## do it yourself


doit yourself framing Ematting
Prepared by Kay Strassburg, Extension Textiles Specialist
INTRODUCTION ..... 1
THE MOUNT
Kinds of Mount Boards ..... 2
Mounting Techniques ..... 2
Dry Mounting Procedure ..... 3
Museum or Archival Mounting ..... 4
THE MAT ..... 5
Design Considerations ..... 5
Mat Materials ..... 5
Tools ..... 6
Cutting the Mat ..... 6
Variations ..... -
Hinged Mats ..... 7
Liners ..... 7
Covering a Mat Board ..... 8
THE FRAME ..... 8
Possible Framing Materials ..... 8
Tools ..... 9
How Much Molding? ..... 9
Rabbet Size ..... 10
Cutting the Molding ..... 10
Putting the Frame Together ..... 11
Cutting the Glass ..... 11
Contemporary Framing ..... 12
REFINISHING FRAMES ..... 13
Supplies ..... 13
Preparing the Raw Wood ..... 13
Refinishing Old Frames ..... 13
Antiquing ..... 14
Refinishing Techniques ..... 15
FRAMING NEEDLEWORK ..... 16
Supplies ..... 16
Preparing the Fabric ..... 16
Stretching the Fabric ..... $17^{*}$
ASSEMBLING THE ARTWORK ..... 17
HANGING THE ARTWORK ..... 18
REFERENCES ..... 19
GUIDELINES FOR MATCHING FRAMING TO ARTWORK ..... 20

As a do-it-yourself framer, you can make accesories that add a very personal touch to your home. If done well, artwork can become the theme around which to plan room furnishings.

Good artwork is available to all. You can buy reprints of world-famous paintings at low cost from galleries, mail order houses, or book stores. Even magazines offer pictures worthy of framing. Sidewalk shows make paintings, lithographs, and prints available in a wide price range. Search for those that fit your taste and budget.

Family mementoes, Christmas cards, decorative maps, posters, prized photos, and hobby collections are a rich source of personalized accessories. Fiber arts, such as weaving, macrame, stitchery, crewel work, and quilting, offer another wide choice for the framer.

Visit museums, art exhibits, and frame shops. Study the artwork, noticing the types of mats, colors, and textures used, as well as the types of frames and mounting techniques.

Framing artwork can become an exciting hobby. But there are some steps in the framing process that require special equipment and skilled technique. You may want a professional to cut the oval and round mats, make the frames from commercial molding, dry mount the artwork, or frame antiques. Learn where to draw the line between your skills and the skills of a professional. Understanding the techniques and becoming aware of their use will make you a more competent shopper and more appreciative of framing costs.

The commercial framer usually figures his costs on the basis of the united inch (the width and length of the frame added together). This figure is multiplied by the unit cost of mounts, mat board, frame molding, glass, and inserts. Thus additional mats, increased picture size, and nonglare glass all add to the cost.

Night schools and do-it-yourself framing shops offer instruction and use of specialized equipment. Check your area for this service.

Mounting, matting, framing, and assembling are all parts of the framing process. Follow the step-byep techniques in this booklet and become a do-ityourself framer.

Mounting is a permanent process for sticking artwork to a rigid backing. The mount may only be to ho? the artwork in place, free from warping. Or it may also become part of the design plan, visible when the artwork is displayed.

## Kinds of Mount Boards

Mount boards are available in a large variety of weights, thicknesses, sizes, textures, and stiffnesses. It is better to use a mount board that is too thick rather than one that is too thin. Many types are available in $4^{\prime} \times 8^{\prime}$ size.

- Temlock—refined wallboard, $3 / 8^{\prime \prime}$ thick and slightly porous.
- Upson board—rigid and solid, 3/16" thick.
- Regular mat board-heavy weight.
- Illustration board.
- Chipboard (book binders board).
- Masonite.
- Plasterboard. Somewhat thick and heavy
- Plywood.
- Foam core board-styrofoam laminated between two sheets of oaktag or craft paper-matte or glossy. This is extremely versatile and extensively used. Available in sizes $32^{\prime \prime} \times 40^{\prime \prime}$ and $40^{\prime \prime} \times 60^{\prime \prime}$.


## Mounting Techniques

Dry Mount-uses mounting tissue, a special paper coated with a plastic adhesive that is activated by the application of heat and pressure. Excellent for photographs and prints.

Adhesive Mount-uses glues, either white or animal glues, or spray adhesives to achieve a permanent bond. Double-faced film is another form of adhesive mounting.

Wet Mount-uses vegetable pastes to adhere the artwork. Used for damaged, bent, or crumpled objects. Very difficult to achieve good results.

For everything but resin-coated photographs:

- Set the dry mount press to the temperature indicated.
- Predry the artwork in the press.
- Predry the mount board in the press.
- Tack the dry mount tissue to back of artwork using a tack iron or iron; press into place every 2 to 3 inches along edge. Keep piece of release paper between iron and artwork. Keep all surfaces clean.
- Trim mounting tissue to exact size of artwork, using steel ruler and sharp mat knife.
- Tack artwork to mounting board using tack iron. Protect surface with release paper.
- Place artwork and mounting board face up in press. Cover with release paper and clean wrapping paper.

For resin-coated photographs (those that appear to have plastic coating on both sides):

- Same.
- Do not predry photo.
- Same.
- Same. But never use tack iron in center of photo because it will leave a mark.
- Same. But remember to tack only on edges.
- To mount the tissue to back of photograph, place a piece of brown wrapping paper in the press, then the photo face down, next a piece of release paper, then a piece of brown wrapping paper, and finally a special sheet of plastic or cardboard.
- Close press for 30 seconds.
- Remove from press and weight until cool to assure good seal.
- Same. The tissue should be uniformly stuck to back of photograph.
- Tack artwork to mounting board.
- Place mounting board and photo face up in press, cover with plastic sheet, a piece of release paper, and a piece of regular paper.
- Close press for 30 seconds.
- Remove from press; weight until cool.


Making a rag paper corner

Attaching artwork to backing with linen tape


## Museum or Archival Mounting

Items of historical value or documents that you wish to preserve need special treatment. Use acid-free rice paper or rag board behind the item. Attach with linen tape or rice paper hinges. Special paste can be made or purchased. Another variation is to make corners, such as the old-fashioned photo corners, of rag paper to hold the artwork. When in doubt, let a professional do it.

## Design Considerations

Width and proportion-Mats give an impression (optical illusion) of being narrower at the bottom margin. Artwork then appears to be falling out of the mat. Compensate by adding $1 / 2^{\prime \prime}$ to $3 / 4^{\prime \prime}$ to the bottom margin. A general rule is that top and sides should never be less than $2 \frac{1}{2}{ }^{\prime \prime}$.

Color-Mats do not need to match the walls. Instead select one of the background colors of the artwork and make the mat either a tone (lighter) or shade (darker) of this color. Light mats will enlarge the work, dark mats will give a more intimate feeling. Mats should enhance the artwork.

Texture-Use mats with coarse textures to harmonize with strong artwork and more delicate textures, such as silk, to enhance something like a Japanese print.

## Mat Materials

Mats are used to provide a visual separation between artwork and frame, as well as to provide an airspace between artwork and glass to protect against mildew and waterspotting.

| TYPE | Mat board | Rag board or <br> museum board |
| :--- | :--- | :--- |
| COMPOSITION | wood pulp | cloth fibers |
| THICKNESS | 2-ply $1 / 32^{\prime \prime}$ <br> *4-ply $1 / 16^{\prime \prime}$ <br> 8 -ply $1 / 8^{\prime \prime}$ (also <br> called double- <br> weight) | 2-ply <br> 4 -ply |
| COLORS   <br> AVAILABLE wide range limited to a few <br> shades of white <br> and off-white <br> TEXTURES cork, silk, <br> AVAILABLE <br> linen, burlap, <br> metallic, velvet, <br> smooth, pebbled slightly rough and <br> heavier than <br> regular mat board <br> SPECIAL not acid-free <br> $\bullet$ bevel different <br> color than mat • acid-free <br> bevel same <br> color as mat <br>   use for archival <br> or museum <br> mounting |  |  |

Most common usage.

## the mat

The contemporary framer is creative in the placement of the artwork within the mat. Use the mat to focus attention. Experiment. Learn to break the rules.

Other types of board can be special-ordered through framing shops. Foam-type mounting board is available in sizes $30^{\prime \prime} \times 40^{\prime \prime}$ and $40^{\prime \prime} \times 60^{\prime \prime}$, and can be special-ordered in size $48^{\prime \prime} \times 96^{\prime \prime}$.

## Tools

- Cutting tool-such as a mat knife or the more expensive mat cutter, which allows you to control the angle of the cut. A more sophisticated mat cutter may be available for use at a do-it-yourself framing shop.
- Steel ruler.
- Marking pencil.
- Single-edge razor blade.
- Emery or fine sandpaper.
- Art eraser.
- T-square or right angle.
- Neolite or cardboard-gives a smooth, soft cutting surface which allows the knife to cut into the backing without dulling the blade.


## Cutting the Mat

- Lay a piece of tracing paper over the artwork and draw a pattern "opening" (or "window") slightly smaller ( $1 / 16^{\prime \prime}$ on all sides) than the picture.
- Cut pattern for opening.
- Lay this pattern on the mat board and move it about to determine a visually pleasing arrangement.
- Mark the margins for top, sides, and bottom.
- Place mat board on cutting surface (neolite or a firm, clean board).
- Place steel-edged ruler on lines where mat is to be cut. Hold knife against the steel edge to guide your cutting. Cut with long strokes until through the mat board. (Do not overcut.)
- When cutting a bevel, use a single-edge razor blade to complete the cut to the corner. Smooth the bevel edges with emery or fine sandpaper.

Painted bevels-Use acrylic paints, marking pencils, chalks, or crayons to color the bevel. Experiment on scraps first. For a professional look, be accurate and painstaking.

Double Mats-The outer dimensions of the mats are the same but the window openings are staggered to expose the lower mat. These can be planned to show the same margin on all sides, or the widths can be varied. In figuring the dimensions, start with the smallest opening (on bottom mat) and work out progressively. Join the mats with double-faced tape.

French Mats-These mats have several colored lines around the window-one or two bands of color or sometimes metal leaf. After the first bevel is cut, measure and lightly mark the intended lines. Again, patience and accuracy are important. Using a technical drawing pen or a fine, felt-tip pen, apply lines and colored bands. Let each dry before proceeding. Thickness of the lines can be varied.

## Hinged Mats

Attach a second sheet of mat board to the back of a mat, using masking tape to make a hinge. (Hinge horizontal pictures at the top; vertical pictures can be hinged at the side edge.)

Arrange artwork under window. Hold in place and lift mat. Fasten to backing at top corners with paste or masking tape.

## Liners

A liner (also called an "insert") is a small beveled molding that frames a canvas or panel inside a larger frame. It creates a breathing space between picture and frame, and can be used effectively to focus on the artwork.

The liner molding usually has a rabbet (the indentation or lip that holds artwork, glass etc.) The surface can be covered with linen, velvet, or other fabrics. (Follow the same technique as covering a mat with fabric.) It can be leafed with gold or silver. Or it can be painted a natural color such as gray, beige, white, fr black.


French mat: the inner pair of lines represents the bevel of the mat


Cross section of a typical frame with liner

One of the advantages of being a do-it-yourself framer is that you can create original mats. Fabrics, leather, foils, and wallpaper offer a wide variety of choices. Follow the same technique for each.

- Cut the fabric about 6 inches wider and longer than the mat board.
- Coat the front of the previously cut mat with glue (either spray adhesive or white glue painted evenly on the surface).
- Center the glued mat on the back of the fabric and press evenly into place. Keep fabric taut and smooth.
- Turn face up and check. Use a bone burnisher or bowl of a spoon to smooth out air bubbles.
- Clip off excess fabric at corners.
- Turn to back. Glue one side at a time, pull fabric over the edges, and press smooth. Do all sides, checking to keep the fabric on grain.
- Now cut out the fabric from the center, leaving about an inch of fabric on all sides.
- Use a sharp razor or scissors to cut diagonally to each corner.
- Glue the inside edge of the mat and pull the fabric in place.


## Possible Framing Materials

Unfinished picture frame molding-available at lumberyards. Has a rabbet: the indentation or lip that holds artwork, glass, etc.
"Builders" or "finishing" molding-available at lumberyards. Does not have a rabbet, but can be glued to a piece of stripping to achieve a rabbet.

Finished commercial picture molding-available at framing shops. Comes in a variety of bevels, curves, and flats-either finished or plain.

Old frames-may need to be refurbished or cut down to size.

Ready-made commercial frames-available in paint, variety, and art supply stores. Standard sizes. May be unfinished.

Metal or plastic frames or holders-available in variety or art supply stores and framing shops. Usually cut to standard sizes.

Passe partout tape-available at drugstores, office and school supply stores, and variety stores. Used to join artwork and glass and give the effect of a frame.

Novelty and unorthodox materials-leather, ceramic, tin, etc.

## Tools

- Miter box-to miter corners of molding for a perfect fit.
- Back saw (or hack saw)-to cut molding; blades should be sharp.
- Miter vise or clamp-to hold corners together during gluing and fastening.
- Polyvinyl glue-white types.
- Hand or electric drill with small-size twist bit-to bore holes for brads and eliminate splitting.
- Ruler-steel or metal-edged.
- Brads—\#17 or \#18 wire brads (3/4" to $1^{\prime \prime}$ long) for $1 / 2^{\prime \prime}$ molding, finishing nails (4-penny or more) for heavier moldings.
- Nail set-to countersink brads and nails.
- Gesso, putty, or wood filler or buffing wax-to fill nail holes.
- $4 / 0$ or $6 / 0$ garnet paper-for the final sanding of the frame.


## How Much Molding?

In measuring the molding, measure along the inner edge of the rabbet (not along the outside edge of the molding). Add length of 4 sides of picture plus 8 times width of molding and 2 -inch allowance for error.



Check and recheck all lengths and angles as you make any frame or rabbet.


Angle cut for molding

## Rabbet Size

The rabbet is the groove or indentation at the back of the frame that holds the artwork. The lip or depth of the rabbet should never be less than $1 / 2^{\prime \prime}$ and a $5 / 8^{\prime \prime}$ allowance is better. The back of the rabbet should be deep enough to accommodate the artwork, glass, mats, mounts, and backing. For canvas and stretcher framers it may be necessary to have a $3 / 4^{\prime \prime}$ rabbet. Allow another $1 / 16^{\prime \prime}$ on all sides for changes in humidity and for easier assembly.

The rabbet size-the measurement of the inner edges of the rabbet (back of rabbet)-is the most important dimension in figuring the measurements of the miter cuts. Frame size or sight size-the visible picture size-will exceed the frame sight size by twice the width of the rabbet.

When using framing materials without a rabbet, strips can be butt-jointed on the back of the frame to accommodate the size of the artwork.

## Cutting the Molding

- Measure the size of the mounted artwork.
- Remember to allow for the square of the molding width at each end of the piece for cutting the miter joint.
- Cut the molding into approximate lengths with a regular right-angle cut.
- Measure with a ruler along the back of the rabbet to the desired length and width on each molding piece and make a fine pencil mark.
- Draw a thin pencil line at a $45^{\circ}$ angle exactly through the points marked on the rabbet.
- Set the saw for right-hand $45^{\circ}$ cuts and cut all the right-hand ends. If flat, moldings can be stacked and cut at the same time.
- Set the saw for left-hand $45^{\circ}$ cuts.
- Place the molding under the saw so that the pencil mark is just clear of the kerf cut in the miter box. Make the final cut, being sure to save the pencil line so the frame is not cut short.
- Cut the molding strips. A back saw gives a firmer, smoother cut, but you can use a hack saw.
- After cutting the mitered corners, sand them smooth with garnet paper, then dust.


## Putting the Frame Together

- Place molding strips around artwork and check for accuracy. Remove artwork from work area but leave moldings in same relationship to each other.
- Place long piece in the vise (always make a habit of of this) and maneuver into correct position.
- Place short piece in vise to form the first corner. Check for fit.
- Drill holes for placement of brads (or you can do this after gluing).
- Lift short piece from vise and apply glue to the mitered corner on each piece of molding, then clamp into vise.
- Tap brads or finishing nails into molding and countersink with nail set.
- Remove from vise and immediately clean off any excess glue.
- Continue second corner in the same way.
- Join two sections completing corners 3 and 4.
- Slip a temporary support under the corner diagonally opposite the vise while completing the frame.
- Give frame final check for fit. If necessary, sand again at corners.
- Refinish frame if necessary.


## Cutting the Glass

It might be wise to have the glass cut by a professional. You will be assured of a perfect cut and the glass will be "picture glass," thinner and clearer than window glass. Or you can try to make your frames and mats conform to readily available standard sizes such as $8^{\prime \prime} \times 10^{\prime \prime}, 18^{\prime \prime} \times 24^{\prime \prime}$, and $30^{\prime \prime} \times 40^{\prime \prime}$.

But if you wish to cut the glass, follow these steps:
, Work on a flat, smooth surface.


Arrows indicate direction brads should be driven


Corner views of brad placement.

Acrylic, instead of glass, is recommended where moisture or sunlight is a problem. Special types, which filter out ultraviolet rays, are available.

- Place a metal straight edge on the line to be cut (rabbet size).
- Hold glass cutter (dipped in kerosene) firmly and draw along the edge of the ruler with a firm, even stroke. Never stop during cutting.
- Move glass to edge of table with scored side up, allowing the excess piece to extend over table edge; grasp the excess and tap sharply on the table edge to snap glass. For extra safety, use square-nosed plyers for smaller pieces.


## OR

Place a slender wooden object, such as a dowel, just slightly to the side of the scored line, and tap the glass with the blunt ball-end of the cutter; then snap the glass apart.

- Clean glass with water, ammonia, or alcohol. Do not use commercial glass cleaners.


## Contemporary Framing

Metal moldings, frames, and strips are available in a wide variety of sizes. Easily assembled clip-it type frames, floater frames, and acrylic shadow boxes are now sold. Assemble and use according to the manufacturer's directions.

Frame shops will dry mount posters, photos, and fabrics for a nominal fee. These can be hung and displayed without frames. However, frames will make them more durable and longer lasting.

If you are handy with plastics, you can design and make very individualized framing parts to display artwork.

Passe-partout, a plastic sealing tape, can be used as a temporary framing technique. Assemble backing, mount with the artwork and glass, and seal the edges with the tape-mitering or neatly folding the tape at the corners.

For Repair:

- Modeling paste
- Wood fillers
- Gesso
- Pallette knife For Cleaning:
- Turpentine
- Denatured alcohol
- Tack cloth
- Soft clothes

For Finish Coats:

- Shellac
- Varnish
- Polymer medium
- Acrylic colors
- Stains
- Gold/silver leaf or bronzing powders
- Rubbing and buffing type wax
- Wax


## For Sanding:

- Rottenstone
- Garnet paper 60-100
- Steel wool (fine-\#000 or \#0000)


## Preparing the Raw Wood

- Sand the frame.
- Use filler: For open grain, such as oak, ash, mahogany, and walnut, apply paste filler according to directions.

For birch, basswood, cherry, maple, fir, pine, and poplar, a wash of shellac acts as a filler and prepares the surface for further finishings. (Wash: 1 part denatured alcohol to 2 parts shellac.)

- Sand again.
- Check stain and finish on back of frame for color and effect.


## Refinishing Old Frames

Old frames can save time and money and offer a creative challenge to the do-it-yourself framer.

- Wash with denatured alcohol. This will clean varnished frames and remove shellac finishes.
- Patch any broken areas with wood filler or acrylic modeling paste. Let dry thoroughly.
- Sand with garnet paper.
- Or add new texture to surface:

Use modeling paste (gesso) and score or scratch or mold to the desired texture; dry and sand lightly.

## OR

Use papier mache to add texture or new contour; let dry, and sand if necessary.

THEN

- Proceed with new finish (refer to chart on page 15).


## Antiquing

Antiquing can be done as a finish or as a final step in refinishing new or old frames. It is a way to give even commercial frames a distinctive touch.

To antique, apply a glaze, let it get tacky, then lift some of the glaze off with a brush, crumpled paper, or cloth. The idea is to highlight by revealing some of the undercoat, leaving glaze in the cracks and crevices. The color of the antique glaze should be darker than the base coat for the most successful effect.

Although it is possible to purchase glazes, such small amounts are needed for frames that it makes sense to mix your own. Following are two types-one to use over acrylic base coats, the other to use over other finishes:

Use with Paint
or Leaf Finishes
1 part boiled linseed oil 3 parts turpentine few drops of oil pigment color

## Use Over Acrylic Paint

1 part acrylic paint 4 parts acrylic: matte medium for dull finish, gloss medium for shiny finish

Some framers also achieve an antique finish by sprinkling rottenstone on a slightly tacky surface and allowing to dry. This can then be buffed, highlighting some surfaces and leaving crevices untouched. It gives a dusty, speckled appearance.

Another method is to distress wood, either by scratching or hitting the frame with some instrument that will make dents and holes. Then to emphasize, add an antiquing glaze.

To achieve a fly-speck look, spatter by dipping a toothbrush in the paint and rub over a firm edge. Use an oil base paint or an acrylic paint depending on your base coat; keep the paints compatible.

| TYPE OF FINISH | STEP 1 | STEP 2 | STEP 3 | STEP 4 | STEP 5 |
| :---: | :---: | :---: | :---: | :---: | :---: |
| BLEACHES | Brush surface with water to raise grain. Dry and sand. | Apply bleach: $\frac{1}{2} \mathrm{c}$. oxalic acid crystals to 1 qt. water <br> OR <br> 1 oz. liquid bleach to 1 c . water OR wood bleach, com-mercial-follow manufacturer's directions. | Neutralize with ammonia or with 2 ox. borax to 1 c. water. | Dry and apply sealer and finish coat. | Add finish varnish or wax. |
| WAX | Wax raw wood and buff. | Repeat for a good finish. | Repeat. | Repeat. | May be antiqued with wax and buff-type wax. |
| OIL | Apply with cloth, let soak into the grain, and wipe off excess. Dry 24 hours. | Repeat. | Repeat. | Repeat finish with a hard wax. | May be waxed with metallic paste colors (wax and buff type). |
| STAINS <br> Penetrating <br> Wax-type Opaque | Brush in direction of grain; after 2 minutes, wipe off. | After drying 48 hours, apply sealer or shellac. | Paint with matte, semi-gloss, or glossy varnish; then wet or dry sand. Remove grit. | Use steel wool between coats, clean with tack cloth, and revarnish if necessary. | Can be protected with wax as final step. Use on moldings to cover grain. |
| METAL LEAF <br> Gold <br> Silver | Paint frame red, green, or gold. <br> Paint frame black. | Seal and apply gold size. | Apply size and leaf, and dry. | Seal with orange shellac for gold leaf, white shellac for silver leaf. | Can add antique finish or flyspeck finish. |
| PAINT <br> Casein <br> Acrylic | Seal wood pores. | Apply undercoat. | Apply paint when dry; sand. | Apply next coat; sand. | Can be finished with antique or wax finishes. |

## framing needlework



For rubbed finishes, rub varnish coats with 500 or 600 wet-dry-paper (silicon carbide) and sudsy nondetergent soap and water or oil. Use a tack cloth to remove grit. Dipping a soft cloth in oil and pumice or rottenstone can also give a soft, hand-rubbed finish.

## Supplies

- Mounting boards:

Plywood-excellent support for three-dimensional items and items under $16^{\prime \prime} \times 20^{\prime \prime}$.
Upson board or heavy chipboard-good for larger items where weight might be a problem. Foam-core or acid-free-accommodates knots, etc. on the back of needlework. Can be used over firmer backing material to give surface for stretching fabric.

- Stretcher frames: Available in wood and metal in standard sizes. Larger or heavier artwork may need extra bracing to keep the corners square.


## Preparing the Fabric

Wrinkles and puckers must be smoothed out of textile materials before framing. Stretcher frames of wood or metal work well for some items, while others need the support of a solid backing. The color of the backing material should not show through the textile. If it is to be preserved for a long time, cover the solid backing with acid-free rag board to protect the fabric from damage.

## Cleaning the Needlework

Carefully handwash with soap recommended for fine fabrics; rinse and squeeze partially dry in a white towel.

## Blocking the Needlework

- Make a blocking board of firm but absorbent building material. Cover with white fabric marked off in squares with indelible ink.
- Lay needlework on board and pin in place on four corners.
- Carefully insert pins in center of one side and then directly across on other side. Continue working from center to corners until item is stretched square. Do not pin into needlework, only in the margin.
- Dampen the needlework and let dry completely before removing from the blocking board.


## Stretching the Fabric

Before attaching the needlework to a backing or to a stretcher frame, it may be necessary to attach fabric extension strips to the needlework. Cut strips of white fabric 2 inches wide. Using a half inch seam allowance, sew to needlework. Iron the seam away from the center of the fabric.

- Place fabric face-down on clean surface.
- Place stretcher frame on backing mount face-down on the back of the fabric.
- Temporarily secure at the corners.
- Start at the center of one side and attach, then move directly across and attach always working from center to corners.
- Occasionally turn to right side and check that the design is being kept on-grain.
- Fold corners of fabric and miter to distribute the fullness.
- Tack, staple, or tape securely removing temporary pins. (Always use rustproof fasteners.) Linen tape, which is acid-free, is best for items of value.


## OR

Use heavy-duty thread and lace or latch across the back (as shown in the diagram). For added support, you can latch in the opposite direction also.

To stretch old and fragile textile items for display, first attach a white fabric to the backing. Arrange and carefully stretch the old fabric into place; turn under the edges and hand stitch to the backing cloth.

The process of placing the artwork in the frame is known as assembling.

- Place frame face-down on a clean work surface.
- Carefully lower an absolutely clean piece of glass into place. Touch only the edges. (Clean glass with water, ammonia, or alcohol-not with commercial cleaners-and buff. )

Purchased fabric murals can be stretched in the same manner.


## assembling the artwork

For canvases or panels, finishing nails can be driven into the rabbet. Or spring turn buttons or angle clamps can be used to hold artwork in place in the frame.


When planning to hang a larger frame, it is wise to insert more than two screw eyes. Support the weight of the frame by setting in four eyes and stringing the braided wire as shown.

- Add matted artwork face-down on the glass.
- Add backing board.
- Turn over and check for dirt, lint, or smudges.
- Again place face-down on work surface and brace edge: Drive wire brads about $1 / 4$ inch into frame while pressing backing firmly down; nail opposite sides alternately using four to ten brads per side.
- Seal back with craft paper: Apply a thin line of polyvinyl glue to outer edge of frame. Cut craft paper slightly larger than frame and dampen with a sponge Smooth paper to back of frame pressing firmly against glued edge. When dry, trim off excess with a craft knife or razor blade.
- Attach screw eyes or other fasteners.
- Attach pads (felt or foam cushion) to lower edge of frame to keep picture from touching wall.

There is a visual weight to pictures. When hanging them on the wall it is important to experiment with this visual balance. Texture, color, size, and spacing all play a part. The edge of each picture sends out invisible lines. In other words, your eyes are striving for that visual balance. The invisible line may be formed by the mats, the liners, or the frame molding.

Furniture and other room accessories also radiate invisible lines and should be considered as you group the artwork. Hang pictures so they appear to belong to a furniture grouping. Don't make the mistake of hanging pictures too high. In living areas they shoulc be at eye level when you are seated.

Smaller pictures can be grouped to form a larger nit. The asymmetric arrangement is an interesting way to arrange pictures near lamps, table, or furniture. If a picture has action or directs the eye to the right or left, be sure to hang it so the eye is directed toward the center of the room or wall, not into corners.

Use the correct size of hooks and wires to support the weight of the artwork. To keep from marking the wall there are many commercial adhesive hooks and hangers, either metal or cloth. Check directions for mounting and correct use of each.

Consider light when hanging artwork. When possible, arrange pictures under natural light. Or minimize glare by using nonreflective glass. A current decorating trend is the use of track lights to highlight the display.

Sunlight is harmful to fabrics so use acrylic sleeves to fit over flourescent lights and block out harmful light rays. Protect fabric artwork with special acrylic glass.

Duren, Lista. Frame It. A complete do-it-yourself guide to picture framing. Houghton Mifflin Company.

Hyder, Max. Picture Framing. Pitman Publishing Corporation.

Newman, Thelma R., Jay Hartley, Lee Scott. The Frame Book. Contemporary design with traditional and modern methods and materials. Crown Publishers, Inc.


## references



## GUIDELINES FOR MATCHING FRAMING TO ARTWORK (continued)

| Type of Artwork | Frame Suggestions | Glas, |  | Mat |  | Comments |
| :---: | :---: | :---: | :---: | :---: | :---: | :---: |
|  |  | Yes | No | Yes | No |  |
| LEGAL PAPERS, DOCUMENTS | Narrow; metal, or natural or painted wood | x |  | x |  | Use rag paper to preserve. |
| NEEDLE ART, such as crewel, embroidery, needlepoint | Varies with size and visual weight of needle art |  | x |  |  | ing finish can be used instead of glass; use glass and rag paper for valuable work. |
| .TAPESTRY/RUGS | Support usually hidden. Use nylon pressure tape on wood or metal, or run a dowel through fabric casing |  | x |  | x | Can protect with spray if texture won't be affected. |
| 3-D (HOBBY COLLECTIONS) | Shadow box-or moldings slanted toward art | x or | x |  |  | Mounted or backed for extra support. |
| MOSAICS/ <br> STAINED GLASS | Heavy frame-often molding reversed for added strength. If viewed from both sides, use doublesided frame. |  | x |  | x |  |

NOTE: Rules are guides-not absolutes. For example, as you become more comfortable with creating your own frames, you may want to experiment with more unorthodox techniques.

Nonglare glass can hide detail.

This publication was originally prepared by Kay Strassburg, Extension Textiles Specialist, for the University of Vermont, Cooperative Extension Service.

Educational Programs conducted by the Texas Agricultural Extension Service serve people of all ages regardless of socioeconomic level. race, color, sex, religion or national origin.

Cooperative Extension Work in Agriculture and Home Economics, The Texas A\&M University System and the United States Department of Agriculture cooperating. Distributed in furtherance of the Acts of Congress of May 8, 1914, as amended, and June $30,1914$.

