

## How to protect the artwork after framing

The Conservation Framing aim is to provide that protection over a period in excess of 20 years under normal conditions. I would now like to explain what those normal conditions are:

- **The artwork has to be placed out to direct sunlight.**

It is irreversible and it is cumulative and the damage caused depends on two factors: firstly the time of exposure and secondly the intensity of the light source.

It manifests itself in several ways:

cellulose materials bleach, yellow and darken, they become weak and brittle and sunlight causes pigments and dyes to fade and/or change color.

- **The artwork has to be placed within a temperature range of 10 degrees to 25 degrees centigrade.**

It is always best keep artwork in cool and stable conditions and normally museums aim to a temperature between 16 degrees centigrade and 19 degrees centigrade but perhaps this is too restrictive for our own domestic requirements.

High temperatures result in chemical reactions occurring faster. Fluctuations in temperature can cause dimensional change leading to the cracking and flaking of paintwork, the cockling and buckling of artwork and the damage to photographic emulsions.

- **The artwork has to be placed within a relative humidity range of 40% to 60% degrees.**

The relative humidity is defined as the amount of moisture in the air as to the amount of moisture the air can hold at a given temperature. The relative humidity has to be between 40% and 60%

Low relative humidity may cause problems such as the flaking of paintings, cracking and the warping of wood and the possibility of desiccation of some organic materials.

Whereas main problem of high humidity, say more than 70%, is that it forms the ideal conditions to the growth of mould and associated pest infestations.

- **It is a good advice to put felt bumpers onto the bottom and onto the top.**

Those bumpers do not mark the wall and they allow for the free air flow around the actual frame itself..