

STYLE



ROOM & BOARD

# Frame Job

Upgrade your wall space with an of-the-moment art display

BY ALISON GWINN

If you have a.) a large, blank wall and no big piece of art to fill it with; b.) a collection of family photos or kids' artwork that you would love to display but aren't sure how; c.) a collection of smaller drawings or paintings that you love; or d.) all of the above, we're here to help. Sarah Baumbach, visual associate at Room & Board in Cherry Creek, says she often is called upon to help customers create a frame wall. Here are some of her smartest tips:

**GO SYMMETRICAL.** If there were a book called "Frame Walls for Dummies," it would start with one simple suggestion for the beginner: Place all of your pieces of artwork in the same type and size of frame and then use them to create a symmetrical grid. It's the easiest way to create a frame wall that will look ... well, smart.

**MAKE SURE YOU CAN LOOK THEM IN THE EYE.** Let's say you decide not to go symmetrical and matchy-matchy but rather to mix up the frames and grouping. No matter how many frames you use or what size they are, make sure the center of the central piece of art is at eye level. Everything else can be arrayed below and above that.

**GIVE THEM SPACE.** If you are grouping frames over a piece of furniture (say a credenza or bed frame), leave about five inches between the top edge of the furniture and the bottom edge of your lowest frame.

**CREATE UNITY.** One way or another, you need to find some sort of unifying element. There are a number of ways to do this:

1. Use the same frames throughout (with a variety of images or artwork inside them).
2. Use all of the same type of artwork throughout (for example, all black-and-white family photos or all colorful kids' artwork), which allows you to go with a variety of frames.
3. Evenly space all of the frames, either symmetrically or by aligning top edges or side edges of adjacent frames.
4. Use images inside the frames that all have the same color palette.



**PLAY NICELY IN THE SANDBOX.** Look around the room at the other finishes. Is there a warm cherry wood chair? A black floor lamp? A reddish rug? Try to pull one or more of those finishes into the frames you choose. Think one word: cohesive.

**BE GENEROUS.** Before you start to create a frame wall, make sure you have enough pictures to fill it. Nothing looks worse than two small, lonely pieces of art sitting in the middle of a large expanse of wall. Look at the photos here: All have at least eight pieces of art on the wall. However, there is no magic formula—consider the size of your space and map out the frame layout ahead of time to make sure it fills the wall well. **DLM**

