

# Metal Mats



Photo 1: These aged copper mats were created with just a few easily available items.

*Editor's note: The instructions for these projects are taken from the book "Frame It" by the Vanessa Ann Collection. This hard cover book, published by Merideth Press, includes over 50 frame design ideas.*

## **"GRACEFULLY AGED COPPER" MATS**

To create the mats shown in photo 1, you will need 18 gauge tooling copper, scissors for cutting the metal, copper patina, a ballpoint pen and a stack of newspapers.

Make copies of the mat patterns (included with this article as diagram 2) on a photocopier and enlarge or reduce them to the desired size. (Or, draw your own designs.)

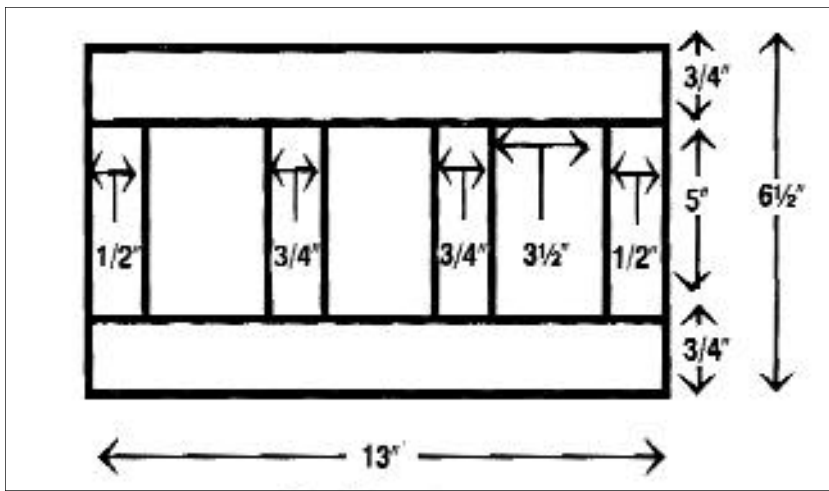


Diagram 1: Three 4"x6" copper mats were used in the example in photo 1, and placed into a balsa wood frame with the dimensions shown here.

Position and tape the pattern to your piece of copper.

Stack newspapers to provide a padded work surface and place the copper pieces with the patterns taped to them on this stack. Using a ballpoint pen, retrace the pattern lines, pressing firmly. Also mark the opening for the mat window. You may need to repeat this tracing more than once to make the impressions deep enough. Remember that the embossed pattern will be reversed on the copper.

Following the lines, cut the window for each of the pieces of copper. For an aged look, apply a copper patina following the suppliers instructions. The copper mats in this article which were

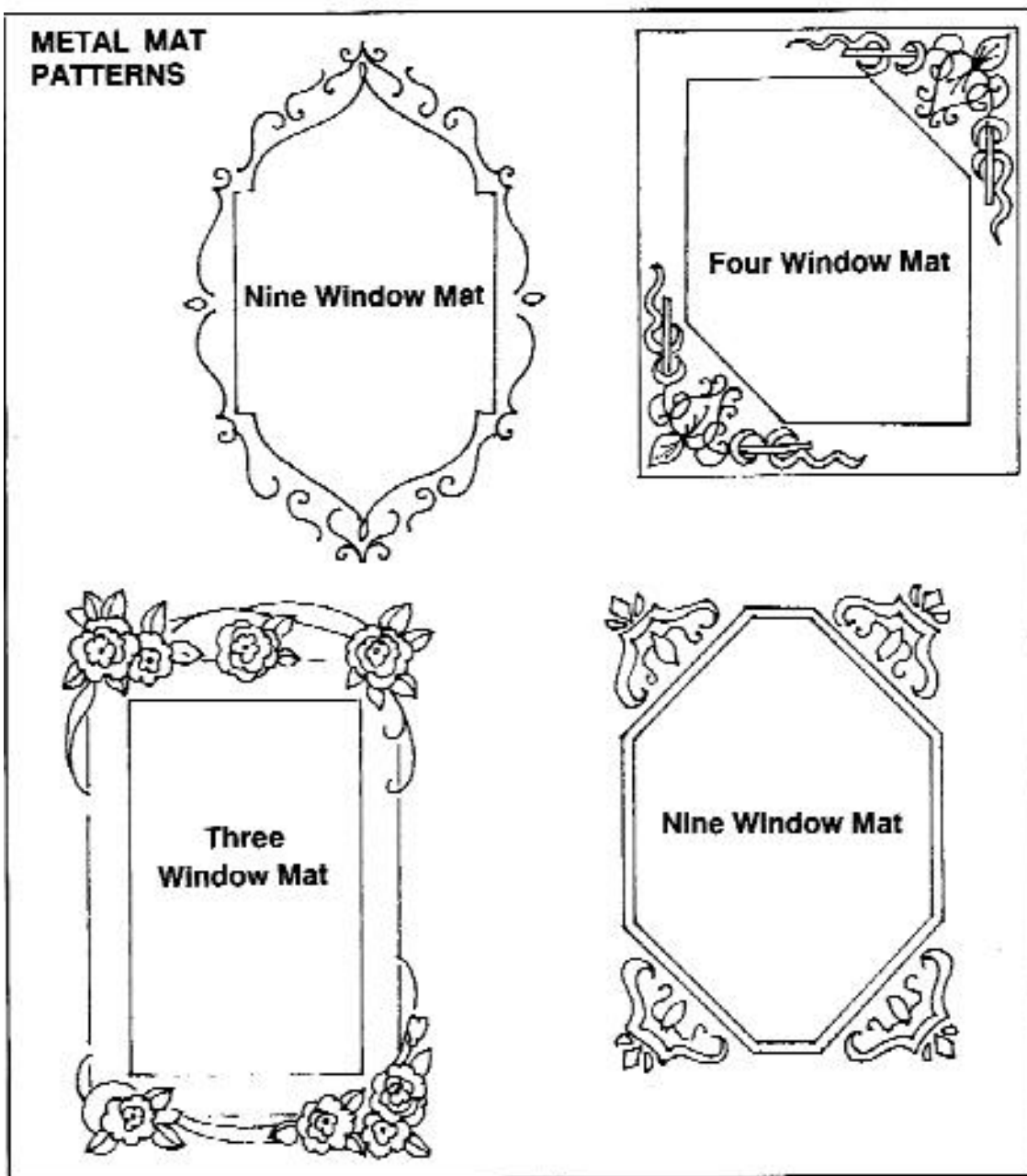


Diagram 2: These designs were used to create the mats shown here. Use them or create your own.



Photo 2: These copper mats were not aged and were created with a different weight copper sheet.

not antiqued (photo 2) were made with 36 gauge copper instead of 18 gauge.

The copper mats in this example were placed in a frame made of balsa wood strips that were painted with brown acrylic paint. Pieces of matboard can be adhered to the underside of the mat to space the metal away from the artwork.

### “VICTORIAN PARLOR” MATS

The mats in photo 3 were created using similar materials and the same method as the copper mats. Instead of copper, 36 gauge aluminum was used. The patterns for these designs are included also. Again, balsa wood was used to hold the mats in their arrangement before they were placed in the frame moulding. □

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Photo 3: Metal mats can also be made with aluminum.