

# Preserving Your Memories: Traditional Albums and Scrapbooks



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# Overview

- Simple preventive measures for preserving your paper-based collections
- Options for addressing damage
- How to choose preservation supplies
- Resources for services
- DIY resources
- How to find follow-up answers





## PRESERVATION



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- ➔ [Preservation Home](#)
- ➔ [About Us](#)
- ➔ [Collections Care](#)
- ➔ [Conservation Highlights](#)
- ➔ [Emergency Preparedness](#)
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- ➔ [Preservation Science](#)
- ➔ [Resources](#)
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- ➔ [Building Digital Collections: A Technical Overview](#)
- ➔ [Preservation Metadata Maintenance Activity](#)

## Collections Care

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Basic information and simple steps to take for the good care, handling, and storage of various materials and formats found in library and home collections:

- [Paper](#)
- [Books](#)
- [Photographs](#)
- [Scrapbooks and Albums](#)
- [Newspapers](#)
- [Comic Books](#)
- [Grooved Media, Magnetic Tape, and Optical Discs](#)
- [Motion Picture Film](#)
- [Asian Bindings](#)

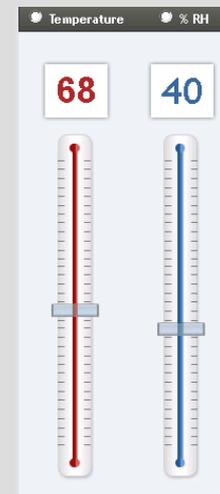
Guidelines for reducing risks to library materials posed by display/exhibition, reformatting, water, and airborne pollutants and for using ABLE™ 7.0 software for the preparation of materials for library binding:



# An ounce of prevention...

Prevention is:

- Good storage (passive)
- Good storage environment (passive)
- Good handling (active)



# What is Good Storage?

Good preservation storage materials/supplies:

- Acid- and lignin-free paper/card stock
- Made of accepted preservation-quality paper/cardstock or plastic\*
- Pass Photographic Activity Test (PAT)\* \*
- Successfully keep out light, dust, and pests
- Appropriately fitted to the item inside
- Designed for flat storage of albums and scrapbooks, which are usually composite objects made of or containing a variety of materials



# \*Acceptable Papers and Plastics

The screenshot shows the website for the Northeast Document Conservation Center. The header includes navigation links: HOME, ABOUT, WORKING WITH NEDCC, PHOTO LIBRARY, SUPPORTERS, DONATE, CONTACT. Below the header is a menu with categories: BOOK CONSERVATION, PAPER CONSERVATION, PHOTOGRAPH CONSERVATION, IMAGING SERVICES, AUDIO PRESERVATION, ASSESSMENTS AND CONSULTATIONS, PRESERVATION TRAINING, and FREE RESOURCES. There are also buttons for 'PRESERVATION LEAFLETS' and 'DISASTER ASSISTANCE', a 'Join E-list' button, a 'Site Search' box, and social media icons for Facebook, Twitter, and YouTube. The main content area is titled 'STORAGE AND HANDLING' and '4.4 Storage Enclosures for Books and Artifacts on Paper'. It features a 'FREE RESOURCES' sidebar with a table of contents, a main text block, and a 'Back to Leaflet List' link.

**NORTHEAST DOCUMENT CONSERVATION CENTER**

HOME ABOUT WORKING WITH NEDCC PHOTO LIBRARY SUPPORTERS DONATE CONTACT

BOOK CONSERVATION PAPER CONSERVATION PHOTOGRAPH CONSERVATION IMAGING SERVICES AUDIO PRESERVATION ASSESSMENTS AND CONSULTATIONS PRESERVATION TRAINING FREE RESOURCES

PRESERVATION LEAFLETS DISASTER ASSISTANCE

Join E-list GO Site Search GO TEXT SIZE

STORAGE AND HANDLING

## 4.4 Storage Enclosures for Books and Artifacts on Paper

**FREE RESOURCES**

- Overview
- Ask NEDCC
- Preservation Leaflets
  - Overview
  - 1. Planning and Prioritizing
  - 2. The Environment
  - 3. Emergency Management
  - 4. Storage and Handling
  - 5. Photographs
  - 6. Reformatting
  - 7. Conservation Procedures
- Preservation 101
- Disaster Assistance

Protective enclosures made of chemically stable materials provide both physical support and chemical protection for books and artifacts on paper. Materials from which enclosures are constructed should meet preservation standards since poor-quality materials can cause irreparable damage.

### CHEMICAL STABILITY

Acids in paper are responsible for much of the deterioration suffered by books and artifacts on paper. This deterioration is most noticeable as discoloration and embrittlement. Examples include the following:

- Acidity in poor-quality folders can migrate into documents housed in the folders, discolor the documents, and hasten their deterioration. The same is true for envelopes and portfolios.
- Enclosures made from chemically unstable materials can deteriorate to the point of falling apart, threatening the physical safety of the items they are intended to protect.
- Acidic interleaving papers can transfer acids to the items they touch, leading to further damage.
- Discoloration from acidic window mats often referred to as "mat burn", disfigures works of art

[← Back to Leaflet List](#)

#### 4. Storage and Handling

- 4.1 Storage Methods and Handling Practices
- 4.2 Storage Furniture: A Brief Review of Current Options
- 4.3 Cleaning Books and Shelves
- 4.4 Storage Enclosures for Books and Artifacts on Paper
- 4.5 Protecting Books with Custom-Fitted Boxes
- 4.6 Card Stock Enclosures for Small Books
- 4.7 The Book Shoe: Description and Uses
- 4.8 Polyester Film Book Jacket
- 4.9 Storage Solutions for

# \*\*Photographic Activity Test

Image Permanence Institute | Photographic Activity Test (PAT) - Mozilla Firefox

File Edit View History Bookmarks Tools Help

Image Permanence Institute | Photographic ...

www.imagepermanenceminstitute.org https://www.imagepermanenceminstitute.org/testing/pat

photographic activ

**IPI** **IMAGE PERMANENCE INSTITUTE**  
A department of RIT's College of Imaging Arts & Sciences

*In support of preservation since 1985.*

Home About Environmental Management Testing & Standards Imaging & Information Media Store Resources Contact Login | New User?

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**IPI Websites**

- Graphics Atlas
- DP3 Project
- Dew Point Calculator
- eClimateNotebook
- Sustainable Preservation Practices

**Upcoming Events**

- Tuesday, Apr 23rd, 2013  
Workshop: Daguerreotypes
- Wednesday, May 1st, 2013  
IPI Webinar: Best Practices for Collecting and Analyzing Environmental Data
- Monday, May 6th, 2013  
Workshop: Collodion Emulsion Printing Paper

[more](#)

Home » Testing & Standards » Photographic Activity Test

## Photographic Activity Test (PAT)

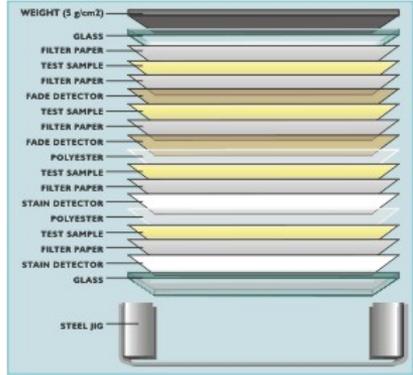
The Photographic Activity Test, or PAT, is an international standard test (ISO18916) for evaluating photo-storage and display products. Developed by IPI, this test explores interactions between photographic images and the enclosures in which they are stored. The PAT is routinely used to test papers, adhesives, inks, glass and framing components, sleeving materials, labels, photo albums, scrapbooking supplies and embellishments, as well as other materials upon request. This test can be performed on products in development as well as on materials already in use in collections.

**We encourage producers of photo-storage and display products to purchase and review ISO 18916 describing the Photographic Activity Test.** After reviewing the standard, contact us with any questions that may arise. ISO 18916 can be purchased at [www.iso.org](http://www.iso.org)

### The Test

Materials to be tested are cut to size and stacked in contact with image interaction and stain detectors. The stacks are held together in a stainless-steel jig. A control stack is prepared using an inert material in place of the test sample. These stacks are then incubated in a temperature- and humidity-controlled chamber to simulate aging. Once incubation is complete, the jigs are disassembled and the samples' image interaction and stain detectors are assessed for changes in density and compared to those of the control sample. Pass/Fail certificates are issued for each sample tested. The pass/fail limits have been derived from enclosures that are known to have caused fading or staining in real-life storage situations.

Turnaround time for testing is four to six weeks from the time samples are received. In fairness to all of our clients, rush



# \*\*Photographic Activity Test

Archival Specifications - Mozilla Firefox

File Edit View History Bookmarks Tools Help

Archival Specifications

www.gaylord.com/page\_manager\_st\_leftnav\_no\_ewe.asp?page\_ID=specsandpat&LeftNav\_ID=900

## RESOURCES

### Gaylord Archival Specifications & The P.A.T. Logo



→ Supplies



→ Furniture



→ Archival

#### Understanding Our Archival Specifications

We list the specifications for our archival products right with the product, so you know exactly what you're getting.

**Specifications:**

- Acid-free; lignin-free
- pH 8.0-9.0
- 60 pt. Barrier board
- Blue/grey with white liner
- 3% Calcium carbonate buffer
- Passed P.A.T.

**Acid-Free**—Having a pH of 7.0 or greater at the time of manufacture.

**Lignin-Free**—Must test negative for lignin, a component of plant cells believed to aid chemical degradation.

**pH**—The pH of the paper material at the time of manufacture; 7 is neutral; 0 to 6.9 is acidic, 7.1 to 14 is alkaline. Plastics are not described by pH.

**Construction**—The thickness and type of material; pt. and mil are both terms that indicate 1/1,000 of an inch.

**Color**—Our colors won't bleed.

**Buffer**—This line indicates whether or not an alkaline substance has been added to neutralize acids or counteract acids in the future; some items may be sensitive to alkalinity and require unbuffered materials.

What is the P.A.T.?



The Photographic Activity Test (P.A.T.) is a simulated aging test developed by the Image Permanence Institute to predict which storage materials will cause accelerated deterioration or staining in photos, a very sensitive medium. Most of our storage materials have been submitted and passed the test. Some, like archival polyester, polypropylene and polyethylene enclosures, have not been submitted because they are inherently stable. We don't sell anything which is known to have failed the P.A.T.

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# References: Good Storage

## **Specifications for Preservation Supplies:**

[www.loc.gov/preservation/resources/specifications/index.html](http://www.loc.gov/preservation/resources/specifications/index.html)

## **What are “Good” Papers and Plastics?**

<http://nedcc.org/free-resources/preservation-leaflets/4.-storage-and-handling/4.4-storage-enclosures-for-books-and-artifacts-on-paper>

## **What is the Photographic Activity Test (PAT)?**

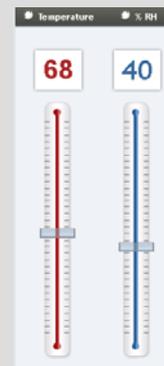
[www.imagepermanenceinstitute.org/testing/pat](http://www.imagepermanenceinstitute.org/testing/pat)

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# What is Good Storage Environment?

- Light: eliminate visible and UV (there's no need to illuminate something in storage)
- Humidity: 35-50%
- Temperature: room temp or below
- Area: low risk of leaks and other house problems like pests or mold
- Clean (not dusty, good quality air)



# What is Good Handling?

- Attention and common sense
- Have clean hands and a clean worktable
- Pick up albums and scrapbooks with both hands fully supporting the weight
- Be aware of weak points
- Fully support the item at all times
- Fully support heavy pages while turning
- Avoid using adhesives (e.g., rubber cement, white glue, glue sticks, etc.) and self-adhesive tapes, metal fasteners (e.g., staples, paper clips, binder clips, etc.) and rubber bands



# Options for Dealing with Damage

## Options:

- Improve storage
- Minor DIY improvements
- Dismantle/reformat
- Consult a conservator

Cost (time and money)  
Low -----> High

(Why an ounce of prevention is worth a pound of cure)



# Improve Storage

## Pros:

- Inexpensive
- Easy DIY with low risk of error
- Good for items handled infrequently

## Cons:

- Condition of item remains As Is
- Difficult to handle
- Unsuitable for certain condition problems (e.g., brittle/fragmented; mold; red rot; etc.)



# Improve Storage

## Improve Storage Environment:

- Aim to achieve recommended parameters

## Improve Storage Container:

- Flat storage in preservation-quality box



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# Resources: Preservation Supplies

## **Some Preservation Suppliers** (some offer made-to-order boxes)

- **Archival Products** [www.archival.com/](http://www.archival.com/)
- **Archivart** [www.archivart.com/](http://www.archivart.com/)
- **Custom Manufacturing Inc** [www.archivalboxes.com/](http://www.archivalboxes.com/)
- **Gaylord** [www.gaylord.com/](http://www.gaylord.com/)
- **Hollinger Metal Edge** [www.hollingermetaledge.com/](http://www.hollingermetaledge.com/)
- **Talas** [www.talasonline.com/](http://www.talasonline.com/)
- **University Products** [www.universityproducts.com/](http://www.universityproducts.com/)

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# Resources: DIY Storage

## Box Making:

- **Cornell University Library Preservation**  
[www.library.cornell.edu/preservation/publications/documents/mg6a.pdf](http://www.library.cornell.edu/preservation/publications/documents/mg6a.pdf)
- **Northeast Document Conservation Center**  
[www.nedcc.org/free-resources/preservation-leaflets/4.-storage-and-handling/4.5-protecting-books-with-custom-fitted-boxes](http://www.nedcc.org/free-resources/preservation-leaflets/4.-storage-and-handling/4.5-protecting-books-with-custom-fitted-boxes)
- **Syracuse University Library Preservation**  
<http://surface.syr.edu/sul/96/>

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# Minor DIY Improvements

## Pros:

- Relatively inexpensive
- Promotes personal connection to item
- Safer to handle afterwards

The Library of Congress will not be responsible for damage to your collection item(s) should damage result from pursuing any one, some, or all of the actions described herein. To address condition issues of collection items of monetary, sentimental, or historic value, it is best to consult a conservator.

## Cons:

- Risk of irreversible, unsightly, damaging errors by DIY
- Requires patience, research, proper materials, time
- Unsuitable for complicated condition problems



# Resources: DIY Improvements

## From the Northeast Document Conservation Center:

- **Surface Cleaning**

<http://nedcc.org/free-resources/preservation-leaflets/7.-conservation-procedures/7.2-surface-cleaning-of-paper>

- **Mending Tears**

<http://nedcc.org/free-resources/preservation-leaflets/7.-conservation-procedures/7.3-repairing-paper-artifacts>

- **Removing Old Metal Fasteners**

<http://nedcc.org/free-resources/preservation-leaflets/7.-conservation-procedures/7.8-removal-of-damaging-fasteners-from-historic-documents>

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# Dismantle/Reformat

## Pros:

- Separates in-compatible materials
- Allows optimal storage for different component materials
- Multiple digital copies to share/give

## Cons:

- Sacrifices original format
- Loss of intended look & feel and contextual information
- Requires extensive patience, research, time and proper materials/equipment



# Resources: Digitization

## Some Digitization Service Providers:

- **Conservation Center for Art and Historic Artifacts**  
[ccaaha.org/services/imaging](https://ccaaha.org/services/imaging)
- **Dodge Chrome**  
[dodgechrome.com/scanning/artscan.html](https://dodgechrome.com/scanning/artscan.html)
- **Etherington Conservation Services**  
[www.etheringtoncs.net/services/digital-conversion/](https://www.etheringtoncs.net/services/digital-conversion/)
- **Northeast Document Conservation Center**  
[www.nedcc.org/services/imaging.digitization.php](https://www.nedcc.org/services/imaging.digitization.php)

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# Resources: DIY Digitization

## Some Scanning Guidelines:

- **Library of Congress Digital Preservation**  
[www.digitalpreservation.gov/personalarchiving/documents/PA\\_scanning.pdf](http://www.digitalpreservation.gov/personalarchiving/documents/PA_scanning.pdf)  
<http://blogs.loc.gov/digitalpreservation/2013/01/scanning-diy-or-outsource/>
- **Federal Agencies Digitization Guidelines Initiative**  
<http://www.digitizationguidelines.gov/guidelines/digitize-technical.html>
- **Northeast Document Conservation Center**  
<http://nedcc.org/free-resources/preservation-leaflets/6.-reformatting/6.7-outsourcing-and-vendor-relations>

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# Consult a Conservator

## Pros:

- Improved functionality, condition, preservation
- Safer to handle
- Holistic solution (remedial and preventive)
- Personalized guidance

## Cons:

- Costly
- Requires research and time to find a conservator



# Consult a Conservator

A DIY  
attempt  
gone  
wrong



<http://jeffpeachey.wordpress.com/treatment-portfolio/vellum-string-mount/>



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# Consult a Conservator

(List is not exhaustive)

- Scotch® or other “pressure sensitive” tape
- Parchment
- Oversized
- Stains
- Discoloration
- Structural book repair
- Deacidification
- Mold
- Complicated condition problems



# Resources: Consult a Conservator

## Some Conservation Service Providers:

- **American Institute for Conservation**  
[www.conservation-us.org](http://www.conservation-us.org)
- **Conservation Center for Art and Historic Artifacts**  
[ccaaha.org/](http://ccaaha.org/)
- **Etherington Conservation Services**  
[www.etheringtoncs.net/](http://www.etheringtoncs.net/)
- **Northeast Document Conservation Center**  
[www.nedcc.org/](http://www.nedcc.org/)
- **Regional Alliance for Preservation**  
[www.rap-arcc.org](http://www.rap-arcc.org)

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# Questions and Inquiries

**Find answers from the Library of Congress  
Preservation homepage:**

[www.loc.gov/preservation](http://www.loc.gov/preservation)





## PRESERVATION

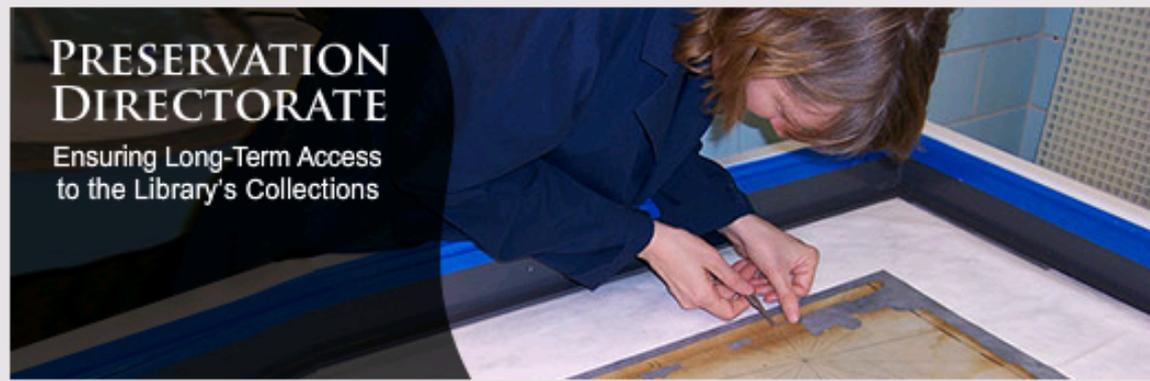


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## PRESERVATION DIRECTORATE

Ensuring Long-Term Access to the Library's Collections

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### || Preservation Highlights ||



Several prints required conservation treatment for the Library's 2012 exhibit, *Sakura: Cherry Blossoms as Living Symbols of Friendship*. One [treatment](#) provided an opportunity to [investigate traditional colorants](#) used in Japanese color woodblock printing.

[More about special collections conservation](#) »

In March 2012, the Library implemented the new enhanced version of the Advanced Bindery Library Exchange (ABLE™ 7.0) web-based software, which replaced the outdated Library Automated Retrieval

### || Get Help ||

- > [Answers to Frequently Asked Preservation Questions](#)
- > [Can't find an answer to your question? Ask a Librarian](#)
- > [Find Funding](#)
- > [Find a Conservator](#)
- > [Find an Appraiser](#)
- > [Get Supply Specifications](#)

### || Events ||

**April 21-27, 2013** - The Library of Congress celebrates [National Preservation Week](#) with various programs and events



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# Contact Us

<http://www.loc.gov/rr/askalib/ask-preserved.html>

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