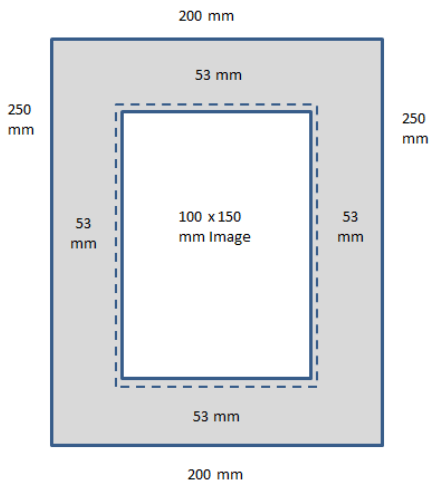


HOW TO CUT A BASIC MAT



This is a standard 200 x 250 mm (8 x 10 inch) mat, it will accommodate a 100 x 150 mm (4 x 6 inch) image.

The border width on this mat is 50mm (2 inch) on all sides.

The inside dimension of the mat board can be cut to fit any image that you desire but a 40 - 50 mm (1.5- 2 inch) border on all sides is a good starting point. I have given a 50 mm (2 inch) border in the example.

At this point, you might want to consider a colour for the mat board. This is more of a personal preference and possibly could depend on the colours that might be in your image. Coloured mat board can enhance as well detract from images and photographs

Mat board is available in many colours and decorative textures, so the possibilities are many.

1. MEASURING FOR YOUR MAT

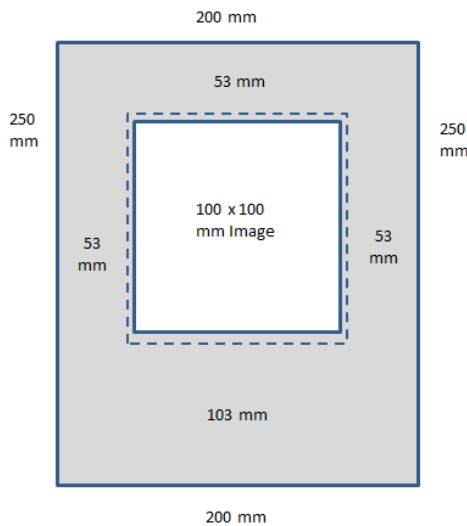
I recommend that a tape measure or metal ruler be used as opposed to a fabric or paper measure.

VERY IMPORTANT: all mats should have at least 5-6 mm overlap in the opening of the window, so that the image will not fall through. Always keep this in mind when measuring for the window.

When measuring also consider

- a) If your print has a border do you want the border to be visible?
 - a. if yes measure the overall print size
 - b. if no then measure only the image size and exclude any border.

For the purpose of this tutorial it is assumed the print is borderless.



There is an option for the mat to be “weighted” at the top, or bottom. Which means that if “weight” is at the bottom, then three sides of the border would be the same, and the bottom of the mat would be the thickest.

This is an example of a mat which is weighted at the bottom. Using the same dimensions as our first which had an outside dimension of 200 x 250 mm, the inside dimensions have changed, and you will now be able to fit a 100 x 100 mm (4” x 4”) image behind the mat.

The actual opening of the window is 94 x 94 mm.

The tools you will need to cut the mat, this depends on you. In my demonstration I will use the Logan 301 compact 32” cutter. This comes with a “push” style mat cutter, which runs in a track, and will yield excellent results. It is simple and easy to use. But you may choose other styles and if they work for you, then so be it.

But in any event, you will need a mat cutter of some sort that has a bevelled cut.

A slip sheet, which is a piece of scrap mat board to go under the one you are cutting. This needs to be larger than the actual mat.

Make sure the blades of the cutter are set so that they cut through the mat and slightly into the slip sheet.

So, if you’re ready, we will proceed.

Let us say that the image which we are going to mat is 100 x 150 mm (4 x 6) with 50mm border on all four sides.

The first step is to trim the mat board to the outside dimension.

The next step is to decide the width of border the mat will have. For our purposes, we will say 50mm on all sides.

2. CUT THE MAT TO SIZE – the overall size will be 200mm x 250 mm

- turn the board over so that the colour surface is facing down
- from the top left corner measure 200mm across and mark
- from the bottom left corner measure 200mm across and mark
- from the top left corner measure 250mm down and mark
- from the top right corner measure 250mm down and mark
- using your straight edge, draw a line and connect the marks

If the uncut board is of suitable size use the Logan cutter to trim the mat to size, otherwise use a steel rule and a sharp Stanley knife. When using the Logan use a slip sheet under the cut for a perfect edge. A “T” Square can be useful when cutting larger board.

You should now have a mat 200mm x 250 mm.

If you intend to use a backing board then repeat this process so you have two mat board of identical size.

3. MARKING THE WINDOW – the window should be 6mm smaller in each direction than the image.

- From the top left corner, measure 53mm down and mark.
- Carefully insert the mat, reverse face upwards, under the Logan straight edge and adjust the “guide” so that the mark aligns with the edge.
- Using a pencil lightly mark across the mat edge to edge.
- Turn the mat 90 degrees and repeat.
- Repeat twice more to complete the square.

Note – it is important that the pencil lines cross as this is an essential aid in cutting the window.

Recommendation – I strongly suggest you lay the image onto the back of the mat to verify that the window outlined in pencil is smaller than the image. Measure twice – cut once!

4. CUTTING THE WINDOW

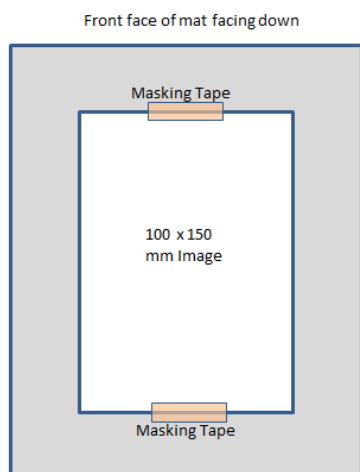
1. Slide the mat, reverse face upwards, under the Logan straight edge and tight up against the guide.
2. Arrange so that the pencil line aligns with the straight edge of the Logan cutter by adjusting the guide if necessary.
3. Note the Logan cutter is a push style cutter.
4. Locate the Logan cutter into the straight edge groove and gently align the start/stop mark on the cutter with the nearest pencil line on the mat. Insert a slip sheet under the cut area.
5. When aligned press down on the cutter handle to fully insert the blade into the mat.
6. Steadily push the cutter along the straight edge until the start/stop mark aligns with the other pencil line.
7. Gently pull up the handle to remove the blade from the mat.
8. Remove the mat from the Logan board and turn 90 degrees and repeat item 4, 5, 6 and 7.
9. Repeat 8 until four cuts have been completed.
10. Carefully remove the mat and the window board should separate from the mat.

If the window is not fully cut then (a) either the blade was not properly pushed into the mat or (b) more likely the blade was not started at the correct position or the cut was stopped short. The best way to correct for (b) is to carefully finish the cut using a sharp Stanley knife but make sure the blade angle matches the mat cutter angle. For (a) it is difficult to match a part cut and so I recommend to start over with a new mat.

When you turn your mat back over you will see the cuts you have made have an angle or bevel to them as opposed to just straight edges.

5. MOUNTING THE IMAGE

For this you will require: Masking tape approx. 15-20mm wide, preferably acid free.



Method 1

Place the cut mat board with front surface face down.

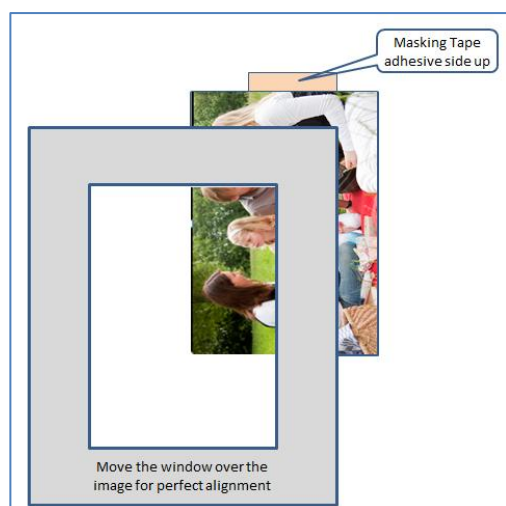
Place the image also face down over the window and centre.

Using a small length (eg. 25mm) of masking tape temporarily fix the image to the board in two places as per diagram.

Gently turn the mat over and check the image is correctly placed. If not carefully remove the masking tape, re-align the image and repeat the process.

Once the image is aligned correctly then apply masking tape to all four sides. Take care to ensure the image is properly flat.

Note: It is recommended that for mounting in a picture frame only the top edge should be fixed.



Method 2

Apply a small length of masking tape on the reverse of the image so that it overlaps the top edge.

Place the image face-up on a flat surface.

With the "cut mat" face up, locate the window above the image and move until the image is correctly located within the window.

Gradually lower the mat onto the image and the masking tape. Press gently to secure the tape to the mat.

Now with the image fixed to the mat give it a further check. If all is well fix the image using additional masking tape.

6. APPLYING A BACKING BOARD

For this you will require: Double sided tape (not the foam/mounting type) approx. 20mm wide

- Select the mat with the image attached and lay face downwards.
- On the reverse side of the mat apply lengths of double sided adhesive tape around the periphery of the mat board. It can be continuous or in selected locations just sufficient to hold the two boards together.
- After applying the tape lift an edge of the protective film from each length so that it will be visible when the backing mat is applied.
- Hold the two boards vertically in close proximity but slightly apart and with one of their edges resting on a flat surface.
- Ensure the two boards align and bring them together. The small exposed sticky areas will hold the boards in alignment. Check the boards are aligned before proceeding. If they need further adjustment it will be quite easy to separate them at this stage.
- Grasp the protruding protective film and gently pull to remove and expose the double sided tape. Once all the protective film is removed press all round to ensure there is good adhesion between the two boards.

Your image is now professionally mounted and ready for exhibition!

Don't forget to name your print !