

The Mat Doctors



Brian Barnett, CPF



Tim Franer, CPF, CMG



John E. Ranes II, CPF, GCF

Three leading mat designers in the picture framing industry are here each month to answer some frequently (and not so frequently) asked questions about mat cutting or design techniques. With an average of 26 years of framing experience, they bring a wealth of knowledge to this column. If you've got a nagging problem with an aspect of cutting mats, or simply want to find out what the experts have to say about a certain technique, send in your question to pmeditor@hobbypub.com and The Mat Doctors will prescribe a remedy.

Q. What is the process for cutting a slant, notched corner mat using the measuring stops on my manual mat cutter?

Brian replies:

A. In the August issue, I addressed this question by showing how to create a slant, notched corner mat without the use of measuring stops (also referred to as production stops) on your mat cutter. This month, I'll show how to create this design using those stops. In this example, I will use an 11"x14" matboard and the "main" border will be 2½" wide. Let's begin...

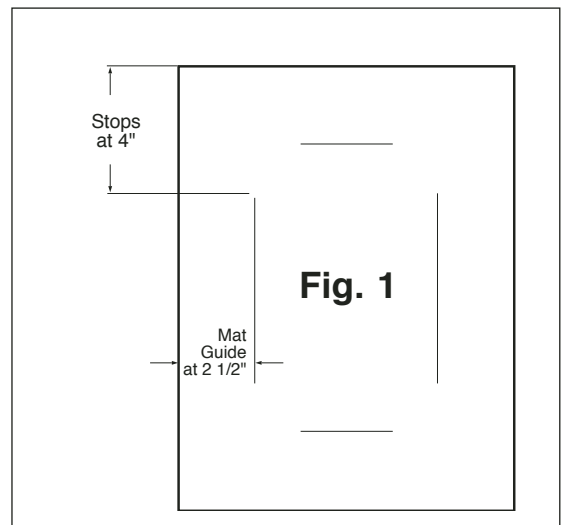


Figure 1: Begin with the 11"x14" matboard. Set your mat guide to 2½" and both measuring stops to 4". Make four cuts as shown here. The result will be a mat with large undercuts (the cuts will not meet and there will be no fallout).

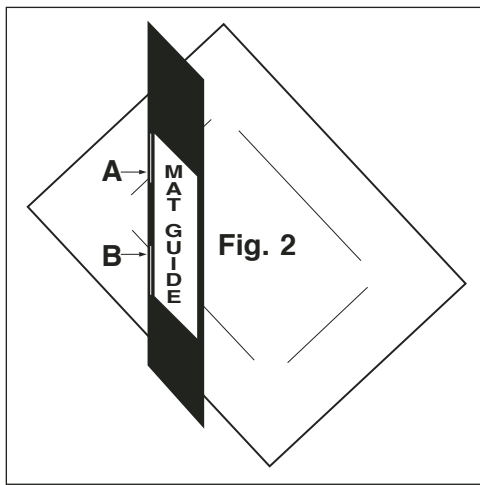


Figure 2: Next, position the matboard under the mat guide at a 45° angle as shown here. Position one short side cut and an adjacent long side cut so they each protrude from under the edge of the mat guide by approximately 3/16". To begin cutting, insert the blade tip about 1/8" above the short cut at "A", and cut down to approximately 1/8" past the cut at point "B". Repeat this process for the other three corners of the mat. The result will be a mat with an octagonal window as shown in Figure 3.

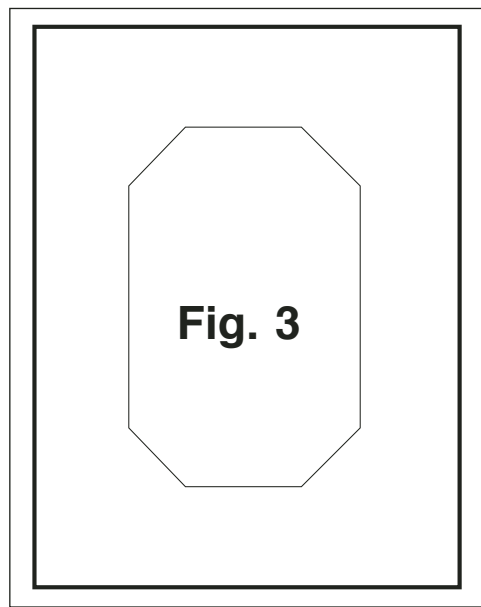


Figure 3: The octagonal mat

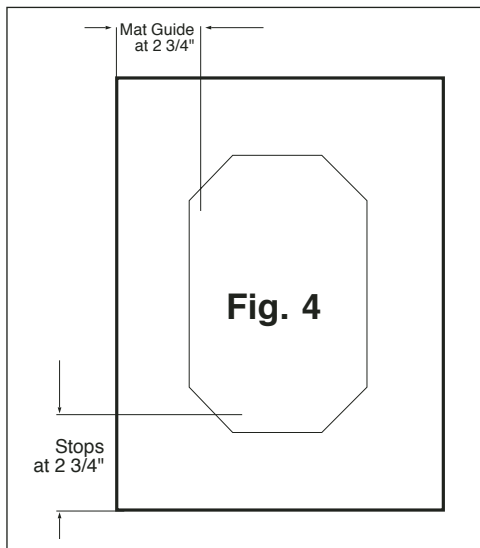


Figure 4: Next, use tape on the backside of the mat to insert the octagonal fallout back into the opening. Set your mat guide to 2 3/4" and the measuring stops to 2 3/4". Cut all four sides; you will be cutting a rectangular opening into the octagonal mat. This will create the design shown in Figure 5.

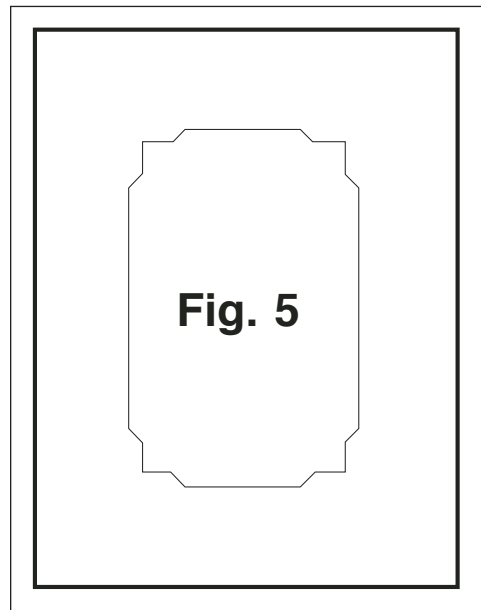


Figure 5: The completed slant, notched corner mat

Brian Barnett, CPF, an industrial designer by profession, has spent 25 years in custom framing sales, product and graphic design, merchandising, operations, production control, and financial management. He appears in training videos, has authored numerous training manuals and magazine articles, and teaches at educational venues. He currently is Larson-Juhl's consultant to the retail framing industry, consults with The Fletcher-Terry Co., and contracts for special projects with large industry retailers.

Tim Franer, CPF, CMG, has spent over 30 years in the art and custom framing industry. Known for his creative design and skilled craftsmanship, Tim is a former gallery owner and is currently a chairholder with the Color Marketing Group. He is currently development, design, and educational consultant for Nielsen Bainbridge.

John E. Ranes II, CPF, GCF, is an instructor of workshops and seminars throughout North America, Europe, South America, Australia, and New Zealand. He and his wife, Sarah, own a frame shop and gallery in Appleton, WI, which has won more than 60 framing awards. John also consults for The Fletcher-Terry Company.