

WCACO Best Practices: Artwork Presentation and Installation

I. General Best Practices for Artwork Presentation and Installation

These guidelines for 2-D artwork presentation and installation are based on industry standards for quality, finish and installation that are typically required by professional commercial galleries, museums and calls for entry. Some venues may vary.

If the artist is not present to install their own work they must provide clear, easy to follow instructions for installation if necessary. Case by case assessments can be made by the installation team, officers or curators based on the type of artwork, installation and exhibition purpose. If an artwork is found to infringe on these guidelines it may be removed and brought to the attention of the artist. The artwork may be re-installed when it is brought up to these standards at the discretion of the show runners.

1. Artwork needs to have a safe, secure, easy to use installation method which is appropriate for the type and weight of the artwork so that it cannot easily be moved, fall down, or knocked over such as:
 - Hanging wire (no saw tooth hangers) on 2D work, or other secure method for non-conforming or unusual work.
 - Suitable, sturdy hanging apparatus and mechanism for suspension from above.
 - Putty or other method to secure 3D work on display pedestals or floor.
 - Secure mounting that does not damage walls for audio/video or other new media work.
2. Artwork is prohibited if any part of it that is visible to normal viewing (including framing and glass) is found to be:
 - Damaged, dirty or frayed (unless intentional as part of the artwork).
 - An infringement of copyright law (whether intentional or unintentional).

Unframed gallery-wrapped canvas works should have finished edges. Either the artwork continues around the edges or a simple solid color edge works fine.

All frames must be in excellent condition and ready to sell. Please inspect your frames for damage before drop off. Damaged frames will NOT be accepted.

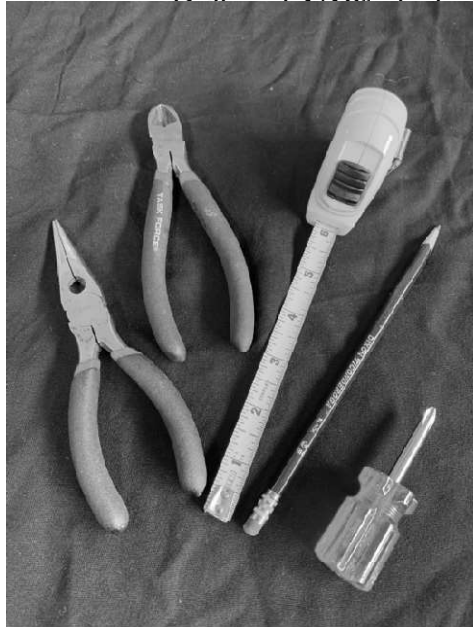
3. Artwork may be refused if it causes ongoing disruptive sound, scent, smoke/fumes, heat or uses dangerous materials or chemicals that could cause damage to visitors of the premises.
4. Artwork exhibit and display materials including price tags, narrative panels, vinyl wall signs, posters, postcards, etc. must follow gallery graphic standards, be well-designed and professional in appearance.
5. All vinyl, posters and artwork should be easily mounted and removed from walls, floor or any other surfaces without causing damage. After artwork is removed walls must be spackled and painted with materials provided by gallery, and any debris cleaned up so the next exhibitor can move in quickly.

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II. Hardware and Wiring Best Practices for 2-D Artwork

A. Artwork Hanging Hardware Kit

All artwork hanging hardware can be found at craft, hardware and online stores:



Drill a 1/16" hole with a 1/16" bit (smaller than the screw you are using)

- Ruler/Tape Measure
- Pencil/Pen
- Screw Eyes or D-rings (no sawtooth hangers)
- Uncoated Picture wire (different gauges depending on the weight of your work, don't use plastic coated, because it tends to slip over time)
- Needle Nose Pliers (these often have a wire cutter feature)
- Wire Cutter (if not included in the needle nose pliers)
- Protective Mat/Cloth (to work on to keep from damaging the front of your artwork when you are putting on your hanging hardware)

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B. Artwork Hanging Hardware Best Practices



Get your artwork to follow a system to use for all your artwork, based on the type of artwork. Use the same measurements and supplies so it is easy to wire all your work and allows for easy trade out of frames and installation in the future.

Attach screw eyes or d-rings at the same place on all your artwork, between 4-8 inches from the top of the artwork or frame. This can vary depending on the size of the artwork. For smaller pieces 4 -6 inches for larger pieces 6-8 inches. Just do it the same way for every piece of similar size.

Also, keep the distance of the top of the wire to the top of the frame the same on all pieces. This makes it easier to install and trade out

For gallery wrap canvas or cradled panels attach your screw eyes or d-rings inside the frame so the artwork rests flat on the wall.

III. 2D Hanging Wire Installation Guide

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1. Put the frame face down on a flat work surface with the bottom nearest to you. Lay the frame face up in front of you first so you are sure the bottom of the frame is closest to you. Carefully flip it over so you are looking at the back side. This will ensure the picture frame is oriented correctly as you install the D-rings.

2. Put a self-adhesive felt bump on the back of both the bottom corners of the picture frame. This will steady it on the wall once it is hung and allow air to circulate behind it.



frame, measure 4 – 8 inches down from the top of the frame and make a mark with a pencil. Repeat this on the other side.

4. Use an electric drill with a 1/16" bit to make a small starter hole for the screw eye or D-ring in both sides of the frame.

5. D-rings are the standard hardware used to install picture frame wire. They come with small screws. Lay the D-rings so the screw holes line up with your marks and the D shapes face inwards towards the center of the frame. Attach the D-rings using the provided screws.

wooden frames or frames made out of other pliable materials that you can screw into. It will not work for metal frames.

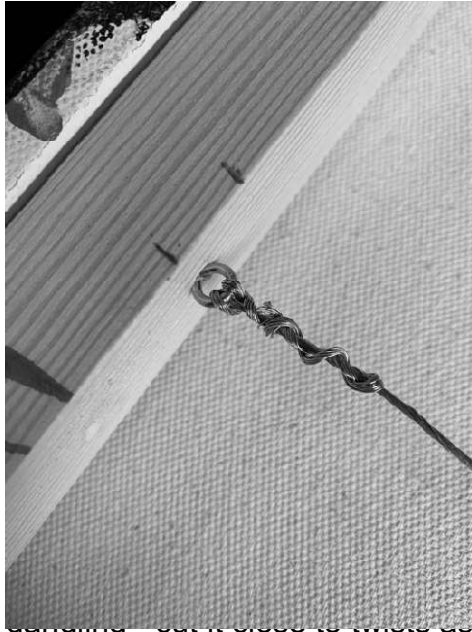
6. Select the correct weight of wire for the size of frame you want to hang. Picture frame wire comes in different sizes that can support different weights. Choose a gauge of wire that can support at least the weight of the frame and artwork you want to hang.

For example, if the frame you want to hang weighs 13 lb (5.9 kg), you would use 15 lb (6.8 kg) picture frame wire.

7. Cut a piece of wire to 10 cm (3.9 in) longer than the width of the frame. Measure the width of the picture frame with a ruler or measuring tape and add 10 cm (3.9 in) to the width. Measure out the wire to this length and clip it with pliers.

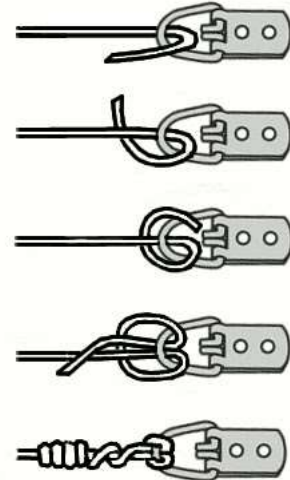
This will allow you to tie and secure the wire in place while still leaving a little slack for hanging the frame.

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LARK'S HEAD KNOT

Also called...
Lark's foot, Cow
hitch, Girth hitch,
Ring hitch,
Lanyard hitch,
Bale Sling hitch,
Baggage Tag
Loop, Tag Knot,
Deadeye hitch,
Running eye



8. Starting with the first D-Ring, loop wire into a Lark's Head knot (see step-by-step diagram the end. Important note: Do not leave the end of wire as shown. Dangling wire ends can poke into painting from the rear resulting in a dent to the canvas or worse.

There are many videos on youtube that show this process. Here is one: <https://youtu.be/rxN8luo28oQ>

9. Make sure the wire is short enough to stay behind the artwork while hanging before tying the second end of the wire. To do this, pull wire through the second D-Ring loop (without making a knot) while holding wire in the position you would like it to be - pull the hanging wire tight until wire sets at 2nd D-Ring position. You now have a bend in the hanging wire as a reference starting location for step 10.

10. Tie the second end of the wire using the same steps as step 7.

IV. Artwork Gallery/Museum Installation and Removal Kit



Basic Supplies:
Hanging hooks and pins
Hammer
Tape measure
String
Pencil
Level
Pliers
Blue Painters Tape

IV. Artwork Gallery/Museum Exhibition Curating and Installation

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A. Curating An Exhibit

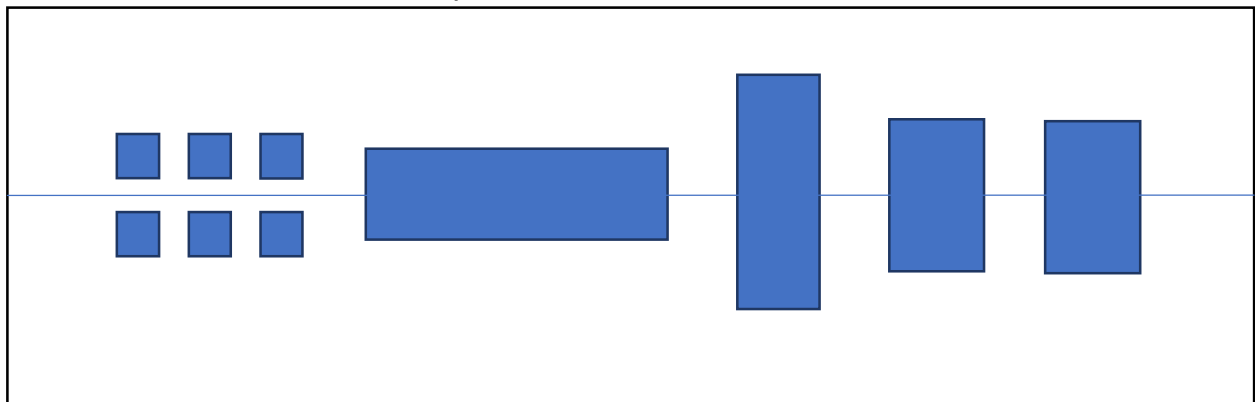
1. Put all the artwork face out on the floor leaning against the walls of the gallery so you can see each piece. Look for common themes based on color, style and/or subject and arrange the works in groupings based on artwork size and wall size.
2. Pay attention to site-lines and transitions between spaces. Put large, colorful pieces at the end of site-lines to draw the visitors eye. Use common colors or themes to make transitions between groupings and around corners to draw the visitor through the space.
3. Consider each wall length and give the works on each wall ample viewing space. Groups of smaller pieces may have 4 – 6 inches between them, while larger individual pieces may have 6 to 18 inches between them. Be consistent throughout the exhibit.
4. Move the work around the gallery until you have a layout you like.

B. Installing The Exhibit Artwork

1. Museum/Gallery standard installation height is 60 inches on center. This means that the vertical center of each piece of artwork is 60 inches from the floor. Treat groupings of smaller works as one piece and center the group 60 inches from the floor.

For a large installation use a length of string taped to wall at 60 inches so you don't have to measure each piece.

2. Make a thumbnail diagram of the first wall you will install using inches for all the measurements. Measure the width in inches of the wall and find the center. Measure the width of each piece that will go on that wall and add them together, then subtract that from the wall width. That will give you the amount of space you have to work with on the sides and between each piece.



$$\begin{aligned} 204 &= \text{wall width (center is 102)} \\ -148 &= \text{width of pieces (12+12+12+48+16+24+24)} \\ \hline 56 &= \text{amount of space to work with on the edges and between pieces/groupings} \end{aligned}$$

Give a bit of extra space from the edges and corners of the wall than you put between each piece or grouping to give visitors ample room to view the pieces in these spots. In this scenario put 12 inches on the edges and 6 – 10 between each piece, and 4 inches

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between each of the small pieces in the group. Keep in mind the space needed for tags and other printed information with the artwork. Start by installing the pieces at the center of the wall and working outward to the edges.

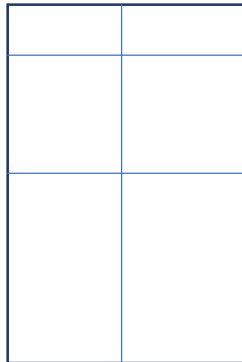
3. Determine where to place the hanging hook for the first piece. Still working in inches, add the space needed from the center of the wall to the edge of the artwork plus half of the width of the piece and mark that on the wall.

Then to find the height of the hook add 60 inches plus half the height of the piece, and subtract the inches from the top of the piece to the top of the wire. That is where the bottom of the hook will go (not the nail). Mark that spot.

Select the correct size of hook to the piece you're installing. Large and/or heavy pieces may require two hooks spaced 4 – 10 inches apart from the center mark.

4. Continue measuring for each piece toward the edges of the wall. To determine the center of the next piece, add half the width of the piece you just installed, plus half the next piece, plus the distance between the two pieces. Then determine the height of the next piece using the method in number 3.

24" Top
4" Wire



60" Center

60" from the floor plus
+24" half the height of the piece
84" less
- 4" top of the piece to the wire
80" bottom of the hanging hook

C. Installing The Exhibit Tags and Graphics

1. Artwork price tags are typically the size of a standard business card, 2x3.5". Information included is Artist Name, Title, Media, Size (Height x Width in inches), Price.

Artist Name
Title
Media
Size (Height x Width)
Price

2. Place all artwork price tags 1-2 inches to the right of the artwork at the same height at the bottom of 45 – 50 inches from the floor. Tags for smaller works are placed 1-2 inches to the right and even with the bottom of the artwork. Tags for sculpture are placed on the pedestals in the front right corner or on the wall behind and to the right of the work at 45-50 inches to match the wall art.

3. Additional informational/narrative graphics should have a consistent type and size and be handled similarly to the artwork. Either as individual pieces or as part of the artwork.