Monthly Makes

September 2025: Sublimated Mug

The **Sublimation Printer** in The Workshop works like any other inkjet printer, except it uses special sublimation ink and paper. When heated, sublimation ink bonds to polymer-coated materials, sometimes called "sublimation blanks". You can transfer a design from sublimation paper to make items like custom shirts, puzzles, coasters, stickers, and mugs. **This project will walk you through using the sublimation printer and heat press to create a mug with the image you provide.**



Items Provided:



sublimation printer (with 4x9.5" paper)



mug press



heat-resistant tape



USB flash drive



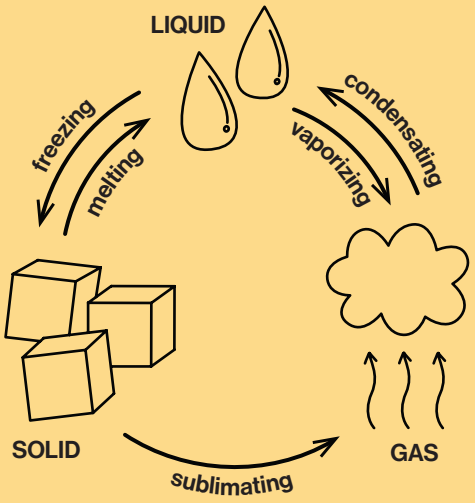
blank mug



butcher paper

What is sublimation?

When you learned about the states of matter in school, you might not have covered sublimation! Sublimation is when a solid turns directly into a gas, without becoming a liquid in-between. A common example is dry ice. In sublimation printing, the dye particles in the printer ink sublimate into a gas, which can then bond with polyester and poly-coated materials.



PART 1: DESIGN

Make your design in Adobe Illustrator

1. If you brought your image in on a USB flash drive: Insert your USB drive into one of the ports on the laptop. If your image is in your email: Open a new internet browser window and log in to your email. Download the image to the laptop.

2. Insert the USB provided by The Workshop into one of the ports on the laptop on the right hand side. In the window that pops up, double click to open the file labeled Mug-Template.

3. Once the Photoshop file has opened, in the upper left corner of the screen, click **File**, then **Place Embedded...**.

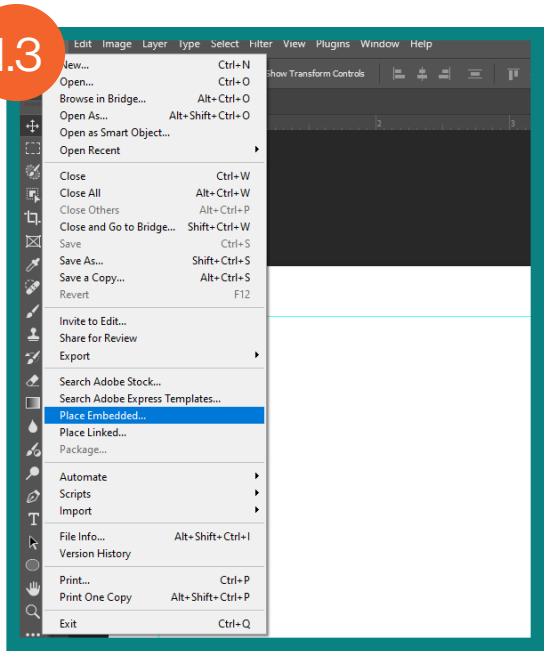
4. In the pop-up window, navigate to where your image is saved (either on your USB flash drive or in the Downloads folder) and select it. Click **Place**.

5. Your image will be dropped into the center of the template. Click and drag on the corners of the bounding box of your image to resize and reposition your image in the template. When you've finished, click **Done** or press the **Enter** key on the keyboard.

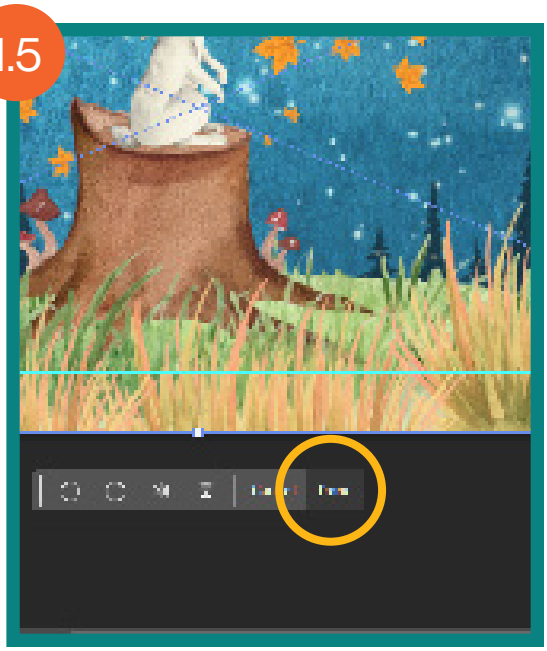
6. In the upper left corner, click **File**, then **Export > Quick Export as .PNG**. Navigate to the USB flash drive and click **Save**.

7. When the file has finished saving, eject the USB flash drive and take it to the computer by the printers.

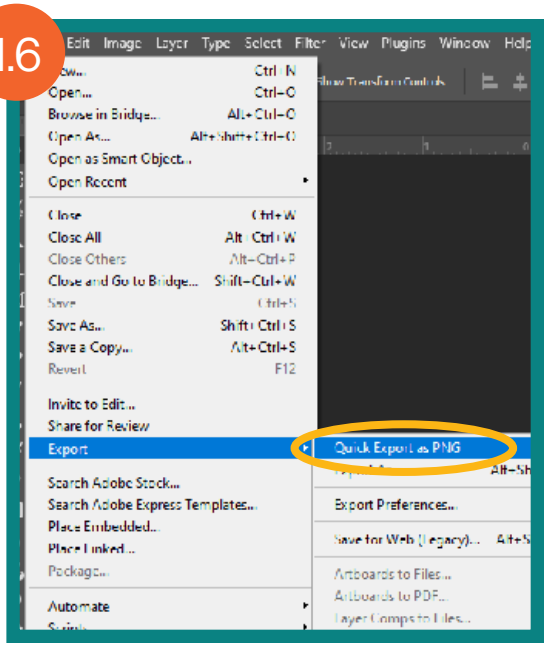
1.3



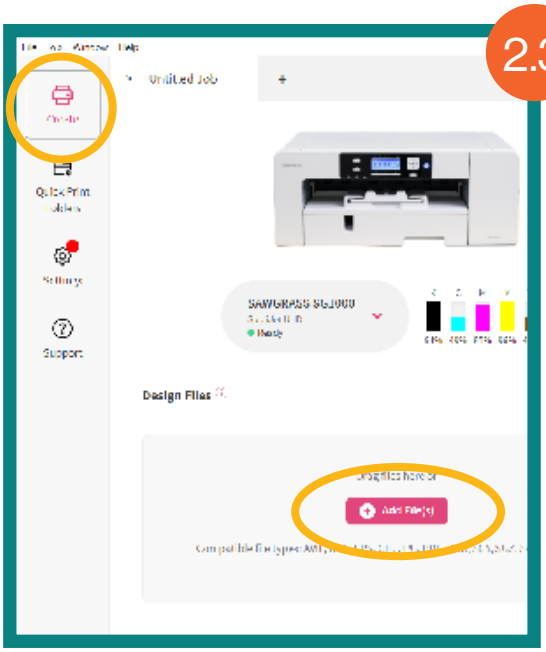
1.5

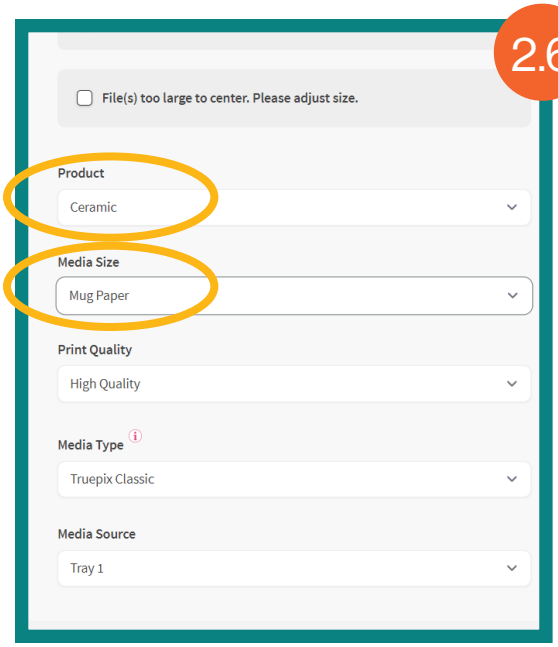


1.6









PART 2: PRINT

Print the image in Sawgrass Print Utility

1. Plug your USB flash drive into the USB Port underneath the laptop computer next to the printers.

2. Double click to open **Sawgrass Print Utility** (the rainbow colored icon) on the Task Bar at the bottom of the screen.

3. Once the program loads, click the pink **Create** printer icon in the upper-left corner.

4. Click the pink **Add Files** button in the middle of the screen.

5. In the pop-up window, navigate to the USB flash drive and select your .PNG file. Click **Open**.

6. Scroll down and change **Media Size** to **Mug Paper**.

7. Change **Product** to **Ceramic**.

8. Scroll up and set the **DPI** of the image to **300** and change the **Rotation** to **90 degrees**.

9. The image should be mirrored by default; this is correct! Click the pink **Print** button at the bottom of the screen. When the image prints out, it will look faded and backwards; this is normal.

PART 3: PRESS

Tape the image to the mug

1. Wrap the mug with the printed image touching the ceramic.

2. Using heat safe tape, tape both sides of the paper to the mug, focusing on the page edges

underneath the handle.

Check the heat press settings

3. Check that the mug press is set to

    Time: **3 minutes and 30 seconds**
    Temperature: **400° F**

If not, ask staff to help you adjust the settings.

Press the mug

4. Holding the mug by the handle, slide the mug into the press from right to left. Ensure the handle is centered in the middle and is not touching any part of the press. **Safety note:** The inner circle of the press will be very hot; use oven mits while working with the heat press to avoid getting burned.

5. While holding the lip of the press labeled **HOLD HERE**, pull down the top black handle all the way until it locks into place; this may require some force. Ask staff for assistance if needed.

6. The heat press timer will automatically start counting down from the set time (3 minutes and 30 seconds).

7. The press will beep when the cycle has completed. While holding the lip of the press, labeled **HOLD HERE**, lift the black handle until the mug is released.

8. The mug will be hot, so use the oven mitts provided to remove it from the press. Place it on the marble coaster next to the mug press and wait at least five minutes for it to cool.
9. Once the mug is comfortable to touch, peel the paper off of the mug. It's okay if the paper rips. Remove any of the tape that is still stuck to the mug. Voila! You have a mug.

3.2



3.4



3.9

