

SETTING UP AN EXHIBITION

1. Choose a theme.

It's not enough to simply have lots of artwork to exhibit; you need a focus. More importantly, however, this is also a marketing technique – especially for unknown artists – by attracting people who are specifically interested in the concept. Choosing a theme will also help with more practical aspects of the exhibition, such as its title and which other artists to include.

2. Find other artists to exhibit with.

Look round local art clubs or street markets where you see artists with good work for sale. Ask anyone you know who is an artist in your community. Artists with related, or perhaps contradictory, themes will help create a group momentum.

Don't limit the exhibition to artists within your own medium. Consider different mediums, paintings, sculptures, models, photos, glass work, performance pieces, etc. to create dynamic collaborations.

3. Find a location for your exhibition.

Renting space in a studio is always a possibility. But depending on the scale of the project, many different kinds of spaces will do, including a restaurant, café, library, or even someone's home. Ensure that the space chosen is well-presented, clean, and is an appropriate size for your exhibit.

Pay particular attention to lighting. Large windows can be good, and track lighting can be especially useful in illuminating the work.

4. Set a date.

Give yourself plenty of time to organize everything. It is always best to organize an art exhibition so that it includes a weekend, so that people working Monday to Friday can come.

5. Set prices.

Consider all costs including the cost of renting the space, the materials, advertising, the artist's share, the organizer's share, and any percentage donated to charity. Decide whether an admission fee will be necessary or appropriate.

6. Think about sales.

In addition to selling the artwork, it can also be profitable to produce cards with photos of the artwork and sell them, perhaps in packs of five.

7. Do the administrative work.

Among other things, you will need insurance, a schedule, and helpers to coordinate artwork drop-offs and pick-ups, and details of how each piece should be presented, placed, hung and lighted, etc.. You will also need the artists' resumes to keep perhaps in a binder, a price list, and gallery sitters to stay with the work at all times. Think carefully about the logistical details.

8. Advertise the exhibition.

Create post cards for the artists to send as invitations. Consider doing press releases for exhibits. Put up advertising posters at local art schools, universities, trendy areas, cafes, clubs, and even supermarket bulletin boards. Get in touch with local newspapers.

9. Set up the exhibition space.

Imagine how visitors will interact with the room. Which piece will they see first? What direction will they move in? Consider adding descriptions to the pieces. Ensure that there are signs indicating whether or not people may touch the pieces. Always make the prices clearly visible.

10. Provide food and drink.

If you can afford it, offer beverages such as champagne, wine and non-alcoholic choices, along with finger food or a buffet, perhaps just for an invitation-only opening. Provide a pleasant background atmosphere. If it enhances the experience, play music at a low level, especially at the end when people start leaving.

VOCABULARY

3. These terms are useful for setting up an exhibition. Find the English translations in the text. The words you need are underlined.

quota di ammissione	
permettersi	
appendere	
tenere	
illuminazione	
fornire	
affittare	
vendita	
vendere	
spedire	
fissare	
organizzare	
dimensione	

GRAMMAR

5. The imperative

The imperative is the base form of the verb, and no subject is used.

Complete this short text about how to tell the difference between a print, a lithograph or a real painting.

Hold the piece up to the light. (1) a magnifying glass - that is essential. A real painting will have real brushstrokes, which will vary in size and texture.

Now (2) the painting up to the light and (3) at it from the back. You should be able to see variations in the light coming through the back of the canvas. This is because artists use varying degrees of impasto (heaviness of paint in certain areas). A lithograph on canvas will not have these variations.

A real painting will almost always be signed by the artist - (4) for a signature in the lower right hand corner. The artist's signature should have a dimension to it. This does not apply to a watercolor, but it applies generally to acrylics, egg tempera and oils.

The exception here is that some artists paint very smoothly, and their technique is to not show brushstrokes.

The very best way you can know whether you are buying a print, litho or real painting is to visit the artist and watch him or her at work. (5) the artist to find out when this is possible!