

How to Hang a Picture

By Dennis Payton Knight

I went to my bookshelf this morning, sure that I had one on the art and engineering of hanging a picture, but twelve pages in, it turned out to be on the art and engineering of hanging things other than pictures, specifically humans. I don't know why I had it on the shelf, but I have this bad habit of judging books by their covers. It must have looked like fun when I bought it. But it wasn't what I needed at the moment and, further, I just wasn't interested in having people hanging around today. It looks like I will have to write the book myself.

Chapter 1. The first element in hanging a picture is to decide where you want it hung. That's the artistic part. You don't want Uncle John hanging around your kitchen watching you muck up the chowder, or in the dining room watching you spill the chowder. And you don't want him in your bathroom watching you... well, watching you.

The only other place to hang old Uncle John is in the living room. Determine what wall is behind you when you're watching the tube. You don't want the old geezer there unless you know he likes your taste in television, which he won't, because he's a geezer. And don't put him on the opposite side either, unless you want to look at his sour countenance for hours every day. One of the other walls will do fine; you'll catch him out of the corner of your eye now and then, but the intrusions will be minimal.

Now that we have dispensed with the *art* of hanging pictures, we must address the *engineering*. For that you will need a ladder, a measuring tape, a level, a pencil, a hammer, a length of wire, a nail, and a nail puller. Especially a good, strong nail puller because, face it, you are more of an artist than an engineer.

Regarding the ladder and, knowing you will be running off to the building supply company to get it, this author strongly suggests you select one that is shorter than the ceiling height of your living room. Anything taller is unnecessary and will likely go through the ceiling or crash the living room window in the process of getting it up. If you don't know how high your ceiling is, get a ladder that seems right and buy a saw which you can use for adjustments later. As long as you're there, buy a hammer that is heavy enough to be persuasive and a nail that is big enough to be persuaded. And pick up a six-pack of persuasive beer on your way home.

Chapter Two. You probably should have measured before you carried the ladder in, but you didn't. So, slide dear old Uncle John's countenance under the couch, call the window company and finish the six-pack.

Chapter Three. To be continued tomorrow. Or next week. Maybe someday.