

Preparing Prints for Focus Competitions

My method – printing them myself and then putting them in pre prepared mattes. More on printing below.

Mounting Prints for Focus Competitions

Materials needed - Mattes and tape

1. Decide on some standard sizes for your prints so you can **reuse your mattes** over and over.
 - a. I have a few different ones. A good start is to get one or two each for portrait and landscape images.
 - i. Non Custom Pre Cut – can use the same matt for both portrait and landscape
 1. 16x20 for 11x14 picture
 - ii. Custom – the bottom border is bigger than the other three
 1. 16x20.5 landscape. Top and side borders 2 ¾". Bottom 3 ¼". The print is printed 10" x 15"
 - iii. In either case, you want it with the same kind of board as a backing attached with a tape hinge at the top.
 2. Buy something simple that goes with everything. Mine are all slightly off white and archival. Archival costs more to start, but they will not yellow and go bad nearly as quick as regular ones will.
 - a. If you take care of them, they will last a long time. Mine are mostly 14-15 years old now. The newest ones are over 10
 - b. Places to buy - Search for custom cut mat on Google
 - i. Guirys, Meiningers, Hobby Lobby, Michaels, Any Frame Shop
 - ii. Online – redimat.com, matboardcenter.com, matboardandmore.com and many others.
 - iii. Approximate cost for the custom matte above including backing, etc. \$25 from redimat
3. Tape – artist tape or even plain old Scotch Tape

Doing your own printing

Printers, Paper and Toner

1. Unless you are going to print quite a bit, don't bother. If only for Focus – don't bother.
2. Printers – Epson, Canon, HP – vary by maximum size of print, how many colors of cartridges, pigment vs liquid ink, what kinds of paper types and weights they can handle, ability to handle role paper and other features.
 - a. Pigment inks more stable and longer lasting (more archival), less color casts
 - b. Usually the more expensive the printer, the cheaper cost per ML of ink
 - c. Bigger printers more heavy duty and can handle heavier types of paper such as canvas, etc.
 - d. Matte papers use different black inks on Epson pigment printers. The printer auto switches depending on the type of paper specified

Epson Printers

Printer	Cost*	Max Print Width	Per Cartridge Toner Cost	ML/ Cart.	Cost \$/ML	# of Colors	Cost per Full Set
P400	\$390	13"	\$18	14.0	\$1.29	8	\$144
P600	\$473	13"	\$32	25.9	\$1.24	9	\$288
P800	\$895	17"	\$58	80.0	\$0.73	9	\$522

* From B&H reflecting mail in rebates valid though 3/31/19

3. Paper – wide variety of brands, types, thicknesses
 - a. Surfaces - Matte, Glossy, Luster, Canvas, Metallic
 - b. Thickness, Optical Brighteners (OBA), archival qualities, baryta, etc.
 - c. Some of my favorites Epson Ultra Premium Luster, Moab Entrada Natural (matte), Ilford Gold Fibre Silk (Baryta), Epson Exhibition Fiber, Canson Infinity Baryta Photographique, Hahnemuhle Photo Rag, I also use a lot of Epson Premium Glossy – mostly for test printing
 - d. I use mostly Epson Ultra Premium Luster for both Focus and test prints
 - i. (A3 11.7 x 16.5", 50 Sheets) \$69.99 (B&H) - \$1.40 per sheet
 - ii. (8.5 x 11", 50 Sheets) \$27.99 (B&H) - \$.56 per sheet
 - e. Not all papers are compatible with both pigment and liquid inks.

Printing

1. Calibration of monitor and printer or not, ICC profiles – different for every paper
2. 300dpi
3. Soft proofing
4. Getting your set up dialed in. How I set things up/print using Lightroom and Photoshop
 - a. Test Prints on various papers
 - b. On line use is different than printing – separate ICC
 - c. Get used to how one paper works before doing others.
 - d. B&W vs Color
5. Other uses besides Focus – obviously the main reasons you buy a printer in the first place
 - a. Printing for your own collection – albums or frames
 - b. Printing for sale
 - c. Test printing before using commercial printing,
 - i. Books
 - ii. Metal prints
 - iii. Very large prints.