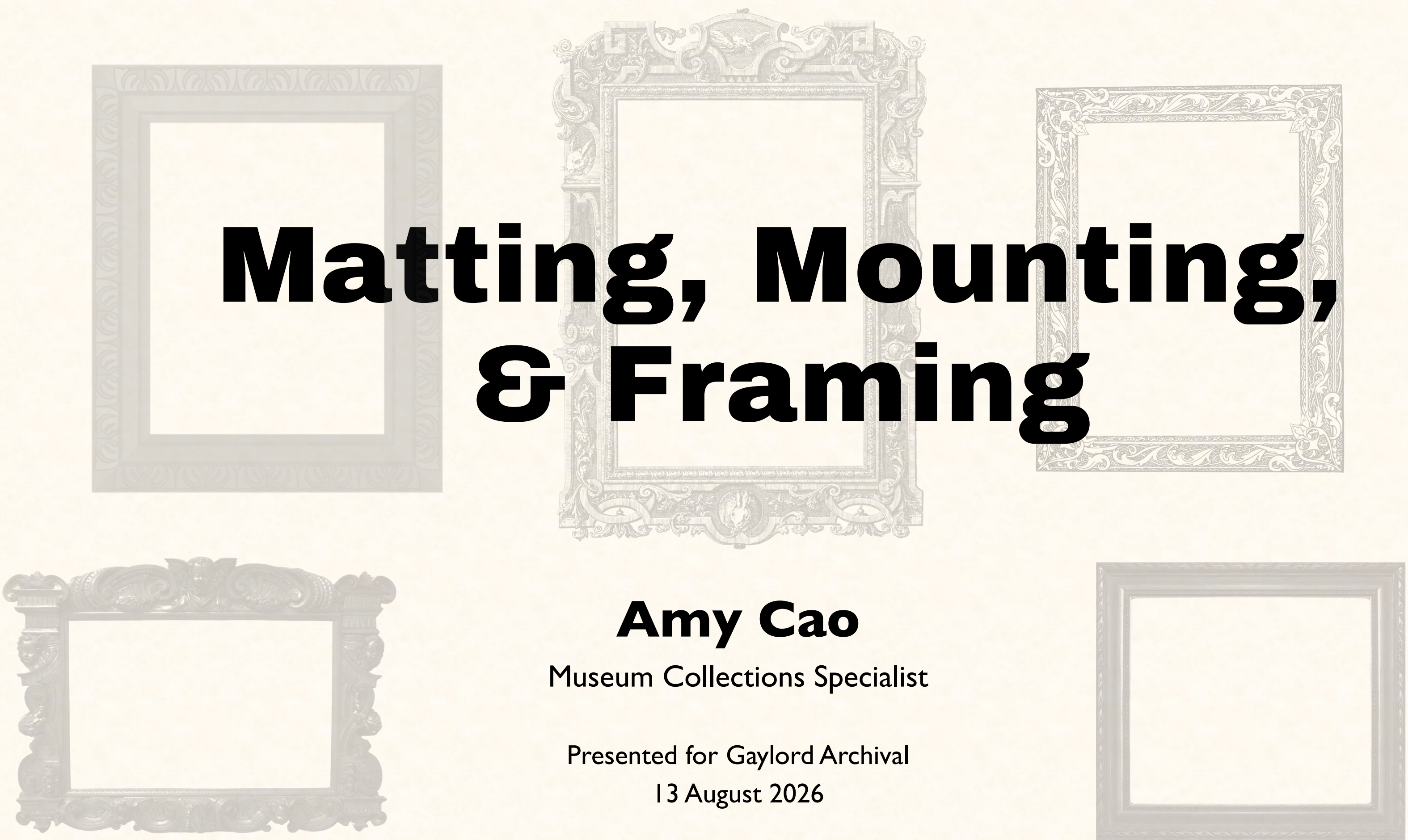




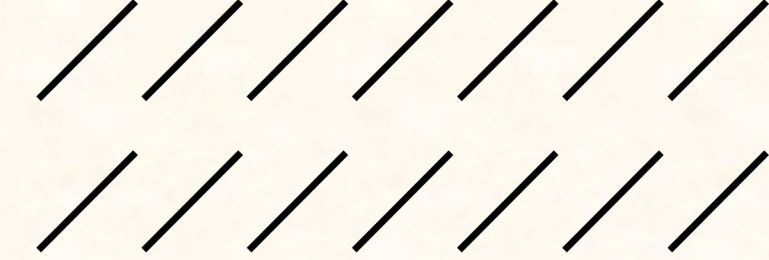
Matting, Mounting, & Framing

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Museum Collections Specialist

Presented for Gaylord Archival

13 August 2026



This presentation includes

- An overview of matting, mounting, & framing techniques
- Expert-recommended materials & supplies to use
- Options for a variety of budget & collection needs

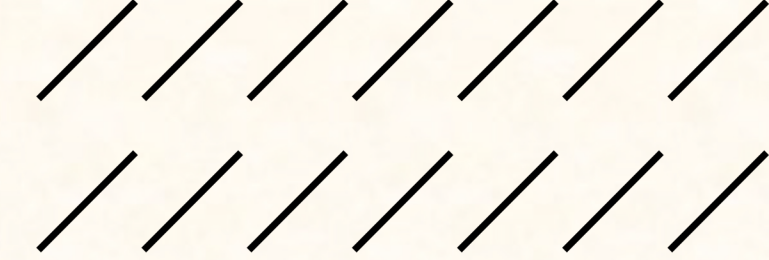


**Don't
PANiC!**

When you see this icon, remember not to panic!

There is a lot of info out there on matting, mounting, and framing. Knowing the basics is a great place to start when thinking about these things from both preservation and display perspectives.

I don't know everything, and you probably don't need to know everything either!



Matting

- The border thing that surrounds an artwork
- Can serve both aesthetic and preservation purposes

Mounting

- How you get artwork to stay in the spot you want
- What you add instead of the “sandwich it all into the frame and hope it squishes enough to not succumb to gravity” approach

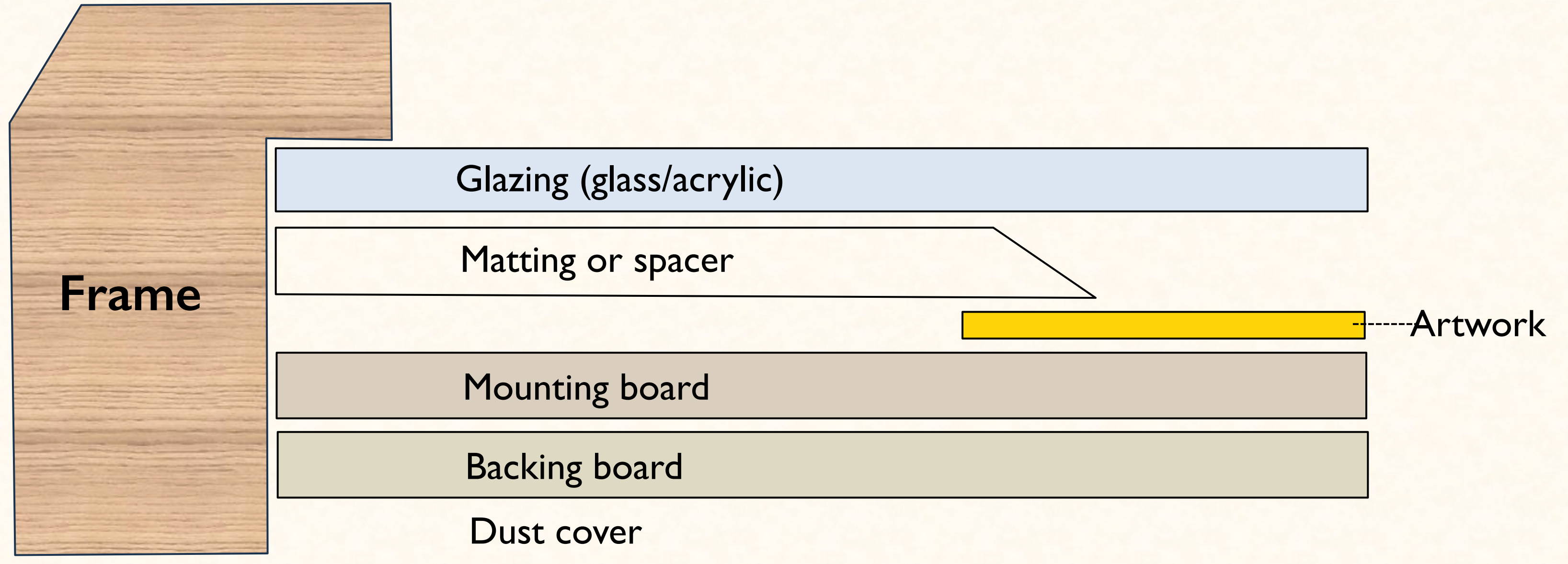
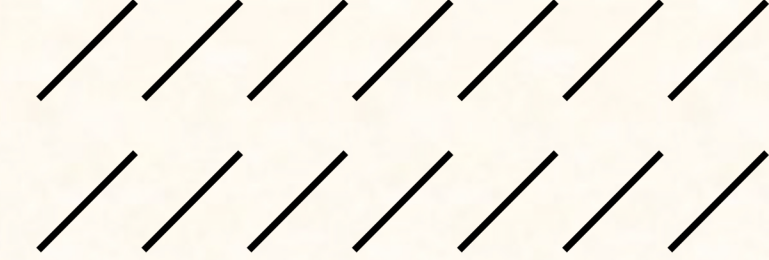
Framing

- The thing that encases artwork
- Can serve aesthetic and preservation purposes
- We'll talk frame anatomy later!



Note: I may use the term “artwork” throughout the presentation—know that I’m not exclusively talking about art. This could apply to archival documents, photographs, other objects/items/belongings that you may have in mind.

Frame anatomy



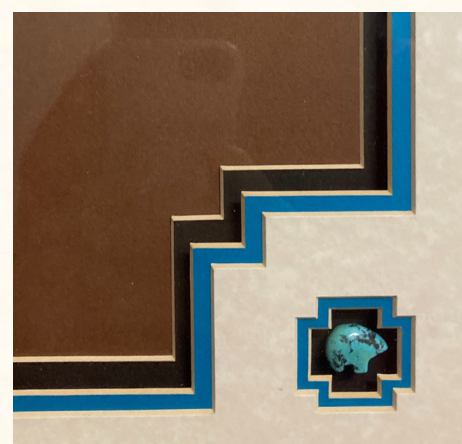
Matting

Mats can not only enhance the look of works, but they can also provide support and protection - both while on display and in storage!



Existing matting

Many works may come pre-matted and framed...
with a lot of artistry and personality!



**Don't
PANiC!**

pH Testing Pens (e.g., Abbey pens) are a handy tool to test matboards for acidity! A small mark on a non-visible part of the mat may tell you if it's acidic or not.



Abbey pH Pen™
#PH65

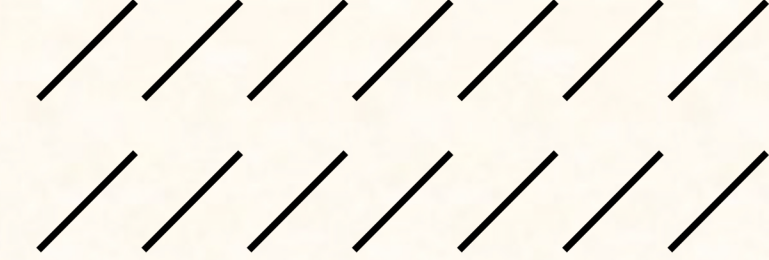


...or were matted in ways that may not be the best for long-term preservation standards.

While this isn't always ideal, there may be some things to consider, for example:

- Is the mat **part** of that artwork? If yes, then does that make you want to remove it? Swap it out? Add a barrier?
- Does it matter for that artwork? Is it a replica or original work being matted?

Choosing new matting



Rising Buffered Museum
Board Sample Corner Kit
#RMBC-K

Board used for matting comes in different colors, different sizes, different plys, different materials, and with or without customizations (like pre-cut windows).

Many suppliers offer samples so you can see what works best for you and/or your artwork.

*Tip: I've had good luck buying from local shops—helps save on shipping costs, and I've also gotten discounts or freebies of slightly dinged or damaged board!

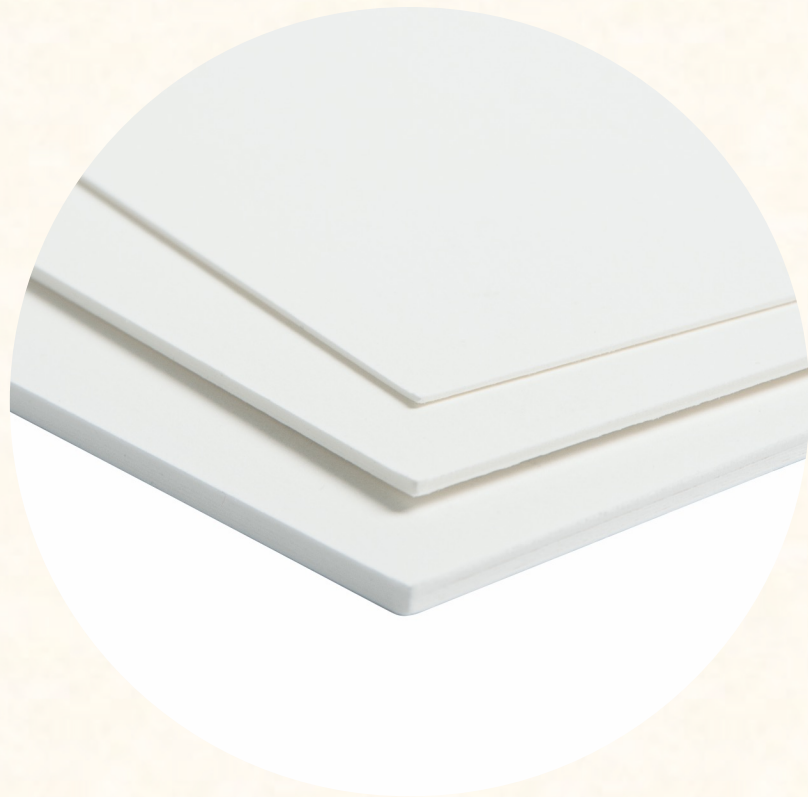
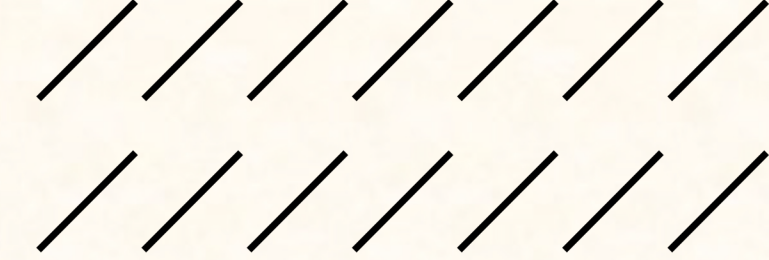


**DoN't
PANiC!**

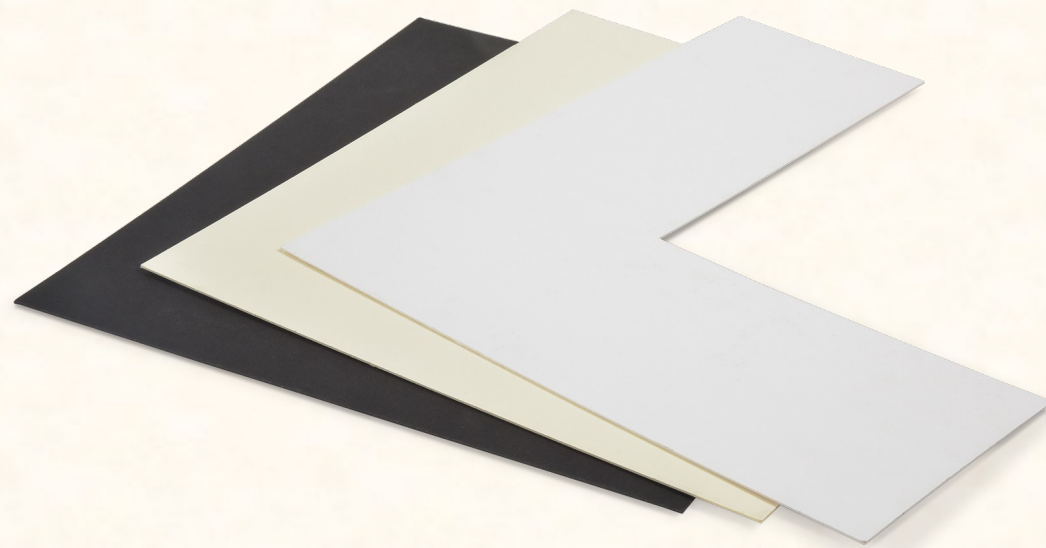
“Mat board? Museum board?? What are these words??? What should I choose????”

Here are some quick tips to help you make decisions on what is what and when to use what.

*Note: This may not be consistent from supplier to supplier! Always remember to check the specs and material content before purchasing. Most suppliers have a representative you can ask all those nitty-gritty questions if you can't find them on the product page.



Rising Buffered Museum
Matting & Mounting Board
#HYB09264



Gaylord Archival® Buffered Museum
Matting & Mounting Board
#HYB09655

Museum board

*Note: This is not firm advice for
all situations!

What it is:

Sometimes called “museum-grade” mat board or “100% cotton rag board.”
Usually refers to 100% cotton rag as the material; thus, it is acid-free and lignin-free.

Pros/Cons:

Probably the best choice for long-term preservation and will not cause acid burn/acid contamination. Usually more expensive.

When to use it:

Would recommend using this for museum objects and originals/artworks that you want to preserve long-term.

If you are making a mat enclosure to store an artwork, use this.

Mat board

///
///
*Note: This is not firm advice for
all situations!

What it is:

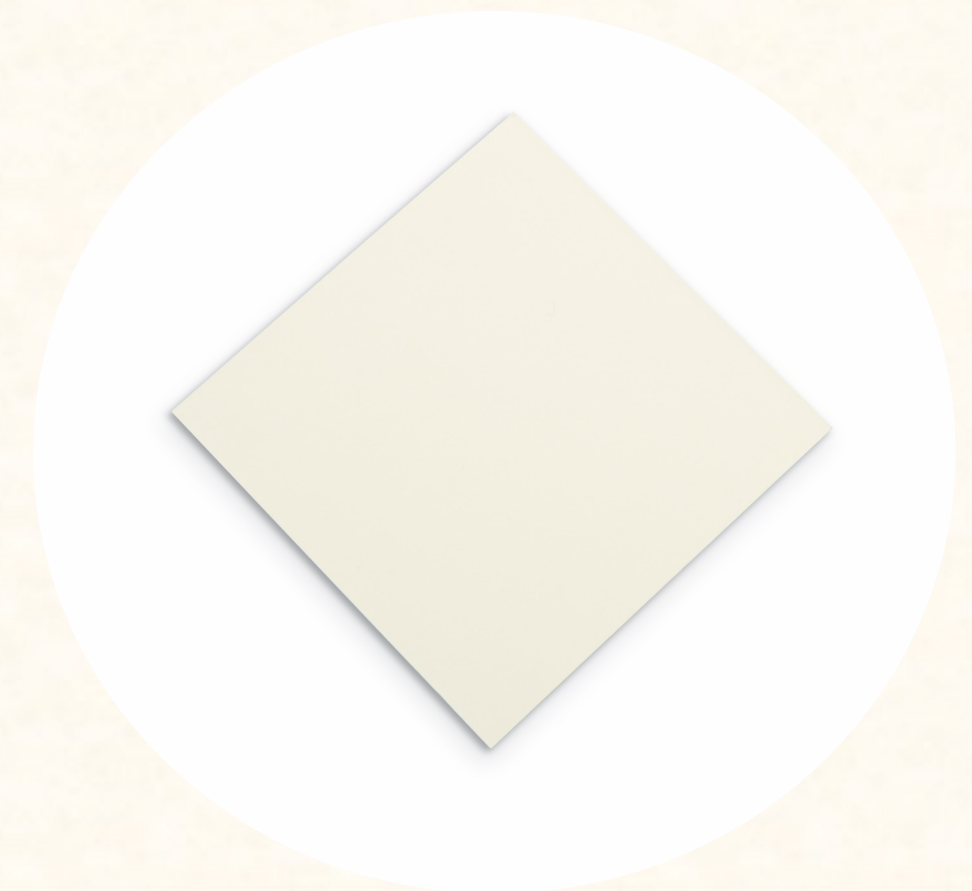
Typically made of wood pulp. Many sold today will be processed to be acid-free and/or lignin-free; may also have a cotton rag core to reduce lignin-based acid.

Pros/Cons:

Again, many of these will not be acidic or may not pose an immediate threat to artwork, BUT it's not always clear depending on where you get it and what it's made from. Overall, not ideal if you're thinking of the highest preservation standards. It's cheaper and more available locally.

When to use it:

Not to say that it doesn't have good applications! This is great for reproductions/replicas/facsimiles that are made just for display (e.g., not collection objects or original artwork); personal photos that you may not care about lasting forever.



Rising Buffered Conservation
Matting & Mounting Board
#HYB09275

Matting example: Window-mat package



Materials for making a basic window mat (without the fanciest equipment or materials)

DoN't
PANiC!

- Museum/mat board
- Logan pull-style bevel mat cutter (e.g., Logan Model 2000 or 4000)
- Blades for mat cutter (whatever corresponds to mat cutter model)
- Pencil (& optional eraser)
- Lightweight ruler
- Heavy-duty ruler (aluminum L 48" x W 2")
- Clamps
- Self-healing cutting mat (to do all of this on!)



Rising Buffered
Museum Board Sample
Corner Kit
#RMBC-K



Logan Handheld
Mat Cutter
#2000ADVANCED



Replacement Blades
for Logan Mat Cutter
#270



No. 2 Pencils
#476919



Magic Rub Erasers
#73207



Dahle® Cutting Mat
#HYB01247

Mounting

Mounting is how you get something to stay where you want it to in a frame or in a mat package.

Remember, this is what you do instead of the squish/sandwich method.

*Note: Also remember that we are mostly talking about works on paper. There are different mounting methods for works on other media.

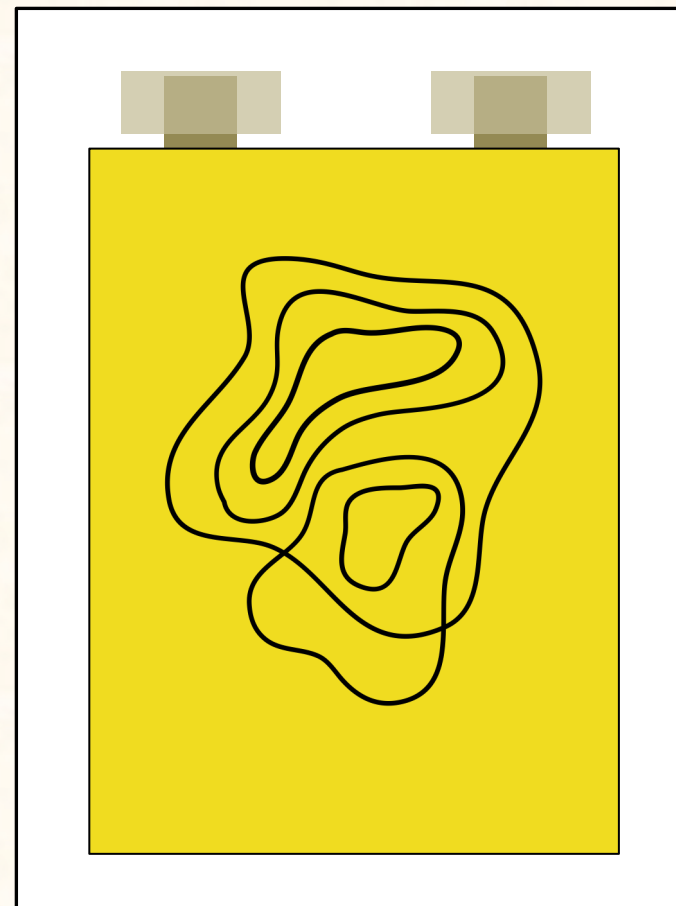


Mounting methods for works on paper: Hinging

Hinging is a secure way of mounting a work onto a backboard. Using materials like hinging tape (e.g., linen self-adhesive or gummed + water) or Kozo (Japanese mulberry paper) adhered with wheat or rice starch paste, these hinges are sturdy but reversible.

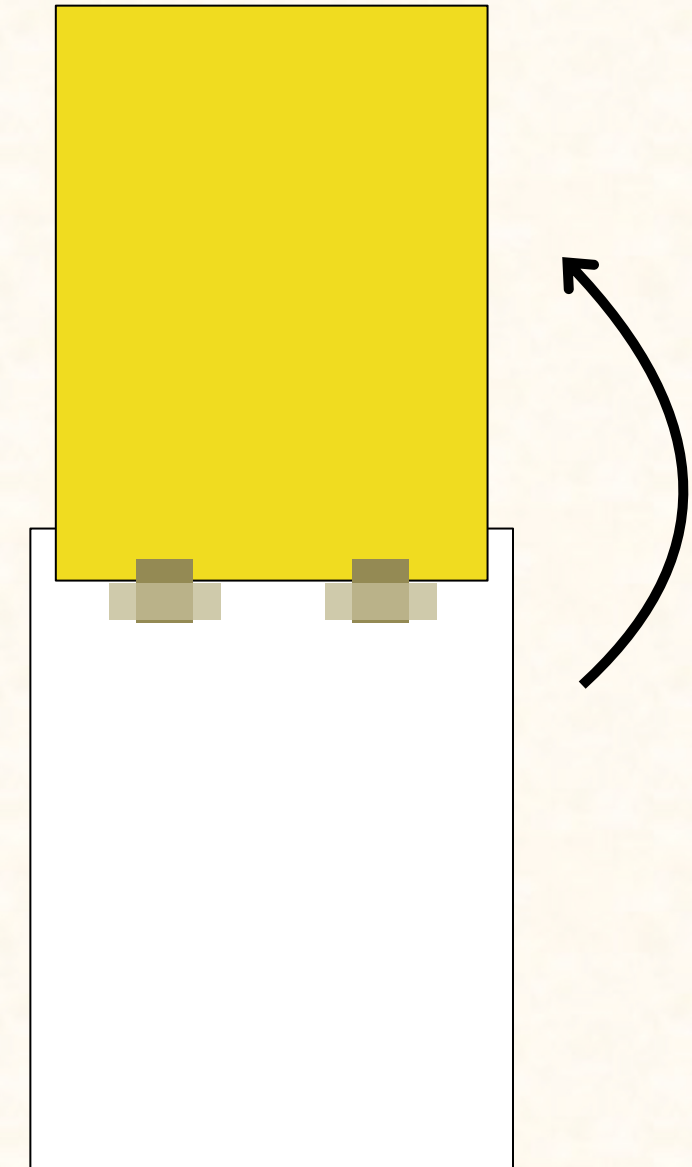
T-Hinge

(visible if you don't cover with a window mat)



V-Hinge

(invisible, can allow a work to appear to “float”)

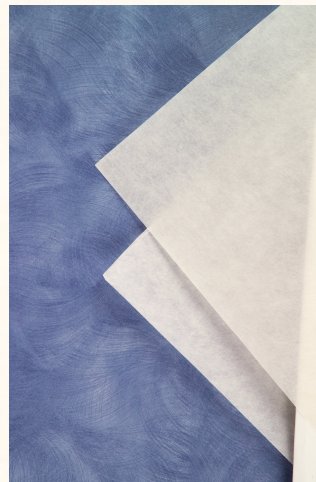


*Note: Something to remember for any framed or matted works (especially in storage!)—make sure the edge with hinges is at the top! If something gets stored sideways, it may put too much strain on the hinges and make them fail.

Materials for making “T” or “V” Hinges

Don't
PANIC!

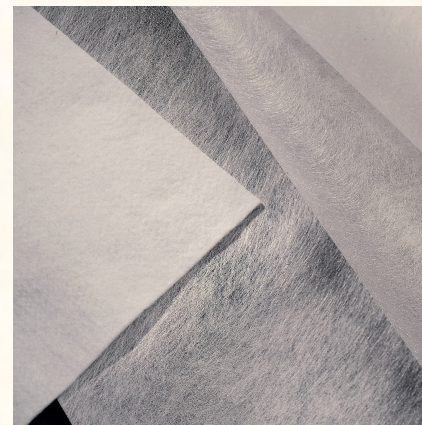
- Kozo (mulberry paper – or other Japanese paper for hinging)
- Wheat paste (pre-mixed or wheat starch powder + distilled water) and a small cup
- Reemay
- Blotting paper
- Paint brush
- Tweezers
- Weights
- Museum/mat board to attach ‘em to!
- Optional but helpful: metal pick or similar tool
- Optional: small metal spatula



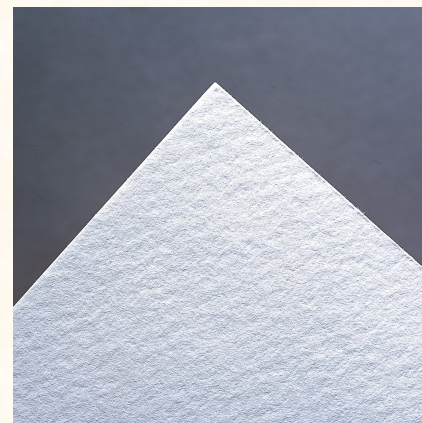
Machine-Made
Kozo-Shi Paper
#51038



Pre-Cooked Instant
Wheat Starch Paste
#52000



Spunbonded
Polyester Reemay®
#HYB01370



Unbuffered Blotting Paper
#UBP20301



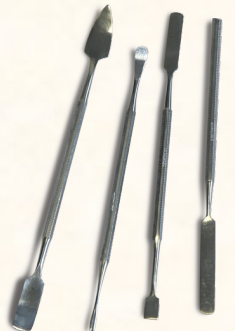
Set of 4 Tweezers
#T4



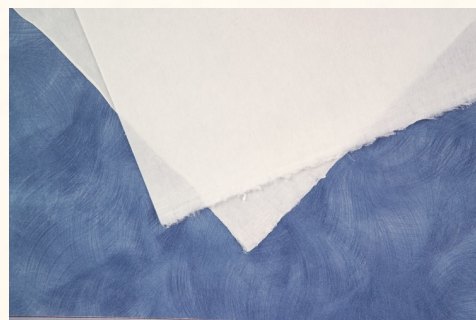
Benchmark Brass
Weights
#BM5000



Rising Buffered
Museum Board
Sample Corner Kit
#RMBC-K



Set of 4 Mini
Spatulas
#MS4



Handmade
Mulberry Paper
#51043

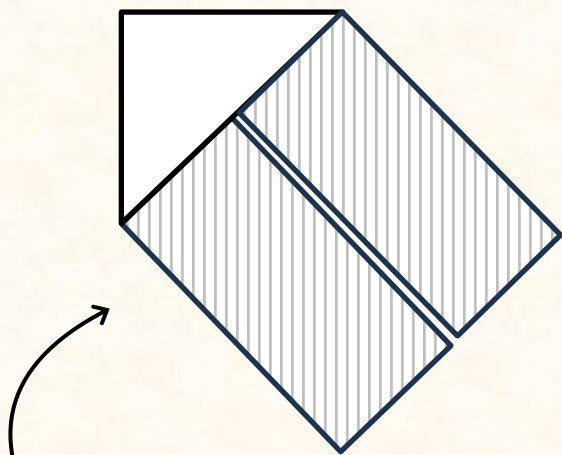
Mounting methods for works on paper:

Corners

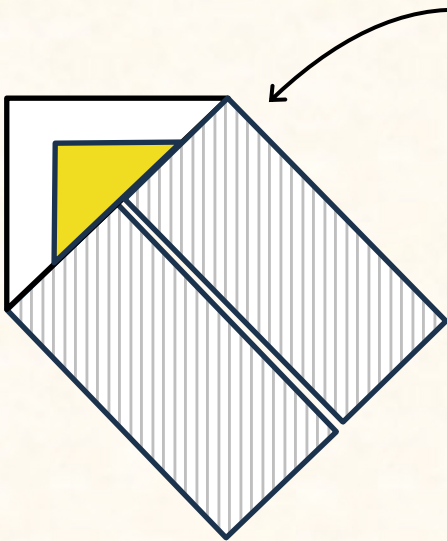
Paper corners or edge strips are great for mounting more fragile paper/materials because you're not adhering anything directly to the works. They're easy to make and fairly cheap (just make sure you're not using an acidic paper). These will be visible if not covered by a window mat.

Paper Corners

With two small folds, you can turn a strip of paper into a corner!

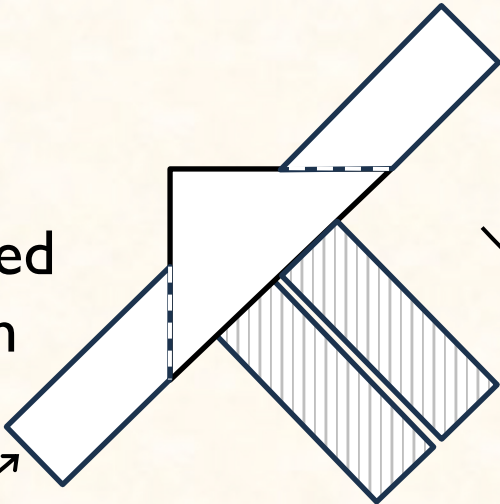


Basic paper corner



Paper corner with yellow area cut out to show more artwork

Amy's fave modified paper corner with wings



Materials for making paper corners

Don't
PANIC!

Time for a
poll!

- Acid-free paper (e.g. Permalife)
- Bone folder tool (or something to make a crease)
- Utility blade or scissors
- Ruler
- Weights
- Linen hinging tape (self-adhesive)
- Museum/mat/backing board board to attach 'em to!



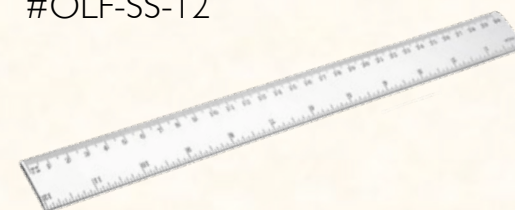
Permalife 20 lb.
Bond Paper
#HYB00968



Gaylord Archival® 6"
Genuine Bone Folder
#6480



Olfa® Stainless Steel
Slide-Lock Knife
#OLF-SS-12



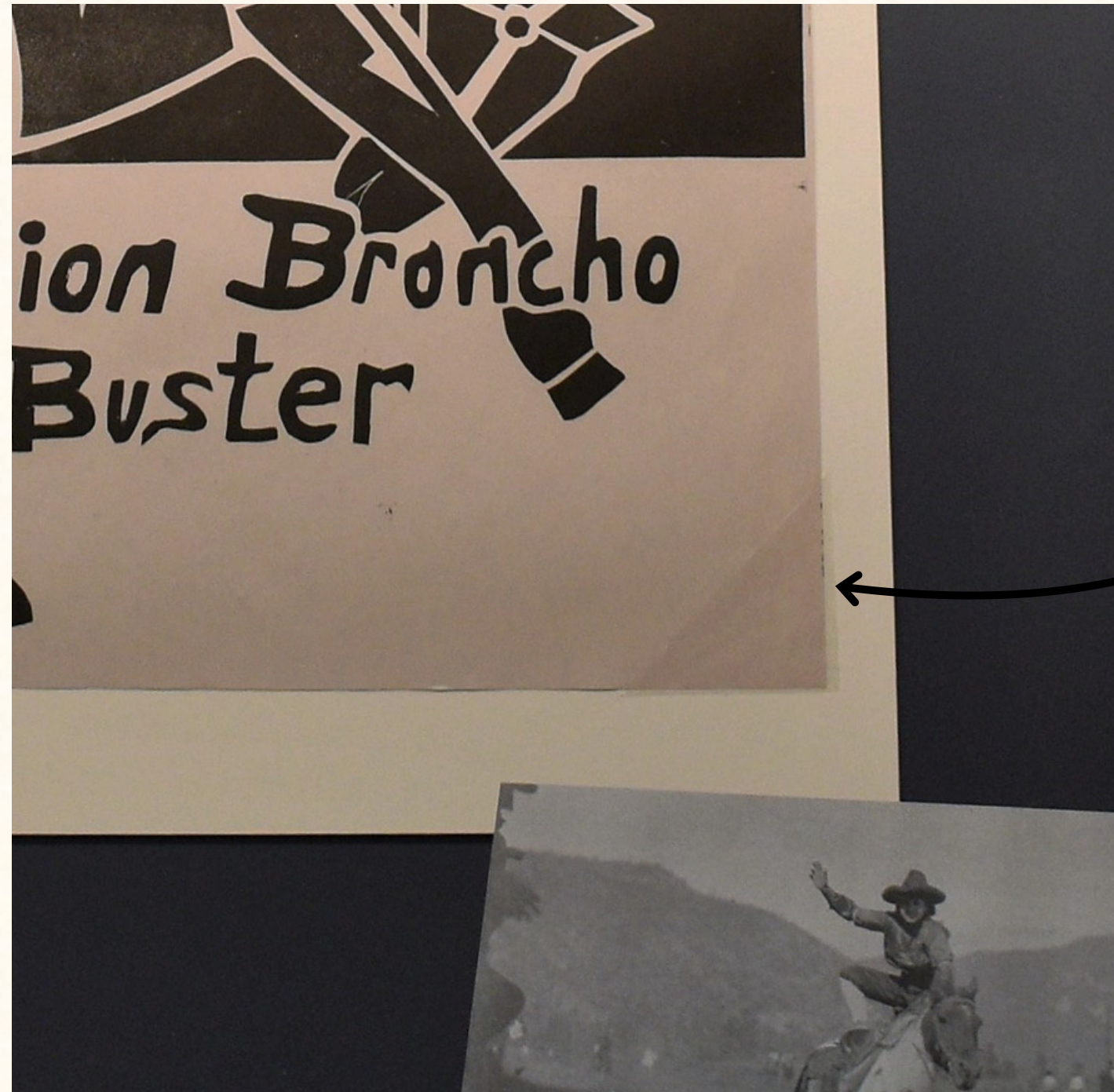
Benchmark Brass
Weights
#BM5000



Linen Hinging Tape
#HYB00653

Mounting methods for works on paper: Corners & Strips

Adhesive acid-free clear photo corners (Mylar, polypropylene, etc.)



Gaylord Archival® 3/4" Clear
Self-Adhesive Polypropylene
Photo Corners
#A334

Some people have strong feelings against these kinds of mounting corners, but I think they're great for pairing with reproductions or facsimiles for temporary displays!

Framing

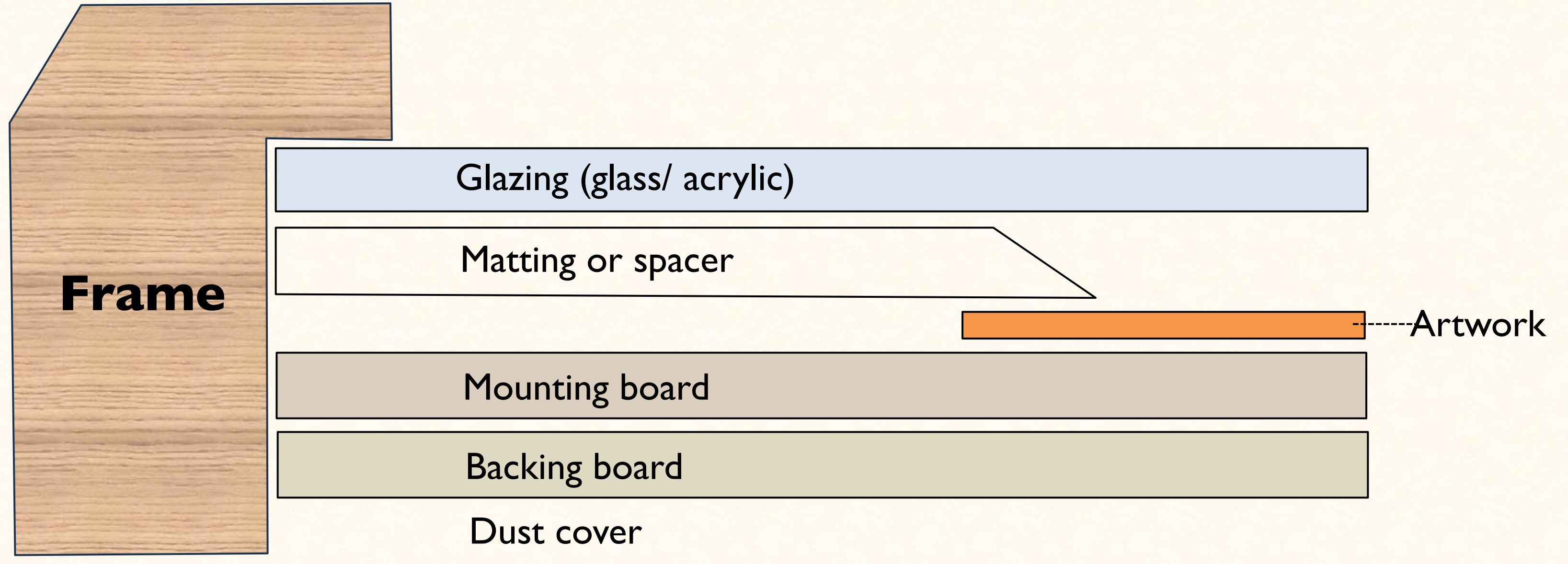
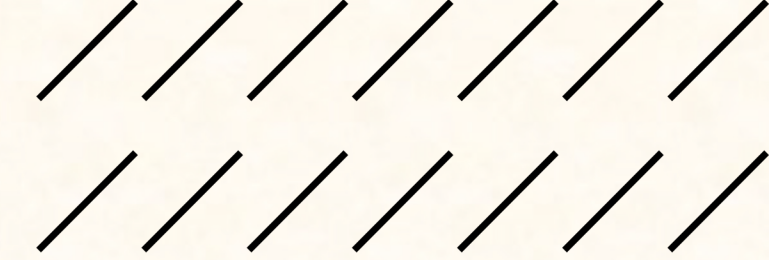
Framing is typically the last step in prepping artwork for display.

Many artists or collectors have an aesthetic reason for choosing frame styles or designs.

With preservation in mind, we can also think about frames as more personalized vitrines that can be propped up or wall-mounted.



Reminder: Frame anatomy



Frames

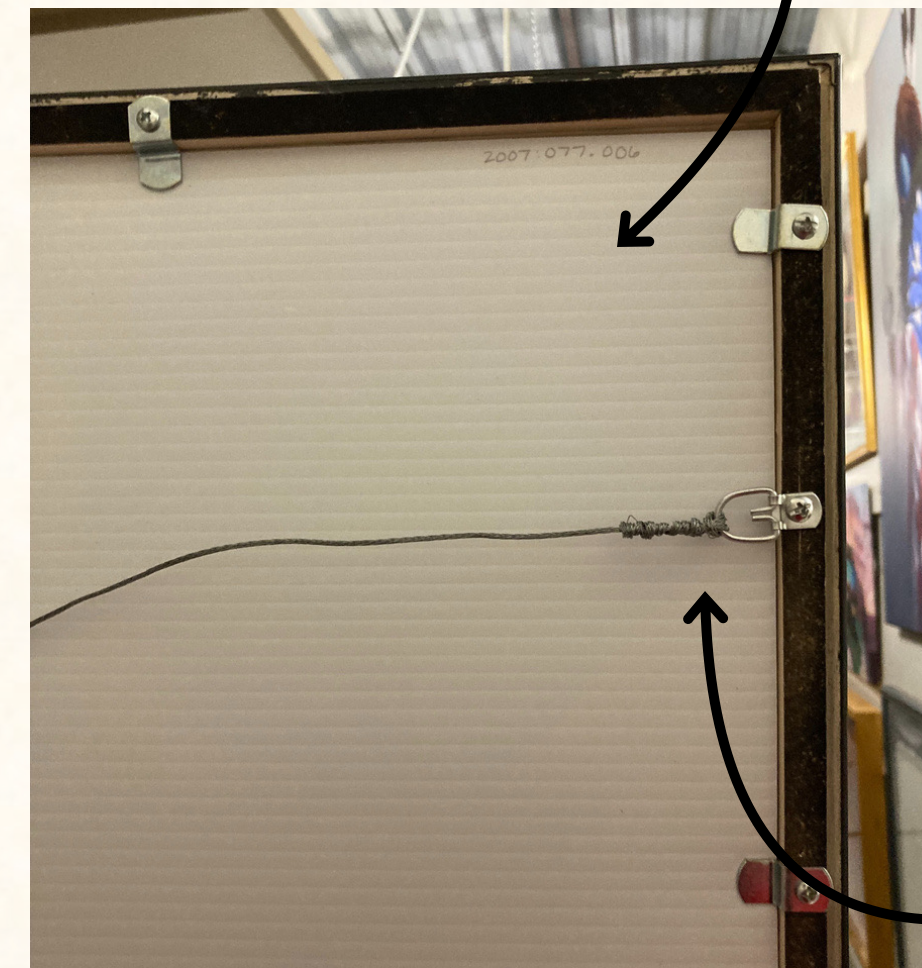


The outside part of frames can be pretty much any color, any material, any shape, and any size. I'm not an expert on frames, but here are a couple of quick notes that have helped me in my museum work:

- **Glazing:** Not all glass or acrylic glazing (Plexiglas) is made equal. Some are treated to block most UV, some are anti-glare, some are scratch-resistant, etc. Choose what you need based on your needs. E.g., if your work is near a window or in fluorescent light, choose a glazing that makes sense for that (and also probably choose a short display period).
- **Wood:** I'm not against wood frames, but know what you're working with! Unsealed or raw wood, MDF, or cheap plywood may likely off-gas or be acidic, posing possible harm to artworks nearby or inside them—they can also be more sensitive to warping from changes in humidity and temperature.

Existing frames

- Just like mats, frames may be part of the artwork themselves. Even if it's not the most preservation-friendly.
- I know that in an ideal world, we'd all store our works on paper NOT in frames, but I also know that space is an issue.
- Minor upgrades on existing frames (e.g., changing the backing or type of hanging hardware and wire) can also make a big difference!



Swapping acidic
cardboard to
coroplast

Removing protruding
eyelet screws and
adding d-rings

Standard-sized frames

- It's handy to have matching, standard-sized frames and associated glazing (like glass or acrylic/Plexiglas) that can be reused over and over, especially if you mounted your artwork to standard-size mats!



*Note: Don't underestimate what you can find in a thrift store! There are many quality framing components that can be reused.



(e.g. Nielsen Bainbridge Metal Frames in 11x14"; 16x20"; 20x24").

Remember to wrap these so they don't get scratched or dinged. E.g., I use Tyvek to wrap glazing and stretch wrap to protect metal frames and to keep all the parts together. For ease, I also label each part with the glazing or frame size.

& some display alternatives

Sometimes a frame isn't the only way to show a 2D work!



These prints were mounted using acid-free polypropylene self-adhesive corners onto museum board with no window mat covering or framing inside a glass-front case. We used double-sided foam tape to “hang” them. This is a great option if you are presenting a work on paper but only have cases to work with for exhibition and display.



We also decided not to use the original historic photos and instead printed scans onto label/adhesive paper and mounted them directly onto scrap mat board and used a mini acrylic easel to prop them up in front.

Takeaways

- **Don't panic!**
- Feel free to watch this webinar again and again. Pause on the slides that are helpful to you.
- Reach out to the Gaylord Archival folks for info on product specs. Look at the resource guides on their website or other framing/mat suppliers.
- While we have preservation in mind, there are many situations where it is OK and realistic to use a variety of materials. If in doubt, chat with a paper conservator or museum friend in the field.
- There is no one way to mat, mount, frame, or even display works, and that's ok!



**DON't
PANiC!**

Thank you!



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Presented for Gaylord Archival

13 August 2026



Upcoming Webinar:

Thursday, October 15th at 2PM ET

Build Your Own Clamshell Book Box

with Conservator Rebecca Elder