

CREATE A PERSONALIZED LAYERED CARD DESIGN FOR CRICUT USING PIXLR

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Create a Personalized Layered Card Design for Cricut Using Pixlr

Purpose Statement: To allow Cricut users on a budget to design and create a personalized layered greeting card design using Pixlr (a free online photo editor). I will be using a card that I created as an example, but readers will be able to choose whatever design they want.

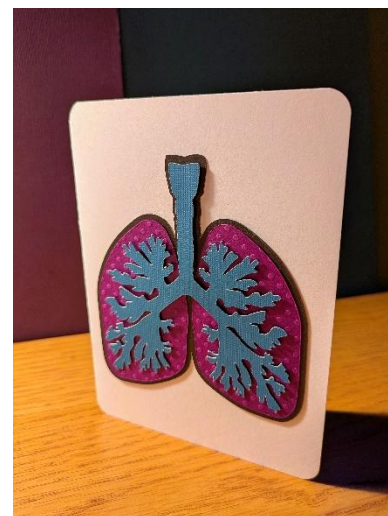
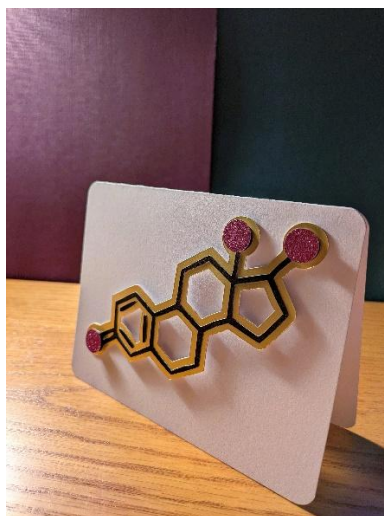
Target Audience: The audience already has basic knowledge of how to use a Cricut machine and cut materials. However, they don't want to pay or continue paying for a Cricut Access subscription and buy additional specialized equipment. These crafters want to have more creative freedom when making a card on a Cricut machine.

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1 INTRODUCTION

Hello! My name is El. I'm an avid crafter located in Seattle, Washington. This is a tutorial showing how to design a layered greeting card for your Cricut machine using the software program, Pixlr. Layered greeting cards are cards that use multiple layers of paper as well as foam adhesives to elevate certain pieces higher than others. This creates a three-dimensional effect.



There is no need for a subscription or additional specialized equipment aside from your Cricut machine. Layered greeting cards stand out more than the general greeting card. Send them for birthdays, holidays, or any other important milestones or life events. They're a wonderful way to stay connected with friends and family. Many of my friends and family are involved in the health and sciences, so my cards often revolve around this theme as seen in the photos above.

1.1 DISCLAIMERS



Beware of copyright infringement laws. If you are using another person's work as inspiration or using their work to help with the shape of your card design, this may commit a copyright infringement. It is your responsibility to ensure that you are not reproducing, distributing, or making anything derivative of somebody else's work without their permission. Please see the U.S. Copyright Office website for more information:

<https://www.copyright.gov/about/>

2. BEFORE YOU START

Make sure you have access to the internet and some kind of device (computer, tablet, mobile) to run Pixlr.

All examples are shown using a desktop computer as both Apple and Windows desktops have no difference between versions. If using a different device, your screens may be a little different.

As many Cricut users are aware, there is a possibility of Cricut updating their software, so your screen could slightly differ than the screenshots being used.

Any browsers can be used, but for this project, I will be using Google Chrome.



2.1 MATERIALS

- ☐ Computer with access to the internet
- ☐ Cricut machine (pictured on the right)



MATERIALS USED FOR EXAMPLE CARD



- ☐ Cardstock paper
- ☐ Blank card and envelope
- ☐ Scissors
- ☐ Glue stick/Glue pen
- ☐ Double-sided foam tape
- ☐ Standard grip cutting mat
- ☐ Cricut Fine Point Blade

2.2 CHOOSING A DESIGN

Choose a design that can be broken into multiple pieces, and layered on top of each other. For this project, I am making a layered image of a brain.

Determine which pieces are bases and which pieces will be on top.

Top layers tend to be more intricate in design. They can be accentuated by using specialized cardstock (glitter, metallic, pearlescent, etc.)



Also consider what color or type of cardstock you're planning to use, and the colors you're using in your design. If too similar, the design may be difficult to see.

It's advisable to only have 2-5 layers of paper to avoid extra postage costs.

Tip: Make a base for all the layers to be laid on. This could be used as an outline or guide of how to layer all your pieces.



2.3 PNG FILES

As a Cricut user, you already know that Cricut allows for different types of files, but in this tutorial, we will focus on Portable Network Graphic (PNG) files. PNGs are commonly used to display high-quality digital images. Below are some reasons why PNGs are good to use:

- Transparent backgrounds, which are needed when using a Cricut to cut your design
- Open format, so images can be changed
- PNGs retain quality, even when compressed and downloaded - this makes it easier to store and transfer over to the Cricut

3. PIXLR



Pixlr is a free software that is similar to Adobe photoshop. Make sure you are using Pixlr Editor found here: <https://pixlr.com/editor/>

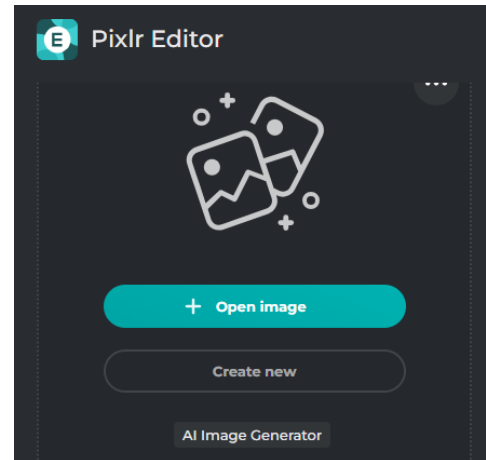
4. SETTING UP PIXLR

STEP 1

Open <https://pixlr.com/editor/>

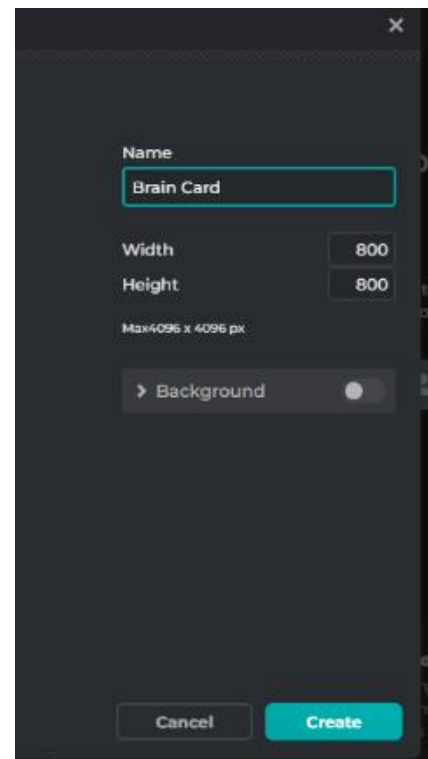
Here, you can open an image you already have. This is a good option if you're using an image to help with a shape. *Please refer to the disclaimer to see about copyright.

If you are drawing free hand, then choose, "Create new." This is what we will be demonstrating.



STEP 2

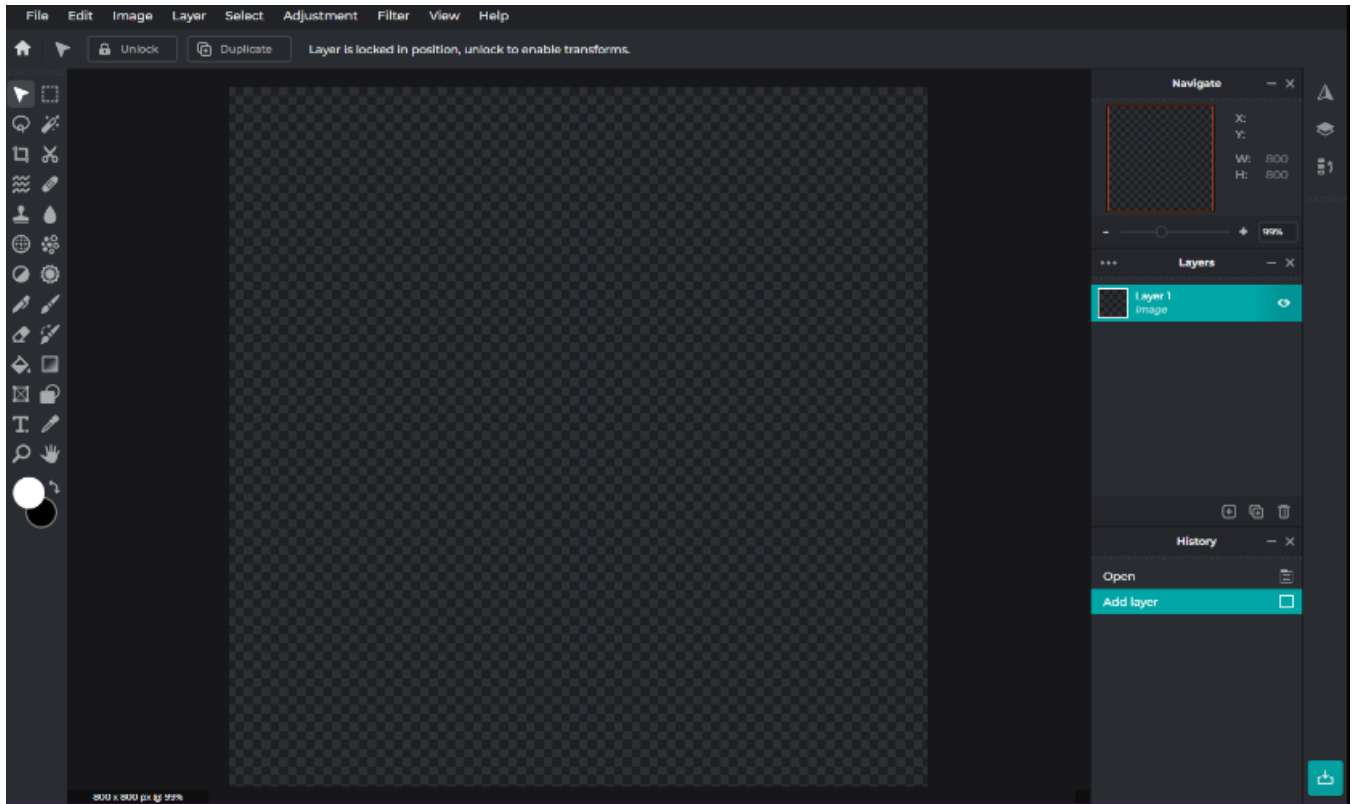
Under the "Recommended" tab, Put the title of your project and set your width and height to at least 800 pixels as shown below. This ensures that your



STEP 3

You should see something like the picture below. Whenever you create a document on Pixlr, you're automatically given a first layer that is transparent. The toolbox on the left are the features you will use to draw. On the right side is where you can see the layers you've created.

Now you're set up and ready to go!

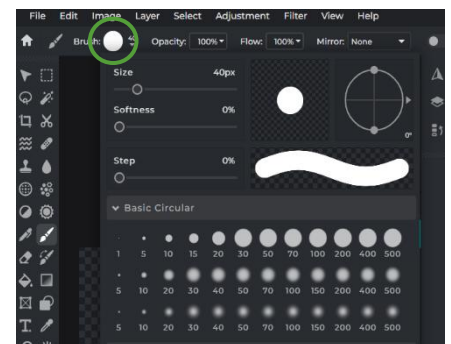


4.1 PIXLR TOOLS

Paintbrush: You will primarily be using the paintbrush in Pixlr.



Paintbrush Settings: Go to the top left corner and click on the white circle after "Brush:". Make sure the settings for "Softness" and "Step" are set at zero, as shown in the green circle. The size can be whatever suits your design needs.



Adding Layers: Now you are ready to draw. Once you are done with one layer, you can add more layers by clicking on the plus sign shown in the picture on the right in the pink circle.



When you add a layer, select "Empty."

Adding Labels: To the right is an example design. There are four different layers labeled. Naming layers is optional, but can be helpful.

At times, it can be difficult to tell which layer you're looking at. There are a few useful tools that you can use.

To make a layer invisible, click on the eyeball icon.



5. FROM PIXLR TO CRICUT

The next steps briefly explain how to get your design on Pixlr to your Cricut machine.

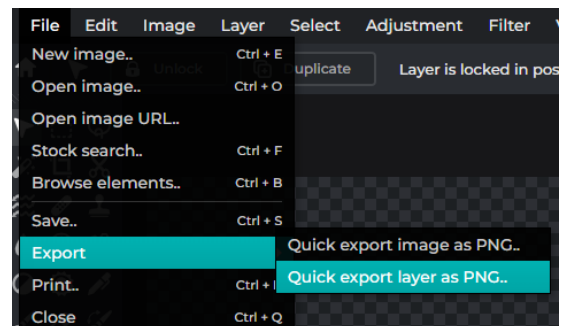
5.1 EXPORTING A PNG FROM PIXLR

STEP 1 Click on the layer you want to download.

STEP 2 Go to the upper left corner and select the "File" tab.

STEP 3 A drop-down menu will appear. Select "Export" and then you will see two options.

STEP 4 Select "Quick export layer as PNG".



Depending on your browser settings, you may be prompted as to where you want to save this file.

Some browsers automatically have a default setting, so be sure to check where downloads may be placed.

5.2 UPLOADING YOUR PNG TO CRICUT DESIGN SPACE (DS)

STEP 1 Open Cricut and select "New Project."

STEP 2 In the right corner, click "Upload."

STEP 3 Go to the side toolbar. At the bottom select "Upload Image"

STEP 4 Click “Browse,” and search your computer for your PNG layer files. Open them. If files are on your desktop, drag them into the dashed box.

STEP 5 The layer you want to add should appear. Click

STEP 6 You will see the image again. This step allows backgrounds to be removed, however, this was already done in Pixlr, so all you have to do is select

STEP 7 You will be taken to a page to convert upload. Keep the default choice, “Single Layer.”

STEP 8 After selecting the file, you are able to preview and rename the design. You can also create a collection to store your project in.

STEP 9 Once renamed, the design will be seen under “Upload.”

STEP 10 Click on the design you want to add into DS and click “Insert Image at bottom right.

STEP 11 Once your design is in DS, follow the same steps to add other layers.

STEP 12 When all layers are in DS, you are able to click on them with your mouse and adjust the size. The grid marks are in 1-inch increments to help with sizing. You can also go to the top right corner and adjust the size numerically.

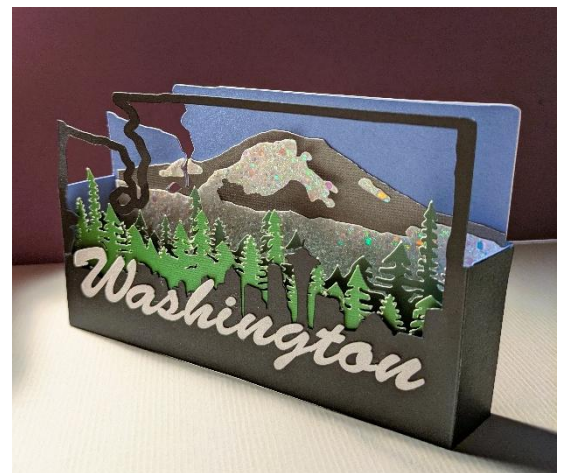
6. FINAL COMMENTS

Congratulations! Your design is now ready for cutting. You already know how to make your own layered greeting card design on Pixlr and upload it to Cricut Design Space.

With the knowledge learned from this brief tutorial, you can go on and apply this to many other types of projects!

For some other great resources on how to use a Cricut machine, please check out the “Additional Information” section.

Hope this tutorial was useful. Happy crafting from Washington!



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ADDITIONAL INFORMATION

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GLOSSARY

Cardstock: paper that ranges from light to heavy -weight paper material. It is available in a variety of colors, designs, and specialty materials (glitter, metallic, etc.). Cardstock is ideal for making greeting cards.

Cricut cutting mat: a plastic mat with grids and an adhesive applied to it. Whatever material you plan on cutting will go on this mat to be fed through the machine as it cuts the design shown in Cricut Design Space.

Cricut Design Space (DS): a free application required to use any Cricut machine.

Double-sided foam tape: a permanent tape that is thick; often referred to as 3D foam tape. There is a strong adhesive on both sides and when used in layering designs, it can add a lot of dimension.

Fine-point blade: This standard blade comes with all Cricut machines. It is used for projects that require more intricate cuts.

Layered Card: Cards that use multiple layers of paper as well as foam adhesives to elevate certain pieces of paper higher than others, creating a three-dimensional look.

Layering: when a design is made of more than one layer of material. These layers are not necessarily the same design.

Paper Weight: measurement used to refer to how thick paper; the heavier the paper weight, the thicker the paper.

Pixlr: a free software that's similar to Adobe, and available online.

PNG: Portable Network Graphic; a file commonly used to display high-quality digital images.

STYLE GUIDE

GENERAL INFORMATION	
NAME	E. Lenn
DATE	January 10, 2025
DOCUMENT	CEENG1001 40150 Capstone Project
STYLE MANUAL	The Chicago Manual of Style Online 17 th edition text (CMOS18); accessed November 30, 2024
DICTIONARY	Merriam-Webster ; updated and expanded 11 th Edition; accessed November 30, 2024
GRAMMAR	Grammarly ; accessed November 30, 2024

PUNCTUATION AND GRAMMAR	
OXFORD COMMA	Yes
DASHES (-) AND HYPHENS (-)	<ul style="list-style-type: none">En dash (–): used between phrases, use in number ranges (e.g. one – three)Em dash (—): indicate pause; use similar to colonHyphen (-): for prefixes and compound words, between numbers, compound modifier (phrasal adjective; e.g. kid-friendly) grammarly.com/blog/punctuation-capitalization/hyphens-and-dashes/
QUOTES	Punctuation placed before closing quotation mark

ABBREVIATIONS	
DS	Cricut Design Space
PNG	Portable network graphic

DOCUMENT STYLES AND FORMATS	
tone	First person, conversational tone
HEADING 1	Century Gothic, all caps, size 14
HEADING 2	Century Gothic, all caps, size 12
HEADING 3	Century Gothic, all caps, size 11
NORMAL TEXT	Century Gothic, size 11
THEME COLOR	Green
HYPERLINKS	Green
STEPS	Century Gothic, all caps, green, size 14
PARAGRAPHS	Single space normal text, 1.5 space bulleted text, 1.5 space "STEP X"
REFERENCES	Chicago Manual of Style 17 th Edition through Purdue OWL