

Photo Mounting Techniques

First, what “not to do”!

Everyday corrugated “card board” is for **boxes**,
it is not a suitable backing board for photos.

“Foam-board or “foam-core”
is the best all around option
for mounting your photos.

“Masking” tape is a very poor choice of tape for mounting any photograph.



Over time.....

- it dries out and the substrate of the tape turns into a yellow powder which contaminates your whole frame
- the residue of the adhesive is permanent and not archival, contaminants in the tape keep damaging your photo.

Also....



Use of an adhesive around the whole perimeter of your image is not acceptable. It does not allow for any movement of the photo or substrate.

Use of any adhesive on the “face” of the image is not acceptable either. Any adhesives are to be confined to the back side of the artwork.

OK, what about this?





3M brand “scotch” tape is technically not that bad a choice of adhesive, but...using around the whole perimeter, on the front of your photo is still not acceptable.

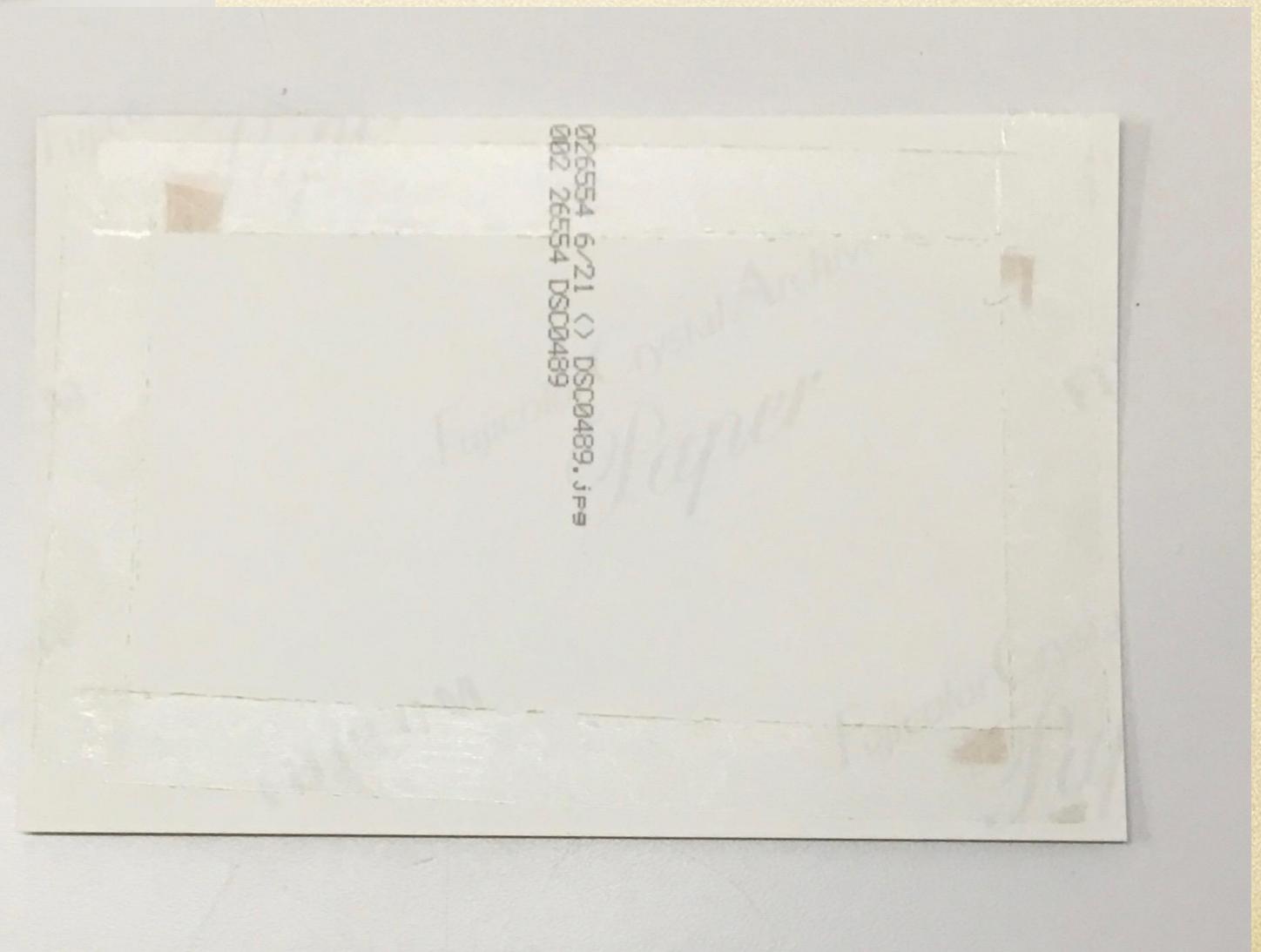
This is an image of “scotch” tape used on the back of the photo, adhered to the “window mat”.



It's technically not correct to adhere any photo to the “window mat”. It's still not acceptable to use any adhesive around the whole perimeter of the photo.....



“Double sided” tapes are not designed for mounting photos. They are a “construction” tape used to adhere different part of matting in a frame job.



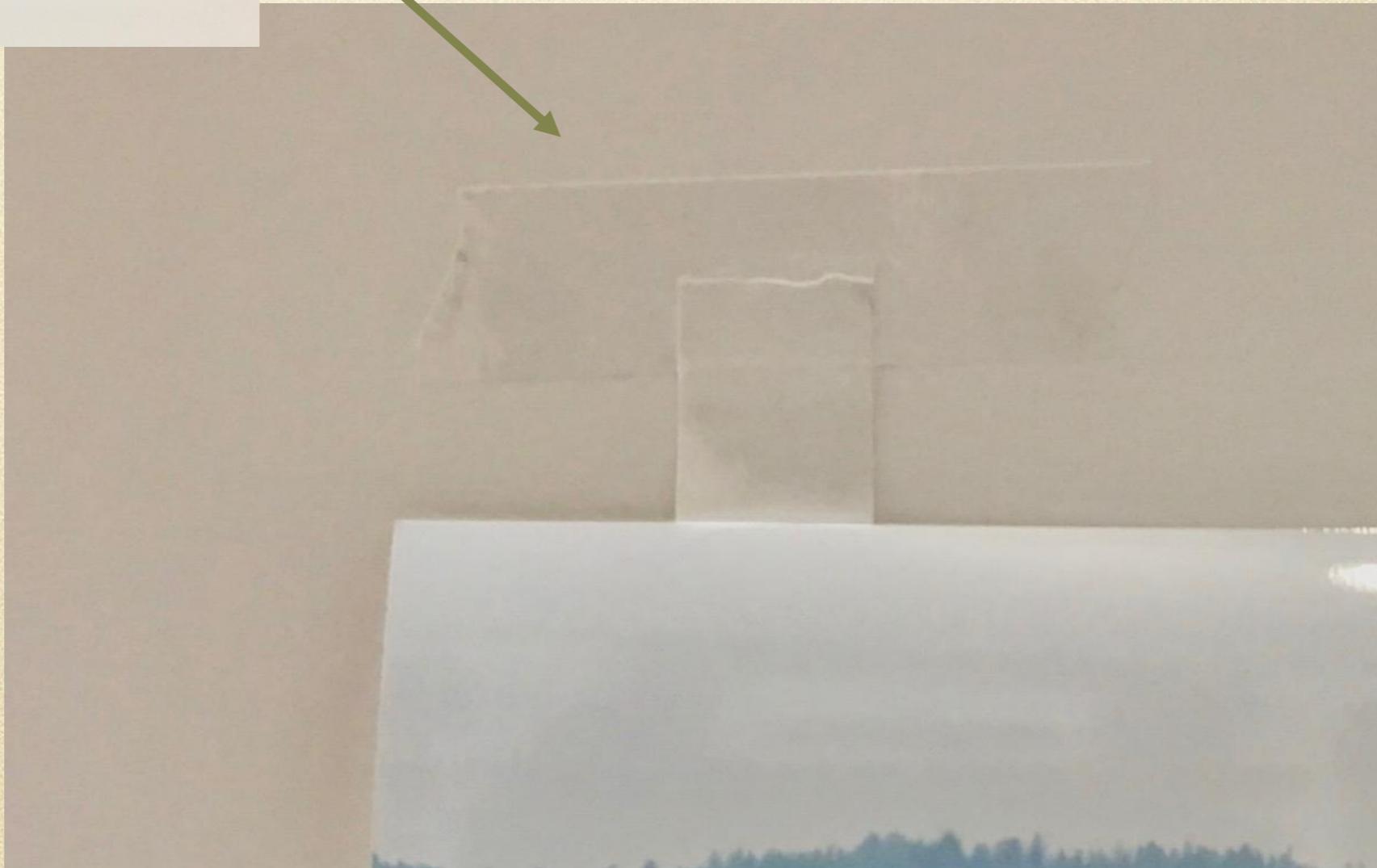
Using an “acid free” tape and mounting your photo with T-hinges is perfectly acceptable, but still allows the “curvature” of the photo paper to show.





Closeup of a T-hinge

FYI: hinges allow the photo and substrate to move independently, this discourages buckling and rippling of the photo.



Want an even better mounting technique?



Mylar mounting strips are an excellent choice. They allow movement, there is NO adhesive touching the photo, and they are made from “acid free” materials.



But...none of these techniques will
keep your photo FLAT!



There are commercially available adhesive sheets that mimic the properties of a dry mount and keep your photo flat.

The sheets of adhesive are “Acid free” and do not require heat.

They are however, irreversible....and also \$\$.

Liquid “spray mount” adhesives are still available.

They are **permanent, messy, and “aromatic”**.

Despite their negative qualities, they still do a decent job of mounting, if you insist on your photo being “flat”!



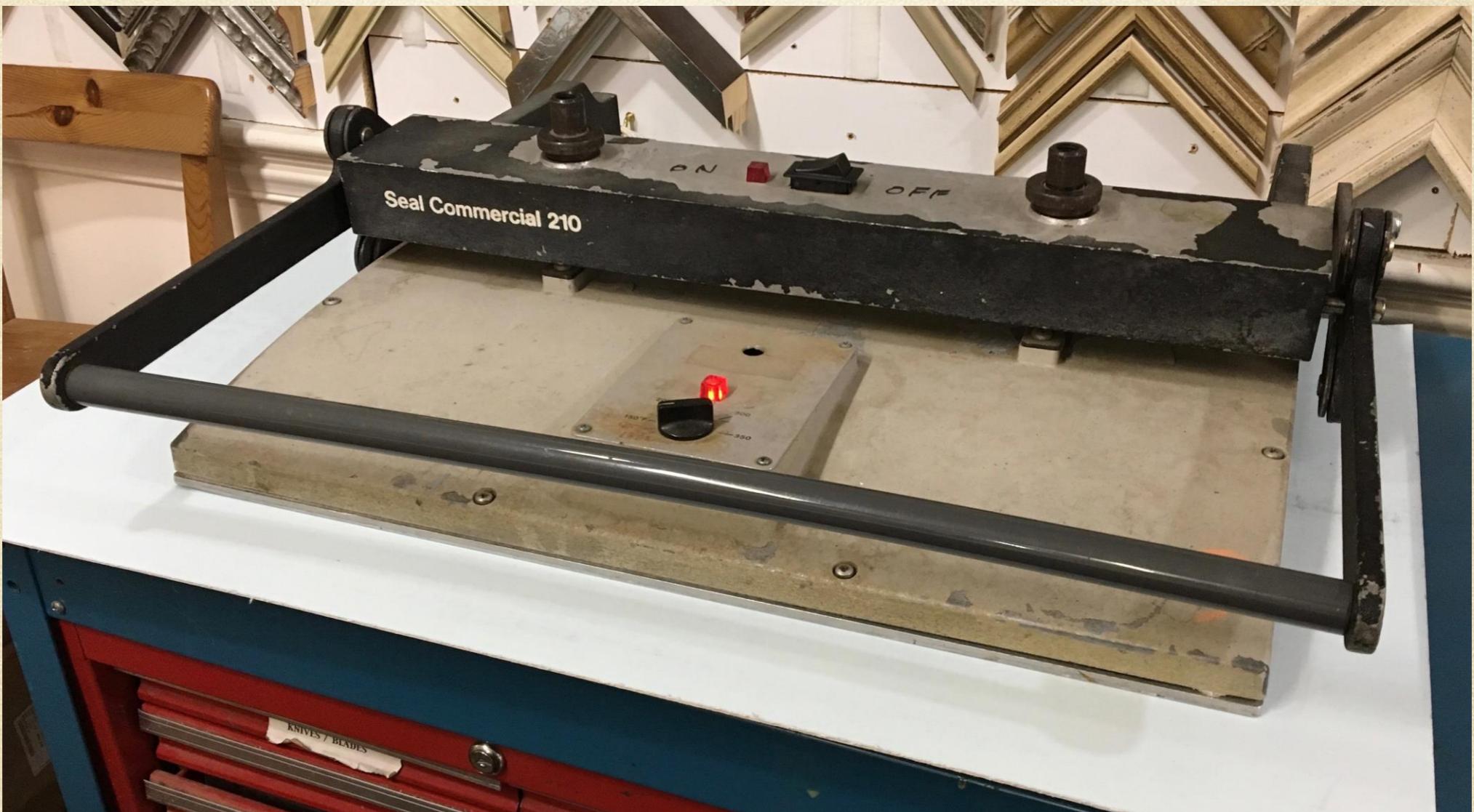
Archival dry mounting keeps your photo flat, is reversible and also “acid free”.

dry mount
adhesive
visible



Sadly, “dry mounting” is not really DIY....

This is an image of our ancient “dry mount” press. Using an archival “dry mount” is still the best and most reliable option for “acceptable mounts” that will flatten your photo.



FYI: heat and pressure are applied to bond the photo to the substrate with a “dry” adhesive sheet.

**Note: don't try this at home with an iron....LOL!

There are a couple of exciting new techniques emerging in the world of photography mounting. Among them are acrylic “face mounts” and “static mounts”.

Static mounts, use a static charge to entice your photo to “cling” to a sheet of acrylic holding it in place with no adhesive, very archival!

Face mounts, use a clear adhesive to mount the face of your photo to acrylic, see example.

I urge all of you image makers to mount
your beautiful images with the best
possible material and techniques.....

Thankyou!