

HOW TO STRETCH YOUR OWN CANVAS

SUPPLIES:

- unprimed cotton canvas

- four stretcher bars (the wood that makes up the frame)

You can buy pre-cut wood stretchers at most art supply stores


or if you have sufficient DIY skills, cut your own from a 2x2" piece of wood w/ corners cut @ 45°

- staple gun + staples

- wood glue

- nails or screws

- canvas stretching pliers (optional) → you can simply pull w/ your hands

- corner keys (optional)  → keeps large canvases square

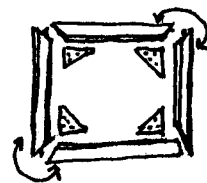


TO BEGIN:

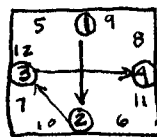
- Join the stretchers. Place on floor, rub small amount of wood glue into corners, then push the corners together by hand. Tap gently on a carpet or use a rubber hammer. Check that they're at right angles

- Nail in corner keys if you have them

- Place a few nails in each corner to secure



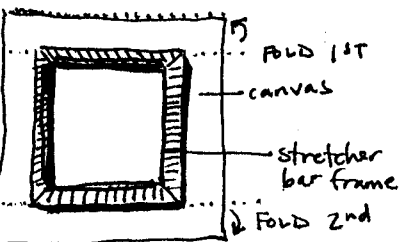
- Roll out your canvas, put the frame on top, then cut to size, leaving 4-6" extra on all sides. Remember the canvas has to fold over the edge and onto the back of the stretcher bars



[staple order]

- * Stretch canvas with logic, not randomly!

- Place the frame face down on the canvas so the FLAT side faces you. Start in the center on any side. Pull canvas over edge until it meets the end of stretcher. Staple center. Put in about 3 staples



- Move to the opposite side, pull the canvas taut, + staple the middle in place.

Repeat w/ other 2 edges (stapling only the middle)



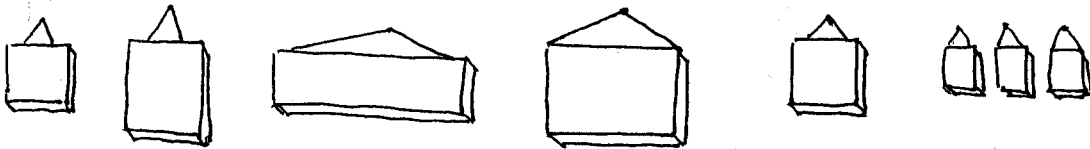
REMEMBER TO PULL THE CANVAS AS TIGHT AS YOU CAN!!

now staple one edge from the middle to the one side
Then do the same to the edge diagonally opposite

Continue like this until all edges are in place. WORK IN SECTIONS FOR BETTER TENSION

At the corners, fold the edges neatly and staple the one on top the other. Fold the canvas at the edge so it looks clean from the side. If you have too much fabric, cut out a triangle so it lies flatter, but be careful not to cut too much.



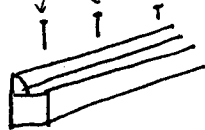
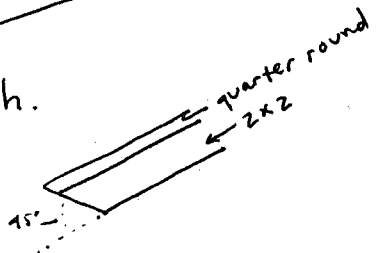
Now your canvas is finished and ready to be primed with Gesso!
Good Luck!

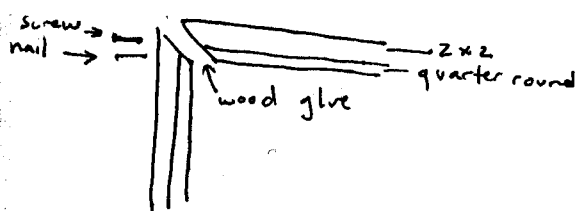


Tips + Extras:

- Get a strong friend to help hold the canvas while you staple it.
- Smooth any imperfections w/ a nail file or sandpaper

FOR MAKING OWN STRETCHER BARS.

- use a 2x2" wood  and quarter round wood to  place on top 
- nail quarter round on top of 2x2" w/ flat edge flush. Then cut wood pieces to size at a 45° angle 
- Fit together w/ wood glue, then use one screw (use drill) and one nail at each corner



stretch canvas the same way.