The first step is to insert an insect pin through the center of the thorax. The body should not be angled when viewed from the side but perpendicular to the pin. Push the pin 2/3 of the way through the specimen.

Place the pin with the specimen on it in the center of the groove in the board. Be sure that the pin is straight and not leaning in any direction. Then using forceps push the wing until it is flat with the board. Wings should neither be in the groove of the board, nor above the groove, but even with the wood on either side of the groove.

*Be sure to use an appropriately sized pinning board - wide enough to fit the wing span, with a wide enough gap to fit the legs and body. Using the wrong size board can cause the end result of your pinning to be lackluster.

Carefully separate the wings with tracing paper and flatten the wings to the board. Secure the paper to the board with pins.

Now the idea is to use the pins and paper to help you keep the wings in place once you have moved them to the desired position.
Once the wings are flat to the pinning board, covered by the paper and secured by pins, proper alignment may begin.

To move the wings to the correct position, touch the sharp end of the pin to the costal wing vein, as shown in adjacent illustration.

DO NOT PIN THROUGH THE WINGS.

Carefully pull the forewing upwards.

The bottom of the forewing should be more or less straight, with the bottom edge perpendicular to the thorax.

Once the forewing is in place secure it with a pin.

Near the base of the hindwing, locate the costal vein and use it to position the hindwing.

There should be a moderately sized gap between the forewing and hindwing.

Once you have correctly placed both wings, secure them with pins.

Complete the other side as shown.

Now bask in your success, or see the following page if you are unsure of your success.
This is an example of a well pinned specimen.

This is not the finest of examples. The forewing is too high and the gap between the forewing and hindwing, or the wing gap, is too wide.

This specimen’s wings are too low and the wing gap is too small.

If the wings tear badly during pinning it is usually the result of not being hydrated enough before pinning. If the specimen is not freshly collected, you can use a hydrating chamber to re-hydrate the specimen.