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MOUNTING & HANGING PICTURE FRAMES



MOUNTING & HANGING

Before you build your frame, it's a good idea to get your print or artwork matted. This will make it easier when it comes to mitering the frame pieces to length (see box below). Most of the time, I sandwich the print between a piece of mat board (with a "window" cut out of the center) and a piece of "foam core." Foam core is a polystyrene backing material that cushions the artwork and helps protect it from damage. I purchased both of these from a local frame shop. (Just be sure to order the mat and foam core cut to size — it's not worth the risk to cut them on your own.)

MOUNTING THE PRINT. After you've built your frame, you can take it to a frame shop and have your print professionally mounted. Or you can do what I did and simply purchase the materials and do the mounting yourself. Although professional framers use special

tools and fasteners to secure the glass and artwork into a frame, you can do the same thing with some simple turnbuttons, like the ones shown in the drawing below.

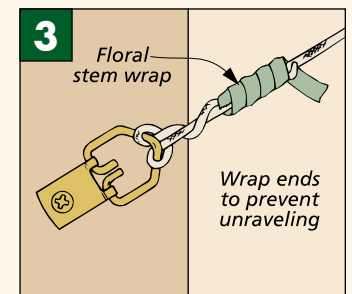
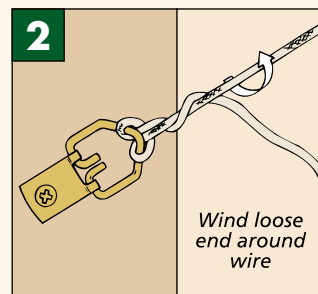
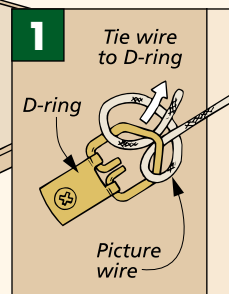
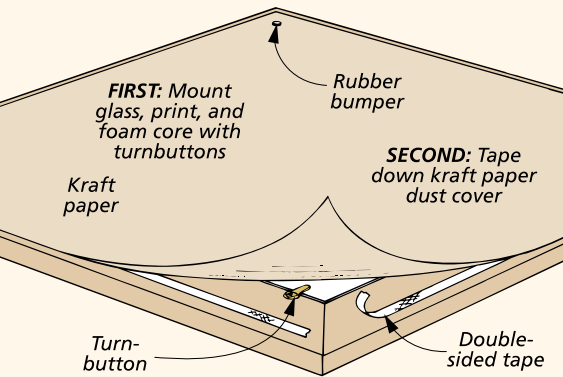
DUST COVER. To protect the print, it's a good idea to add a dust cover to the back of the frame. This is just a piece of brown kraft paper that is attached to the frame with double-sided tape. Once this is in place, I like to add rubber bumpers to prevent the frame from damaging the wall surface.

HANGING THE PICTURE. When it comes to hanging a picture (or any other item) it's important to make sure the hardware you're using is strong enough to support the weight of the object you're hanging. If the frame is fairly heavy, I use heavy-duty picture wire and *two* 50 lb. picture hooks for each frame. (You should be able to find these items at most hardware stores.)

The picture wire is secured to the frame with a couple of D-rings, shown in Fig. 1. You can also see the special knot that

is used to fasten the wire to the ring in this drawing. After pulling the knot tight, wrap the end of the wire around itself to prevent it from unraveling, just like you see in Fig. 2. Then, to prevent the wire from scratching or marking up the wall, I like to wrap the ends with floral stem wrap (available at craft stores) or masking tape (Fig. 3).

TWO-POINT HANGING SYSTEM. To hang the picture, I like to use two picture hooks. This does a couple of things. First, it distributes the load so all the weight isn't on a single hook. And second, it makes it a lot easier to level the picture once it's on the wall. Just install the hooks about 6" apart on the wall. If you have plastered walls, it's best if one of the hooks is driven into a stud. But this isn't necessary if your walls are made of drywall.



CUTTING TO SIZE

When I'm making a frame for a door, I usually build the frame first and then cut the panel or glass to fit the opening. But when it comes to framing artwork, I'd strongly suggest that you have the print, glass, and mat on hand before mitering your frame pieces. This allows you to use them as a gauge for marking your frame pieces to length, as in Fig. 1.

There's just a couple of things to be aware of here. First, I like to allow for a $\frac{1}{16}$ " clearance-gap between the artwork and the frame. This way, even if your glass or mat board is cut a little over-size it should still fit in the opening.

Second, remember that what you're trying to do is match the artwork with the size of the rabbeted opening at the back of the frame. So when marking the frame pieces before cutting them

to length, make sure you place your layout marks on the *inside* edge of the rabbet — not on the edge of the frame. If you don't, you'll end up with a frame that is too large for your artwork.

