



Printing to fit the new Club thin mats

Objective of this article

To help you get images printed and into one of the new thin display mats with maximum ease and minimum fiddling.

Mats: The easiest, cheapest way to mount print competition entries is to buy the new thin mats¹ from the Club. These are **11" high by 14" wide** and include a hinge, backing and peel-off tape. PS: I'm using inches rather than centimetres because most print shops still offer products in inches, not centimetres.

Decide your image size to fit the mat

Assuming **landscape orientation** for your print, we will orient the mat with the hinge at the bottom; this gives better print security when it is being held to view.

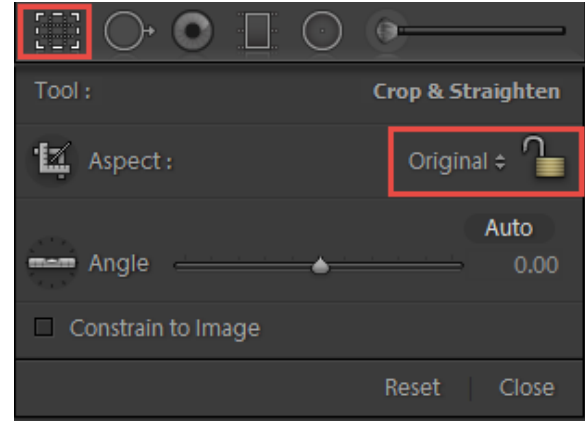
The **display window** is **7.5" high x 11.55" wide**. This is thus the maximum image size, assuming no visible border on the image in the window. I'll show you how to add borders inside the window towards the end of this article.

Paper size: You might get away with an 8" x 12" print (around \$4) but you will only have about 0.4" of room on each edge that is outside the window. This might make it fiddly to properly align the image in the mat's window and doesn't really provide much grip to hold the print in. The **11" x 14" print** (around \$10) provides more leeway so we'll base this article on that size.

First, you need to consider the image's **Aspect ratio**; this is the **ratio of the longest side to the shortest of an image**. So, the aspect ratio of our display window is $11.55/7.5$ or 1.54 to one. You don't actually need to know this number but you should ensure the aspect ratio of your image matches this to avoid unequal borders. Here's how!

Crop to aspect ratio

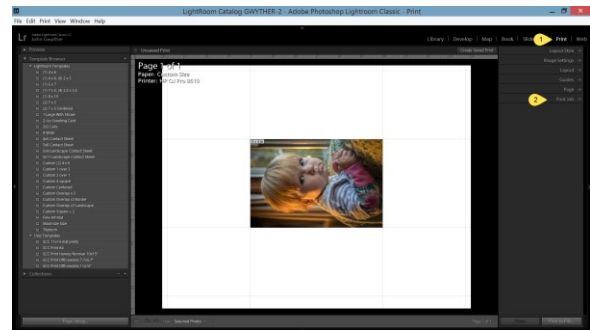
Cropping to an aspect ratio is easy in Lightroom. Just below the Histogram display in the **Develop module** is the **Crop tool**.



Click on it then on the down arrow next to the word **Original** to display a choice of crop modes; we want **Enter Custom**; type **7.5** in the first field and **11.55** in the second. Once you are happy with the position of the crop frame on your image, clicking the Crop tool again makes the image match the desired aspect ratio.

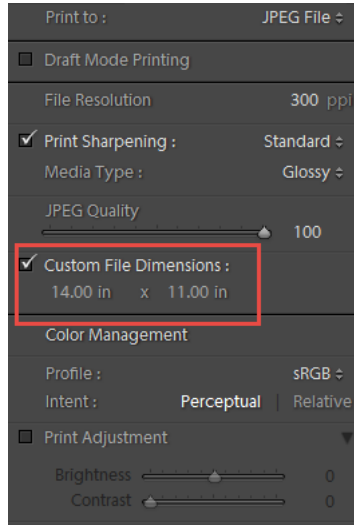
Printing Preparation

With your print-ready image selected in the **Library module** (ensure it appears in landscape mode, as below), select the **Print module** **1** from the top bar, right-hand menu. Your image will appear in whatever print layout was last used.



¹ Sometimes spelt "mattes".

First, we need to set our paper size, which is done in the **Print Job tab** on the right-hand side of the screen **2**. Make sure your settings match the ones shown; 300DPI is vital for print quality and you should match the **Media Type** to the paper type you plan to print on.

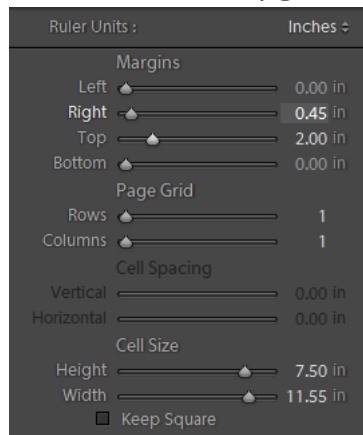


Next, we need to visit the **Layout tab** to size and position the image on the print page.

- Set the **Cell Size** to the mat's window size of Height=7.5 and Width=11.55. This image will thus exactly fill the mat's window.
- If you wish to have an equal border visible in the window, reduce the Cell Size height and width accordingly. For example, to 7.0 and 11.05 to create a 0.25" border when the image is centred in the window. More on this later.

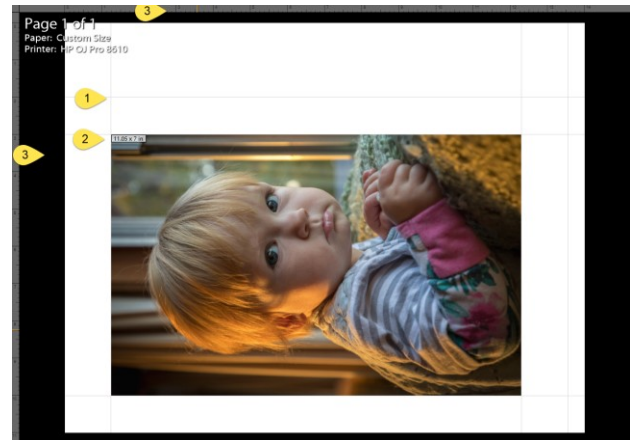
Now, even though the 11" x 14" print size matches the 11" x 14" mat size, we need to allow for the hinge line. When you insert a printed sheet into the mat, it can only go in about 0.7" (1.8cm)

towards the hinge line. So, to make life easier for us, adjust the **Margins** in the **Layout tab** to match these settings.



This will make the bottom (hinge line) margin the necessary 0.7" and give you a 1" margin on the left. Ask your printer to trim the sheet so that the wider white spaces on the top and right come down to 1".

Thus, the final print (after being trimmed) will be a sheet 13.55" wide and 9.25" high with a 1" border on right, top and left and a 0.7" border at the bottom.



Note the **Guide Lines 1**, **Print Dimensions 2** and **Rulers 3** shown. If they are not displayed on your system, you can select them in the **Guides** tab.

Printing To a JPEG File

All that is left now is to ensure **Print To** in the **Print Job tab** is set to **JPEG file** and click on the **Print To File** bottom in the lower right-hand corner of the screen.

Take or send the resulting file along to your favourite printer (eg OfficeWorks, Harvey Norman, Home Grown Design, etc), specifying:

- 11" x 14" paper
- Of a type that matches the **Media Type** you selected in Lightroom and
- Trimming the two wider borders down to 1" each.

Before you go, a word about Templates.

Saving as a Print Template

Now, you only need to do all this fiddling with print settings once, because you can save them as User Template for use next time.

Look over the left-hand of the **Print module** screen to see the **Template Browser** with sub-headings of **Lightroom Templates** and **User Templates**.

The former is a set that comes with Lightroom and the latter is where any Templates we save, or import, end up².

Simply click on the **+** symbol at the right-hand side of the **Template Browser** header, decide on a name for your template (eg **SCC 11x14 mat full window image**) and click **Save**. Your new Template shows up under the **User Templates** sub-folder at left, ready for instant re-use!

Using a saved Template

Simply go into the **Print module** with your next image and click on the saved **User Template** from above (eg **SCC 11x14 mat full window image**); it's done! All you now need to do is print.

Like borders with that?

One last trick; let's shrink our image size to leave a 0.25" white border when centred in the mat window.

This often lifts the appearance a bit and gives you an easier guide to getting the image square and centred.

Reduce the **Cell Size** in the **Layout tab** to 7.00 and 11.05 (no need to adjust the Margins or printer trim instructions) to achieve the same effect.

Why not save that as template called (for example) **SCC 11x14 mat 0.25 border**?

² I could have simply exported this template for you to use but felt it was better for you to see how this all works, in case you want to vary the size and layout.

Mounting the image in the mat

Slide the print into the mat with the thinnest border towards the hinge line. Check your alignment is square and as desired before you push it in as far as it will go.

If you have trimmed the image as described above, the lift-off tape at the top and right-hand sides should be clear of the photo paper.

To stick it down, you can use the peel-off tape already on the matt. But, **be warned**; this is strong stuff and unpeeling it to re-use the mat can be tricky and might damage the mat.

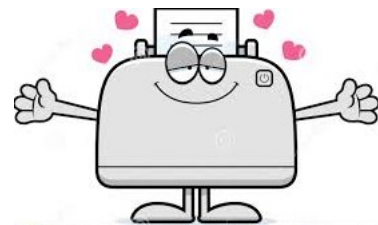
If you do use it, expose no more than an inch of it. The next time you want to use this mat, expose another inch but put standard sticky tape over the old, exposed sticky bit to avoid further damage to the mat area in contact with it.

Better to use a small amount of double-sided sticky tape at each of the mat's top corners, just inside the edge. These can be easily separated from the matt with a Stanley knife or razor blade.

What happens if I want portrait mode?

Proceed as above but simply rotate the mat to vertical after everything is completed.

Happy printing!



File=How to print for 11x14 thin mats V1.1