

# Quick Tips

## Maximizing Acrylic Cuts

When trying to maximize your yield while cutting acrylic, the most important rule to remember is to plan out the job. Lay out each size of acrylic to be cut onto a sheet of paper, then diagram each size in relation to the overall size of the sheet.

Acrylic sheets come in various sizes, including 48"x96", 48"x120", 51"x100", 60"x96" and 72"x96". A 51"x100" sheet is the most effective size for minimizing waste, and it still can be cut on most wall cutters.

We know this from experience. We have many requests for cut acrylic more than 48". In order to cut this size, it must be cut from the 96" length which can waste as much as 60 to 70 percent of the sheet. The 51"x100" sheet accommodates 48-1/2" to 51" sizes, potentially eliminating much of the waste. A framer using a saw will lose approximately 1/16" from each cut. This will make the yield for cutting 16" and 24" sizes much lower, making the 51"x100" sheets more effective.

To plan large jobs check with your supplier on sheet availability to help increase the overall yield.

When cutting acrylic always use the proper blade. Score only once; this will eliminate any chips and give a cleaner cut. Special acrylic "No Melt" saw blades and other brand names are available if a table saw is used. It is highly recommended to use blades designed specifically to cut acrylic. Table saws are a good tool to use when cutting acrylic as they will cut much faster and be more efficient.

—Don Berg  
VP Sales  
Gemini Moulding /  
Showcase Acrylics



## Adjusting CMCs for Thicker Matboards

With the multitude of matboard choices used in framing today, framers must be able to efficiently and effectively make the necessary adjustments for quality cuts in different thicknesses of matboard.

Cutting different thicknesses of matboard requires using different parameters and can basically be done two different ways: software and blade depth changes.

For software, we call the settings "profiles." Most profiles are created and saved during on-site installation and training. However, if a new profile needs to be created the user simply changes the "overcut" and "blade reaction-down" values. For example, 8-ply matboard typically requires an increase in overcut values of .04 and adding 100 to the blade reaction-down time to compensate for the additional matboard thickness. Once the desired result is achieved, you name and save the profile (8-ply, suede, linen, etc.). The next time a particular thickness of matboard needs to be cut, you select the correct profile and the property changes are made automatically.

Then there are two easy steps:

1. Change the "blade depth slider" on the cutting head to the appropriate pre-determined depth setting.
2. Select the correct "profile" from the software to ensure accurate quality cuts.

This process literally takes seconds. Give it a try and you will be amazed at how quick and easy it is to cut today's thicker matboards with perfection. Check with your CMC provider for specific instructions for your machine.

—Mike Anglesey  
Vice President, Sales &  
Marketing  
Eclipse CMC's



## Keeping Blades in Pairs

At one point, we started to have problems with the cuts coming from our main saw. When we switched the blades, the problem was corrected. We concluded that the blades were just defective. A few weeks later, the problem returned with a different set of blades.

After further looking into the problem, we realized that the company sharpening our blades was not returning them in the correct boxes. We had labeled all of our saw blade boxes to insure that the same two blades were always used and sharpened together. Our blade sharpener was unaware of our system and never kept track of which blades came in which boxes. To eliminate a mix-up on either end, we engraved part numbers on our blades so that an operator putting the blades on the saw knew for sure that the blades were a pair.

Keeping blades paired is crucial in getting an accurate cut. The wear from the type of wood a set of blades has cut, the amount of frames they've cut, and the number of times they've been sharpened all play a part in how they wear. If you pair them at random, you will often find that one blade is more worn than the other. The result is that one blade is cutting through the moulding before its partner; the other blade rips away at the moulding instead of cutting through smoothly. It only takes a little more than 1/16" of difference in the diameter of the blades to create blow out on the back of the moulding. If the difference exceeds 1/8", it could affect the angle of the cut. The problems are more apparent as the tooth size on the blades shorten due to sharpening.



—Renoir Battle  
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Artists' Frame Service

Contributors to this column are industry members who have experience in the operation of a production framing facility. If you have a tip of your own, please send it to Production Tips, PFM Production, P.O. Box 102, Morganville, NJ 07751.