

# Simple Print Mounting

by

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This treatise sets out to describe the steps to simply face mount photographs on cardboard using an adhesive as opposed to cutting mats and inserting the photo behind the board. There are several things you should take into account such as the photograph, the board, its colour, the adhesive and the tools you need.

## The Photograph

If your photograph is home processed on an ink jet printer. Try to, allow 24 hours for the print to dry properly. Unless it is properly dry the print surface can become damaged when handling it.

## The Mounting Board

Choose the board colour carefully. The right colour can enhance a picture. Whilst this is a matter of taste, you will often hear a judge remark on the picture mount and whether it compliments the picture. A poorly produced mount can draw adverse comments and may even affect the final mark

For even small prints the board should be at least two millimetres thick. One can either buy a large board typically measuring say, 84 cm x 59 cm (33" x 23.5") and cut it down to size, or buy a pack of ready cut boards. Cutting large boards down to smaller sizes is not straightforward. If you are new to mounting photos I suggest you consider using a ready cut board such as the ones supplied by Firstcall Photographic (see below for further details).

However, if you are planning to enter the '4-Prints on a theme' competition depending on the size of your photographs you may need to buy a large board.

## The Adhesive

I recommend 3M Spray Mount and buy mine in 400ml spray tins. The advantage is that it sprays the adhesive evenly and if you need to re-position the print when you are sticking it down you can. Do not expect to do this ad infinitum. Aim to put the print in the right place to start with.

## The Tools

A firm flat surface on which to work is essential. You will probably need to trim your picture. Assuming that you are working on an A4 or smaller sized photographs, to do this you will need a 305 mm (12") flat steel rule (anything but steel will easily become cut) and a craft knife,. Ideally, you will also have a 600mm x 450 mm self-sealing cutting mat. However, you could use several layers of newspaper, thick enough for the knife blade not to penetrate to the surface beneath. To do the mounting you will also need a pencil and a soft cloth. Lastly, have some white spirit and a cloth handy to clean up any excess adhesive. If you using the large boards, and have to cut them, you will need a long 92 cm (36") straight metal, preferably steel, flat rule (not an extending rule).

## The Method

Look closely at your picture and trim away any excess white edging or indeed any unnecessary foreground or sky that might detract from the visual impact of the main subject. Whether landscape or portrait shape, the picture has to be placed centrally on the mounting board. Measure the width of the picture and compare it with the width of the board. Work out a position for the print that will give you an even border on each side. As a general rule try not to have borders that are less than 2.5 cms wide otherwise the picture will look cramped. For large prints a more generous border will look better. Carefully put two pencil guide dots alongside which, the print will be placed. If you are right-handed they will be on the left border. Next, choose a top border width that will give you a top border slightly smaller

than the bottom boarder. Again mark the top print edge position with two small guide dots. Put the print into position and check that the guide dots are in the right place to put the picture in the centre of the horizontal axis.

Next we have to apply the adhesive. A light spray should be applied up and down and across the picture making sure that the corners are well covered. As the spray can get everywhere, I tend to do this outside, using a clothes peg to hold the photo against a folded newspaper. After say, the up and down spraying I move the peg and do the across spraying to ensure that everywhere is covered. Do not attempt to mount the picture on the board for 30 – 45 seconds to give a chance for the adhesive to go 'off'. After this resting pause, it is possible to put one's fingers on the sticky side with out too much coming off. Align the print with the pencil guide dots and smooth the print down with the soft cloth. Job done! Should any of the adhesive find its way onto the print surface with some inks it is possible to wipe it away with a soft cloth and white spirit without damage. But, try it on another print first in case it has the effect of removing the ink as well as the adhesive.

## **Enhancements**

To improve the appearance of the finished work some people like to mount the print onto a thin white card or even paper and then trim off the excess card/paper to leave say, a two to three millimetre border to the picture. In this case it is easiest to put the photo any where on the white card/paper without bothering too much regarding its position as you are going to trim off the excess card/paper. The colour of the edging could also be chosen to improve the appearance of the print. The print with its edging is then pasted on the mounting board using the method above. Some think that whilst white and other colour boarders can be applied in the photographic processing, doing it as described enhances the overall appearance.

## **Where to buy large size mounting board?**

In the local area I suggest that you look at Bookends in Wokingham (rather a small choice), The Print Room in Bracknell (also a small choice), Hobbycraft in Reading and one you may not be familiar with, Creative world, The Bishop Centre, Taplow SL6 0NX who have a fairly wide selection of boards and colours.

## **Where to buy cut mounting board?**

Have a look at [www.firstcallphotographic.co.uk](http://www.firstcallphotographic.co.uk) as mentioned above. I do not have any interest in them but, they offer a good deal. They say:

*We have re-launched our range of inexpensive board this year.... Our unique range of double sided board allows you a twin colour choice to make the most of your mounting budget. The colour options are white/cream, grey/black or olive green/brown.*

*Packed in 10's, we have extended the sizes available too. We can offer board in 10 x12, 12 x16, 16 x20 and 20 x24 inch sizes. As the usual way to mount board is to allow a 1 inch border around the print this means that paper sizes of 8 x 10, 10 x 12, 12 x 16 or 16 x 20 inches will be perfectly presented.*

*The best thing about our mounting board this year though is that we have re-negotiated our contract with the British manufacturer allowing us to do a 3-for-2 deal on all sizes. Simply buy two of the same size board and we will give you the third pack FREE.*