

Using Picture Mat for your photos

When it comes to framing and matting supplies for your artistic photographic images, quality is everything. Your images may be the finest taken since Ansel Adams turned his camera toward the spectacular mountain ranges of California and the Pacific Northwest, but without the proper photography frames, matboard and other framing and matting supplies, your prints will not only look cheap, they'll deteriorate very quickly as well.

It Starts With Matboard

There are multiple techniques that can be used for mounting your photographic prints, and the one you choose will depend on various factors:

1. The storage or display environment; whether it is humid or dry, if there are wide temperature variations, and if pollutants are an issue.
2. The durability of the medium; are the photographic images reproduced on high-quality papers and with the best dyes? If not, it may be necessary to increase the amount of protection for the images.
3. Your budget: like many other aspects of photography, there is a wide range of costs depending on the quality and nature of the materials used. (Fortunately, framing is not the most expensive part of photography.)
4. The complexity of the method used; less experienced photographers may prefer to use simpler framing methods.

A Quick and Easy Way

Once you have chosen and obtained your framing and matting supplies, one of the simpler methods for mounting your print is to affix, or hinge the photo directly to the photo mat board. This is best accomplished with the use of adhesive hinging tissue, which is similar to double-sided adhesive tape designed especially for this purpose. This can create some problems in the future should you choose to change the picture mat at some future date, but it will definitely hold your print securely in place.

Other methods you may wish to consider:

- Hinge the matboard to the mount board, sandwiching the print between them
- Use photo corners affixed to the mount board. This has the advantage of allowing you to mount the print without having to apply adhesive to the photo paper, and the photo corners can be hidden with the use of photo mat board and/or proper sized photography frames.
- Glue or spray adhesive: this is probably the most economical method, but caution should be exercised, as such substances can damage the surface of the photograph.

Choose Your Mat

One question that is frequently asked is "What is the best picture mat to use?" Again, your choice of these particular framing and matting supplies depends on several factors. If you are inexperienced at cutting matboard, you may wish to use pre cut mat board, although this will limit your options as to how your photo will be displayed. If you are looking for archival quality, bainbridge mat board is the only real choice; made from special acid-free mounting materials this is one of the best framing and matting supplies available, and will preserve your prints in museum condition for many years.

About the Author

Susan Slobac is an avid [photographer](#). Susan believes a [picture](#) frame is more than just fashion; it's a safeguard for something you love.