

How To Professionally Mat A Photo Step By Step Guide



Prepared by the Competition and Exhibits Committee
Coastal Carolina Camera Club

How To Mat a Photograph

Matting photos isn't a major task if you take the time to learn the techniques involved. You can save a lot of money, especially if you happen to be trying to get a photography business off the ground or to exhibit your work in a gallery.

Keep in mind that some galleries have requirements you must follow, such as color of mat/frame, etc.

Having a photo professionally matted can cost you quite a bit of money, especially if you have it framed as well.

However, if you're displaying your matted photos for sale, it's a lucrative way to cut costs by learning to do it yourself.

The process isn't hard. It's just important to do it correctly so that your finished product looks professional.

Photo Matting Supplies

- Photo
- Mat (color should coordinate with photo) - single or double mat
- Mat board or foam board - 3/16ths
- Heavy object such as a glass or picture weight
- Framing tape - called hinging tape
- Double sided sticky tape for framing
- Clear sleeve preferably with a flap if selling
- Stickers with logo for back of mat board if selling

All materials used in photo framing should be acid-free and archival quality

How to mat the photo

- Select a photo
- If there are no restrictions, select a mat that brings out the colors in the photo.
- Cut foam board or purchase to match size of the mat. So if you're using a mat that's 11x14 for instance, cut the foam board to 11x14.

Sometimes mats can differ so it's "best" to cut the foam board yourself with a sharp razor tool.

You can also purchase foam board with the mat in some frame stores on sale. Just make sure they match up - the mat isn't bigger than the board or vice versa.



- Put picture on foam board and slip mat over the top of it. The trick here is to position the photo exactly where you want it inside the mat.

Note that it does not have to be perfectly straight - it will be under the mat! It just must be in the position you want it to be when the mat is finally in place.



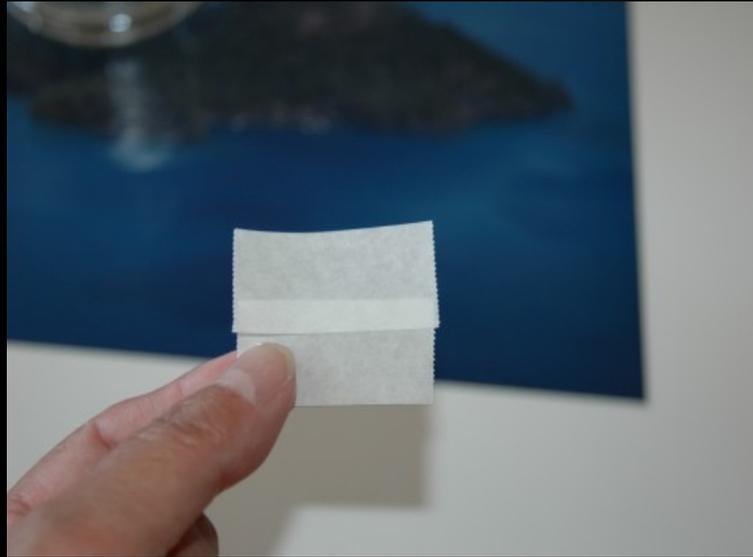
- Put a weight on the picture to hold it in place. A heavy drinking glass works well or you can purchase a professional picture weight (or make your own).
- Carefully remove the mat from atop the picture which is still on the foam board.

Make sure the object is heavy and most importantly is clean so as not to damage the photograph.



- Leaving the picture in place, tear off 2 pieces of the framer's tape to make your picture anchors.
- Make a double joint of the tape, so 1 piece sticks to the foam board and 1 piece sticks to the photograph.

Place this at the top of the photo only. Carefully slip it under the picture but do not move the picture (it is still anchored by the weight).



If a large picture, you might want to affix 2 or 3 spots along the top of the picture. If a very small print such as a 4 x 6 and you are making a 5 x 7 mat, this method isn't necessary.

- Put on the double sided sticky tape in strips in a rectangle – leave glass or weight in place.

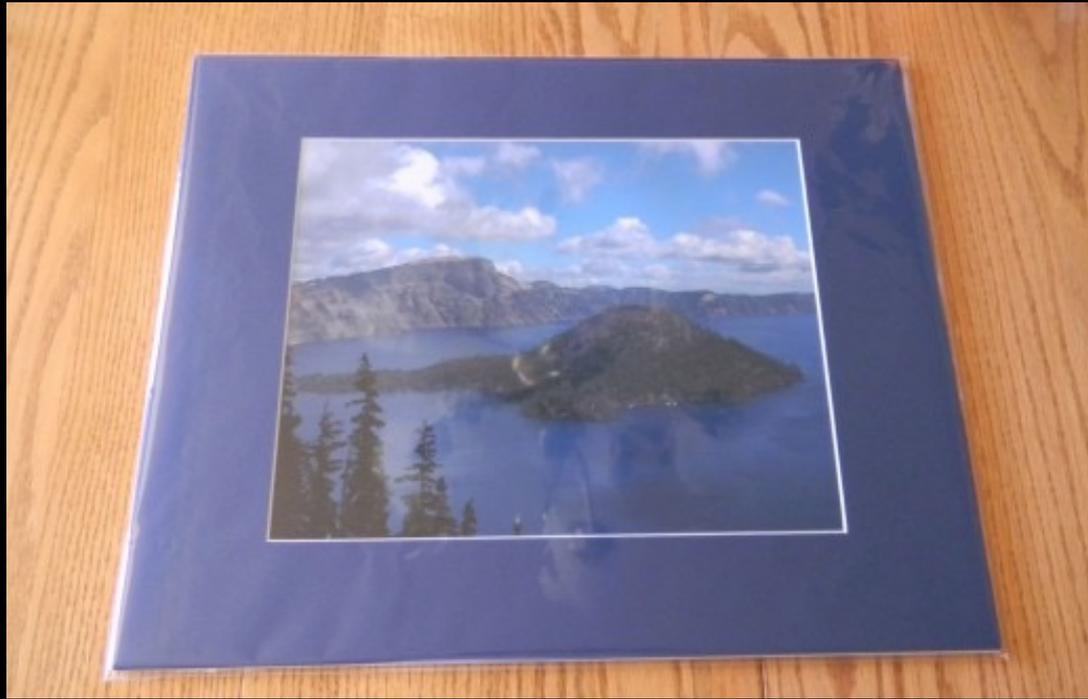




- Peel off sticky tape – leave glass in place.

- Place mat over the photo - press down on all sides.
- Remove glass or weight





- The picture is now ready for framing.
- If you're going to be selling your matted photo, attach your logo label to the back of the foam board.
- Slip the matted photo into a clear plastic sleeve with a flap and seal. This keeps the photo clean from the atmosphere especially if you do outside shows and also keeps the matting free of fingerprints

LIST OF SUPPLIES and SUPPLIERS

- Scotch – Permanent Double Sided Tape
- Framer's Tape – PH neutral #4275
United Mfrs. Supplies, Inc.
800-645-7260
- MatBoard Plus. Com – 1-888-949-4443
- Redimat.com 1-877-883-1011

United Manufacturers sells wood and metal frames and a lot of other artist's supplies.

QUESTIONS?