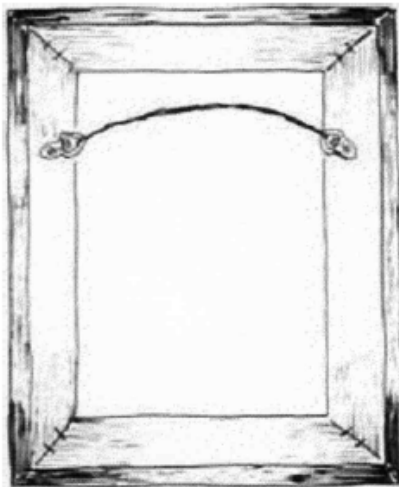


HARDWARE FOR HANGING ARTWORK

Kelly M. Fiske and illustrated by Karen Trush.
The Exhibition Alliance



Back of frame with "D"-rings attached for hanging directly (without wire)



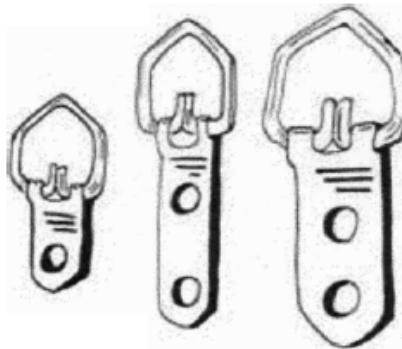
Back of frames with "D"-rings and wire attached

Choosing and Installing the Hardware

Hanging artwork is an essential part of most gallery installations. To ensure that the work does not fall to the floor, three elements are crucial: appropriate hanging hardware, picture wire of adequate strength, and hangers or hooks that are strong and securely attached to the wall. To err on any one of these negates all other efforts to install the work safely. No matter how carefully you have chosen the wire and hanging hardware, a painting hung from a single finishing nail is not going to stay on the wall—at least not for long.

For most framed artwork, two metal "D"-rings should be attached with screws to the reverse of the frame, one at each side, about a quarter of the frame's height from the top of the frame. Metal frames usually have "D"-rings or similar hardware already in place. The work can then be hung directly from two wall hooks, two picture hangers, or two nails. Careful measuring is needed to place the hangers and ensure a level result, but this method keeps all the stress on the frame parallel and provides support at two points. Because it is time consuming, this method is usually reserved for permanent installations; oversize works, or unframed paintings.

A more expedient method is to hang the work using wire in combinations with the "D"-rings. The two metal "D"-rings are attached on the reverse of the frame as described above, but oriented horizontally. A length of wire is threaded through the two rings, and the wire is securely knotted around each ring. The framed work is then hung by placing the wire over two hooks or nails driven securely into the wall.



"D" rings



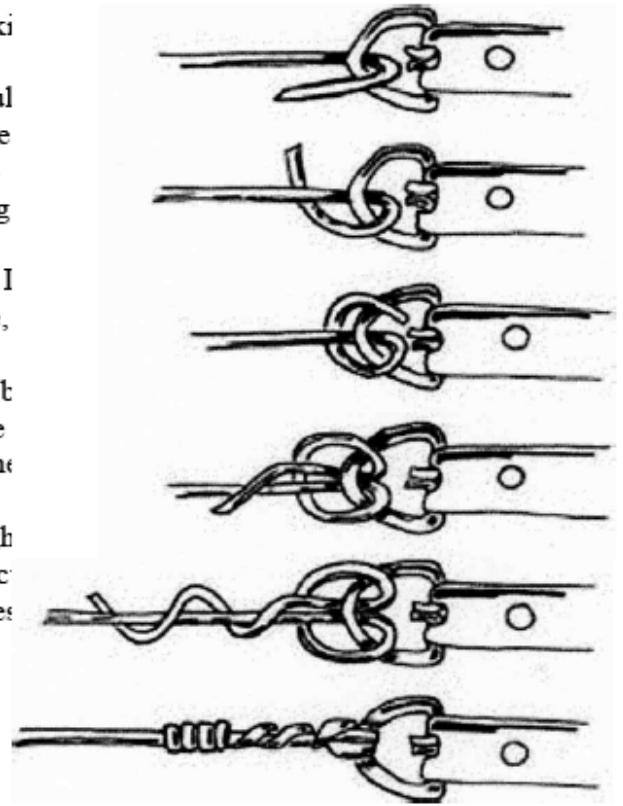
Never use screw eyes

ILLUSTRATIONS OF ACCEPTABLE HARDWARE AND RECOMMENDED PROCEDURE (CONT'D)

"D"-ring hangers are available in a variety of sizes, making them appropriate for most framed works. Screw eyes should never be used since they tend to loosen from the frame and pull free. They also pose a hazard when artwork is stacked because as projections, they can scratch or puncture other works. "D"-ring hangers lie flat during display and during storage, making them less hazardous as well as more secure.

Hardware should be attached while the frame is empty. If hardware must be attached when there is artwork in the frame, carefully measure the thickness of the frame and note the location of the artwork in relation to where the hardware will be attached. To avoid damaging the artwork or the frame, choose screws which are considerably shorter than the frame or strain and proceed with caution.

Before attaching a wire to the "D"-rings, carefully weigh the framed pieces. Once you have determined its weight, select braided steel wire that is designed to support at least four times that weight. Braided steel does not fray or split as easily as twisted wire, and "under loading" the wire is a good safety measure. If the strength (often expressed as "lb. test" or "breaking strength") is not indicated on the spool, the manufacturer should be able to provide that information.



Top to Bottom:
Recommended method for knotting wire
around "D"-ring

Carefully knot the wire around the "D"-rings so that it cannot slip, and tightly wind the loose ends around the main strand to keep them from unraveling and to prevent them from scratching or puncturing other works. The ends can also be taped as an additional precaution. The Gallery Association uses a knot similar to a "fisherman's bend" which is easy to tie and very secure.