

GUIDEBOOK

# A BEGINNER'S GUIDE TO CRICUT CAKE TOPPERS

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# HEY THERE, FUTURE CAKE TOPPER QUEEN!

## I'm so happy you are here!

If you're reading this, you're most likely a Cricut machine owner wanting to try a new type of craft with your machine. Maybe you just got your machine out of the box or maybe you have already mastered working with vinyl.

## Does this sound like you...

You've seen amazing cake toppers on social media. You know a Cricut machine has the power to make these cake toppers. But you aren't sure where to start.

- What Cricut machine works best for cake toppers?
- What are the best materials to use?
- What is the secret to a 3D cake topper?



# YOUR HELPFUL GUIDE



## Before we get this crafting party started

Hi! My name is Tara and I can help you make beautiful cake toppers.

My goal is to empower you to **design and make your own gorgeous creations in any theme from princess castles to rocket ships**. Through this guidebook, I will answer **your most asked questions** to get you started.

As for me, I fell in love with my first Cricut machine several years ago and I've never looked back. I started out just like all new Cricut owners - not knowing a thing. But now I am a regular speaker at virtual craft events and enjoy sharing all the techniques I have learned.

# BUT FIRST, A QUICK QUESTION FOR YOU

## WHAT IS A CAKE TOPPER?

Here is a quick question to set the foundation for the rest of the Q&As.

### What is a cake topper and why make them?

In its simplest form, a cake topper is any object that is displayed on top of a cake. Toppers made with a Cricut machine are most commonly **made with cardstock**.

Cake toppers are used as an additional way to emphasize a **celebration or commemorate a special day**. A few types of celebrations that use cake toppers are:

- Birthday
- Wedding
- Bridal Shower
- Graduation
- Mother's/Father's Day
- Holidays
- Promotion
- Baby Shower



## FREQUENTLY ASKED QUESTIONS

# CRICUT MACHINE COMPARISON

### WHICH CRICUT MACHINE IS BEST FOR MAKING CAKE TOPPERS?

Next to vinyl, **cardstock is a common material to cut on any Cricut machine**. In fact, **any Cricut cutting machine has the ability to make a cake topper**: Cricut Maker 3, Cricut Explore 3, or Cricut Joy.

However, **not all Cricut machines are created equal**.

See the guide below to help you make the best decision on which Cricut machine works best for you.



#### CRICUT EXPLORE 3 (BEST VALUE)



The Explore 3 gets the **#1 slot for cake toppers**. If cake toppers and paper crafts are the type of projects you want to make, then the Cricut Explore 3 is the best value to meet all your needs.

Here are the specific features used with cake toppers and paper crafts:

- Capable of **cutting craft foam** (useful for shaker cake toppers)
- **Print Then Cut** feature (useful for adding character images to cake toppers)
- **Scoring** stylus capable (useful for favor boxes and cards)
- **Maximum cut size** of 11.7 inches wide

# CRICUT MACHINE COMPARISON



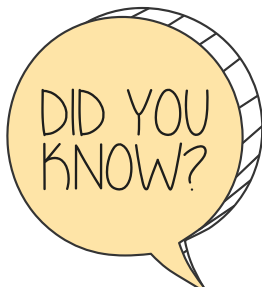
## CRICUT MAKER 3 (CUTS 300+ MATERIALS)

The Cricut Maker 3 can do everything the Explore 3 can **plus more**. If you want to make other items beyond cake toppers, the **Cricut Maker 3 will give you maximum Cricut crafting capabilities**. Other types of projects you can do with the maker only are engraving and cutting Balsa/Basswood or chipboard.

Another item to note is the Cricut Maker 3 has the ability to use the **knife blade**. You might be surprised to learn that the knife blade can and should be used with cake toppers.

**Surprised? Keep reading, my friend.**

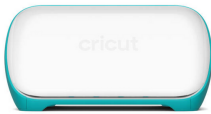
When making a shaker cake topper, a space or compartment is created for the glitter or sequins to 'shake'. One way to make the space for the shaker is with craft foam.



A cake topper secret no one told you is that the **knife blade is great at cutting craft foam**. Don't worry if you have an Explore Air 3, the deep-point blade will cut craft foam as well.

## FREQUENTLY ASKED QUESTIONS

# CRICUT MACHINE COMPARISON



### CRICUT JOY

The little but mighty Cricut Joy can cut cardstock and other cake topper materials, like acetate. The Joy **works very well for cupcake toppers.**

The reasons the **Cricut Joy is not recommended for cake toppers** are:

- Cut size limit of 4.5 inches wide
- No Print Then Cut
- No scoring tool

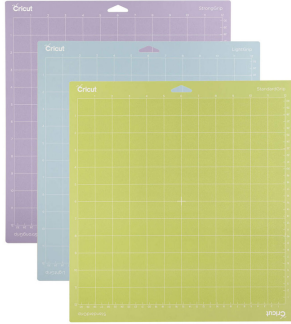
If you have a Cricut Joy, don't worry. There is still a wide variety of ways you can use your Cricut Joy to make toppers. **Here are 3 project ideas that are Cricut Joy friendly:**

- Monogram
- Tropical
- Sunshine cupcake topper



## FREQUENTLY ASKED QUESTIONS

# WHAT CRICUT MATS DO I NEED?



### WHAT CRICUT MATS DO I NEED FOR CAKE TOPPER PROJECTS?

Now, this is important and can make or break your project.

With your Cricut machine, you will use mats to load the cardstock into the machine. The Cricut will use the mat to keep the cardstock stable while cutting.

**Use this Cricut machine mat break down to figure out which mat to use:**

LightGrip Mat (Blue)	StandardGrip Mat (Green)	StrongGrip Mat (Purple)
Light/thin cardstock	Medium cardstock	Thick cardstock or thin cardboard
Printer paper	Glitter/Textured/ patterned paper	Chunky Glitter cardstock

For the most part, you can get away with using the **LightGrip (blue)** and **StandardGrip (green)** mats. Once in a while, you may need the purple mat for a really thick or heavily textured cardstock.



## FREQUENTLY ASKED QUESTIONS

# WHAT KIND OF PAPER DO I USE?



### WHAT KIND OF PAPER DO I USE FOR CAKE TOPPERS?

The paper makes a difference. Construction paper is not a good quality paper and does not cut cleanly.

Save your sanity and pick up cardstock online or at most craft stores. Cardstock comes in a wide variety of weights.

**Cardstock weight refers to the thickness of the cardstock.** The higher the weight the thicker the cardstock.

**65 lb (176 gsm)**

thin or lightweight cardstock

**110 lb (298 gsm)**

thick or heavyweight cardstock

You might be thinking you need thick cardstock to make cake toppers. Well, sure, you can use a thick 110 lb cardstock, but **heavy cardstock is not necessary** and can be more challenging to cut small pieces.

Many cake topper projects use layers upon layers. The layers add up and create plenty of stability for your cake topper.

The exception to this rule is the one-cut or welded word cake topper (an example shown in the photo above). **If the cake topper design is one layer, then choose a heavy cardstock or glitter cardstock** for support.

## FREQUENTLY ASKED QUESTIONS

# WHAT KIND OF GLUE DO I USE?



### WHAT KIND OF GLUE DO I USE FOR CAKE TOPPERS?

Much like the paper, the glue makes a difference. Believe it or not – not all glue is created equal.

“That Elmer’s school glue used for your kid’s projects will **ruin** your cake toppers.”

That is because school glue is **very watery** and will **wrinkle cardstock**.

For that reason, I use a glue made specifically for papercrafts, which dries clear and comes with a precision tip for super tiny areas.

The precision tip makes it really easy to control the **amount** and **flow** of the glue.

## FREQUENTLY ASKED QUESTIONS

# HOW DO I MAKE 3D CAKE TOPPERS?

### WHAT IS THE SECRET TO MAKE 3D CAKE TOPPERS?

The trick to creating the 3D effect with cake toppers is double sided adhesive foam. **Adding foam in-between layers creates subtle shadows between the layers.** The shadows give the appearance of dimension or thickness that you can't achieve with paper glued directly to paper.



**Double sided adhesive foam** is craft foam or mounting foam with adhesive on both sides. The foam comes on a backing sheet just like a sticker but also has a removable sheet on the top side that you peel off to stick to paper.

Adhesive foam is great for paper projects like scrapbooking, card making shaker projects, or mounting photos. You can **stack foam** together to create even more height.

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# WHAT TO BUY

Don't throw your time and money into the trash can.

It can be hard to know what materials work best when there are a million different options to choose from. You don't want to waste your time and money on tools and materials that don't work.

To help you get started making cake toppers, I created a list of my favorite materials I have tried and tested to make cake toppers.

- |                  |                              |
|------------------|------------------------------|
| ✓ Cricut machine | ✓ Cardstock & Acetate sheets |
| ✓ Cricut tools   | ✓ Glue                       |
| ✓ Cricut mats    | ✓ Cake sticks                |

In order to save you time (and money!), you can find links to the brands I have found work best for these projects on my **Amazon storefront**: <https://www.amazon.com/shop/craftaracreates>



## HERE'S THE TRUTH

### This is what everyone gets wrong

Even if you have all the right tools and materials - that **does not guarantee you will be successful** with Cricut cake toppers. The *KEY* to the perfect cake topper is **structure, strength, and design**.



#### STRUCTURE

How to turn the flat image on your computer screen into a multi-dimensional work of art

#### STRENGTH

How to build layers while using delicate materials



#### DESIGN



How to design for simplicity and perfection during assembly

You have two options:

- Learn slowly through your own mistakes
- Jump to the end of the finish line using my 5-step formula for cake topper design

**Are you ready to design with confidence?**

Learn more here

**[www.craftaracreates.com/caketopperconfidence/](http://www.craftaracreates.com/caketopperconfidence/)**

# SHOPPING LIST

## CRICUT

- ☐ Cricut Machine
- ☐ Cricut Machine Mats
- ☐ Brayer
- ☐ Basic Tool Set
- ☐ \_\_\_\_\_
- ☐ \_\_\_\_\_
- ☐ \_\_\_\_\_
- ☐ \_\_\_\_\_
- ☐ \_\_\_\_\_
- ☐ \_\_\_\_\_

## PAPER

- ☐ Cardstock 65 lb
- ☐ Glitter Cardstock
- ☐ Foil Cardstock
- ☐ Acetate
- ☐ \_\_\_\_\_
- ☐ \_\_\_\_\_
- ☐ \_\_\_\_\_
- ☐ \_\_\_\_\_
- ☐ \_\_\_\_\_
- ☐ \_\_\_\_\_

## ADHESIVE

- ☐ Paper Crafting Glue
- ☐ Hot Glue
- ☐ Adhesive Foam Tabs
- ☐ \_\_\_\_\_
- ☐ \_\_\_\_\_
- ☐ \_\_\_\_\_
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## OTHER

- ☐ Cake Pop Sticks
- ☐ Paper Straws
- ☐ \_\_\_\_\_
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