

## Making Padded Blocks

### Introduction

Padded blocks are recommended for galleries or for museums in which paintings form part of the collection. Two features of padded blocks make them ideal for use with paintings: a cushioned surface protects the frame or edges of an unframed painting from abrasion, and a skid-proof bottom reduces the chance of slipping. Padded blocks safely support paintings being arranged for exhibition, and also serve to raise paintings off the floor in temporary storage, thus protecting them from water damage in case of flooding (Figure 1). In addition, padded blocks of various lengths can be placed on tables to support and cushion paintings and frames while they are being examined or treated (Figure 2).

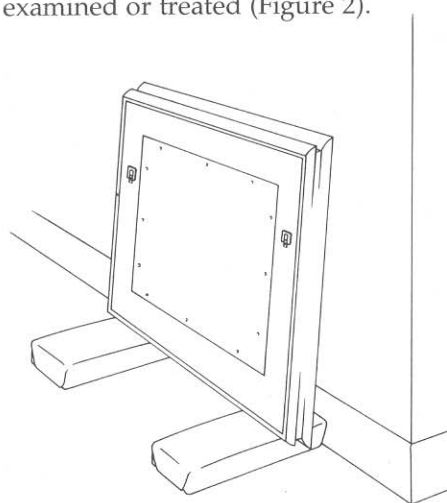


Figure 1. Raising painting off the floor.

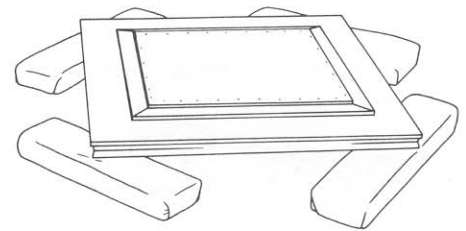


Figure 2. Supporting painting and frame.

### Constructing Padded Blocks

Padded blocks are constructed easily at minimal expense.

Cut a 2" x 4" (5 cm x 10 cm) piece of wood into lengths of 12" (30 cm) or more, as required.

Wrap the block with a cushioning foam, being sure to cover the corners and sharp edges (Figure 3).

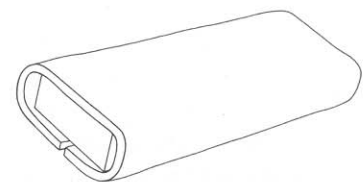


Figure 3. Wrap block with cushioning foam.

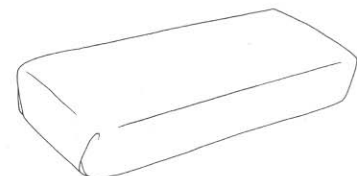


Figure 4. Cover foam with fabric.

Cover the foam snugly with a fabric that is soft, smooth, colourfast, and tightly woven (Figure 4).

Staple the fabric to the underside of the block (Figure 5).

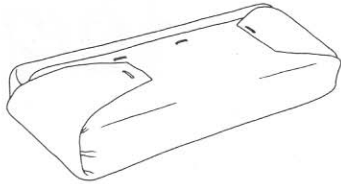


Figure 5. Staple fabric to underside of block.

Staple or tack a skid-proof pad to the bottom of the block (Figure 6).

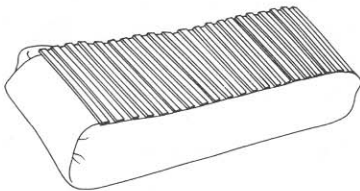


Figure 6. Attach skid-proof pad to bottom of block.

Padded blocks used in temporary storage to raise paintings off the floor should be covered with polyethylene sheeting. In the event of a flood, this covering will prevent water that might have been absorbed by the padded block from coming into contact with the painting.

Padded blocks used to support unframed paintings (e.g., during examination) should be kept clean. Reserve them for this purpose only, or else cover them with a thin Mylar sheet so that the painted surface is not placed against a soiled material.

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Copies are also available in French.

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