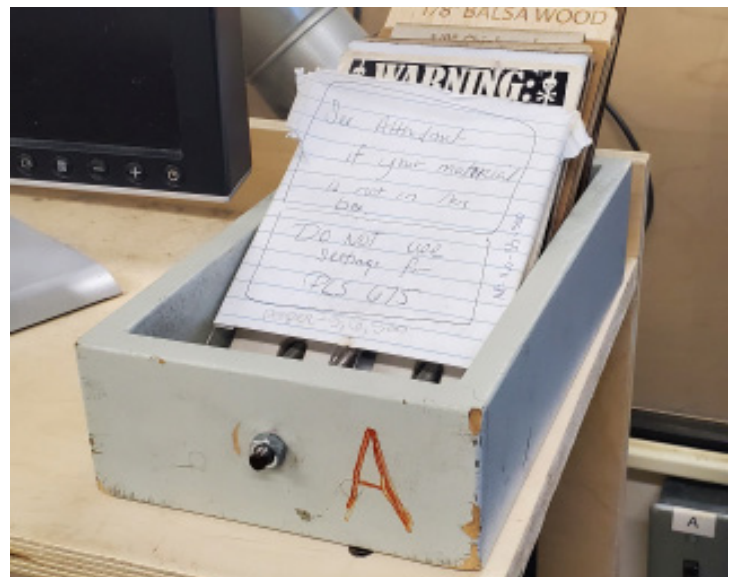# 3 Operating the Laser Cutter

Now you finally get to operate the laser cutter. By now you should have valid line work all laid out onto cut sheets and ready to get started on the machines. Keep in mind that this assignment is just a brief rundown of the steps you will need to take to operate the lasers. Please read through the Laser Cutter guide for the software you chose to use (Rhino or Illustrator) before proceeding to cut. If you need any help, please ask an assistant on duty. See M2A3 attachments on our website.
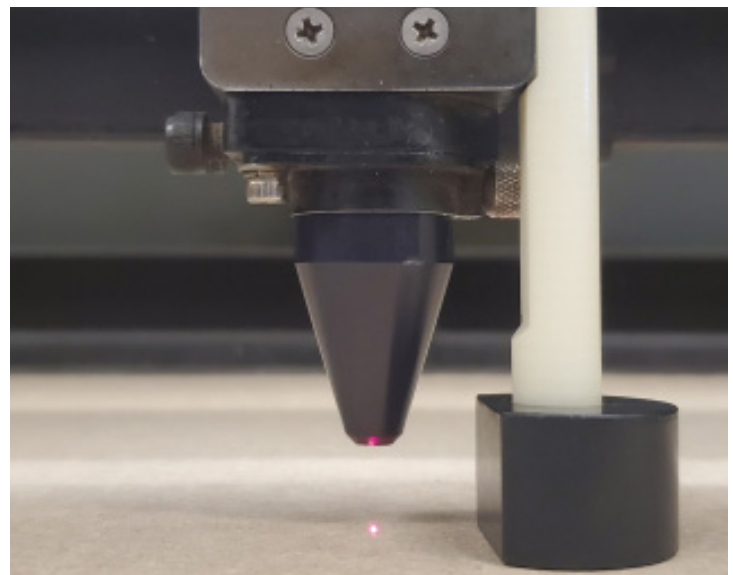
Final Deliverables:
Two images of your laser cut "model." Minimum of two layers thick.

Instructions

1. Use our consultation request form to set up a "first time use" appointment for the laser cutter.

2. When you arrive, log into the computer that is next to the laser cutter you made an appointment to use. Plug in your flash drive and open your file.

3. Make sure you have a 18"x32" or 18"x24" bounding box (depending on which laser cutter you are using) around your linework if using rhino. Or make sure your artboard is set to 18"x32" or 18"x24" bounding box (depending on which laser cutter you are using) if you are using Illustrator.

4. Follow the laser cutter guide to set up your file properly. Keep in mind, each machine requires different values for power, speed, and sometimes dpi even if you are using the same material. Reference the "deck of cards" that is next to each computer when setting up these values for the material you are using.

5. Ensure the laser is focused properly by using the black and white tool that is located in a holder within the machine. Select the "Z" option on the screen and use the arrows until the your laser matches the picture on the right. Do NOT presss down on the material to flatten it during this step.

6. Once your settings and height are checked by an assistant on duty, you are free to cut.

Material "deck of cards"

Proper Laser Height