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Hang Your Art, Not Yourself!

By Suzanne Gallagher, the Wall Design Diva

Why is hanging art such a challenge for us? It is really not that difficult if you have the tools and know some easy to apply principles. The safest place for a piece of art to be is hanging on the wall. How long have you left a great piece of art leaning against the wall waiting to be hung, only to get kicked by an unsuspecting passerby, ouch! So, no more avoiding the obvious. Once you get the “hang” of it there will be no stopping you!

TOOL KIT

Every serious homeowner, man or woman should have a tool kit with the essentials for installation and repair survival. Pencil, tape measure, art hangers, and hammer are crucial for art lovers. Colored toothpaste comes in handy and a little spackle to fill in those rare mistakes is a good idea. A tool that is a “gotta have” is a ruled level. These are inexpensive and enable you to measure and get it straight at one time!



There are two types of hanging systems usually found on the back of your art piece. Hanging methods are slightly different for each.

If your art has Wire Hangers: Hold the art against the wall to determine where you want to place it. Make a small pencil mark on the wall at the top center. Take the art down. Pull the wire taut as if the art was hanging. Measure the distance from the top of the frame to the highest point of the taut wire. Using your ruled level, measure down that same distance from the mark the on the wall to determine the center of the placement for hooks. If you are centering the art, double check the mark in relation to the furniture and adjust. Using the ruled level, place the center of the level on the pencil mark and measure 5 to 12 inches on each side and mark location of hooks. The distance between hooks depends on the size of the piece. A 40” piece will need hooks at least 24” apart, and so on. This keeps the piece from tipping side to side easily. Gently tap hooks into the wall with your hammer and hang art.

Your art piece may be large and too heavy to hold. No problem, measure the height of the art piece. Pull the wire taut and note that measurement. Then take your tape extended to the height of the piece and place it against the wall where you want the center and top edge of the art. Adjust the tape until you have the desired height. Make your pencil mark, not at the top of the tape but the same measurement down from the top of the art piece to the wire. Proceed to mark position of hook placement using the ruled level, place hooks and hang art.

If your art has Saw Tooth Hooks: First check to make sure that the hooks are placed equal distance from the top edge of the frame. If they are different you will need to adjust accordingly. Next, put a very small amount of colored toothpaste on the center of each hook. This is especially helpful if you have dark walls or wallpaper. With the art side facing you, hold the art against the wall where you want to hang it and lightly press upper edge to the wall, leaving the toothpaste marks. Make a small pencil mark to redefine toothpaste marks. Remove toothpaste. Check with ruled level.

Another method is to hold the art piece with the image toward wall. Make a light pencil mark on the wall at the top edge of the frame above the center of each hook. Take the art down and check markings with a ruled level. You will need to measure down about ½” to adjust for the placement of the hooks, remark. Erase the original pencil marks. Pound flat head nails or brass nail hooks at marked locations. Traditional hangers will not work with the saw tooth hook. Hang art.

These and other easy to apply “tricks” are what make a room hum. You don’t have to own original art to create a space that has charm, individuality, and pizzaz. It’s all part of creating the Fine Art of Wall Design!

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Visit Suzanne’s web site for a free copy of **Tips for Hanging Art Groupings**

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