

# Welcome to the MassArt Laser Lab

The Laser Lab consists of two Universal Laser Systems 60 watt lasers connected to separate PC workstations. These are available for use by any MassArt student, staff or faculty member with appropriate training.

## General Rules

**Respect the space** - Remove all your materials when you are done cutting. Recyclable materials should go in the blue bins, trash in the trash cans, and any materials you wish to keep need to leave with you. Leave the space tidy for the next user.

**Never leave a running laser cutter unattended** - Lasers cutters work by burning through material. Fires can easily start and burn out of control. This means they require constant vigilance when cutting. Leaving a running laser cutter unattended is grounds for immediate loss of laser cutter privileges. No exceptions.

**Use cutting mats** - Cutting mats are located on work tables. Use these. There is no reason to chop up the tables and desks in the laser lab.

**Don't leave belongings unattended** - D-311 is a shared space. Don't leave your belongings unattended. This includes projects you may be working on.

## Obtaining Access

There are three tiers of access to the MassArt laser lab.

**New User** - New Users have limited or no experience on the laser cutters. A new user may sign up for a laser cutter time slot **only** when there is a laser monitor available. These times are marked on the weekly calendar. During the first training session the monitor will go over how to safely use the laser cutter, what materials are acceptable, and help with any issues that arise in preparing files and actually cutting materials.

After a new user signs up for and completes three sessions with a monitor, they may take a laser cutter test consisting of a written quiz, and an in-person demonstration by the user that they understand how to set up and cut safely with the laser cutter. If they pass the test, their name will be added to a Trained User list on file with Public Safety.

**Trained User** - A trained User has passed the laser test and demonstrated the ability to set up and run the laser safely by themselves. Their name is on a Trained User list on file in Public Safety. Trained Users may sign up for laser time during the DMCs normal hours, 7am - 11pm. However, another Trained User must be in the lab with you. Sign up with a buddy so you can both work.

During non staffed hours (i.e., no monitor present), Trained Users must first go to Public Safety with their partner who will be laser cutting with them. They both turn in their IDs and get a key and ID card for the laser cutter studio. Since partners may not operate the lasers alone, it is against rules for one person to leave after access has been granted to the lab. Operating the laser alone, unless you are a monitor, will result in loss of privileges. When the users are finished laser cutting, the key is returned to Public Safety and IDs are retrieved.

**Monitor** - Laser cutter monitors may use the Laser Lab alone. However, they may not sign up for time slots during their monitor shifts. They can work on their own projects if no one else is using the lab during their shift, but must make a laser available for use by others on short notice. Monitors should schedule outside time for any files that will take longer than ten minutes to cut. Finally monitors should try and schedule their usage during unmonitored times so machines can be signed out by new users when monitors are available to help them.

## Signing Up For Time

Sign up sheets are on the back wall of the Laser Lab. They are updated every Monday for two weeks in advance. For example, on Monday the 16<sup>th</sup>, the weeks of the 16<sup>th</sup> and 23<sup>rd</sup> are posted.

## General Sign Up Rules

There is no signing up for time slots that are already in progress or starting in less than an hour. If no one is using a laser cutter, simply hop right on; access to machines when no one is signed up is strictly on a first come first served basis. If the lasers are in use, but the sign up sheet is open, ask whoever is using the laser how long they intend to be using it. Sign up for a time slot after they will be finished. This is a shared resource, a little bit of courtesy goes a long way.

**New Users** may only reserve time where monitors are available and are limited to a maximum of four hours per week in two hour chunks.

**Trained Users** may reserve a total of eight hours per week and can reserve four hour chunks during non monitored times. If a Trained User wants to reserve time when a monitor is present, we ask that they make the reservation no more than two hours in length. This allows New Users to sign up with monitors to get the training they need.

**Monitors** may reserve eight hours per week during times when monitors are not scheduled. Again we want to serve as many New Users as possible and this means having machines available when monitors are scheduled.

**Instructors** should email Fred Wolflink ([fwolflink@massart.edu](mailto:fwolflink@massart.edu)) with requests to check out the laser lab for class assignments. In order to make sure time is available for your class this should be done *at least two weeks in advance* so that time can be blocked out on the sign up sheets before they are posted. It is also helpful so that appropriate help can be available. Depending on the instructor's technical expertise and experience with the laser he/she may need to either schedule a comprehensive training session for themselves prior to bringing their class, or schedule the class when a monitor can be made available.

Planning is essential to successfully running a class assignment with the laser cutters. Let us know what your assignment will entail, your time frame, class size, and any other relevant details such as materials to be cut, file formats, etc. Additionally, either the instructor or TA should run through the assignment before it is given out to make for a smoother process.

**Walk-ins are welcome** If no one is using a laser, and it hasn't been signed out (or someone is ten minutes late for their appointment), then it may be operated within the guidelines for a user of your level. However we ask that walk-ins limit their time to two hour blocks if other people show up wanting to use the laser. It is suggested that people fill out the sign up sheet if there is a sudden spike in demand. This avoids scenarios such as one user telling a second that they can use it in an hour when they finish, with a third user signing up for that time slot in the interim.

## **Appointment Etiquette And Rules**

**Don't be late** - If you are ten minutes late for your appointment, you forfeit it if someone else shows up and was waiting. During the end of the semester time becomes very valuable on the laser cutters. Schedule time when you know you can make it.

**Don't run over your appointment** - It is your responsibility to finish in the time you have signed up for regardless of difficulties or obstacles you may encounter. If you think that a file is going to be tough to get right, plan accordingly and sign up extra time. If you have a huge project see if it can be broken down into smaller, more manageable pieces.

The VLS software has an "estimate time" feature. Use this to see how long your file will take to cut. If it will take 45 minutes, and there are only 15 minutes left on your appointment, and someone has the next hour scheduled, do not start the job. Make an appointment for more time later. If someone has the laser cutter reserved, they can ask you to leave when their slot starts.

**Pack it in, pack it out** - Whatever you take into the laser lab needs to either leave with you, or go into the trash or recycling bins. Recycling bins are for paper, cardboard, plastic, aluminum and thin plates of steel only.