

# HOW TO STRETCH CANVAS

## Materials:

- Wood frame
- Canvas
- Canvas Pliers
- Scissors
- Staple Gun
- Staples

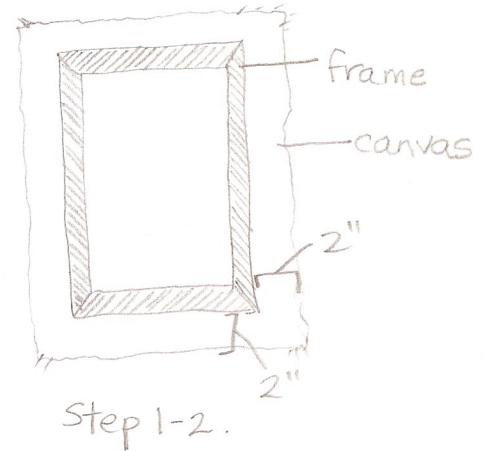
## Safety:

Safety glasses should be worn when using the staple gun.

Never point the staple gun at yourself or others.

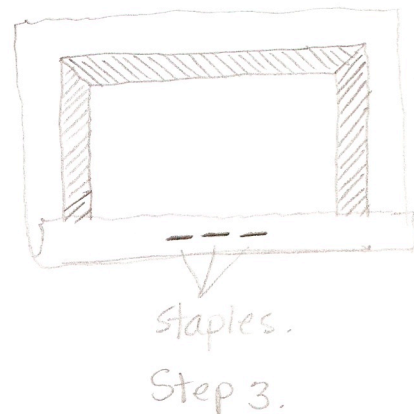
Always pull the canvas away from yourself with the pliers - do not pull straight up on the canvas or towards yourself.

Step 1: Cut your canvas to fit your frame, leaving an extra 2-3 inches on each side of the frame.  
For example, if your frame is 12" x 18", cut your canvas to 16" x 22". Tip: Use the scissors to make a small cut into the fabric and tear the rest to get a perfect straight edge.



Step 2: Lay your canvas good-side down on the table and center your frame on top of it. Make sure the front of the frame is face down as well, touching the canvas.

Step 3: On one long side of your frame, fold the canvas over the edge and place three staples through the canvas into the center of the frame bar.



Step 4: Turn the frame around so that the opposite long side is closest to you. Using the canvas

pliers, pull the canvas around the frame bar so that it is as tight as possible. Place three staples into the center of this frame bar so that it matches the other side.

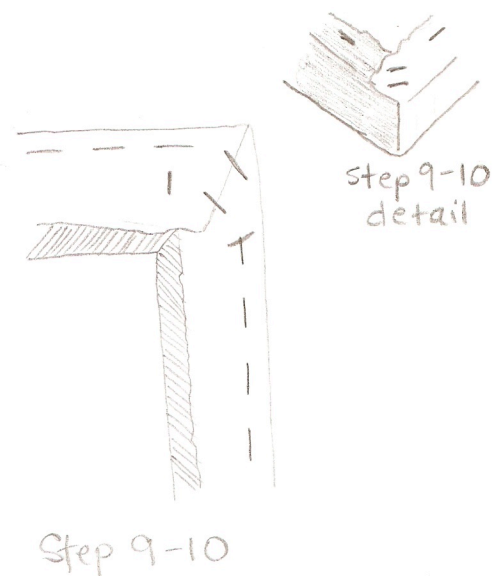
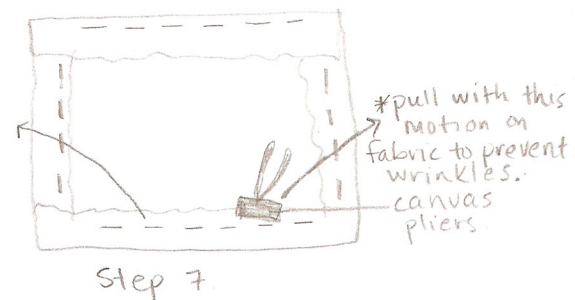
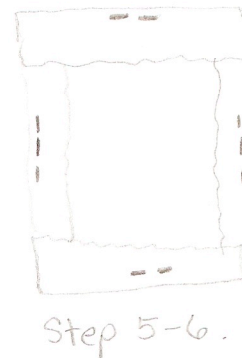
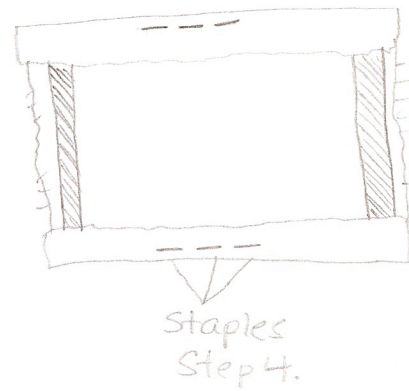
Step 5: Turn the frame so that a short side is now closest to you. Again, use the canvas pliers to pull the canvas tight around the frame bar. Place two staples into the center of the frame bar.

Step 6: Repeat step 5 on the last side of the frame.

Step 7: Return to the first side of the canvas. Pulling the canvas tightly away and outwards from the frame, put a new staple into the frame on each side of the existing staples, about 1-2" from the last staples.

Step 8: Repeat step 7 on the remaining sides of the frame, working in the same order as before, until you come within 2" of the corners.

Step 9: Decide whether your painting is going to be a landscape orientation or a portrait orientation. You want the corners of the canvas to be folded onto the top and bottom sides of the canvas. Then, fold the corners "hospital-style" so that the fabric from one side folds into the space between the frame and the fabric on the other side, and creates a flush, square corner. Place numerous



staples into the fabric to hold the corner securely in place.

Step 10: Repeat step 9 on the remaining corners.

Your canvas will now be complete! The front should feel as tight as a drum and not have any wrinkles.

#### Troubleshooting:

- Small wrinkles in the canvas should come out of the fabric once it is gessoed.
- Large wrinkles will need to be removed from the fabric before gessoing. You may have to remove some staples and redo them, pulling tighter on the canvas this time. Alternatively, you may need to just add more staples in between the ones you already have in place, pulling tighter each time you place a new one in.
- If you are having a hard time getting your corners flat, you may want to trim the excess canvas slightly so that there is less to fit into place.