

DESIGN BASICS: CRICUT DESIGN SPACE



What is the Design Space?

Design Space is Cricut's web-based design software used with their electronic cutting machines like the Cricut Joy Xtra available in Salem Public Library's QuakerSpace. Designs are created using the Design Space before cut on the Cricut machines. To access Cricut's **Design Space**, visit design.cricut.com. A **Cricut App** is also available for *Android* and *Apple* devices.

Create an Account

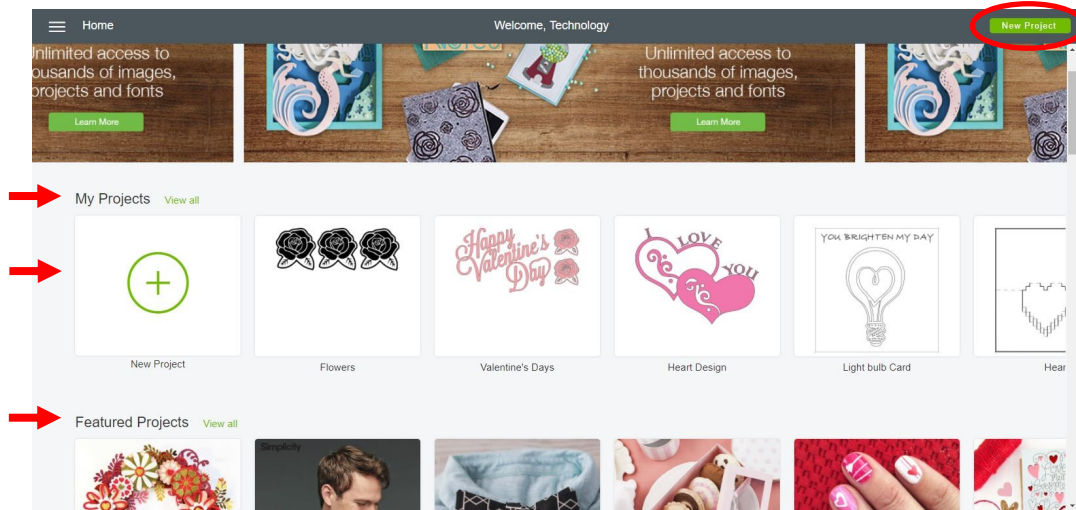
To use the Cricut Design Space, and to make the most of the features, you will want to create a **Cricut account!** The Library has a login available, but you won't have access to our account at home. Cricut accounts are free and can be accessed at any computer, making it easy to work on designs at home and bring them to the QuakerSpace! Once at design.cricut.com, either sign in with an existing account, or choose **Create a Cricut ID** to sign up.

A screenshot of the Cricut registration page titled "Create a Cricut ID". The subtitle reads "Your Cricut ID is your sign-in for everything you do with Cricut." The form contains several input fields: "First Name", "Last Name", "Country" (a dropdown menu with "Please Select" as the current selection), "Email/Cricut ID", "Retype Email / Cricut ID", and "Password". There are two checkboxes: "I accept the Cricut Terms of Use" (unchecked) and "Send me Cricut tutorials, tips, inspiration, and deals via email" (checked). At the bottom, there is a "Sign In" button for existing users and a "Create A Cricut ID" button for new users.

GETTING STARTED

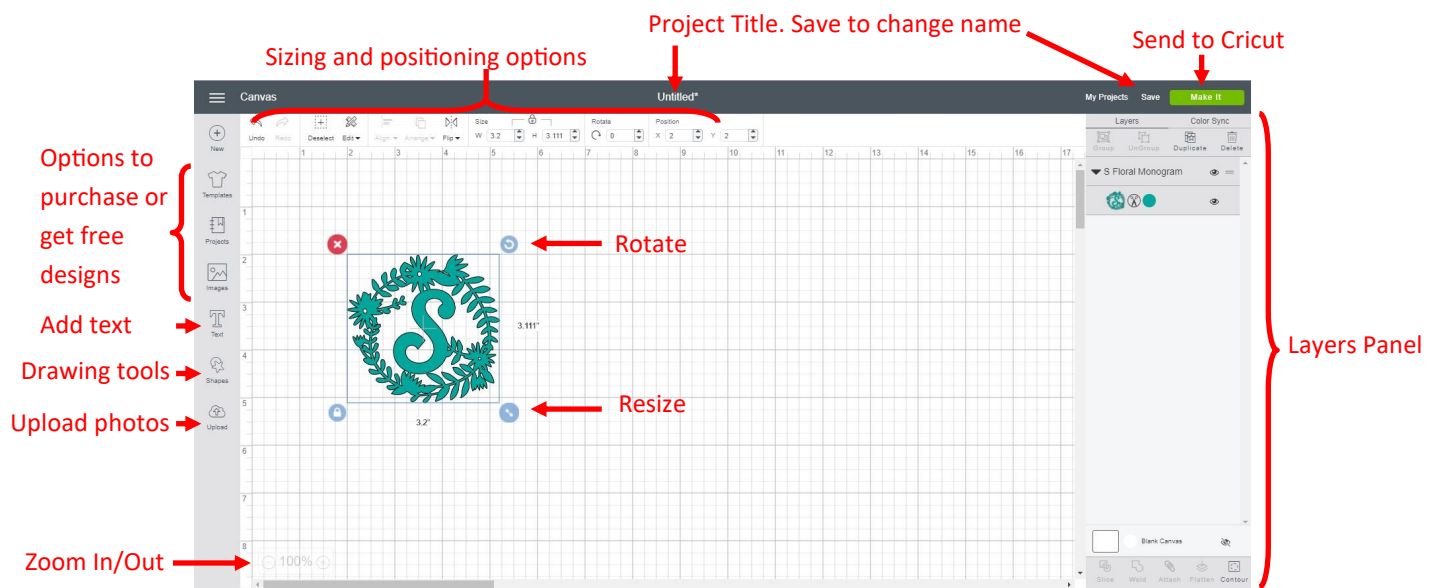
After Signing In

After signing in to your Cricut account, you will be at your Cricut homepage. Any projects you are working on or have created will appear in the **My Projects** section. Below the **My Projects** section are **Featured Projects** that you can replicate or use for inspiration. To start a **New Project**, click **"New Project"** in the upper right or below the **My Projects** title.



Design Space Layout

Below is a general overview of the Design Space.

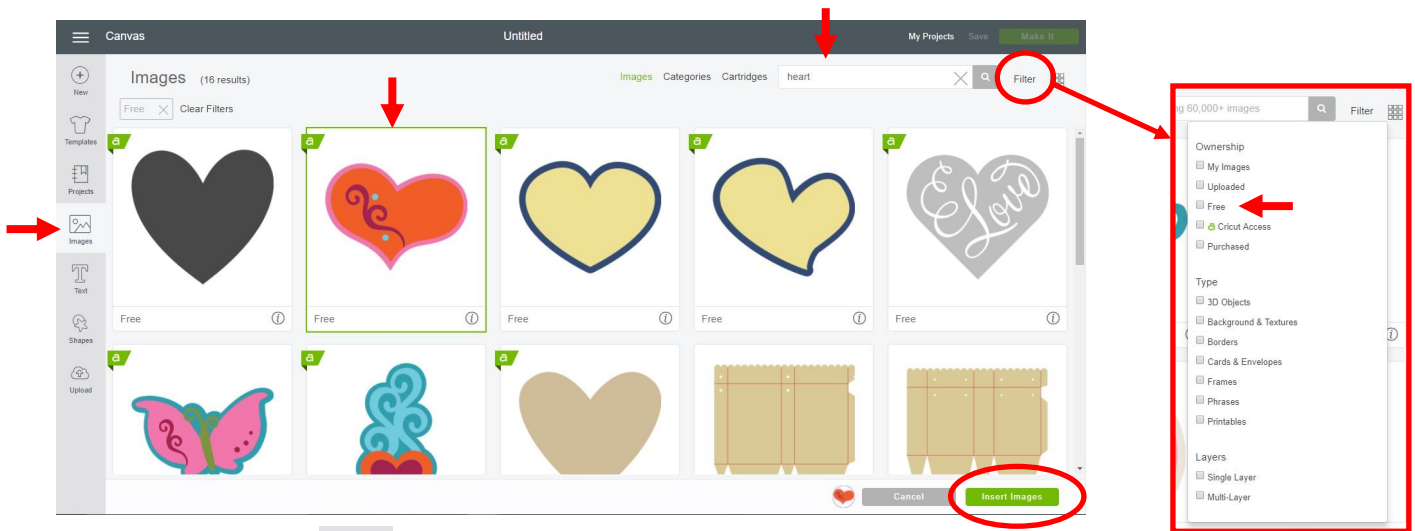


ADDING IMAGES

Insert Images



Cricut has a library of images and designs that can be used for your project. Some images are free while others have to be purchased. To browse for images, select **Images** from the menu on the left. Use the **Search Bar** to look for specific designs. For instance, search for “heart” designs. To only view free designs, select **Filter** next to the **Search Bar**. In the menu that pops up, select “Free.” Select the orange heart and click “Insert Images” in the bottom right.

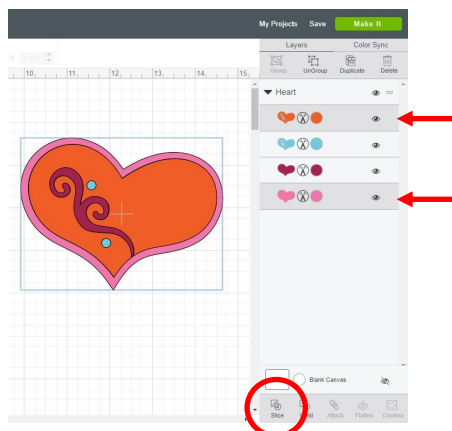


Slicing Images

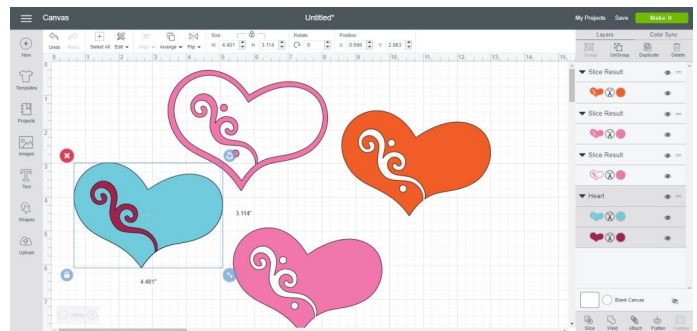


Most designs are created using multiple shapes and layers that have been merged into one single image, like the heart below. Shown in the **Layer Panel**, the heart includes an orange, blue, purple, and pink piece. These can be **Sliced** and separated. Click the **Orange** layer, then press and hold **Control (Ctrl)** and click the **Pink** layer. With both layers selected, click the **Slice** icon at the bottom. The heart can then be separated into its different parts. **Delete** the **Blue** and **Pink** hearts.

Note: The results of the slicing will vary depending on which layers you've selected.



Result of Slicing



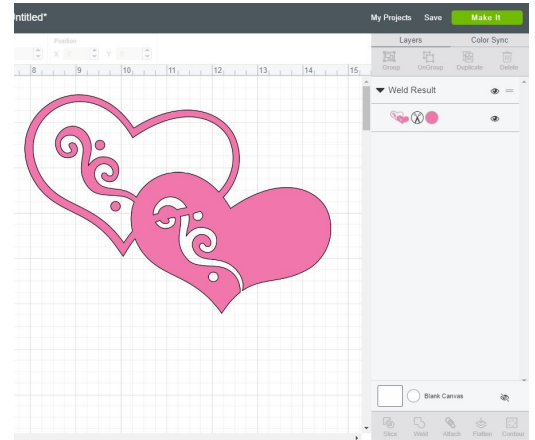
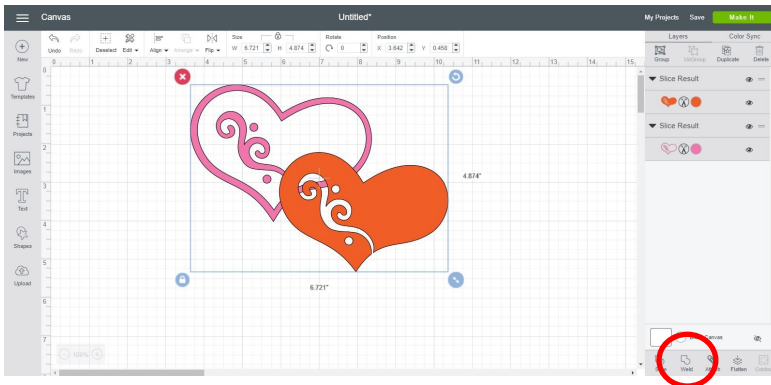
ADJUSTING LAYERS

Welding Two Layers



Opposite to **Slicing**, **Welding** can be used to combine two layers or items to make one combined shape. To **Weld**, select both items and then select **Weld** at the bottom.

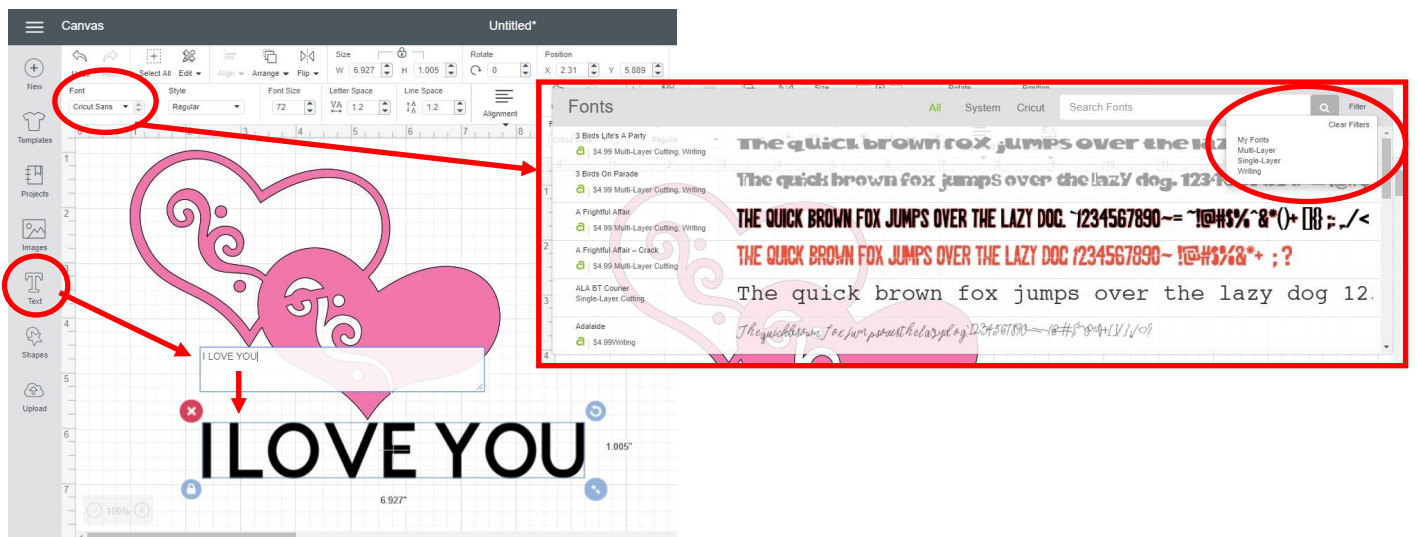
Result of Welding



Adding Text



Click the **Text** icon on the left to add text. A text box will appear for typing. Type "I LOVE YOU" in caps. The menu above the Canvas has options to adjust font, font size, alignment, spacing, and more. Select the drop down menu under **Font** to adjust text font. A list of font options with previews will appear on the screen. Just like with images, some fonts need to be purchased. Select **Filter**, then **My Fonts** to view free fonts.

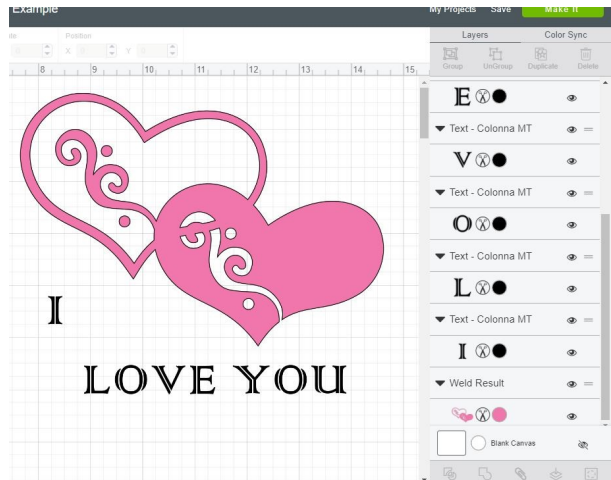
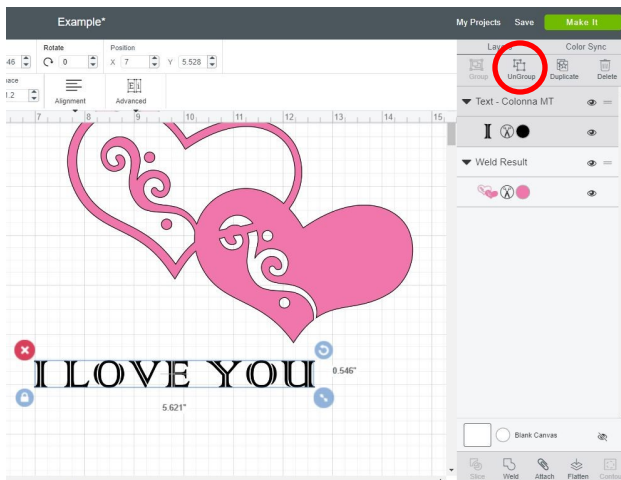


CURVING TEXT

Ungrouping Text



Cricut does not have a built-in feature to curve text. Curving text needs to be done manually by rotating each letter along a curve. To begin this process, the letters need to be **Ungrouped** so they can be manipulated individually. Select the **Text**, then click “**Ungroup**” in the upper right. You will now be able to click and drag each letter separately.



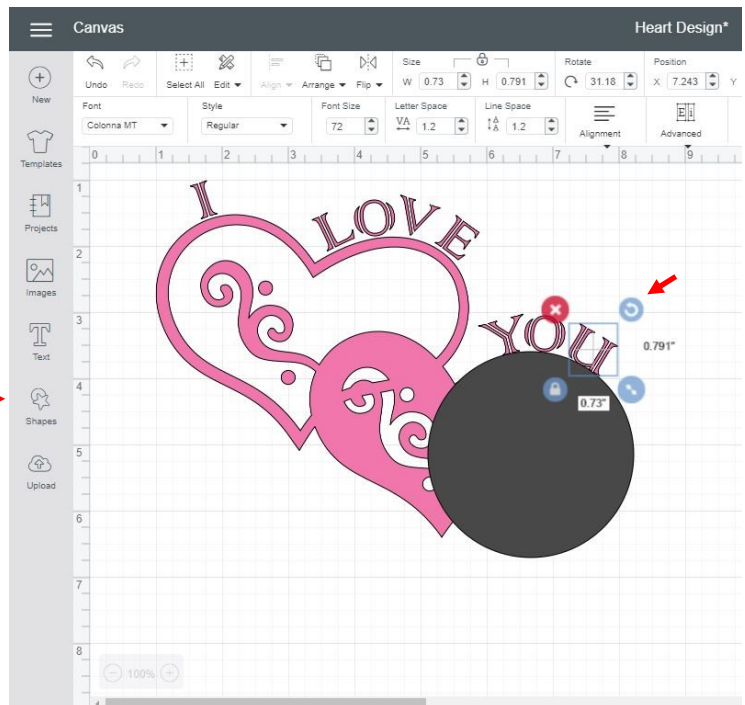
Curving Text

Once the letters are **Ungrouped**, they can be positioned and rotated along a curve. To begin, use the **Shapes** tool to create a circle. Then, click and drag the letter to the surface of the circle. Use the **Rotate** button to rotate the letter to align with the curve of the circle. Once the text is curved, the circle can be deleted.



Activity

Practice curving the remainder of the text. Either use the curve of the hearts or the curve of the circle.

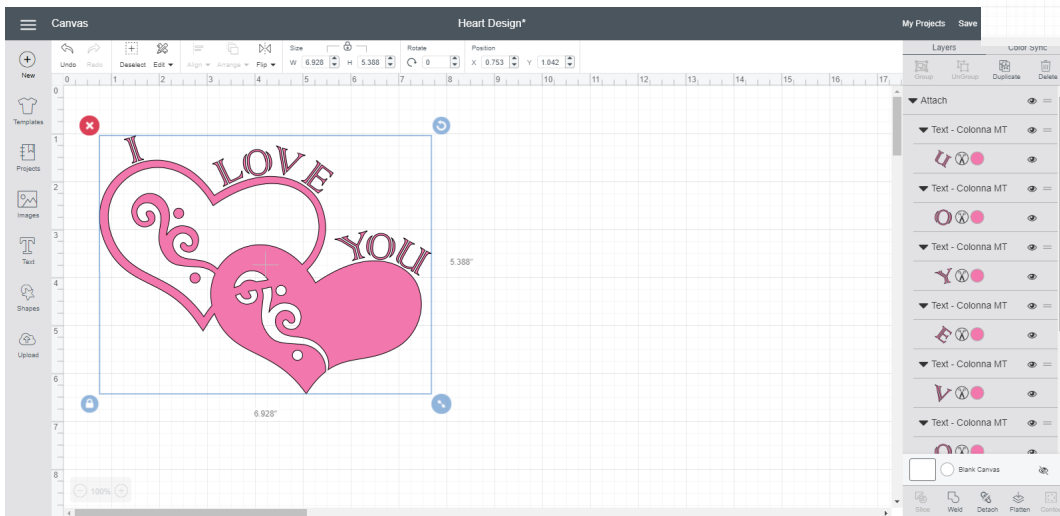
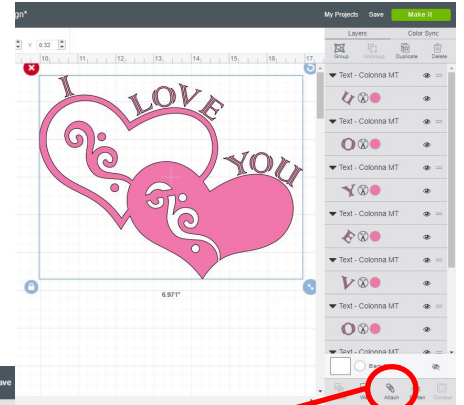


ATTACHING LAYERS

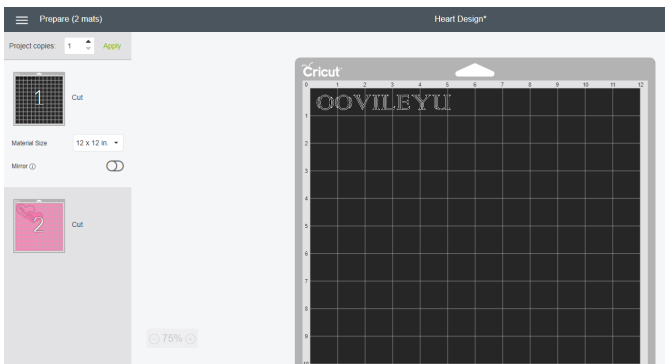
Attaching Designs



Before cutting or printing a design, the separate parts of the design must be **Attached**. All aspects of the design need to be **Attached** to prevent them from shifting during the “making” process. Select every item in the design, then click “**Attach**” in the bottom right. Once attached, you are ready to click “**Make It**” and send it to a Cricut machine to cut!

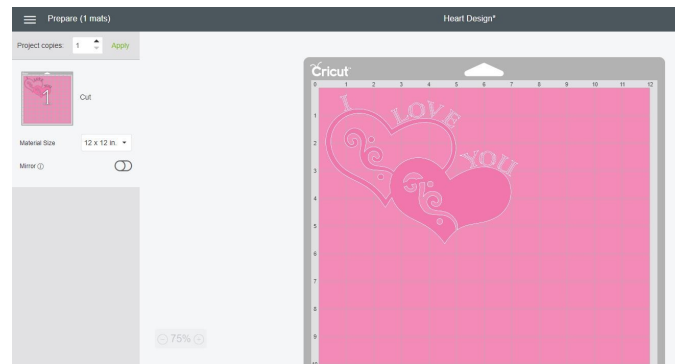


Example: Design Unattached



When the design is **unattached**, it will reposition the design and split it into multiple parts.

Example: Design Attached

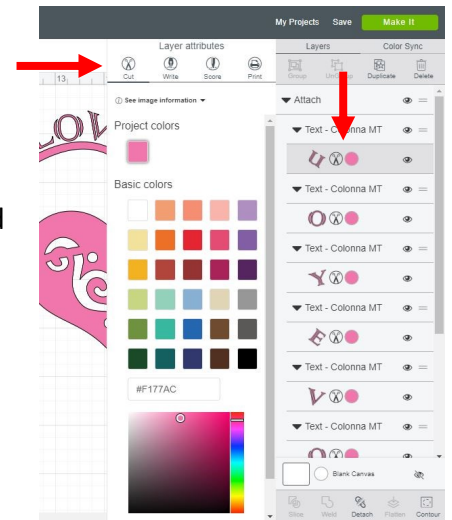


When the design is **attached**, it will appear exactly as you see it on the canvas.

LINE TYPE

Line Types and Color

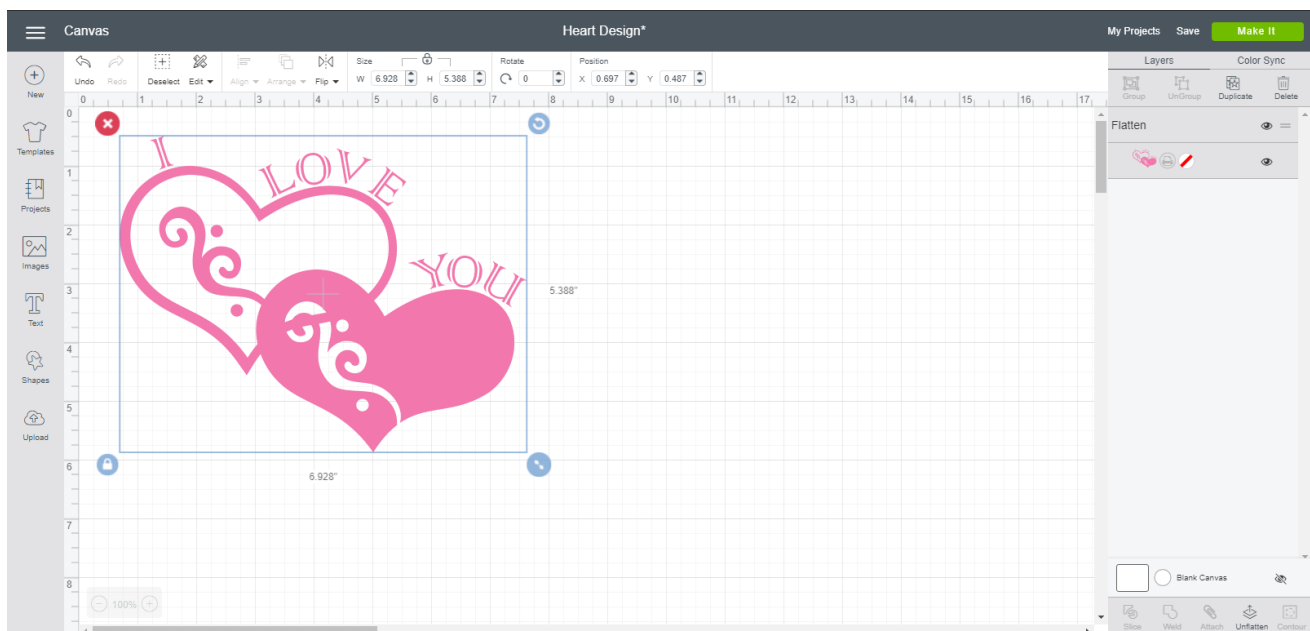
Each item or layer has its own line type and color. Located in the **Layer Panel**, next to the preview of the layer is the icon for line type and color. Most layers default to **Cut** lines, but the Cricut has markers and pens to **Write** and a score tool to **Score**. Designs can also be printed on a standard printer, using the **Print** line type, in the colors selected from the color menu.



Flatten Design to Print then Cut



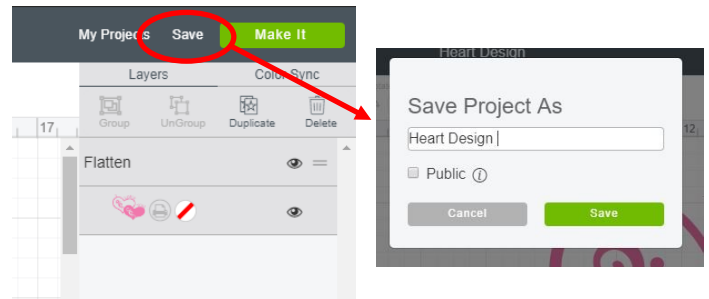
Layers can also be selected and flattened using the **Flatten** tool in the bottom right. **Flatten** is used to merge all layers into a single layer and switch the line type to **Print**. This is used for Cricut's "**Print then Cut**" feature. Once flattened, the design can be printed using a standard printer onto paper or printable vinyl or fabric. It can then be sent to the Cricut to **Cut** the *outline* of the design.



UPLOAD IMAGES

Saving Your Project

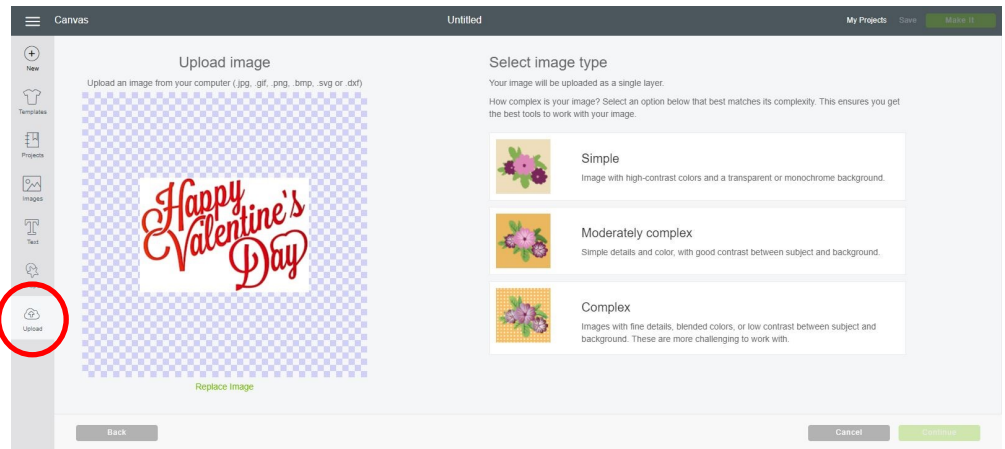
As you work or finish a project, it is important to **Save** it. Click the **Save** button in the upper right (next to **Make It**). It will give you an option to **Save** or **Save As**. **Save As** is useful if you want to make a copy of a design. Then, give the project an name and click **Save**.



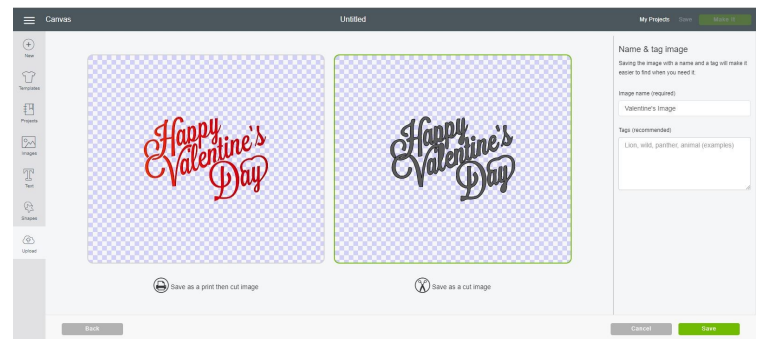
Upload Other Images



Images found elsewhere can be uploaded and converted to use with Cricut Design Space. Select **Upload** from the menu on the left. Then, **Browse** for the image stored on the computer's hard drive. In our case, we will be using the "Valentine's" image located on the **Desktop**. There are three image types that can be converted: **Simple**, **Moderately Complex**, and **Complex**. Since this image is one color, any image type will work for conversion.



Next, click on the parts of the image you want to remove. For this image, we will want to remove the background by clicking on the white parts. *Don't forget to click the white parts inside the letters.* Once you've eliminated the unwanted parts, you will have a design that can be cut or printed, as shown on the right.



Additional Resources

- ◆ For more tricks and tips: tinyurl.com/CricutTips
- ◆ For project ideas and inspiration: pinterest.com
- ◆ How-To videos from Cricut at help.cricut.com