

AMY CATERINA / PALOMAR COLLEGE / PHOTO 120

CUTTING A WINDOW MAT

Tools and materials you will need:

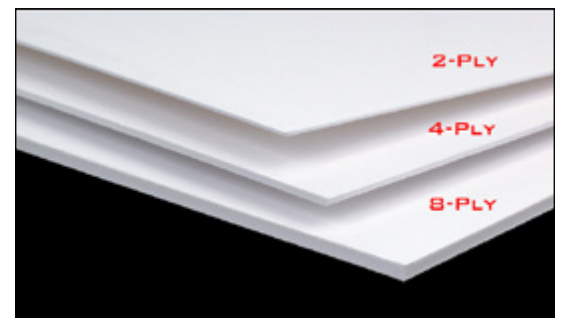
1. Flat, hard table
2. Mat cutter and plenty of new blades
3. Thin lead Pencil-0.5
4. White or kneadable eraser
5. A weight of some kind
6. Good straightedge – a metal, cork-lined ruler at least 24"
7. See-through plastic ruler/t-square x2
8. Tape - acid-free linen, Tyvek or artist's tape
9. Clean, soft brush to dust off the work
10. Gloves



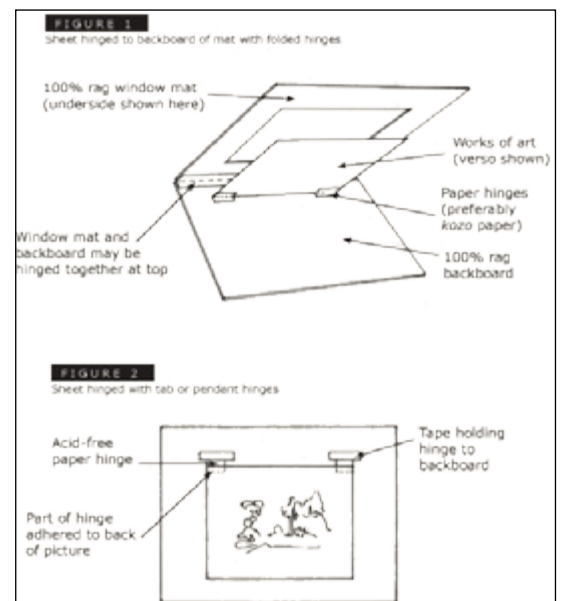
Usually a window mat is measured to cut 1/8" --1/4" into the image area, so the resulting window is slightly smaller than your image. This is a very clean look.

CUTTING A WINDOW MAT:

1. Measure the image's (horizontal) width.
2. If you want to make the smaller window as described above, you will have to remember to subtract 1/4" from the total width. (That is an 1/8 inch smaller on each side)
3. Subtract that number from the board's width then divide that by 2. This will give you the measurement in from each side.
4. Write this down.
5. Do the same for the image's vertical height and subtract from the board's height. This will give you a symmetrical window....same distance on right and left and top and bottom. HOWEVER, you want more room at the bottom than the top. Visually this seems to look better. The sides and top can be the same with a bit more at the bottom.
6. I lay the print down on the board and move it up and down until I like what I see.



EXAMPLE-Cutting a window for a horizontal 6x9 print on a horizontal 11x14 board: Using the formula above you would have 2.5 inches all around. If you want more space at the bottom (preferred) you would adjust your print so that it has 3" at the bottom and 2" at the top.



7. These measurements are drawn onto the back of the board. Check the matboard first to make sure it is clean and there are no marks on the front side.
8. Use a good ruler or plastic t-square to make dots along the desired measurement. Then connect the dots. Accuracy is important!!! Use a good straight edge and a fine point pencil! Measure everything again after you have drawn the lines. I cannot tell you how many times this has saved

me from cutting the wrong size mat!!! Now you cut the mat.

9. Follow the directions for your mat-cutter. Some mat cutters use a push and some use a pull. You might want to try someone's first before you buy. I use a Logan 700 S Studio Simplex and a 301 S Compact. It will take practice and there will be some waste as you attempt to create your windows.
10. There are trouble-shooting instructions that come with your cutter so look up what's wrong. Typical problem areas; blade depth, using a dull blade, uneven pressure, backing sheet problems, and overcuts.

The materials you use for mounting/matting your photographs are critically important. Only archival, acid free/lignin free materials should be used. I buy mine from Archival Methods or Lumiere but there are many other places/brands. I use 2 to support the work and 4ply or thicker to overmat the work.

RESOURCES

<https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=smAluaQUM44&-feature=youtu.be>
<http://www.prettyhandygirl.com/cut-art-mat-like-pro/>
<http://www.dpmag.com/how-to/tip-of-the-week/how-to-cut-window-mats-9-1-14>

