

TECH TIP

Photo Engraving Software Comparison

Two software products are available for processing images for laser engraving - PhotoGrav 3.0 and EngraveLab Photo/Vector Software.

The reason special software is required for laser engraving photos is the many variables in the process. Different laser systems and different materials react uniquely with each different photo to be engraved. In addition to modifying each photo for the material and system, they enhance the image by automatically adjusting the brightness, contrast and gamma range. Both software packages also have a feature called Edge Enhancement. This is especially helpful with photos that have a busy background.

Both PhotoGrav and EngraveLab Photo/Vector Software are simple to use and the steps in the process are easy to follow. Both are designed for Windows XP and Vista. Both have settings for all commonly found materials used in the engraving process.

PhotoGrav 3.0 Software Overview

[PhotoGrav 3.0](#) is a major upgrade on the software that has become the industry standard for processing photos for laser engraving. If you have PhotoGrav 2.11 you will want to upgrade soon.

The process starts with opening a photo in PhotoGrav. Next, click on the resize button to change the photo to the final engraving size. Now select the material for engraving from the list under the Select Material button. Now click Final Process. The software will modify the photo and it will need to be saved. The final step is to import the processed photo into the layout software and print it to the laser for engraving.



Now, Color or B&W images can be processed by PhotoGrav. Standard image types can be opened by PG 3.0 including tif, jpg, png and bmp formats. A huge list of makes and models of lasers feature specific settings for each. Updated materials listing provides automatic settings for typical materials used in the photo engraving process. The simplified design of the software includes a sizing tool - making the process of preparing photos for laser engraving even easier. A great product made better, PhotoGrav 3.0 is designed for novice and expert engravers to produce first run, professional quality results.

EngraveLab Photo/Vector Software Overview

Based on the full EngraveLab Laser software package, Photo/Vector includes several major features. This product has layout software features, a vector tracing feature and a photo processing module. A photo can be imported into [EngraveLab Photo/Vector](#) and cropped/edited then processed then printed to the laser - all from one program.



The photo module is full featured and allows the input of any color or B&W photo. A drop down list is available for all the standard laser engraving materials. The auto process button creates the modified image for laser engraving. Text and other effects can then be added and the whole job sent directly to the laser. The vector tracing feature included with Photo/Vector is far more powerful than the tracing feature found in DRAW X3. Vectors

created from the trace have very few nodes and are much more accurate. This translates to less time cleaning up the traces and faster cutting times on the laser. EngraveLab Photo/Vector offers the upgrade path to the full version of EngraveLab Laser for a complete layout, design, vector tracing & photo processing package.



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