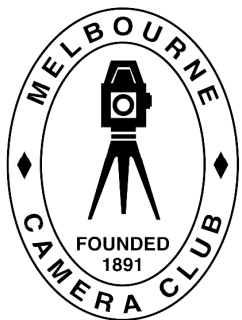

How to Mat a Competition or Exhibition Print

A LOW FUSS APPROACH
FOR BEGINNERS



*Prepared by Vitas Anderson
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What Is Matting?

Definition of Matting

Matting is the process of placing a photograph within a decorative cardboard frame.

Enhancement of Images

The mat serves to enhance the photograph, adding a touch of elegance and making the image stand out.

Protection of Photographs

When placed in a picture frame, the border created by the mat provides space between the photo and the glass, preventing any contact that could damage the image.

Matting is easier than you think!



Although it can seem a bit daunting to a beginner, matting a photo print is really not so hard.

This guide provides a relatively *low fuss approach* which enables reusability of the matting materials and enables easy mounting of your prints in picture frames after competition display.

Feel free though to trying other matting approaches as you get more confident!



Material list for matting



1. For this approach, your photo print on an A3 sheet
2. A 16 x 20 inch mat with an A3 inner size window
 - The window size is slightly smaller (~8mm on each side) than an A3 sheet.
 - Mats are available in a variety of colours (warm white is a good neutral starting choice) and are typically sold in multiple packs.
 - You can buy these to order or pre-cut at:
 - <https://pictureframe.com.au/> (typically sold in packs of 6)
 - <https://www.framesreadymade.com.au> (cut to order and pre-cut frames, East Brunswick)
 - If you prefer a cheaper and more hands-on approach the MCC periodically offers workshops in cutting mats and has a mat cutter for member's use.
 - You can also purchase 'hanging mats' with the backing board already attached:
 - <https://globalimageproducts.com/mats-traditional-white/>
3. A 16 x 20 inch blank mat (or piece of cardboard) for the backing board
 - Blank mats can be bought very cheaply online at temu.com.
4. Masking tape
5. Blu Tack
6. Soft dust brush
7. Clean handling gloves
8. A clean, flat, dry work surface

6 steps to matting
your photo print

Let's get to it!



Step 1: Prepare your photo print



Print on an A3 sheet

For the low fuss approach recommended in this guide you will need to print your photo image on an **A3** sheet. This facilitates reusability of your mats and later mounting of your prints in A3 photo frames.

Decide how large to print your photo image on the A3 sheet

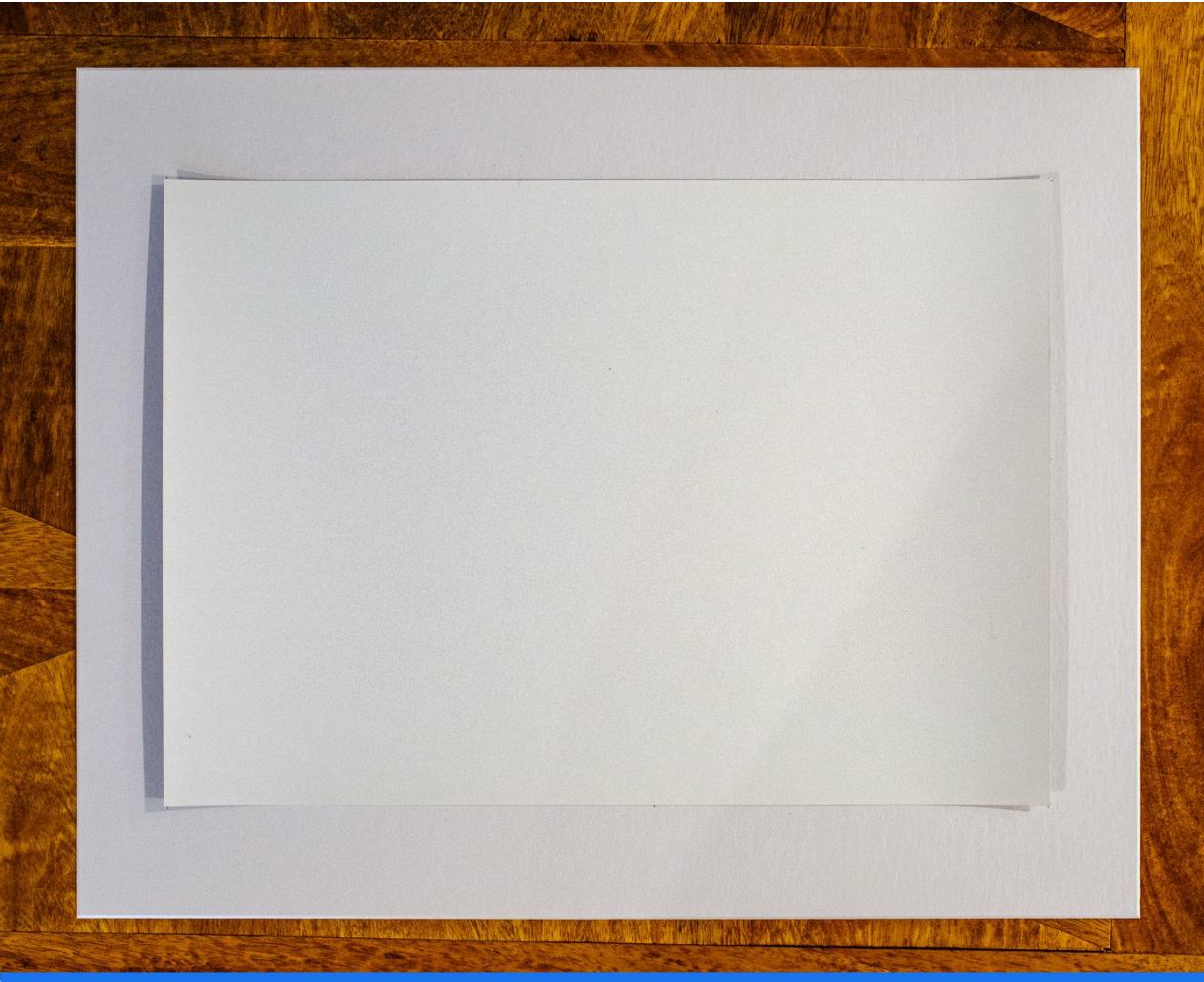
If your image dimensions suit, the photo could be printed to cover the entire A3 sheet. Another approach is to print the image smaller. This will result in an extra background border for your image in addition to the mat background.

Step 2: Draw alignment marks

Draw alignment marks on the back of the mat.
This is very helpful for aligning the print with
the mat.

Note that the dimensions of an A3 sheet are:
11.7 x 16.5 inches (297 x 420 mm).





Step 3: Align print on the mat

Lightly dust the Photo Print

Ensure that the photo print is free from dust before matting.

Handle with Care

Handle the photo print carefully to avoid damaging the surface. Use gloves if necessary to prevent oils from your skin transferring to the photo.

Align photo on the mat

Carefully place the print face down within the alignment marks on the back of the mat.

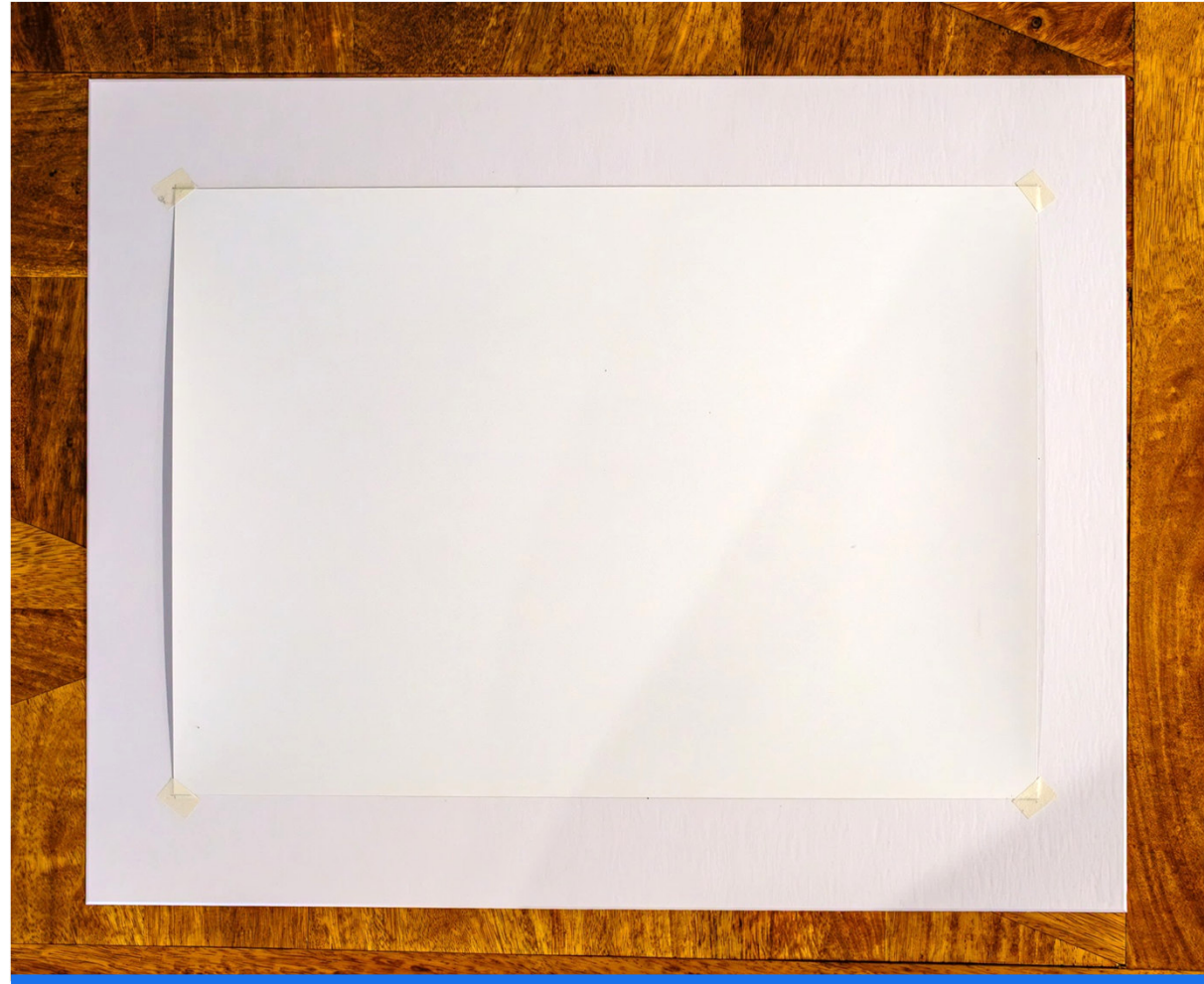
Step 4: Tape print to mat

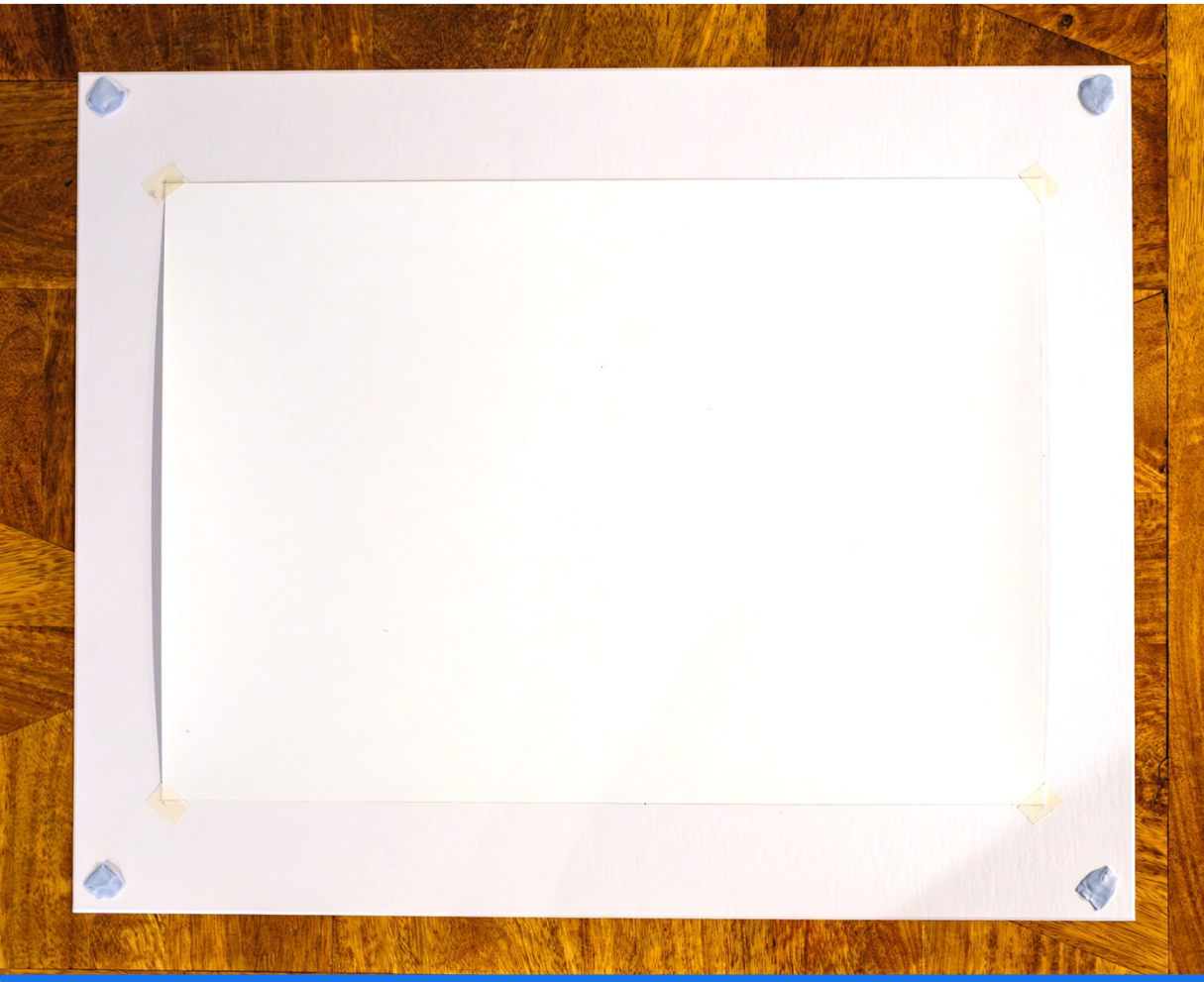
Use masking tape

Masking tape is the best choice for fixing the print to the mat as it is easiest to peel off when you later disassemble the mat.

Apply tape to the four corners of the back of the print

This should be enough to hold the image securely in place. Remember, the less tape you apply, the less there is to peel off later!






Step 5: Attach backing board

Use Blu Tack

Apply a dab of Blu Tack to each corner of the back of the matting board.

Then place the backing board over the mat and press firmly at the corners to secure it.



Vitas ANDERSON
A grade
Set topic
"Birds of a feather in fog"

Step 6: Identify your mat

On the backing board, print:

- Your name
- Your competition grade (A- or B-grade)
- The topic section (set topic or open)
- The image title (this is optional)

Best to use pencil for the last three items so that they may be erased for later changes.

And that's it. You're done! 😊

Transporting and Protecting Your matted photos

An art carry case, e.g. Winsor & Newton, is very useful for transporting and protecting your matted photos.

You can buy them at Officeworks and art supply shops.





Storing your prints

Store your prints safely in a display folder.

This also provides a neat way to show your photographic portfolio to family and friends.

You can buy an A3 display folder at Officeworks, in art shops or online at [temu.com](https://www temu.com)

Display your prints



Photographs *love* to be seen!

Create a gallery of your prints on a wall at home and rotate them as you make new ones.

You can buy cheap A3 photo frames at Officeworks or online at [temu.com](https://www temu.com)