

Tech Team® French Cleat Style Picture and Mirror Hangers are the strongest most efficient and easiest system for hanging pictures and mirrors, especially those that are excessively heavy. The system consists of two aluminum extrusions that are shaped in such a way that the one mounted to the back of the picture frame engages the one that's mounted to the wall, and thereby forms a connection that holds the picture or mirror flush to the wall. Unlike cabling systems that by their very nature allow the picture or mirror to hang closer to the wall at the bottom than at the top i.e. it tilts towards you. The structural integrity of the Tech Team® French Cleat System is excellent and it will support substantial weight. However, as in many things in life, it's ability to support weight is no better than it's foundation. For example, if you have a 100lb mirror and you attempt to mount the system to drywall using only drywall anchors, you can expect everything to pull away from the wall in short order. The first thing you need to understand is how a typical wall is constructed. In the USA you might note that drywall, whether it's 8, 9, 10, or 12 feet in length, is always 4 feet in width, and studs (the vertical members inside the wall) are correspondingly always 16" spacing center to center (3x16"=48"). In order to hang a picture or mirror that is heavy, you need to locate the studs and determine where the centers of these studs are to get maximum support and holding strength. If you can identify the location of the screws or nails holding the drywall to the stud, it should give you a good indication of where it is. Chances are you will be hanging your picture or mirror on a wall that is already painted and therefore finding the studs is problematic. The solution to this is to use an electronic stud finder to allow you to locate both the edges and centers of the studs. Even though the stud may not be in the exact location where you want to hang your picture or mirror, you should take this into account and locate the picture/mirror accordingly. The other thought, of course, is that any picture or mirror that is heavy, 50-100 lbs or more, is going to be rather large. In that event you should use either one Tech Team® 737 20"/ 510mm Cleat System, or multiple 735 6"/160mm, or 736 12"/305mm hangers to properly support the weight. Failure to properly identify the location of studs and properly anchor the cleats accordingly can result in an unhappy outcome.

You also must pay attention to how the frame will appear on the wall. Each Tech Team® kit is supplied with a spirit bubble level so that you can level the cleat on the wall, which of course is an important step. You also must pay attention to how the companion cleat is mounted to the rear of the frame. It should be mounted perfectly parallel to the upper edge. Assuming you have mounted the wall cleat level, and the frame cleat parallel, the frame should, in theory, appear level on the wall. Unfortunately that is not always the case. Due to the configuration of the walls, floor, ceiling, and other accoutrements in the room, a perfectly level frame may appear visually slightly out of level, and/or the frame is out of square. It is easy to make small adjustments in leveling. It is simply a matter of putting a toothpick or a match stick in the track of the cleat that as against the wall at the appropriate point, remounting the frame, and then checking for level again. This is the easy way to solve the problem.

