

Today's Hanging Hardware

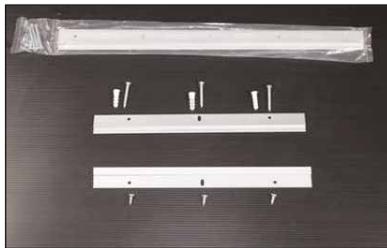
By Rob Markoff, CPF

A look at hanging devices that provide two-point picture suspension for level installation

As an art installer, I find that there is not a one-size-fits-all solution for hanging hardware. Different situations call for different solutions. It is good to have a variety of hanging hardware available so you can match the appropriate solution to the hanging challenge in front of you. Here is a quick look at a variety of hanging devices, all providing a two-point suspension of the picture so the picture will stay level after installation.

Frameloc

Framework is constantly adding new products and carries Stand-Offs and a host of innovative framing hardware. Many companies offer conventional “T” lock security systems for both wood and metal frames that use a top bracket that only supports 25 pounds that only engage in a small area. The



Framework's Frameloc system combines a cleat system with a T lock for security.

Frameloc System uses a cleat in 6” or 18” for both metal and wood frames that supports up to 80 pounds. A great feature of the cleat is its adjustability for level that also allows repositioning left and right after the hardware is installed. If a client feels pieces in a group need to be an inch or more closer or farther apart, you can slide the pieces left or right before locking them down.

We also use the cleat independently for hanging groupings of plaques as the hardware allows for interchangeability of plaques and keeps them in neat rows. The slotted cleats also allow adjustment to make all the plaques straight and level.

Another couple of nifty devices are the 432 TSL

Tee Screw Marking Security Wrench and the DA drill adapter. The 432 TSL Marking Wrench marks the exact center of the mounting plate so the installation of the mating “T” screw is perfect. The wrench has a small plastic insert with a protruding point that is inserted into the mounting plate and is held in position with the security wrench. Simply pressing the piece being installed leaves an accurate mark where to install the “T” screw. And for multiple piece installations, the DA drill adapter quickly spins the “T” screw into the wall. (www.frameworkinc.com; 800-582-5608.)

Nido Hook

The Nido Hook provides a simple solution for hanging artwork on the edges of bookshelves. This look is very popular with interior designers and can be seen in many fashionable interior design and home magazines. The plastic coated steel hook is available in two sizes—for shelves 1” thick and smaller and for shelves from 1” to 2” thick. Each hook is rated for 20 pounds. The hooks are available through the website with no minimum order. (www.nidohook.com; 818-986-3727.)



The Nido Hook fits over shelves to accommodate the latest trend of hanging artwork on a bookshelf.

EZ Bar

“Z” bar is commonly used throughout the framing industry. Z Hardware’s version, called “EZ” Bar, is available in two styles, “EZ Regular” and “EZ Lite.” As the name implies, EZ Lite is a thinner version. For the majority of installations, EZ Regular works well because it is less flexible and easier to use on drywall with wooden studs. Walls that are “crowned” (with a bulge due to one stud being proud) make for a difficult installation if the Z bar on the wall is not perfectly flat. The EZ Lite Bar can bend more easily to follow the curve, and the gap between the wall and the inside channel of the Z bar is thinner, making alignment of the two pieces more difficult. Both types of bar are easily cut with a metal blade in a chop saw



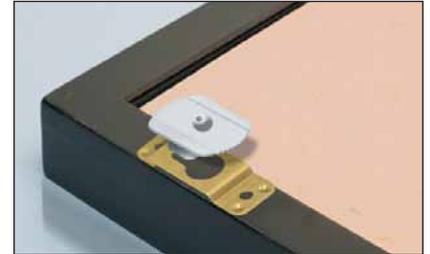
Z Hardware’s EZ Bar hangers are an easy-to-use cleat mounting system.

or a hack saw and miter box. They are also available in pre-cut lengths.

EZ Bar is an excellent choice for heavy pictures as it can span two or more studs. This method meets the new seismic codes for commercial hospital installations in California. We have also installed EZ Bar on the top and bottom of a picture for added strength and to hold down the bottom of a mirror over a bathroom splash where there’s no room for a “T” lock system. (www.zhardware.com; 949-369-6649.)

Wireless Hanger

This new hanging system from Fletcher-Terry provides hanging solutions for a variety of situations, and the self-marking system makes



The Fletcher-Terry wireless hanger uses brackets on the frame rails.

installation quick and easy. The video on the website is easy to follow. The biggest drawback is that the system is only rated for 50 pounds, but if your pictures weigh less, it can be the perfect solution. The system uses brackets installed

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on the left and right frame rails. The furnished wall hangers also serve as marker devices that will allow accurate wall marking. Since the framed art slides down on the hangers and engages with an “interference” fit, the framed piece is not easily bumped off the hangers like lightweight pieces that are often dislodged from conventional hooks. This may be the perfect hanger for artwork installed in children's rooms or areas where there is a lot of activity. (www.fletcher-terry.com/videos/wireless.wmv; 888-888-5165.)

Canvas Wrap Hangers

This innovative hanger provides a great solution for hanging gallery wrapped giclees flush to the wall. There are three versions. Each hanger holds up to 32 pounds.

- ◆ The CWH1 is a unique hanger that is fixed under the top bar of a stretched canvas or flat on top of it, almost flush with the back of a wood frame
- ◆ The CWH2 flares out and hangs the stretcher or frame flat so that the backing paper is left intact.

- ◆ The CWH3 is for aluminum frames. This hanger's cutout allows it to fit over a standard picture hook so that the artwork always hangs flat on the wall. The saw-tooth bottom allows side adjustment.



Canvas Wrap Hangers come in three versions and are designed for stretched canvas.

Each of these hangers provides a useful solution for hanging gallery wrapped (and other) stretched canvases flush to the wall. With the CWH1, there needs to be an open back to the canvas because the hanger sits flush to the back of the stretcher. This provides a flush fit to the wall.

The CWH2 protrudes slightly from the back of the piece, allowing a wall hook to engage the hanger. The back of the art does not need to be recessed.

Rod and Cable Hangers

Sometimes an installation requires that no holes be made in the surface where the art is hung, such as beautifully paneled walls, concrete walls, or where art is constantly changed and the wall cannot be repaired and repainted over and over. In these instances, gallery rod or cable systems are an excellent solution.

Walker Display Incorporated

Walker makes an entire display system with gallery rods and accessories that is easy to use and move. It has a simple, flexible design that allows hanging an assortment of pictures with a minimum of effort. Users can choose from a variety of durable rods, hooks, and mouldings. The company has an excellent on-line catalog that is also downloadable. (www.walkerdisplay.com; 800-234-7614.)

AS Hanging Systems

AS Hanging has gallery rods and hanging systems that use cables in a variety of styles. The website and catalog are valuable resources for problem solving. The Contempo system is a nice alternative to generic cable systems especially for homes where a decorative element is required. The company also has hard-to-find solutions, such as traditional moulding hooks (for vintage homes) that can be paired with modern cable solutions, panel hooks for cables to be suspended from temporary panels, and rods and cables made from a clear nylon material that almost disappears on the wall. (www.ashanging.com; 866-935-6949.)

Arakawa

Arakawa Hanging Systems feature a wide variety of cable components that can creatively be combined for a variety of hanging solutions. Arakawa components are made in Japan and are extremely high quality. The catalog is also a valuable resource that allows you to find solutions for many applications, and the company's design team is very easy to work with on the telephone. (www.arakawagrip.com; 888-ARAKAWA.)

OOK Systems

Impex Systems Group manufactures many handy items under the OOK brand that are useful for installations, including a gallery rod system. Of particular interest is the “tremor” hanger, also known as a Kidsafe hanger. This hanger features a spring in the picture hook that captures the hanging wire (or D ring) so it cannot bounce out if the picture is jarred or shaken. (www.ooks.com; 800-933-0163.)

The CWH3 allows a metal frame to hang flush to the wall, be suspended from two points to stay level, and allows side-to-side adjustment. With these hangers, you can do a group arrangement or a grid and have both up and down and left and right adjustment for perfect alignment. (www.lionpic.co.uk and www.mmdistributors.com; 800-526-2306.)

Wall Buddies

Wall Buddies are saw-toothed diagonal brackets that mount on the top rail of both metal and wood frames. Model M-2200 (holds up to 30 pounds) and P-1100 work with metal frames. Models SW-4400 (holds up to 30 pounds) and W-3300 (holds up to 80 pounds) work with wood frames. The wood frame models also have added support for vertical rails.

All Wall Buddies come with a proprietary wall hanger, which allow for easy leveling. However, left and right adjustment also mean a slight increase or decrease



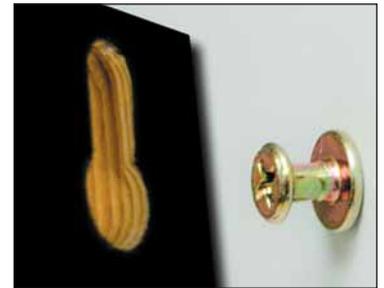
Wall Buddies diagonal saw-tooth hangers allow for easy leveling.

in the height of a picture. Unless the wall hangers are carefully placed, hanging pictures in a grid or row with perfect alignment can be tricky. Many framers find that their customers love them and offer them a hanging option for their everyday framing. (www.wallbuddies.com; 800-859-2030.)

Hangman Products

Hangman makes so many products that it is hard to pick just a few items. I have used many of their products in multiple installations.

One nifty device is the keyhole locator kit. It includes marker devices to locate the wall hanger placement, and a great hanger called the BCK Double Head Bear Claw Hanger. I am often asked to install bulletin boards and other wall hangings that have a keyhole slot routed in the back. If



The BCK Double Headed Bear Claw hanger from Hangman is designed for use with recessed keyhole hanging.

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there are two (or more) keyholes on the back, aligning the holes accurately can be tricky. Misaligning wall screws by even 1/16" will mean the piece will not slide down on the screws and that adjusting the screws won't be easy. With the Keyhole Locators, you tape the locators in the keyholes, position the wall hanging where you want it to be, level it using the small level in the kit, and gently press on the wall hanging to mark the position. Then you install the Bear Claw hangers in the marked holes and the picture will hang perfectly. They also work for installing D-ring hangers and small metal frames that can be hung from the top channel. Hangman also sells a kit with a router bit that lets you make your own keyhole slots on the back of any frame. (www.hangmanproducts.com; 818-610-0487.)

Hook-Ups!

Hook-Ups! from Stuart Industries are adjustable hangers with many advantages. Besides adjustability, they can be used on narrow wood mouldings (with a back edge as thin as 3/8"), and have a two-hole mounting plate for metal and wood mouldings. They are rated up to 100 pounds.

The hangers come as a "handed" pair, meaning there are specific hangers for the left and right sides of a frame, and the attachment hardware is also furnished for both wood and metal frames. The hangers are color-coded; the silver hanger goes on the right side and the brass one on the left (as seen from the back). A knurled nut at the bottom of the suspending eye allows adjustment of the hanger up or down after installation and in the field. This means that if the wall hook placement is off even slightly, the framed piece can be adjusted perfectly level. Hook-Ups! work with a wide variety of wall hooks, from standard picture hooks to a protruding screw head or even gallery rods.



Stewart Industries' Hook-Ups! are especially useful for hanging frames made from narrow wood moulding.

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A security version accepts a "T" screw as a wall anchor. While not as secure as a three-point system, the Hook-Ups! system would be perfect for an exhibition

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where the potential for easy removal needs to be inhibited and adjustability would allow more accurate picture placement. (www.stuartindustries.com; 888 325-7976.)

Art Materials Service (AMS)

Art Materials Service's "T" lock security installation system has become the industry standard for both wood and metal frames. Its patented marker hardware makes



AMS offers three lengths of security wrenches as well as a drill driver attachment for driving "T" screws.

locating the hole for the "T" screw much faster and more accurately.

AMS also offers three different security wrenches in case-hardened metal, which lasts longer and won't round out from repeat

use. The shorter and longer wrenches are extremely useful for difficult installations. A length of wire can be tied to the shorter wrench for leverage to turn it when a picture is close to an obstruction, such as a backsplash. The longer wrench is useful for stacked or wide frames where the "T" lock is higher on the frame than a standard wrench. AMS also offers a great drill driver attachment for driving "T" screws.

(www.artmaterialsservice.com; 888-522-5526.)

Beehive Hangers

This innovative hanger is available in two sizes, the "original" for pictures up to 35 pounds on frames 5/16"

or wider, and the new "max" for pictures up to 100 pounds. These hangers work on a honeycombed grid (hence the name "Beehive") that is attached to the back of the framed picture.

The original hanger is attached to the left and right of the frame's top rail, and it engages with a proprietary hanger/nail. The max hanger is also attached to the top rail but is also attached to the left and right vertical rails, adding strength to the miter. It engages with the proprietary max hook (also furnished) that is inserted through the drywall for added support.



The honeycomb grid of the Beehive hangers allow solid, adjustable hanging.

Both hangers allow adjustment in 1/16" intervals in all directions, so aligning and leveling groups of pictures is fast and easy. This hanger works very well for hanging multiple pictures, especially in grids or rows. (www.beehivehangers.com; 219-958-0574.) ■



Rob Markoff, CPF, has been framing for more than 35 years. With his wife, Barbara, he operates Gallery Services, a contract framing company, and Artrageous!, an art and framing retail company in San Diego, CA. He has written extensively for industry publications and is a featured speaker/educator at framing venues across the U.S. and Canada.

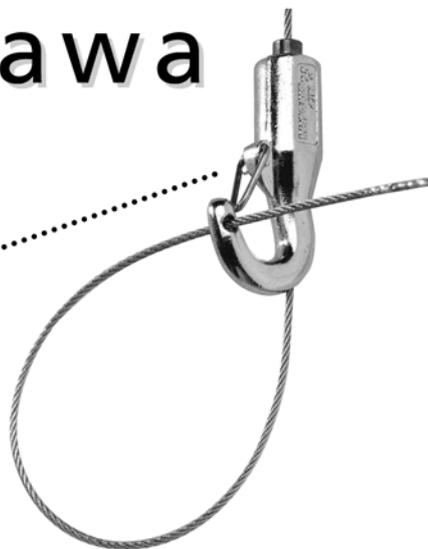


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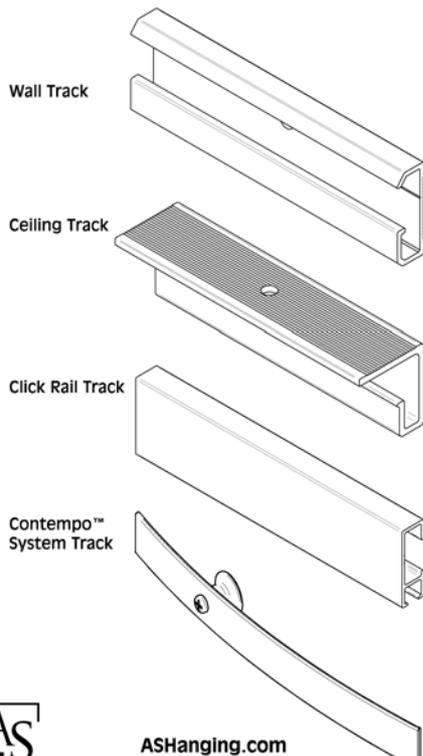
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Deborah Hill
Greenhouse Gallery of Fine Art
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The West Coast Art & Frame Show AND THE NATIONAL CONFERENCE

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