Illusion2Beam

Instruction Guide

How to make a 3D illusion design and get it ready for your laser. Written for version 3.02.

What Illusion2Beam does

You describe a scene, the app plans four ideas for you, and it turns the one you pick into a carved 3D illusion design. Then you download a laser-ready grayscale file for wood or slate. You can make wood art, square slate coasters and round slate coasters, and you can even put your own pet into the design.

The app works in four steps, shown across the top: **1 · Idea**, **2 · Concept**, **3 · Preview** and **4 · Files**.

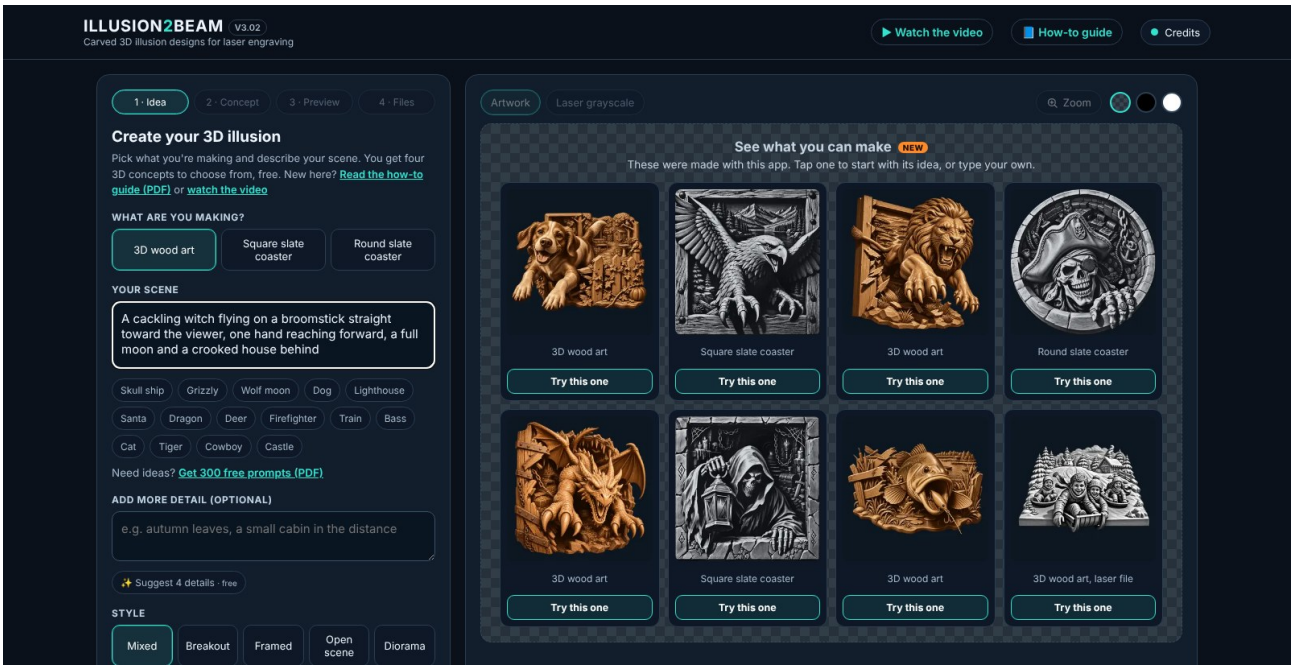
Getting started

- Go to **illusion2beam.com**. There is nothing to install and no code to enter.
- Open it in **Chrome, Safari or Edge**, not from a link inside Facebook or Messenger. Facebook's built-in browser can't download files. If you see a warning bar at the top of the app, tap the three dots and open it in your regular browser.
- Enter your email and click the link in the email to verify it. New users get **16 free credits**, enough for 5 previews.
- Your credits show in the top right corner, next to the version number.
- Prefer to watch? Tap **Watch the video** at the top of the app for the full walkthrough on YouTube. This guide is under **How-to guide** right next to it.

What things cost: getting concept ideas is free. A preview is 3 credits. Upgrading to HD is 6 credits. Downloading files, moving sliders and saving designs are always free. Credits are shared with Depth2Beam, so the same credits work in both apps.

> **Tip:** Illusion2Beam is a different app from Image2Beam. If a screen is asking you for a 6-digit code, you are in Image2Beam. Go to illusion2beam.com instead.

Step 1 · Idea



The Idea step: pick what you are making and describe your scene. The examples on the right show what the app makes.

What are you making?

- **3D wood art** for signs, wall art and other wood pieces.
- **Square slate coaster** or **Round slate coaster**. Then pick a border: **Thick frame** (your subject leans out of a deep carved window), **Picture frame** (a moulded frame, and you can describe a fancy one in your scene) or **No border** (the carving runs to the edge).

Your pet photo (optional)

Add one clear, well-lit photo of one pet with no people in it. The animal in your scene becomes your own pet. Your photo is only used to make your design and is not saved.

Your scene

Describe what you want to see in a sentence or two. The box holds 280 characters. The best designs have one main subject coming toward you and a background behind it.

Example: A cackling witch flying on a broomstick straight toward the viewer, one hand reaching forward, a full moon and a crooked house behind

- Use words like **toward the viewer**, **reaching forward** or **bursting out** for the most 3D pop.
- Start with **Close-up** for a big face that fills a coaster.
- Stuck? Tap **Need ideas?** for the free prompt packs, or use the example buttons under the box.
- New here? Under **See what you can make**, tap **Try this one** on any example. It fills in that design's scene and settings for you, and you can change the words before you go on.
- **Add more detail** (optional) is for extra touches like snowflakes or a fence.

Style

- **Mixed**: the app picks a mix of styles for your four ideas.
- **Breakout**: your subject breaks out through a wall, window or frame.
- **Framed**: a frame surrounds the scene and parts of your subject reach past it.
- **Open scene**: no frame, just your subject with scenery behind it.
- **Diorama**: a little 3D scene on a base. Indoor scenes like a workshop get walls. Outdoor scenes like a snowball fight get an open base with no walls.

Step 2 · Concept

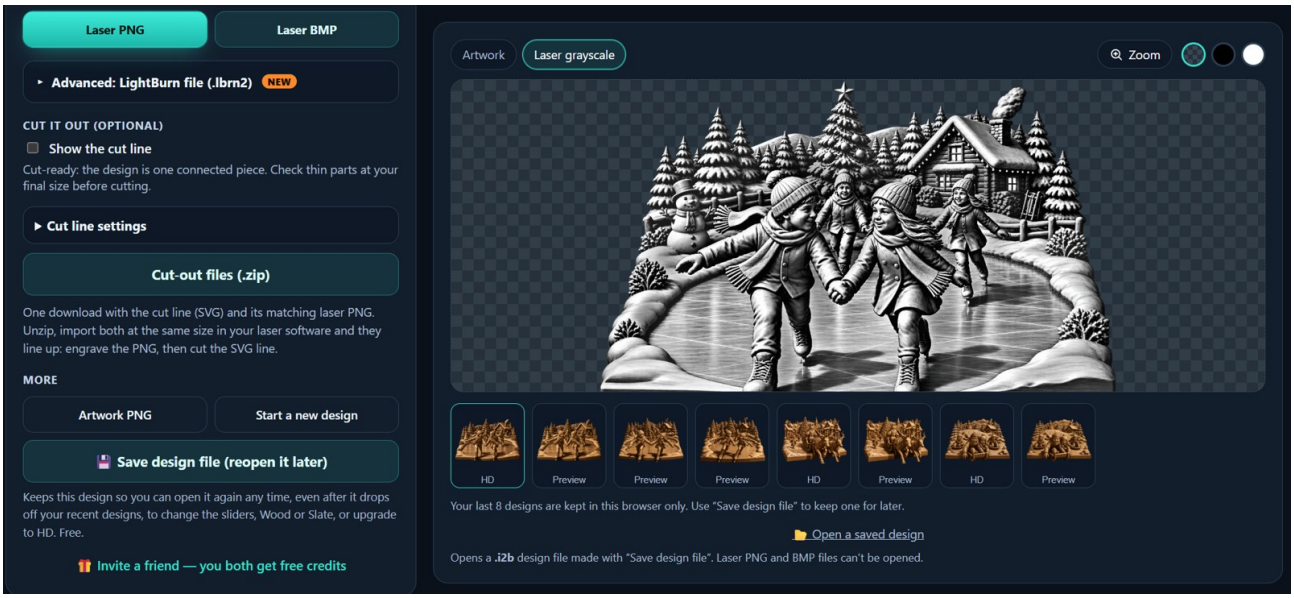
The app plans four ideas, each with a title and a short description. This step is free.

- Read the descriptions and tap the one closest to what you want.
- **New concepts** gives you four more ideas for free.
- **Edit scene** lets you change your description and try again.
- For an outdoor diorama, pick one marked **Straight-on** or **Slight angle**. A **3/4 view** is a corner room with walls.
- When you are happy, tap **Create preview** (3 credits). It can take up to a minute, so stay on the page and keep your phone screen on.

Step 3 · Preview

- Use **Zoom** to check the details, especially faces and hands.
- Not quite right? Type a change in **Change something** (up to 300 characters), like "remove the tube under the saucer" or "make the bear bigger", and tap **Try again** (3 credits).
- **Use this preview** is free and goes straight to your files. **Upgrade to HD** (6 credits) gives the sharpest detail and is best for anything you sell.
- **Make matching coasters** gives you new ideas with the same frame, so you can build a set of four. Leave the box empty for the same subject in a new pose, or type a different subject (like a different bird). With a different subject, only the frame is copied, so the new subject gets its own natural pose.
- **Send to customer for approval** (free) makes a link your customer can open to approve the design or ask for changes before you burn anything.
- **Back to concepts** goes back a step. **Start a new design** starts fresh.

Step 4 · Files



The Files step: download your laser file, cut files, artwork, or save the design file to reopen later.

Engrave on: Wood or Slate

Pick the material you are burning. Slate turns lighter where the laser hits and wood burns darker, so the file has to be different for each, and the app sets it up for you. You can download both from the same design, and downloads never cost credits.

Look before you download

- **Artwork** is the carved design picture.
- **Laser grayscale** is the actual file you engrave.
- **Slate preview** (slate only) shows roughly how it will look on dark slate.

Sliders

Auto-tune for engraving sets everything up for you. If you want to fine tune it:

- **Slate darkness** (slate only): makes the slate version lighter or darker overall.
- **Depth pop**: makes the 3D shading stronger.
- **Shadow depth**: how dark the deepest spots get.
- **Hero cast shadow**: the shadow behind your main subject. More makes it stand off the surface.
- **Background fade** (wood only): softens the background so your subject stands out.
- **Fine-tune**: Detail, Extra crisp, Brightness and Contrast.
- **Reset** or **Auto-tune** puts everything back, so you can't break anything.

My laser profile

Tap **Calibrate my laser**, burn the test card once on your material, then tap the first step where you see a mark and the step where it stops getting darker. After that, every file is adjusted to match your machine. It is free, and you can make a profile for each laser and material.

Download your files

- **Laser PNG** or **Laser BMP**: the file you engrave.
- **Advanced: LightBurn file**: for LightBurn users who know their power and speed. It opens in LightBurn already set up. New to your laser? Just use the Laser PNG.
- **Cut it out** (optional): turn on **Show the cut line**, then download the cut-out files. Engrave the PNG, then cut the SVG line. Raise **Smoothness** and **Margin** in Cut line settings for a simpler, sturdier outline.
- **Artwork PNG**: the design picture, good for sharing on Facebook or with customers.

Saving and sharing designs (.i2b files)

The app keeps your last 8 designs in your browser only. To keep a design for good, tap **Save design file** on the Files step. It saves a small **.i2b** file to your computer or phone.

Later, tap **Open a saved design** under your recent designs and pick the .i2b file. It opens right on the Files step, so you can change the sliders, switch between wood and slate, download again or upgrade a preview to HD.

- You can share .i2b files. Anyone who uses the app can open your design and tune it for their own laser and material.
- Want to show off a design? Tap **Share this design** at the bottom of the Files step. It saves a picture of your design to post on Facebook or anywhere you like. On a phone it opens your share menu.
- Only .i2b files open this way. A Laser PNG or BMP can't be opened back into the app.
- The files are fairly big, so zip them before posting them on Facebook or emailing them.

Setting it up in LightBurn

- Import the Laser PNG and size it to your blank. For a 4 inch coaster, set it to 4 inches and center it.
- Double-click the image layer and set Image Mode to **Jarvis** or **Stucki**. Do not use Threshold, which turns everything into full burn or no burn and loses the shading.
- Use about **250 to 320 DPI** on a CO2 or diode, or about **500 DPI** on a fiber.
- Leave **Negative Image off**. The app already set the file up for your material.
- Use your normal speed and power for that material, and always run a small test on scrap first.

> **Tip:** Slate prep that works well: sand the slate with 320 grit, then spray it black before engraving.

Troubleshooting

- **The preview never shows up.** Stay on the page and keep your phone screen on. If it still hangs, refresh, or try a computer in Chrome.
- **Downloads don't work.** You are probably inside Facebook or Messenger. Open the app in Chrome or Safari.

- **The burn came out flat with no shading.** Image Mode is probably set to Threshold. Switch to Jarvis or Stucki.
- **The burn came out blocky or lined.** Check your DPI (around 300) and make sure you used the full file, not a small preview.
- **Slate looks too dark on screen.** Lower Slate darkness or raise Brightness, then check the Slate preview.
- **People in a group look like twins.** Use Change something to describe each one differently, like "an older boy with freckles, a little girl with braids".
- **My design is gone.** Only your last 8 are kept. Use Save design file for anything you want to keep.

Need help?

Watch the full walkthrough video: **youtu.be/HXGcbJCihWU** (also under **Watch the video** in the app).

Join the **Image2Beam Laser Community** on Facebook for free files, prompts and settings help, and post your questions there. No question is too basic. You can also email **support@depth2beam.com**.

Anything you make with Illusion2Beam is yours to engrave and sell.