

How I Mount Prints for Showing by Wally Roth

1. I have my own wide format printer and can print up to 13 x 19 inches in size.
 - a. I don't recommend doing your own printing unless you enjoy learning by trial and error, usually making it expensive. Cost-wise I'm sure it's cheaper to get them printed elsewhere. However, I like being able to print any size I like when I like.
 - b. My preference is to show photos a minimum of 10 inches (if square) to a maximum of 13 x 19, which is what my printer can do. Check the requirements of the Club before showing which are: 8X10 minimum (un-matted) to 16X20 maximum (outside measurements).
 - c. *Hint:* To cut costs, have a print made at the standard size at London Drugs, etc, and when you get it home you can crop by cutting the print to your liking. No standard size is required unless matting and framing is planned.
5. Need to decide how to make the photo appealing.
 - d. Do you leave a white border or print a border? If so, what kind of border?
 - i. e.g., add a black or white line, decide how thick. Or, A "fake" mat?
 - e. Do you mat it? If so, what color shows it off well?
6. Backing (required for showing at the Club)
 - a. Needs to be heavy enough to keep the print from bending.
 - b. Three of my choices, from most preferred to least:
 - i. Foam board (black or white). Can buy sheets at VIU bookstore, Dollar Store, etc.
 - ii. Do you cut your own mats? If so, you can use mat paper (any colour, but off-white is most adaptable). Or buy mat paper for this purpose.
 - iii. Cardboard (only if smooth and heavy enough)
 - c. To save some money, I like to reuse the backing if possible.
 - i. I don't glue the photos, as it's permanent. I use two-sided acid-free tape instead. I cut about 1" lengths of tape and place them close to the four corners, and along the sides if it's a large print. **Advantage?** Can remove the photo and reuse the backing. (Alert: Double-sided scotch tape doesn't hold.)
 - ii. To remove the tape I use a sharp, thin-bladed paring knife. It leaves some tape residue--not a problem if you place the next photo over it.
 - iii. I generally leave some space on the backing that extends beyond the photo to act as a natural border. Advantage? I don't have to cut it exactly according to the photo size, and I can reuse the backing for another sized photo, if possible.
7. Other options:
 - a. Cut the backing to fit the photo. If you do this, it's easiest to tape or glue the photo first and cut along the edge to get it perfect. (If using cardboard, this is a must as it's unattractive otherwise.) Use a straight-edge and a very sharp knife, such as an exacto knife, or a blade cutter (break off the ends as they get dull).
 - b. To cut the photo itself, I prefer the round-blade cutter. When cutting the backing use a cutting mat to protect the blade and the surface underneath
 - c. Or, you can add a mat and tape it over the photo after it's mounted on the backing.
 - i. Make sure the mat suits the photo.
 - ii. I haven't done it, but you could make your mats reusable by leaving a slot in one end to slide their photos in and out. Advantage? Reuse with little fuss. Disadvantage? Photos must be the same size and suitable colour-wise.
8. Don't forget to type up or write a tag for the back with the title of your piece, your name, and other info required for the showing. Add an arrow to indicate which side is up.
8. What to do with the extra prints?
 - a. I use Art Profolios to store them safely and for showing them. They come in various sizes. I bought mine at the VIU Bookstore.