

PICTURE FRAMERS GUILD OF AUSTRALIA INCORPORATED.

GENERAL FRAMING STANDARDS

Introduction

This Standard is intended to cover the framing of items typically on, but not restricted to, paper. The framing of textiles, works on canvas, cibachrome photographs or similar, and objects, falls outside the scope of this Standard and must be considered differently. (Standards are being developed to cover the framing requirements for these items.)

The procedures and/or processes contained in the following Standard do not guarantee that any level of protection specified hereunder will be reached. There are many factors, in addition to framing, that will affect the longer-term outcome, the least of which is the condition of the artwork prior to framing. Notwithstanding the need to fully consult with the customer, framers should recognize when an item may require special treatment prior to framing and seek appropriate advice from suitably qualified professionals prior to framing.

Framers should remember that they have a responsibility to advise their customers of the appropriate level of framing and of the display and environmental conditions that may have an affect on the art.

Issue 4 –4 April 2006

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GENERAL FRAMING STANDARDS

Framing Category 1 – Minimum

This category provides a minimum framing standard for products aimed at the low cost or temporary display market. This category is suited to items of no commercial or sentimental value such as posters and open edition prints, or ready made frames into which a customer may place their own items.

Component	Standard to Meet
The Frame (Including Slips)	The frame must be free from obvious defects. Frame corners must be accurately cut glued and joined tightly to prevent movement. The frame when finished must be square and sit flat without significant twist.
Window Mats	Window mats must be free from obvious defects and all window corners must be cut cleanly.
Attaching Artwork	It is acceptable for items to be permanently mounted down. If items are hinged appropriate hinging materials must be used. Masking or packaging tapes are not acceptable for hinging. See Appendix A for attaching textiles.
Glazing	Float glass or acrylic sheet is acceptable. Minor defects are acceptable. The glazing must be sized to give sufficient clearance inside the frame rebate. It is acceptable for the framed item to come in contact with the glazing.
Backing Board	<i>MDF</i> board, foam core board and cardboard are acceptable.
Fitting Up	Dust and dirt should be removed prior to assembly. Flexible tabs, framing points or other mechanical device that allows for removal of the backing board may be fitted. Hanging fittings must be strong enough to support the weight of the frame.

GENERAL FRAMING STANDARDS

Framing Category 2 – Economy

This category provides a superior product to Category 1. Whilst cost is still a consideration, more emphasis is placed on improving the appearance of the finished product. This category is suited to items of no commercial or sentimental value such as posters, open edition prints and photographs.

Component	Standard to Meet
The Frame (Including Slips)	The frame must be free from obvious defects. Frame corners must be accurately cut, glued and joined tightly to prevent movement. The frame when finished must be square and sit flat without twist. Corners should be puttied or finished, to hide gaps or raw moulding showing, due to misalignment or profile differences.
Window Mats	Window mats must be free from obvious defects and all window corners must be cut cleanly. <i>Standard mat board</i> is acceptable. There must be clearance of 1 to 2mm inside the frame rebate.
Attaching Artwork	It is acceptable for items to be permanently mounted down. If items are hinged appropriate hinging materials must be used. Masking or packaging tapes are not acceptable for hinging. See Appendix A for attaching textiles.
Glazing	Float glass or acrylic sheet is acceptable. Minor defects are acceptable. The glazing must be sized to give sufficient clearance inside the frame rebate. A 2mm clearance is generally deemed acceptable. It is acceptable for the framed item to come in contact with the glazing, except in the case of photographs which must be spaced away from the glazing.
Backing Board	<i>MDF</i> board, foam core board and cardboard are acceptable.
Fitting Up	Dust and dirt must be removed prior to assembly and the glass cleaned to remove smears. Framed components may be held into the frame using flexible tabs or framing points. Sealing the back of the frame is not mandatory at this level, however, when a seal is provided masking or packaging tapes are unacceptable. Hanging fittings must be sufficiently strong to support the weight of the frame.

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GENERAL FRAMING STANDARDS

Framing Category 3 – Quality

This category provides a level of protection against environmental pollutants and the effects of the degradation of framing products for a period of about 5 years in *normal conditions*. The category is suited to items of low to moderate commercial and/or sentimental value such as posters, open edition prints, photographs and some artwork.

Component

Standard to Meet

The Frame
(Including Slips)

The frame must be free from obvious defects. Frame corners must be accurately cut, glued and joined tightly to prevent movement of the joint. The frame when finished must be square and sit flat without twist. Extra care must be taken to ensure that the moulding profiles are accurately matched and misalignment is kept to a minimum. Corners must be puttied or finished, where necessary, to hide gaps or raw moulding showing due to minor misalignment or profile differences.

Window Mats

Window mats must be free from obvious defects and all window corners must be cut cleanly. *Standard mat board*, at least 4 ply thick, is acceptable. There must be clearance of 1 to 2mm inside the rebate.

Attaching Artwork

Hinging - The artwork should be hinged to the backing with T-hinges on the top back edge of the artwork and over-lapping sufficiently to adequately support the artwork. Preferably gummed paper tape should be used however other tapes are acceptable provided they have been developed specifically for art hinging. Japanese tissue paper and starch glue should be used for hinging artwork on tissue or similar paper. Masking tape or packaging tapes are not acceptable for hinging. In selecting a suitable hinging material the hinge must be weaker than the artwork to which it is attached.

Permanent Mounting - At this level permanent mounting (wet or dry) is acceptable providing that customers understand that the process is generally irreversible. Permanent mounting directly to the backing board is acceptable. Regardless of the attaching method artwork must be properly centered.

See Appendix A for attaching textiles

Glazing

Float glass or acrylic sheet is acceptable. Minor defects are acceptable. The glazing must be sized to give sufficient clearance inside the frame rebate. A 2mm clearance is generally deemed acceptable. It is not acceptable for the framed item to come into contact with the glazing.

Backing Board

Backing boards may be made from regular or *Acid Free Foam Core Board*. There must be clearance of 1 to 2mm inside the frame. The use of *MDF* board is not acceptable.

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GENERAL FRAMING STANDARDS

Framing Category 3 – Quality (Cont.)

**Component
Fitting Up**

Standard to Meet

Dust and dirt must be removed prior to assembly and the glass cleaned to remove smears. Framed components may be held into the frame using flexible tabs or framing points.

The back must be sealed with self-adhesive framing tape and burnished firmly to ensure a permanent seal. Masking tape and packaging tape are not acceptable. 'Bump Ons' must be fitted to the back of the frame where it is likely to come into contact with the wall. A label giving the date and the name of the framer must be adhered to the back. Where possible old labels must be refitted to the back. Hanging fittings must be sufficiently strong to support the weight of the frame. The use of cords and staples is not acceptable.

Where mat boards are not required the artwork must be held off the glass by using appropriate spacer material such as plastic or acrylic spacer, or mat board strips.

When framing art with medium that is likely to shed, e.g. pastels, a 4 or 6 ply mat board spacer must be positioned between the mat and the artwork.

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Framing Category 4 – Conservation

This category provides a level of protection against environmental pollutants and the effects of the degradation of framing products for a period of about 20 years in *normal conditions*. The category is suited to items such as collectable works of art, limited edition prints, and items of historic and/or sentimental value. At this level all processes relating to the art must be fully reversible. Ideally a Guild framer or conservator should examine frames every five years. It is the responsibility of the framer to recognize when artwork may require special treatment from specialists such as art conservators and make appropriate recommendations to the customer.

Component

Standard to Meet

The Frame (Including Slips)

The frame must be free from obvious defects. Frame corners must be accurately cut, glued and joined tightly to prevent movement. The frame when finished must be square and sit flat without twist. Extra care must be taken to ensure that the moulding profiles are accurately matched and misalignment is kept to a minimum. Corners must be puttied or finished, where necessary, to hide gaps or raw moulding showing due to minor misalignment or profile differences. The moulding shall have a rebate that is sufficiently deep to comfortably hold all of the framing components. A rebate build up should be used to achieve sufficient depth. If artwork is likely to touch the moulding, it needs to be sealed with strips of *Conservation mat board* or *Cotton Museum mat board* or a conservation foil and paper tape.

Window Mats

Window mats must be free from obvious defects and all window corners must be cut cleanly. *Conservation mat board* or *Cotton Museum mat board*, at least 4 ply thick, is acceptable. There must be clearance of 1 to 2mm inside the rebate. The window mat should where possible, overlap the edge of the artwork sufficiently and allow the artwork to expand and contract behind the window. Any pencil marks on the reverse of the window mat must be removed to prevent their transfer to the artwork. For photographs *unbuffered* mat board must be used. (This is only available currently in *Cotton Museum mat board*.) Where original window mats need to be retained (such as gilded or decorated mats), a barrier of no less than 2 ply, *Conservation mat board* or *Cotton Museum mat board* must be fitted the underside of the mat board in such a manner to prevent the original mat from touching the artwork.

Under Mount

The under mount is a barrier layer inserted between the back of the artwork and the backing board. The under mount must be made of at least 4 ply *Conservation mat board* or *Cotton Museum mat board*. For photographs *unbuffered* mat board needs to be used. The under mount must be the same size as the mat board and hinged to it using a gummed conservation tape with a water-soluble adhesive. At this level the under mount may be deleted provided the backing board is made from *Acid Free Foam Core Board*.

Attaching artwork

Hinging - The artwork must be hinged to the under mount with T-hinges on the top back edge of the artwork and over-lapping sufficiently to adequately support the artwork. Preferably gummed conservation or museum paper tape should be used. Japanese tissue paper and starch glue should be used for hinging artwork on tissue or similar paper. Masking tape or packaging tapes are not acceptable for hinging. In selecting a suitable hinging material the hinge must be weaker than the artwork to which it is attached. Artwork must be properly centered. See Appendix A for attaching textiles

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GENERAL FRAMING STANDARDS

Framing Category 4 – Conservation (Cont.)

Glazing

Float glass or acrylic sheet providing UV protection and free from obvious defects must be used. The UV protection must prevent at least 90% of all UV rays penetrating the glass. The glazing must be sized to give sufficient clearance inside the frame rebate. A 2mm clearance is generally deemed acceptable. It is not acceptable for the glazing to touch the artwork. Glass must be cleaned using either ammonia free glass cleaner or mixture of demineralised water and methylated spirit.

Backing Board

Backing boards may be made from regular or *Acid Free Foam Core Board*. There must be clearance of 1 to 2mm inside the frame. The use of *MDF* board is not acceptable.

Fitting Up

Dust and dirt must be removed prior to assembly and the glass cleaned and polished to remove marks. Framed components may be held into the frame using framing points. The back must be sealed with self-adhesive framing tape and burnished firmly to ensure a permanent seal. Masking tape and packaging tape are not acceptable. 'Bump Ons' must be fitted to the back of the frame where it is likely to come into contact with the wall. A label giving the date and the name of the framer must be adhered to the back. Where possible old labels should be refitted to the back. Hanging fittings must be sufficiently strong to support the weight of the frame. The use of cords and staples is not acceptable. When framing art with medium that is likely to shed, e.g. pastels, a 4 or 6 ply mat board spacer must be positioned between the mat board and the artwork.

Notes:

- Where mat boards are not required the artwork must be held off the glass by using appropriate spacer material such as acrylic spacer, *Conservation mat board* or *Cotton Museum mat board* strips.
- At this level a label advising of the need to inspect the frame components every 5 years must be placed on the back of the frame.
- When framing pastels the use of a fixative by the framer is not recommended unless discussed and approved by the client.

GENERAL FRAMING STANDARDS

Framing Category 5 – Museum

This category provides a level of protection against environmental pollutants and the effects of the degradation of framing products for a period of about 35 years in *normal conditions*. The category is suited to museum-quality works and artwork requiring preservation. This includes artwork of high monetary value and artwork of actual or potential historical value. At this level all processes relating to the art must be fully reversible. Ideally a Guild framer or conservator should examine frames every five years. It is the responsibility of the framer to recognize when artwork may require special treatment from specialists such as art conservators and to recommend to the customer appropriately.

Component

Standard to Meet

**The Frame
(Including Slips)**

The frame must be free from obvious defects. Frame corners must be accurately cut, glued and joined tightly to prevent movement. The frame when finished must be square and sit flat without twist. Extra care must be taken to ensure that the moulding profiles are accurately matched and misalignment is kept to a minimum. Corners need to be puttied or finished, where necessary, to hide gaps or raw moulding showing due to minor misalignment or profile differences. The moulding shall have a rebate that is sufficiently deep to comfortably hold all of the framing components. A rebate build up should be used to achieve sufficient depth. If artwork is likely to touch the moulding, it must be sealed with strips of *Conservation mat board* or *Cotton Museum mat board* or a conservation foil and paper tape.

Window Mats

Window mats must be free from obvious defects and all window corners must be cut cleanly. *Cotton Museum mat board*, at least 4 ply thick, is acceptable. There must be clearance of 1 to 2mm inside the rebate. The window mat should where possible, overlap the edge of the artwork sufficiently and allow the artwork to expand and contract behind the window. Any pencil marks on the reverse of the window mat must be removed to prevent their transfer to the artwork. For photographs *unbuffered* mat board must be used. (This is only available currently in *Cotton Museum mat board*.) Where original window mats need to be retained, such as gilded or decorated mats, a barrier of no less than 2 ply, *Conservation mat board* or *Cotton Museum mat board* must be fitted the underside of the mat board in such a manner to prevent the original mat from touching the artwork.

Under Mount

The under mount is a barrier layer inserted between the back of the artwork and the backing board. The under mount must be made of at least 4 ply *Cotton Museum mat board*. For photographs *unbuffered Cotton Museum mat board* needs to be used. The under mount must be the same size as the mat board and hinged to it using a museum-quality paper or fabric with either starch paste or SCMC (sodium carboxy methyl cellulose).

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GENERAL FRAMING STANDARDS

Framing Category 5 – Museum (Cont.)

- Attaching artwork** Hinging - The artwork must be hinged to the under mount with T-hinges on the top back edge of the artwork and over-lapping sufficiently to adequately support the artwork. Gummed conservation or museum paper tape must be used. Japanese tissue paper and starch glue should be used for hinging artwork on tissue or similar paper. Masking tape or packaging tapes are not acceptable for hinging. In selecting a suitable hinging material the hinge must be weaker than the artwork to which it is attached. Artwork must be properly centered.
Corner pockets – These can be made from lignin free, *pH* neutral paper and attached using adhesive made from starch paste or SCMC (sodium carboxy methylcellulose).
See Appendix A for attaching textiles
- Glazing** Float glass or acrylic sheet providing UV protection and free from obvious defects must be used. The UV protection must prevent at least 90% of all UV rays penetrating the glass. The glazing must be sized to give sufficient clearance inside the frame rebate. A 2mm clearance is generally deemed acceptable. It is not acceptable for the glazing to touch the artwork.
Glass must be cleaned using either ammonia free glass cleaner or a mixture of demineralised water and methylated spirit.
- Backing Board** Backing boards must be made from *Acid Free Foam Core Board*. There must be clearance of 1 to 2mm inside the frame. The use of *MDF* board is not acceptable.
- Fitting Up** Dust and dirt must be removed prior to assembly and the glass cleaned and polished to remove marks. Framed components may be held into the frame using framer's points.
The back must be sealed with self-adhesive framing tape and burnished firmly to ensure a permanent seal. Masking tape and packaging tape are not acceptable. 'Bump Ons' must be fitted to the back of the frame where it is likely to come into contact with the wall. A label giving the date and the name of the framer must be adhered to the back. Where possible old labels should be refitted to the back. Hanging fittings must be sufficiently strong to support the weight of the frame. The use of cords and staples is not acceptable.
When framing art with medium that is likely to shed, e.g. pastels, a 4 or 6 ply mat board spacer must be positioned between the mat board and the artwork.
Notes:
- Where mat boards are not required the artwork must be held off the glass by using
 - Appropriate spacer material such as acrylic spacer, or *Cotton Museum mat board* strips.
 - At this level a label advising of the need to inspect the frame components every 5 years must be placed on the back of the frame.
 - When framing pastels the use of a fixative by the framer is not recommended unless discussed and approved by the client.

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GENERAL FRAMING STANDARDS

Glossary of terms

Acid Free Foam Core Board – Board having a polystyrene core and acid free paper liners.

Conservation mat board – Mat boards that meet the *FATG* for Conservation mat board.

Cotton Museum mat board - Mat boards that meet the *FATG* standard for Cotton Museum mat board

FATG – Acronym for Fine Art Trade Guild

‘*May*’ – Used to indicate that the provision is optional.

MDF – Acronym for Medium Density Fibre Board. For the purposes of this standard MDF shall include other wood pulp products including Masonite and ply wood.

Normal Conditions – This term means out of direct sunlight, within an ambient temperature range of 10 to 25 degrees Celsius, and relative humidity of between 40 to 60 percent.

pH – A scale (0 to 14) of measuring the acidity or alkalinity of materials. A measurement of 7 is neutral, less than 7 is acidic and greater than 7 is alkaline.

‘*Shall*’ – Used to indicate that the provision is mandatory.

‘*Should*’ – Used to indicate that the provision is not mandatory, but recommended as good practice.

Standard mat board – Mat boards that do not meet the *FATG* standard for Conservation or Cotton Museum Board.

Unbuffered – No alkaline filler

Amendments

Issue 2 (19/7/2004) – “Inc” added after “Picture Framers Guild of South Australia” in header and footer

Issue 3 (27/9/2004) – References added to page 10

Issue 4 (28/2/2006) – Reword and format. Numerous minor wording changes

Introduction added

Objective and Suitability clauses deleted. Rewritten into category introduction

Requirement for frames to be square and free from twist added at all levels

Acrylic sheet added to acceptable products for glazing

Clearances between components and frame standardized, now 1 to 2mm

Requirement of an under mount in Category 4 now conditional

Requirement for UV glazing at Category 5 now mandatory

Definitions for ‘shall’, ‘should’ and ‘may’ added in Glossary of Terms

Definition for MDF board added in Glossary of Terms

Definition for Acid free deleted in Glossary of Terms

Definition for Acid Free Foam Core Board added in Glossary of Terms

Appendix A added

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GENERAL FRAMING STANDARDS

Appendix A

Special requirements of attaching textiles

Framing Category 1 – Minimum

Embroideries

Textiles should be squared if possible. Whilst it is preferable to attach textile using lace-mounting or sewing techniques, at this level it is acceptable for fabric to be stapled to an appropriate backing.

Framing Category 2 – Economy

Embroideries

Textiles should be squared if possible. Whilst it is preferable to attach textile using lace-mounting or sewing techniques, at this level it is acceptable for fabric to be stapled to an appropriate backing. Unsightly knots and traveling stitches should be concealed.

Framing Category 3 – Quality

Embroideries, painted silks, flags

Textiles should be squared if possible. Items at this level shall be attached using lace-mounting or sewing techniques, (hand or machine), to an appropriate support such as foam core board. (The use of *MDF* board is not acceptable). Unsightly knots and traveling stitches should be concealed.

Framing Category 4 - Conservation

Embroideries, painted silks, flags

Textiles should be squared if possible. All processes shall be reversible. Items at this level shall be attached using lace mounting or hand sewing techniques to an appropriate support such as *Acid Free Foam Core board*. Threads and /or backing likely to come into contact with the textile shall be either a like product (e.g. silk on silk, cotton on cotton) or polyester. Unsightly knots and traveling stitches should be concealed.

Framing Category 5 – Museum

Embroideries, painted silks, flags

Textiles should be squared if possible. All processes shall be reversible. Items at this level shall be attached using lace mounting techniques over a museum quality support or hand sewing techniques to an appropriate backing. Threads and /or backing likely to come into contact with the textile shall be either a like product (e.g. silk on silk, cotton on cotton) or polyester. Unsightly knots and traveling stitches should be concealed.