



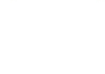
PHOTO BY ROLAND BELLO AT JACOBSENINTERIORS.COM

Hanging Artwork Is A Challenge. And An Art.

As a residential interior designer, I have installed many kinds of art for clients and hire the best installers to ensure that the work is done properly.

Have you ever had the experience where you just completed a wall, you step back, and notice that one piece is 1/4" off? Nudge it all you want, you can't change the mathematics, and you may end up settling with artwork that is askew. You find yourself hoping that no one will notice but, you see it every time you look at that wall.

Here are a few tips to help avoid this scenario.



Two Techniques to Determine The Positioning The Art

1. Let's outline the wall dimensions on the floor with painter's tape. Usually, there are several pieces in different sizes, so I start by moving them around until I have a balanced layout. It's like solving a visual puzzle. I decide whether I want the frames to line up on the top or the bottom or intersect at the middle point. If we're planning a grid-styled layout, I like to give equal spacing between the artwork. I place the layout on the floor and then transfer it to the wall. Why do I do this? Because I can see it as a whole, and I can do it fast.

2. Create a layout by using drafting paper (or brown paper) and drafting tape. Outline your frames on the paper, cut them out, and tape the paper to the wall into place. Once you decide on your layout, you can use this as a guide for the final installation. Note: If the artwork already has hardware on the back, be sure to measure the drop from the top of the frame to the nail or D ring.

Scale

The scale of the work in conjunction with the area is crucial. The most common mistake is placing small pieces in large areas with too much space around the art. You would also want to avoid placing large pieces in small areas. Learning to see the space as part of the layout is key to understanding the scale and creating a great presentation.



FINCHCREEK RESIDENCE
ANDERSON/ANDERSON ARCHITECTS
PHOTO BY ANDREW ZELTZER

Standard Height Measurements

The standard height used in many galleries and museums to hang their art is 57" on center ("on center" referring to the middle of the artwork).

The hanging hardware will be higher. This measurement of a 57" standard represents the average human eye height. This is a good place to start the center of your grouping so the final result will feel comfortable on the wall. European preference sets at 61".

When you're planning on combining or stacking works, take into account the total height, including the space between the frames.

If you're hanging large works that are too tall to hang on a centerline, try placing them about 15" off the floor.



JASON BRISCOE PHOTO FOR JACOBSEN

A Grand Statement

Some layouts break all of the rules, which can be terrific. They are free form, based on content and scale. They can elongate the height of a room, add a dramatic flair, and create a very stylized effect.

Variations in frame styles work well to create a 'salon-style' look, as opposed to a collection-styled wall where the same or similar framing creates a grouping.



ROBERT BROWN INTERIOR DESIGN

Gallery Setting

You may also wish to have a classic gallery-style track mounting installed. It uses a rail system that can either be placed against the ceiling, molding, or lower and have moveable hangers that allow horizontal positioning and adjustable hooks that slide up and down for vertical positioning.



KALADORA GALLERY IN THE FOOTLOCKS OF MT. BAKER
JASON ANGELO

The hanging system (above) was designed and built by the artist/photographer to display heavy works of art anywhere within a room with exposed beams. The metal bars were plumbed to vertical while installing, and you could probably hang a Volkswagen off of them.

Weigh The Project

Consider the total weight of the framed piece and choose the appropriate hardware that will support that weight. The installers I work with only use "D" rings in the installation for typical framed artwork. This hardware will safely secure most art and keeps the piece from tilting and becoming unlevel. Clear round plastic bumpers or protectors are used on the bottom corners to bring the art level with the installed hardware and to protect the wall. If I am purchasing art, I request no hardware be installed on the back and let my professional installers add it as framing companies, artists, etc., rarely place the hardware correctly.



D-rings



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Lighting

Another important factor in a successful display of artwork is the lighting. Your choices range from track lighting systems to directional recessed wall washers or picture frame lights. Height, space, electrical, and of course, location will help to determine that decision.

Bulbs. The "Precise Constant Color" incandescent (halogen) lamp by G.E. is suitable for art, and LED Waves' LED lamps are also safe for art.

If you are wondering what the pros use. Solux bulbs provide an unparalleled replication of natural daylight and are used in many of the world's top museums, including the Musée d'Orsay, Van Gogh, and Guggenheim Museums.

Getting that lighting effect is something you can also recreate at home.

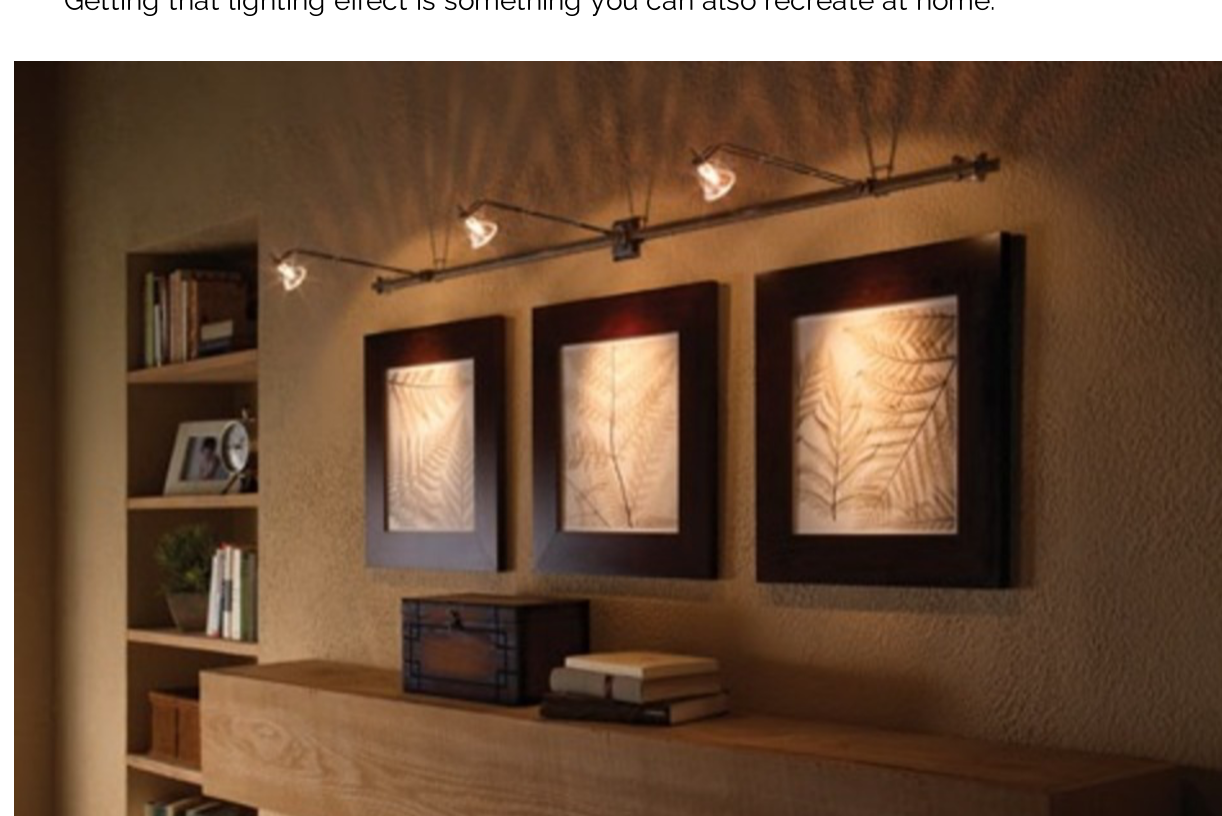
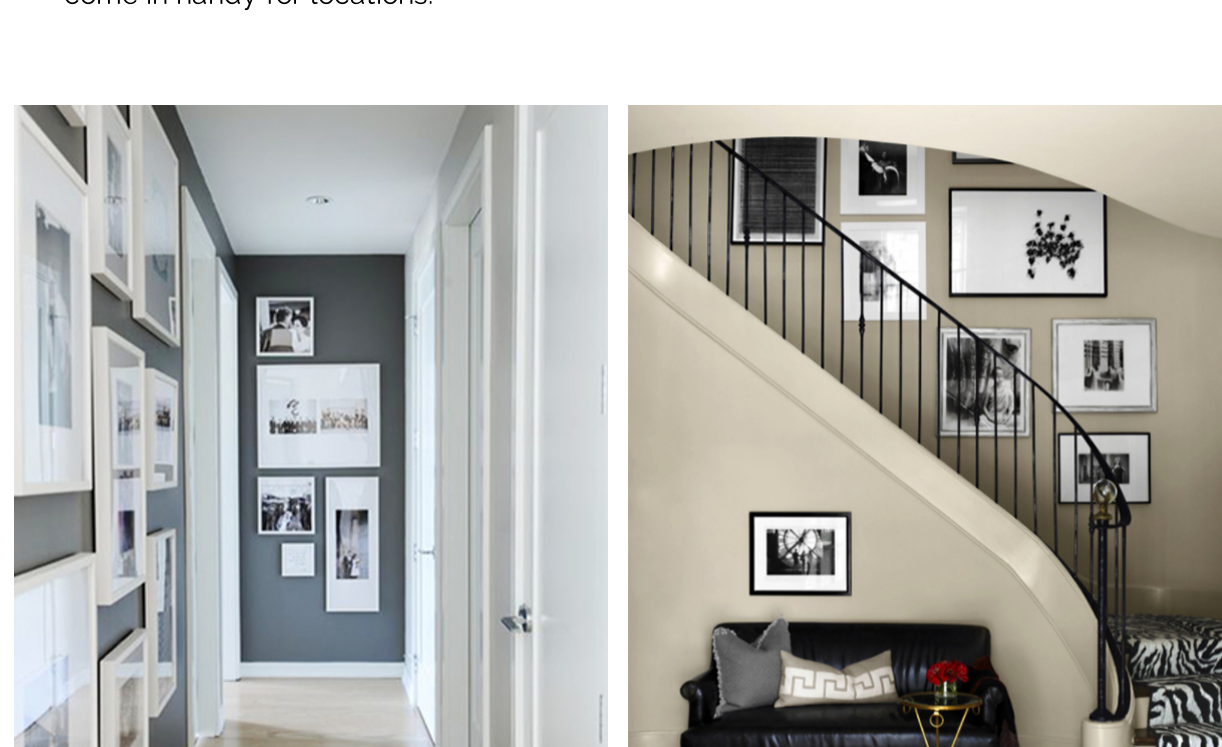


IMAGE COURTESY OF ILLUMINATING



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Even indirect natural light will take a toll on such pieces. It can also cause harsh reflections and glare on the pieces as well. This is where staircases and hallways come in handy for locations.



JOANAS DE JESUS INTERIORS
TODD/JOANAS INTERIORS



ROBERT BROWN INTERIOR DESIGN
JOEY EDWARDS - PHOTOGRAPHY

Placing artwork in the home is a challenge for even the most experienced designers and professionals. If you are still reticent about successfully hanging your artwork, try leaning it against the wall. That's a nice design look too!



INTERIOR DESIGN: JACOBSEN INTERIORS
PHOTOGRAPHY: JACOBSEN

Don't be afraid to utilize negative space above a sofa or table and set your art asymmetrically to one side while maintaining space on the other.

It is all about balance and interest. I have seen art installed right above the floor and under-console tables. It just has to feel balanced in the space it holds. So, you have the basics mapped out for you above, now go ahead and color outside the lines.

Have a great day, and hang in there.

