



The *Creative* Guide to Picture Framing:

Seven Tips that You SHOULD
Know to Enhance the Longevity,
Impact and Pleasure provided
by your Artwork

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Creative
art & frame

Dedicated to Bringing Your Ideas to Life

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Introduction

Thanks for checking out *The Creative Guide to Picture Framing - Seven Tips that You SHOULD Know to Enhance the Longevity, Impact and Pleasure provided by your Artwork*.

There is really so much to know about picture framing that is technical and that you really need to discuss with your picture framing professional. We at Creative Art & Frame would love to have your business and would be delighted to answer any questions that you may have.

With the enclosed tips, we try to explain some of the most commonly asked questions from our clients over the last 25 years, such as:

- How high should I hang my artwork? (FYI – most people hang their artwork way too high.)
- How do I manage hanging my wall of frame which includes family photos of multi generations?
- What about matting – single, double, triple, none, what proportion, what colour?
- How do I select artwork for my office or a commercial space?
- What about glass? What is the difference between clear, non-glare and UV?
- How do I safely frame memorabilia such as war medals, hockey jerseys and family collages?
- What are reproductions on canvas?

We will continue to add more Creative tips so please check out our website or blog to keep updated. If you have a question please call, email or stop by and our staff of interior designers, artists and picture framers will try our best to answer your questions in a thorough, simple, accurate way.

As our tagline says, we are “dedicated to bringing your ideas to life”. That means that we will work with you to create and custom frame your artwork to exceed your expectations.

Wilda Thomas
Owner and still loving where she works

Creative Tips #1

Art Groupings - Hanging for Impact

Arranging and hanging art groupings has its own challenges and benefits. A variety of framed pictures, wall sculptures, dried flowers, etc. can tell a story about your family, travel history or artistic tastes. It can also create interest in any room. To hang your grouping will take a bit of patience and know how and perhaps even a few extra small holes in the wall!

Let us say that you are at the point where you have assembled the pieces that are to be arranged. They have some common design elements such as medium, style, colour, subject matter, size, shape, or similar framing. You are now ready to determine how the grouping should be hung.

Basically there are 3 different ways to align pictures:

Along the bottom - Think of them hanging above a chair rail.

Along the top - Think of them hanging from a clothesline.

Along the centre - Think of an imaginary horizon line with pictures being grouped equally above and below this line. It is also beneficial to visualize a vertical line running through that horizon line. Also considering four quadrants can help you create a well-balanced arrangement.

Typically most pictures are grouped along the bottom or the centre, however if there is a shelf placed high on the wall, you may want to hang the pictures along the top to accent the symmetry of the shelf.

Before you start the hanging process, place your artwork on the floor and design a pleasing arrangement. You may choose a symmetrical or asymmetrical style. Symmetrical groupings tend to be more formal and are used for pieces that are the same size and shape. Asymmetrical groupings are less formal and work well for items that have varying sizes, shapes and styles. Balance is key, when creating an asymmetrical design. Consider the amount of colour, the proportion, and position of the pictures so that each quadrant of the grouping looks somewhat uniform. The space between each picture is usually 2"- 4" depending upon the size of the artwork. The smaller the piece, the closer they should be together, to create a uniform look.

The height of your grouping also needs to be determined. If it is going to be viewed from a standing position (eye level is considered to be between 60"- 65") the centre line should be at that height. If you are hanging your grouping over a chesterfield or bed, 4"- 6" above the furniture is usually appropriate. When sitting, a horizon line of 45"- 50" usually works. Remember, these are just height suggestions, not absolute rules.

Now you are ready to hang your artwork. You will need a pencil, measuring tape, level, hammer, picture hooks and perhaps wall plugs, screws and a drill. Lastly, a compatible person to help you is always beneficial.

Creative Tips #2

Framing Works of Art on Paper - Why Use Mats?

Works on paper are the most common popular form of art. These include reproductions, limited edition prints, watercolours, pastels, acrylics, and photographs. Works on paper require specific framing techniques to protect them from the environment and to ensure their longevity.

Why Use Mats?

Mats have three main purposes:

- a) To prevent the art from touching the glass. It is important that there be an air space between the artwork and the glass, otherwise moisture or condensation may build up and cause mildew or foxing to occur. Photos will often stick to the glass if a mat is not used.
- b) For esthetic purposes. Mats come in a wide variety of styles, colours and types. Well-designed mat combinations highlight the artwork and help focus the eye of the viewer on it.
- c) For conservation purposes. Acid-free materials are used to protect artwork that is irreplaceable, or has a potential monetary or sentimental value.

What are the Different Types of Mats?

Although mats come in a huge variety of colours, designs and finishes, there are basically two different types of mats: acid free and paper mats. Acid free mats, often referred to as rag or conservation mats, typically have 100% cotton cores and backing. They are also fade and bleed-resistant. Although they are more expensive than paper mats, for any framing that is important to you, they are necessary.

Paper mats come in a wide variety of colours and finishes as well. Over time, they tend to fade and the acids in the mats can seep out and discolour your work of art. Paper mats are cost effective and can be used on reproductions or posters that you may want to change or discard in a few years.

What Mat Proportions Should I Choose?

General rules regarding mat width include:

Choose mats that are least 1½" - 2" wide. Even on small pictures, you want a border that allows the art to "breathe". To really attract the viewer to the art and create drama, you may want to select mats that are 4"- 5" wide. The mat should generally be 1½ - 2 times wider than the frame. If the mat is narrower, the artwork can look overpowered by the frame.

What Colour of Mats Should I Use?

Mats are available in many colours and each picture can be framed many ways. One recommendation is that you choose colours that are in the center of the artwork, so that your eye is drawn into the image. You also want to create a contrast with the matting against the wall colour. Typically, if your wall colour is dark, you may want a light coloured mat and vice-versa.

How Many Mats Should I Use?

For conservation purposes, you need at least one mat. Additional mats highlight the colours in the artwork and provide depth to the image, once again drawing your eye inward. The number of mats selected will depend upon the finished design that you desire. Your framer or interior designer can help you make those decisions.

Creative Tips #3

Selecting Commercial Art - A Guide

Artwork for your home is personal, but selecting artwork for your office or your place of business is a different undertaking. Although it is important to consider the decorating scheme, including colour and style, in a commercial space you must also consider the other people (especially clients) you will be serving. It is important to make your customers, as well as your staff, feel comfortable. That way they will feel happier doing business with or working for you.

When selecting artwork for a commercial space you should consider the following:

Type of Business

The artwork selected for the offices of a registered massage therapist, a lawyer, a retail store or a software developer could and probably should be very different. In a registered massage therapy office there may be posters or health related reproductions of the skeletal system in the massage room while relaxing landscapes or subtle profiles of nudes may appear in the waiting area. In a law office you may see images that are traditional to reflect the stability of the law. Depending on the type of retail store, you may have point-of-sale reproductions of the latest promotions or in a high-end women's ware boutique you may see original works of art. The office of a software developer may reflect cutting edge technology in the form of abstract paintings.

Business Image

The type of art that you select should tie in with your over all marketing plan and the image that you are trying to project. Are you a hip business that is promoting its goods and services to the 20 plus age bracket or are you focusing on over - 65 seniors with an above average income? Determining your target market will help you narrow down the selection of art that you require while focusing on the lifestyles, needs and wants of your clients.

Size and Scale

Most commercial spaces are very bright and airy so they typically require art that is larger than that used residentially. Also because clients do not spend much time in a commercial space, it is important that the artwork is noticeable and has impact, another reason to use pieces that are simple and large in scale.

Location

In a commercial space there are public areas such as the lobby, boardroom, lunchroom and hallway but there are also private offices. It is important to have the feel of the artwork flow from space to space. In many offices an artwork policy is put in place so that personal items are restricted. Although it is important for the individual using the office to like the artwork, they need to be careful that the work is not "residential" in appearance

Children, pets and over- the- top florals are usually inappropriate. Small detailed works of art may be used in a private office, but typically they will not work in a large public area.

Budget

Typically commercial artwork is framed very simply, so that you can focus more on whether your budget is going toward original art, limited editions or reproductions. Framing for a large piece of art can vary from \$150 if it is laminated on wood to about \$400 if it is matted and framed or canvas transferred.

Creative Tips #4

Hanging Art - How Is It Done?

One of the most frequently asked questions is,

*"How should I hang my art? I am short, my husband is tall;
at whose eye level should the artwork be hung?"*

Hanging art involves the use of many design principles - proportion, scale, colour, and balance. It also requires some mathematical ability and technical know how, but in the end, properly done, it makes a resounding difference in the appearance of your room.

Before a nail is put in the wall, some preplanning is necessary. You need to determine where you are going to hang your artwork. Is it going above a piece of furniture, in a grouping or alone on the wall? When people are looking at it, will they be sitting or standing?

It is a good idea to make a pattern of your artwork out of craft or newspaper so that you can determine whether the scale of the art is going to work, without having to move the actual artwork around the house. Take these pieces of paper and tape them temporarily to the wall to see if the piece is too large or small, what height it should be hung at and, more importantly, how a grouping can be arranged.

If you are hanging artwork above your sofa, you will want a piece that is proportional to the size and scale of your chesterfield. Typically you will want something that is at least half the size of your chesterfield to appear balanced. If your plan is to hang one picture above a standard sized chesterfield, you should have a piece that is at least 24" x 36". If you are hanging a grouping, the arrangement should take up at least that area, allowing for 3" - 4" between each picture. You should leave about 6" - 10" above the back of the sofa to allow for people to sit comfortably without hitting their head on the frame of the picture.

There is a tendency to centre artwork in the middle of the wall. This will work if the furniture is centered.

If the furniture is not centered and the artwork is placed so that part of it is above the chesterfield and the remainder is hanging over the edge, the artwork will look unbalanced, as if it may fall off. Not a good idea!

And about that height question - typically eye level is considered about 60" - 65", so if a piece of art is going to be viewed from a standing position, the centre of the art should be hung about 60" from the floor, even if you have cathedral ceilings! If the artwork is to be viewed from a sitting position, it should be hung at a lower height, typically 45" - 50".

Hanging your artwork correctly will increase the pleasure that can be derived from the art, as well as create a more finished appearance to your room.

Creative Tips #5

Common Custom Framing Questions

• *Should I put clear glass on all of my framed artwork?*

In most cases clear glass works well if your artwork is not in direct sunlight. However, when artwork is exposed to direct or even large amounts of indirect sunlight, fading and damage can occur. There are basically 3 other types of glass - non-glare, UV and non-glare UV glass.

Non-glare glass is etched so that it lessens the effect of the light and therefore the glare on the image. The disadvantage is that because of the etching, the colours in the artwork are not as vibrant.

UV glass looks remarkably like clear glass but it has a UV film over the surface which helps prevent damage by the sun.

UV non-glare glass helps prevent glare and sun damage.

• *What is the proper way to frame photos?*

Photographs are one of the most delicate types of art to be framed because they can easily fade, be damaged by mounting or be susceptible to damage by humidity. Photos should not be placed in direct sunlight because they will fade over time. The UV glass will help prevent fading, but your best solution is to remove them entirely from the direct sunlight.

Mounting of photos, especially if they are large, is preferred so they will not buckle in the frame. Because of the combinations of chemicals in the photo and in the mounting paper, damage can sometimes occur during the mounting process and the photo will need to be replaced. If you would like the photos mounted, the best solution is to use a dry mounting process onto foamcore, or to laminate them onto masonite. If you plan on leaving your photos framed permanently, you should always have a mat or a spacer in the frame, which provides a protective airspace. If photos are placed directly against the glass the effect of heat and humidity can cause them to stick directly to the glass. When this occurs there is little to be done to remove them from the frame without damage.

Both metal and wood frames work well on photographs depending on their age and style. Usually contemporary photos look best with a metal or a simple wood frame, where as antique photos look magnificent in traditional wood frames.

• *Should I put glass on my needlepoints or cross-stitches?*

If you use glass on a needlepoint or cross-stitch, we recommend that you use a mat or a spacer to keep the handi-work away from the glass. Heat and humidity can produce moisture, which can damage the needlepoint if it is placed directly against the glass. With needlepoints and cross-stitches, you always have the option of not using glass at all. If you wish, they can be stretched and framed without glass and mats. However, this does expose them to the elements such as smoke, household fumes, etc.

Creative Tips #6

Sports Memorabilia - A Great Collector and Decorating Idea

Canadians are huge sports fans – hockey, soccer, baseball, football, Nascar, golf, volleyball, basketball, bowling, etc. Many of us are diehard fans of a particular professional team - the Leafs, Jays, Raptors, Tigers, Red Wings, Galaxy, Canadiens, Celtics. When we attend live sporting events we often want to remember these unforgettable moments. One way to do that is by framing sports memorabilia so that it becomes a permanent method of preserving and displaying important sporting photos, tickets, jerseys, hockey pucks, golf balls, baseball bats, hockey sticks and whatever else you may have in your collection.

If you have budding sports stars at home, they can feel honoured to have their team pictures and medals framed and displayed in the family room. It can provide an historical account of their progress throughout the years.

Professional athletes are heroes to many people and displaying autographed photos brings back many youthful memories. At Creative Art & Frame, we have framed up some really unique memorabilia. One man brought in a letter that he received from his hockey hero, Bobby Orr. As a young boy he had written to Orr who replied wishing him good luck with his goals and dreams. The client had saved this letter from over 30 years and finally framed it so that it could be displayed in his sports room.

An adult woman had the opportunity to throw the first pitch at a Blue Jay's game when she was thirteen. She framed up her Blue Jay's uniform, photos that had been taken at the event and the autographed baseball that she had pitched. That event was a true highlight in her life and now she can think of that moment every time that she looks at the frame.

Whether hockey, football, baseball, or golf, an autographed sports jersey is a wonderful keepsake. Many people framed autographed London Knights jerseys, especially after their Memorial Cup win in 2005. Creative Art & Frame has authentic framed jerseys signed by Gretzkey, Yzerman, Orr, Gilmour, Crosby, Kadri, Lance Armstrong and many more. The owners are proud to display them when they look professional and are conserved for the future.

When framing your treasured sports memorabilia, it is important to use acid free mats, backing and conservation glass to prevent fading as these items are collectables and can be very valuable. Jerseys should be framed in a shadow box so that they don't touch the glass as condensation may damage the shirt.

Bring those sports memories to life by framing them now.

Creative Tips #7

Artwork on Canvas – Canvas Transfer/Giclée on Canvas

A tour of any museum or art gallery makes it perfectly obvious that for centuries artists have been painting on canvas, primarily with oils or more recently acrylics. With today's technology, reproductions are also available on canvas. This is often confusing and may cause uncertainty about what is actually being purchased and its possible future value.

• *What is a Canvas Transfer?*

Most reproductions can be put on canvas. The procedure involves applying a lamination film on the face of the reproduction, stripping the paper off the back and then mounting the image directly onto the canvas. This technique has many advantages especially with larger reproductions. Canvas transfers have:

- A canvas texture
- No glass
- No mats
- An Ultra - Violet film which helps prevent fading and has a non-glare image
- The ability to be wiped down with a damp cloth

The canvas transfer technique is a good option for traditional or contemporary pieces that originally were painted onto canvas because it creates a more "authentic" appearance.

• *What is a Giclée on Canvas?*

Giclée printing is a process using an ink-jet printer. The image is computer scanned and then printed directly onto the canvas. There has been a huge improvement in this process since its inception over 15 years ago due to improved printers and higher quality UV inks. The advantage to the artist is that as many or as a few images can be reproduced, in any size, whenever they like. The images can also be colour corrected. The advantage to the consumer is that if the artist is producing a limited edition reproduction of 500 and sales are slow, not all may be printed, making those printed more valuable.

Many poster reproductions are also available as a giclée on canvas. This offers a great deal of flexibility for the consumer who may require different sizes of art for a variety of spaces.

Whether an original, reproduction or giclée, works on canvas can be very traditional or contemporary in appearance and provide a great focal point in any room. Now that you know the differences between works on canvas enjoy!

In Conclusion

Well we hope that this was helpful for you.

In summary here our 7 tips:

1. Hanging art groupings is complicated and most of your time should probably be spent making a plan. Please, don't hang your artwork too high.
2. Use conservation mats on anything that is of value to you. You will never regret paying a good price for framing, but you may regret cutting corners and damaging your artwork.
3. Come to us for professional help with selecting art for your office.
4. Ensure that your art is proportional to the room and furniture that it will hang with and in case you missed #1, hanging art too low is preferable to too high.
5. Glass needs to be put on nearly all works of paper and is recommended on most needlepoint and handiwork as well.
6. Have fun framing your sports memorabilia. It will make the sports fans in your house happy.
7. These days you can have almost any image put onto canvas including fine art reproductions and photos. The technology is amazing and the quality can be excellent if you are not buying Asian imports at big box stores.

We thank you for spending the time reading these tips and we hope that when you have something that requires custom framing that you will contact Creative Art & Frame.

All the Best

Wilda Thomas

Provider of picture framing and travelling tips

So What Can You Frame Anyway?

Here are some ideas:

- Sports Jerseys – not just famous athletes...why not yours from High School or College?
- Children's Art – paintings, drawings, art supplies such as crayons and scissors, etc.
- Needlework – including doilies, crochet, tatting, handmade lace
- Paintings – Oils, Watercolours, Acrylics
- Limited Edition Prints
- Animation Cels
- Movie Posters
- Vintage Toys
- Military Medals
- Historical Papers
- Degrees
- Awards
- Precious Photos
- Holiday Souvenirs – Boarding Passes, Menus, Maps, Guides, Postcards, „Do Not Disturb“ signs, etc.
- Concert/Event Tickets/CD's /Albums
- Autographed Sports Collectibles – Boxing gloves, Golf balls, Baseballs and bats, Hockey pucks, Footballs, etc
- Dresses – wedding, prom and christening
- Vintage Posters
- Stamp Collections
- Wedding/Anniversary Collages
- In Memoriam Collages
- Collectable Books and Magazines

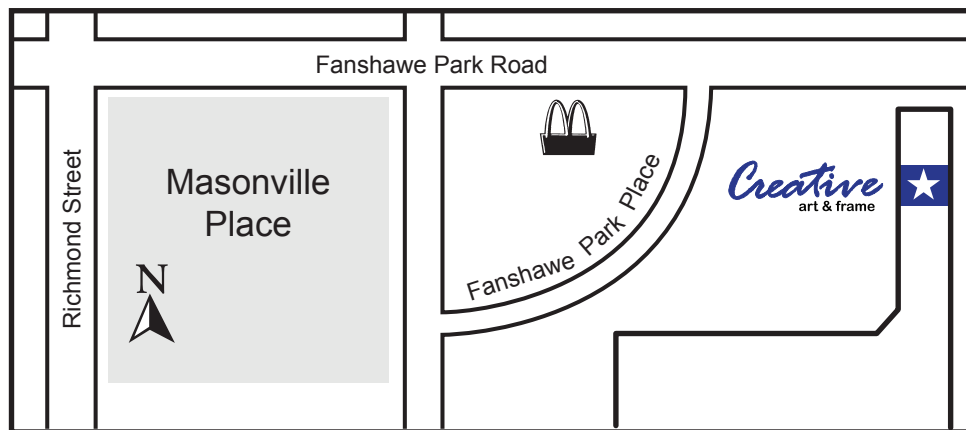
Basically we can frame almost anything and if we can't we will tell you.

Appointments May be Helpful.

You are welcome to stop by anytime.

We always want to give you our undivided attention but sometimes we get really busy.

If you would like to make an appointment then we will make certain that you and your project are given the time and consideration that you deserve.



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