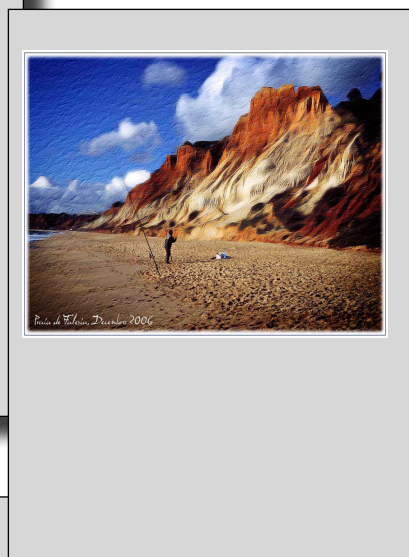
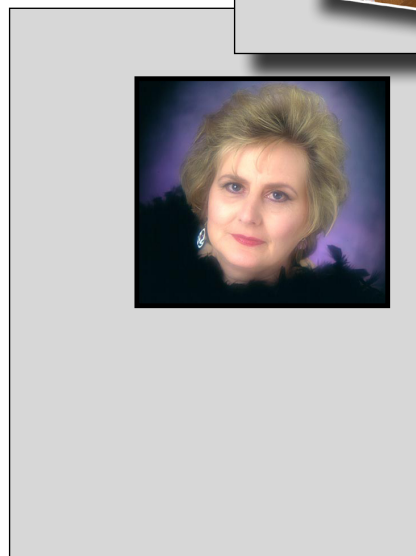


Sometimes .....

it's not what  
you've got that  
counts ....



.. so  
much  
as ..



where you  
put it.

## Presenting a single print.....

Starting at the very beginning, you want to display a single masterpiece. Naturally it is important that it is presented to maximum advantage - just 'slap it in the middle' really isn't quite what is needed.

The great tendency, especially in these Photoshop® days, is unfortunately to do exactly that. It is almost too easy to just make the background the size you want the final print, put your picture in the centre and then 'pretty' it up with a border. Regretably, even with the most stunning of pictures, it is very obvious that this is just what you have done. The easy route isn't the best route to get maximum impact.

So what's wrong with putting the image in the centre of the mount? It's very logical. Where else would you put it? The answer is in the **optical centre**.

What on Earth is that? Simply put, it is the place where the picture **looks** to be in the middle. If you place your image in the physical centre, it looks to be sliding off towards the bottom. Place it slightly above the centre and, strangely enough, it looks to actually be in the centre.

Don't ask me why, I don't know, but if you put your image on the actual centre it looks wrong and if you put it in on the optical centre, it then looks right.

### Finding the Optical Centre

I know what you're thinking - 'this has absolutely got to be really and horribly complicated'.

Well..... you see ..... it's sort of like this.....

- can you take a measurement and divide it by two? That is the extent

of the hard stuff. I'm not joking. Put the print on the mount (or do it in Photoshop®), make a mark, measure from the mark to the mount edge and divide that by two. Do the same again in a different place and that's the extent of the complex mathematical calculations. Rocket science it most definitely is **not**!

The techniques for an ordinary print and doing it in Photoshop® are slightly different so let's look first of all at the method of placing a plain photographic print in the optical centre of a plain mount.

In either case, be it merely a straightforward photographic print or a compilation of image and 'mount' created in Photoshop®, you should be aware of one or two points.

- The image will never look to high on the mount if you use this method.
- If the finished product is to be framed and the image fills the mount area substantially, it may look satisfactory in the physical centre.
- If the lower margin, from the lowest point which may include title and/or signature, is less than the upper margin then the image **will** appear to have 'slid down the page'.
- It is important that you *include any border, signature, title or other matter* within the measured image area.
- Anything other than the plain mount (matte) should be included in your positioning.

# Spot the difference



Image physically centred on the mount



Image optically centred on the mount

Of necessity, the two pictures on the preceding page aren't very big and the differences in the position of the image may not be especially noticeable. Here I have simply taken a slice of each image and superimposed them. The difference in position is now very evident indeed.


It must be stressed at this point that the image has most definitely not just been moved 'up the mount a bit'. There is no **fixed** amount by which the image is moved, as everything depends, like so many things, on the relationship in size and shape between the mount and the image. You can't just 'hutch' the image up a bit, or move it by a predetermined amount.

However, there is a very easy method which works completely irrespective of the shape of the image and the shape/orientation of the mount.

Let's start off with the most likely combination, where the image and the mount are both the same orientation (ie. both landscape or both portrait - it matters not which as long as they are both the same).







1) Position print in top left hand corner of mount

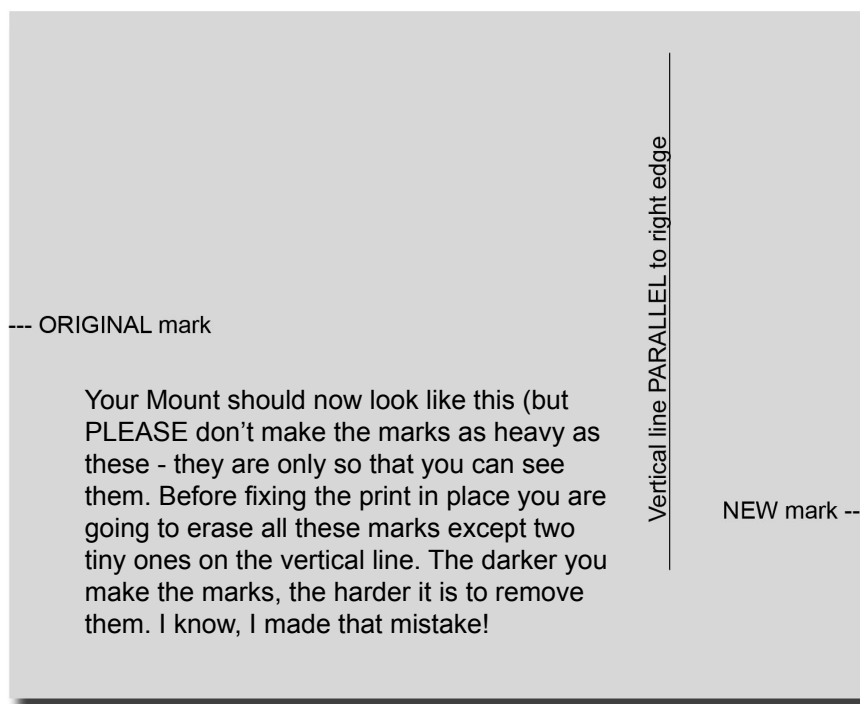
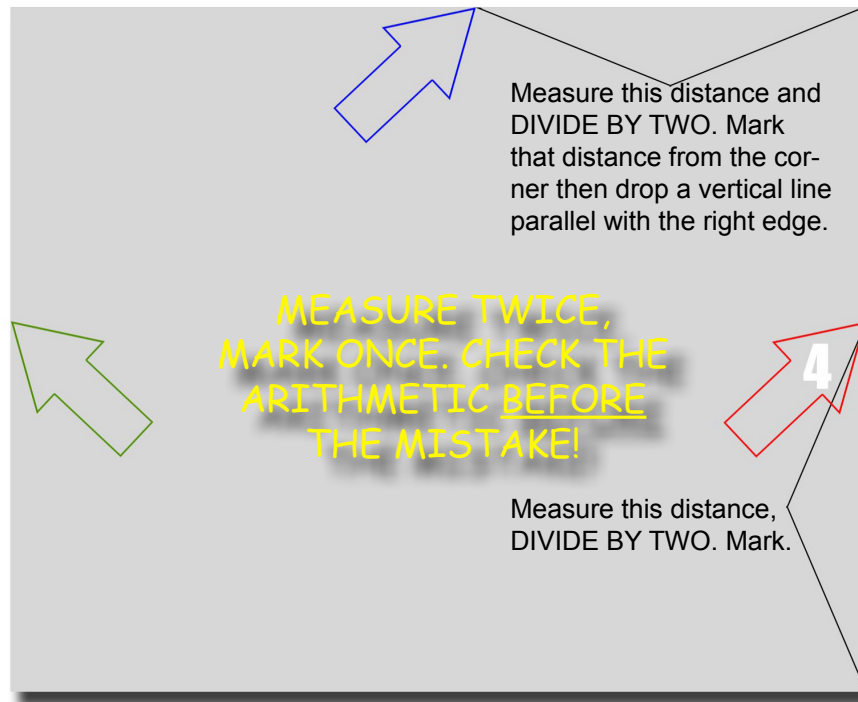
2) TINY light pencil mark here

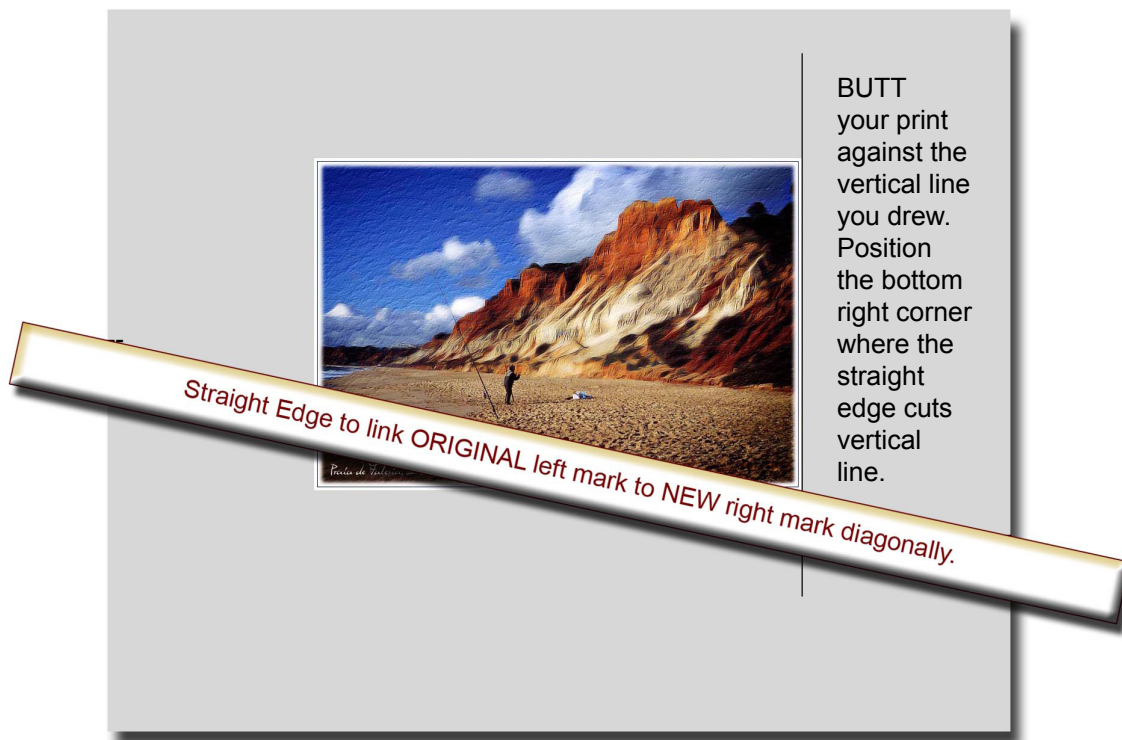
3) TINY light pencil mark here.

These two pencil marks will later be erased so be gentle - don't dent the mount and don't make them too dark.



4





Almost finished. All that remains is to remove all trace of the guide and marks you drew. At this stage, you will discover just how important it is to make these marks as faint as you can without rendering them invisible. I use a 0.3mm soft lead in a propelling pencil and virtually let the weight of the pencil make the mark. The darker they are, the harder they are to remove!

This method of finding the optical centre of the image / mount combination works with all right angled prints and mounts, irrespective of their actual dimensions. The hardest part, with large mounts, is usually finding a straight edge which is long enough. Other than that, it is very much quicker to do than it is to describe or to read about.

A variation of this technique can be applied in Adobe Photoshop®. The major difference is that you have to ensure that any extras like titles and signatures outside the picture area are included in your image area.

For details of the method, see the Tutorial "Presenting the single image in Photoshop®".



**tutoratwestonphoto.plus.com**  
**www.photo-tutor.co.uk**

(Change the **at** to the normal **@** symbol then I get **your** email not the spammers junk.)