

# PROJECT IDEAS FOR VINYL





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# Design #1: Pineapple



Pineapples have long been a symbol of hospitality, they are also quite trendy. Who wouldn't want to make a fabulous pineapple welcome sign like the one above?

This sign ended up being quite large (2 feet tall!) so I decided to use the hinge method of application. Using the hinge method of application helps ensure you have everything lined up straight!

Depending on what die cutting machine you use, the way you prep the design and cut the vinyl may differ, but the application method will be universal.

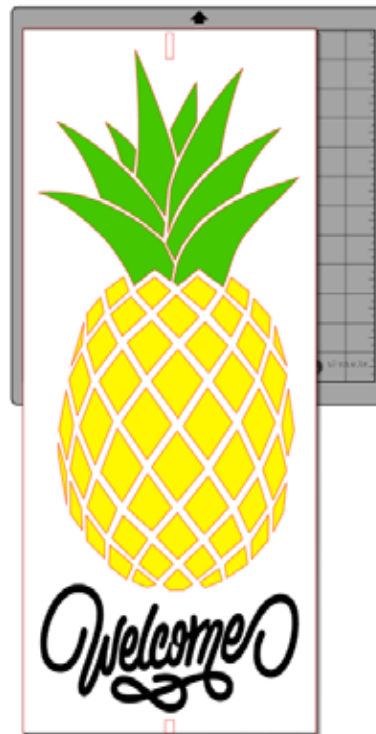


I started this project with an unfinished kitchen cabinet door (this is the back of it). I painted the door with white acrylic paint and added in some pink stripes before sanding it all down a little to give it a shabby look:



I measured the dimensions of my door and resized the pineapple design to fit. Make sure to resize all pieces of the design at once.

When I resized my pineapple, I had quite a bit of "extra" vertical space. I decided to add the Welcome at the bottom to fill the space more.



To help make sure all the pieces of the design were centered in the end, I lined them up in my software and added two little boxes at the top and the bottom of my design. These were centered so I could make sure the design was centered on the final project.

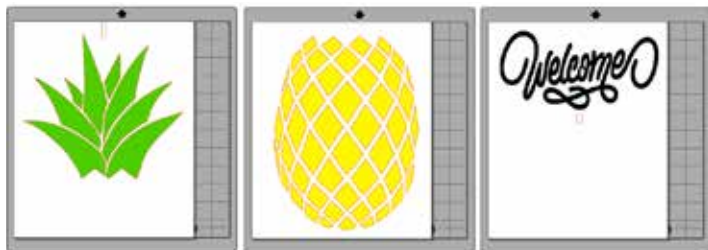
Next I cut each piece of the pineapple in the respective colors. In this case, I used green, gold and black.

To cut the different colors, I dragged the piece I wanted to cut onto my cutting mat in the software



# Hinge Method of Application

and moved the rest of the design off the cutting mat:



Some die cutting machines will do this for you automatically. If yours does not, you just have to separate the layers yourself before cutting.

Once I had all the pieces cut, I weeded the design (removed the parts that were not part of the design) and trimmed the backing sheet as close as possible to the vinyl so I could align the pieces. I laid out the pieces on the sign and used the boxes on the top and bottom to ensure the design was centered on the door:



When I was happy with my spacing, I used small bits of masking tape to tape the pieces into place. I taped them right on the sign (if you look closely at the next picture, you can see the bits of tape under

the transfer paper). The tape helped to ensure that the pieces would not move while transferring them.

To transfer the design, I decided to do the “hinge method” of transferring. I took a piece of transfer paper and taped it to the top of the sign with some masking tape. I flipped the transfer paper sheet up and removed the backing sheet. I slowly smoothed the transfer paper down over the vinyl to cover the whole design:



Once I had the entire design covered with transfer paper, I used a scraper tool to burnish the vinyl onto the transfer paper. Burnishing helps vinyl stick to the transfer paper.

## Vinyl Vocab

**Burnish:** /'bərniSH/ Verb

To rub over a vinyl design using pressure and the assistance of an instrument such as a scraper tool. An action done to assist in transferring vinyl for crafting. Burnishing vinyl designs helps the vinyl release from the backing sheet and adhere to transfer paper, or release from transfer paper and adhere to the project surface.

"She burnished the vinyl onto the wall."

# Design #1: Pineapple

I started to work the transfer paper back towards the top of the sign, ensuring that all the pieces of the design stuck to the transfer paper. I removed the pieces of backing sheets as I went leaving the vinyl sticky side up on the transfer paper hinged to the top of the sign:



Next step is to transfer the design to the sign. The hinge method should allow you to just flip the transfer paper over and have it perfectly aligned, but you only get one shot at this. With such a large design, I decided to create a secondary hinge. I took the transfer paper backing sheet and cut it in half width wise and put it back on the design leaving a small gap in the middle, exposing only a small piece of vinyl and transfer paper (see arrows below):



I then folded the whole design on to the sign relying on the top hinge to keep it straight:





# Hinge Method of Application

The only sticky part of the design at this point is the small space in the middle of the pineapple. I ensured the design looked straight then burnished this small section onto the sign. This anchored the design to the board.

To finish transferring the design, I flipped the bottom of the design up so it laid on top of the top part:



I removed the transfer paper backing off the bottom part of the design and then flipped it back down so it was in place on the sign.:



I pressed the vinyl down, but left the transfer paper on the design. Next, I flipped the top part of the design so it laid on top of the bottom part. I removed the backing sheet from the top half and then flipped the design onto the board and burnished the entire design. Once I had the whole design secure, I removed the transfer paper and added a saw tooth hanger to the back of the cabinet door making a sign:



This method of vinyl application is called the hinge method because you are hinging the design...it is sort of like a binding in a book. The exposed part in the middle holds everything together so you can flip the design like book pages while keeping everything aligned.

This is one way to transfer very large designs and ensure that they line up straight, and it also works well when putting designs on a curved surface. If the design was a little smaller, I could have gotten away with just doing the top hinge. The double hinge helps in case it isn't quite aligned, you can just lift up and try again before committing.



## Design #2: Candy Corn

Candy corn is a iconic symbol of Halloween. The orange, yellow and white- there is no mistaking them.



I have a love/hate relationship with candy corn. A few is fine, but a few handfuls and you'll be green in the gills. And who can just eat a few??

I designed this candy corn file to be used on all your Halloween projects. Let me teach you how to use this file and how to layer vinyl as well!

When you open the file, you will see this:



I made the pieces all black to make it easy to trace the parts and separate them by color. Notice that each piece has a set of squares on either side of it. These squares will help you in layering, so don't delete them!

I decided to make a double sided Halloween sign with this design. One side says Trick or Treat with some candy corn and the other side says "Sorry, we ran out of candy" (...because sometimes that happens) with a skull.

To make this sign, I painted a piece of scrap wood with black acrylic paint. Easy enough.

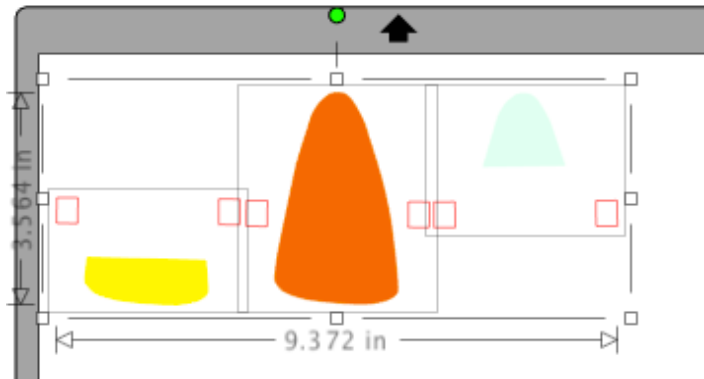
Next, I measured the piece of wood and drew a box the same size in my die cutting machine software. I colored in the box black and then decided how big to make the candy corn and words from there:



I am a really visual person so this helps me make sure that the files I make will look right on the final project. This is also a great way to create a "mock up" for a client that you are designing a project for. I had to resize the candy corn pieces to make them

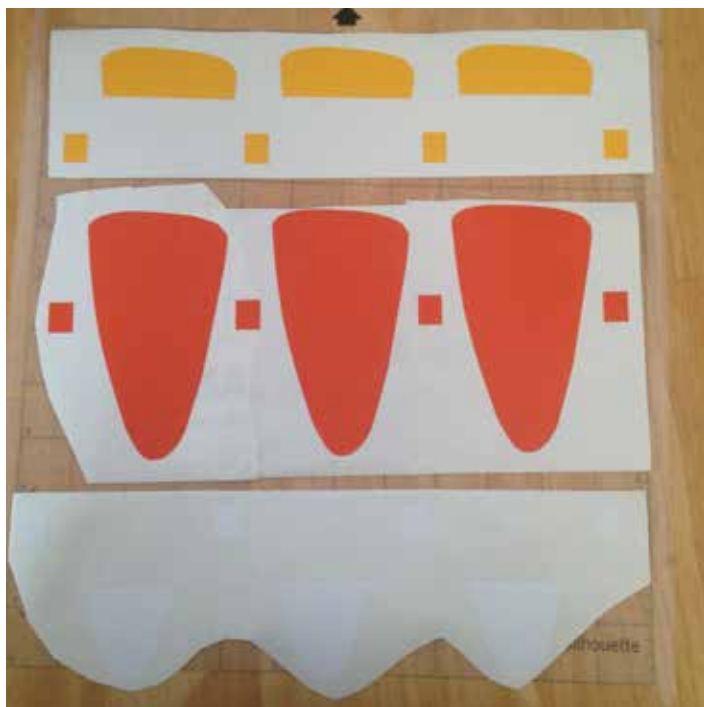
# How to layer vinyl

larger for the sign. Whenever you need to resize a design, make sure you resize all pieces at once so they stay the same size.

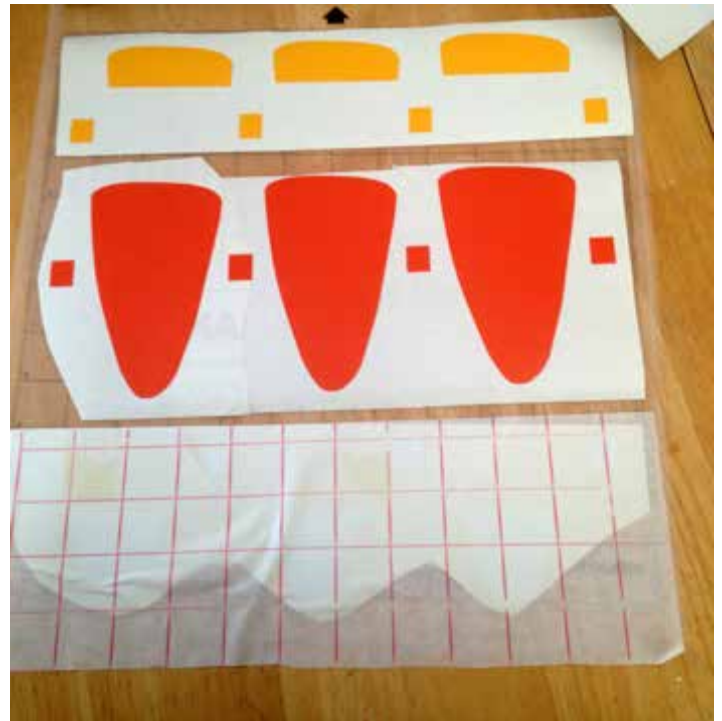


It's important to resize everything all at once like this since they will be layered on top of each other, and you'll want to make sure the pieces all stay the same size, respectively.

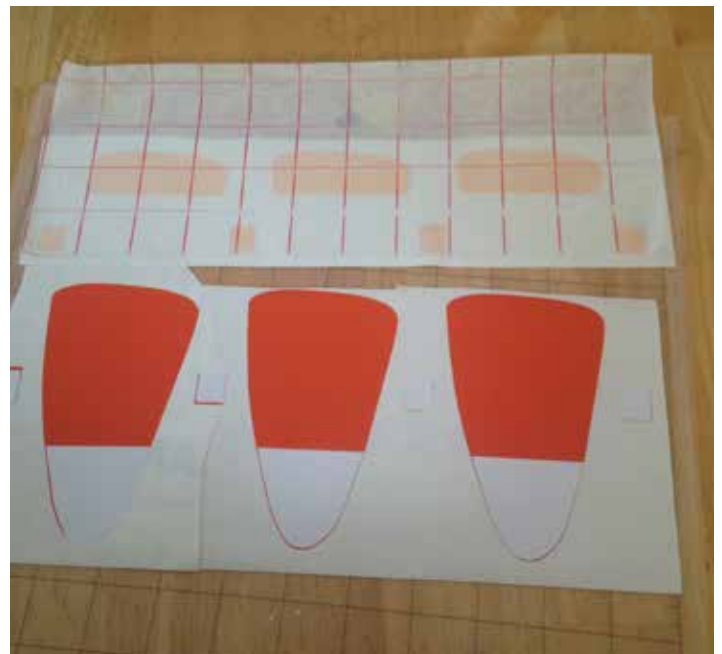
Next, you can cut the different colors on the right colored vinyl. For my project, I wanted three candy corn at the bottom so I copied the candy corn design three times and divided the pieces by color. Once all the colors were cut, I cut the backing sheets down slightly and stuck everything to my cutting mat. This will help keep the pieces in place when I start layering (as the vinyl strips sometimes want to curl making it harder to align pieces):



I started layering by using a strip of transfer paper and picking up all the white tips:

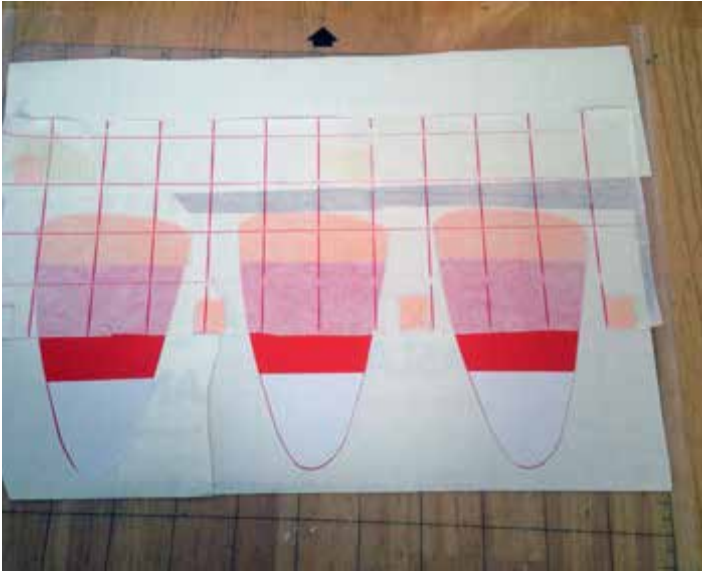


I picked up all the pieces, including the little white boxes on either side of each piece. Next I moved the bottom part to the middle of the candy corn. Here is where the boxes are helpful: align the white boxes with the orange boxes. The way the file is designed, this should get your white parts exactly where you want them on the orange:



# Design #2: Candy Corn

If you are a smidge off, don't worry. Just roll right along and add the tops, no one will notice. Now you'll want to align the yellow squares with the white squares:



Once they are all aligned, I removed the transfer paper and added the candy corn to my sign:



I wanted to make this a double sided sign so I added some words to the back of the sign with a skull (it is Halloween, after all):



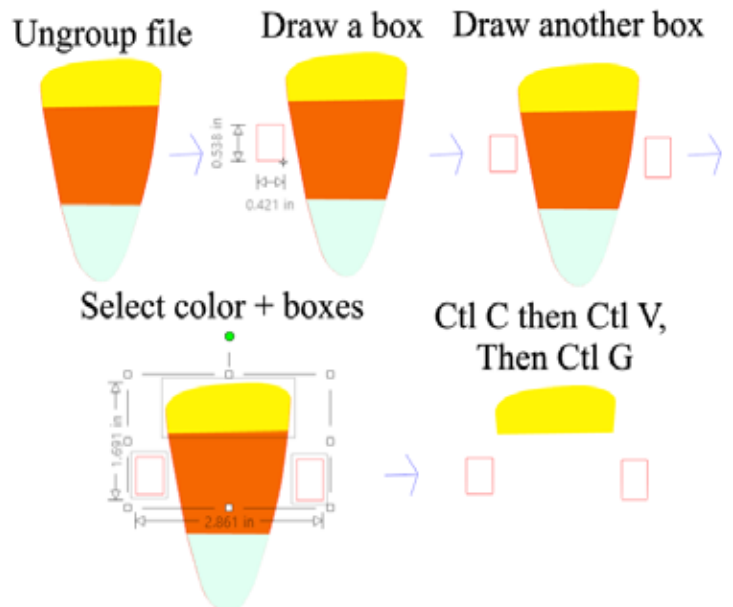
As a quick bonus project, I added some vinyl to a piece of drift wood featuring the candy corn too:



I hope you enjoyed these spooky fun projects and learned a thing or two about how to align vinyl!

If you were to start with your own layering project, you would layer the design in your software then draw a squares on each side of the design. Copy the layers with the alignment boxes for each layer. When you go to line up the cut vinyl pieces, use the alignment boxes, then throw the alignment boxes away when you are done layering.

## How to Layer Vinyl





## Design #3: Dahlia Flowers

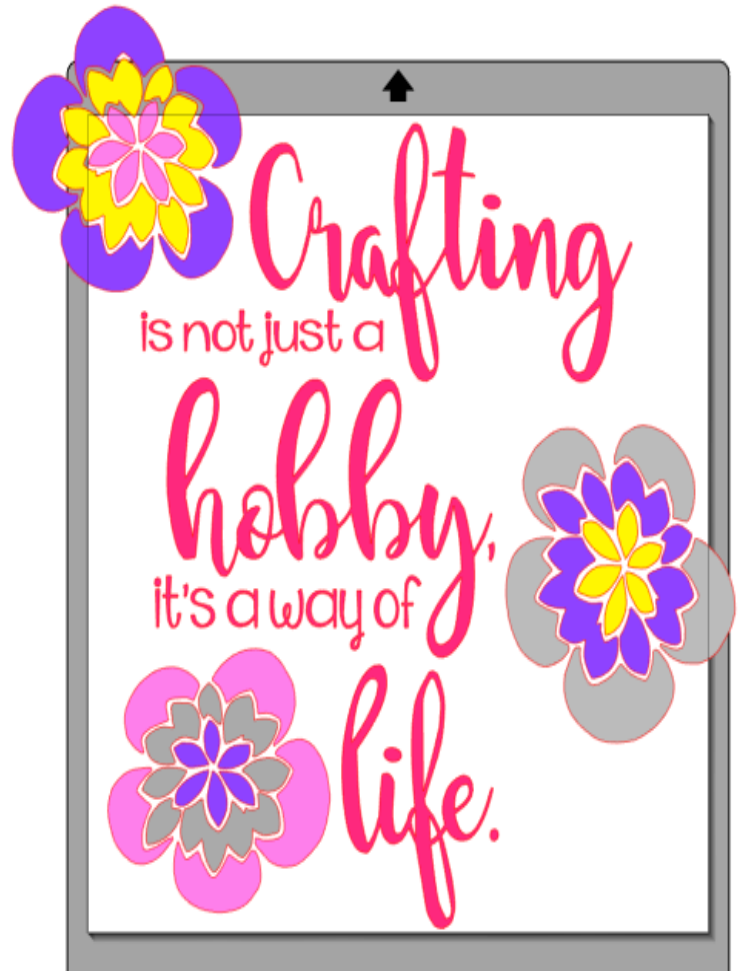


Flowers are so fun to add to just about any design. They are a nice “space filler” and can bring so much color to a project.

I made this flower design with using many colors in mind, let me show you how I added them to the wall to complete this wall art, you won't guess the unexpected tool I used for application!

When you first open this file, you will see four flower pieces:

I decided to add these flowers to a quote that I wanted to put up on the wall so I typed my words and then decided how I wanted to arrange my flowers around the quote. I created duplicates of the flower and colored each layer different colors:

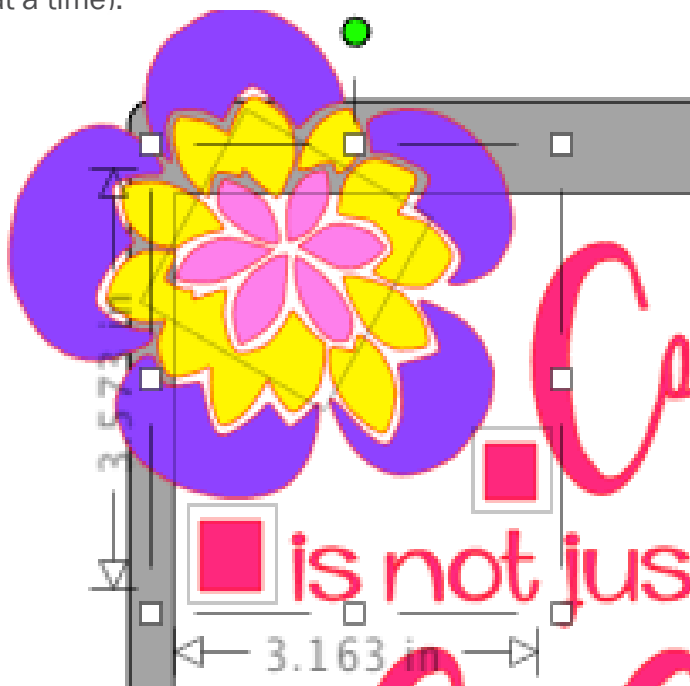


# Design #3: Dahlia Flowers

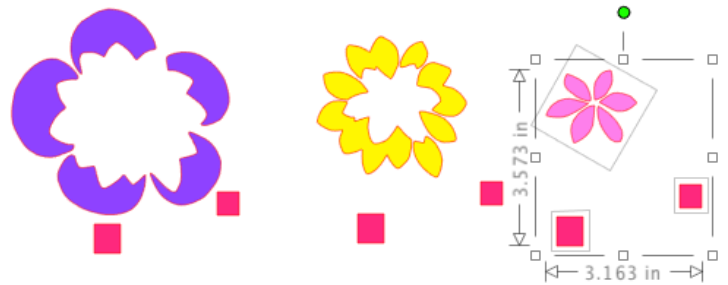
Once I decided where I wanted to put the flowers, I added in some small boxes around the flowers. The size of the boxes do not matter, I am adding them in to help me when I got to layer the design, and you need at least 2 boxes per flower (though I added three in some of the larger flowers to help with alignment):



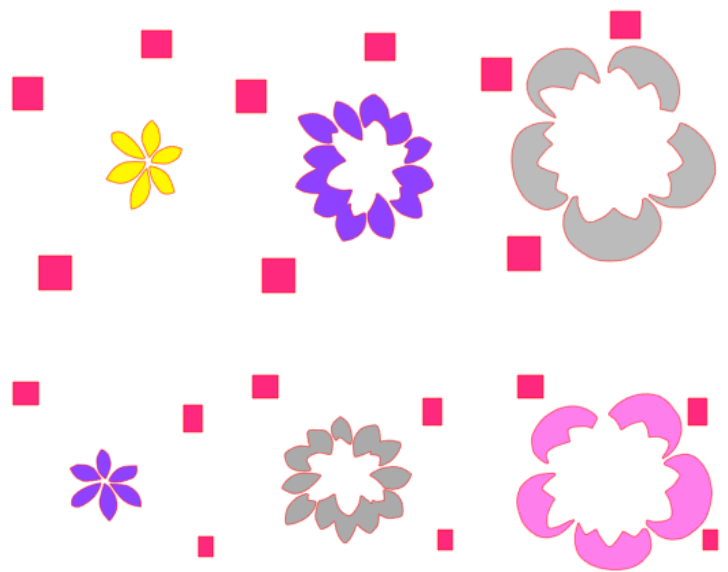
To make the layers for the flowers, I ungrouped the flower into three layers. Next, I selected the inside pink layer and each box surrounding the flower (hold shift and click to select more than one piece at a time):



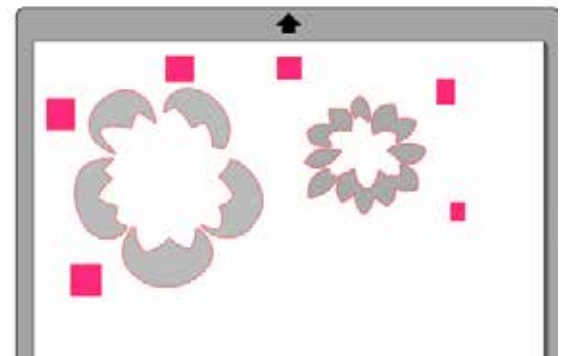
Once I had the pieces all selected, I pressed Control C and then Control V (copy and paste). While the copied pieces are selected, press Control G to group your pieces. You can then move the pieces around without messing up the spacing. Here is the flower with all the pieces ready to cut:



I did this with the other two flowers as well:



Notice that each layer has the exact same boxes surrounding it. Once I had all the pieces grouped with their alignment boxes, I cut the pieces out by color. First, I did the words (making sure to include the spacing boxes as well) and then did the flowers based off colors, for example:



# Applying vinyl to a textured surface

Once I had everything cut out, I was ready to assemble the design. There were two ways I thought I could transfer everything to the wall for my completed project. One would be to put the words up on the wall and then transfer the flowers right on the wall. The second way would be to get everything layered and then move it all at once to the wall.

I decided it would be easier to layer everything first and then move it to the wall all at the same time, but you could certainly layer it right on the wall if desired.

I stuck the everything to my cutting mat for stability as I began to layer, this prevented the backing sheet from rolling up on itself. First I put down the layer with the words as it was the largest layer. Next I added in the flowers. This design went outside of the 12" backing sheet the words are on, so I taped on some pieces of scrap backing in the areas where needed. To align the flowers, line up the boxes with each flower layer with the boxes on the quote:



The goal is to keep lining up the boxes so your flower stacks correctly. Obviously mine were a little off, but that's okay. You can always make adjustments by picking up the individual petal and moving it over if needed. Once you have it all lined up, remove the boxes and discard:

**TIP** When adding in vinyl elements, cover the rest of the design with your hand or a scrap of backing sheet to prevent the transfer paper from sticking to other parts of your design:





## Design #3: Dahlia Flowers

Once I had everything layered, I took transfer paper and covered the entire design. This design was too large for just one piece of transfer paper, so I used two pieces of transfer paper stuck together to move the whole design:



Once the design was all on the transfer paper, I moved over to the wall. I wiped the wall down with some rubbing alcohol and allowed it to dry before applying vinyl to it. Vinyl will stick better to a clean wall than a dirty wall!

I placed the design on the wall:



And began working the transfer paper off:



The vinyl was sticking to the wall, but it took some extra encouragement and it was a slow process to remove the transfer paper. Folding the transfer paper backwards onto itself as you remove it will help the vinyl release from the transfer paper and stick to the wall. I used my hand to press the vinyl onto the wall as it came off the transfer paper.

Once I fully removed the transfer paper, I could tell the vinyl was only kind of stuck to the wall. To help the vinyl stick better, I used my super secret vinyl adhesion tool! ...a tennis ball! The tennis ball helped to work the design into the texture of the wall because it presses the vinyl into all the little bumps in the wall.

# Applying vinyl to a textured surface

Keep your hand flat and ROLL the tennis ball around on your design. You can see in the photo to the right that some of the light pink did not stick as well as the silver. Rolling the tennis ball over the design helped the vinyl conform to the texture of the wall, giving it greater surface area adhesion.

You can see that the silver vinyl really picked up the texture of the wall.

There are two types of vinyl that you likely will use with projects: glossy permanent and matte removable. While glossy will stick to the walls easier, it is also harder to take off the walls. This vinyl is usually used for outdoor applications or on items that are going to be handled a lot (cups, bags, etc). The matte



removable vinyl is a little harder to get to stick to the walls, but it will come off without peeling the paint. Matte removable vinyl is the type you use for indoor purposes, as a stencil or on things that aren't going to be handled a lot (decor pieces, for example).

Here's another quick project I made using this flower design. I love the pink, gray and purple colors together:





## Design #4: Cupcakes

Vinyl can be used to freshen up just about any surface. Take, for example, my 10-year-old, well loved and well used, KitchenAid stand mixer. She's got a few nicks in her enamel, and she may be starting to accumulate some rust here and there...but add a little vinyl! Add a little vinyl and she looks brand new!



This vinyl "update" was pretty simple to do and, if I ever grow old of the design, I can always remove it and do something new!

The design I am highlighting with my "brand new" stand mixer is the cupcake design. I created this cupcake with some versatility in the design, which I hope you'll enjoy.

When you open the file, you will have four pieces :



The first cupcake is all grouped together. If you want to just color the cupcake and liner the same color, use this first one. The second is just the solid backing color. The last is the top and the bottom of the cupcake separate.

I used the first and second cupcakes for my stand mixer design. I wanted one solid color for the frosting and liner and a different solid color for the background:



I wanted to add the vinyl design to the top of my mixer and on each side. To add the design to the top, I first measured the top of my mixer with a ruler. Next I drew a box the same size in my die cutting machine software. I added two small boxes and centered them at the top and bottom of the design box. This is a trick I used on the Pineapple Welcome Sign as well, it really helps when you are trying to center a design.

Once I had my design space size ready, I designed my words and cupcake so they fit within the box. I cut all my layers out and used alignment boxes like seen in the Candy Corn project and the Dahlia Wall Design. The alignment boxes make it easier to align everything you go.

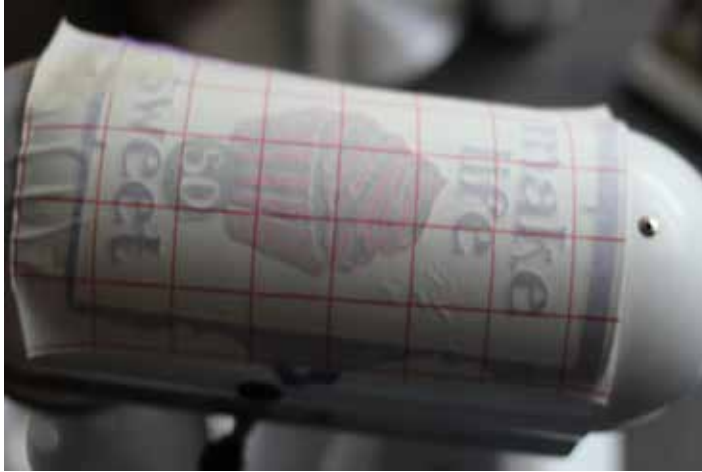
Here is the design in my software, aligning it on the top of the stand mixer and a view of the final top of the stand mixer:





# Updating home decor with vinyl

I picked up my entire design, including the outside box, with transfer paper. I used the small boxes at the top and bottom and aligned them with the screw on my stand mixer:



Then I removed the backing sheet:



Next I cut two more cupcakes for the sides. You can see the alignment boxes:



To finish it off, I added a bunch of circles and hearts randomly around the machine. These helped cover up some of the scratches my mixer has (poor thing) and added some quick color. To add these, I just drew a bunch of circles in my software and added in a little slit for the “reflection” on the bubbles.

## Design #4: Cupcakes

Look at that transformation!



Vinyl can be used on a variety of surfaces, even slightly porous ones. In the case of the stand mixer, it was pretty easy to just stick the design down. The best part is, if I change my mind on the design, I can just peel it off and make a new one. You can even do a seasonal design!

It's important to ensure your project surface area is clean before applying vinyl to it. For glass or hard surfaces, wiping the surface down with rubbing alcohol is ideal. This helps remove finger prints and anything on the

surface that may discourage the vinyl from sticking. On any other type of surface, such as a wall or painted board, you can use some soap and water and just give the surface a good cleaning. Make sure your surface dries before applying.

Here are a few more project ideas for you using this design. Use heat transfer material to add a cupcake to an apron:



or use the vinyl as a stencil to paint cupcake kitchen pop art:





# Design #5: Dream Catcher (Project #1)

The Ojibwe people were the first to make dream catchers. They believed that dream catchers could change a person's dreams, allowing only good dreams to filter through the web like design. The dream catcher net would hold any bad dreams until the light of day, when they would disappear. While dream catchers don't necessarily look like they did originally, they are still widely used, especially in children's rooms to help children sleep peacefully.



I designed this dream catcher file and made a few paintings for my kids rooms to help ward off bad dreams.

Let's take a look at the file and then I will share with you how I made two projects with just one 12x12" sheet of vinyl.

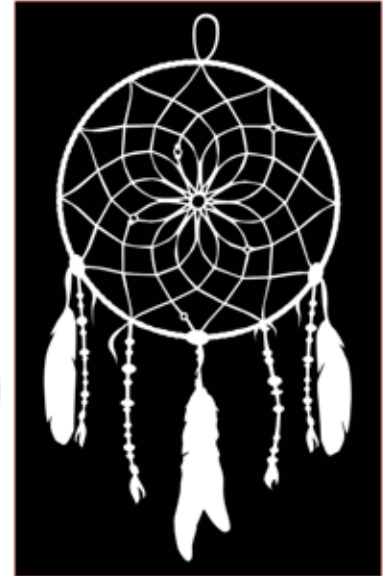
The dream catcher design is one solid design meaning it will be a solid shape you can pick up all at once. You could easily use this design for a paper project as well as a vinyl design!



I used this to my advantaged and used the positive and the negative of the design to make two separate projects.



Positive



Negative

I decided to paint a sparkly dream catcher with a goodnight saying for my daughter. I used the negative of the dream catcher as a stencil to paint in all the details. I used the positive of the design to make another dream catcher project for my son too.

Both of these projects were done on canvas. It can be a little tricky to get vinyl to stick to canvas, so I have a few pointers to share. Stretched canvas gives you some tension, it does not have enough support to allow you to really press down to get your vinyl to adhere to the surface. One thing you can do to help with this is to give your canvas a temporary hard backing. To give my canvas a hard back, I used a piece of scrap wood. This is just a section of standard board you can get in any hardware store that I cut a piece off of. You could also use a stack of paper, small shoe box or anything else that fits inside the insert on the back of your canvas. Bonus points if you can make it flush with the surface like this piece of wood:





# Design #5: Dream Catcher (Project #1)

For this project, I wanted the words to be white so I used the vinyl as a stencil and decided to preserve the white canvas for the white lettering.

I used my die cutting machine to design the words for this project. I cut them out, weeded them and then transferred them to the canvas with transfer paper. Next I used a scraper tool to burnish the vinyl onto the canvas:



With the piece of wood under the canvas, I had the support I needed to really rub the vinyl onto the canvas.

Next, I removed the transfer paper by folding the transfer paper back over on itself and pressing down on the design as I went, ensuring the letters stuck to the canvas.



To really make my vinyl stick, I heated it up using my embossing gun (a blow dryer would work as well). Your goal is to lightly heat the vinyl and press it into the canvas with your fingers as you go. Heat in small sections and press the vinyl into the canvas. If you can start to see the texture of the canvas through the vinyl, you are doing it right! But use caution, vinyl melts when over heated and fine lines can curl onto themselves. Light heat is all that is needed.

To ensure the crispest of paint lines, I painted over all the words with white paint. This way, if the paint does bleed under the vinyl, it will be the same color as the canvas. Just a light coat of paint will do:



I did a cross hatch pattern over all of my words to seal the edges, but you could still see the vinyl:



# Applying Vinyl to Canvas

Once the white paint dried, I painted the whole canvas with a light gray acrylic paint. Before the gray paint was dry, I peeled up all the words using a hook tool and a pair of tweezers. Peeling when the paint is still wet helps you get crisp paint lines.



It's okay to be a little messy here, the vinyl is acting as a stencil.

As a final step, I painted over the entire design with glitter paint to give it sparkle!

Before everything was dry, I peeled off the vinyl:



Next, I added in the NEGATIVE of my Dream Catcher Design to the left of the words:



To pick up just the negative of the dream catcher, I weeded the positive of the dream catcher by peeling it up all at once and used it on another project (see project #2 next). The negative of the design was left over once I did that, so I trimmed closely around the design and lined it up with the canvas and words. I used transfer paper to move it over to the canvas and applied it using the same technique I used for the words.

Next, I painted the dream catcher in using some fun paints my daughter chose.



It is now hanging by my daughters bed, here's to sweet dreams!

If you wanted to add vinyl to canvas and NOT use it as a stencil, you can certainly do that as well. No need to "seal" the vinyl afterwards. Actually, I would recommend to NOT seal it as sealants may cause the vinyl to curl or warp. Just leave the vinyl as is and you should be fine!





## Design #5: Dream Catcher (Project #2)

I love using a design in two ways to help prevent wasting my vinyl. Using both the positive and the negative of the same design is a great way to use your vinyl and reduce waste. Here is my second project using the Dream Catcher Design:



The first project I did with this design, I used the negative of the design to create a sweet dream catcher canvas for my daughter. Now I am going to use the positive of the design to create a dream catcher for my son!



Positive



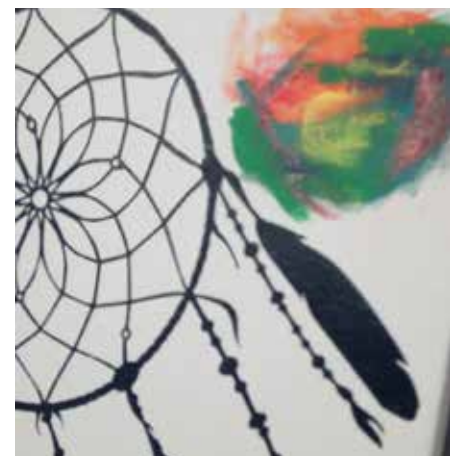
Negative

I carefully peeled the dream catcher off of the vinyl backing sheet. It is all one continuous piece so I could remove it without using transfer paper. This allowed me to use the negative of the design for my first project. When removing the design, use caution: vinyl seems to naturally have static and it will stick to itself. It's really hard to get it unstuck and it can potentially ruin the delicate design. To help minimize any static, I wiped the vinyl and my hand with a baby wipe before transferring the design to the canvas.

I stuck the positive of the design to a 12x12 inch canvas. I added a piece of wood to the inside back of my canvas to give it a hard backing and then used my embossing gun to GENTLY heat the design, pressing it into the canvas as I went:



Next, I painted to the left and right of the dream catcher with colors that matched the room decor. I made sure to dry between paint layers to prevent everything from turning into a gross brown color:





# Using vinyl as a stencil

Once the paint dried, I cut out the words “Sweet Dreams” out of vinyl in a type writer font and added it to the corners of the design over the painted areas:



Finally, I spray painted the whole thing with a lime green spray paint using light coats:



Once the paint was dry, I peeled off the vinyl with a pair of tweezers. This revealed the white canvas where the dream catcher was and the colorful words (that look more like plain black in the photo below...):



This project was simpler than the first project, but my son loves it, especially right above his bed:

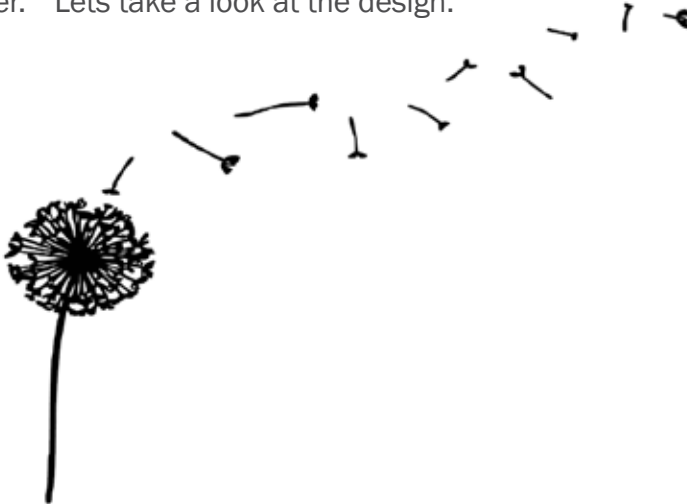


## Design #6: Dandelion

I love dandelions. Blowing dandelion seeds was always something I enjoyed as a kid and I love that no one will ever care if you pick a dandelion (or 10) from their yard. Some people see them as weeds, but I think that weeds are just flowers growing where they don't belong. With my love of dandelions, it's no surprise that I wanted to add one to my car with my own custom car decal:



I love how tiny of a detail that the Cameo can cut! Let me share how I created my own "bumper sticker." Let's take a look at the design:



The file has a dandelion and 10 little tufts floating away... it feels very breezy to me. I added this to my car bumper a few years ago and about a week later, I got in an accident where the car was a total loss (sad face). I miss you Corolla...



But, such is life, as the decal says! So I decided to add it to my new vehicle!

First, I duplicated the dandelion. I have two kiddos, so I wanted to make three dandelions to represent us. Then I added in the "c'est la vie," which means "such is life" because I feel that goes really well with what a dandelion means to me. I measured the space on my car and sized the design to fit. Next I cut the vinyl and began to weed. A sharp hook tool is very helpful:





# How to Make Custom Car Decals

Here is one of my favorite vinyl weeding tips, wrap a scrap of vinyl around your finger, sticky side out, then stick all your little scrap bits to as you weed:



Once I weeded the design, I covered the whole thing with transfer paper:



Next, I burnished the design with a scraper tool:

## Vinyl Vocab

**Burnish:** /'bɜːniʃ/ Verb

To rub over a vinyl design using pressure and the assistance of an instrument such as a scraper tool. An action done to assist in transferring vinyl for crafting. Burnishing vinyl designs helps the vinyl release from the backing sheet and adhere to transfer paper, or release from transfer paper and adhere to the project surface.

"She burnished the vinyl onto the wall."

I then turned the design upside down and removed the vinyl backing sheet. To help the vinyl release from the backing sheet, I folded the backing sheet over on itself and pressed down as I went:



Now I was ready to transfer it to the car. First, I cleaned off the car with a little rubbing alcohol. This will ensure your vehicle is dirt free allowing the vinyl to stick better:



## Design #6: Dandelion

Finally, remove the transfer paper and ensure your design is well adhered:



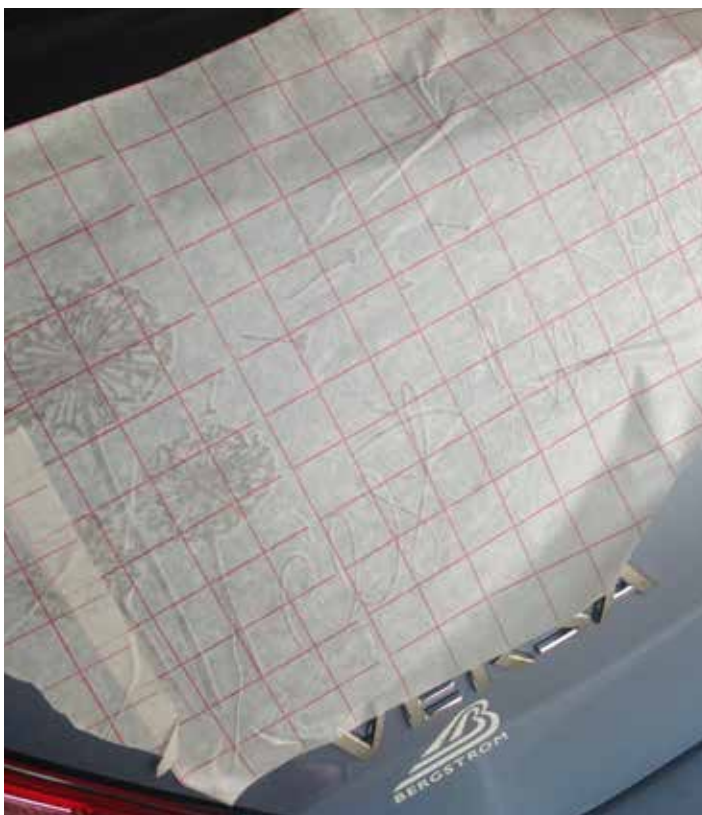
If you have a decal you want to remove from your vehicle, such as the one from the dealership...



You can use a hook tool to work it off:



Next, place the vinyl onto the vehicle and rubbed over the entire design:



# How to Make Custom Car Decals



Just gently work the hook under the vinyl and peel it off. For stubborn vinyl, you may need to use a blow dryer to gently heat up the adhesive on the back of the to help it come off. When the vinyl comes off, you may have a little glue residue left:



I used a little lemon essential oil to remove the residue, but you could use Goo Gone or any other sticker residue remover you choose.

All done! So happy to have “my decal” on my new vehicle again!



## Window vs. Bumper: A Sticky Debate

I put my sticker on my bumper, but many people choose to put their decals on their window. We live in Wisconsin, so I didn't want to put it on my windshield where I would be scraping ice off the window all winter long. Putting the vinyl on the car shouldn't make any difference nor affect the paint job at all.

Think of all the things you could do making your own vinyl car decals! Memorial decals, your kids sports teams, make your own stick family or advertise your favorite independent consultant business (Thirty One Gifts, doTerra, Origami Owl, Avon, Mary Kay, Younique, etc).



## Design #7: Pink Flamingo

I love pink flamingos! Don't you? When I was a kid, I remember stopping to see the pink flamingos every time we went to the zoo with my Grandma. There's something about giant pink birds on stilt-like legs that you just have to love.

And plastic yard pink flamingos? No yard is complete without one! They're so gaudy that I can't help but love them too!



I used vinyl as a stencil to paint this hand made tray, let me give you some pointers on making your own...

I decided to design this fun plastic pink flamingo design:

It's on the simple side, but sometimes I think simple is best.



I started out this project by building this serving tray using some scrap wood and pallet boards:



To build the tray, I cut a piece of scrap wood for the base then cut four pieces of pallet wood to fit the sides and nailed it all together. Once I had the tray built, I painted everything white and then added in some turquoise on the outside and a nice sky blue color on the inside. I sanded everything down to make it shabby chic.

To add in the flamingos to the tray, I measured my tray base and sized the flamingo to fit. I wanted three flamingos going across, so I duplicated the design and created a box to cut around the flamingos that was a bit smaller than the inside of the tray. I let my die cutting machine cut the design from matte removal vinyl (any color will do).





# Using vinyl as a stencil

Once I had cut my design, I removed the flamingos creating a stencil. Next, I moved the design from the vinyl backing sheet to my tray using transfer paper. Once the design was centered, I burnished the vinyl onto the track and then removed the transfer paper leaving behind my stencil:



I used a round foam stencil brush to stencil in my flamingos:



I decided to go with an ombre look and can't help but chuckle a little at the fuzzy looking flamingos:



Once I had good coverage, I removed the stencil while the paint was still wet.



The paint lines are so crisp! The key to crisp paint lines is to use a sponge dauber and “pounce” the sponge around the edges of the design. This will help keep the paint from bleeding under your vinyl stencil.

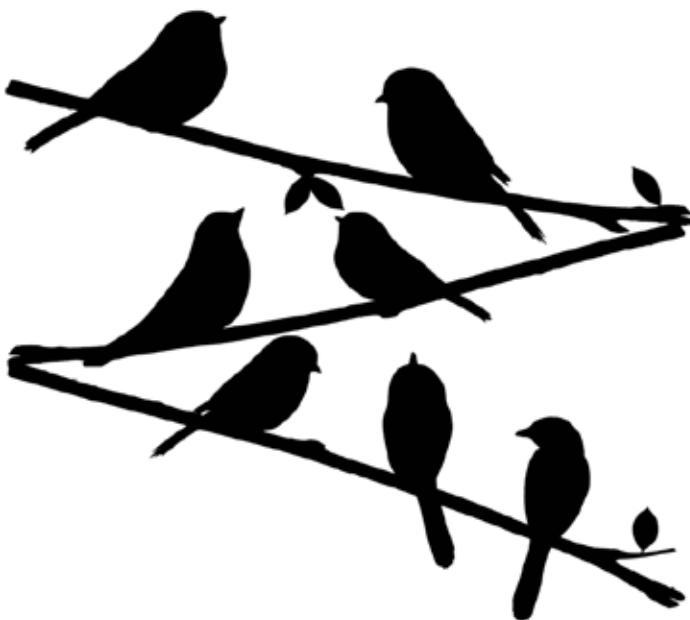
To finish the tray, I added in “Love” in the bottom corner of the tray. I really like the way that it all came together! It's important to use removable vinyl for stencils and to pull up the stencil before the paint all dries, this will give you crisper paint lines!

## Design #8: Birds on a Branch

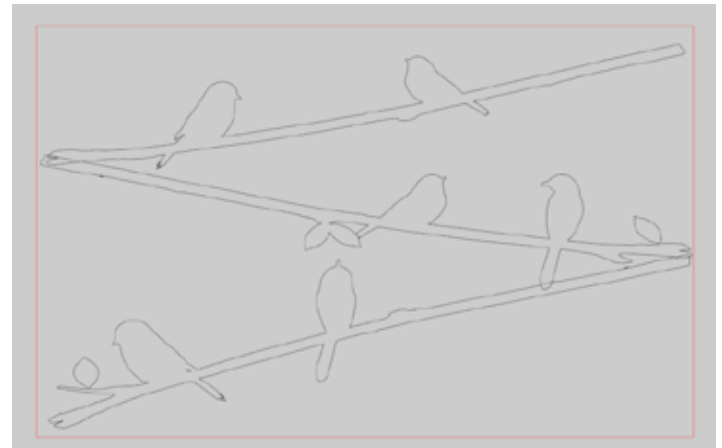


I found this window at the local antique store thought the birds on a branch file paired with a quote would be a perfect match for it. There are some tricks on application that I wanted to share with you, including the “wet method of application” which helps avoid dreaded bubbles!

Before we delve into the project, let’s take a look at the file:

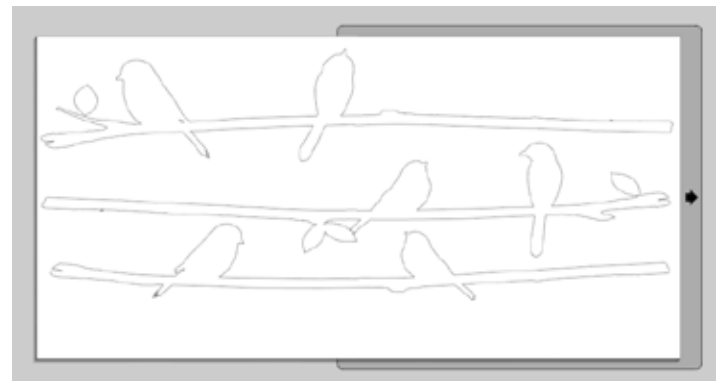


To use this file for my project, I measured my window and sized the file to fit. In this case, the window was 15x24 inches and I really stretched it out and rearranged the birds to fit nicely.



**TIP**

The total height of my design was 15 inches, which is too wide for my die cutting machine to cut. To cut the design, I rotated the branches sideways and cut them on a 12" by 24" long sheet of vinyl:



Next, I prepped the quote for the design. I added the text right over the top of the birds in my file to make sure the spacing looked right and the font was as big as I could make it:





# Wet method of application

I had limited purple vinyl to work with, so I had to cut the words in several pieces. I laid them out in lines and taped the pieces together, adding in scrap pieces of backing sheet where there were spaces where there were spaces:



Now that all the pieces were cut, I went to transfer everything to the window. I started with the birds on the back of the window.

Transferring large designs to a glass surface can be difficult to get the design straight on the first shot and to not have bubbles in the vinyl. To help with that, you can use the wet method of application. The wet method is really helpful when you have a non-porous surface and want to avoid bubbles.

I filled a spray bottle with about a cup of water and a squirt of baby shampoo (Exact measurements aren't all that vital, you just want a little shampoo in some water). Shake the contents up. Next, LIGHTLY spray your surface. I sprayed one half of my window first:



I laid the vinyl onto the window and then used the scraper to work all the moisture out from under the transfer paper. I used a paper towel to sop up the liquid as I squeegeed it out. Next I sprayed the other side of the window and repeated the process:



When I was confident that the moisture was mostly out, I removed the transfer paper:



I then blotted all over the design to sop up any water left behind. I was able to make some slight adjustments to where the branches lined up on the window at this point. To finish up, I used my scraper tool to go over the vinyl one last time, getting out any water that was left behind.

I let the vinyl dry for a while as I prepped the other side of the window for the words. Putting the birds on one side and the words on the other side allowed me to not overlap my design, making for smooth vinyl!



## Design #8: Birds on a Branch

I put the window on the floor so I could use the lines in our hardwood floors to line up the lines. If you don't have hardwood floors, no worries, you can lay your cutting mat under the window too!

I taped the strips of words in place with bits of masking tape to hold them in place on the window:



I flattened a piece of transfer paper over the design and taped it to the window with a strip of a tape. I used the hinge method of application described in the Pineapple Project post to transfer the words.



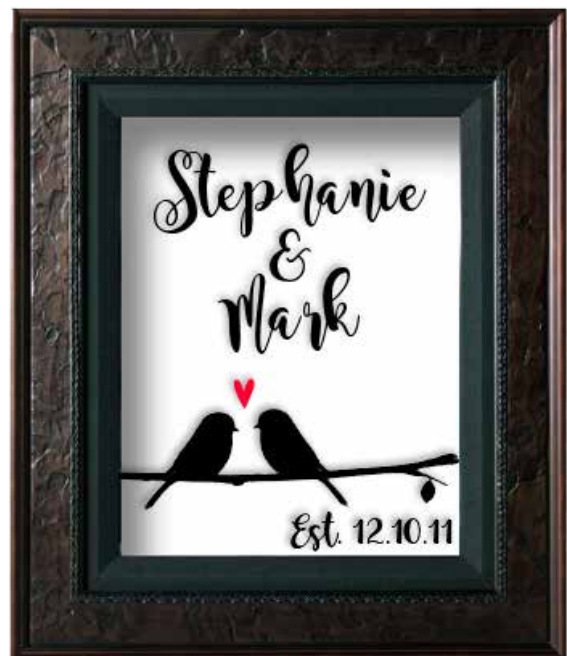
I didn't spray the side of the window that the words were going on with the solution this time because the words are thinner and won't bubble like the birds would have. Large surface areas of vinyl are more likely to bubble than thin things like words.

You can use the wet method of application on any non-porous surface including glass, certain plastics, wood with a finish on it, tiles, stainless steel tumblers and more. The advantage of this application method is that you squeegee out the water as you apply the vinyl, which works out any bubbles as well leaving you a nice smooth application!

I love the way this project turned out, so I decided to cut a few more birds to apply to our actual window. I think it's fun to see the birds when the sun comes up:



Or you can grab just a bird or two and a branch and make a cute personalized wedding/ anniversary gift for someone special:



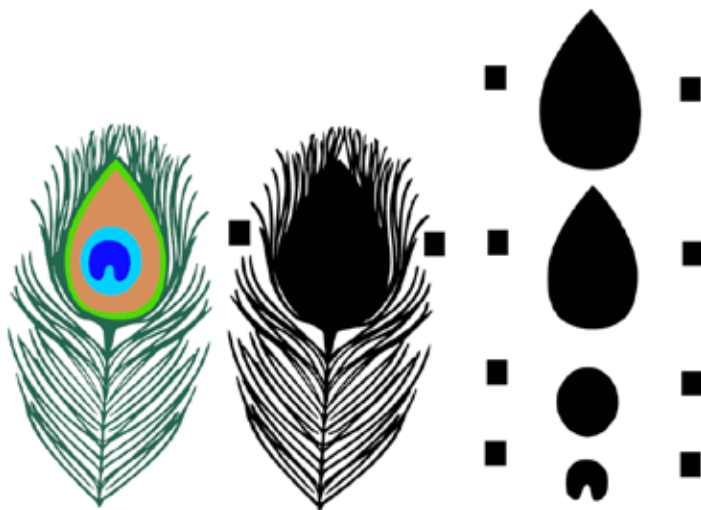
# Design #9: Peacock Feather

Are you up for a challenge? I think you can make this project, and I think you'll love the results as much as I love my new utensil holder:



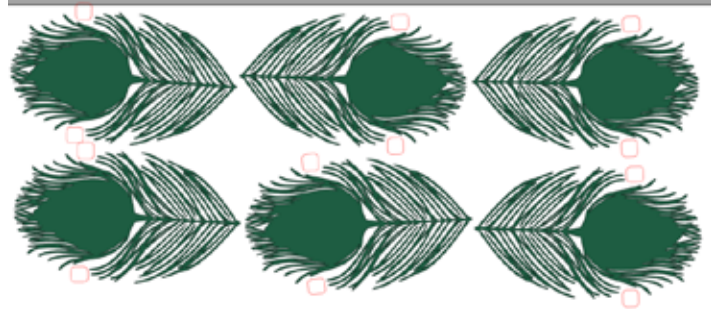
This will be a challenging file if you are new to vinyl, but I designed it to not only because it's really pretty, but to also give you some practice in weeding and layering. Once you work through this project, you'll be able to face just about anything!

Let's start off by taking a look at the file:



This file is broken up into layers with layering boxes already built right in. To see more about layering, please see the Dahlia Wall and Candy Corn Projects.

I needed 6 total peacock feathers to put them around my utensil holder, so I duplicated the design 6 times over and put them close together to use up as little vinyl as possible:



The real challenge with this design is that there are a lot of little pieces to pick out of the base feather. Removing parts of vinyl that are not part of your design is called weeding.

I really enjoy weeding. I find it very relaxing and almost therapeutic, but even I felt a bit of a lump in my throat when I looked at the feathers. When cutting detailed files like this, you'll want to make sure you have a sharp cutting blade- the newer the better. Also, make sure you pause cutting and clean the blade periodically.

## Vinyl Vocab

Weed: /wēd/ Verb

1. Removing unwanted portions of a design.
2. Removing anything that is not part of the final design.

The use of a tool, such as a hook tool, is recommended.

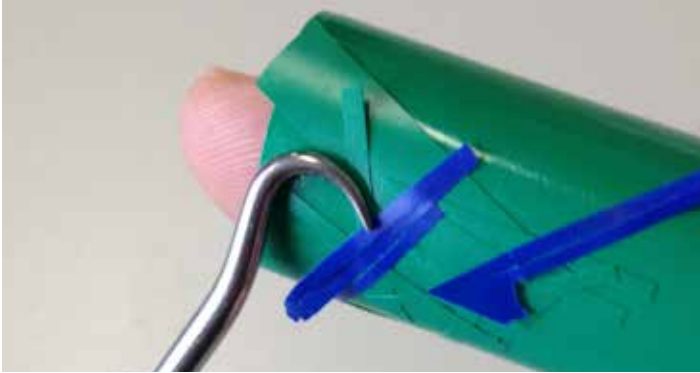
"After I cut my vinyl, I used a hook to weed the design, leaving just the words behind."

Once my machine cut the feathers out, cut each feather off the group so I could work on one at a time. I used a hook tool and a pair of tweezers to weed. I also had a bright light set up so I could see the fine lines. While I weeded, I had the feather file up on my computer so I could double check that what I was trying to weed was a removable piece. Take your time with this step. Start with just one feather and work on it when you have some time, do not try to rush it.



## Design #9: Peacock Feather

Here is a genius tip on weeding something very detailed like this: take a piece of tape, or a scrap piece of vinyl, and wrap it around your finger so it is sticky side out. Use this to catch your scraps:



You won't believe how much easier that makes it to weed! Just rotate the tape or vinyl occasionally and you're all set!

It took about an hour and a half to weed these six little feathers. It was a real exercise in patience, but at only 15 minutes per feather, I think I did okay!

Once the feathers were all weeded, I cut all the other pieces and then used the alignment boxes to line everything up:



Next, I stuck them to my utensil holder. I placed one feather on one side and then put another one on the direct opposite side of the holder. Finally, I spaced the remaining 4 all around the utensil holder. It's so pretty, I don't know if I can stand to put it back in the kitchen holding spoons and spatulas! She could go right on a shelf and be a piece all her own:



Here's another idea for this file. I just put the photo together, but wouldn't this be such a beautiful statement piece or piece of sofa art? Drool...





# Design #10: Reindeer

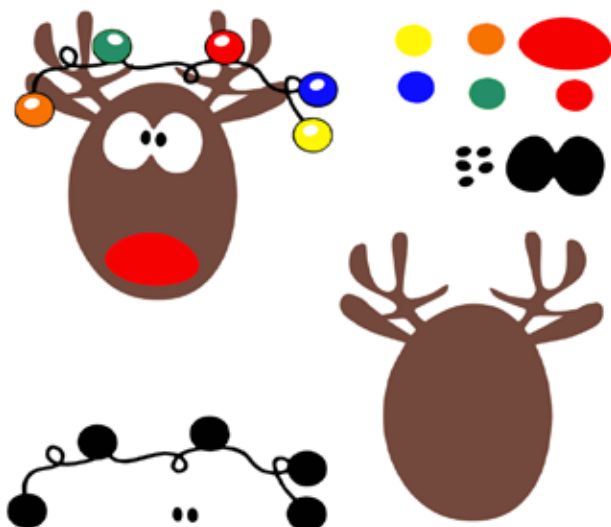
Leaving cookies out for Santa on Christmas Eve is a favorite holiday tradition in our house. I think our favorite cookies to make for Santa include classic sugar cookies and peanut butter cookies with a peanut butter cup in them! Yum!

And cookies taste so much better when you have them on a cute plate...don't you think?



I really think this is a fun file and you can use it for a variety of different holiday projects. It looks like Rudolph got into a little bit of a tangle in the lights!

When you first open this design, you will see the complete and grouped reindeer on the left. You will also see all the parts separated by color (the whites are colored black to ease in tracing):



To make my cookies for Santa plate, I measured my pate and drew two squares the same size as the plate in the software. I dragged the fully grouped reindeer into the middle of the plate and put it at a slight angle. A bit of his antlers overhung the inside of the plate, so I used the knife tool to trim those off (I promise this will not hurt one bit Rudolph, hold still!):



Once I had my reindeer sized to fit, I ungrouped everything and then sorted by color utilizing my whole mat:



## Design #10: Reindeer

Next I loaded up my cutting mat with pieces of vinyl:



This allowed me to cut all the pieces at once! This project is a great way to use up scraps of vinyl. If your die cutting machine allows you to cut by color, you may wish to utilize that feature over doing it all at once like this. It really depends on your personal preference.

Once I cut all my pieces, I assembled the reindeer by hand. To place the reindeer head, I used the wet method of application. This helped so I could move the vinyl around. Once I was happy with where it was placed, I used a scraper tool to work all the moisture out from under the reindeer and used a paper towel to sop up the water. Next, I placed the nose, eyes and lights. To finish off the plate, I used some transfer paper to add the words and candy canes around the edge of the plate.

### **A note about vinyl safety!**

You do not want your vinyl to come in contact with food. It's not safe to eat off of. This is a cookies for Santa plate, so you would want to put something between the cookie and the plate. We use a napkin because Santa probably needs a napkin after his snack anyway. This will also help keep your vinyl clean, you don't want cookie crumbs to get on your design.

**TIP**



Alternatively, you could use a clear plate and layer the vinyl from the back so you could still use the plate without a napkin.

A few other ideas for this design would be to cut it out of paper and use it as a gift tag! You could also use heat transfer material and make it into a fun Christmas sweater (hello ugly Christmas sweater party!).

You could also add it to a mug. I bet hot chocolate would taste wonderful in a cute reindeer mug:

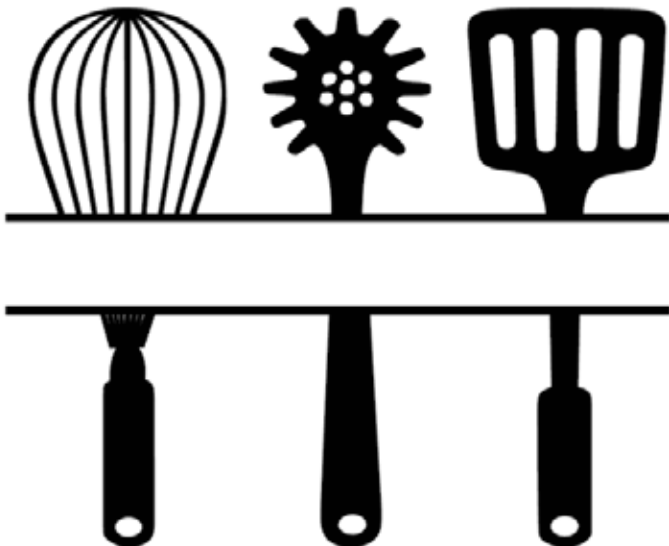


# Design #11: Kitchen Utensils

Have you ever needed to make a quick and inexpensive gift for someone? Maybe Mother's Day is coming up quicker than you thought, or you have a last minute bridal shower to attend?



Split images with writing in them (like this design) are very trendy right now, and who doesn't love something personalized? I decided to make some split utensils to add to a glass kitchen cutting board, click below and let me show you how easy it is to create a personalized gift.



I bought the glass cutting board at a discount store. The top of the cutting board has some texture to it and there are clear little rubber feet on the bottom. When I measured the design space, I measured between the feet on the back of the board.

I want to add the vinyl to the back of the cutting board for several reasons. Vinyl should never come in direct contact with food, it is made out of the same materials as PVC and you don't want that touching anything you eat (or drink). Plus, if you were to put the vinyl on the top of the cutting board, you'd end up wrecking the design from cutting on top of it. Even if you were just going to use it as a display piece, the top has texture to it and the vinyl just won't stick well to that. Putting the vinyl on the back of the cutting board solves all these problems. Plus, most vinyl is the same color whether you are looking at the top of it or the sticky side, meaning you can put it on glass and it will look the same from either side of the glass.

Once I decided on the size of my design, I added in a text box and typed out my words and sized them to fit between the utensils. Note the bars included on either side of the design:



These bars are here to help align the layers, we'll get to them in a moment. Once you have your design ready, select everything and right click on the design and flip it so it appear backwards:





# Design #11: Kitchen Utensils

This will flip your design so it appears backwards in your work space:



This step is important because we are going to be putting the vinyl on the back of the cutting board. You want to reverse the image so when you look at it from the top of the cutting board, it appears the right way up.

Once you have flipped your design, you can cut the utensil layer out and transfer it to your cutting board.

**TIP**

Place your cutting board face down on your cutting mat. Since you can see right through the cutting board, this will help you align the design between the feet and make sure it is straight.



Once you have the utensils on, you can cut your words and the two side bars. Here is where those side bars come in handy- they are spacers to ensure that your design lines up how you planned.

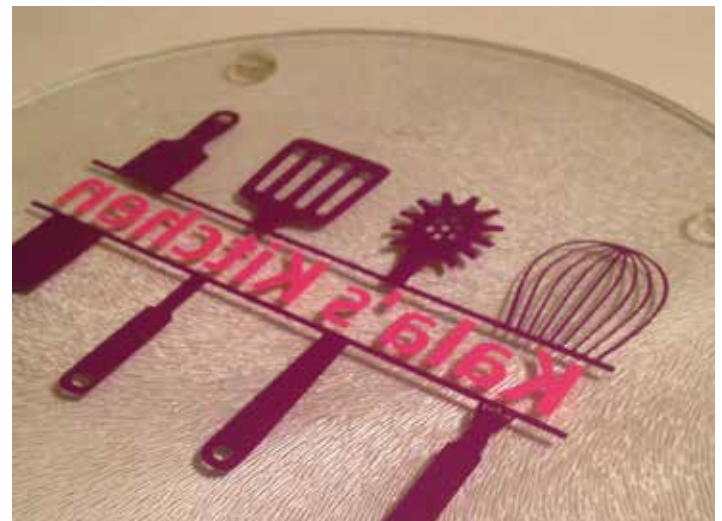
**TIP**

Hold the cutting board up to a light and use the spacer bars to align your design before pressing your vinyl to the cutting board. With the help from the light, you can see right where your spacer bars line up:



Next peel off the transfer paper, remove the spacer bars and you are all done! If you happen to have any air bubbles, you can work them to the edges of the design using a scraper tool. Let the vinyl cure (sit) for at least 72 hours before doing anything with it.

Here is the completed design from the back of the cutting board:



# Putting vinyl on glass

And here it is when you turn it the right way up!



A few tips for anything you add vinyl to that is food related:

- 1) Don't put vinyl on a surface that your food will touch. This design is on the bottom of the glass cutting board so the food won't ever touch the vinyl. This goes for plates or cups as well.
- 2) Don't soak anything that has vinyl on it. If you soak vinyl designs, it can peel right off the project surface.
- 3) Use a dishwasher sparingly. I always say that if it was hand made, it should be hand washed. I know a lot of people who have vinyl on mugs and use the dish washer to clean them with no problems at all, but I would hand wash anything that has vinyl on it, just to be safe.
- 4) Don't microwave or bake anything with vinyl on it. Vinyl is made out of the same stuff as PVC. You don't want to heat that up in a microwave or oven as it may release fumes. Plus, vinyl can melt if you heat it up and that can ruin your design or even start a fire.



A few other ideas you could use this design for include using heat transfer vinyl to an apron or hand towels.



## Design #12: Outlet Personalities

Have you ever looked at something that, once you see it, you can't un-see it?

The internet is full of these images...the cigar sticking out of the brick wall, a cowboy silhouette that just looks like random lines and so much more. I once saw a picture of an outlet with a mustache on it while browsing and ever since I just can't un-see their little faces.



So one of the designs I made was for outlets. These are sized to fit a standard outlet in the US and I think they are so fun!

I sized down a collection of hats, glasses, mustaches, eye brows, hair and even little ties, bow ties and a scarf, because these aren't just ANY old outlets... they're fancy!



This is a fairly simple project. Just set up your machine to cut vinyl and cut out the pieces you'd like to add to your outlet. You can have lots of fun with these by using different colors, building up with layers and more. Even just adding a simple tie to an outlet will make people see it as a face...



### A few words of caution:

Use your best judgement on doing this project.

First- if you have little ones, you may not want to do this project. Or at least not on outlets they can see. **You obviously don't want to encourage kids to pay any attention to electrical outlets**, or make them think that the outlets have mouths (because kids might think they're hungry and feed the outlet!) - so make sure you keep it out of reach of children. Even if you don't have kids, keep in mind that some kids might be in your house at some point (birthday parties, watching the neighbors, etc), always use caution and keep an eye on little kids around you outlets (with or without vinyl!).



# Adding Vinyl in Unexpected Places

Second- if you are planning on using the outlets you add these to, **make sure the vinyl is well adhered to the outlet** and not coming loose or going into the holes of the outlet. These designs are all sized to fit AROUND the holes, you don't want them going IN the holes or blocking the holes at all. Vinyl is a plastic material (it's made out of the same stuff as PVC plumbing) and it could possibly cause a fire or an electrical short if your get a piece jammed inside your outlet. I would recommend checking the vinyl before using the outlet every single time, or only adding designs to outlets you don't use (which would be safer all together). This could also just be a temporary project for a laugh and then remove the vinyl.

**If these warnings have you leery of using these designs for the purposes above, fear not! There are lots of uses for these beyond just putting them on outlets!**

Do you have an Elf on the Shelf? Your elf could decorate up a framed photo with some of these shapes and even get in on the action themselves. Vinyl can be peeled off the glass so you won't harm your photo and your elf won't have to permanently sport a fu manchu (unless you want him to, of course):



These designs are really little so they fit on outlets, but you can also size up any of these designs and cut them out of paper too! All you need to do then is glue on a stick and you have instant photo booth props!



You can also add these designs to digital scrapbooks, cut them out of heat transfer material and add them to shirts or add them anywhere else you can think of! They really are fun and versatile shapes so feel free to have a little fun!



These outlet personalites are a lot of fun, just make sure to use your judgement on the project. Of course, you do so at your own risk. We don't want anyone harmed in the spirit of fun, so please check and recheck your outlets if you plan to do this project. I love a good laugh, but it's not worth someone getting hurt over!