



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

By Vicki Jedlicka, Extension Assistant

## General Rules

### FROM FAIR BOOK:

4-H'ers are allowed entries in only one unit of competition.

A photograph may be used only on one exhibit and may be taken with a film or digital camera. Photos must be shot during the current project year by the 4-H member. Photos need to be appropriate for 4-H.

Securely attach photos. Photos that are unattached with 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.

Securely attach the tags to the back of the exhibits or include as page one in your photo showcase. Unit I & II prints and displays require the Unit I & II Print/Display Data Tag. Unit II showcases require the Unit II Showcase Data Tag. All Unit III entries, including portfolios, require the Unit III Data Tag.

### 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://lanaster.unl.edu/4h/Fair>

### 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.

### FROM FAIR BOOK:

## Photo Showcase (Units II)

- Choose one lesson from each of the four project areas in the Level 2 project manual titled "Controlling the Image" (available at county offices). For example, you might choose "You Take Control" from Project Area 1, "Lighting in a Flash" from Project Area 2, "The Rule of Thirds" from Project Area 3 and "Bits and Pieces" from Project Area 4.
- Take three photos showcasing each lesson, for example three photos using different shutter speeds or three photos showcasing the Rule of Thirds. You will take 12 photos in all.
- Mount 4" x 6" photos on an 8½" x 11" white paper. For each set of three photos, include a short paragraph describing the lesson you are illustrating and changes you made to your camera settings for each photo (shutter speed, aperture, type of lighting). You may also draw the rule of thirds or golden photo on your photos.
- Place pages in an 8½" x 11" black or white three-ring binder. Plastic sleeves are recommended for each page.
- Unit II Showcase Data Tags are required. For your showcase complete only the Unit II Showcase Data Tag and include this as page one of your showcase.

## Photography Portfolio (Unit III)

- Select ten photos from your 4-H career that represent the strongest collection of your work.
- Photos may have been taken at any time during the 4-H experience and may have been previously exhibited. Photos can only be used in a portfolio once.
- Place photos in plastic sleeves and present them in an 8½" x 11" black or white 3 ring binder. No matting is necessary.
- Unit III Data Tags are required along with supporting information.
- On the first page of the portfolio include a table of contents listing a title for each photo in your collection and a narrative describing the overall intent for the portfolio. For example the portfolio could include a range of your work from your earlier years in 4-H photography to the present, you could have a creative theme for your portfolio or you could include photos that illustrate your diverse photography skills.
- On the page prior to EACH photo include an information sheet for each photo that includes 1) Unit III Data Tag, 2) the photograph title and 3) a paragraph describing how the photo contributes to the overall intent of your portfolio. The information sheet and the photo should create a 2-page layout so that when the portfolio is open the information sheet is the page on the left and the photo is the page on the right.

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# How to Prepare a Picture Display

## FROM FAIR BOOK:

### Picture Displays (Units I & II):

- Three 4" x 6" photos mounted on a single HORIZONTAL 11" x 14" black (preferred) or white poster or matting board.
- Every photo on picture display must be pencil numbered (no. 2 lead pencil) below (for judge's reference only). Numbers should be readable but not detract from display.
- No titles, captions, or stick-on numbers will be allowed.
- Photos must be mounted vertically or horizontally.
- Unit I & II Print/Display Data Tags are required.

## 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).

Securely attach the tags to the back. Can be placed anywhere on back as long as it is placed neatly (straight, even spacing if it's centered, etc.)

## SUPPLIES:

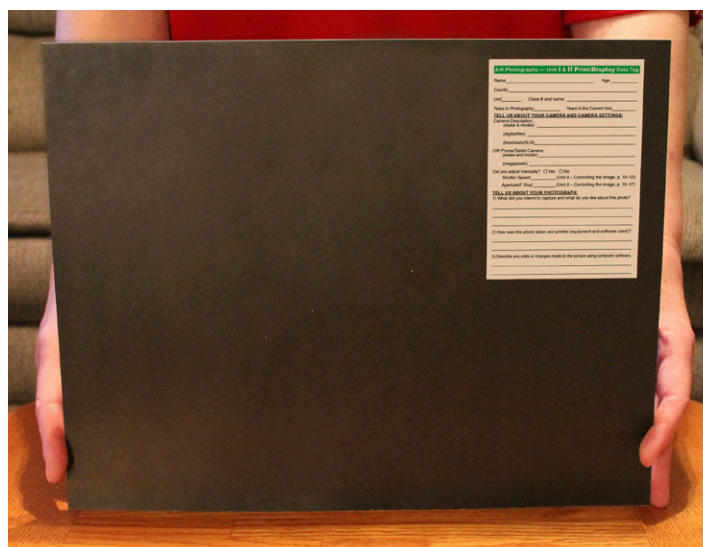
Double-sided tape, rubber cement or glue stick is recommended to securely attach photos and Personal Data Tags. Poster board is usually cheaper than mat-board, however, mat-board is more rigid and durable.

**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 3 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.

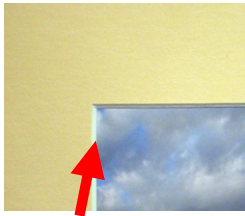


# How to Prepare an Exhibit Print

## FROM FAIR BOOK:

### Exhibit Prints (Units I, II & III):

- All exhibit prints 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.
- Place photos horizontally or vertically as appropriate.
- Unit I & II Print/Display Data Tags or Unit III Print/Display Data Tags are required.
- Note: Manual adjustments (settings) are strongly encouraged for Unit III Exhibits.



"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.

Securely attach the tags to the back. Can be placed anywhere on 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.

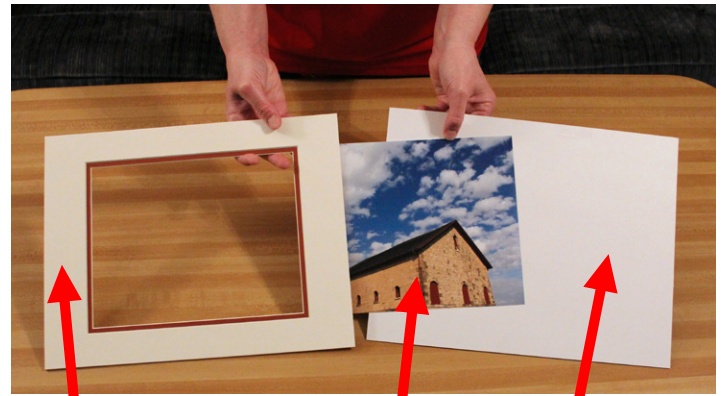
Choose carefully when selecting a shape for your mat opening. Select a shape that truly enhances the photograph — rectangular and oval shapes are acceptable.

## SUPPLIES:

Double-sided tape or rubber cement is recommended to securely attach photos and mat-boards (glue stick may not be strong enough). 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.

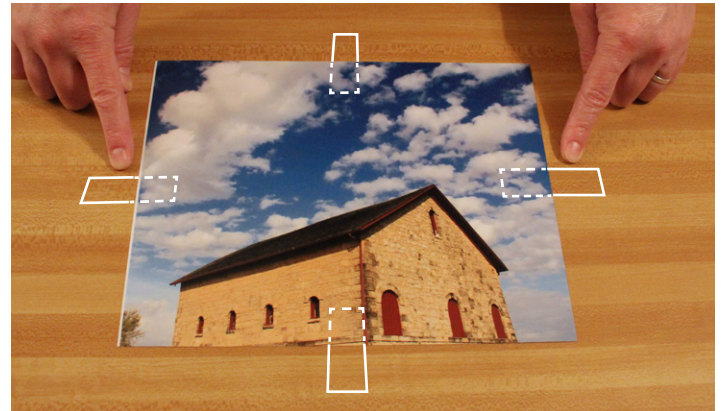
For mat-board backing, some stores have pre-cut 11" x 14" mat boards (without inside mat openings). It can be cheaper to purchase 32" x 40" mat-board or illustration board which can be cut down (use an X-Acto knife to cut).



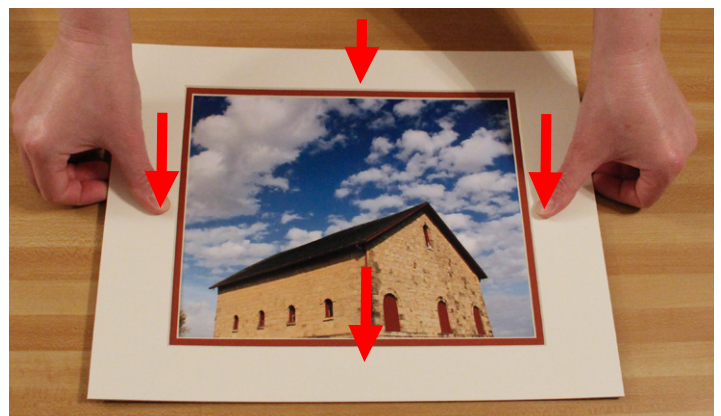
Single mat with inside opening (will go in front)

Mat-board for backing (will go in back)

Photo (will be sandwiched in the middle)



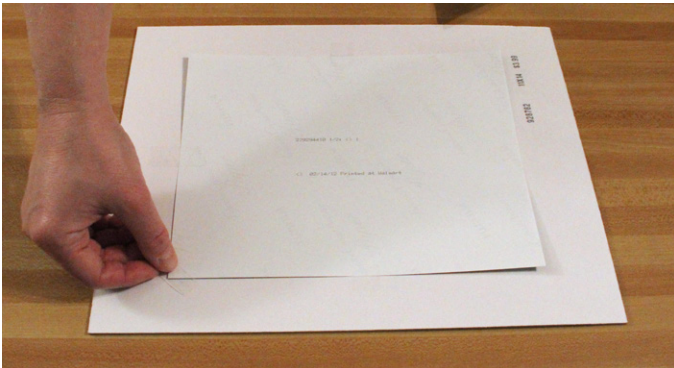
There are many ways you can secure your photo to the mat — the following method works well. Put regular, one-sided tape FACE UP — partly under the photo and partly sticking out — on four sides of your photo.



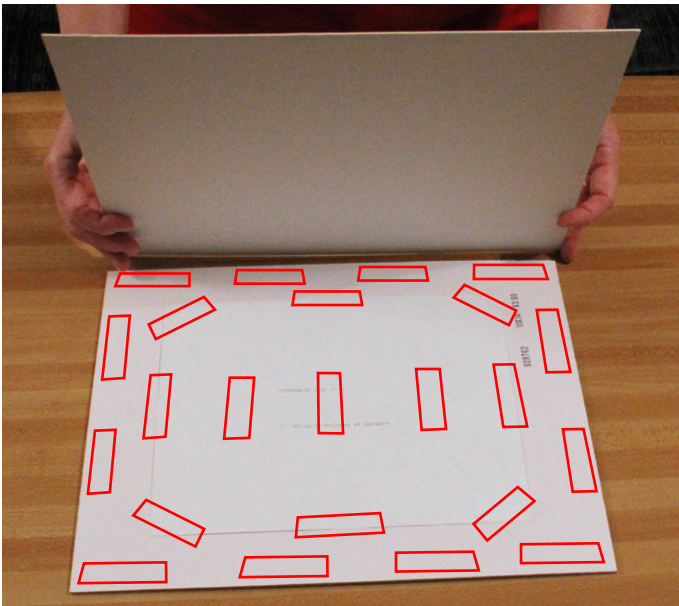
Notice your photo is slightly larger than the mat opening. Place the mat slightly above the photo and move mat slightly from side to side and up/down until you decide which "cropping" (portion of the photo showing) looks best. Press down on the mat where the tape is underneath. This holds the photo to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



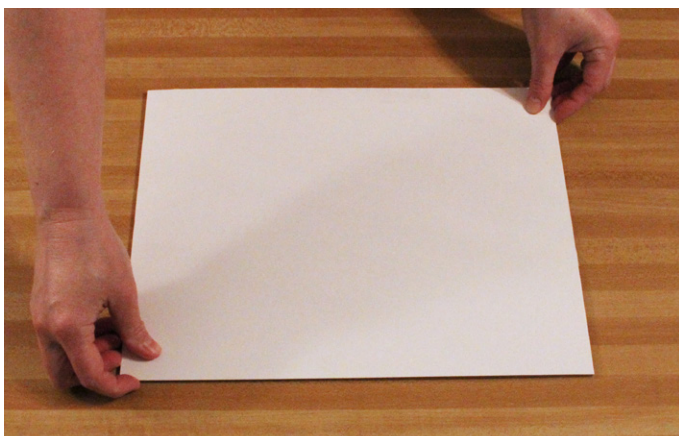
## How to Prepare an Exhibit Print *continued*



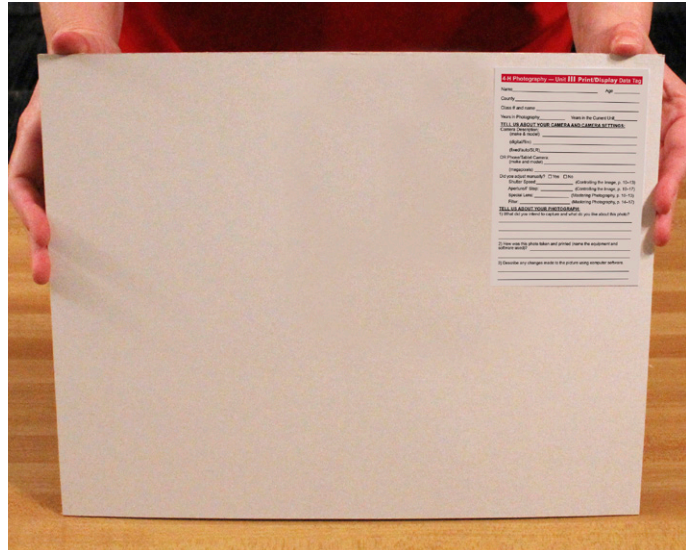
Turn the mat and photo over and place lots of double-stick tape or rubber cement over the back of the mat and photo. The goal is to make the mats and photo secure enough to hold even in the heat and humidity of fairs.



(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.