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## **Cricut Crafts: Flower String Lights** with Annabel Wrigley

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### **Chapter 1 - Introduction**

#### Overview

I'm Annabel Wrigley. I'm a designer, author, and owner of Little Pincushion Studio, a design and crafting studio for children in Warrenton, Virginia. I've partnered up with Creativebug and Cricut to come up with a bunch of fun, creative projects for children. I'm going to show you how to make a really super sweet flower string light set that will just be perfect in your bedroom. We're going to learn how to open up the templates in the Cricut Design Space. We're going to cut our flowers from three different types of materials, paper, this fun new product called Craftex, and felt. We're going to be hot gluing the flowers together. We're going to add a little bit of detail, and we'll string them up to give your room an instant face lift.

### **Chapter 2 - Materials**

#### Materials

- The supplies we need for this project are a computer, a Cricut Explore machine. We also want a cutting mat and I'm using a purple cutting mat, which is the StrongGrip, and I'm also using a LightGrip blue cutting mat. we're gonna need a sharpie, a set of string lights. I think it's good to not do anything too long. Mine is about 13 feet long, but you could go shorter. But I wouldn't go too much longer than that. Each flower is made up of three different materials. We're gonna be using card stock for the large part of the flower, and you can use any color that you choose. We're also gonna use this interesting paper fabric, which is called craftex. Kind of part fabric, part paper. It's really interesting, it has a great texture. We're also going to be working with wool felt. You can use all different colors and you'll probably need quite a few scraps, depending on how many flowers you're gonna be making. We'll also be using heat and bond. You'll need as much heat and bond as you need felt. And the heat and bond is a fusible web and you iron the rough side to your felt and it gives a good paper backing, which is a good stabilizer when it's in the cutting machine. We're also going to be using a leather punch, a pair of scissors. We'll need an iron and of course we'll need a hot glue gun.

### **Chapter 3 - Make Flowers**

#### Cut and assemble flowers

- We'll be making the main part of the flower from colored cardstock. I'm using this fun, textured cardstock and I'm going to be using a blue cutting mat. So you'll want to take the plastic protective cover off the mat, and that's there to keep all bits and dirt off your mat. Take your cardstock and I want you to carefully line it up on the grid on the sticky map. If you're just working with a scrap of paper, just make sure that you line it up first in the left-hand corner. So we just wanna smooth over the cardstock, make sure that it's all stuck down. Then we're gonna slide it under those guides on the Cricut machine. Make sure it goes underneath. To cut all the pieces of this flower, you need to go to the Creative Bug Project Page for this particular project. You'll need to download the PDF, and then you can click on the link in the PDF and it will take you directly to the Cricut Design Space. I've opened the main flower piece into my Design Space. And now I think I wanna duplicate it, because I think I'd like to cut four from my one 12 by 12 piece of cardstock. So I'm going to click on that flower. And then I'm gonna click on Duplicate. And that's gonna create another one of the flowers.

And I can move that to the side. We just wanna make sure that it still fits in that 12 by 12 inch space. That's how big our cutting mat is. So I'm gonna duplicate it again. I'm gonna try for four. Even if I don't use all of these, I can set them aside and use them for another project. But I always like to make the most of my pieces of cardstock. Sometimes when you look at your Design Space on the computer, it might be a little bit confusing. And you might think that you can spread out all your templates onto one page. But if you have a look at the little numbers along the top and down the sides, each one represents one inch. And it kinda corresponds with your cutting mat. So just make sure that you stay within a 12 by 12 inch area. So now that I've got my four flowers on my page, I want to combine them all together so that they print exactly as I see them, so that they cut exactly as they appear on the screen. So what I'm gonna do is I'm gonna click on Select All, and that's going to select all four together. And then I'm gonna take my mouse over to Weld, and I'm gonna click on that. And that means they're going to cut exactly as I see them. So now we're ready to cut. I'm going to click on the little C Go button. And a window's going to pop up. And this window tells me that it's ready to go. So it looks like it's ready to go. I'm gonna click on the Go button. And now it's giving me the cue to load my paper into the machine. So I'm gonna go over to the Cricut machine. You'll see that the little arrow is flashing. That means that we can press it to load our mat. The next thing that you wanna do is make sure that the dial is set to cardstock. Now you'll see that the C is flashing, and we just need to press that to start our cut. When the machine is finished cutting, you'll notice that the arrow is flashing again. We need to press that to unload the cardstock. You're gonna take the mat out of the machine. And then we'll carefully peel off that piece of cardstock so that all that's left are the beautiful flowers. Now I'm just gonna use my fingers to peel the flowers off. Make sure you peel the flowers off really gently, because they do rip quite easily. My string of lights is about 13 feet long and I found that I needed around about 15 flowers. So if that's the case, you should go ahead and cut maybe three more pieces of cardstock, 'cause you can four flowers per pieces. Now that we've finished that, we're gonna move on and cut the felt part of the flower. So we really need to prepared the felt first. We're gonna take our piece of wool felt, and we're also gonna take our piece of Heat n' Bond. And I've cut this to the exact same size as the felt. There's no right or wrong side to the felt so you can put the Heat n' Bond on whichever side you choose. But when you use the Heat n' Bond, I want you to feel it. One side is rough and one side is just plain paper. We want the rough side to be on the felt with the paper side up. Take your iron and just lightly iron the paper until it's stuck down onto the felt. This should only just take a second. It'll stick pretty quickly. And I think that looks pretty good. I have a little bit overhanging Heat n' Bond on my felt so I wanna clean it up and get rid of the scraps. So I'm just gonna trim that off. It's great for you to prepare all of your felt pieces in advance, so then you can take them over to the cutting machine and get them all done. We're only using scraps, so you'll need quite a few scraps to do this entire project, especially if you're doing 15. I can get two flowers out of each piece of mine. So now I've got it ready to position onto my cutting mat and I'm using a blue mat for this. So I think it's a good idea if you just position your felt piece up in that top left-hand corner And make sure it's stuck down really well. That Heat n' Bond paper is gonna keep it in place. And then we can slide it into the machine and go over to the computer and work on our design. We're gonna be using the exact same flower as we used before. But this time, we're gonna make it a little bit smaller. So we're just gonna up that flower file up again in our Design Space. And then we're going to click on it. And I want you to use your mouse to size it down to about three and-a-half inches. And a great way to test is to slide it up in to that corner and just double check that it fits at three and-a-half by three and-a-half. And I think that looks pretty good. So now I wanna duplicate that, and I'm only gonna do that once. So I'm

gonna click on Duplicate and I'm gonna drag it down. Just like that. We just wanna make sure that when we move those flowers into positions that they're gonna actually fit on the felt. So I'm gonna go back over to the Cricut. Our felt scrap is about four and-a-half inches wide and it's almost eight inches long, so our two flowers should fit really well. Click on Select All. And then I'm gonna take my mouse over to Weld, so I've done that. And we're going to click on the Cricut button. And this is gonna bring it up. We're gonna click on GO. And then now is the really important part. Unlike cardstock we're gonna have to set it for a custom setting, 'cause felt's a little bit harder to cut. So you can go over to the dial on your Cricut machine and I want you to turn it around to custom. We're gonna go back to the computer and you'll see that it's telling me to load my mat. We're gonna go back over to the Cricut and we're gonna click on that flashing arrow. Before we hit Cut, we have to make sure that we adjust it for the felt. So you can go into Set and click on the arrows under Select a Material. And if you scroll down you'll see that it says Felt. And we wanna click on that. So that means that the machine is set for felt. We're gonna see that the little C button is flashing, that means it's ready to cut. So let's press on that. And you'll notice it's cutting through the felt twice. Now we can unload the mat from the machine by pressing the flashing arrow. Let's take the mat out of the machine and peel off our felt and reveal some beautiful felt flowers. If you have any trouble with the cutting of the felt, have a think about how many times you've used that blade, you might need to replace it, and that's okay. And they're easy to come by. When you're peeling it off, try and get your fingernail under the paper side of this. So let's peel it off like this. We're gonna peel the felt off the paper backing and it just comes off super easy. And you'll see some of the flowers are still attached to the felt in little parts, and that's okay. You can just use a really sharp pair of scissors to loosen it. And you can also use those scissors just to trim any of those fluffy bits. I'm just gonna use these and just loosen up. Those bits a bit. Okay, like that. And just seal those little wooly bits. Let's just trim them off. I always find that they get a bit wooly in the corners. So just go in there and give it a little trim. It's looking good. So I'm happy with that. I'm gonna put that one to the side and I'm going to work on my next one. This one's a little bit more stuck, but that's okay. The scissors loosen it up really well. I think it's important that you make the effort to give it a little trim, 'cause you want it to look neat. Cut about 15 or 16 of the felt flowers in a variety of colors and set them aside. And we're gonna move on and do our leaves. So I have my piece of green cardstock. And I'm going to place it on my mat just as I've done the other parts of the flower. I'm positioning it on that mat and pressing down really well. Let's load this mat into the machine. And then we're going to go back over to the design space on the computer. And we're going to start duplicating our leaf image. I've already got it up on my screen. So we're gonna click on that and we're gonna duplicate that quite a few times so it fits in that 12 by 12. I used two leaves per flower. It's up to you. You might wanna use one, you might wanna use two. But I would do is definitely do as many as you can to fill that page so that you make good use of that cardstock. So I am going to press Duplicate quite a few times to fill my page. I usually do a few and then I move them around. And I take them right up to that 12 or just before that 12. And I think I can probably just add a couple more if I lay them on their side. So I'm gonna duplicate two more. And I'm gonna take that down to the bottom. And then I'm gonna click on this little circle at the top and I'm gonna turn it on its side. When I'm using particularly fun and precious cardstock, I like to get as much as I can out of each page. There they go. So now we're going to Select All so that, once again, the leaves cut exactly as I'm looking at them. And then I'm gonna click on Weld. And we're ready to go. So let's click on the Cricut Go button. Great. And we're going to click on Go. And then once again our machine is prompting us to load the map. So let's click on the flashing arrow button again, just as we have before. And then the

important thing is to change your dial back to cardstock, so let's just turn that around, super easy. And then we're going to click on that flashing C button again. And off it goes. Let's take it out. And now we're just gonna carefully pull it back to reveal all those great leaves. You can use the tool, the spatula, to take these off, or you can just use your fingers. I'm just gonna use my fingers. Because we're using the blue mat, it's not as sticky, so they're a lot easier to take off. So now we're gonna move on and we're gonna be cutting out the centers of our flowers out of Kraft-Tex. We're gonna use a purple mat for this part, because it's a strong grip so it's super, super sticky. And because the Kraft-Tex is a lot thicker it's gonna hold it in place while it cuts. So let's take off the protective plastic. You can already see that this is a lot stickier than the last mat. And I have my piece of Kraft-Tex and I'm going to line it up on the mat. I'm really gonna take my time getting it super flat with as few little bubbles as possible. Kraft-Tex is like a really thick part paper, part fabric. It's really great and you can wash it. It doesn't tear and it doesn't fray. And the more you wash it the softer it becomes so it's also a really good leather alternative. But in this case we're using it to make a stiff center that kind of holds its shape. I'm gonna use this little scraper as well just to make sure that it's really stuck down. Now if you don't have any Kraft-Tex, go ahead and use cardstock. You can definitely use that. This is just introducing a different texture to the flowers but it's entirely up to you. Okay, let's load this into the machine. So you should totally know how to do this already since we've done it quite a few times. But we're going to open the image onto our design space. And then we're gonna go back and have a look at the measurement of our Kraft-Tex. And I'm seeing that it's measuring about eight across and about 10 down. So when we fill in the page with this page, with this shape, we wanna make sure that we don't go past that. So I'm just gonna duplicate this image a few times. 'Kay, so once again, I'm gonna Select All. And then I'm gonna go to Weld. Remember that so that it cuts exactly as we see it on the page. And then I'm gonna click on the Cricut button and click on Go. I've tried a lot of different settings with this actually Kraft-Tex product. And I find that Posterboard words really, really well. It's a slightly deeper cut than cardstock. And I think you'll be pleased with how well it cuts. Before we start cutting, we wanna turn our dial around to posterboard. And then we're gonna click on the C. Let's press the button and unload the mat from the machine. And this will just peel off super easy. We can just take each one of these out. So all we have left to do is to create a really fun polka dot detail to the center of the flowers. So just grab a Sharpie and you can just do some little polka dots all over there. If you're not partial to polka dots you could do something different. Think of it as maybe a little blank canvas to do what you want. But I think the dots look pretty good. Go ahead and polka dot all the centers to your flowers. And up next we'll punch holes and assemble them.

## **Chapter 4 - Assemble String Lights**

Attach flowers to string lights

- All our cut flower components now are just going to be layered together to create the final flower that we're going to put onto our string lights. We're going to be using a leather punch to punch a hole in the center of each one of our flower sections, and I'm using a leather punch because it helps get through the thicker fabrics like the felt and the Craft-Tex. So take each one, and just position it so that the punch is in the center of your piece, and just simply give it a punch, and there we go. We want to do that with all of our pieces. Sometimes, you might have to do it a couple of times to get through. I'm just going to pull that out like that. You might have to bend your flower a little bit to get it in there, like that. All we need to do now is take our leaves and attach them with hot glue to the bottom of the flower. I'm going to take my garnet and I'm going to attach this leaf to the large

bottom paper flower. So I'll just put a little bit of hot glue there, you don't need too much, and then I'm just going to put it on like that. I like to have two leaves per flower, I think it looks really pretty, so I'm going to attach the next one. I'm just going to stick that on there like that. Now it's time to layer them together, and we're going to use a little bit of hot glue to hold them in place. So I have my felt, I'm just going to put a little bit of hot glue on both sides. Make sure not to get it on the circle, I mean the hole there, and I'm just going to line up the holes. Press it down. Make sure that when you apply the hot glue, that you apply it to the shiny side. Then take your Craft-Tex center and I just kind of shape it a tiny bit to make it have a little bit more interest, and then I'm going to turn it over and put a little bit of hot glue on either side of that hole, once again remembering not to cover it up. Then I'm lining up that hole and sticking it in place, just like that. Go ahead and assemble all of your flowers. I've gone ahead and I've made all of mine already, and then we're going to start popping them onto our string lights. Now, when I attach them to the string lights, I did it on every second light bulb. So I have them here. You're going to slide your little flower onto the string light bulb. It's going to be a little bit tight, but just gently get it on there. Depending on the size of your hole punch, and also the size of the little bulbs, because I'm sure they vary a little bit, you can adjust your hole size. It's definitely better to go smaller, because you do want these to be tight and firm on the bulb and not rattling around on there. So, you can take the pencil and just push it all the way through, and that's going to help us create the perfect size. I'm attaching the flowers on every second bulb, so let's put this one on. Just remember, it's going to be a little bit of a tight squeeze at first, but once it's on there, it's going to hold really well. I think I want to do a neon pink one. So I'm going to go through and just do this with my pencil, just to make sure it definitely fits, pull it all the way through, and here's my third one, and just really gently pull that through, and it's coming now, there we go. Always make sure that when you're attaching the flowers to your bulb, sometimes you have to force a little bit to get it on, and I want you to make sure that you're only pushing down on the green part of the light, and not on the actual bulb, because we don't want to break that. Continue adding flowers until your light strand is totally full. These are the perfect lights to hang up all year round, but you can change up the colors, and they're great for any holiday, hang them in your bedroom over your bed, or even hang them in your crafty nook. They're the perfect thing to brighten up your space.