

Instructions for Photographing Framed Pictures

A question that has been asked many times is how to acquire a digital copy of a framed picture, in particular originals, of which there is no other record.

The easiest way to get a digital image is to photograph the picture, but the fact it is behind a piece of glass complicates things a little. Here is some advice from a professional photographer on how to achieve the best image possible:

Turn off all the lights which may cause a light reflection on the glass, and take the photograph in good ambient (natural) light, e.g. put the picture near a window. If you are unable to use a good natural light source try using one light directly above or at the side of the picture but make sure it is level with the painting and not too close. Ensure that you cannot see the light reflecting on the glass.

Do not use a standard camera flash as this defeats the point of trying to avoid a reflection in the glass. A more advanced method of using flash would be to use 'bounce flash' (if you have a detachable flash unit) where you bounce the flash off the ceiling or walls; this will only really work successfully if you have white or light coloured walls.

You will probably see your own reflection in the glass which can be avoided by taking the photograph from a slight angle, but not too much to distort the painting.

This advice has been tried and tested, and although it can take a little time to get right, the results are certainly worth it.

Remember, it is not only great to be able to submit your originals to this gallery for everyone's enjoyment, it could also be an important condition of an insurance policy especially with itemised high value objects.