Perfect Pairing: Patterned and Solid Vinyl Coordination

Incorporating SparkleBerry™ patterned vinyl into your Silhouette Cameo® projects can be a great way to set your crafts apart; however, there are a few guidelines that should be followed to ensure your design will be super-fab instead of super-drab.

Bigger IS Better: BIG fonts and BIG surfaces are best!

- Thickening fonts with the Offset option in Silhouette Studio® is simple! You can achieve this by creating a very small offset. Which font thickness looks better to you? The thicker font shows more pattern, therefore making the design stand out.

- Using large areas for patterned vinyl is my *favorite* way to use SparkleBerry! One example of this method is the shell you will use in our lesson today. A pineapple or a sand dollar are other examples of designs that are complimented by patterned.
- Also remember when using SparkleBerry™, there will already be plenty of "busy-ness." Simple cut files will be a winning match when designing with patterned vinyl!

No "matchy-matchy"

Opt for a nice, contrasting color to your patterned vinyl. It doesn't have to be a color found in the pattern. In fact, it often will "pop" more if it doesn't match! Which design stands out more to you?

Would you have thought to put this pattern on a yellow blank? The blue matches beautifully but it blends in too much with the pattern. Placing the project onto a yellow blank will create a much more vibrant look!

When in doubt, Offset!

One of my favorite Silhouette® software options is the Offset tool. You can use this tool: to create a simple offset on a word or phrase, to thicken fonts, and one of my personal favorites, to create an offset/subtracted (or knockout) design. This allows the wording to stand out. Sometimes layering patterns and solids without a knockout will cause too much of a color-blend making it difficult to read the text in the design.

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Offset/Subtract Method: "Mermaid at Heart" Project

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Supplies Provided:
"Mermaid at Heart" cut file (raw as well as complete)
Pre-cut "Mermaid at Heart" SparkleBerry™ HTV design
SparkleBerry™ Medium Tack Mask (for transferring SparkleBerry™ HTV)
Makeup-bag
Heat press

What to bring:
Laptop with Silhouette Studio® Designer Edition or above installed
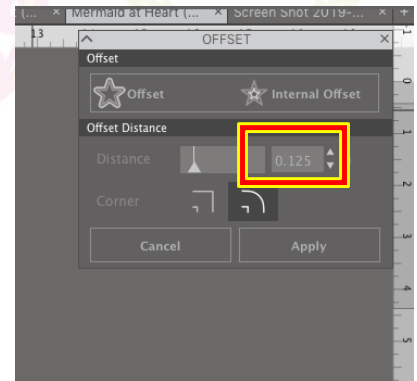Squeegee
Weeding Tools

- In Silhouette Studio®, select the object you would like to offset with the Select tool. In this case, we are wanting to offset "Mermaid at Heart." ***TIP: It may be easier for you to separate the shell from "Mermaid at Heart" by dragging it to the side by selecting and moving it with your mouse.***
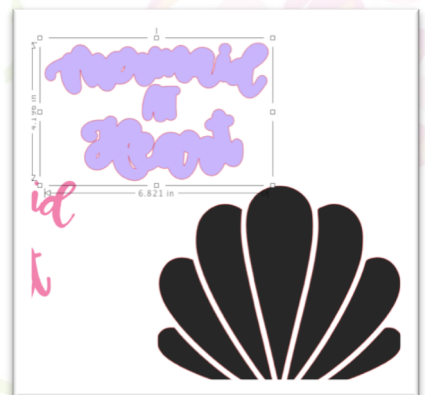
- On the tool bar on the right side, click the icon that looks like a star with an outline.

- Once you click the icon, the Offset panel will pop up on the right side. Choose "Offset" and adjust the numbers in the panel until you are pleased with the size of the offset. ***Tip: Using the up and down arrows to toggle the size is easier than manually typing the numbers. You're able to make much finer adjustments at a steady rate.***

- Click "Apply" once you've decided on the distance or size.

- With your select tool (aka the arrow) click your mouse to highlight the original "Mermaid at Heart." Using your mouse, drag it away from the offset you've created by holding down the mouse as you move it. (This is in order to separate them to make it easier to select only the desired objects for the next step.)

- ***TIP: Select the offset and by choosing the "Fill" panel on the ride side, fill in the offset with a color for easier placement.***
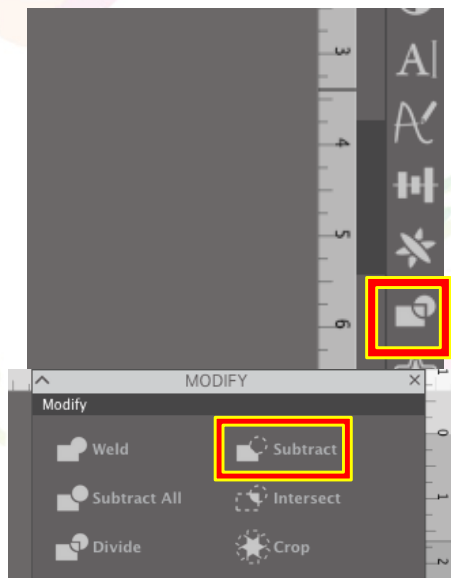
- Drag "Mermaid at Heart" over the shell, toward the center.

- Using your select tool, drag the mouse to select BOTH the offset and the shell. Be careful not to select other items on your artboard. *TIP: The Undo* *option at the top of your screen is a fabulous tool! Don't be afraid to use it!*
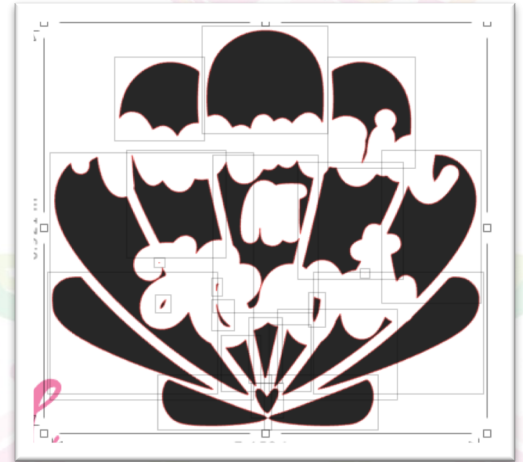
- From the right tool bar, you'll select the icon that appears to be a circle and a rectangle merged together. This is used to select the Modify panel.

- The Modify panel will open and you will see several tools. For this particular design, we want to **SUBTRACT** the top shape from the bottom shape, making the top shape disappear and leave only empty space behind. Select "Subtract."

- Please note, your new shell is in separate pieces (you can also think of it as "ungrouped")
- To "clean up" your design, you will need to delete the smaller pieces. These are unnecessary and are often lost during the weeding process, anyway.
- Click somewhere on the artboard to unselect the shell, then carefully choose each small piece you want to delete.. Then, press "delete" on your keyboard to erase them one at a time. ***TIP: Zooming in can be helping during this step. The zoom tool can be found on the top tool bar as a magnifying glass with a plus sign in the center.***

Delete the smaller pieces 1

- Once you have deleted the small pieces, you'll need to select ALL of the pieces of the shell by dragging your mouse over the entire shape. Right click and choose "group" from the right-click menu. This will ensure the design does not separate during the remaining design process.
- Finally, drag the original "Mermaid at Heart" into the empty space, making sure to place it directly into the center of the subtracted area.
- While you'll want to make sure you've selected the entire design, you may adjust the size as desired.
- Voila! You are ready to cut!