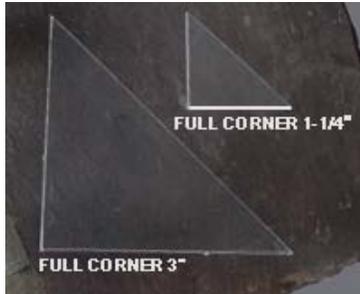


Techniques: Using Mounting Corners & Hinges

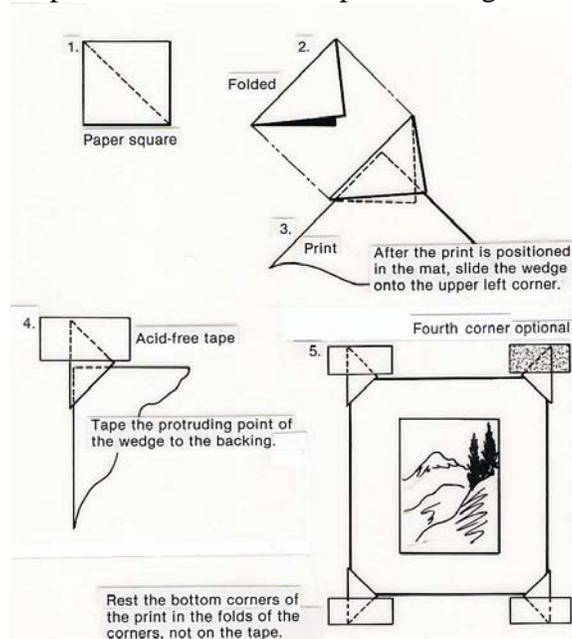
Among the easiest and most frequently used method is clear corner pockets made of polypropylene. Our photo corners are made of archivally-safe polypropylene and have a high-quality pressure sensitive adhesive that doesn't contact with print.



There are two types of polypropylene corners, full and cut back. The standard full corners are traditionally-styled, mounting corners and are offered in 4 sizes: 10mm (3/8") up to 4" x 6" prints, 15mm (5/8") up to 8" x 10" prints, 32mm (1-1/4") up to 11" x 14" prints, and 75mm (3") up to 20" x 24" prints. The cut back corners have a unique feature we call a "cut back pocket" which are intended for use with matted works. The corner covers only the edge of work, making the adhesive corner "invisible" behind the mat. They are available in two sizes: 32mm and 75mm. ([Mounting Corners](#))

Corner Pocket

It is also possible to make your own corners. The task is quite simple. You will need some acid-free paper ([Archival Paper](#)), a pair of scissors, and a roll of non-acidic [linen tape](#) ([Filmoplast P-90 or similar](#)). Follow the diagram below. Cut four squares of paper an inch long on each side. Fold each square diagonally. Lay the print on the backing board, and check the position by closing the window mat. Reposition if needed and place a weight on the print. Open the mat.



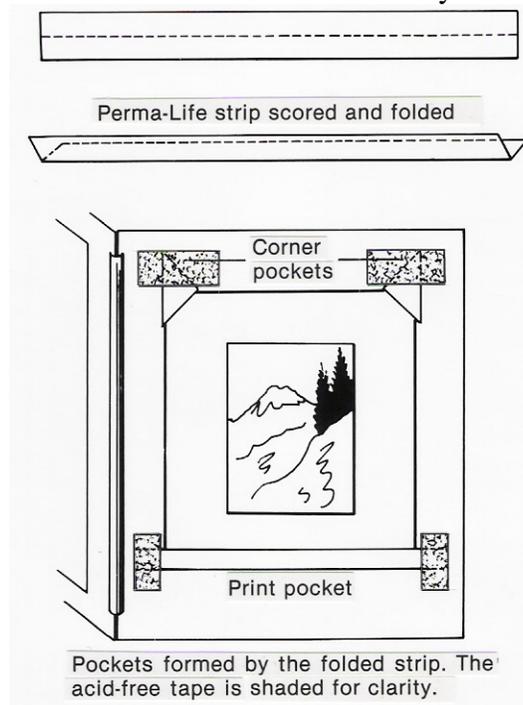
Slide one of paper wedges onto the upper left corner of the print. Half the wedge is now in front of the print and the other behind it. The top of the triangle faces right at the top edge of the paper. The fold of the wedge is pressed firmly against the side of the paper.

Lay tape across the protruding part of the wedge (parallel to the print). The linen tape adheres to the backing board and the top of the wedge forming a pocket. Repeat on the right side.

Print Pocket

A variation of the corner pocket is the Print Pocket. It holds the picture firmly and supports brittle and delicate objects better than the corner pockets. A window mat is needed to conceal the edges of the paper. To make a print pocket cut a strip of archival paper 1" wide and 1" longer than the print bottom. (Use a ruler and razor knife to achieve a straight edge.)

Score the strip lengthwise down the center and fold along the score. Put the print in position on the mat board. Slip the V-shaped strip against its bottom. Tape the ends of the strip to the backing board with acid-free linen tape. Make corner pockets for the two top corners. For additional support, tape the paper strip to the backing board – but make certain the tape does not come in contact with the print. The mat should close smoothly with the pocket laying flat.



Japanese (Tissue) Hinges

Hinges made from Japanese tissue paper (rice paper) represent the most exquisite and graceful way to mount a print. Although they are very strong and securely hold the print in place they appear almost invisible. There are three kinds of hinges used within this practice; the hanging or pendant, the folded and the reinforced. Each is made from strips taken from a large sheet of tissue by a technique of water cutting. In order to receive the full benefit of tissue hinging, the

paper must be water cut. (Supplies needed are listed below.)

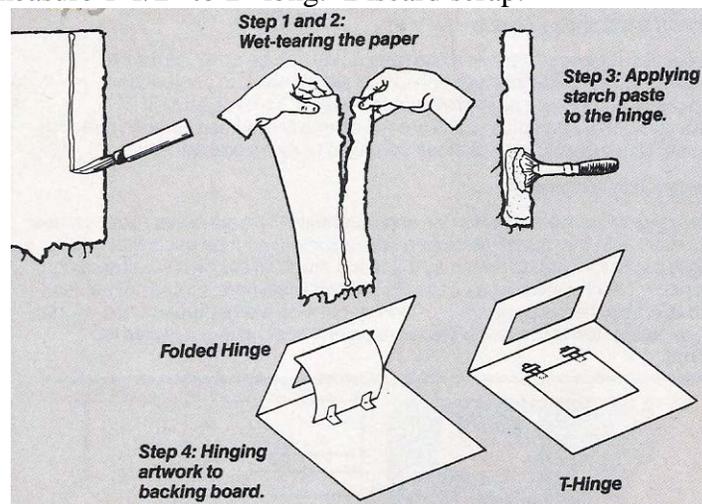
Water Cutting

Due to the long fibers in the Japanese tissue paper it can be water cut to produce feathered edges. These edges allow for the hinges to blend inconspicuously with the back of the print.

Hold the tissue up to a light. You will see grid lines, some more closely spaced and others that are right angles to them as well as widely spaced (chain lines). Very lightly mark a corner with an arrow to show the direction of the chain lines. Lay the straightedge near one edge of the tissue and parallel to the chain lines. Dip the cutting brush in water and draw it along the straightedge. This will weaken the paper. Run the bone knife or burnisher along the edge to make an impression. Hold the straightedge down firmly and pull the exposed strip back up and away from it to the side.

Discard this strip. Never use the edge of the sheet it can be as hard as a razor cut edge. Now look for the torn edge. You will see numerous tiny fibers along the edge, some longer than others. These give the hinge its feather. Move the straightedge about an inch to the side and repeat the process. Cut several strips (the first time) off this width for practice and save them for reinforcement strips.

Bow cut several strips for hinges. They should be between 3/8" and 1/2" wide. Repeat the same method to cut them down to desired length. Hinges usually are 1" long and reinforcements measure 1-1/2" to 2" long. Discard scrap.



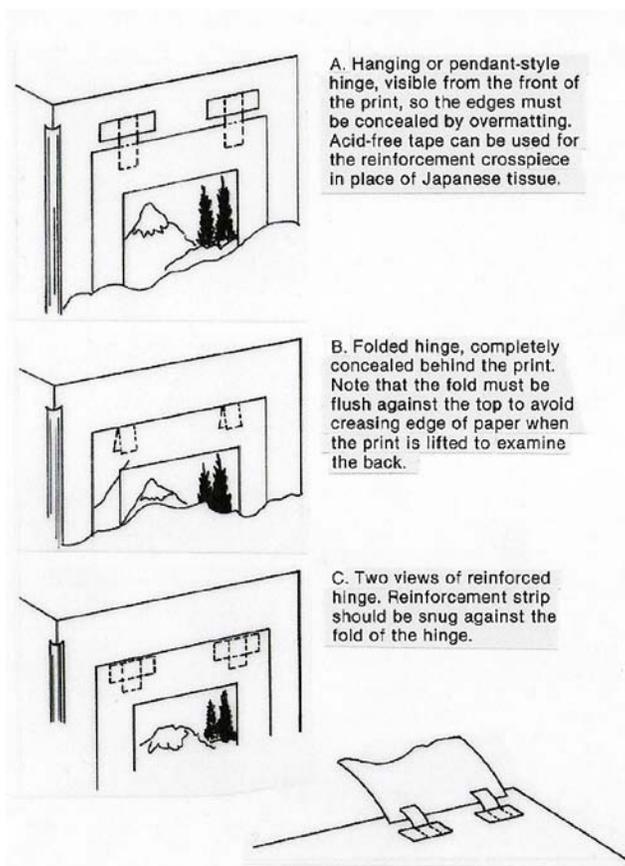
Water Cutting a Hinge

Hanging (Pendant) Hinges

The technique consists of a hanger strip and reinforcement. Use only when a window mat hides the print edges. Make sure the work area is clean and position the print on the backing board. Fix the print in place with positioning clips or weights. You do not want the print to move. Apply paste 1/3 the length of the hinge strip. Work on a small scrap of backing paper and do not get any paste on the other side. If you dip the brush in water first, the paste flows more smoothly.

Pick up the hinge with tweezers. Lift one corner of the print and attach the bottom 1/3 of the strip to the back. The side with the paste should be behind the print. Brush the paste the length of the reinforcement strip. Using the tweezers, lift the protruding 2/3 of the hanger strip and brush paste on the back. Smooth it onto the backing board with the other flat brush. Pick up the reinforcement and put it on the top of the protruding hanger, parallel to the top of the print but 1/8" away so in the future the print can be lifted for examination. Smooth down.

Slide a small square of Mylar behind the print, in back of where the hinge is adhered. This will protect the backing board from moisture and ensures the paste will not stick the print and board together. Allow the hinge to dry under pressure (weight or clip) for best results. Repeat the same procedure for next hinge. A few things to remember; it is better to apply to little paste than too much, thin layers adhere better and run a lesser risk of smearing and - mistakes happen. Do not panic – hinges can be removed. Also, larger prints may require 3 or more hinges, it is best to place the first hinge in the center.



Folded Hinges

These look similar to the glassine hinges stamp collectors use. They do not show from the front and are suitable for floating a print inside a window. Position the print on the back board and weight it. Fold and crease a hinge strip 1/3 of the way down its length. Put the dry hinge in place behind the print. The longer section goes against the back board and fold goes flush with the top of the print

Lightly mark (with a pencil) the location of the bottom of the longer strip on the backing board. Take the hinge and brush the paste onto the front and back without getting any inside the fold. Using tweezers pick up the hinge and lift the corner of the print positioning the hinge using the pencil mark as a guide. Smooth down. Slide the blotter into the fold and apply pressure as it dries. Repeat the same steps for the remaining hinges. As a general rule these hinges are used only on the top of the print.

Reinforced Hinges

This hinge is simply a folded hinge with a reinforcement strip added inside the fold and parallel to the crease for strength. Do not use linen tape as a substitute for the tissue as a reinforcement its thickness will cause an impression to appear on the print. These hinges can not be seen while the print is in a mat.

To make the hinge, apply the folded hinge as before and allow it to dry. Then lift the print and apply the reinforcement strip. Do not place on print; attach it to the backing board at right angles to the hinge. For maximum strength, make sure the edge fits snugly against the fold. Let the reinforcement dry under a blotter.

Removing Japanese Hinge Tissue

The process of removing Japanese hinge tissue is not difficult if done properly. For example; if we are going to change the mat on a hinged print, we would want to follow the steps outlined below.

- 1) Open the mat and lay a sheet of paper bigger than the print next to it.
- 2) Cut the hinge.
 - a. Hanging Hinge – hold the print down with one hand and slice through the tissue above the edge of the print.
 - b. Folded Hinge & Reinforced Hinge – slide the knife behind the print and cut up through the fold.
- 3) Lay the print face down on the paper. (Practice by removing small remnants from the back board of the mat.)
- 4) Use a brush dipped in water to moisten the adhesive. Make sure water stays on the tissue only. Let it soak for a few minutes.
- 5) Gently pull up the corner of tissue. Pull down slowly toward the center of the hinge.
- 6) Pluck the remaining fibers with tweezers.
- 7) Repeat process with remnants of the hinge on the back of the print.

If you encounter any adhesive remains after the hinges come off, try these tips.

- 1) Test a small area of the back of the print to make sure it will not water stain.
- 2) If it doesn't, proceed to step 3. If it does, end the removal process.
- 3) Put a lightly dampened piece of blotter over the adhesive stain and touch it gently with a hot tacking iron. The steam will soften the adhesive.
- 4) Moisten the blotter with a brush to cool it and gently peel it away from the print back.
- 5) Scrape, gently, the adhesive with a knife – removing a little at a time.
- 6) Do not chafe the paper surface.
- 7) Repeat until no adhesive remains.

Japanese Tissue Hinging Tools & Materials

Japanese tissue paper in sheets	Straightedge
Bone knife or burnisher	Hard lead pencil
Small pieces of acid-free blotter	Small sheets of Mylar
Razor sharp knife	Tweezers
Print positioning clips or small sandbag weights	Drafting brush (to clean working surface)
Water Container	White cotton gloves (for handling print)
Rice starch, wheat starch or methyl cellulose paste (mix in advance)	3 sable watercolor-type brushes – 1 pointed & 2 flat (label to keep from interchanging them)

Reference:

Chapter 9: Techniques of Conservation Mounting in *The Life of a Photograph* written by Laurence E. Keefe & Dennis Inch.