

# I've Been Framed!

Go the extra step with your prized photos or valuable artwork with conservation framing.



**Getting Started:** There are a variety of options available in conservation framing.

Conservation framing requires the use of the following materials: conservation-grade matting, glass, and mounting. Matting serves to create a pleasant balance around the artwork as well as protect it. Acids and other impurities have been removed from the conservation mat board, also referred to as rag board or museum board, which eliminates the concern of the board discoloring your artwork over time. Another purpose for matting is to keep the glass from coming into contact with the artwork. It provides an area where air can circulate within the picture frame eliminating the chance for condensation of moisture, which will encourage mold growth and in turn could ruin the artwork.

Choosing the right type of glass also is important. Conservation glass is specially formulated to protect your framed artwork from damaging effects of ultraviolet light. Ultraviolet light is dangerous to your artwork because it will not only cause the artwork to fade but will cause the framing materials such as the mat board to deteriorate in the frame. Most conservation glass effectively blocks out ninety-seven percent of the damaging light rays. Even if your art is not exposed to direct sunlight—which it should never be—ultraviolet rays can still cause damage to your artwork.

“How would you like your artwork mounted?” Your answer should be, “In a conservation manner,” especially if you think you may want to resell your valuable art piece, pass it down to your children, or even consider the possibility of reframing it in ten years. The method your framer uses to attach the artwork to an acid-free backing also is an important element. The hinge and the adhesive must be acid-free, water-reversible, nonstaining, and strong enough to hold your artwork securely in place within the mat board and frame. Some choices of adhesives your framer may use to hinge the artwork to the backer board are wheat or rice starch, a methylcellulose paste, or a high-quality linen tape. Your framer will know which material is best to use to hinge your art piece.

Next time you visit your local frame shop, remember to ask to look at acid-free matting and emphasize you would like to have conservation framing. You will be happy you “went the extra mile” and will be able to enjoy that favorite photo, striking painting, or intricate drawing for years to come.



**The Right Look:** Don't be afraid to say you want your piece framed in a conservation manner.