

SolidWorks Intro Part 2a

LaserCut5.3 Software

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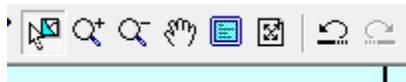
You can download the LaserCut5.3 software to your personal Windows computer and run it in demo mode. This will enable you to do all the preparation of your DXF file before you get to the laser cutter. The only thing you can't do is send the file to the laser cutter.

Go to <http://wiki.makeitlabs.com/training/laser/lasercut53personal>. This site looks sketchy, but it is a legit copy.

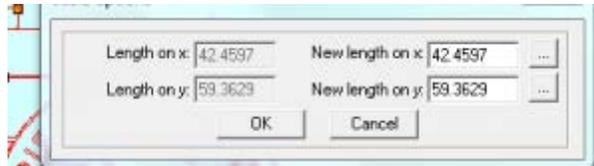
1. Download, extract and install LaserCut5.3 from the Control Software folder. Accept all the defaults. Don't worry about error messages. You don't have to install SoftDog which controls the connection to the laser cutter.
2. Once it's installed, open the installation folder, probably C:\LaserCut53
3. Create a shortcut for the exe file, Lasercut53_Demo. Note: Lasercut53_Demo will not show up in your list of programs, so put a shortcut to it on your desktop.
4. Run Lasercut53_Demo. If you run Laercut53 (not the demo) you will get an error message about a dongle. Just quit out of it and open the demo version.
5. Use **File** → **Import** (do not open) to get your DXF file into the LaserCut software.
6. When the program first opens, the view is zoomed to your part. Two buttons in the top toolbar let you toggle between seeing your part in relation to the entire laser cutter bed and zooming in on your part.



7. You can use the other buttons in this toolbar to Select, Zoom Out, Zoom In, and Pan.



8. If your part looks tiny when you view it in the Zoom to Table view, you probably have the wrong units in your DXF file. To make each unit an inch, rather than a millimeter, select **Draw** → **Size** from the menu bar. The conversion factor is 25.4, but you have to do the arithmetic yourself. (If you figure out how to get LaserCut to do this let me know.)



9. Your part will cut more quickly with fewer errors if you join adjacent lines. Select **Tools** → **Unite Lines**. Accept all the defaults.
10. Make any necessary adjustments to the size and position of your file. The blue dot is where the laser will start to cut if you have the Immediate box checked.
11. You can choose between etch and cut for each color. You can find power setting information on the wall hanger and in the three ring binder. In general, you want to do all the etching first, then cutouts (holes in your part), and finally the part outline. This minimizes the chances that your material will move before the cut is finished.



12. **Note:** Neither Save nor Save As work in the demo version. **However**, if you Exit the program, it will prompt you to save the file as an ECP file. This is the file type for laser cutter download. Save your file on a USB drive or somewhere where you will be able to open it on the laser cutter.
13. When you get to the laser cutter, you can open your ECP file in LaserCut5.3 and download it to the laser cutter.