Tracing a hand-drawn image in Beam Studio
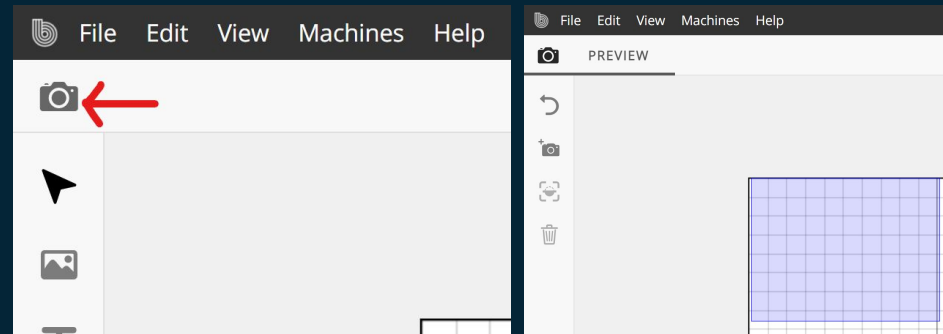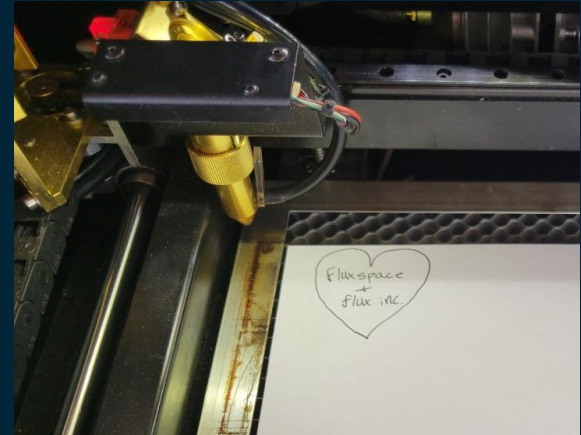
Introduction to the "Trace Image" Feature

Beam Studio has a feature that allows users to engrave an image that has been hand drawn by using the camera to scan the drawing.

To start, I have drawn a small sketch and placed in our machine as shown at the right.

We'll start by scanning the bed. This should be familiar by now, but we'll go through it. Click the camera, and draw a box!
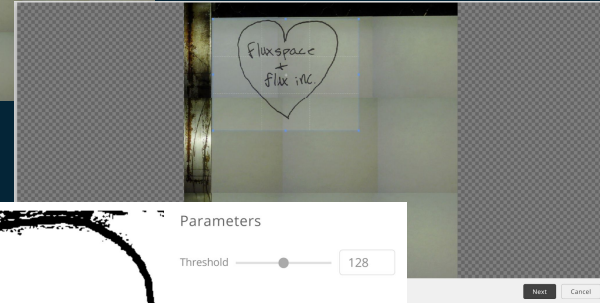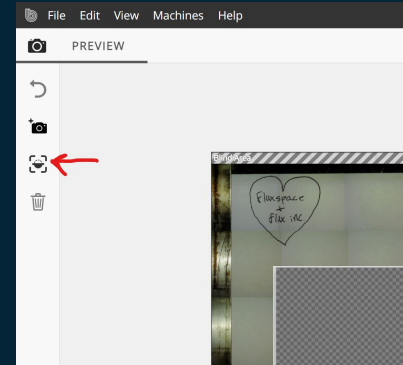
Tracing the Image

Once you have scanned the bed, we can click the "trace image" feature shown by the red arrow.

This button will bring up a dialogue box like this. Resize the box to encompass what you would like to trace, then hit next.

The program will now try to interpolate the image to draw a bitmap of the scan. Unfortunately, it doesn't look anything like what we had hoped! Let's adjust the threshold.
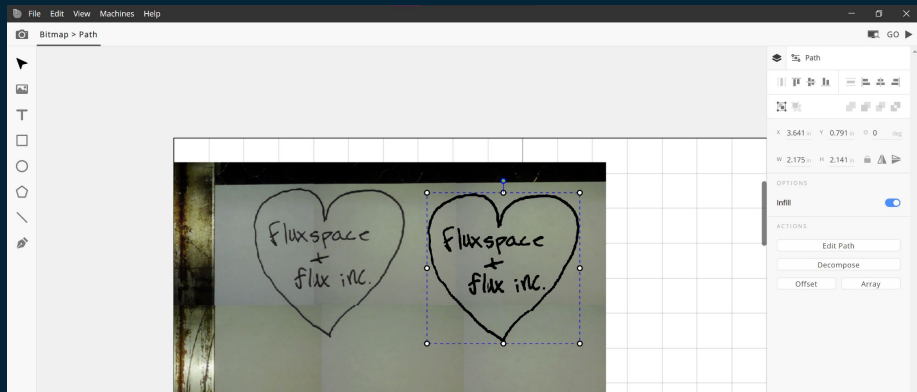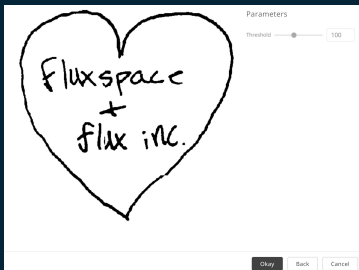
flux
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Final Product of the Trace Image Feature

That looks a little better. Once you're happy with your scan, hit okay.

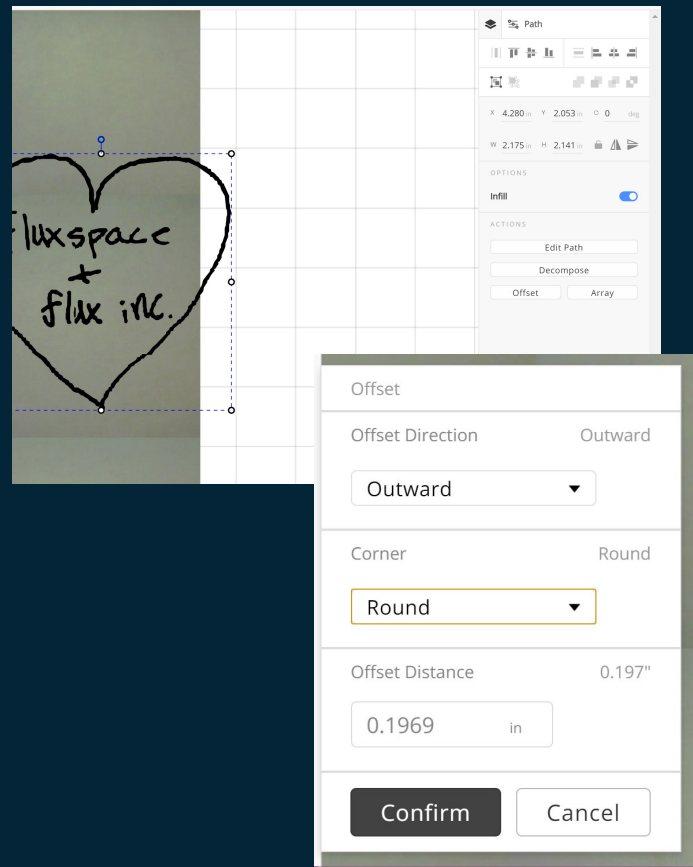There you have it—a scan of your drawing that you can now modify.

One quick note: I strongly advise against cutting a scanned image. When you scan an image, all the little imperfections of the hand drawn image are scanned in, and thus the vector path is very wiggly and will take a very long time to cut. Check the next page for our suggestions of how to fix this!

"What the heck? I wanted to cut out my drawing!"

No worries! If you are looking to cut out a drawing, our best suggestion is to use the offset tool. This is covered extensively in our previous tutorial "How to Use the Trace Feature in Beam Studio," but here's a few pictures to help.

Select your scan, and hit offset. A dialogue box opens in the bottom left. We recommend Round Corners and an Outward Offset Direction. If you use an small Offset Distance, it won't make a big difference in your design, but it will smooth out all the imperfections of the scanned drawing.

Our Final Product in Flux

You can also etch the drawing and use a larger Offset Distance to cut it out, as we did here.

Now Fluxspace's love for FLUX inc. laser cutters has been immortalized in wood!