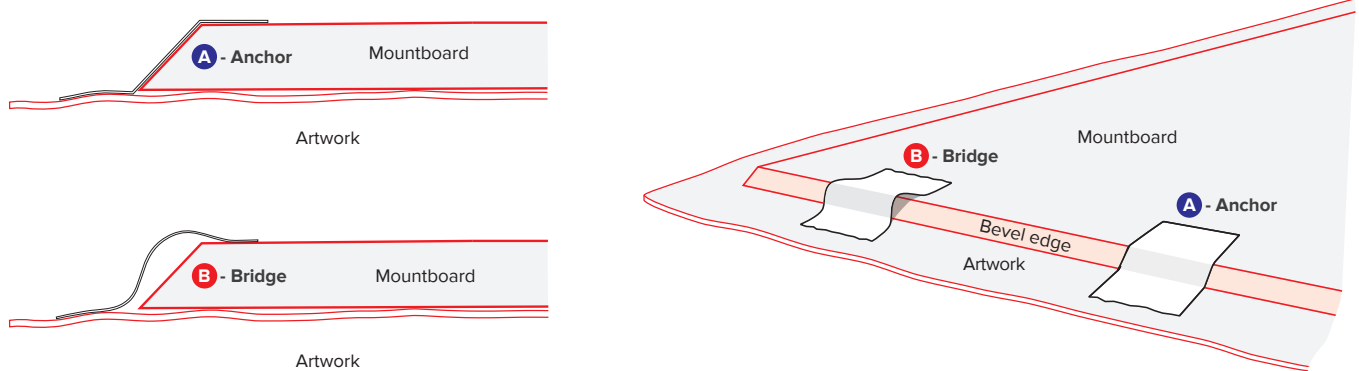


A conservation grade technique devised and developed by Roy Rowlands GCF

Float mounting is a technique often used in framing to enhance the art on heavier paper by revealing a deckle edge. The paper 'floats' which means that normal T-hinges cannot be used as they would show above the top edge. The unique technique described here uses simple materials meeting FATG conservation standards. It allows the paper the essential freedom to shrink and expand in varying humidity conditions with minimal cockling. It is fully reversible and requires no special tools or skill. The same technique can be used either to do a Flush Float mount the art on paper onto a backing mountboard or to do a Raised Float such that it is raised above the backing board to give a 3D effect.

Definitions for Flush Float Method and Raised Float Method:



The paper is mounted on a piece of conservation grade mountboard which is bevel cut approx. 10mm all round smaller than the paper. The paper is then held in place with pieces of gummed paper tape. The same 24mm or similar gummed paper tape is used in three ways:

A Anchor papers: Used along top edge only. Strips moistened (do not over wet) and pressed to sit on the edge of the back of the mountboard, tightly down the bevel edge and onto the paper of the artwork by about 5mm. Pieces are cut app 50mm x 10mm and torn in half to give a feathered edge on the art paper. Typically use only two **A** pieces, spaced widely along the top edge of the art paper to anchor it vertically.

B Bridge papers: Used on all four sides. These form bridges between the back of the mountboard and the back of the art. To create an 'arch' effect to keep them from sticking to the bevel, a piece of release paper (from a piece of heat seal, cold sticky board or similar) is used. This is cut into a strip about 10mm wide and 200mm long. It is folded lengthwise, shiny side out. Before you apply each **B** paper slide the folded release strip as a 'V' under the edge of the board and up to cover the bevel edge. This stops the gummed paper sticking to the bevel and creates a modest arch. **B** papers are spaced between the A pieces along the top edge then at 50mm to 100mm spacing along the along sides and bottom. They allow the paper to expand and contract in varying humidity.

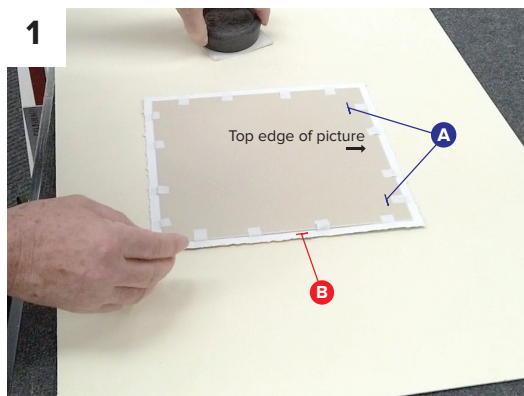
C Joiner papers: Used only when flush float mounting. After the **A** and **B** tapes have dried, the outer part of the mount is laid face down onto the inner part. Cut pieces, **C**, of tape approx. 30mm long. Wet and place over the join line. Put them around all four sides of the join to hold the outer and inner parts of the mountboard together. Must not touch **A** or **B**.

Important: Always do a trial with scrap artwork before attempting a customer job

Flush Float Method:

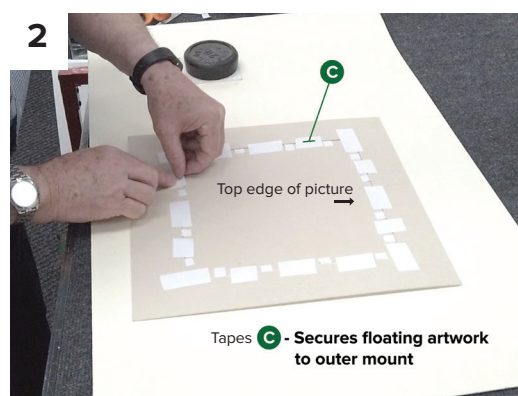
The art on paper sits flat on the mountboard with the deckle edge showing. The paper is held in place on a conservation grade backing board bevel-cut as a drop-out from the larger outer mount. The drop-out is slightly smaller than the paper, which is then held in place using **A** and **B** archival gummed paper strips as described above.

- Measure and cut the mountboard blank to suit the art on paper. Outside size would be the glass size of the finished frame. Then plan the 'drop-out' size and position. Cut it approx. 10mm smaller all round than the paper, ie, make the borders 10mm wider. The drop-out board will become the panel onto which the art on paper will be secured with gum tape strips. This drop-out needs to be 1 to 2 mm smaller than the opening to allow the **B** tapes room to move, which means carefully bevel trimming approx. 3mm off two edges. Mark the back of the board + drop-out with two casually angled pencil lines to ensure you put it back the right way around. Also mark which is the top edge.
- Cut conservation gummed tape into strips approx. 50mm x 10mm. Tear each in half to make a feathered short edge. In positions **A** near either end of the top edge, wet the tape and carefully position it with the torn edge onto the paper by about 5mm. Then press it onto the bevel and then onto the surface of the board. These two **A** strips anchor the art on paper.
- Take the silicone release paper and form a flat strip 10mm wide and 200mm long approx. Fold it lengthways, shiny side out.



1 Picture shows the bevel-edge drop-out secured to the art on paper. If doing a Raised Float, this is bonded to the spacer panel and in turn the backing board, ready to frame. If doing a Flush Float, lay the outer mount on top and apply the joiner papers **C**, as described.

2 Outer mount has been laid over the drop out. It is being joined with joiner papers, **C**.



Tapes **C** - Secures floating artwork to outer mount

- Apply the **B** tape strips. As you apply each one, slide the silicone strip under to stop a part of the gummed surface sticking to the edge of the board. The tape should also form a modest arch. The little arches in the **B** strips allow the paper to move and should be spaced between 50mm and 100mm apart, depending on the paper weight.
- To complete, lay the board with the art attached face down. Then lay the outer mount on top, noting the alignment marks.
- Cut gummed tape to approx. 30mm long strips, which are the **C** tapes. Wet and place them over the join line between outer and inner parts of the mount. Put them all round between the **A** and **B** tapes to hold the two parts together. Make sure you do not glue over the **A** or **B** strips.
- Frame the completed two-part mountboard as normal using a suitable spacer.

Raised Float Method:

This creates an illusion of the art floating in the frame. The art on paper is held in place on a slightly smaller conservation grade backing board using **A** and **B** archival gummed paper strips as described, in italics, above. The backing board is then bonded to a spacer panel, thickness to choice, and then onto on backing board. The whole is placed in a shadow-box frame. Position spacer blocks in the frame to the depth of the spacer panel plus space to keep the art on paper away from the glass.

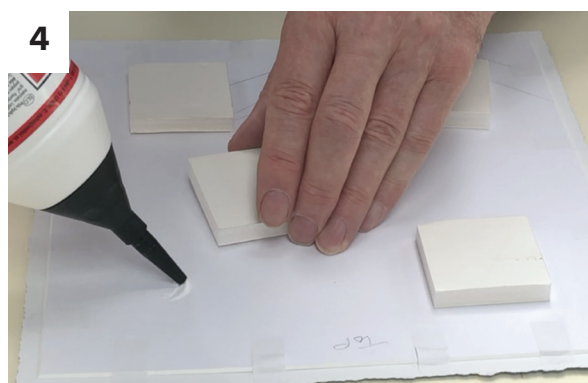
- Bevel cut a backing board of conservation quality about 10mm smaller all round than the art.
- Mark the top and position with the art face down in the centre of the board. Use a weight to hold it in place.
- Secure the art on paper to the drop-out board using the **A** and **B** papers method in italics above.
- When dry, bond the panel to the spacer panel and in turn to the backing board frame. Make sure the rebate and spacers allow enough space under the glass.

Some Lion products which may assist you when Float Mounting:

- 5764** Deckle Edge Ripper For tearing deckle edges onto art papers
- 4949** Lion High-tensile strength conservation-grade gummed paper tape
- 1701** Lineco Archival gummed paper tape
- Mountboard** Select from four leading brands - Value2, Value Munken, Canson, Daler & Colourmount. With Lion Mixed Sheet Despatch, we pick, pack and despatch any mix of 10 or more boards.
- L1342** is the spacer shown in the Raised Float. It is Lion MONO 17 x 6mm. Many similar available.
- 2724** FrameSpace and **2727** EconoSpace are popular and well proven polymer spacers



3 Finished Flush Mount, with backing board, ready to frame.



4 Raised Mount assembly in progress. Spacer blocks of mountboard or foamboard being glued to the back of the 'drop-out' which will in turn be glued to the backing board.

Tools and materials needed:

- Bevel mount cutter + sharp blades
- Conservation mountboard, 1.4mm or more thick + pencil
- Conservation grade gum paper tape + scissors
- Wet sponge
- Strip of silicone release paper, approx. 10mm x 200mm, use release paper from cold sticky board
- Frame moulding of your choice



To view the video on our YouTube channel, go to **lionpfs Ltd** and look for **Float Mounting Art on Heavy Paper** in the listing

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