

# ESSENTIAL CRICUT SUPPLIES

This comprehensive guide answers the most common questions that I hear beginners ask (and I asked myself) when starting out:

- Which machine should I buy?
- What other supplies do I need to get started?
- Where should I buy my vinyl?

Surprisingly, when I started [SVGandMe.com](https://svgandme.com), I couldn't find a great printable resource to refer people to, so I created my own!

**This is NOT a sponsored list** (it makes me a bit skeptical when resource lists are sponsored by a brand and then all the products on there were from that brand). It does contain affiliate links that may make me a little bit of money at ZERO cost to you.

## Goals of this list:

1. Create an honest, unbiased list of supplies (NOT sponsored)
2. Save you money by understanding what you REALLY need
3. SIMPLIFY! SIMPLIFY! SIMPLIFY! = less frustration + better decisions

I plan to update this list periodically as changes occur, so check back on [SVGandMe.com](https://svgandme.com) for updates.

Oh, and if you plan to print this guide, make sure to choose "Fit to Page" under your printer settings to ensure that nothing gets cut off.

**Alright, let's get to it!**

# WHICH SHOULD I Buy?



[Cricut Explore Air 2](#)



[Cricut Maker](#)

**Trying to decide which to buy?** I try to simplify things as much as possible for my readers, so I created this easy to use table so you can go through & highlight your answers to the 4 questions. Based on your responses, you can QUICKLY & EASILY make the best decision!

Comparison	Cricut Explore Air 2	Maker (recommended)
I plan to mostly create...	Paper + Vinyl Projects	Paper, Vinyl, Home Decor, Felt, and Sewing Projects
Are you on a strict budget?	Yes - Usually on sale for \$199	No (\$399) On sale \$349
Which would describe your interest level and how often you'll use it?	I'm a casual crafter. I'll probably make a few projects per month and nothing too complex.	I am a serious crafter or business and plan to use it often. I want to be able to cut thicker materials & fabrics and not feel limited.
Will it upset you if you can't use newly released blades + accessories?	No, I like to keep it simple and I have all the capabilities I need.	Yes! I want to be able to get the latest and greatest tools & projects!
Ready to buy!	<a href="#"><u>BUY NOW!</u></a>	<a href="#"><u>BUY NOW!</u></a>

## The Bottom Line:

- **Cricut Explore Air 2:** if you are on a super strict budget and will mostly be creating paper and vinyl projects, this is a great machine to get started with.
- **Cricut Maker:** The most powerful and versatile machine that I would recommend my best friend buy if she was in your shoes. Not only does it cut better, but thanks to its exclusive rotary and knife blades it can cut felt, fabric and wood WAY better than the Explore Air 2 machine which is well worth the upgrade in my opinion.

For more details, [check out our blog post here.](#)

# SUPPLIES Checklist

After you decide which machine to buy, the next logical question is what else do I need? Well, there are a number of machine bundles out there but many include quite a few items that may be nice to have but aren't essentials in my opinion. So, I am breaking down the supplies I think every beginner should have when getting started:

## The Essentials

- [Cricut Explore Air 2](#) or [Cricut Maker](#)
- [Cricut Basic Toolkit](#)
- [Medium Tack Transfer Tape](#)
- [Siser EasyWeed Heat Transfer Vinyl\\*](#)
- [Oracal 651 Vinyl\\*](#)
- [Cardstock Variety Pack](#)

\*I use black, white and gold the most often and then a few 12"x12" sheets of your favorite colors.

## Add-Ons

- [Heat Press](#) **OR**
- [Cricut Easy Press](#) (w/ [silicone mat](#))
- [Padded squeegee](#)
- [Teflon sheets](#)
- [X-acto knife](#)
- [Self-healing cutting mat](#)
- [Pressing pillows](#) **OR**
- DIY version: [foam](#) & [Teflon sheets](#)
- [Freezer Paper](#)
- [Stencil vinyl \(Oracal 813\)](#)
- [Glitter cardstock](#)
- [Heat N Bond Ultra](#) (Explore only)
- [Speedball ink](#) (stenciled shirts)

## Cricut Maker Only:

- [Green and Purple Mats](#)
- [Knife Blade](#)
- [Scoring Wheel](#)

## Explore Air 2 Only:

- [Blue and Purple Mats](#)
- [Deep-Point Blade](#)
- [Scoring Stylus](#)

- [Chalk Paints](#)
- [Blank shirts and apparel](#)
- [12"x24" cutting mats](#)
- [Printable vinyl](#)
- [Paper Trimmer](#)
- [Sticker paper](#)
- [Etching Cream](#)
- [Painter's tape](#)
- [Chipboard](#) (Maker Only)
- [Basswood, 1/16"](#) (Maker Only)
- [Cricut Access](#)

See separate list of my favorite Amazon crafting blanks for more crafting supplies.

# VENDOR Comparison

Another common question I get is, "Where is the best place to buy vinyl?" Ask 12 different people and you may get 12 different results, so I decided to compare them side-by-side for an objective comparison. While there are others, I am familiar with these six and confident enough in their customer service and integrity to recommend.

Pricing	651vinyl.com	Expressions Vinyl	Cricut	Swing Design	Amazon	Happy Crafters
<b>Oracal 651</b> (12"x12")	\$0.72	\$1.25	\$0.99 (Cricut brand only)	\$0.65	\$0.99+ (mostly bulk)	\$0.75
<b>Oracal 631</b> (12"x12")	\$0.74	\$1.25	\$0.75 (Cricut brand only)	\$0.65	\$0.99+ (mostly bulk)	\$0.87
<b>Siser EasyWeed HTV</b> (12"x12")	\$3.00	\$3.79	\$3.00 (lesser quality)	\$3.00	\$3.25+ (limited selection)	\$3.25
<b>Siser Glitter HTV</b> (12"x20")	\$4.99	\$5.99	\$6.00	\$4.99	\$7.99	\$4.99
<b>Transfer Tape</b> (30' roll)	\$9.75	\$9.99	\$26+	\$15.99	\$12.99	\$3.50 (mixed reviews)
<b>Patterned HTV</b> (12"x12")	\$5.99	\$6.99	\$5-6	\$6.99	n/a	\$3.60 (must add mask)
<b>Shipping</b>	>\$50: free <\$50: \$6.95	>\$75: free <\$75: \$4.50-8.50	<\$49: \$10+ >\$49: free	>\$35: free <\$35: \$5.95	Free w/ Prime	>\$75: free <\$75: \$5.95

Please note that pricing is subject to change.

## The Bottom Line:

- [Swing Design](#) is the best all around vendor for stocking up on vinyl and HTV due to its low prices and free shipping over \$35. (Where I typically order from)
- [651vinyl.com](#) is a close second due to its competitive pricing and best pricing on transfer tape. However, it does have a slightly higher limit of \$50 for free shipping so it's best to use when you have larger orders.
- If in need of a roll of basic vinyl (e.g. black or white) quickly, [Amazon](#) can be a good option if you have Prime due to its free 2-day shipping. However, it has a very limited selection and products are mostly available in bulk, so I would not recommend it for general vinyl or HTV shopping.