

How To Care For Your Original Artwork By Stephanie Boon

Thank you for supporting my work by purchasing an original artwork, I hope you enjoy it.

An original painting or drawing is something to cherish for a long time, so here are a few tips to make sure you keep your new artwork in the best condition:

Frame It!

The Mount (Matt)

The mount is the most important component of any framed artwork. Here's why:

Damp

Sometimes the glass in a framed picture can become damp with condensation, which will potentially stain and ruin the artwork (if it's constantly damp it can even get stuck to the glass). It's really easy to avoid this by using a card mount to keep the work away from the surface of the glass.

Acid

Not all mounts are the same! Cheaper mount board has acid in the fibres which, after time, can stain the artwork with brown spots and marks called 'foxing' (you can often see this on old watercolour paintings) and eventually damage the artwork.

Avoid this by using acid-free mount-board, sometimes called 'museum' or 'archive' board. Make sure you ask your picture framer for an acid-free backing-board too. The backing-board is a sheet of thin card that sits behind the art-work to protect it from the hardboard back, which is what you usually see when you look at the back of a framed picture. The core of an acid free board (the bevelled bit against the picture) is noticeably whiter too.

'Weighting' the mount

Ask the framer to 'weight' the mount at the bottom when you have it cut. This means the mount is cut with a deeper border at the bottom, which isn't just for aesthetic reasons. Equal borders all round can look 'off' when you hang the picture on the wall because of foreshortening (depending on your eyeline when you look at it), so the bottom border appears smaller than the others. Weighting the bottom border counteracts this effect.

Attaching your picture to the mount

Attach your drawing or painting to the mount with a single strip of acid-free adhesive paper-tape along the top edge. (The picture will buckle over time if it's taped on all sides because it'll inevitably 'drop' a few millimetres in the frame.)

Choose Your Frame

Once you've got the mount sorted you can put your artwork in any frame you like, even under frameless glass. Here are a few ideas to consider:

- A black and white drawing looks crisp and modern in a simple, square-edge frame in natural wood, black, white or grey
- A frame for a coloured painting or drawing can be chosen to match a colour in the artwork, as well as neutral grey, blacks etc
- Think about the overall aesthetic: do you want the frame to make as much of a statement as the art, or do you want it to be 'backstage' and let the artwork be the sole focus?
- A large frame on a very small painting can catch the eye and draw the viewer into the image, on the other hand a narrow frame on a large drawing can make a big statement if it's hung on the wall with lots of space around it

Hang It!

It's always exciting to put a picture on the wall, but make sure you think about the practical hand-in-hand with the aesthetic:

Think practical

- Mirror plates are the most secure way to attach your picture to the wall, but if you want to hang it use a wire (rather than cord) fixed about 1/3rd down from the top of the frame and hang it on screws
- Never hang an original artwork in direct sunlight – it *will* fade! (I use the best quality artists materials, but care must still be taken.) Some colours fade much more quickly than others, so it won't even look like the same painting getting lighter, it'll look like a completely different picture altogether.
- Make sure there are no strong shadows crossing it during the day, unless you want the shape of the shadow permanently there if there is any eventual fading!
- Don't hang your original artwork above an open fire or a wood-burner, the smoke and soot will discolour it
- If your walls are a bit cold or damp feeling it's far better to *hang* your picture rather than fix it with mirror plates. Leave the wall screws proud so that you get a good air gap behind the frame. Consider hanging it on a warmer interior wall rather than an exterior one

Make it beautiful!

- Create groups of pictures with a similar theme
- Make a statement with one large picture on a spacious wall
- Hang lots of small pictures together where you can look closely at them (stairs, opposite your desk, etc)
- Unify lots of different pictures by using the same or similar frames
- Hang in regular grids or 'organically'
- Make different size pictures look more regular by adjusting the mount size for each one and keep the frames the same size
- Stand them on shelves or mantle pieces (when the fire's not lit!) so that you can easily move them around for interest throughout the year

If you have any more questions, drop me a line (below) and I'll try to help as best I can. Thanks again and enjoy your artwork!