Button Maker & Die Cutter Guide

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Overview

These general instructions support your self-guided use of the button maker & die cutter located in the Central Branch MakerSpace and Alton Branch MakerStation.

This guide covers the basics to get you started, but there's so much more to learn. We encourage you to explore beyond and do your own research to keep growing your skills.

Button Maker Safety Brief

There are the potential hazards with button maker use:

- Crush/Compression risk from the mechanical die used to compress button materials.

Button Making File Preparation

Designs should be made to follow the template available on BPL's website.

- Make sure all parts of the image you want to be visible are contained within the button face line (1.375").
- The die cutter will cut at the cut line (1.837").
- All parts of the image that are between the button face line and the cut line will be folded around the edges of the button/magnet.

Button Maker Parts

The button maker has three main sections as shown in the following image:

1. Pick-up Die (Stage 1)
2. Magnet & Upper Die
3. Crimp Die (Stage 2)

Button Parts

The button maker can make both pin and magnet backed buttons. To ensure you make your button of choice, you will need to choose the correct parts for your project.

Convex Metal Shell Disk

All the button types are made with the same convex metal shell disk. This disk will be loaded into the pick-up die (stage 1) with the convex (rounded) side facing towards you.

The image below shows the back (left image) and front (right image) of the convex button shell. The disk on the right is in the correct orientation.

Backing

Choose either the pin back or the magnet back for your project.

The image below shows in order from left to right: a convex button shell, pin backing, a magnet holding ring, magnet. The mylar circle, a clear plastic disk, is not shown in this image.

How to Make a Button

1. Place the convex button shell into the pick-up die (stage 1).
    - Make sure you have only one button shell. Shells can get stuck together and may need to be separated. Drop the shells onto a hard surface to separate them.
    - Look for any dents in the shell. If there is a noticeable dent, the button will not crimp completely. Discard dented/bent supplies.

2. Place your design on top of the shell that is loaded into the pick-up die (stage 1). Tip! Position the design so it appears how it should when looking straight at the button.

3. Place one clear mylar circle in the pick-up die.

4. Rotate the pick-up die (stage 1) 180 degrees until it is under the upper die. Pull the handle forward and push down.

5. Place the button back (pin back or magnet) into the crimp die (stage 2).
    - Make sure the backing aligns in the same orientation as your design.
    - Look for any dents in the backing. If there is a noticeable dent, the button will not crimp completely. Discard dented/bent supplies.

    A. To make a pin-style button, you will load the pin backing zig zag face-up into the crimp die (stage 2).

    B. To make a magnet-style button, load the magnet into the magnet holding ring before placing it magnet side up (not ring side up) into the crimp die (stage 2).

Image A. Pin backing

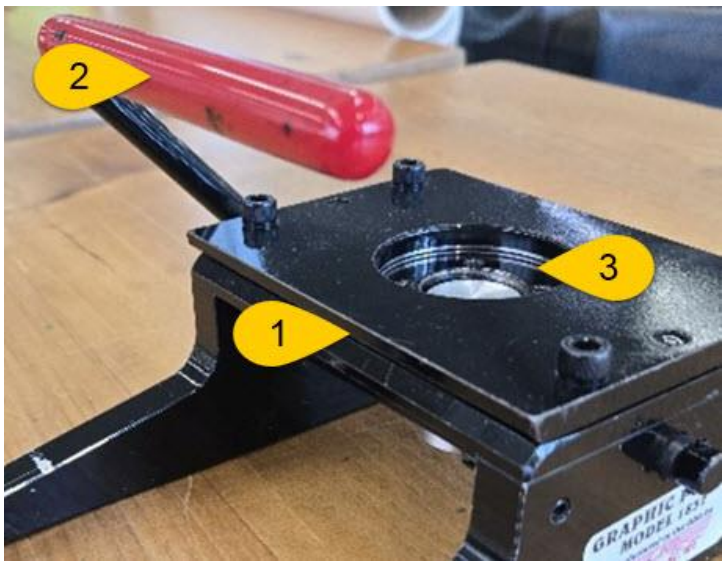
Image B. Magnet backing

6. Rotate the crimp die (stage 2) 180 degrees until it is under the upper die. Pull the handle forward and push down.

How to Use the Die Cutter

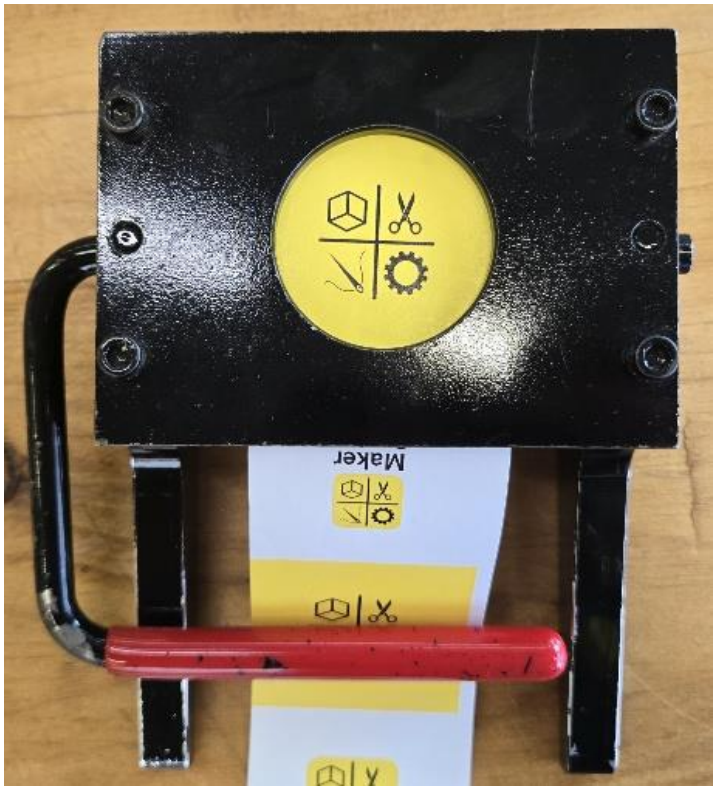
Simple to operate, the button die cutter has three main sections:

1. Slot for inserting the paper to be cut.
2. Lever to operate cutting action.
3. Hole to assist with alignment and retrieval of the cut paper.



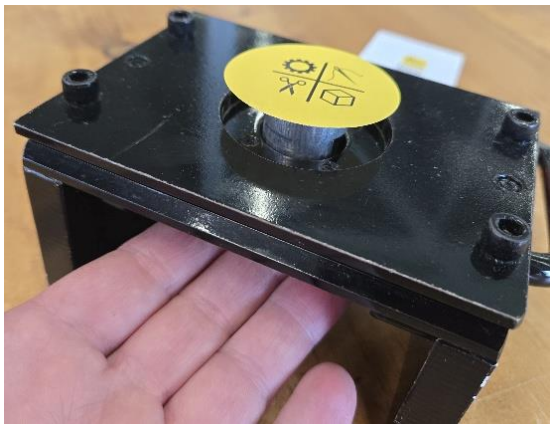
To use the cutter, insert paper into the slot at the front or rear edge of the unit. Line it up so that the design is centred within the circle cutout of the die cutter.

After inserting the paper into the slot, align the design in the centre of the circular opening. When the design is aligned and ready to cut, push down the red handle to cut the paper.



Important! The paper will not release until the handle is returned to the original position. If the handle is in an up or down position, you will need to move it back to the middle.

On the under side of the cutter is a silver aluminum post that you can left to help remove the cut paper.



Questions?

If you have questions about using the equipment, please talk to branch staff or email us at makerspace@bpl.on.ca.

Central MakerSpace: 905.639.3611 extension 1302
Alton Branch: 905.634.3686

- Date: September 1, 2024
- Amended Dates: July 17, 2025
- Associated Documents: