

Engraving on wood Tips and Tricks

This document will help you improve the quality of your wood engraving. We will start by covering some wood characteristics and types. Then we will talk about some techniques and helpful tips/strategies.

Wood Characteristics:

It is important to know whether the wood you have selected is either a soft or hardwood. When engraving softwood, it will require less power and hardwoods. Softwoods tend to be lighter and provide a nice contrast when engraving. Hardwoods tend to be darker and provide less contrast.

Grain Structure:

Make sure that you are choosing wood with a smooth and consistent grain structure. You do not want to use wood with any knots in the engraving section. This will help prevent any “streaking” in your images and uneven engraving patterns.

Resin/Sap:

Woods which contain a high level of resin or sap leave a darker burn. Some examples are Cherry and Alder.

Example of Types:

- Softwoods – Bamboo, Balsa, redwood, western red cedar and southern pine
- Hardwoods – Brazilian Ebony, snakewood and African pearwood

Setup Tips:

Choosing the correct lens is always important. For greater detail, use either a 1.5” or 2.0” lens. However, if you are wanting to cut thicker pieces of wood. You want to invest in either a 2.5” or 4.0” lens. The thicker the material, the larger lens you want to use. This is due to how the lens focuses your laser beam.

Make sure when you are engraving that you are using compressed air and are engraving from the bottom up. This will help with lowering smoke damage, lowering flame-ups and to help keep your optics clean.

Due to the smoke, dust, oils, and resins being released when engraving/cutting. It is important to make sure that you are cleaning your hardware/optics regularly. Please see the user’s manual for proper cleaning procedures.

Engraving Tips and Strategies:

To help prevent smoke from damaging the area around your engraved surfaces. You can apply either a vinyl transfer mask or painter’s tape. However, this is not ideal if you are doing a very detailed or photorealistic job. This is due to having to remove the many small pieces in the finishing process.

Imagine.



When you are wanting to get a darker burn on your softwoods. You can defocus your laser beam. Defocusing your laser beam can help darken your engraving. NOTE: you are increasing the size of your cutting beam and will lose detail of your engraving when using this method.

A decorative graphic in the bottom left corner consisting of two overlapping curved shapes: a light blue one on top and a dark grey one on the bottom, both tapering towards the right.

Imagine.