

# PICTURE THIS

You've scored some new artwork. But now, how to frame it? We went straight to the pros for their no-fail approaches—and, for the intrepid out there, we also pulled their favorite alternative ideas

## I have... **Colorful Modern Art**



### **Play It Safe**

“Choose a simple, **modern white frame** and pair it with a white mat so that both disappear against the wall—and allow the artwork to shine.”

—ROBYN POCKER, president, J. Pocker & Son custom framing and decorative prints



**Or Bend the Rules** Fashion an old-meets-new synergy by placing your contemporary art inside a lavishly **ornate, antique-looking frame**. (Picasso reportedly flanked his Cubist works with centuries-old carved wood numbers.) “A rococo frame is also a clever way to integrate modern artwork into a room with traditional décor,” says Steve McKenzie, CEO of Atlanta frame company Larson-Juhl. “Visually, it’s a smoother transition.”

**Custom Closed Corner Concerto Collection frame, Larson-Juhl, price available upon request; [larsonjuhl.com](http://larsonjuhl.com) for stores. *Curvilinear Time*, Jessica Snow, courtesy of the artist and [20x200.com](http://20x200.com) for info.**

### **HANGING TIP**

Center an oversize frame like this one above a key piece of furniture so that it creates a focal point in the room.

**HANG ON!** Don't set foot in the frame shop before reading these tips from designer ALEX PAPACHRISTIDIS

**1 Do some research** Flip through books and magazines for inspiration on how others have framed similar pieces.

**2 Take it with you** Bring the artwork to the store when you're ready to buy a frame—don't just take measurements and head out the door! It's important to see the art in context with the frame (and mat) choice.

**3 Consider the options** At the store, hold up several frames next to the work. “Try colors and styles that may not seem like contenders—you may be pleasantly surprised,” says Papachristidis. Opt for a wood or metal frame (plastic tends to warp quickly). Wood feels warmer, is offered in better colors and styles, and looks good with everything; metal is slicker and tends to complement contemporary art.

**4 Go one by one** Select a frame for each piece individually; there's no need to choose the same style for everything just because it will all hang on one wall. “Go for a salon-style look with a mix of differently framed and matted pieces—some can even be unframed,” he says. “It can be fresher and less studied that way, especially if the mood of the artwork is similar to the look and feel of the room.”

# I have... Black & White Photography



**Play It Safe** “While museums and galleries generally pair dark frames with white mats, try a **white, pale wood, or gray frame** instead,” says McKenzie. “An ivory or charcoal-tinted frame plays up a photo’s middle tones and is less distracting than a jet-black one, which draws the eye away from the photo.” Stick with neutral mats too: Gray, off-white, and ecru hues are good bets.



**HANGING TIP**  
Trace frame shapes on butcher paper, cut out, and tape them to the wall, moving them around until you like the arrangement. Then get out the hammer!

**Or Bend the Rules** Make a grand statement on a bright wall by hanging a **mix of frames in both bold and neutral tones**, says N.Y.C. lifestyle expert and blogger Eddie Ross. A pale-colored mat anchors each piece and keeps the area from looking too chaotic.

# I have... Tons of Kids' Artwork



**Play It Safe** **Splashy, colorful frames and coordinating mats** are nice matches for subject matter that is playful by nature. An easy way to guide your choice: Choose a tone that picks up on one of the hues in the picture. Word to the wise: “Always use Plexiglas—not glass—on work that will hang in kids’ rooms; it’s break-resistant,” advises framer Russell Gerlach of Gerlach Frames in Brooklyn.

Custom Taffy frame (from \$14/ft.) and mats (\$24/32" x 40" sheet), Larson-Juhl; larsonjuhl.com for stores.

**Or Bend the Rules** Has your darling created a whopper that seems, well, too big for its britches? “Cut it up into equal rectangles, **frame the portions separately**, and **arrange them in a grid**. This technique makes the work look and feel more modern and less ‘little kiddie,’” says Ross.



Ribba 12" x 16" birch frames, \$10 each; ikea.com for stores.

## Go Out of the Box

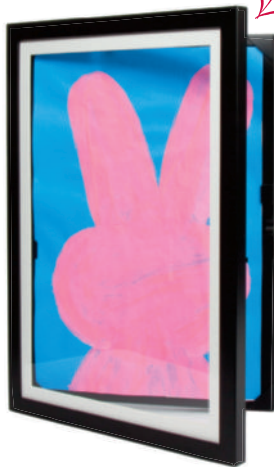
Five frame alternatives to showcase your treasures with flair



**1 DECALS** Place a photo beneath the clear window of this removable (and reusable) sticker. Stickr frame, Butch & Harold, \$20/8; butchandharold.com.

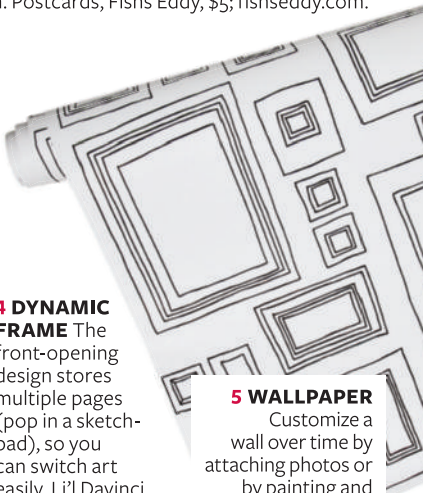


**2 SHADOW BOX** Ideal for any three-dimensional collection that you want to highlight or for flat artwork. Pins hold paper in place. Shadow-Box 8" x 16" gallery frame, West Elm, \$29; westelm.com. Postcards, Fishs Eddy, \$5; fishseddy.com.



*Opens like a medicine cabinet!*

**4 DYNAMIC FRAME** The front-opening design stores multiple pages (pop in a sketchpad), so you can switch art easily. Li'l Davinci 12" x 18" x about 1" art cabinet, Dynamic Frames, \$35; dynamicframes.com.



**5 WALLPAPER** Customize a wall over time by attaching photos or by painting and drawing directly on the paper. Frames wallpaper, Graham & Brown, \$40/roll; amazon.com.

**3 MAGNETIC CORDS** Punctuate an area with a series of these vertical strips, then attach your artwork with enclosed minimagnets. Magnetic Photo Rope, Kikkerland, \$12; photojojo.com. Photos by Joshua Kessler; joshuakessler.com.

## Sources for Affordable Art

**Aperture.org** This prolific nonprofit offers a stunning mix of photographic prints in its "under \$750" section.

**Artoftheprint.com** A treasure trove of original watercolors, paintings, drawings, and silk screens, it's also a go-to for hand-colored botanical etchings and architectural sketches, many priced under \$500.



*Scene of Fields II*, Anew McKnight, \$200; zatista.com.

**Gallery10G.com** Manhattan gallerist Jill Gerstenblatt represents emerging painters and photographers and occasionally sells

work by more-established artists (Takashi Murakami, Juergen Teller, Massimo Vitali) for \$1,000 to \$5,000.

**Novica.com** Discover expertly handwoven wall hangings and tapestries (from about \$35 to \$250) and browse hundreds of folk-art paintings created by African, Indian, Mexican, Thai and other international artisans.

**Tinycowcase.com** Each week this cooperative turns a different little work on paper (approximately 5" x 7") into a limited-run print for \$20 and donates a percentage of sales to charity.

**Zatista.com** Click through more than 4,000 pieces (painting, photography, drawing, digital media) from artists in 20 countries. If you don't like the work after receiving it, the site offers a refund.

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