

## **Presentation and Mount Cutting**

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These are two elements of photography, both important in their own right. What is the point of spending time taking photographs and not showing them to off their best advantage?

Compare an un-mounted photo with a mounted one and see which looks the best? I bet you will say the one which mounted. When you put your images in an album you are, in effect, mounting them. When you put a submission into a camera club competition, is it not fair to say that the image should be properly mounted? After all you are giving it to a judge with photographic experience, and often a member of the RPS, for his opinion of your image.

Let us have a look at what we can do, without setting a size and standardising all mounts, other than having a maximum size of 400mm x 500mm. Like your prints, it is up to you how you present the mounted print. I prefer two mount sizes 405mm x300m (16" x12") and 400mm x 500mm (15 ¾" x 19 ½"). The first will fit into an off-the-peg, 16" x 12" frame. Into the smaller mount you can put any print up to an A4, and in to the larger an A3. In which ever size you choose you can mount a landscape, portrait, panoramic or square, the choice is yours.

It is also at this point worth saying a few words about photo paper. Are you using a suitable paper for your prints? Some are good on gloss, not all, some are better on matte or semi gloss. Try some different papers, the most successful photographers use a variety of different paper. You can buy a selection off the internet to try without wasting a lot of paper.

## **Tools and Materials**

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Ideally you will need:- ruler or tape, tee square, straight edge, pencil, eraser, a mount cutter (Logan are a good make and easy to use), Stanley knife, scalpel, and an emery board.

Mount board, backing board, and sticky tape.

## Method

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First you must decide how big your image is going to be, and which format to use. This is done at the printing stage and determines which cut you are going to use in your mount. Then you need to decide where it is going to sit in your mount, towards the top, bottom, middle, etc. It is up to you; I prefer mine to go towards the top of the mount and in the centre.

First wash your hands to keep finger marks off of the mount. Always work from the back of the mount, use a sharp knife to cut it to the size you require e.g. 40mm x 50mm etc. Measure the centre of both the top and side and use your tee square to mark centre lines.

Take a typical A4 with a print size to view of 196mm x 280mm (7 ¾" x 11"). Halve the measurements on both the width and height and measure from the centre lines each way to give the size of the image centred in the mount. Use your tee square to draw these lines and finish your markings about 1" or so in excess of the image boundaries.

Use a spare piece of card under your mount to protect the blade and the table. Apply the cutter by placing the ruler with the cutter attached on the outside of the aperture. Line it up with the markings nearest to you on the left side of the aperture, push home the blade into the mount board and complete the cut by sliding firmly away from you to the mark that completes the cut. Release and withdraw the blade. Now do the other three sides and your mount should be done. Lift it carefully upwards and if there are little bits in the corners that have not completely cut through, take your scalpel and very carefully complete the cut. Using the fine side of the emery board, finish the edges making them smooth.

Now we are ready to apply the image. Put a small mark on the back of your image, in the centre at the top and lay it on the mount board and align it with the lines already there. You will see by the pencil lines when you have it correct. Take a piece of sticky tape about 4" long and stick it along the top edge

securing it to the mount. Carefully turn over your mounted image and see how it looks from the front. If you are not satisfied you can turn it over again and adjust it. Do not stick your image down on each side as the variation of heat will cause the image to move and it will appear warped in your mount. Use a backing board. This can be an inferior piece of card attached to the back of the picture and taped down on all four sides but there are backing cards available on the market quite cheaply.

Turn the mounted image over and inspect it for marks or finger prints which can be removed with an eraser. Your picture is ready for exhibition.

Example prices Approx. (Depending on supplier at 06/03/2012)

Mount board	£3-50p for A1	Chichester Park Hotel
		2 <sup>nd</sup> Sunday Monthly
Backing board	£2-50p for A1	As above
Fixing tape	£2-00p for 25 yards roll	As above
Logan mount cutter	£42-20p	Amazon

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