

HOW TO TAPE-AFFIX WATERCOLORS WHEN FRAMING

The layers of a framed watercolor painting, when laid down face-up, are as follows;

Top layer; the frame, usually wood or metal, forming a perimeter

Layer 2; glass or sheet plastic

Layer 3; the mat with the window cut out somewhat smaller than the painting dimensions so it secures the painting on all sides

Layer 4; the painting

Layer 5; the backerboard, popularly a foam core board. Never cardboard.

Tape the painting to the **BACKERBOARD**. This is considered superior to fixing it to the back of the mat.

Use archival quality framing tape. Do not use scotch or masking tape. Recommendations found in the literature include Framers' Tape Two # 2000 from Specialty Tapes® or PH7-70™ conservation tape from Industrial Tapes©.

Mark the backerboard first, to locate the painting in such a position as to show it under the mat window to best advantage, and allow for the amount the tape overlaps the painting's edge, to ensure that the tape does not show.

Affix tape in two pieces along the **TOP EDGE** of the painting and nearest the corners. This, in effect, hinges the painting to the backerboard at the top of the painting only. The hinge concept allows for dimensional swelling and shrinking without buckling. For large paintings, say full sheet, or for heavy paper, more tape may be needed to hold it in place. This may mean adding short strips of tape on the sides as well, but only at the upper corners, maintaining the hinge concept as much as possible.