



## Sink Mats for Damaged Glass Negatives

Damaged glass negatives need specialized to protect vulnerable edges and surfaces. Cracked but unbroken plates also need to be laid flat. A custom sink mat will support the weight of the damaged glass and prevent stress. It is important to keep the fragments of a broken plate together but also protected from further damage. Delaminated or flaking emulsions also need protection from accidental loss.

This sink mat (aka folio) is made in three parts: a base, frame and top. The pieces are held together with library binding tape. Within the middle frame, pieces of Volara, a smooth surfaced polyethylene foam, are used as dividers and can also for a continuous pad below the negative. The sink mat should be constructed of unbuffered 4-ply ragboard or blue board. Double sided 415 tape or hot glue can be used to hold the pieces together.

The sink mats can be stored in a standard drop-front box. The outside dimensions of the sink mat should fit snugly into the drop-front box. Ragboard and blue board can be purchased in pre-cut, standard size and will speed up the construction of the sink mats. Scraps of mat board can be used for the middle frame margins.

### Materials Needed:

- Utility knife
- Steel ruler
- T-square
- Cutting mat for work surface
- Pencil
- 4-ply Ragboard or Blue Board
- Double sided tape
- 2-inch library binding tape
- Volara

### Directions:

1. Lay out the negative on a sheet of paper, placing it in one of the corners.
2. If the plate is broken, leave approximately  $\frac{1}{4}$ " spaces between the fragments.
3. Measure the amount of paper remaining around the plate. These measurements will determine the size of the mat board margins. Divide each measurement by 2.
4. Leaving the plate on its paper, bring out mat board rectangle of the same dimension.
5. Cut strips of mat board to serve as margins.

- a. Using Type 415 tape or hot glue, adhere the strips to the edge of the mat board.
  - b. Begin with strips on the short edges, then do one of the long edges.
  - c. Do not attach the final strip. Set it in place and lightly mark its inside edge on the mat board, then put the strip aside.
6. With a pencil, carefully trace the gaps between the plate fragments. This tracing can be approximate, so avoid touching the glass edges with the pencil.
  7. Set the plate into the mat board ring, arranging the any fragments as they were on the paper.
  8. Using the tracing as a guide cut foam to the appropriate shapes.
    - a. If the selected foam does not have an adhesive backing, then apply a strip of 415 tape along the full length of the foam piece.
    - b. For small pieces, it is easiest to apply the tape before cutting.
  9. Carefully insert the foam between plate fragments and attach it to the mat board.
  10. Set the fourth margin in place. Wrap tape from the top of the margin strip around to the bottom of the mat board. If necessary for stability, place small pieces of tape from the final strip into the two adjacent strips.
  11. Align a second mat board rectangle on top of the sink and tape it in place on the same edge as the final margin strip.



