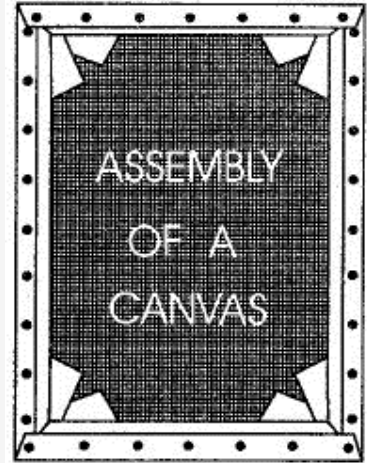


## Preparing a Canvas

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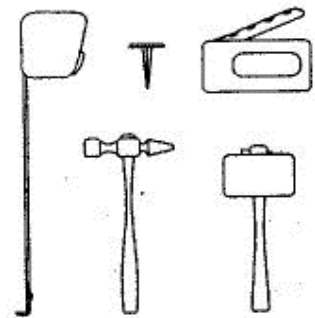
### Tools for the Job

A tape measure.

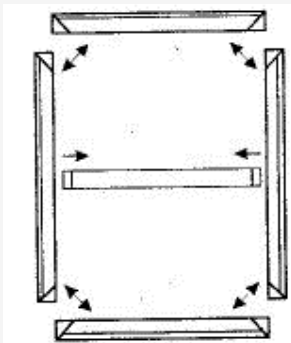
A tack hammer.

A wooden mallet.

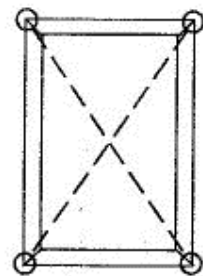
A staple gun (but 3/8" bayonet tacks can be used).



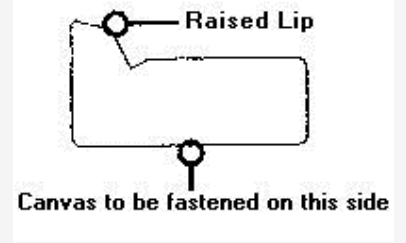
Knock the stretcher bars together with the mallet to form the required dimensions. If you have chosen a larger stretcher, the cross-bar should also be added



Square the assembled stretcher by measuring the distance between the diagonally opposing corners. Tap the corners until the measurement is the same for both diagonals (the frame will then be square).

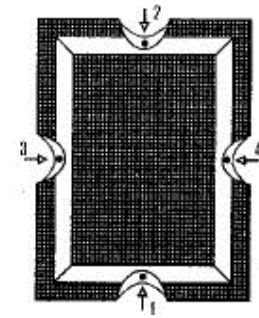


Cut the canvas with an extra 2" each side. Place the canvas face down on a clean, flat surface. Then place the frame onto the canvas with the raised lip of the stretcher face down.



Centre the frame and check that the weave of the canvas runs parallel to the stretcher bars.

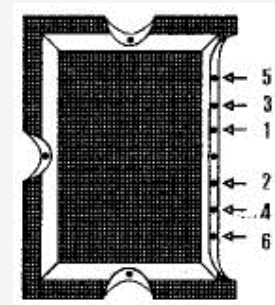
Starting on one side of the smaller sides, fasten the canvas to the stretcher with one tack in the centre of the bar. The tack should be placed about 1/2" from the edge of the canvas. then follow the sequence for each side shown in the diagram.



The canvas needs to be pulled and held reasonably taut before each tack is secured.

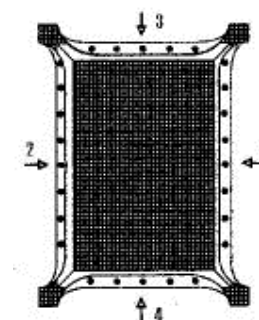
Beginning on one of the longer lengths, tack the canvas to the bar in the sequence shown.

The tacks should be about 2 - 3" apart. Remember to keep the canvas pulled taut.



When one side is secured, repeat the procedure in the sequence shown.

Tack the smaller sides to about 3" from the corner, this allows room to fold and neaten the canvas.



Fold the corners as if making a bed (i.e. nurses corners).

Tack each corner in turn.



Place the wooden wedges into the slots in the inside edge of the stretcher bars.

Adjust the tension of the canvas by gently knocking the wedges with the tack hammer.

The wedges are used to make final adjustments. Only slight alterations to the canvas tension can be made at this stage.



### Priming the Canvas

Canvases can be primed with either oil or acrylic primer. Acrylic primer is more versatile, flexible and, when applied properly, forms a good, non-acidic barrier between the paint and the canvas.

When dry, oil or water-based paints can be used on its surface. For extra protection a soft gel size can be applied before the coats of primer. There are many gels which can be directly applied on top of the primer which will give various surface effects prior to painting.

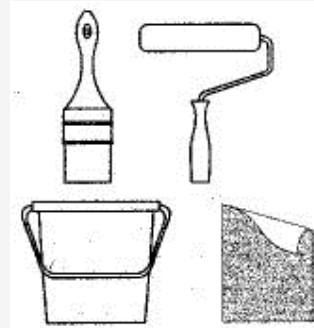
If a permanent, safe, flexible surface is required, use materials designed for artists. Do not be tempted to use emulsion or any other household paints. They may be cheaper, but they are designed for rigid substrates and will eventually crack and fade, ruining your artwork.

#### Tools for the Job

A brush or a roller.

A plastic container.

Some fine grade wet or dry paper.



For the first coat of primer, mix about 10% water to the primer in a separate container and stir well.

For larger canvases a roller will give a more even surface.

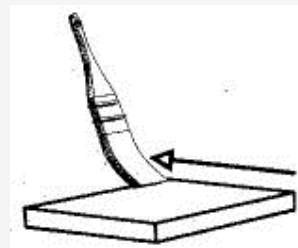
If using a brush, ensure the primer is worked thoroughly into the surface.



Apply the first coat in one direction only.

Allow at least 6 hours to dry.

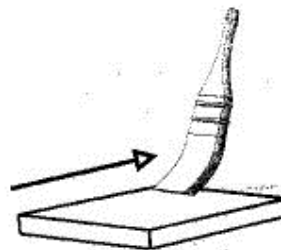
If a smooth surface is required, sand down with a fine grade wet or dry paper between coats.



When thoroughly dry, brush the second coat at 90 degrees to the first and all other layers at 90 degrees to the previous layer.

A minimum of three coats is recommended.

For a smoother surface apply more coats giving a light sanding between coats.



### Golden Acrylic Artists' Products found in our on-line store

#### Gesso Primer

Formulated with 100% acrylic polymer emulsion. This primer produces a sandable film with excellent flexibility. A high pigmentation level gives a pure white ground to work on. If oil paints is to be used, at least three coats of primer is recommended.

#### Black Gesso

A ground that dries to a dense matt black finish. Black gesso is particularly useful when working with a chiaroscuro technique.

#### Absorbent Ground (White or Canvas)

This is an acrylic surfacing medium that dries to a porous, paper-like surface. This medium should be applied over an acrylic gesso primed surface. Effects very similar to a watercolour staining and bleeding can be achieved with this ground. pastels can also be used on this paper-like surface.

#### Soft Gel (clear)

A very versatile medium. Soft gel can be used as a size for canvas if thinned with 20-30% water. Other uses include as an isolation coat between paint and varnish, as a glazing medium increasing translucency, giving collages and increasing film integrity.

#### Pumice Gel (Textured)

These gels are available in a variety of grades of gritty textures which dry to a hard film. Pumice gels mix well with Golden acrylic colours. Fine pumice gel can be used to create a fine textured surface which is an ideal ground for pastels.