

**PICTURE FRAMERS GUILD OF AUSTRALIA INCORPORATED
STANDARDS DOCUMENT**

WORKS ON CANVAS

Introduction

This Standard is intended to cover the framing of items on canvas.

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 I – 1st June 2006

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Framing Category 1 – Minimum

Note: It is not appropriate to frame works on canvas at Category 1 level.

Framing Category 2 – Economy

This category provides basic framing where price overrides visual appearance and quality. This category is suitable for mass produced items and open edition prints on canvas.

Component	Standard to Meet
Strainer / Stretcher	Material used must be appropriately profiled so that the canvas touches the strainer/stretcher at the outer edge only. Use cross bracing if required to prevent bowing of the strainer/stretcher. The strainer/stretcher when finished must be square and sit flat without twist.
Mounting Artwork	Preferably works on canvas should be stretched to a strainer or stretcher frame however it is acceptable for items to be permanently mounted down to hard board. (See Note 1 below).
Frame (If Required) Glazing	As per general standard If glazing is used at this level it must be free from obvious blemishes and of appropriate thickness for the frame size. The glazing must be sized to give sufficient clearance inside the frame. Sufficient clearance must be provided to prevent the glazing from touching the artwork. Glass must be cleaned to remove any dirt or smears. If Perspex is used the space between the Perspex and art surface must be sufficient to allow for flex in the Perspex. A minimum of 5mm or 1% of the maximum dimension is required.
Fitting Up	Secure mounted canvas into frame using framing points or other mechanical device that allows removal of the canvas from the frame. Hanging fittings must be sufficiently strong to support the frame.

Note 1 - This process is only recommended when conservation is not an issue. Framers should discuss this option fully with their customer before proceeding.

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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 under *normal conditions*. This category is suited to items of limited commercial and/or sentimental value. Preferably processes are to be reversible.

Component	Standard to Meet
Strainer / Stretcher	Material used must be appropriately profiled so that the canvas touches the strainer/stretcher at the outer edge only. Use cross bracing if required to prevent bowing of the strainer/stretcher. The strainer/stretcher when finished must be square and sit flat without twist.
Frame (If Required)	See general standard
Attaching Artwork	Canvas must be properly stretched to a strainer/stretcher frame and must not sag/bow or tear/distort. Corners of canvas to be neatly folded.
Glazing	If glazing is used at this level it must be free from obvious blemishes and of appropriate thickness for the frame size. The glazing must be sized to give sufficient clearance inside the frame. Sufficient clearance must be provided to prevent the glazing from touching the artwork. Glass must be cleaned to remove any dirt or smears. If Perspex is used the space between the Perspex and art surface must be sufficient to allow for flex in the Perspex. A minimum of 5mm or 1% of the maximum dimension is required.
Dust Cover	Dust cover must be made from regular or acid free foam core board, calico or TYVEK®. The use of MDF board is not acceptable.
Fitting Up	Framing points or canvas off sets that allows removal of the canvas from the frame are required. Hanging fittings must be sufficiently strong to support the frame.

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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 under *normal conditions*. The category is suited to collectable artwork that is to be kept for future generations, e.g. original paintings of moderate to high value, as well as items of sentimental or historical value. Processes 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

Strainer / Stretcher

Material used must be appropriately profiled so that the canvas touches the strainer/stretcher at the outer edge only. The timber used should be either cedar or pine (see note 1 below). On large frames cross bracing must be used to prevent bowing of the strainer/stretcher. Where stretchers are used corner wedges must be fitted to allow for future stretching.

The strainer/stretcher when finished must be square and sit flat without twist.

Frame (If Required)

See general standard

Attaching Artwork

Canvas must be properly stretched to a stretcher frame. The canvas must not sag/bow or tear/distort. Corners of canvas to be neatly folded. Woven cotton strip lining tape must be used between staples and canvas.

Dust Cover

Dust cover must be made from **acid free** foam core board or TYVEK®.

Glazing

If glazing is used at this level it must be free from obvious blemishes and of appropriate thickness for the frame size. Glass that blocks more than 90 per cent of all UV rays should be considered unless work is to hang where there are already controlled UV levels (e.g. some museums). The glazing must be sized to give sufficient clearance inside the frame. Sufficient clearance must be provided to prevent the glazing from touching the artwork. Glass must be cleaned using either ammonia free glass cleaner or demineralised water with methylated spirit to remove any dirt or smears.

If Perspex is used the space between the Perspex and art surface must be sufficient to allow for flex in the Perspex. A minimum of 5mm or 1% of the maximum dimension is required.

Fitting Up

When fitting to a frame canvas off sets or similar mechanical fastening that allows removal of the canvas from the frame are required. Framer's points may be used in deep frames.

Hanging fittings must be sufficiently strong to support the frame.

Points of contact between the frame rebate and the front of the canvas must be lined with polyester felt tape or polyethylene foam to prevent damage to the canvas image.

A label giving the date and the name of the framer must be adhered to the back. In addition a label advising of the need to inspect the frame components every 5 years must also be placed on the back of the frame.

Note: any existing labels need to be preserved as this can provide provenance for the art.

Note 1. Other timbers may be used however these must be sealed with either shelac, acrylic, gesso, polyurathane, or archival tape.

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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 under *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.

Stretcher

Material used must be appropriately profiled so that the canvas touches the stretcher at the outer edge only. The timber used shall be cedar and corner wedges shall be fitted to allow for future stretching. The area of the frame that comes into contact with the back of canvas must be sealed. On large frames cross bracing must be used to prevent bowing of the stretcher. The stretcher when finished must be square and sit flat without twist. Strainer frames are not approved at this level.

Frame

See general standard.
Frame rebate must be sufficiently deep to accommodate canvas and dust cover.

Attaching Artwork

Canvas must be properly stretched to a stretcher frame. The canvas must not sag/bow or tear/distort. Corners of canvas to be neatly folded. Stainless steel staples must be used. Woven cotton strip lining tape must be used between staples and canvas.

Dust Cover

Dust cover must be made from **acid free** foam core board or TYVEK® only.

Glazing

Glazing must be free from obvious blemishes and of appropriate thickness for the frame size. Museum-quality glazing must be used i.e. glazing that blocks more than 90 per cent of all UV rays unless work is to hang where there are already controlled UV levels (e.g. some museums). The glazing must be sized to give sufficient clearance inside the frame. Sufficient clearance must be provided to prevent the glazing from touching the artwork. Glass must be cleaned using either ammonia free glass cleaner or demineralised water with methylated spirit to remove any dirt or smears. If Perspex is used the space between the Perspex and art surface must be sufficient to allow for flex in the Perspex. A minimum of 5mm or 1% of the maximum dimension is required.

Fitting Up

When fitting to a frame canvas off sets or similar mechanical fastening that allows removal of the canvas from the frame are required. Framer's points may be used in deep frames.

Hanging fittings must be sufficiently strong to support the frame.

Points of contact between the frame rebate and the front of the canvas must be lined with polyester felt tape or polyethylene foam to prevent damage to the canvas image.

Any areas of raw timber that may come into contact with the canvas sides must be sealed using appropriate materials.

A label giving the date and the name of the framer must be adhered to the back. In addition a label advising of the need to inspect the frame components every 5 years must also be placed on the back of the frame.

Note: any existing labels need to be preserved as this can provide provenance for the art.

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Note 1. Other timbers may be used however these must be sealed with either shelac, acrylic, gesso, polyurathane, or archival tape.

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General notes:

Working with old canvas – Framers should exercise extreme care when working with old canvas and should seek advice from either a Guild framer experienced in stretching or preferably an appropriate conservator.
Framers should advise customers not to frame works on canvas until the paint is fully dry.

Glossary of terms

Acid Free – Containing no acid.

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.

AMENDMENTS

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