



Hanging a picture

Consider these tips when displaying your latest acquisition.

BY LISA JAFFE HUBBELL

DISCOVERED A new artist at the annual Arts on the Avenue event? Just had photos matted and framed? Then it's time to think about how and where you're going to display your new art. Here are some points to consider:

Placement. Where you hang a picture depends on the size of the wall and of the picture, as well as the function of the room, says Jim Rittimann, an exhibition designer at the Henry Art Gallery in Seattle. Museums usually hang art so that the center of the picture is about 60 inches from the floor. When hanging art on a wall behind furniture such as a couch, you can place it a little higher, or lower, if your couch sits low to the ground.

The room's light and heat. Don't hang art in direct sunlight or near a heat source to avoid fading, yellowing and other possible damage.

The wall's construction and the picture's weight. Avid art collectors often back drywall with plywood so that pictures can be hung anywhere. But most people have to either hunt for a

stud or use a hanging device that is suitable for drywall. Marty Robino-wich of The Home Depot says pictures that are heavier than 10 pounds need wall anchors or toggle bolts (which can hold up to 100 pounds). Another option is to use spider-type hangers; these are pushed into drywall and have thin wires that spread behind the wall. They leave only pinpricks when re-moved and can hold heavier works of art.

No more crooked art: Use a level for hanging.

Hanging it straight. Once you have found the right spot, Rittimann advises, map out the picture's dimensions on the wall with blue painter's tape before you start banging nails. If you don't like how it looks, ignore the rules and choose a placement that looks better to you.

But more important, especially for any Felix Ungers, hang it straight. Some people have a good eye. The rest of us should use a level; one that's 2 or 3 feet long offers the truest line, Robinowich says. Even better: Use a laser level, which may have an electronic stud finder — no more knocking on the walls. **LV**