




The Ultimate Guide to Open- Ended Shapes

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Ultimate Workbook: Mastering Open-Ended Shapes with Cricut

What Are Open-Ended Shapes?

Open-ended shapes are designs composed of lines or paths that do not form a closed loop. They may look like sketches, calligraphy, flourishes, abstract squiggles, or partial outlines. Unlike closed shapes, which can easily be filled, cut, or welded, open-ended shapes require special attention when preparing them for use in Cricut Design Space.

These shapes are incredibly versatile and are commonly used in drawing, engraving, scoring, and even certain types of vinyl or stencil work.

Section 1: Understanding the Basics

Why Use Open-Ended Shapes?


Adds Artistic Flair: Open-ended shapes give a free-flowing, hand-drawn look to your Cricut designs.

Perfect for Drawing and Sketching: Ideal for using the Cricut pen tool to mimic pencil or ink illustrations.

Useful in Embellishments: Great for decorative additions to cards, journals, or wall art.

Excellent for Debossing and Engraving: Their fine lines can be used for delicate textures and patterns.

Great for Fold Lines: In paper crafts, open-ended lines are perfect for score and perforation marks.



Exercise 1: Identify Open vs. Closed Paths

Print or sketch five Cricut shapes. For each, indicate whether it is an open or closed path and describe how it might be used in a project.

Section 2: Preparing Your Shapes

Step-by-Step Setup

1. Import or Create Your Design
 - Use Inkscape, Illustrator, or Cricut's Draw tool
2. Assign the Right Linetype
 - Draw, Score, Engrave, Cut
3. Attach Elements
 - Use Attach/Group to keep designs aligned
4. Check for Errors
 - Zoom in to review connections and line weight

Exercise 2: Linetype Matching

Match each linetype (Draw, Score, Engrave, Cut) to the correct project application. Example:
Score = Fold lines for 3D paper boxes

Section 3: Practical Projects



Project 1: Decorative Border for Scrapbook Page

Create swirls and flourishes using the Draw setting
Use pen tool to sketch directly onto a scrapbook page



Project 2: Minimalist Line-Art Bookmark

Use open-ended flower or face drawings with iron-on vinyl
Transfer to faux leather or cardstock



Project 3: Foldable Treat Box

Use open-ended score lines in Cricut Design Space
Cut from heavy cardstock, fold along score lines



Project 4: Engraved Metal Tag

Import an open-ended flourish or monogram
Use Cricut Maker with Engrave tip on aluminum blank





Section 3: Continued

Project 5: Wood-Burned Sign Stencil

Convert open path script into stencil with thicker lines
Cut onto stencil film, apply to wood, burn with pyrography tool

Project 6: Faux Calligraphy Envelope


Use a single-line font and pen tool
Write recipient name with open-ended strokes in CDS




Exercise 3: Create Your Own Project Plan

Sketch out or describe your own open-ended shape project. Include:

Materials used
Linetype needed
Purpose of the design





Section 4: Troubleshooting & Best Practices

Common Issues and Fixes

Issue

Fix

Cricut doesn't recognize the shape

Use Weld/Join, check linetype

Design disappears

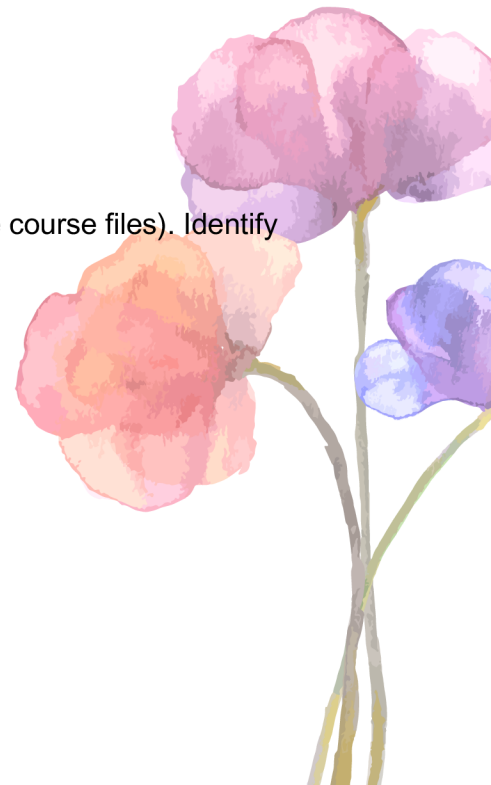
Increase stroke width, check layer order

Skipped parts when drawing

Check for broken nodes, adjust pressure/speed

Exercise 4: Fix the File!

Download the provided faulty SVG (from your instructor or included in the course files). Identify and fix each issue using Design Space tools.





Section 5: Tips for Success

Test on scrap first
Use quality SVGs
Combine open and closed shapes
Save your work often

Exercise 5: Compare the Tools

Complete this table for each tool you use:

| Tool | Material | Linetype | Result Notes |
|------|----------|----------|-----------------|
|------|----------|----------|-----------------|

Exercise 6: Mixed Media Challenge

Design a 3-layer card that combines open-ended sketch lines (pen), folded elements (score), and cut shapes. Include a sketch and write steps for how you would assemble it.

Using open-ended shapes can truly unlock new creative possibilities with your Cricut machine. Whether you're creating delicate engravings, adding decorative sketch lines, or preparing foldable paper art, mastering these versatile shapes gives your crafting a whole new dimension!

✨ **Keep experimenting, keep crafting, and don't forget to share your creations in the BettiesMakes community!**






Examples:

✉ **Fastenerless Envelope Closures: A Creative Workbook**

By Dr. Bette Daoust – BettesMakes.com

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✦ 1. Introduction

Fastenerless envelope closures are perfect for paper crafters who want a clean, elegant finish without using adhesives or mechanical fasteners. This workbook walks you through six different styles of closures you can design and cut using your Cricut. Each project is beginner-friendly but stylish enough to wow!

2. Tools & Materials

Cricut Maker / Explore / Joy

StandardGrip or LightGrip cutting mat

Cardstock (65lb–110lb)

Scoring stylus or wheel

Bone folder (optional)

Weeding tool

Design Space or similar software





3. Envelope Closure Styles



A. Slot & Tab Closure

How it works: A small tab on the flap slides into a slot on the body of the envelope.


Best for: Greeting cards, note holders.

Design Notes:

Tab must be slightly narrower than the slot.

Round the corners for easier insertion.

B. Tuck-In Flap

How it works: The flap of the envelope tucks under a decorative cut or pocket on the envelope itself. 

Best for: Journaling inserts, gift card holders.

Design Notes:

Use curved flaps for a smoother tuck.

Add decorative cutouts or slits.



C. Wraparound Slit

How it works: A long flap wraps around the envelope and slides into a horizontal slit.

Best for: Flat mailers, files.

Design Notes:

Score gently to prevent cracking.

Leave enough tolerance for paper thickness.



D. Petal Fold

How it works: Four (or three) rounded flaps fold over one another and hold themselves closed through overlapping pressure.

Best for: Invitations, romantic notes.

Design Notes:

Precision cutting is key.

Use a circular base for symmetry.

4. Step-by-Step Projects (With Detailed Instructions)

Project 1: Slot & Tab Mini Envelope

Overview:

A classic closure where a tab on the flap slides into a cut slot on the envelope body.

Steps:

1. **Open Design Space.**

Start a new project and choose a rectangle (or envelope base shape). Add a top flap extending from one edge.

2. **Add a Tab:**

Draw a small rectangle or semi-circle at the tip of the flap (around 0.75" wide). This will be the tab that tucks in.

3. **Create the Slot:**

On the body of the envelope (opposite the flap), insert a narrow horizontal rectangle about 0.9" wide and 0.15" high. Place it about 0.5" below the top edge.

4. **Score Lines:**

Use the "Score" tool to add lines where the envelope folds (typically between flap and body, and sides).

5. **Attach Elements:**

Select all elements (including score lines) and click "Attach" so Cricut knows to keep them aligned.

6. **Cut the Design:**

Load cardstock onto your mat, insert the scoring stylus or wheel, and cut the project.

7. **Fold the Envelope:**

Use a bone folder to fold crisp lines. Test that the tab fits securely into the slot.

8. **Customize:**

Add decorative elements like ink edging, stickers, or a stamped message inside.

✓ **Result:** A tidy envelope that stays closed with no glue or adhesive.



Project 2: Petal Fold Invitation

Overview:

Four rounded flaps overlap in a circle pattern, locking each other in place.

Steps:

1. In Design Space:

Create a circle (around 5") as your base. Then add four overlapping petal shapes around it, using crescent or tear-drop shapes.

2. Align & Score:

Align the petal shapes evenly around the circle. Add a score line where each petal meets the center.

3. Attach Score Lines:

Select each petal and its score line, then click "Attach."

4. Cut the Design:

Load cardstock and cut out the full shape.

5. Fold Carefully:

Fold each petal inward, one at a time. Overlap them in clockwise order so the last one tucks under the first.

6. Adjust if Needed:

If the petals pop open, slightly round the edges or trim 1/16" to make a better overlap.

7. Decorate:

Embellish with a wax seal, ribbon wrap, or a printable tag inside.

✓ **Result:** A beautifully self-locking envelope perfect for special occasions.



Project 3: Wraparound Slit Folder

Overview:

A long flap wraps around the back of the envelope and inserts into a horizontal slit.

Steps:

1. Design the Envelope:

Start with a rectangle for the main body. Add a top flap that is about 2.5" long and tapers to a point or rounded end.

2. Add a Slit:

On the back panel (centered about 1" from the bottom), add a horizontal slit shape about 2" wide and 0.2" tall.

3. Add Score Lines:

Insert score lines at the fold points of the envelope.

4. Attach & Cut:

Select all elements and "Attach." Then load cardstock and cut.

5. Fold the Body:

Fold in the side flaps first, then the bottom. Use a bone folder for clean folds.

6. Wrap the Flap:

Wrap the top flap over the front and insert the end into the back slit to close.

7. Finish:

Ink the edges or add layered embellishments if desired.

✅ **Result:** A stylish wraparound closure that looks custom and stays put.



Project 4: Tuck-In Flap Envelope

Overview:

The top flap tucks behind a small decorative band or slit to stay closed.

Steps:

1. Design the Envelope Base:

Create a standard envelope rectangle with a pointed or curved flap.

2. Add a Tuck Strip:

Add a horizontal band to the lower half of the envelope's front panel—about 0.75" tall and as wide as the envelope. Align it 1" below the top edge.

3. Weld the Band:

Weld the band to the envelope front or make it a separate layer to glue later.

4. Insert Score Lines:

Add score lines for each fold section.

5. Cut & Fold:

Cut your design, fold along the score lines, and optionally ink edges.

6. Tuck the Flap:

Insert the flap under the band to hold it in place.

7. Decorate:

Add flowers, ink, or faux stitching to elevate the look.

✅ **Result:** A tidy, handmade envelope that holds itself shut and adds flair.



Project 5: Accordion Tuck Closure

Overview:

A folded accordion flap slides under a lip or slit to close.

Steps:

1. Design the Envelope:

Use a rectangular envelope with a longer-than-usual flap (about 3").

2. Add Score Lines to Flap:

Add 3 to 5 score lines at $\frac{1}{4}$ " intervals across the flap to make the accordion folds.

3. Create a Tuck Band:

Add a thin strip on the body of the envelope where the last fold of the accordion can tuck under (about 0.5" from the top edge).

4. Attach & Cut:

"Attach" all elements and cut.

5. Fold Accordion Flap:

Fold the flap forward and back on the score lines to form the accordion.

6. Tuck to Close:

Slide the last fold of the flap under the band to close.



Result: A layered and dimensional envelope that's perfect for thicker inserts.



Project 6: Locking Circle Closure

Overview:

Two opposing semi-circles interlock with a twist, like a twist tie.

Steps:

1. Draw the Base Envelope:

Create a square envelope with a front and back flap.

2. Add Circles:

Add two overlapping circles (1.25" each) at the ends of opposing flaps (top and bottom).

3. Overlap Design:

Offset the circles so when folded, they will rotate to interlock.

4. Score the Flaps:

Add score lines where the flaps and circles meet the envelope body.

5. Attach & Cut:

Attach everything, then cut the design.

6. Fold the Flaps:

Fold the top and bottom flaps with the circles.

7. Twist to Lock:

Tuck one circle over the other and twist slightly to hold them together.

Result: A clever, satisfying closure that adds a premium feel.



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