

It should exude quality and great design.”

For photography, McKenzie advises choosing simpler, more modern frames. Since the most prized photographs are black and white, a simple “edge” of black, white, or silver” made out of either wood or metal would be most suitable.

Collectible objects and artifacts are also taking centre stage in the framing industry, and shadowboxes are becoming increasingly popular for showcasing prized possessions. “Taking your collectible to a reputable framer is your best option,” says McKenzie. Professionals understand the technical aspects of your particular object, and can pick the moulding and frame that best suits your personal style while complementing your showpiece.

“The frame should complement both the artwork and the environment in which it is displayed,” says Eric Burke, general manager



A MODERN TRADITION: Simple black shadow boxes corral this collection of spoons. The frames can be opened up easily so spoons can be cleaned or rearranged.

of Framehouse Boutique in Vancouver. Warm-toned rooms should display more classic, traditional frames whereas cool, modern rooms should showcase contemporary, hard-edged

decorations. Although this is the general rule, switching one for the other can “marry the two different designs together,” says Burke.

When framing a piece of sentimental value, conservation is importance. UV glass will help protect your piece from the sun’s harm. Mats are important, too.

“When determining whether to use acid-free

versus archival-quality matting, it all depends on the commitment to the artwork,” says Burke.

“Alpha cellulose and cotton rag mats – the more expensive options – are naturally inert since they don’t have wood pulp, an acidic substance. Wood pulp and paper mats have been buffered on the surface to make the outer edges acid-free. For these less costly mats, there is a

artwork conservation, it is certainly the key to completing a visual masterpiece. Wood frames are more warm and natural, and many people feel that they emanate more character. Metal frames provide a modern edge, are inert in composition, proportionally stronger, and come in a wide variety of enamel colours and anodized finishes for a clean, contemporary design.

[Picture Perfect]

5 tips for choosing the best border

- 1. Sturdy is smart:** Choose durable frames, especially for pieces you plan to preserve for generations.
- 2. Be versatile:** Frames should transition through different rooms, trends and decades.
- 3. Check for defects:** Watch for “rough” patterns on the frame, unless it’s part of the overall design.
- 4. Weigh in:** The frame should have the feel and weight of a piece of fine furniture. Too light? It might be poor quality wood.
- 5. Size it up:** Make sure the frame has the size and strength to hold your art, especially when framing heavy objects.

potential that, in the right conditions, the outer surface becomes acidic again, affecting the preservation of your art.”

Although the framing material might not be a fundamental part of

In 2009, consumers are paying particular attention to wooden frames since it’s a “safer” and more long-lasting purchase, says Larson-Juhl’s Steve McKenzie. “Consumers are also focusing on a ‘back to basics’ lifestyle, choosing more classic, traditional designs that will remain great decor elements in the home for many years to come.” McKenzie say that solid, hardwood frames of sophisticated texture and authentic antique detailing will be the upcoming trend.

At the end of the day, the right frame is the one that suits your tastes and needs. Embrace the fine art of framing, as a well-framed masterpiece will brighten a room, with more elegance and sophistication than ever before.

— Michelle Lam ■

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