



Cary Photographic Artists

Matting and Framing

Presenting Your Photos in a Compelling Way

A “Mastering the Art of Photography” Topic

Developed by Michael Greenstein

August 5, 2013



Agenda

- General materials for framing
- Choosing the frame and mat
- Simple framing
- Advanced framing
- Sources of materials and references



General Materials for Framing



Soft Erasers



Pencil



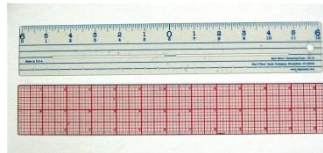
Drafting Brush



Scissors



Utility Knife



Centering Ruler



Picture Wire



Metal T-square



3/16" Foam Core Board



Linen Hinging Tape



Choosing the Frame & Mat

General Guidelines:

- Do not use a frame and mat that overwhelm your photo and distract the attention of the viewer.
- A simple black frame with a plain white mat works best for exhibits and competitions.



Simple Framing

Use Preconstructed Frames

- Wood, metal or plastic
- May include glass or clear acrylic
- May include or can purchase precut mats

Advantages: Already assembled in **standard sizes**, may not have to buy separate glass, can buy precut mats if necessary, less expensive, **simpler to do and less work.**

Disadvantages: Have to size and perhaps crop photo to be compatible with available frame/mat sizes.



Preconstructed Frames



Frame complete with mat

OR



Plain frames without mat



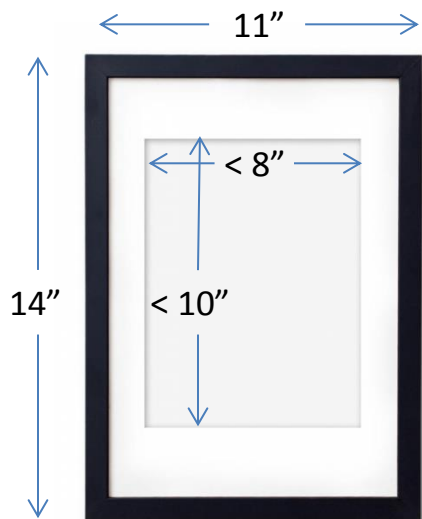
Precut mats available individually or in packages



Purchasing a Frame

If you are framing an 8 X 10" photo, for example:

- Purchase a frame that is 11 X 14" or even larger
- Purchase separate mats, if necessary, that will fit into that size frame with an opening (window) for an 8 X 10" photo



The actual opening is generally 1/8 to 1/4" smaller than the photo size on each side to allow the mat to overlap the photo edges



Mounting the Photo for Framing

- It is best to mount the photo on a rigid support to keep it flat and centered in the frame.
- Use the back of the frame or a piece of foam core cut to the frame's dimensions using a utility knife and a metal straight edge.
- I prefer to use T-hinges to mount the photo to the support.



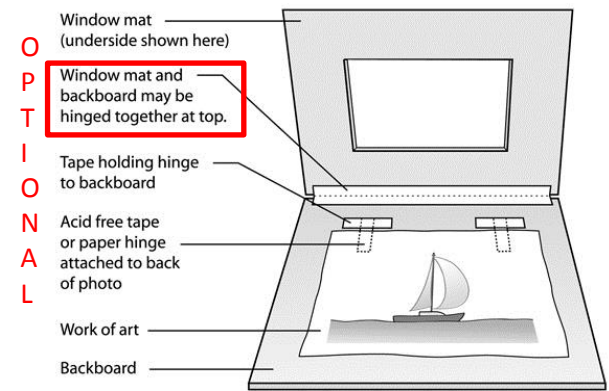
Hinge Mounting the Photo

Step 1 – Cut several 1” strips of linen tape.

Step 2 – Pull the paper back from one half of each strip and stick the exposed adhesive surface to the back of the photo.

Step 3 – Position the photo on the backboard, place the mat over the photo, and by trial and error, move the photo until it is centered in the mat window and no edges show.

Step 4 – Remove the mat, strip the remainder of the paper from the hinge strips, and apply another piece of linen tape at a right angle over the exposed hinge to tape it to the backboard.



Jacqueline Mahannah JMC2006



Completing the Frame

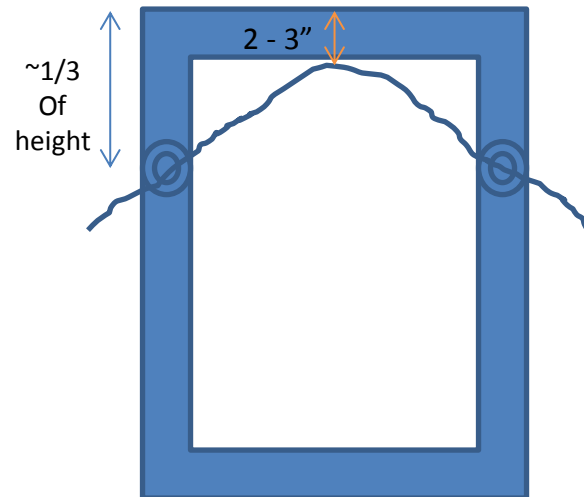
- Realign the mat over the photo making sure, once again, that the mat window covers the photo's edges.
- Insert glass into frame if necessary.
- Sweep the glass and the front of the mat and photo with a drafting brush to remove any traces of dirt or debris.
- Insert the mat and mounted photo into the frame, and then insert the backboard.
- Fix the mounting clips on the backboard to hold frame contents in place.



Wiring the Frame

Step 1 – Cut a length of picture wire allowing enough room for knotting and twisting at each end. Hook should fall ~ 2 - 3" below top of frame.

Step 2 – Knot the wire in the wire eye and wrap it around itself several times.



Advanced Framing

Assemble Yourself

- Usually metal or wood
- Does not include glass
- Does not include mat

Advantages: You can customize dimensions of frame/mat to your photo.

Disadvantages: Have to assemble it, must buy glass separately, **usually requires a custom cut mat** that you can have done or prepare yourself



Popular Self-Assembly Frame

- Purchase two pairs of frame pieces, one pair matching the length, the other the width of the frame you wish to construct. Purchase Bainbridge Style 11 at Jerry's Artarama in Raleigh or Dacor- Frames Profile 120 (**cheaper**) online.
- For a 2 ½ - 3" mat all around, add 5 – 6" to your photo's dimensions to determine the length of the pieces to be used.

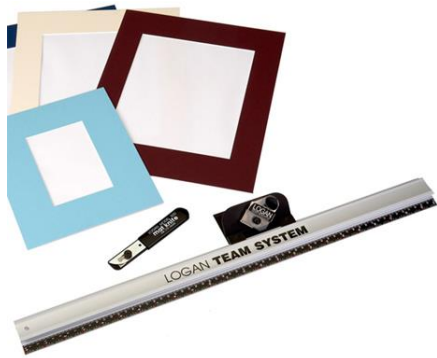
For example, for a 12 X 18 inch photo, you would purchase one pair of 18 inch pieces and one pair of 24 inch pieces to make an 18 X 24 frame with a 3" mat all around.

- To assemble the frame, insert the L-braces in each corner of the corresponding frame pieces to be joined and tighten. Leave one side off until glass, backing board with attached photo, and mat are inserted.

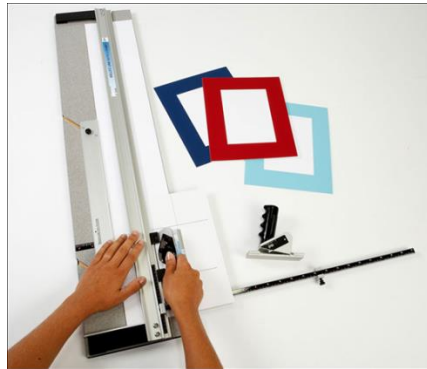


Matting Materials

- Mat board 32" X 40" (I use Crescent acid- and lignin-free board, white glove)
- A mat cutter (professional quality mat cutters are designed to generate a beveled cut)



Hand cutter &
straight edge
~ \$30 - 40



Mat cutting machine
~ \$75 - 100



Advanced mat cutting
machine ~ \$ 200 - 450



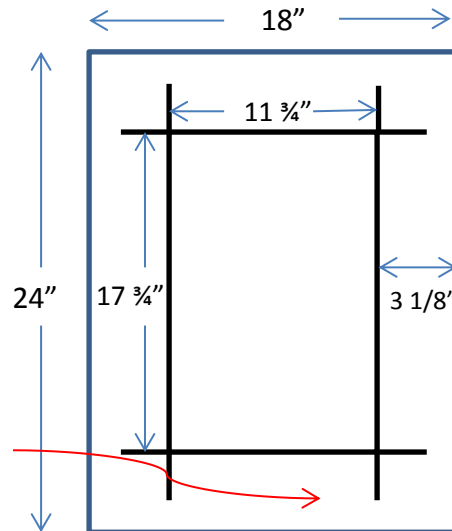
Cutting a Mat

Step 1 With a straight edge and a utility knife, cut a piece of mat board matching the size of the frame.

Step 2 Measure the size of the photo (do not include borders) to be framed. Subtract the length & width from the frame length & width, divide by 2, and add $1/8''$ such that the mat will overlap the photos edges. eg, $3\ 1/8''$ all around for a $12'' \times 18''$ photo in an $18'' \times 24''$ frame.

Optional: Some people like to cut the lower border slightly wider than the top border.

Step 3 On the back of the board, use a pencil to mark the cut lines for the mat window. The line extensions are important to determine where the cutter should stop.



Step 4 Cut your mat with a hand cutter and straight edge or a mat cutting machine. Be careful not to overcut your corners. Mat should have even, beveled edges and sharp 90° corners.



Completing the frame

- Have a piece of glass cut to the size of the frame, and slide into the partially assembled frame.
- Cut a piece of foam core backing board to the size of the frame, and mount the photo as previously described, making sure that the mat window edges will completely overlap the photo edges.
- After sweeping dust from the glass and the front of the mat and mounted photo, slide the pieces into the frame in back of the glass.
- Install the remaining side of the frame.
- Insert the spring clips under the frame edge, install the wire eyes, and finally, wire the frame as previously described.



References

Sources of Materials

Jerry's Artarama	3060 Wake Forest Rd, Raleigh, NC or online at http://www.jerrysartarama.com/onsale.aspx , great prices
Décor Frames Frame Warehouse	online at http://www.decor-frame.com 1327 Kildaire Farm Rd, Cary, NC excellent source of glass cut at a low price
Michael's or AC Moore	Crossroads Plaza

Books

Basic Picture Framing, ed. by Amy Cooper, Stackpole Books, Mechanicsburg, PA 2005

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