

## Preparing Your Work

### 1. Choosing a frame

To be able to work, the silk must be perfectly stretched. It will therefore be necessary to use a frame. There are 2 types: frames with non-adjustable tension and frames with adjustable tension.



Fixed frame (painting frame)

#### Non-adjustable tension frames

- **The fixed frame**

The most simple and generally used frame. Usually made of tender wood battens and brackets, it is inexpensive and simple to make. However, it does have a major drawback. As it is fixed, it does not allow to adjust the correct tension in techniques such as watercolor for example. Also, you will need to make a separate frame for each different size of artwork you wish to make.

*It can advantageously be replaced by the use of a painting frame, from which the canvas will have been removed. Used on the back, it will have the advantage to be able to tighten the silk during work (corners). The latter may also, once turned over, serve for framing the finished decor.*

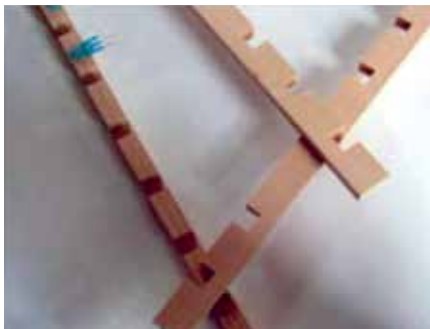
- **The notched frame**

For small pieces of silk (90 x 90cm max).

The dimensioning is done by simple fitting.

Quick and light to use for workshops or demonstrations.

Over time, the assemblies wear out and the frame becomes loose.



Notched frame

#### Adjustable tension frames (the most practical)

The adjustable tension frames allow you to tighten the silk without having to unhook it.

- **Sliding bar frames**

Tension is effected by sliding the uprights relative to each other. Locking is done using wing nuts.

These frames allow you to stretch large silks.

Ease of use, but risk of irregular silk tension as the silk fabric is only fixed on two sides instead of four. To remedy this, plan an additional hanging system (example: claw tensioners).



Spiked frame

- **The spiked frames**

These models are fitted with 2 bars with spaced pins every centimeter and 2 bars with slides and butterfly nuts.

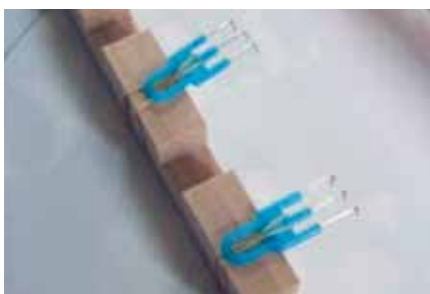
The silk is pinned to the spiked bars (use an old toothbrush or the handle of a brush). It is then stretched using the slides of the other 2 bars.

Its advantages: silk is stretched in a fast and effective manner throughout the work. Retensioning is quick and easy.

Its disadvantages: its price is high, risk of injury (sharp pins).

- **The claw tensioners**

Unlike pins and thumbtacks, claw tensioners allow you to stretch the silk without damaging it. Tension is well maintained throughout the work. They are fixed to the frame either with springs or with rubber bands.



Claw tensioners



## **2. Stretching the silk**

Use masking tape to protect the wooden frames from staining your silk.

If you use pushpins to stretch your silk, provide a correct margin for the push pin marks, especially if there is a risk that you might need to reajust the tension and pins (fixed frame). Add 2cm in height and width to the dimension of your frame.

On a fixed frame, start in the middle of each amount. Place a thumbtack about every 5 cm, then stretch the opposite side.



### *Important*

Once stretched, the silk should have no pockets or folds.

For wooden frames, use masking tape so as not to stain the frame and isolate your work from any old stains present on the frame. Indeed, stains on the frame will rub off on new fabric.

After each use, inspect the masking tape and change it if necessary.

## **3. The work plan**

**Painting on silk is always done horizontally or on a slight inclination (seated work).**

Protect the floor with plastic. Use or cover a water-resistant table cloth (children can sit on the floor). As the work is generally done upright, it is better to have a table at a height of 90 cm above ground to avoid bending.

You can easily make a work table using adjustable trestles, a wooden panel covered in plastic or melamine.

**The table must be clean. Wipe your worktop regularly to avoid stains.**