

*what to look for when choosing a mount cutter*

Watercolours, drawings and photographs are usually framed with mounts under glass. Standard size frames, or inexpensive clip frames, are readily available but what is not is the mount. Standard size mounts are more often than not the wrong size and colour. So, instead of struggling to fit your image into the window aperture of an unsuitable mount consider purchasing a mount cutter to cut a mount to fit your pictures. With the cost of framing of even the smallest picture, Mount Cutters are a really cost-effective investment.

*so, from this*



*to this*



*you need this*



*What should you look for in a mount cutter?*

First size. If you specialise in miniatures then something quite small is all that is required. If your work is on an altogether grander scale then you will need a mount cutter to suit your larger designs. Look to ensure that the mount cutter can handle the required mountboard sheet size, and most importantly, has an accurate on board squaring facility and vertical cutter to cut the external size of the mount out of the mountboard sheet. Something that is often overlooked.

In simple terms the size of your work is going to define which length version is most appropriate for you. If undecided between two sizes then it might be prudent to pick the larger if you have sufficient work space.



the Longridge Duo System pictured here match the standard sizes as follows:

- For A3 – Mini
- For A2 – Midi
- For A1 – Plus
- For AO - Maxi

Any left handed person knows only too well how difficult it is to use the majority of tools and equipment which are designed for right handed people only. So, left-handers look to see that the mount cutter you decide upon is specifically designed for left –handed as well as for right-handed use, not just a crude adaptation.



Longridge  
bevel cutter  
set for right  
handed

Longridge  
bevel cutter  
set for left  
handed use



Ease of use – does the cutter come with stops to prevent over-cutting or do you have to rely on lining up the corners by eye. The window aperture has to be drawn out on the back before cutting – do you have to do this by using a ruler and pencil – a tedious and laborious job – or does the system come complete with an onboard marking out facility. Does the bevel cutter have a depth control – if not, the corners will not come out accurately. Mountboard varies in thickness and so it is essential to be able to alter the blade depth to suit.

A mount cutter with a base is something of a must where other than occasional use is envisaged. It helps enormously with accuracy, ease and speed of operation. If you think you will be cutting several identical mounts consider the added facility of a parallelogram, as it is especially useful for repetitive work and quicker in operation.



the Longridge Trio Midi and Trio Plus Systems have an onboard measuring system and parallelogram.

the Trio Maxi has a further twist in having twin parallelograms, which make long projects, such as panoramic windows easier still, but also allows smaller work to be accommodated at one end of the system, as easy to use as a smaller system



Cutting technology is a major consideration. Look for blades made from high quality steel. These are dry from new, giving a cleaner cut and longer life span than the lesser quality oiled blades which have a tendency to rust.

When bevel cutting a cutting medium is essential otherwise the mount's surface paper will tear leaving a ragged edge. Mountboard can be used for this but, its surface not being flat, it does not support the mount fully and its criss –crossed fibres tend to cause drag and blade waver. – hence why Longridge introduced their newly formulated SprintMat with its fibres aligned in one direction, the direction of your cut



using the Sprintmat makes it easier to cut, because you are not cutting against the grain of the cutting mat and it positively helps support the blade during the cutting process, which makes for a cleaner more accurate window cut – less blade drag, less effort, superior finish – and for those who watch their pennies it makes the blade last longer too.

Finally, look at the instructions that come with the system. It may seem strange that the huge advances in computer technology may be beneficial to cutting mounts, but it is so. Mount cutting is a visual and practical operation so instructions that come live on a DVD video providing an inhouse demonstration are a real bonus.

So much choice- but then a decision has to be made! To see the Longridge range of mount cutters and mountboard click on [www.longridge.co.uk](http://www.longridge.co.uk)



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