

# Getting Started at home with Makerspace VCarve Pro

After logging in to your client copy of VCarve Pro, you will have access to the Makerspace trial edition of VCarve Pro, where you can explore its tools and features to design and create your projects.

You can also share files that you have created or edit files with other members of the Guild. If you are sharing files, you must **not** share any patented or copyrighted files from a third party.

## Learning to Use VCarve Pro

So now you must answer the question? What do I want to make? Unless you already have a project in mind, we would suggest that you start simple.

Maybe a sign.

Perhaps a simple box.

Maybe a carved, detailed rendition of the Mona Lisa (probably not).

You could jump directly into VCarve Pro and start the design aspects your project (which we do not recommend). Unless you are already familiar with VCarve Pro, we maintain that a better use of your time would be to first learn the functionality of the program.

A very successful method of learning the software is to watch one of the videos and copy what the presenter is doing, then change the project in a way to make it your own. For instance, if the video shows a sign with the word “OPEN” carved in relief, change it to be a plaque with your home address. Keep in mind that repetition is the best teacher.

Below is a partial list of tutorials from Vectric that will assist you in learning about the design software. Many of these videos are less than 5 minutes long but will provide you with information to aid in your design. All of these can be accessed from the lefthand side of your VCarve Pro homepage by clicking on “Tutorial Video Browser . . .” See Figure 1 to the right.

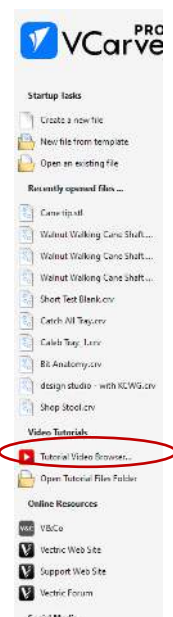


Figure 1

Under the “Getting Started” window:

- How to create a simple sign in Vectric software
- How to create a v-carved sign in Vectric software
- How to add a clearance tool to your v-carving . . .
- How to import vectors and create profile toolpaths . . .

- How to import and machine a 3D model in Vectric . . .

Under the “Creating Vectors” window:

- How to draw a circle
- How to draw an ellipse
- How to draw a rectangle
- How to use the polyline tool
- How to add dimensions to your drawing

Under the “Transforming Objects” window

- How to move objects
- How to set object size
- How to rotate objects
- How to mirror objects
- How to align objects
- How to join vectors

Under the “Editing Objects” window

- How to select vectors
- How to node edit vectors
- How to transform vectors
- How to group and ungroup vectors
- How to join vectors
- How to edit bitmaps

The good thing about tutorials is twofold. First, the tutorials get you acquainted with the software and help you learn functionality/workflow. Secondly, tutorials are an excellent idea incubator for coming up with new ideas, where you can use the tutorial project as a jumping off point, and then modify the project to your personal needs.

Vectric is not the only online resource available to learn the software. In this group of articles is one titled “Online Resources for the CNC” which will provide you with many website that are available.

## **Saving and Cutting Your Toolpaths at the Makerspace**

Before machining anything on the CNC it is important that you have been certified to use the CNC at the Guild and know all of the rules and regulations needed before proceeding.

**To bring your designs to life and machine them at the Guild, follow the steps below:**

- Save your design file from the Client edition of VCarve Pro onto a portable storage device (e.g., USB flash drive, external hard drive).
- Take the saved design file to the Guild.
- Log into VCarve Pro Master Makerspace Edition on the Guild computer using the credentials (email and password) you signed up with when you downloaded VCarve Pro.
- Once logged in, navigate to the section in the software where you can open and load design files.
- Select the saved design file from your portable storage device and open it within the Makerspace Edition.
- Review the design settings, toolpaths, and machining parameters to ensure they are safe and appropriate for use in your makerspace.
- Save out your toolpaths (G-Code) making sure to use the proper postprocessor for the CNC you are using.
- Be sure to log out of the software and the Vectric website. Failure to do so may allow others to use your account.
- Proceed with the machining process, following safety guidelines and any additional instructions specific to the machine being used.

By following these steps, you can machine the designs you created using the Makerspace Edition at the Guild.

Remember you must receive certification to use the CNC before you may machine a project.

If you have any questions or encounter any difficulties during the design and machining process, consult one of the Guild CNC instructors.