

HOW SHOULD I PRICE MY ART WORK

A study guide for use in conjunction with:

<http://www.talkshoe.com/talkshoe/web/audioPop.jsp?episodeId=25952>

This guide is designed to help the artist remember the information by filling in the blanks as he or she listens to the podcast. I suggest listening to the entire podcast before filling in this study guide during a second hearing. If you are listening on your computer the podcast may be paused at any point by placing the cursor on the || symbol and clicking.

Restart by clicking the >.

1. Of the many dilemmas facing artists, one of the most perplexing is how to price _____ and the _____ made from them. Unless you paint purely for pleasure and not for profit, you need to apply the same principles every other business must consider in order to yield a reasonable return for your _____ and _____, cover _____ and compensate other art and sales professionals who spend their _____ and _____ to help your art find a buyer.
2. As you establish a reputation and following, the price you can charge will increase in _____ to the _____ for your work. But what if you are just starting out or haven't established a consistent track record of sales? Here's a _____ many artists have found useful.
3. Decide what your _____ and _____ are worth on an _____ basis. If you were offered a full-time job creating or teaching art, what would you realistically accept per week because you enjoy the work? If you were to expect \$1,000 for a forty-hour week you'd be valuing your time at _____ per hour. Therefore, if spent ten hours on a painting, your time is valued at _____.
4. Next you must add the cost of _____. That, of course, varies depending on the painting and the medium you use. Let's say that on average, each painting costs \$35 in materials. The time invested is worth \$250 plus \$35 the cost of materials for a total to \$285.
5. You must also set aside an _____ to cover your _____: accounting, electricity, phone, studio space, travel, taxes, etc. For this example, assume that 30% of your time value, or \$75, will cover these costs. Your overhead, too, may be more or less.

In this example, you'd be allocating \$300 per week to cover these out-of-pocket costs. You may be able to determine this with a fair amount of precision by looking at last year's tax return. At this point, the total cost of your ten-hour painting is \$360. This is your _____ or _____ price.

6. Unless you have established a large following of avid collectors, most of what you sell will go to _____ like galleries, architects, and decorative art buyers at your _____ price. They will usually _____ the _____ price you charged them and sell your ten-hour painting to their client for \$720.
7. This is for the art alone and it is now the established _____ or _____ price you must quote, and _____, if you sell your own original work to a _____ buyer. The "marketplace" will soon tell you if your art is salable at that price. If it isn't, you will need to _____ the _____ of your time, or consider ways to produce quality art in less time. That may mean _____ the medium you work in, the _____ of the subjects you tackle or find ways to produce and sell _____ of your best work at more reasonable prices.
8. Artists who will sell for a _____ or "back door" price to someone who comes to their studio or purchases from an artist's on-line gallery or web-site is _____ the very people who will help advance their careers as professional artists and will be the most _____ and _____ buyers. When you cut out the "_____ " word will spread and you'll soon be selling for the cheapest bargain price you are willing to accept.
9. If your trade buyer frames the piece for their client, you as the artist, _____ for the framing or _____ any of the mark-up they will add for the frame. If you frame your art in order to make a sale, the _____ of the frame and the _____ you take to work with a framer can be reckoned in same way as your cost for materials and what your time is worth. Keep in mind your wholesale buyers who frame art for their clients probably buy those services _____ than you can because of the _____ of work they place and long established _____ with their suppliers.

10. You are probably nodding your head at this point, saying, “\$1,000 bucks a week would suit me fine. I can do that!” Now, friend artist: WELCOME TO THE REAL WORLD! How many business owners, just starting out to establish their enterprises, work a _____ - _____ week, doing the part of the job they like best? None that I’ve met. I certainly didn’t when I established Art Venture and went on the road selling my own work and the work of other artists and publishers.
11. The inescapable reality is that you will probably spend at least _____ your time _____, establishing relationships with the trade professionals who will be your usual buyers, working on your website, if you have one, keeping records, shuffling papers, filling out forms and traveling to see the many associates every business person must deal with - not creating the beautiful art you dream about.
12. The forty-hour week we were talking about a few minutes ago may turn into eighty hours spread over all seven days and the \$25 an hour shrinks to \$12.50. That’s called “_____.” I hope you are so good, your art so compelling and salable that buyers are hammering on your door day and night begging to buy. But, here’s the _____ check: until the _____ is done to let people know you’ve “built a better mouse trap,” the only ones who will know about it will be the mice.
13. Some of the art you sell through your own efforts, from your website or to collectors who know and appreciate your work or commission special art, will bring the full _____ – that’s the best of all worlds. If you hire an _____ or representative to help you sell to the trade professionals who buy at wholesale, expect to _____ them for their efforts, usually _____ to _____ of the _____ price they receive. That means the ten-hour painting you would sell for \$720 to a collector, or at \$360 wholesale through your own efforts, will bring you from \$144 to \$270 depending on the _____ you agree to pay the rep. But you do not _____ in any of his marketing expenses – his time, travel or overhead. He _____ the art, _____

and _____ from the buyer and sends you a check. You just create and take the money to the bank.

14. Another way to price your work is to _____ it with what other artists in your area are asking for work similar in size, and complexity, using the same medium. To get a handle on this, you'll need to visit galleries, design studios and high-end furniture stores and _____ the retail prices asked into prices per square inch you can _____ to similar work you have created. Or, sit down at your computer and visit other artists' websites, looking for work similar to your own and translate their prices into square inch costs for comparison.

15. For example, I went through several recent issues of ART WORLD NEWS and wherever an original oil painting was pictured, along with the _____ and _____, I figured the cost per square inch. Prices ranged from a high of \$33.75 to a low of \$2.19 – a huge spectrum that included artists I was familiar with and ones I'd never heard of. I tossed out the two highest figures and the two lowest and then _____ the rest to come up with a _____ square inch cost of \$6.54.

16. Now, let's turn our attention to pricing _____ of your original paintings using the same published retail price per square inch _____ and apply it to the prints. These days, most artists who self-publish are thinking about _____, the _____ technology that has almost taken over the multiples marketplace.

17. I just went through several current issues of Art World News and Decor Magazine, listed the price and size of every giclee _____ offered for sale and figured the "per square inch" for each. These ranged from a ridiculously low .50 to a ridiculously high \$4.68. I threw out the three highest and three lowest figures, _____ the twenty-two mid-range numbers and found the average charged was \$1.45 per square inch. That means a 20" x 30" giclee print would be offered for \$870 retail or \$435 to the trade, compared to an original oil of the same size for \$3,924 in a gallery and \$1,962 to a trade professional who would _____ the price to the retail buyer.

18. Some artists _____ - _____ their giclees and charge more for these because of their time and expertise. If this is your plan, I'd suggest you add your _____ just as you would in creating an original painting.
19. Even if it's a reproduction, it costs _____ and _____ to market it to a willing buyer as it does for an original. The bottom line – you have to _____ and then _____ it to _____ it!
20. Commercial, four-color, fine art _____ editions are still an option and should be considered by artists who have established some following and have a _____. For most artists not fortunate enough to find a publisher who wants their work, the up-front cost to print a full edition and then figure out how to sell hundreds of images is still a _____ and _____ proposition even though the _____ of each print is low.
21. Even with giclees there is an _____ - _____ cost to the artist, though the investment and risk is _____ than producing a complete edition of many prints. The _____ cost _____ by a number of printers I've checked comes in around \$13 to \$16 per square foot, or from .09 to .11 per inch. This does not include the one-time digital capture by _____ or _____, color _____, setting up the printing _____, archiving or multiple proofs. These costs _____ with printers, but you should expect anywhere from _____ to _____ to be ready to print the first copy, which can then be divided or amortized over whatever number of giclees are ultimately printed.
22. Because you have an original painting you can photograph for your website, place in a digital slideshow to send to potential buyers, you may be able to secure a _____ for a giclee, and perhaps a _____, before laying out your dollars to have it printed.
23. Pricing your work properly is only _____ in the _____.

ANSWERS:

1. ORIGINAL ARTWORK, REPRODUCTION, TIME, TALENT, EXPENSES, EFFORT, DOLLARS
2. DIRECT RELATIONSHIP, DEMAND, BASIC FORMULA
3. TIME, TALENT, HOURLY, \$25, \$250
4. MATERIALS
5. ALLOWANCE, OVERHEAD, WHOLESALE, TRADE
6. TRADE PROFESSIONALS, WHOLESALE, DOUBLE, EHOLESALE
7. RETAIL, GALLERY, ADHERE TO, RETAIL, RETHINK, VALUE, COMPLEXITY, MULTIPLE REPRODUCTIONS
8. DISCOUNTED, UNDERCUTTING, CONSISTENT, LOYAL, MIDDLEMEN
9. DO NOT PAY, RECEIVE, COST, TIME, MORE CHEAPLY, VOLUME, RELATIONSHIPS
10. FORTY-HOUR
11. HALF, SELLING
12. PAYING YOUR DUES, REALITY, HARD WORK
13. RETAIL PRICE, ART REP, COMPENSATE, PARTICIPATE, DELIVERS, BILLS, COLLECTS
14. COMPARE, TRANSLATE, APPLY
15. SIZE, PRICE, AVERAGED, TYPICAL
16. REPRODUCTIONS, FORMULA, GICLEES, PRINT ON DEMAND
17. EDITION, AVERAGED, DOUBLE
18. HAND-EMBELLISH, TIME VALUE
19. TIME, EFFORT, PRICE IT RIGHT, SHOW, SELL
20. LITHOGRAPHIC, SALES RECORD, COSTLY, RISKY, UNIT COST
21. UP-FRONT, MUCH LESS, PRINTING, QUOTED, CAMERA, SCANNER, CORRECTION, VARY, \$100, \$200
22. FIRM ORDER, DEPOSIT
23. ONE STEP, PROCESS

Many listeners have found that once they have listened to the podcast and filled in the study guide, just glancing over the answers will quickly and easily bring the important points to mind.