



Mat Design by: Brian Wolf, CPF  
Artwork: "Symphony" by Simon Bull, published by Wild Apple Graphics.  
Mats: Crescent Cardboard's Whitecore Basics in Silver Gray, Lapis, Chamois Gold, and Green Pear.  
This mat design appears courtesy of Crescent Cardboard Company, LLC.

# *The Inlay Mat*

*Editor's note: "The Inlay Mat" is the first in a series of twelve articles on the basics of mat design. In each 1999 issue, Picture Framing Magazine will feature a different mat design, an example of its use, and instructions for creating it.*

At first glance, many inlay mats look as if they are multiple, stacked mats. This is an illusion, however, since an inlay mat is created with pieces of matboard assembled together to create a single mat, not multiple ones. This has several practical advantages: it both keeps the matting package from becoming too thick; and, depending on how it is pieced together, it can also be used to eliminate the numerous white bevels exposed when multiple mats are stacked.

The following instructions are for creating a single inlay mat (like the lapis inlay shown in this example). The mat shown with this article is a more advanced variation which features advanced cuts used in conjunction with the inlay design.

Step 1: Select two mat boards of different colors (but similar thicknesses).

Step 2: The board you've chosen for your first mat (like the Silver Gray mat shown here) should be sized to its outer dimension.

Step 3: Cut the board you've chosen as your inlay (in this example, the Lapis blue mat) to its outer dimension. Size it 1/2" smaller than

your first mat on each side. (E.g., if the first mat was 11x14", the inlay mat should be 10 1/2"x13 1/2".)

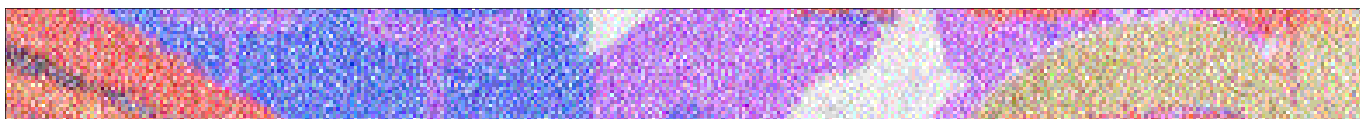
Step 4: Now you'll have to determine two measurements: how wide the mat borders will be, and where in that border you'll place the inlay. For example, you might choose a 2 1/2" border and place the

inlay at 2 1/8", making the inlay 3/8" wide.

Step 5: Set your mat cutter guides and stops to the measurement where you want to place the inlay (using the example above, that would be at 2 1/8"). Now cut window opening of your first mat using those guides and stops.



*The Silver Gray and Lapis matboards create the inlay, while the Chamois Gold provides an accent. The inlay mat is then combined with the Green Pear mat and the entire combination becomes a double mat.*



Step 6: Now place the first mat (the one you just cut) face down and place the second mat (the inlay) face down on top of it. Position it in the center so that there is a 1/4" margin on each side. Using just a little tape, attach the boards to each other.

Step 7: Keeping your mat guides and stops the same as before, make

cuts on all four sides of the mat that go from one end of the mat to the other. Make sure your blade cuts the inlay mat, but not the first mat.

Step 8: Remove the strips that result from your cuts. Take the center that remains of the second (inlay) mat, and tape it into the window opening of the first mat. You now

have a mat boarder and a mat center that together form a single mat.

Step 9: Now move your mat cutter guides and stops to the measurement for your mat borders (in this example, 2 1/2"). Cut the opening in your mat.

You should now have an inlay mat! ■