
Glowforge Projects: Engrave a Photo with Lauren Marcinek

Chapter 1 - Glowforge Projects: Engrave a Photo

Overview

(whimsical music) - Hi, everyone. My name is Lauren Marisnick. I'm a member of the Creativebug family and I'm going to be showing you how to cut and engrave a photo using the Glowforge. I'll show you how to upload any photo, how to enter the settings for your proof-grade material. Today, we're gonna be using maple hardwood. And how to cut and engrave a beautiful, personalized memento. I love working with the Glowforge because it's super simple and it's great for all ages. (whimsical music)

Engrave

- To get started, grab your laptop and pick a photo that you want to use. It's best to use photos that have a lot of contrast and typically I recommend converting them to black and white in advance just to make sure. I'm gonna be using a photo from my wedding that I really liked and printing that on maple. Log into your account at app.glowforge.com. Now I'm going to go to upload and I'm gonna locate my photo that I want to use. Gonna select Open. You'll see that it starts processing. And once that's uploaded then it will take me directly into my design canvas. So now that I have my photo in here I need to add a second file that's gonna allow me to cut out the photo. So I need to upload a second file. I can do that by hitting Add Artwork. Go into Upload and I've got a second file that's just a rectangular box, but that's really important because that's going to be what I can command to cut around the perimeter of the photo. There are different types of files that you can use with the Glowforge. You can use a PNG and a JPEG but I highly recommend using a vector whenever you can. From my experience that's the most compatible with the machine and its ability to read. And so for me that's resulted in far quicker print times versus using a JPEG or a PNG. So now I have them both in here. You'll see the box for cutting and then my photo that I'm gonna engrave. I want to take the cut piece and I want to drag that right around the perimeter of my photo. And I adjust that slightly so it fits flush. It's okay if there's a little bit of an overhang. That will protect your crumb tray but you really want it as close as possible and you want it to be centered. Next, I'm gonna turn on my Glowforge. Note that it might take a couple of minutes to warm up. You'll see that the arm's moving around along with the sensor. Normal, just give it a couple of minutes to warm up and then you'll be good to go. Next, I'm gonna put my material in the Glowforge chamber. I'm using proofgrade maple hardwood. So proofgrade is something that's sold by Glowforge. They sell all of their material and proofgrade come with a QR code located on them. And the benefit of using proofgrade material is when you put the material in the machine the machine actually is able to recognize what you are using and can adjust settings accordingly for you. So that takes out a lot of the guess work around what your setting should be to make sure that the project turns out the way that you would want it to. So I'm gonna go ahead and put that in the Glowforge chamber. Just set it right in the middle of the crumb tray. Close the lid. And we're gonna wait one minute for the Glowforge to scan and to recognize the material and then show that on my screen. Perfect, so you can see here it's read the QR code and it's reflecting in the upper left-hand corner. It reads medium maple hardwood. We can go ahead and adjust the photo as well as the cut, rectangle, to fit on the material. Now I could downsize this a little bit. I'll do the same with the photo. Great, now I can drag this to fit. Uh, still a little bit big. I'm gonna bring it down a little bit more. A

little bit more so it fits comfortably on the material. And that's perfect. We're gonna go ahead and adjust the settings. We'll start with the cut file. It's showing cut, proofgrade cut, we're good to go. Next, for the photo it recognizes that it's a photo, which is good. The settings that populate here work for most photos but because of the level of detail of the photo that I'm using I'm gonna make a few adjustments. I'm going to change the Glowforge type to HD Graphic. The speed I'm going to set to 1,000. I'm going to use full power. I want to convert to dots. I'm gonna change the pattern density to run from zero to about 87. The pattern density informs the contrast on the photo and you can change that. So for example, if I used low pattern density range it looks kind of segmented, granular. If I come back and I expand the pattern density all the way to the top of the range then it's a little bit too dark. So it's really important to find the middle ground here. Typically for me I would use something in the high 80s range for this photo. Lastly, lines per inch. That's gonna effect how it's printing. So I'm gonna change this to 225. All right, so now that I've entered my settings for my photo that are specific to the photo that I'm printing, I'll click out of here just to ensure that that photo is centered within the cut file and then I am good to go. I can click print. We're gonna wait for it to calculate how long it would take and then whenever the machine is ready it will display and the button will start glowing that I can click in order to start. Before you click print and hit the button make sure to turn on your filter. (mellow music) Our photo's finished so now we can take the photo out of the machine. Lift up on the lid, pick the material up, and the photo should fall right out. For this project I printed on Glowforge material with the masking on. But you can also pull the masking back and print directly on the material itself. The masking does have some bearing on how dark or how light the print comes out. So this one I really like. However, here's another iteration that I made where I did pull the masking off and printed directly on the material. So you'll see same level of detail, it's a little bit darker here. I really like how this photo turned out. It would look great with a frame. You could put it on a mantle, on a desk, or somewhere in your home.