

Framing Workshop Handout
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Becky Neideffer - bneidefferart@gmail.com

Frames purchased from Aaron Brother's, IKEA, Michael's and other stores. What you need to know!

Framing material should be wood. Plastic or plastic composite frames are very difficult to alter. Even though you are purchasing a ready-made frame, when you are finished with your framing, you want it to look as professional as possible.

Rabbet

For pastel – no less than 1/2 inch

You create a 'sandwich' of the following layers:

- glass
- mat = mount
- spacer = smaller mount
- pastel painting = work
- backing

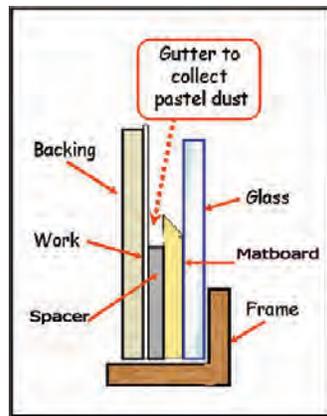
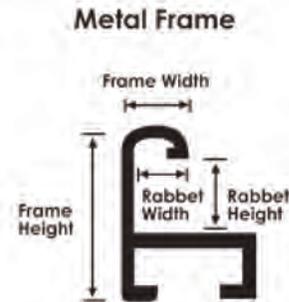
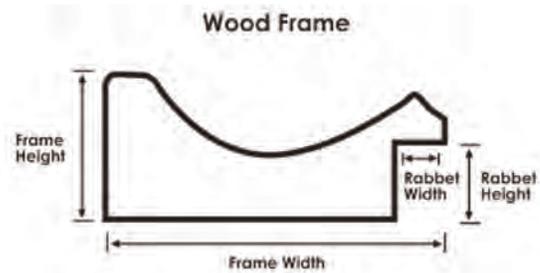


Figure 1



Glass

The glass in purchased frames is standard glass that can be found in any hardware store. You can use this glass or purchase conservation UV non-reflective glass that helps protect your art.

Acrylic (plexiglass) has static electricity and used without treatment will cause your pastel to cling to the acrylic. They do make an anti-static acrylic but I've not personally used the product.

Spraying the inside of the acrylic with a non-static spray, like used on computer screens and TV's, should prevent the pastel from clinging.

Museum glass is non-reflective but very expensive.

ArtGlass is a lower-cost non-reflective glass.

I have ArtGlass available for members only. See me for a price list.

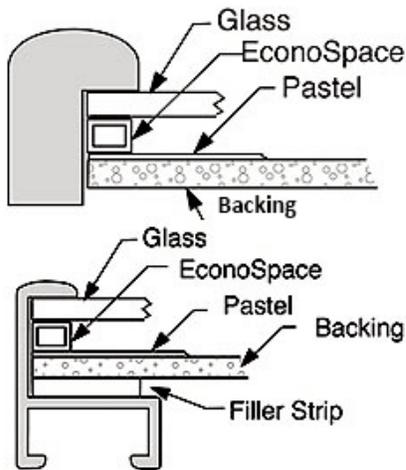
Spacers

Spacers are used in matted paintings to keep loose pastel from dropping down on your clean mat board. They are used in matless paintings to keep the pastel paintings away from the glass.

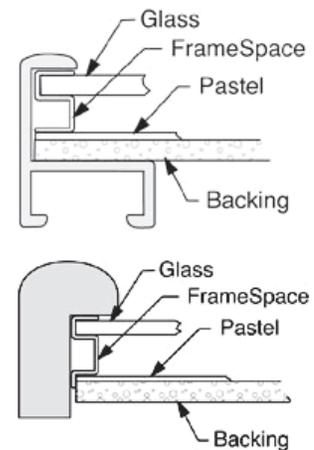
I do not recommend using fixative because it does change the depth and intensity of your colors. Highlights can literally disappear. Fixative is great during the painting process to fix pastel in place so that you can add more layers of pastel, but a final spraying can cause problems.

I always take my painting outside and thump it many times on the back to dislodge any loose pastel.

What kind of spacers are available and what should you use:



Matless Framing



Block spacers with a sticky back that adheres to the glass. The diagram shows framing matless but you can place a mat next to the glass, adhere the spacer to the back of the mat, then place over your pastel.

S - spacers that slip on the glass for matless framing

You can make spacers using acid free mat board or acid free foamboard. Instead of the thicker plastic spacers, place cut strips of mat board or foamcore between the mat and the pastel painting.

Backing - Dust Cover

Whether you use mats, spaces, passe-partout or any other combination to this point, you will need to prepare your frame with a dust cover for the back of the frame. You will need to be sure that your glass, pastel, mats (if using) and backboard come just under the depth of the rabbit of the frame. This is the 'sandwich' in Figure 1 on page 1. You can add depth to your 'sandwich' with acid free foamboard or cardboard. Once the dust cover is in place, you don't want a deep depression but a fairly smooth look to the dust cover.

The next step is to place picture or frame points to hold everything secure.

To apply the dust cover, place two-sided tape along the entire back edge of the frame. You can use glue instead of tape, but it will be much more difficult to remove if you want to change the frame. I use ATG double-sided tape with a dispenser. You can apply this tape without the dispenser using patience. After placing the tape along the edge, lay a slightly larger than the frame piece of kraft paper or tyvek over the back of the frame and starting at the center, smooth the dust cover towards the edges and press firmly where there is tape. You can also lay the kraft paper or tyvek on a flat surface and place the frame double-sided tape down on top. Then turn over and smooth the paper or tyvek the same as before.



Applying ATG tape with dispenser.

Using either a frame trim tool or a utility knife and straight edge, trim the dust cover to between 1/16 and 1/14 inch from the edge of the frame.

When you have completed the dust cover, mark for the d-rings slightly under half from the top of the frame. Drill the holes for the screws, using a drill bit that is slightly smaller than the screw.



Tyvek trimmed to about 1/4 inch.

Using a screw driver, secure the d-rings or v-rings to the back of the frame, through the dustcover.

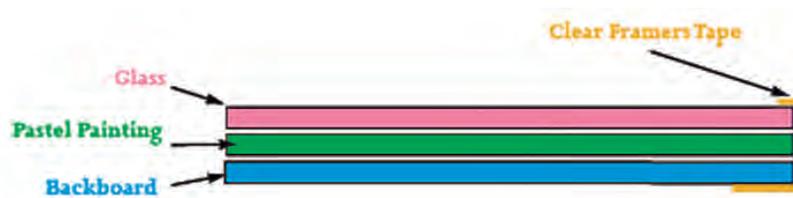
You are now ready to add the wire from ring to ring. I leave about 3" from the top of the frame for the top point of the wire. You do not want your wire to show above the frame. Leave about 1 1/2" of wire to put through the ring and twist around to secure the wire. If your painting is really large, you might want to leave up to 4 inches of trailing wire.

The advantage of Tyvek over kraft paper is you won't be able to put your finger through Tyvek. It is made with fibers that are very durable.



Kraft paper dust cover with v-ring and wire in place.

Passé-Partout



Layer the backboard, pastel painting, and the glass as shown. All three must be the same size. Clamp together so nothing moves. Tape from the top and place the tape about 1/8 or 3/16 inch on the edge of the glass. Press firmly and then press the tape down the side and onto the back. Do each side separately, lapping over the edges to make a good seal. This prevents air, moisture and dust to damage the painting. I use 1" clear framers tape.

Place the 'sandwich' in your fram and finish with the dust cover, rings, and wire.

Passé-Partout is a framing technique that has been used for centuries. I have included a copy of Richard's McKinley's blog on spacers and his instructions for Passé-partout on page 5.

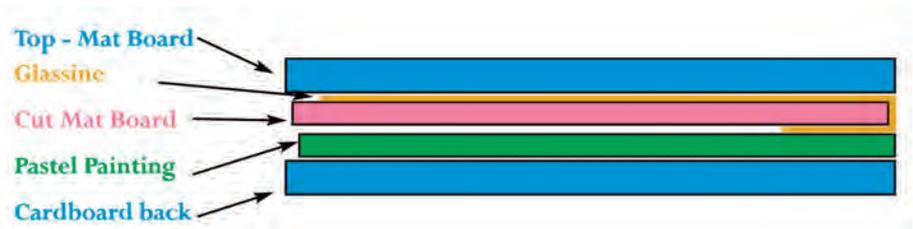
Unframed original pastels:

I often have original pastels that I don't want to frame for one reason or another. I do want to offer them for sale so I use a matted version with glasine to protect the painting. I do not use spacers with this version. I tape a copy of the instructions for framing pastels on the inside and on the cover a print out a 4" X 3" label with a photo of the art, title, size, medium and my contact information. These I sell for \$60 to \$100.

They are layered as such:

- top - mat board
- glasine
- cut mat board
- pastel painting
- bottom cardboard

Acid Free framers tape along the back





Richard McKinley's Pastel Pointers Blog Passe-Partout Framing

A photo showing a pastel painting sandwich utilizing Passé Partout, FrameTac framers tape, and a utility knife used for trimming.

Spacers or no spacers, that is a question many pastel painters are asking these days. As framing trends have evolved from the traditional matted presentation for pieces under glass to the canvas painting presentation of a simple wide molding, the issue of using a spacer to separate the pastel painting from the glazing has become more pertinent.

Most of us were introduced to framing pastels with the use of traditional paper matting. This matting served two purposes: a decorative border around the artwork and a spacer separating the artwork from the glazing. This manner of framing had evolved from traditional methods of presenting and preserving paper. Art media that was water-based or dry, like pencil, charcoal, and pastel, also required added protection to help preserve their appearance. This framing style continues to be very popular today and if you are pleased with its appearance there is no need to consider the use of an additional spacer. The mat is providing one.

The main purpose of keeping artwork away from glass is to stop it from eventually adhering to the glass thus creating damage. What exacerbates this is moisture. In humid environments, moist air becomes trapped between the inside layer of glass and the artwork, creating condensation. It stands to reason then, that if air is removed from between the artwork and glass and it is well sealed, creating a vacuum that helps to prevent migration of moisture, a potentially more stable environment will be created for the presentation of the painting. This is the theory that was first introduced by the French method of Passé Partout framing. While the term has multiple meanings and can even apply to a traditional mat presentation, it differs in that it requires the glazing, artwork, and backing board to be sealed together. This produces an artwork-vacuum sandwich that can easily be placed in a frame and removed for storage.

What is required to create a Passé Partout is strong pH neutral tape to seal the edge of the glass around the artwork to the backing board. I use "FrameTac" professional framer's tape. Make sure the backing board is strong and pH neutral. Place the painting onto the backing board, clean the glass, and carefully position the glass over the painting. When this is placed, carefully position the sandwich over the edge of a table and run a strip of framers tape around the leading edge of the glass. This will be hidden under the lip of the frame. Then gently fold the tape over the edge and tack it to the back of the backing board. Reposition the sandwich and do the next edge until it is completely sealed all the way around. Great caution needs to be used to make sure the glass does not slip across the surface of the painting. For more information on this and other framing suggestions, refer to Maggie Price's article titled "A Clear-cut Guide to Framing" from the [December 2004 issue](#) of the *The Pastel Journal* magazine (2004 issues are available as part of a digital archive collection in our online shop).

While the use of spacers will undoubtedly continue to be a point of controversy within pastel circles, utilizing the historic method of Passé Partout is always a good idea, spacers or no spacers. Plus, it sounds so cool to say your artwork is framed in this method.

Where to Purchase framing supplies: Search (Google, Yahoo, etc.) for art framing

Glass:

Both of the following stores are owned by Bill and Karen Bowe. All the glass is cut at the Poster Warehouse location but you can order and pickup at the Framed to Perfection location if you live closer to that store.

Poaster Warehouse
2900 E. Broadway #102
Tucson, AZ 85716
520-795-1963
pwposter@dakotacom.net

Framed to Perfection
7645 N. Oracle
Oro Valley, AZ
520-571-1963

Spacers:

The most reasonably priced has been on-line.

Poaster Warehouse
2900 E. Broadway #102
Tucson, AZ 85716
520-795-1963
pwposter@dakotacom.net

Art Spacers.com
www.artspacers.com

FrameTek, Inc.
www.frametek.com

Airright.com
http://www.artright.com

Videos:

YouTube video on using spacers from Cheap Pete's Frame Fractory Outlet
<https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=ekliOtEa3X4>

You Tube video from FrameSpacers
<https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=sSOhnTrwgTg>

Glassine

www.utrechtart.com
Roll - 36" X 10' - \$24.00 on sale now for \$16.49

Mat Cutters

Logan Mat Cutter
www.logangraphic.com - \$110 - \$700

Fletcher
www.fletcherwiscom.com - \$1500 - \$2500

Tyvek

www.materialconcepts.com

Tape:

www.888mfgcorp.com

Framing Tools/Supplies /Mats and Frames:

www.888mfgcorp.com
www.americanframe.com
www.dickblick.com
www.jerrysartarama.com
www.woodworker.com
www.aswexpress.com
www.cheapjoes.com
www.framing4yourself.com

Mat Boards:

Not all mat boards are acid free so be sure to ask at all other stores.

Arizona Art Supply
4343 N. Oracle Suite P
Tucson, AZ 85705

Sarnoff Artist Materials
2524 N. Campbell
Tucson, AZ 85719

Precut mat boards:

Michael's
Aaron Brother's
Many on-line stores

Supplies I used in the Workshop

Framing Tools

If you Google picture framing tools, you will find many suppliers and varied prices. These are the cost of my tools and where I purchased them.

Dust cover Trimmer - \$7.50 - American Frame

Framemate Brad Sette- \$45 - Dick Blick

Framing points - \$3 for 200 or \$13 for 2000 - Dick Blick

2-sided tape dispenser - \$28 - findtape.com

Refill rolls 1/2" x 36 yds - \$4.10 per roll

Logan Dual Driver Elite - \$50

Flex Points (600 counts for Dual Driver) - \$7

D-hangers and Wire

Most places where you will be exhibiting your work does not allow saw tooth hangers. Every piece of art must have hangers and wire.

Hangers

Single screw - d or v-rings

Double screw - d or v-rings

Wire

25' at AmericaFrame.com for \$1.50

Kraft paper

You can purchase at any craft store

Tyvek

36" X 150' black tyvek roll + \$129.00

Mat Board

Cutting

Mat cutter - There are several types and sizes of mat cutters. I will demonstrate the Logan 450. It will cut 40 inch lengths and comes with a straight cutter and bevel cutter.

Mat Board

Mat Board comes in many colors and brands.. The most important thing to remember is to purchase acid free mat board. For pastel framing, you will use a standard 4-ply board.

The acid in the mats will stain paper. The longer it remains on the work, the more likely it will not only stain where the mat touches the artwork, but it will begin to spread outward. Eventually the paper becomes exceedingly brittle. This won't happen in months, but rather many many years so whether or not you choose to use acid free mats and backing will depend upon how long you want to preserve the work.

About Mats

Acid Free - Paper infused in water yields a neutral or basic pH 7 or slightly greater. Paper made from wood-based pulp that has not had its lignin removed turns yellow, becomes brittle, and deteriorates over time. When exposed to light and/or heat, the molecules in the acidia paper will break down even faster. It may be buffered to prevent the formation of additional acids. It will also be lignin and sulfur free.

General purpose mats - Non-conservation matboard - Buffered to neutral pH:

- Crescent Berkshire
- Bainbridge NovaCore
- Papermat

Acid Free - meets conservation standards. Acid and lignin free

- Crescent Select
- Moorman

Museum Quality - Cotton fibers naturally are acid and lignin free

- Crescent RagMat
- Bainbridge Alphasag
- Bainbridge Artcare Alphamat cellulose

Core Color - The color of the mat core will be visible in the bevel cut of the mat surrounding the image.

Cotton rag mat board, including Crescent RagMat® Museum and Bainbridge Alphasag, dyes all the plies the same color so the rag mat board will have a consistent color all the way through.

Most other (non-rag) mat board consists of a core made of cotton, alpha cellulose or paper that is typically cream colored or white and then laminated with the mat color. Most manufacturers will offer a few other choices of core board color, such as black

Glassine

A very thin and smooth paper that is air and water resistant. Acid free - approx 25 lb weight paper 40 gm. Place glassine next to your pastel art. It will pick up very little of the pastel and not smudge while storing. Glassine can be wiped with a damp cloth and be re-used. It can be purchased in rolls and cut to desired size.

Rolls can be purchased at Uline.com.

Becky Neideffer
bneidefferart@gmail.com
www.bneideffer.net
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