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## **Cricut Crafts: Make a Lunar Nightlight** with Courtney Cerruti

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### **Chapter 1 - Make a Lunar Nightlight**

#### Overview

- Hi, I'm Courtney. I'm an artist here at Creativebug and I love the moon. What's great about the moon is it's something that you can easily point out in a night sky. I think it's why it's one of the first things you kind of learn as a small child. Even as an adult I look for the moon almost every night before I go to bed and I'm still totally delighted when I spot it in the middle of the day unexpectedly. I'm gonna bring a little bit of the moon into your homes by making this really simple lunar nightlight. We're gonna use a Cricut machine so that we can easily cut all of the components. What's great about this project is you can just add it to almost any store bought nightlight that just plugs right into an outlet. I'll show you some tips for using alcohol ink, and water color paint to create a really beautiful moon surface texture so that when you turn your nightlight on it really feels like you're looking at the moon. (light music)

#### Materials

- The materials you'll need to make your lunar night light are pretty straightforward, and there's a lot of variation here so you can really customize it and make it your own. The one thing that's necessary is using a Cricut machine to cut out all your components. I'm using the Cricut Maker, but you could also use the Cricut Explore if you want. You'll need a standard grip mat, some cardstock. The face of the moon is actually gonna be made out of YUPO paper, which is 100% polypropylene. We want the translucent one, and you'll see why it's gonna make a great night light because it has some sheerness to it, and it's gonna be really pretty, and diffuse the light nicely. Depending on what size you get, it may have a different cover. The surface of the YUPO is really interesting to paint on, and it holds both watercolor and alcohol ink nicely, so you can use either depending on what media you choose to paint your moon. You'll need a pair of scissors, I designed this file in Cricut so that it would be adaptable no matter what your night light is like, and so we might have to do some trimming at the very end, away from the Cricut machine so that it fits your night light. Because we're gonna be painting, I like to have a paper towel. We're gonna use a glue stick, the Scotch Create stick is my favorite one, a bit of artist's tape or masking tape. To make the surface of the moon, I have a variety of things here, and you can use whatever you like. I've got metallic watercolors, I've also had fun playing with alcohol ink, so if this is the kind of medium that you like, I picked some moon sort of colors, I've got Sapphire Blue, Mantilla Black, Silver, and I love Metallic Gold, so this is rich gold, it's not exactly what you'd find in the moon, but I think it's really pretty, and you can use this with the Claro Extender. This helps you get kind of like those pock marks or kind of splatter marks that are unique to the moon's surface. I also have some regular watercolor paints, also in moon sort of colors, so you can actually use all of these things in combination, the YUPO paper will take all of it, or just work with your favorites. I've also got some rubbing alcohol for cleaning up if I choose to use the alcohol ink, wax paper to protect my table for painting, and then you need to choose a night light. You want to make sure that you have something that has an on and off switch, just because you don't wanna cover a sensor, a lot of night lights now have these sensors, and you wanna cover it with the face of the moon. This is a pretty standard night light, I found mine online, but you can also get them at the hardware store, or you might already have one of those lying in a junk drawer somewhere in your house. I've also printed out a reference of the

moon in case when I'm painting, I want something that's more realistic. For this project, you're also gonna need your scoring tool for the Cricut 'cause there are a few clean scores that we need to make. Got a couple of containers for water and also for alcohol, depending on which method I use for painting, and then whatever your preferred device is for connecting to Cricut Design Space.

### Painting lunar texture

- I like to start by painting my moon surface first, and I like to do this randomly. I'll work on a full sheet of YUPO and play with texture and color, and then when it cuts out of the Cricut later after the paper has dried, it's kind of a surprise where it ends up and I really like that effect. It's really pretty on the night light. I'm gonna do one in watercolor and one in alcohol inks so you can see how both work. I'm gonna start with the watercolor. I've got a round watercolor brush. It really doesn't matter what kind you're using here. And I'm just gonna start with this dark metallic gray. I want things kinda wet and drippy because that's gonna give me some interesting effects. We'll start with a splatter. So to do that, I hold the brush in my left hand and just splatter. And go off the edge of the paper because this is what's gonna give you the most interesting effect. Something gets smeared, don't worry because the moon texture is really super interesting and irregular, so that's fine. These are actually gonna dry a little bit lighter and more metallic-looking. You can also experiment with scribbles. Just kind of scribbles all over, and we can do more splatter on top. It might look really strange now, but it allows you to get some more bleeding effects by having those bits of scribble or fields of paint there. We'll use some regular watercolor. This is just gray. Maybe I'll do little lighter pressure on the tip, just getting some kind of scribble marks that are more line work. Try to go off the edge. Mixing a new color. I'm using like a teal blue and a little bit of dark blue. And you can be as imaginative with this as you like. If you wanna add purple or pink to your moon, you totally can. If you think about those autumn moons that are red and gold-looking. Let's add some gold metallic. And a lot of my splatter texture is pretty similar in size, so I want some bigger splatters. You could use a bigger brush, but I'm just gonna get this wetter and with more. And instead of tapping, I'm just gonna sort of like using this like almost like I'm throwing the paintbrush, but don't let go. So I have some different textures. Think a little bit more of that dark. I like the splatter. That's my favorite. Do little taps. This creates some interesting texture. Now, when we cut the moon, it's only gonna be a portion of this, but you can use the rest of this paper. You can actually get two moon faces out of one single piece of this paper. So it's nice to paint it all at once. That way if you're making more than one night light, like maybe one for a friend or if you have someone you're giving this to or you wanna put it in more than one room of your house. All right, so that is our metallic watercolor page. We can set that aside to dry and work on our paper with alcohol ink. Now if you've never worked with this before, it's a little bit different. It has an alcohol base. I do love the metallics. I'm using the Pinata brand, which is made by Jacquard. There are other alcohol inks you could play with also. I've got just a few colors here, and we're gonna do some similar stuff, but instead of using a paintbrush, we're actually just gonna use these little dropper bottles that the ink comes in. It's fine that I already have some splatters on my paper from the watercolor. I'm gonna start with the silver. Give it a shake, especially the metallics. And the dropper sort of acts like our paintbrush. Kinda all over. Do a little bit of this blue. This is sapphire blue. No where they kinda land on top of each other, you're gonna get more interesting interactions. This cleans up with rubbing alcohol, so if you need to do any cleanup, you can. This is our black. I'm not using a ton, just a few little drops here and there. You can use an eyedropper, you can sometimes find these at the art supply store, and a little bit of rubbing alcohol to kinda create the clear spaces

to get more interaction. You can see how that affects the alcohol ink. You don't wanna use water with this process because although it can sometimes create some interesting effects, overall it kind of resists. So think of rubbing alcohol as sort of like your water. You can see that the ink is also more viscous than the watercolor paint that we were using. You can also use something called the Claro Extender, and this also helps create these clear spaces. I'll just use the same eyedropper and kinda sprinkle that around. Now we have some gold, also give it a shake because it's the metallic. So it has actual pigment in it that settles to the bottom. And the metallic gold is so good. It's my favorite thing. You can see how interesting the interaction between the other colors and the gold is. This is where it gets less moon-like, but I just love the way it looks, and so I'm happy with that. (laughing) Now if something's a little bit too intense, like I think there's a lot of blue, you can use a paper towel and lift up some of that texture. And then I might go back in and add other colors back on top. Yeah, I like that better. You can see how fun this is. You really don't know what you're gonna get. This is my favorite part of the process because you can really play with the surface texture. It doesn't have to look super realistic. When we cut it with the Cricut, it's gonna create the moon shape and it kind of brings it all together. Because the YUPO surface is really slick and interesting, it allows for all these great effects. It also takes awhile to dry because it's nonporous. So set these aside and let them fully dry before you put this under your Cricut machine to cut it. If you were going to do this project in two steps, this is where you'd end step one.

### Cut components with Cricut

- We're ready to cut out all of our components on the Cricut. You'll see that the file is pretty simple, but cutting a perfect circle is what makes this so clean and so that's why the Cricut's great for this. We've also got a couple of score lines. Because I created this project it's gonna look a little bit different in my Design Space. You will follow the link in the materials to get access to the Design Space in this project. Once it comes up you'll see that you can Customize it or Make It, you're just gonna Make It. I've done all of the work for you. Once you click Make It Design Space will show you two separate mats. The moon is on one mat, that's gonna be with our painted Yupo paper, and the structure for the nightlight is gonna be in the second mat. That looks pretty standard. I'm gonna go ahead and hit Continue. It's going to connect to my machine. I'm using a Maker, but you could also do this on the Explore. I like to just use the Medium Cardstock setting for the Yupo paper, that seems to cut really nicely. So I'm gonna select that. For the first mat I don't need the scoring tool, it's only for the second mat. I do have my Fine-Point Blade already loaded into the machine. And from here on out both the Design Space and the machine is going to start to prompt me. When I look at my machine I can see that this little arrow button is flashing. This is the load and unload mat. So that is my next step. I'm using the standard grip mat and we're starting with our moon, so I'm gonna load that onto the mat. I'm working with a nine by 12 sheet of Yupo here and I can choose what part I want it to cut out for the moon. Maybe that part. You can see that both the machine and the mat are very well used. If you're using a nice, fresh mat, lucky you. I'm just gonna press down firmly. And then we'll load this. Just shimmy your mat under these guide bars until it hits this rail and then you can press the load button. And then, again, the machine will show me that it's time to cut by pressing the little flashing Cricut button. Design Space will also tell me that. It's done cutting, so now I can unload the mat. And this is the satisfying part. I'm just gonna peel away. And I can save this for another project or another moon. And here's our moon. It's so beautiful, I love it. I love that gold. Now we can go onto cut mat two, which is actually gonna be the structure for our nightlight and hold the Yupo paper in place. And Design Space will show you that it's time to cut that mat.

Just line it up on the zero mark here. I'm working with just 8 1/2 by 11 paper here and the design fits on that. But if you have a 12 by 12 piece of paper you can use that too. Before I load the mat into the machine if I look at Design Space it's telling me I need to select my tools, because this is the mat that has the scoring and the cutting. So here you'll see that it says Scoring Wheel in Clamp B, but I'm actually gonna use the Scoring Stylus. So I'm gonna edit my tools by clicking on Edit Tools, I'm gonna select Scoring Stylus, I'm gonna hit Continue. That means that the Fine-Point Blade can stay in the B slot where it's always been and I can put the Scoring Stylus in the A slot. To do that just open this A lever, your Scoring Stylus goes in and you press. You'll hear like a little bit of a click, and then we'll just close this back up. Super easy. And now we can load the mat, press our button, and the flashing light tells me it's ready to cut. Both Design Space and the machine are telling me I can unload, 'cause the cut is complete. This design isn't complex, but it is so difficult to cut a perfect circle, so I love using the Cricut for this, because it makes everything really clean and professional looking. Peel this away. Now you don't wanna bend this too much, 'cause it's fairly thin. And one of our other artists, Natalie Malan, has this great trick where you can actually bend away the mat and keep your paper pretty flat. It's a great tip. We don't need this. You can make another moon project with that. And these are our Cricut components for making our nightlight.

#### Assemble nightlight

- This comes together really quickly. I like to have all my materials out. And I've made a few different moons cut on the Cricut, just so I can see what they look like. This is one that's just made using the metallic watercolor. I just used the gray and the pearlescent. And on your component that holds everything in place, this longer strip is gonna be at the top and the shorter strip is gonna be at the bottom, so you wanna think about it. I also created just a little bit of a border, so that if you glue this slightly off it's not gonna fall off the nightlight, so it gives you a little margin of error there. I think that looks good. Let's try some of the other ones. Here's the metallic watercolor with gold in it. I really like how that looks. You could also do this not just for the moon, but you could do other planets as well. That one's nice too. I like kind of the bleed in there, it's fun. I have to say though, of course, I like the gold the best. So I think that looks really nice. I like a little bit of the white space, that feels like an actual moon. But I'm just gonna go with this guy, 'cause it has all of the colors and I think that'll be really pretty illuminated with the nightlight. I'm working on my wax paper. I'm just gonna turn this over and using our glue stick just glue the edge. Just holding it down in the center. I love this Scotch Create stick, that's my favorite. Remember, this is the bottom and this is the top, so align it appropriately. As kind of centered as best you can. And just press with your fingers all the way around. All right, we don't need the wax paper any longer, it has glue on it. We've got our nightlight. And then I have masking tape or artist's tape and I've taken off a length of it and just cut it in half, so that it's long and skinny and I've got a pair of scissors. Now you might wonder why didn't we just cut everything on the Cricut? And the reason is I've made these pretty long, so that if you need to trim it to fit your nightlight you can. And you would do that with your scissors afterward, not before on the Cricut machine. This is just to make it adaptable to various kinds of nightlights. We've got these really handy score lines and even though it looks like a little thing it's gonna make folding these elements back really clean and not interrupt that continuous outer edge of our nightlight. So one portion is gonna get taped here to the bottom of this casing and the other portion is gonna get taped to the top. This happens to have like a rotating casing, so I'm just gonna try to keep it as steady as possible. I've made this fairly long, so that I have a nice distance between the casing of the nightlight and the moon, so I get a nice even glow when the light is on. And you

may have to trim this little piece of tape depending on how wide the nightlight is. So this is just super simple. We're just using a very strong, but removable tape. This is sort of like a painter's tape. And then we're gonna do the same thing at the top. Depending on your nightlight and the distance, you wanna kind of see, you don't wanna bend this too much. You can tape it here. I think there is gonna be the best. So in this case my piece of paper's going right to the top of the casing and then the tape is gonna hold everything in place. And you can kind of pinch those score marks so your moon lies pretty flat. But it's really that space that's gonna give this really pretty glow when you turn your nightlight on. This project works the best with a classic nightlight, one that plugs into an outlet and has a switch. Anything that has a sensor, the face of the moon might cover up. If you don't wanna create a nightlight, you could also just hang your pretty moon or other planet in the window and let the natural light shine through it. I love this, because you get a little bit of the outdoor magic inside.