Framing Basics

Wood Selection
Poplar: Best choice, reasonable inexpensive, doesn't warp easily fairly soft wood. Apx. $6 for 1” x 2” x 8' board

Select Pine: This is your lowest grade frame worthy wood, it's cheap, but susceptible to warping easily.

Oak: It offers a harder more durable structure, but is slightly heavier. The grain is very prominent, so it works well for staining. It is a harder wood, so it will cut slower.

Assembly Order
- Make horizontal cut on table saw first
- Make vertical cut next
- Mark and cut all of your 45’ miter joints
- Clamp and glue, be sure to hold a square on it to assure it is perfectly square before glue sets. There are a variety of clamps (shown left)
  * use your fingers to make sure the joints are flush
- Once the wood glue has set up, you can use the pneumatic nailer to put 2 nails into each joint from the top and bottom.
- Apply two coats of wood filler into the cracks of all joints, and nail holes
- Carefully hand sand the frame, start with a 120grit you can go up to a 300grit for a smoother finish. Do not sand past 120grit before staining if that is your desired finish. You may sand the frame further if you will be painting it.
- To paint: you can use a foam weinie roller, or aerosol can. *Oil enamel paints will soak into the wood and leave a nice wood grain, where latex/acrylic paints with sit on top and mask the wood grain.
- Apply 1st coat, then lightly sand with fine grit. This is important, because the grain will become coarse and raised with the first coat of paint or varnish.
- Apply 2nd coat. Optional clear coat after this for extra protection and finish.
The floating framing method allows you to have air space between the art and plexi, without having to partially cover the work with a mat.

*The spacer can be a hollow plastic rectangular spacer specifically made for framing, with an adhesive backing, or you can use an archival foamcore or board that matches the backing material. The rag foamcore spacer is also better looking because it can be cut to sit flush against the interior edge of the frame.

*Make a “T” shape with your linen tape, so that top has the adhesive on the rear, facing the backing. Apply the vertical piece of linen tape so that the bottom is facing forward toward the back of your artwork. Make these hangers first, then measure and apply them.
Nail on the top and bottom edges using a pneumatic nailer. Be sure to shoot straight, or with a slight angle toward the inside of the frame. If the nail pops out the side, it's better to be inside the frame than on the outside. You will need to putty and sand twice before priming or staining. Remember, less is more.

*A “D-ring” may be used instead of a wire, and affixed to the thin back edge of the frame. You will need to add some rubber bumper discs to the bottom edge so that it still hangs flush.

*Eye hooks and picture wire is the easiest and cleanest way to hang the frame, but it can tilt and get off level easily.
Advanced Framing

There is a variety of options for framing/mounting Digital prints. First, you will have to pay for them to have a laminate coating that will allow them to be rolled/adhered perfectly onto a hard-flat surface. The benefit of this process, is that it doesn’t require a wood frame, and is a perfect slick surface for clean presentation. One downside is that the plexi/framing elements become part of the print.

Surface mounting: This is a clean mounting process that allows the digital print to be mounted flush on a variety of surfaces, usually with a cleat or metal hook hanger on the back.

Face mounting: This process also includes surface mounting, but with the addition of a plexi surface that protects the print. The face of the print is adhered directly to the back of the plexi, then the back is mounted onto a rigid variety of materials.

Backimg materials:

Aluminum - it’s the most expensive, but by far the best. Durable, relatively light, perfectly straight, and very thin.

Sintra - is a sheet PVC material that is flexible, rigid, and light. Medium cost.

Gator board - thicker than the othr options, and you can see its grain on the thickness of the material. It is rigid, but susceptible to humidity, and weight, causing it to bow, warp, or sag over time. It is acceptable backing if you have a plexi face mount on the front.

Foam board - is the cheapest worst looking backing option, and will dent easily.

Framing Resources

- PLAZA Artist Supplies on Main St. offers deep discounts on framing for AAC Students.
- Robin Imaging on Central Parkway does printing, laminating, photo mounting to all surfaces mentioned previously.
- Worldwide Graphics in Norwood will print directly to any material, metal, plexi, wood, etc.
- Frame King is Located in Northern KY, and will only sell to you, if you are from the AAC, or other business. They have a huge variety of frame moulding, and will cut and join frames.
- Frame Shop on Main St.