

How to Prepare Photographs for Exhibit in 4-H at Fair

By Vicki Jedlicka, Extension Assistant

General Rules

FROM FAIR BOOK:

Photos may be taken with any type of film or digital camera, including phones, tablets, and drones. An image may only be used on one exhibit with the exception of Portfolios which may include images entered in other classes. Photos must be shot by 4-H member during the current project year with the exception of the Portfolios which may include images captured and/or exhibited in previous years. Photos need to be appropriate for 4-H.

Securely attach photos. Photos that are unattached will be disqualified. Do not use photo corners, borders, or place coverings over the exhibits. Do not include negatives.

Data Tags are required on all classes. Data tags should be securely attached to the back of the exhibit. Photos without data tags will not be accepted.

HELPFUL RESOURCES



Data Tag stickers are available at the Extension office and Data Tag fill-in pdfs which can be filled out on computer are online at <http://lancaster.unl.edu/4h/Fair#static>

NOTE ON PHOTO DEVELOPING/ PRINTING:

I have had photographs developed/printed at discount stores and at professional photography stores. Results have varied for me: sometimes quality is better at discount stores, sometimes it is better at photography stores. I recommend getting photos developed/printed far enough ahead of time so you can have them redone if you are disappointed in the quality.

I have been very impressed with the quality of many inkjet printers when good photo paper is used. If you are happy with the quality of photographs printed on your computer and inkjet printer, then you don't need to have a store do it.

Portfolios (Levels 2 & 3)

FROM FAIR BOOK:

All portfolios must include the following information: 1) 1-page max bio, 2) table of contents, 3) year each photo was taken, 4) title for each image, 5) device make and model used to capture each image, and 6) reflections for each photo. When writing reflections, youth should focus on what new photography techniques or skills they were practicing when they took the photo, what makes the image successful, and what could have been done to improve the image. Data Tags are NOT required. Portfolios may be presented in either print or digital formats:

- Printed portfolios should be presented in a 8.5" x 11" three-ring binder or similar book format. Recommended photo size is 8" x 10". Matting is not necessary.
- Digital portfolios may be presented online and must be exhibited along with a single 8.5" x 11" flyer. Flyers must include a link, URL, or QR code that takes users (judges and fairgoers) to their online portfolio.

How to Prepare a Display Exhibit (Levels 1 & 2)

Display exhibits are encouraged for Level 1 exhibitors.

FROM FAIR BOOK:

- Three 4" x 6" photos mounted on a single horizontal 11"x 14" black (preferred) or white poster or matting board. Incorrect sizes will not be accepted. No foam board backing should be used.
- Each photo on picture display must be numbered using a pencil. Numbers should be readable but not detract from display.
- No titles, captions or stick-on numbers will be allowed.
- Photos may be mounted vertically or horizontally.
- Appropriate level Data Tags are required. **EACH PHOTO MUST INCLUDE A SEPARATE DATA TAG.** Data Tags should be numbered with the corresponding photo's number. Securely attach the tags to the back.

CLARIFICATION:

DISPLAY BOARD MUST be HORIZONTAL.

The PHOTOS CAN BE ANY COMBINATION OF VERTICAL OR HORIZONTAL.

Positioning of the photos is flexible — place how you think they look best (photos cannot be tilted or overlap each other).

Tags can be placed anywhere on the back as long as it is placed neatly (straight, even spacing if it's centered, etc.)

SUPPLIES:

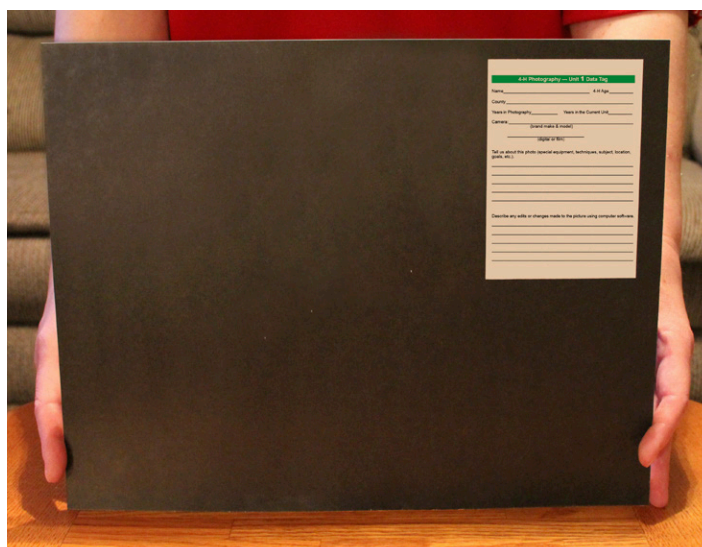
Double-sided tape, rubber cement or glue stick is recommended to securely attach photos and Personal Data Tags. Poster board is usually cheaper than mat-board, however, mat-board is more rigid and durable.

Black or white poster board can be purchased at many discount, craft or art stores. Size is usually 22" x 28" (which you can cut into four 11" x 14" sheets). Posterboard can be cut with scissors or an X-Acto knife.

Mat-board only needs to be black (preferred) or white on one side (the front) — it can be any color on the back.



Sample front side of a picture display. Display board **MUST** be **HORIZONTAL**. Photos may be horizontal **OR** vertical. Positioning of the three photos is flexible — place how you think they look best.



Sample back side of a picture display. Secure Print/Display Data Tag anywhere on the back.

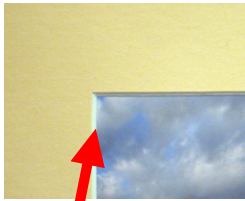


Every photo must be numbered in pencil below.

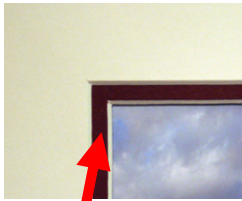
How to Prepare a Print Exhibit (Levels 1, 2 & 3)

FROM FAIR BOOK:

- All prints exhibits are 8" x 10" prints mounted in 11" x 14" (outside size) cut matting (no frames) with a sandwich mat-board backing (not foam board); rectangular or oval inside matt opening. Incorrect sizes will not be accepted.
- Place photos horizontally or vertically as appropriate.
- Appropriate level Data Tags are required. Securely attach the tags to the back.
- Note: Level 3 photographers should be exploring and experimenting with advanced techniques. This may include but does not necessarily require using an SLR camera, manual adjustments, or other advanced equipment. Level 3 photographers should be utilizing all the skills and techniques they have developed throughout their photography career, especially topics covered in Level 1 Photography Basics, Level 2 Next Level Photography, and Level 3 Mastering Photography.



“Single” mat (has single inside edge)



“Double” mat — usually looks nicer but costs a little more

CLARIFICATION:

Mats can be single, double and any color.

Mat-board backing doesn't show, so can be any color.

Tags can be placed anywhere on the back as long as it is placed neatly (straight, even spacing if it's centered, etc.)

ABOUT MAT COLORS & OVAL OPENINGS:

Choose a mat color which looks good with your photo. Most photos look good with a white, off-white or black mat. A color mat can overwhelm or detract from your photo, but some photos are enhanced by a color mat. Choose color carefully. Try to picking a color that is used in the photo. If you want a little color, try a double mat with a color inside border.

Choose carefully when selecting a shape for your mat opening. Select a shape that truly enhances the photograph — rectangular and oval shapes are acceptable.

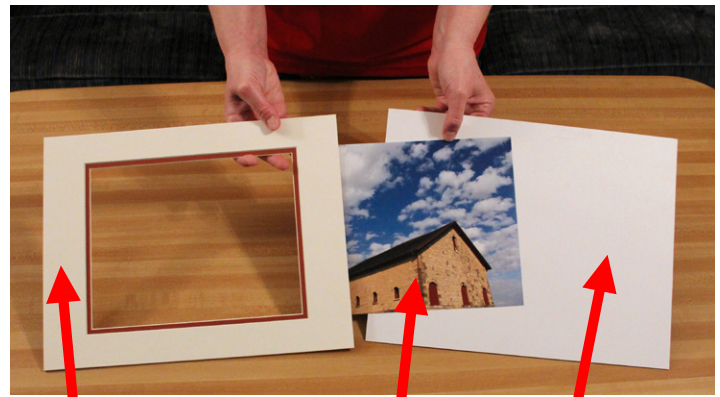
SUPPLIES:

Double-sided tape or rubber cement is recommended to securely attach photos and mat-boards (glue stick may not be strong enough). **Not all double-sided tape has a strong bond — look for “permanent,” not “removable.”**

To attach Personal Data Tags, you may use double-sided tape, rubber cement or glue stick (sticker Data Tags are available at the extension office).

Pre-cut 11" x 14" mats (outside size) with rectangular or oval inside mat opening can be purchased at many discount, craft or art stores.

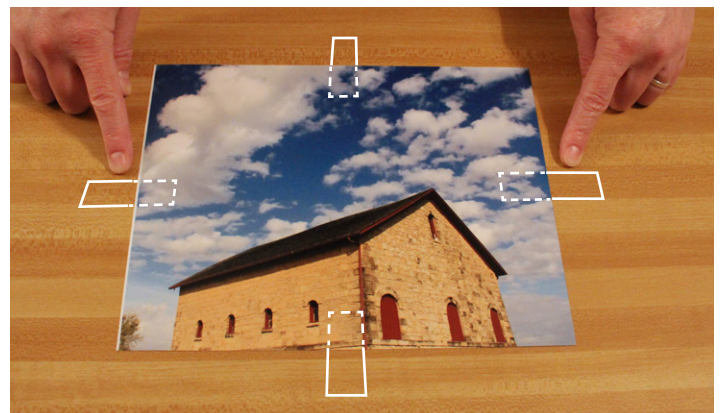
For mat-board backing, some stores have pre-cut 11" x 14" mat boards (without inside mat openings). It can be cheaper to purchase 32" x 40" mat-board or illustration board which can be cut down (use an X-Acto knife to cut).



Single mat with inside opening (will go in front)

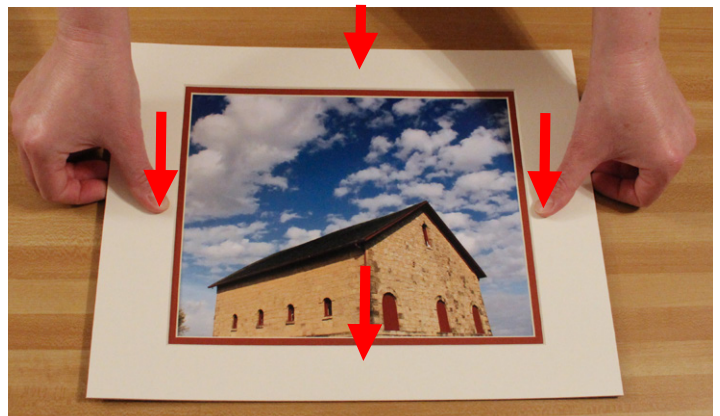
Mat-board for backing (will go in back)

Photo (will be sandwiched in the middle)



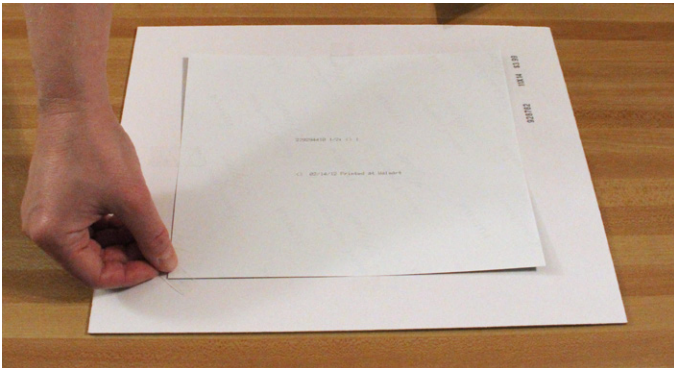
There are many ways you can secure your photo to the mat — the following method works well.

Put regular, one-sided tape FACE UP — partly under the photo and partly sticking out — on four sides of your photo.

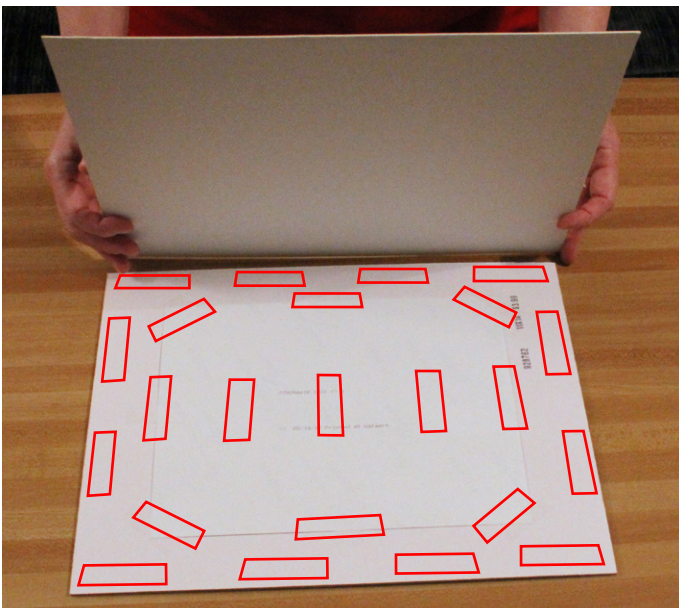


Notice your photo is slightly larger than the mat opening. Place the mat slightly above the photo and move mat slightly from side to side and up/down until you decide which “cropping” (portion of the photo showing) looks best. Press down on the mat where the tape is underneath. This holds the photo to the mat.

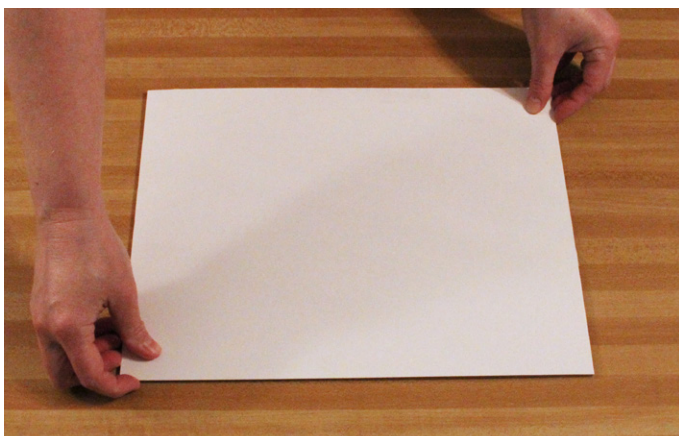
How to Prepare a Print Exhibit *continued*



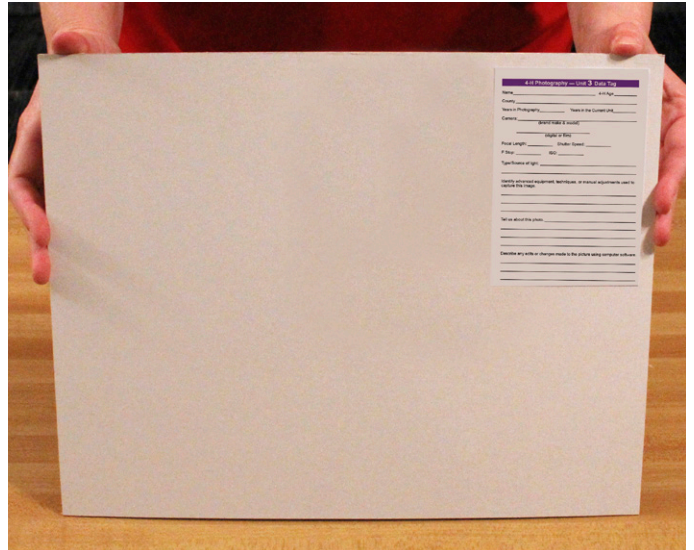
Turn the mat and photo over and place lots of double-stick tape or rubber cement over the back of the mat and photo. The goal is to make the mats and photo secure enough to hold even in the heat and humidity of fairs.



(This is how much double-stick tape I use.)



Line up the backing and press backing firmly to the front mat and photo.



Sample back side of an exhibit print.
Secure Print/Display Data Tag anywhere on the back.



Sample Exhibit Print ready to be entered in the fair!



Note: After the fair, it is a snap to put your matted photo in an 11" x 17" photo frame! (Frames not permitted in the fair.)
Some people reuse their mats for county fair each year, carefully taking the mats apart to replace photos.