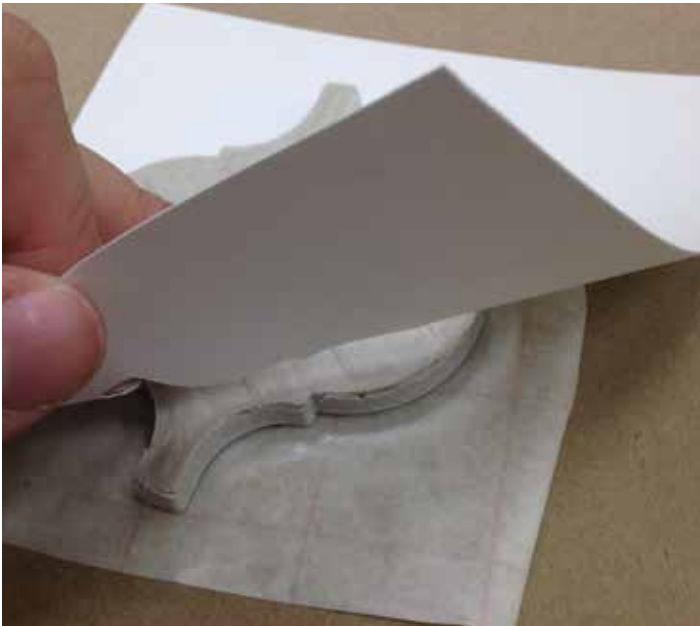
Next I flipped my tile + transfer paper over and burnished the vinyl onto the tile. I then slowly removed the transfer paper:

TIP:
When removing transfer paper, fold it over on itself and peel backwards.

Once you have removed the transfer paper, heat the design with an embossing gun or a blow dryer. This will help the vinyl stick to the tile better. Do not overheat, vinyl can (and will) melt if overheated. You may see bubbles, but they'll work themselves out over time.

To add a hanger to the ornament, I cut a length of ribbon, folded it in half and tied a knot at tje end:

I added a dot of hot glue to the back of the tile and glued the ribbon on. I used the tweezers from a set of Hot Glue Gun Helpers to avoid burning my fingers! These tweezers are coated with silicone so hot glue doesn't stick (and my fingers stayed safe too!).

Now the ornament is complete and can be hung on the tree or wrapped up for gift giving. How special to have a personalized ornament! And think of all the personalization possibilities! There is nothing a kid loves more than having something personalized!

22 Creative ways to cover the back of your tiles

I left my ornament back "plain" and did not cover them because I was making them for a fund-raiser, but you may wish to cover the back of your tiles. Here are some creative ideas to try that range from filling the backs in to covering them up:

- grout
- plaster of paris
- felt
- yarn
- washi tape
- colorful duct tape
- cork
- puffy paint
- mod podge plus:
  - *glitter
  - *fabric
  - *seed beads
  - *scrap booking paper
- old Christmas cards
- craft foam
- another tile
- ribbon
- acrylic paint
- broken CD pieces
- paper mache
- mirror
- melted crayons/wax
- nail polish
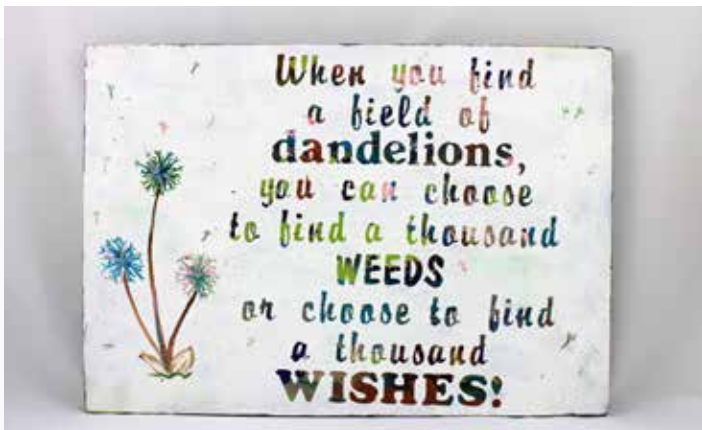
For this project I used vinyl as a stencil. The method I used is called the PVPP method- what is the PVPP method?

PVPP stands for Paint, Vinyl, Paint, Peel.

PAINT: To start, I sanded a piece of wood until smooth then had my kids paint with acrylic paints. They each picked their favorite colors and went crazy painting. There is no right or wrong on this step, use several colors or just one, ensure you cover the whole base:

TIP:
Use only one color at a time and blow dry the paint between colors so the paint doesn't mix together and make a muddy gray color.

VINYL: Next I used my die cut machine to cut out the saying using Matte Removable Vinyl. Once the design was weeded, I transferred the text to the plaque with transfer paper:

*"When you find a field of dandelions,
you can choose to find a thousand weeds
or choose to find a thousand wishes."*
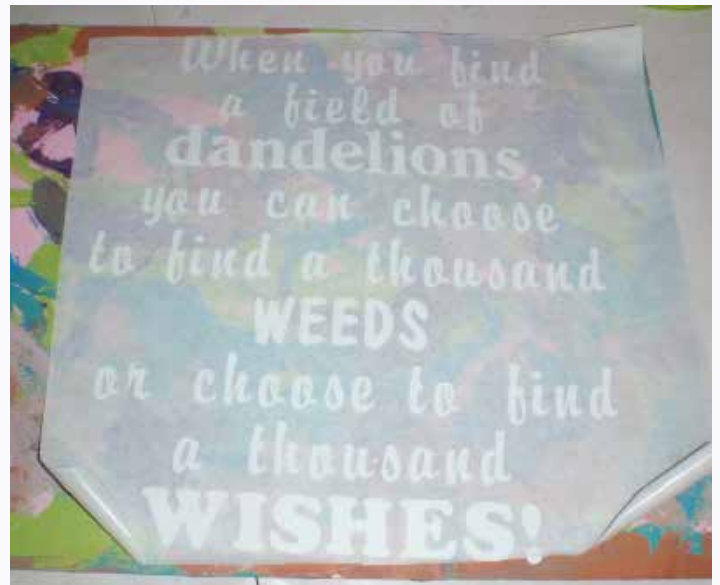
PAINT: Next take a white acrylic paint and paint over the entire plaque. Paint right over the vinyl too! Let dry completely (overnight is best).

PEEL: After the paint is fully dry, slowly peel off the vinyl letters. When the vinyl is peeled away the bright colored background shows through!

For the finishing touches, I hand painted on three dandelions using our thumbprints for the middles, added some floating "tufts" and sanded everything a little bit.

PVPP can be done in two ways. Using the POSITIVE of the letters/shape (like I did here) and using the NEGATIVE of the letters/shape. To do the negative of your shape, weed out the letters/shape from the vinyl and then apply and paint in the letters instead of painting over the background.

This method of making signs is a great way to use vinyl in a different way. I love that the kids can get in on the project and make it extra special! Choose your own quote and make something that fits your family's own style!

Do you have vinyl scraps? I know, silly question, who doesn't have vinyl scraps?! You can't vinyl all the things without ending up with a few scraps. I have a growing pile of scraps and always have a problem trying to decide how small is too small to keep. I always feel like I'm wasting vinyl if I throw "perfectly good scraps" away, so I decided to make something with them. I apologize in advance, if you struggled with destashing before, this just might make it a little harder...

You'll want to use a cutting mat when cutting the vinyl since you are cutting all the way through the backing sheet on the vinyl. Once I had a pile of multicolored chevron strips, I lined them up on my cutting mat, sticking them to the cutting mat as I went and getting them in there as closely packed as I could. You don't want gaps and you do not want to overlap.

This project breaks many conventional rules of using vinyl. When working with vinyl, you normally you do not want to cut through the vinyl backing sheet, but for this project, I set my machine and blade to cut as though it was cutting heavy card stock (I used the machine recommended settings). I chose a chevron design for this project and used all the little scraps of vinyl I had to make strips. You can also just work with straight cut peices of vinyl or with blocks- this is a good time to be creative!

The vinyl still has the backing sheet on the back of each strip. You'll want to pick the stickiest mat that you can find to do this step, you don't want your vinyl going anywhere or to move while you are cutting it with your machine.. Make sure you line up the edges as close as possible.

Use your finger to go over the seems between the vinyl strips to ensure that the edges are as flat and in line with each other as possible. I lined my whole mat with chevron (so pretty!):

Next, I crammed as many designs as I could fit onto a 12x12 inch cutting mat with my software (I didn't want all these scraps to go to waste!). I chose a pineapple, pink flamingo and a peacock:

Next, I adjusted my cut settings in the software and the my blade length back to vinyl settings. Load the cutting mat and kiss cut the vinyl, do NOT cut through the backing sheet this time. I cut my designs and then weeded them right on the cutting mat using a hook tool. If the blade skipped at the intersection of two pieces, use an Xacto to make any touch ups :

Once I had it all weeded:

I put transfer paper over all three designs at once (note: the strips are still stuck to the cutting mat):

Next, removed the designs from the backing sheet strips. I later peeled the strips off the cutting mat.

Next I used scissors to cut apart the designs. This was tricky as the designs were really close together and the vinyl is sticky side up and the transfer paper is sticky, just go slow! I transferred the peacock to a regular canvas I had painted with bronze paint:

I removed the transfer paper. Having a piece of wood under the canvas really helped give my canvas a hard backing so I could press down to remove the vinyl. Folding the transfer paper over on itself helped the vinyl stick to the canvas as well:

Once I had the peacock transferred, I cut my words out and added them to the canvas as well:

To finish my project, I used my embossing gun to lightly heat up the vinyl (a blow dryer would work as well). As I heated the design, I used my fingers to press the vinyl into the canvas. Heating the vinyl will melt it a little and make it stick even better. You should start to see the texture of the canvas show through the vinyl:

I had a brightly colored flower pot that was just begging to have a fun quote put on it, but putting vinyl on a curved surface can be tricky. I learned a few tricks to share to make this process easier.

I wanted to have two different colors of vinyl. One "base color" (orange) and one "accent color" (pink). I used my die cutting machine to cut out all my words from the orange first. I weeded the design and removed all the accent pieces I wanted to be pink. Next I cut the accent words in pink. You could use alignment boxes, but in this case, I only had a small piece of pink and I didn't want to waste the pink to have it spaced equally. When you have a project like this, you can cut the design all in one color, then just your accent colors. Weed the design and remove the accent color pieces that are now cut in both colors. Use a hook tool to move the accent colors into place. You should be able to see faint cut lines where they need to line up.

TIP:
I used the score lines on the backing sheet left by the Cameo blade to line up my accent words.

Once you weed your design, you'll want to put on transfer paper. Transfer paper is an opaque sticky sheet that helps you move your vinyl from the vinyl backing sheet to your project surface. To put transfer paper on a larger design, you'll want to work the backing sheet off as you apply the transfer paper to the vinyl. This was hard to take a good photo of- but this is how I did it. Just start on one side and then slide the transfer paper backing off as your work across the surface covering the vinyl.

Once you have the transfer paper over your vinyl, you'll want to burnish the transfer paper onto the vinyl. Vinyl has a sticky backing and burnishing helps the vinyl stick to your transfer paper and release from the backing sheet. To burnish, you'll want to use a tool of some sort to rub over your entire design. In this case, I used a paint stir stick, but a bone folder, scraper or even a credit card can be used instead. At this point you'll have a sandwich that includes:

| backing sheet | vinyl | transfer paper |

Next flip your design over and then cut a little notch in the top of the backing sheet. I went with about a half inch notch- but you might want to go bigger if you have larger font.

Snip a notch from both the bottom and the top of your backing sheet at about the same spot.

Next, carefully peel off the strip of backing sheet:
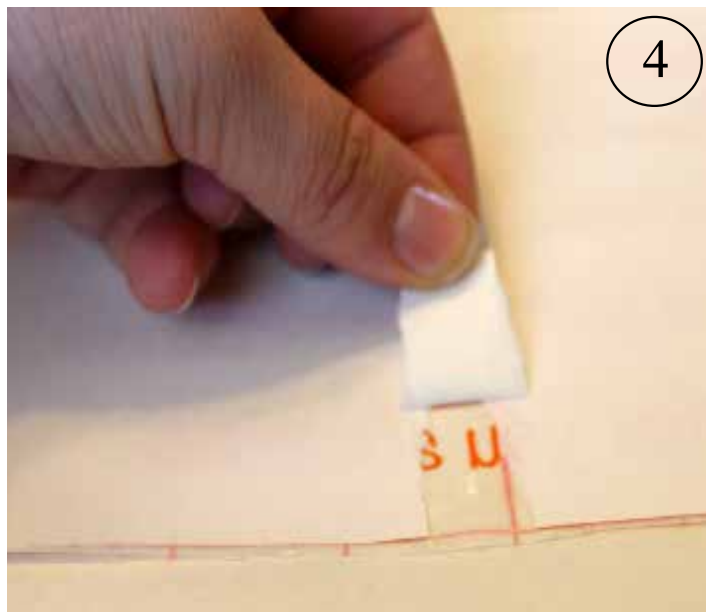
The strip you rip from your backing sheet might not pcome up in a perfect strip- that's okay- we're not going for perfection here. The idea is to get a strip of the backing sheet off to reveal some of the sticky transfer paper underneath. You'll want to fold your backing sheet backwards on itself as you remove it from the vinyl and push down as you go so the vinyl sticks to the transfer sheet. Make sure you don't take any letters with you as you remove the strip.

Once you have your strip taken off, you'll be ready to transfer the vinyl to your pot.

One of the challenges with putting vinyl on a round or curved object, like this pot, is that the pot doesn't want to sit still while you work with it! You're likely to have it roll right off the table while trying to center your vinyl if you don't stabilize it first. To make putting the vinyl on easier, I grabbed this rice bag that I made some time ago and nestled my pot on it. Don't have a rice bag? You can use a bag of beans, or even balance your piece in your lap instead.

The next part can get kind of tricky, but it's very doable! Take your time.

We'll work with just one side of the quote at a time here. Start with one side and fold your quote backwards on itself. Start working one end of the backing sheet off by peeling from the inside working towards the outside. Use your hand or a scraper tool to smooth the vinyl down as you go.

Once your pot is secure, take your quote and line up the top of the quote with the top of your pot. Press the exposed transfer paper strip to the middle of the pot. This will make it so your vinyl stays lined up perfectly!

Once you have one side down, repeat the process on the other side:
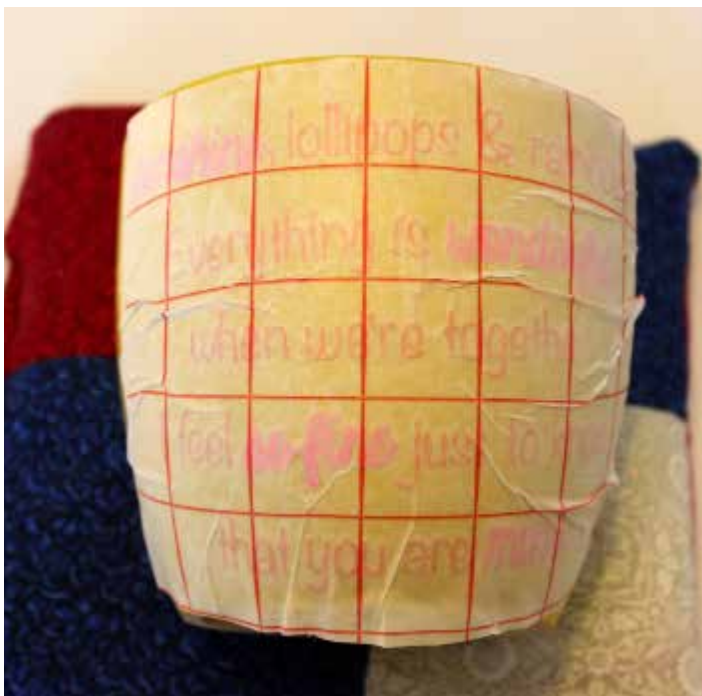
Now you should have a new sandwich

| flower pot | vinyl | transfer paper |

Burnish your vinyl using a scraper (or the like) onto the pot by rubbing over it in sections. The goal is to get the vinyl to come off the transfer paper and to stick to the pot. Make sure you go over the entire design.

Once you have burnished your vinyl, you can work on slowly removing the transfer paper.

To remove the transfer paper, start on one side and fold the transfer paper over on itself. Peel backwards and press down any letters that might not want to stick to the pot. Go slow so you don't loose anything along the way:

Presto! You have successfully transferred vinyl onto a curved surface!

One thing that just says "Easter" to me is Peeps. I know not everyone loves Peeps, some people down right hate them, but I think they are just too cute! I picked up a plain white charger plate a few months ago with the intention to "eventually make a project with it." I thought this was the perfect time to use it! How cute did this charger turn out?

I designed my project using my Silhouette Cameo software, but you can do this same project with any die cutting machine using these steps.

I wanted to have three different colored Peeps, so I layed the design out in my die cutting machine software and spaced the shapes out enough so I could use different colors of vinyl without having to cut one color at a time. I found that using the grid lines in the software was helpful to make sure I lined up the vinyl pieces with the mat grid:
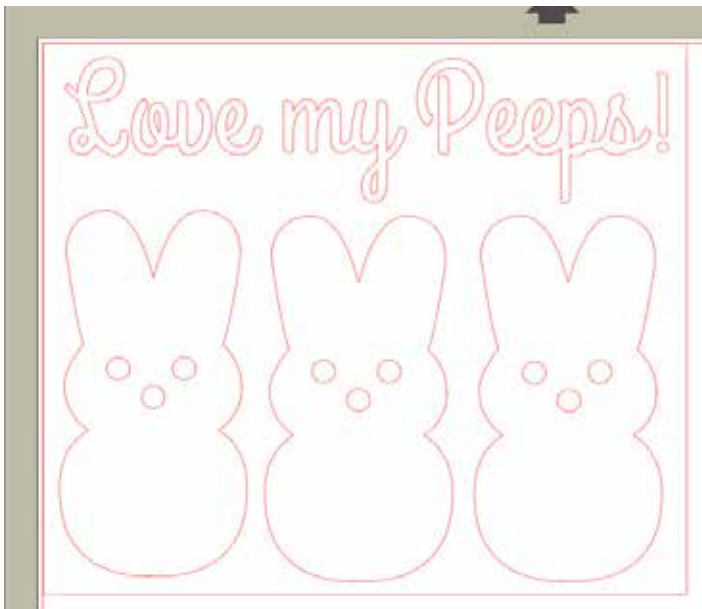

Spacing out the pieces this way allowed me to utilize the whole cutting mat. This keeps you from having to load and unload your mat and vinyl. I cut everything out all at once using this technique and saved so much time in the process! When there were pieces that were the same color (the eyes and words)- I put them in the same group:

Next I needed to transfer the design to the plate. I didn't have transfer paper handy so I knew I had to come up with another way to get all these pieces on straight. I decided to cut the whole design out of cardstock to make myself a paper template! This made is super easy to line everything up straight!

The eyes needed to go on the Peeps first because once all the eyes were on, I decided to turn my vinyl into GLITTER vinyl! Glitter is hard to get a good picture of, but the finished Peeps are sparkly! Look at that shimmer:

I measured the plate and made a square the same size in my sofwtare. I lined up my design and cut the paper template from sturdy cardstock. I taped the cardstock at the top of my charger and then created a second template for the Peeps themsevles. This helped me align the eyes and nose for each Peep.

To assemble the Peeps, I held the paper Peep template against the cut, but not weeded vinyl Peep pieces. I used the holes in the paper Peep template to align each of the eye/nose pieces on the vinyl Peep shape. I temporarily stuck the eye and nose pieces to my finger for easy access. Using the template made it easy to make sure all the Peeps turned out looking the same!

I knew these Peeps had to sparkle- they just look so much more "Peep like" when they sparkle, right? I searched the internet and asked my crafty friends for ways to make my own glitter vinyl. I asked if they thought it were possible to use spray glitter on regular vinyl. Sadly, the answer seemed to be a resounding "no Kala, you can't do that." They said the spray glitter would make the vinyl curl and that it wouldn't work.

Never one to take no for an answer, I tried it anyway... and it worked!

I didn't weed the vinyl before I sprayed with the glitter spray, I was hoping that the extra vinyl would help protect the Peeps from the aforementioned curling my friends had warned me about. I don't know if it really helped or not, but it worked so maybe it did the trick! I did a very light mist of spray glitter, just enough to give them a nice sparkle! The eyes need to go on first because the vinyl won't stick to the glitter, so layer all your pieces first, then spray the glitter.

I let the glitter fully dry overnight. The next morning, I was ready to assemble my charger. I taped my paper template to my charger with a little bit of tape, just enough to hold it in place:

Next I carefully weeded my Peeps and gently placed them down in the spaces in my template.

The paper template works well in this application as normal vinyl methods might damage the project. You would normally use transfer paper to transfer your vinyl, but in this case, it would pull off the glitter, so hand placing works best!

You may get an air bubble or two along the way, but most of those will work themselves out. Resist the urge to rub the vinyl or use a scraper to work air bubbles out, you will end up rubbing all the sparkle off the Peeps if you rub over the vinyl. (The glitter is stuck on from the adhesive in the spray, but vinyl is smooth and you can pick the glitter off and you don't want that!)

TIP:
For stubborn vinyl bubbles, use a small pin to pop the bubble. You can then poke the bubble with your finger to let the air out.

I moved on to the text next:

The key to getting the text on straight is to just focus on getting one part of the word lined up, if you can do that, the rest of the word should fall right into place! In this case, I made sure to line up the bottom of the p in "Peeps" and the y in "my."

Once I had the text laid down, I removed the paper template and it was finished!

I love the way this turned out! It's so sparkly and will look great on display! Despite the spray glitter drying time, this whole project took me less than 15 minutes to do.

A word of caution- this is strictly a display piece only. The glitter sticks and does what I want it to do for this charger, but it CAN rub off if you handle it too much. Vinyl is NOT food safe, so you don't want to use this for anything other than display.. Put the charger in a plate stand and admire!

TIP:
Let your vinyl "cure" on the surface for at least 72 hours to allow the vinyl to really adhere to the project.

Vinyl is a very popular material to use with any electronic die cutting machine! It's such a versatile material, you'll want to put vinyl on just about everything! If you're new to vinyl, you might run into a few bumps along the way. No worries! Our Vinyl Clinic is here to help you through all of your Vinyl Emergencies!

There are several types of vinyl available, but two main types that you may wish to use with your die cutting machine are heat transfer vinyl (HTV) and adhesive backed vinyl.

1-Heat transfer vinyl (HTV) is used to add vinyl designs to material or cloth (shirts, bags, shoes, socks, etc.). It is applied with an iron or heat press. You need heat and pressure to transfer HTV to your project surface. This project book does not include projects for Heat Transfer Material, but more information on HTV is available on our blog.

2-Adhesive backed vinyl is what most people are referring to when they say "vinyl." Adhesive backed vinyl is used to add vinyl designs to surfaces other than material/cloth such as home decor projects, signs, cups, stencils, water bottles, etc. You can think of it like a giant sticker.

Adhesive Backed Vinyl is most often found in two groups - **matte removable** (aka: Indoor or 631), and **glossy permanent** (aka: outdoor or 651) and is available in a rainbow of colors. Which type of vinyl you use will be determined on the project you are working on.

Matte removable (MR) vinyl is used most often when creating wall decals or projects that will be kept inside and/or seldom handled. MR vinyl is ideal for wall decals. The tack is low enough on MR vinyl that it should not peel paint when removed (Note- if removable vinyl is left in place for many years, it may peel up the paint when removed, but so will regular scotch tape, just be aware!). MR vinyl is also great to use as a stencil. If you wish to follow the Paint, Vinyl, Paint, Peel method (PVPP), the matte removable vinyl is perfect because it will not pull up the bottom layer of paint when you remove it. MR vinyl can also be used on photo frames or any other home decor projects that will be on display in your home. Just because it is removable does not mean that it will come right off the surface.

Glossy permanent (GP) vinyl is used for outdoor applications such as bumper stickers, mail box lettering, signs and more. It can also be used for indoor projects as well including dishes, cups, signs, canvas and more. Glossy permanent vinyl is not recommend to be used on wall decals because the vinyl has a higher tack adhesive on it and will likely peel the paint from the walls when removed.

CAUTION!
Vinyl is NOT food safe. It should not be used on anything that will come in direct contact with food (the outside of a cup, for example, is considered safe, however). Vinyl can also pose a choking hazard. Even well adhered vinyl can be picked off by young children and put in the mouth. It is always recommended to supervise children with anything that has vinyl on it. Vinyl should never be applied to children's items such as pacifiers, bottles or car seats.

ADHESIVE BACKED VINYL

Problem:
Bubbles

Bubbles are the arch nemesis of the vinyl crafter. Nothing can ruin a project like air bubbles!

Causes:
1- Bubbles are caused by air getting trapped behind the vinyl. Just like when you try to put a screen protector on a new electronic device, if you don't apply your vinyl right, you will get bubbles!

Treatment: There are a few things you can do if you have bubbles after transferring your design. The most effective treatment for bubbles is to use a scraper tool and gently work the bubbles towards the edge of your design. This will move the bubbles to the edge and allow the air to escape. For large or stubborn bubbles, you can use a pin to prick a small hole in the bubble. This will release the air and you should be able to work any extra air out of the hole.

Prevention:
Bubbles are hard to prevent, but I have found a few things that can help decrease the amount of bubbles you have.

1- When transferring vinyl to a surface, begin by putting the thinnest edge of your design down on the surface you are transferring your vinyl to. Once you have the design attached at this area, use a scraper to smooth the vinyl onto the surface as you go. This should push the air out and prevent it from getting trapped.

2- If you are working on a non-porous surface (like tiles, glass blocks, sealed wood signs, etc.)- you can also try the "wet method" to apply your vinyl. The wet method involves using a spray bottle filled partially with water and about a pea sized amount of dish soap. Transfer your vinyl onto the transfer sheet then LIGHTLY mist the sticky back of the vinyl. LIGHTLY mist the surface you are transferring to as well. Now lay one edge of the design down and use a squeegee or scraper to smooth the design onto the surface. If you press your vinyl in all the same direction (i.e. left to right OR up and down), the water AND air bubbles should work themselves out. Blot the liquid as it is forced out.

Additional Notes: Sometimes there are small air bubbles in a design. These will often work themselves out after a few days so do not fret if a small bubble appears in your design.

Problem:
Vinyl won't stick to transfer paper/release from backing sheet

Causes:
There are a few reasons why your vinyl would not want to stick to your transfer paper. I have found that older vinyl has a harder time releasing from the backing sheet. You may also have a problem getting the vinyl off the backing sheet if you cut a little too deep. Also different brands of vinyl are harder to remove from the backing sheet.

Treatment:
If you are having problems getting your vinyl off your backing sheet, lay your transfer paper over the design and burnish with a scraper tool. If it still does not come up, turn the design upside down (with the transfer paper on the table). Burnish the design from the back. Next, fold the backing sheet over on itself and slowly work it backwards. Hold a scraper tool on the backside of the vinyl as you peel off the backing sheet to force the vinyl onto the transfer paper. You may need a hook tool to pick the backing sheet off the vinyl as you go.

Prevention: Try using newer vinyl. While you may have some colors you don't often use, try to cycle your vinyl and use the oldest to newest. Also make sure you store your vinyl in a cool, dry location. Heat and moisture can cause vinyl to be stickier and make it not want to come off the backing sheet. Next- make sure you are not cutting too deep when you cut vinyl. I have found that a blade setting of 2 is the best for my machine (your machine may vary). You want to "kiss cut" the vinyl, where you are cutting through the vinyl but not through the backing sheet. If you have a deep score line in the backing sheet, try adjusting your settings to not cut as deep next time. Last effort- try different brands of vinyl until you find one that works best for you.

Problem:
Vinyl won't stick to surface/won't come off transfer paper

Cause:
There are a few things that may cause the vinyl to not want to come off the transfer paper.

   1- Some surfaces are naturally harder to get vinyl to stick to. Rough, bumpy surfaces, canvas, curved surfaces. These will take more effort to transfer vinyl onto.

   2- Sometimes transfer paper is too sticky.

   3- The surface isn't clean.

Treatment:
1- Some surfaces are harder to transfer vinyl to. Canvas is one example. To get vinyl to transfer to canvas, place your vinyl on the canvas and leave the transfer paper on. Turn the canvas over and burnish from the back. Once you get the vinyl to stay on the surface, remove the transfer paper then heat the vinyl with a hair dryer or embossing gun to make the vinyl stick better. Be careful to not heat too much, vinyl can melt and/or burn! For bumpy surfaces, roll a tennis ball over the design to work the vinyl into all those bumps (try it, it works!)

2- To take the stick of transfer paper down a notch, stick the transfer paper to a clean t-shirt. This will remove a little bit of stick and make it easier to get the vinyl off too sticky transfer paper/tape.

3- Make sure the surface that you are transferring your vinyl to is clean. For glass projects, wipe down with rubbing alcohol first. For wooden surfaces, make sure to wipe down the surface with a damp cloth to remove any dust or dirt and let dry completely before applying vinyl.

Prevention:
Heating vinyl up once you transfer to a surface will help the glue stick better. Once you have followed the above suggestions, heat your design to ensure you have the best adhesion.

Problem:
The letters are cutting separately leaving a space where they overlap

Cause:
Forgetting to weld.

Treatment:
Whenever you have a design that overlaps, you must weld to connect the design or the machine will cut where the design overlaps (which you do not want). If you do this by accident, do not weed the pieces that overlap, just leave them in the design and transfer it all together. There will still be a little line, but in general, you can't see the lines unless you look closely.

Prevention:
Make a cute little sign to add to your machine to remind you to weld before you cut!

Problem:
Vinyl coming off after applied

Cause:
There are some surfaces that vinyl will not want to stick to. Canvas, porous surfaces, high moisture areas, bumpy walls (etc.) can be difficult surfaces for vinyl to stick to.

Treatment:
If you have vinyl that is peeling up, it might not be possible to fix it. Most of the time, when vinyl is peeling, the adhesive on the back may attract dirt and dust and will not stick anymore. You may have to peel off your design and start over again.

Prevention:
Make sure you clean your surface before applying vinyl. Also make sure you are using the right type of vinyl for your project. If you are making a sign that will be used outside, for example, you want to make sure to use glossy permanent vinyl.

If you have added vinyl to a cup, make sure you hand wash it and do not soak it. I always recommend heating vinyl with a hair dryer or embossing gun when you are done transferring it to a surface to help make it stick better. Note: this isn't recommended if you are adding a quote to your wall with matte removable vinyl.

Problem:
Vinyl not straight when transferred

Cause:
Sometimes it is hard to line up vinyl when you are transferring it. Transfer paper is usually not clear so it can be tricky to line up the vinyl when you are transferring it to a surface. Curved surfaces are even more difficult to transfer to.

Treatment:
If you've transferred vinyl crooked, your only real recourse is to try to get it to stick to your transfer paper and peel it up. This usually doesn't work, however, so you might be stuck with it being crooked or with doing it over again.

Prevention:
Don't rely on the lines on the transfer paper to line up your vinyl. It is usually not straight across the roll and can be a hindrance. To line up your vinyl, you can try making a template to transfer, or try putting your vinyl, sticky side up, on the table and then putting your project to the vinyl so you can see where it is going. You can also try clear transfer tape, but keep in mind that sometimes it is really sticky and might leave residue on your vinyl and you may have problems getting it to come off the vinyl when you transfer.

Problem:
Cutting through backing sheet

Cause:
When you work with vinyl, you want the backing sheet to remain uncut. You cut the design, and then remove the extra vinyl that you do not want (called weeding) leaving your design on the backing sheet. The backing sheet is important to leave intact because you want your design to be able to come up off the backing sheet without having to remove the backing sheet letter by letter once you have it on the transfer paper. When you cut through the backing sheet, this is almost impossible, especially with intricate designs. Cutting through the backing sheet is usually caused by the wrong blade length and/or the thickness selected in the software.

Treatment:
If you have cut through the backing sheet, you can try to tape the backing sheet back together by flipping the design over and using tape. This is hard to do, but not impossible. You can also try sticking the vinyl to the transfer paper and try to peel the backing sheet off each piece. This isn't impossible, but tedious.

Prevention:
Always check your blade settings first. Usually when I cut through the backing sheet on my vinyl it is because I was using my blade to cut paper and then switched back to vinyl and have the blade set too deep. Having a dedicated vinyl blade will not only prevent this from happening but it will also extend the life of your blade. If you are switching between vinyl brands, I would recommend doing a test cut first to make sure you are getting a clean cut through the vinyl, but aren't cutting through the backing sheet.

Problem:
Poor cuts. Not cutting right (tearing corners, etc.)

Cause:
Poor cuts with vinyl can be caused by dull or dirty blades. The wrong settings can also be the culprit.

Treatment:
Open up your blade and clean it out. Vinyl can leave residue on your blade so make sure to wipe it down with a little rubbing alcohol. Also remove any vinyl scraps that may be caught up in the blade.

If you have cleaned the blade and it is still preforming poorly, try slowing down the cutting speed or speeding it up. Sometimes cutting too slow can cause the paper to tear, and cutting too fast can also cause issues as well.

Lastly, try a new blade. Make sure you keep a blade just for cutting vinyl. Cutting paper with the same blade you use to cut vinyl (or fabric) will shorten the lifespan of your blade. Just like paper is hard on scissors, it is also hard on a cutting blade.

Prevention:
Keep a dedicated vinyl (or fabric) blade and your blade will last a lot longer and have fewer cutting issues. Also, when switching between different brands of vinyl or using a different brand for the first time, try a test cut first. A simple shape in the corner of your vinyl could save you from wasting an entire roll of vinyl and lots of frustration when your settings are off and your vinyl doesn't cut well.

Problem:
Vinyl sticking to itself when weeding

Cause:
Vinyl is sticky stuff! If you are working on a larger design and are removing the extra vinyl (called weeding), the vinyl might stick to itself while you go, which can mess up your design.

Treatment:
If you are weeding and notice that you are running into this problem, use a X-Acto knife to trim your vinyl and cut off pieces as you go.

Prevention: To prevent this from happening, try adding weed lines to your design before you cut. Weed lines will help you remove smaller pieces of the excess vinyl so it's less likely to stick to itself as you weed. To add weed lines, draw lines in your software and put them behind your main design. Use the welding feature to weld the weed lines to your design. This will ensure that you do not cut the weed lines through your design.

Problem:
Vinyl slips around
during cutting

Cause:
If you do not line up the vinyl exactly parallel in the machine, your vinyl may move around. This will wreck your cut 100% of the time.

Treatment:
Although you CAN cut vinyl without a mat, I always use a mat. Using a mat will help decrease the amount of mistakes made due to the vinyl moving around during cutting. If you are really set on cutting without a mat, make sure you are moving the roller bars over. On the Cameo, the right roller bar can be moved to accommodate smaller sheets of vinyl (9" at the smallest). You want the white roller bars over both ends of your vinyl. Even if you are cutting 12" vinyl, you may need to move the roller bar over a notch. To adjust your roller bar, twist until the little teeth come out of the track. You just need to twist a little and then you can slide the roller over.

Prevention:
While you can cut without a mat, I always use a mat to help stabilize the vinyl when cutting. If you cut a lot of vinyl, you may want to invest in a roll feeder. Roll feeders ensure that your vinyl is being fed into the machine straight. With the newest version of the Cameo, you can press the "advance to cutter" button and your machine will push the vinyl through to the back so you can cut off your design using the cross cutter. Other die cutting machines may not have this feature.