

Are You Gallery Ready? A Self-Evaluation for Visual Artists

Discover where you stand on the path to success in exhibiting your art. These ten questions are important regardless of whether you exhibit in galleries, juried exhibitions, local art fairs, or group shows. This self-evaluation will give you an assessment you can use to identify the next steps in developing your art practice.

Do you have 20 cohesive and consistent works ready for presentation?

Exhibitors look for artists with a cohesive and consistent body of work, typically with 20 pieces that reflect a clear style or theme. Having a strong, focused collection shows that you're at a level to present your work professionally and meet an exhibitor's expectations.

- Yes, I have 20 cohesive and consistent works ready for presentation. (4 points)
- I have some cohesive and consistent pieces, but not 20 yet. (3 points)
- My work is varied, and I'm working on building a cohesive collection. (2 points)
- I'm unsure of how consistent my work is, and don't have a cohesive collection yet. (1 point)

Are your works created with high-quality materials and presented professionally?

The quality of your art materials and the way your artwork is presented—through framing, matting, or mounting—play a crucial role in how exhibitors and collectors perceive its value and your professionalism.

- Yes, I use high-quality art materials, and my artwork is professionally presented. (4 points)
- My art materials are high-quality, but my presentation needs improvement. (3 points)
- My presentation is strong, but I could improve the quality of my art materials. (3 points)
- Both my art materials and presentation need improvement. (2 points)
- I'm unsure of the quality of my presentation and art materials. I need help evaluating quality. (1 point)

Do you have an artist statement, biography, and resume prepared?

These documents help exhibitors, collectors, and viewers understand your journey, inspiration, and achievements as an artist. They are vital for building credibility and connection.

- Yes, all three are complete, polished, and up-to-date. (4 points)
- Partially, I have these documents but need to improve them. (3 points)
- Partially, I have some documents but need to prepare others. (2 points)
- I'm aware that I need these documents. (1 point)

Do you have a well-researched and consistent pricing structure for your artwork?

Galleries and collectors value artists who confidently price their work based on research and consistency. A clear pricing structure builds trust and ensures your art is positioned appropriately in your market.

- Yes, I have a well-researched, consistent, and up-to-date pricing structure for all my artwork. (4 points)
- I have a pricing structure, but it could use more research and refinement. (3 points)
- My pricing varies and lacks consistency or confidence. (2 points)
- I have just started to think about how to structure my pricing. (1 point)

Do you have high-quality digital images of your artwork?

High-quality images are vital for submitting your work to shows and galleries. This will likely be their first exposure to your artwork and its quality will be judged from the images—and first impressions matter.

- Yes, I have high-quality images of all my artwork. (4 points)
- I have some excellent images, but not for all my work. (3 points)
- I have images, but the quality needs some improvement. (2 points)
- I have just a few images of my artwork. (1 point)

Do you have a polished website for your art practice?

A professional website helps you connect with buyers, stay visible, and attract galleries. A well-organized and easy to navigate website helps visitors find out about your art and return for updates.

- Yes, I have a professional website that is well-organized and easy to navigate. (4 points)
- I have a website, but it needs to be better organized and easier to navigate. (3 points)
- I have an older website that needs to be re-organized and updated with new work. (2 points)
- I've just started to think about having a website. (1 point)

Do you have a digital portfolio showcasing your body of work?

A dedicated portfolio allows you to present a curated selection of your best work professionally and efficiently to galleries and collectors. This is separate from your website or social media, which are more public-facing and often includes a broader range of your artwork.

- Yes, I have a dedicated digital portfolio that is focused and professional. (4 points)
- I have a portfolio, but it needs better focus or presentation. (3 points)
- I use my website or social media as a portfolio but haven't created a dedicated portfolio. (2 points)
- I've only just started to think about a digital portfolio. (1 point)

Have you created a list of calls to enter or galleries to approach with your portfolio?

A comprehensive list of calls and galleries increases your chances of finding the right fit. Including any call or gallery that might be a possibility ensures more opportunities to be seen, build a resume, and gain experience—and helps overcome the fear of rejection.

- Yes, I have a well-researched list of calls to enter and galleries to approach. (4 points)
- I have a list, but it includes only a few calls and galleries. (3 points)
- I've started researching calls and galleries but don't yet have a complete list. (2 points)
- I have an idea of a few calls to enter, but no galleries to approach. (1 point)

Are you actively marketing your art through social media, email newsletters, and your website?

Active marketing through online posting, emails, and blog posts with consistency across these platforms builds your reputation and audience.

- Yes, I consistently market my art across social media, email, and my website. (4 points)
- I market occasionally but lack consistency across all platforms. (3 points)
- I focus on one or two platforms but need to expand my marketing efforts. (2 points)
- I try to market my art only sporadically. (1 point)

Are you prepared to approach exhibitors professionally and follow up effectively?

Approaching exhibitors requires preparation. A professional proposal for an exhibition and follow-up demonstrate that you are serious and reliable.

- Yes, I'm comfortable preparing a proposal and following up. (4 points)
- Somewhat, I understand the basics but need more preparation. (3 points)
- Somewhat, I'm still working to understand the basics. (2 points)
- No, I'm unsure how to approach exhibitors. (1 point)

Now add up the points for each response you've marked. Your point total is ____.

30-40 points: Congratulations, you're gallery ready! Just complete any of the remaining elements.

20-30 points: You're well on the way! Take the next steps to finish 2 or 3 elements on the list.

10-20 points: Now's the time to start! Make a plan for progress on 2 or 3 of the elements.