

Picture Framers Guild of Australian Incorporated

Methods of Construction

How a job is constructed can bear on its long term appearance. As in mounting, the amount of hinges and how they are applied is critical to the longevity of the work. If the job isn't kept flat and square in construction, uneven pressures may result in distortion, gaps appearing or glues and tapes letting go.

Hinging: There are a number of different brands and types of hinging material on the market. The main two are 1/ water activated 2/ pressure sensitive. Water activated consist of either pre-glued paper to be torn from a roll or hinges to be torn from a sheet of *Japanese paper* with the adhesive made from pure *wheat starch*. Pressure sensitive can be a roll of either pre-glued paper or mylar. Water activated can be released by moistening the back of the tape with water, some pressure sensitive can be done the same way while others require heat from a source such as a hair dryer. Tapes requiring heat can separate from the gum leaving the gum on the artwork/document. When using water activated tapes for hinging artwork / documents it's recommended to place small squares of blotting paper underneath the hinge (directly below artwork / document) and on top of artwork / document above hinge to draw any excessive moisture out. Weight bags are then placed on top. This will help prevent moisture absorbing into backing board and cockling of the artwork / document. Hinges need to be the width of the hinge in from the sides, approximately 200mm apart and weaker than the piece being hinged.

Fillets: The back of the mat board requires strips of foam core to level the job out flat with the back of the fillet. Typically 3mm packing is required, the same thickness as the tail on the fillet but 5mm may need to be used on thicker fillets. A combination of heavy duty double sided tape and PVA glue is required for a permanent adhesion. The upper face of the tail will need to be cleaned of any flaky material (e.g. gold leaf), wash or dust to ensure a good adhesion. Were necessary a frame sealing tape needs to be applied to the back of the fillet to protect the document / artwork from acid migration.

Rebate build up: Typically the frame rebate needs to be able to take the overall thickness of the job, from glass to backing board, with approximately 3mm left to point the job in. Having to use undue pressure to squash backing board to get framing point in may lead to a cockling of mats in time. The gluing and stapling of small sections of timber (e.g. 12 x 6, 12 x 8); to the back the frame to extend the rebate will overcome this challenge. This can ultimately aide in the choice of mould for a design where the rebate is initially too small. The outer edge of the build up may be coloured to match the mould.

Fitting up: Backing tape when applied needs to be folded down the rebate edge of the frame and then onto the backing board with out creases or air pockets. It then needs to be burnished to give it maximum adhesion. Weight proportional “D” rings and wire with maximum length screws are required to ensure the job stays hanging on the wall. The weighing of larger jobs before fitting up is recommended. A wire $\frac{1}{3}$ from the top will lean the job out, $\frac{1}{4}$ from the top will hold it closer to the wall.

Canvas Stretchers / Strainers: The fitting of canvas stretchers into the frame can vary depending on the rebate depth. The use of a box frame will enable fixing with a framing point. A standard frame with a descent size rebate may have *frame build up* added to allow the use of framing points. In the case of *frame build up* not being the answer the use of an *Offset Bracket* with a screw is required. Fitting into a Float Frame / “L” Shaped Frame can be done a number of ways: an *Offset Bracket* with screw; *Screw Eye* with screw; *Hook & Loop Velcro* or by screwing through the frame into the stretcher frame. When using a method with screws it’s important to use a screw long enough to hold the stretcher frame securely but not to long as to go through the stretcher and damage the canvas. To prevent the ingress of dust and insects in between the stretcher and canvas a *tyvek*¹ back can be applied. Were rebate space allows a foam core backing can be used.

Museum Sandwich: Is made up by the joining of an under mount to the window mat. A *museum sandwich* is needed in categories 4 and 5. It requires conservation / museum grade materials in category 4 and museum grade cotton material in category 5. If a conservation / museum board with a coloured surface paper is used for the under mount it needs to be reversed so as the paper is to the back of the frame. Refer *Standards* notes for detailed information.

¹ Tyvek: is a polypropylene product that prevents dust getting through to the art but allows the art to breathe. It is 140 cm wide and available by the roll from Du Pont.