

Dry Mounting Silk with Silicone Paper

Remove the silk from the frame. Remove all the tape and cut off the edges that were glued to the frame. The silk should lay flat; if it has a wrinkle, press it with a dry iron (silk setting). It is wise to put a piece of parchment paper or other protective paper between the silk and the iron as some paints (heavy glue) (metallic) can stick to the iron. If your silk has severe creases or wrinkles (from storage off the frame) you can dampen the whole piece evenly (to avoid watermarks) and then press it.

The backing paper should be very smooth and flat. No wrinkles or heavy textures (sticks, plant fiber). You can iron the paper smooth, it's OK to spray the paper to dampen it. I have found a smooth stiff drawing paper works well as a backing, as does cardstock for small pieces.

For dry mounting silk, use a dry iron (no steam) set at the silk setting. If the silicone is not melting easily, heat the iron to the wool setting for a bit. If the protective paper starts to curl while you iron on it, the iron is too hot.

The padding needs to be very smooth and firm. 4 layers of denim is suggested. I use more layers of a smooth heavy cotton. The padding should be solid enough that all the surface under the iron is touching, otherwise air bubbles are trapped. When you melt on the silicone, you squish the air bubbles out off the edge of the silk with the pressure and heat of the iron (like when you brush/squish the air bubbles out the edge of a wet mounting).

Cut the silicone paper to the exact size or a bit smaller than the piece of flat silk. (If it is bigger than the silk, silicone will stick to the iron).

Heat dry iron to silk setting.

Place the silicone paper shiny side up (silicone side up) on the padding.

Place the silk painting face up on the silicone paper. When you iron, the silicone will melt and stick to the back of the painting.

Put a protective sheet over the painting.

Iron from center out, first in a cross and then in an x movement to avoid bubbles (squishes them out to the edges. Keep the iron moving over the entire piece and apply more pressure until it is stuck to the silk. Stop and peel a corner of the silicone backing paper back to check if the silicone has transferred to the silk. The silk will look shiny on the back. If it hasn't transferred, you probably need to raise the temperature on your iron (wool setting) and repeat the process. If the protective paper starts to curl up, it is probably too hot and you should lower the temperature (back to silk setting).

Place the prepared backing paper for your silk painting on the padding.

Peel the paper off the back of the silk, exposing the silicone coating and place the silk face up on the backing paper.

Cover the silk with a protective paper and iron lightly in a cross then x pattern to tack the paper to the silk. At this point you should check to make sure there are no wrinkles developing. Check often as you iron. You can repair a wrinkle by heating the area and peeling the backing paper back from a corner until the wrinkle is released, then re-iron.

Continue ironing and increase pressure until the silicone has melted and glued the backing paper to the silk. Remember to iron from the center out to squish the bubbles out the edge and check often for developing wrinkles.