Heat Press

This guide will teach you how to use the vinyl you created on the vinyl cutter and permanently put it on a tee shirt using the Heat Nation press.

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INTRODUCTION

This guide will teach you how create a custom tee shirt using the Heat Nation press. It requires you already know how to use the vinyl cutter.

The heat press gets dangerously hot so please use caution!

Step 1 — Safety



⚠ **The heat press gets very hot, exceeding 300°F. Left unattended, this could pose a safety risk to users who accidentally come in contact with it. It can also start a fire. The heat press should NEVER be left unattended when powered on!**

- As the heat press takes a significant time to warm up it is likely you will want to begin heating the press prior to using it. This is OK. However, you may not leave the Maker-E while the heat press is powered on.

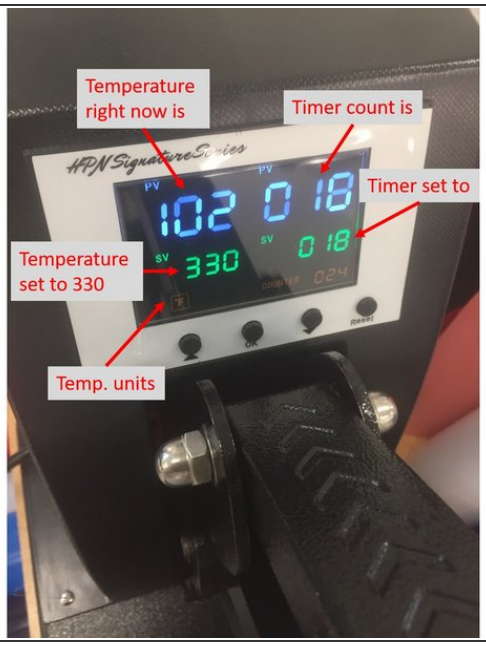
Step 2 — Turn on the press



- The press takes some time to warm up so turn on the orange rocker switch on the back, left side of the press first.

⚠ **Caution! The press gets hot and the bottom side of the upper plate can give you serious burns. Be careful!**

Step 3 — Set the temperature



- Every type of vinyl has a particular temperature and press time. We stock Sizer Easy Weed vinyl which has a set temperature of 305 F.
- Read the green numbers on the display to see the set value (SV) for the temperature. If you are using a different vinyl or it is not 305 you need to set it for the vinyl you are using. In this picture the setting is 330 F.
- While the time for Sizer Easy Weed is 15 seconds we find a time of 25 seconds works better which should be the default setting for the press. Here the time is 18 seconds as shown in the green numbers on the right.
- The actual temperature of the top plate and time left are shown in blue numbers with the labels PV for process value.
- If the settings are not correct the next step shows how to change them. Otherwise skip ahead.

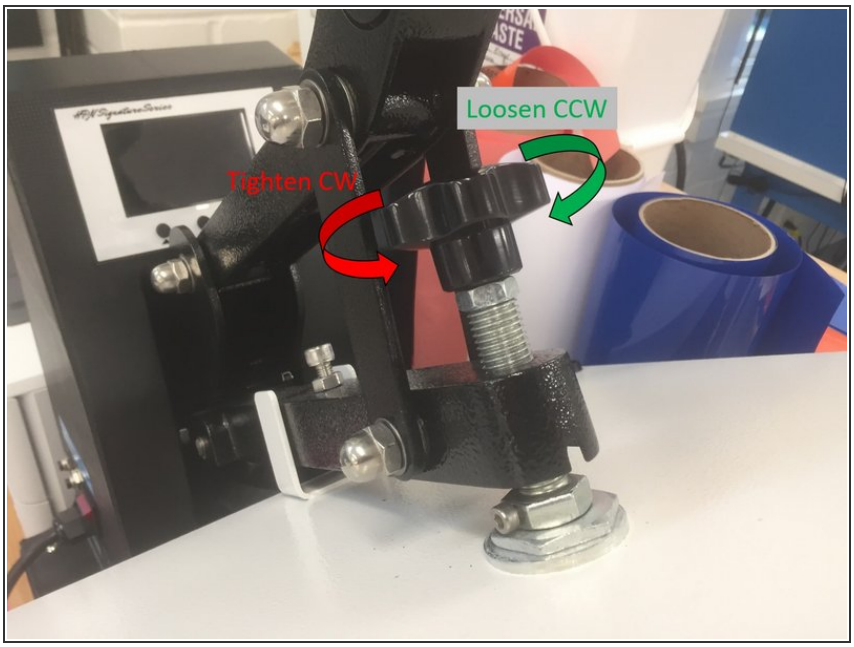
Step 4 — Changing settings



Skip this step if you don't need to change the settings of the heat press.

- To change the settings press the OK button.
- The first thing to set is the temperature units. Make sure F is selected.
- Press OK.
- Now set the Set Values (SV or green numbers) for the temperature using the up an down arrow keys for the vinyl you are using.
- Press OK.
- Do the same for the time using the arrow keys then press OK
- Remember standard Easy Weed vinyl is 305 F for 25 seconds.

Step 5 — Optional - Set the pressure

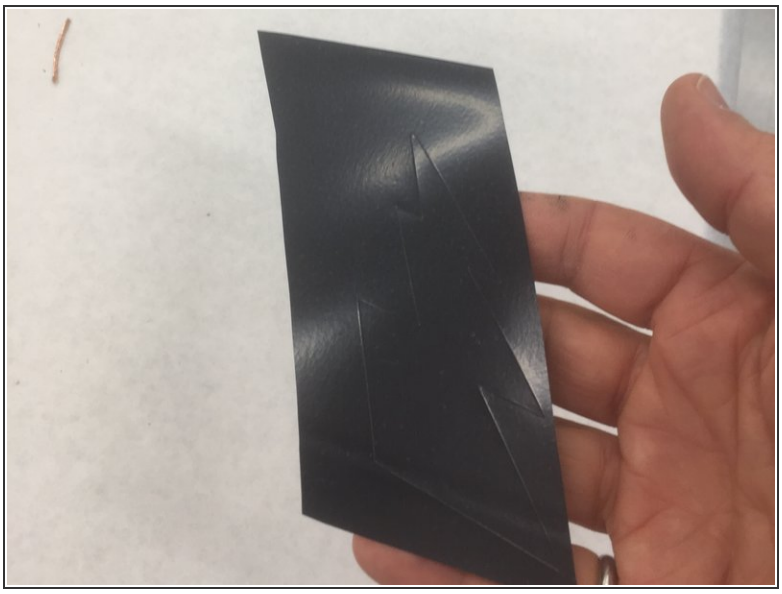


⚠ Unless you are doing thick or thin fabric you should **skip** this step!

- The screw knob on the top plate is used to adjust the pressure. Too little and the vinyl won't stick. Too much and you can't close the press.
- If you need to adjust the pressure put a piece of paper on the bottom plate and close the press.
- It should be hard, but not impossible to pull the paper out without tearing it.
- If it is easy to pull the paper out then turn the know clockwise to increase the pressure. If the paper can't be pulled out turn the knob counter-clockwise to reduce the pressure.
- Repeat the above step until you get the pressure right.

Step 6 — Prepare your vinyl





- While the press is reaching its correct temperature you'll need to prepare the vinyl.
- The vinyl cutter is used to cut shapes just as in making decals. See the vinyl cutter tutorial.

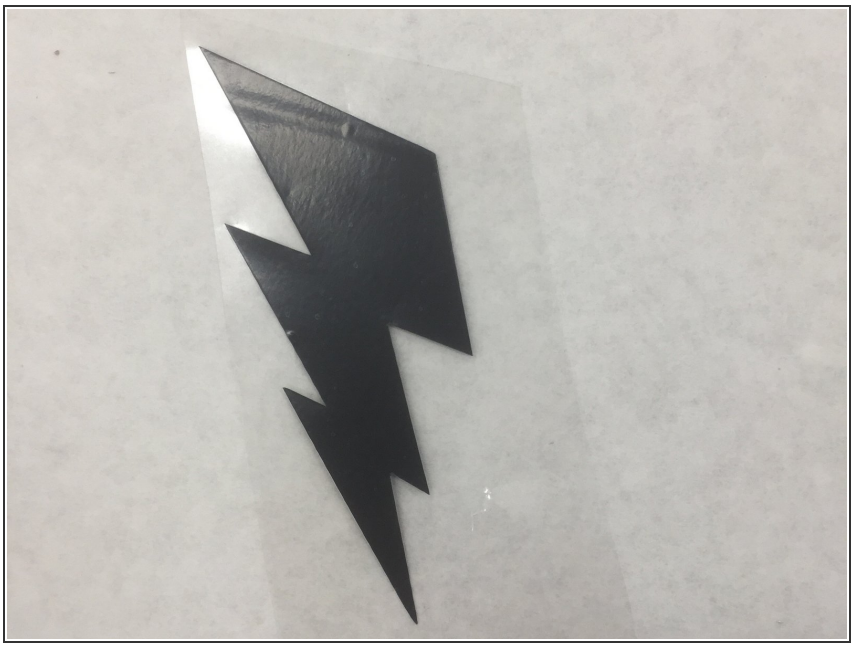
⚠ DO NOT use sticker vinyl to make shirts. A special shirt vinyl that has a shiny backing layer is used instead.

- When you are cutting tee shirt vinyl make sure the shiny side (which is the backing) is facing DOWN on the vinyl cutter and the dull side is facing up.
- The first image shows the reflection from the shiny side and the second from the dull side.

ⓘ **Images and text MUST be mirror imaged (flipped left to right) to show up properly on a shirt. You can do this with the original image or do it on the vinyl cutter.**

- The cutting settings used for decal vinyl should work just fine for tee shirt vinyl.

Step 7 — Preparing Vinyl



- Use tweezers or a sharp object to remove the vinyl you don't want.
- When you are done you will have the shape to put on the shirt attached to a transparent sheet as shown.
- The sticky side of the transparent sheet will go face down on the shirt or other object you are making.

ⓘ Make sure the dull side is down and the shiny side is up on your shirt!

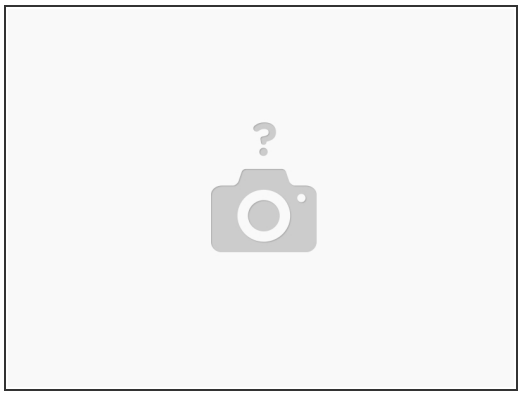
Step 8 — Put your shirt on the press





- Make sure the press has come to the set point - the green SV and blue SV values are the same.
- Pull out the bottom sliding stage.
- Carefully put the shirt on the bottom stage, being careful not to touch the hot top plate.
- The second image shows the shirt on the bottom plate with the lightning bolt vinyl arranged on a shirt sleeve.
- Make sure the cloth is flat with no wrinkles, especially under the vinyl!

Step 9 — Check orientation



- It is better to put all the vinyl pieces that fit in the 16" x 16" area of the press on the shirt at once rather than do them one piece at a time.
- Make sure that the vinyl pieces are well aligned to the shirt and each other before going to the next step.
- Pressing is permanent, you can't easily pull the vinyl off once you make the shirt so take the time to get it right before moving on.

Step 10 — Press!



- When you have the vinyl aligned put one of the brown protective films over the top of the shirt to protect it from the hot press.

⚠ DO NOT PRESS WITHOUT THE PROTECTIVE SHEET!

- Slide the drawer in.
- Press down HARD but gently on the handle until the press locks into place. You will hear a loud snap.
- As soon as you move the top handle the timer will start, so push down fairly quickly and don't hesitate.

Step 11 — Wait for timer to count down



- As soon as you start to lower the handle the green PV timer will count down and start to beep with three seconds to go.
- When the timer reaches zero pull up firmly but gently on the handle to unlock the top plate. Raise it up fully.

⚠ Before removing your shirt slide out the drawer for safety.

- The shirt is hot so wait a few seconds before taking off the shirt.

Step 12 — Peel off the backing layer



- Peel off the transparent backing layer when the shirt is cool enough to do so.
- Your shirt is done!
- If the vinyl peels up while removing the clear adhesive film first check the settings to make sure they match your vinyl. If they are right then press the design a second time.
- Now that you have some vinyl on the shirt you can layer it for an applique look or add new designs to the back or the sleeves
- The next steps describe how to put vinyl on the back of a shirt or how to layer designs.

Step 13 — Putting vinyl on two sides of a shirt

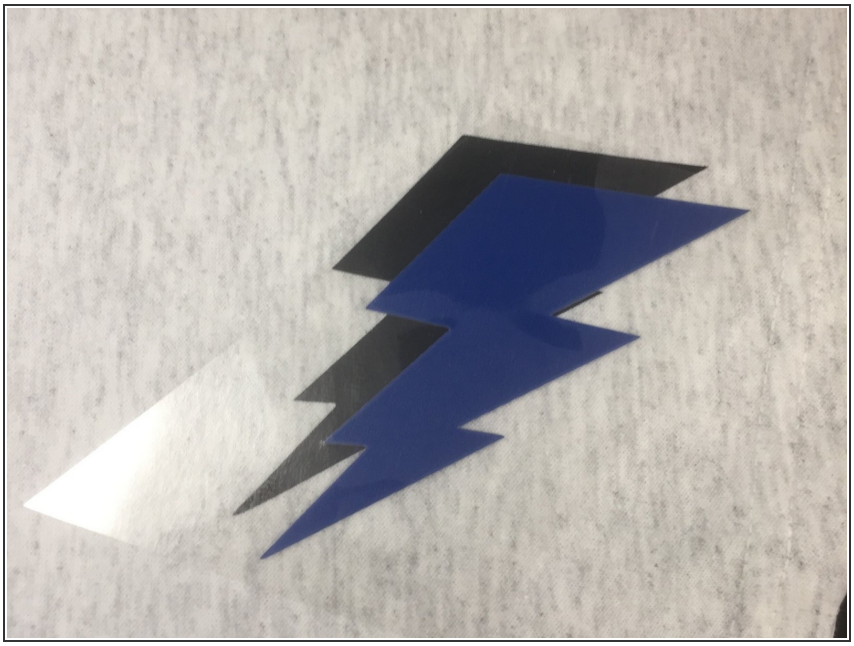


- The process of putting vinyl on the other side of a shirt is exactly the same except there is one more important step.

⚠ **Before putting a tee shirt with vinyl on the bottom stage you MUST put one of the brown protective sheets on the bottom, cloth stage!**

- This keeps the vinyl from sticking to the cloth on the bottom stage and ruining the stage and your shirt.

Step 14 — Layering vinyl



- If you want vinyl on top of vinyl you have to do it in two steps.
- First press the bottom vinyl to the shirt.
- Remove the clear protective layer then place and align the second vinyl image on top of the existing vinyl.
- Otherwise the process and settings are exactly the same.

Step 15 — Vinyl Settings



HEAT TRANSFER VINYL

Transfer Material	Temperature	Time	Pressure	Trim	Peel
Siser Easyweed	305F/150C	10-15s	Medium-Firm	No	Hot or Cold
Siser Easyweed Extra	320F/160C	10s	Light-Medium	No	Hot or Cold
Siser Easyweed Stretch	305F/150C	10-15s	Medium-Firm	No	Hot or Cold
Siser Easyweed Electric	305F/150C	15s	Medium	No	Hot or Cold
Siser Glitter	320F/160C	10-15s	Firm	No	Warm
Siser CADFlex	305F/150C	10-15s	Medium	No	Cold
Siser VideoFlex Glitter	305F/150C	10-15s	Medium	No	Cold
Siser Metallic	305F/150C	10-15s	Medium	No	Cold
Siser StripFlock	320F/160C	10-15s	Medium	No	Cold
Siser ReflectAll	305F/15v0C	10-15s	Medium	No	Cold
Siser Holographic	320F/160C	10-15s	Firm	No	Cold
Siser Easyweed Glow	305F/150C	2-3s	Medium	No	Hot or Cold
Siser Brick	311F/155C	5-15s	Medium-Firm	No	Cold
Siser ColorPrint Soft	311F/155C	10-15s	Medium	No	Warm
Siser ColorPrint Sublithin	265F/130C	15s	Medium	No	Warm
Siser ColorPrint PU	295F/146C	15-20s	Medium	No	Hot
Siser ColorPrint Glitter	320F/160C	15s	Medium	No	Hot
Siser ColorPrint Extra	320F/160C	10-15s	Light	No	Hot

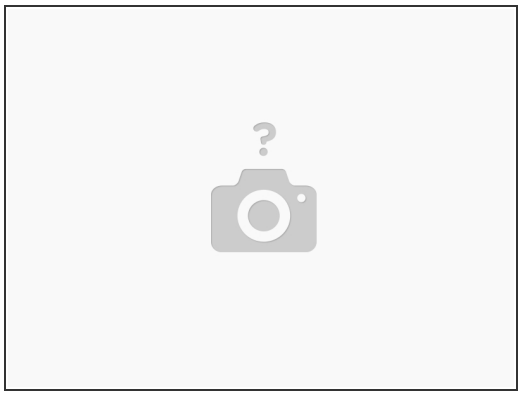
- The image shows some common temperature settings and time settings for vinyl.
- ⓘ Note it generally does not hurt to increase the time by about ten seconds.

Step 16 — Turn off the machine and clean up



- When you are done making shirts make sure to turn off the press using the switch on the side.
- Clean up your mess putting the extra vinyl pieces in garbage rather than recycling.
- Report any damage to the machine or difficulties to the MakerE techs.

Step 17 — Getting supplies



- You can buy shirt vinyl in small quantities at Michaels down in Shamokin Dam.
- For larger quantities at much better prices we order from Heat Press Nation.
- We typically useSizer Easy Weed vinylwhich comes in many colors.
- But manyspecialty vinyls such as glitter, metallic, or fluorescent can be ordered.
- We have had good luck buying shirts from Tee Shirt Wholesalers.

At the end of this tutorial you will be able to make custom tee shirts.