Setting up Files in Illustrator

All drawings must be expressed in inches.

In “Document Setup” set the art board width to 32” and the height to 18”. All parts to be cut/engraved/scored must be 1/4” inside this perimeter. This makes the cutting area 31.5” x 17.5”

Parts to be cut, scored, or engraved must be placed on separate layers. Name these layers ‘cut’ ‘score’ and ‘engrave’.

You can also create layers for innercuts

Please check to make sure that your lines still match up in the different layers.

Lines to be cut or scored must be expressed as vectors. Select all lines, make sure nothing is filled, and set the stroke to .001 pt (you must type this number in)

Elements to be engraved, such as wider lines and filled artwork should be set to .25 pt or higher and/or filled with a color other than white.

Erase all stray lines.

Remove all overlapping and duplicate lines. The laser will double-cut overlapping lines, with negative results.

The laser’s kerf is approximately .008” centered on the drawn line. This will cause the parts that are cut to be slightly smaller than what is drawn. This fact is normally insignificant, but if it is critical to your work, please make note of it.

The rule of thumb for spacing between parts is to allow at least half of the thickness of the material between cuts.

For example, if you are cutting 1/4” acrylic, allow 1/8” spacing between parts.

Draw everything in Illustrator. Files drawn in other programs that are then imported or pasted into Illustrator will cause problems.

If there is text in your design, once the file is how you want it, please select everything, go to ‘Type’ then ‘Create Outlines’ – this will preserve the font you have selected (but will not allow you to edit the text anymore).