

PRESERVE YOUR PHOTOGRAPHS



BECAUSE PHOTOGRAPHS ARE MEMORIES

The best preservation measures for photographic prints and negatives are **good storage, good storage environment, and careful handling.**

GOOD STORAGE

- Use only storage materials (sleeves/pockets, albums/leaves, boxes, etc.) – whether made of paper or plastic – that pass the Photographic Activity Test (PAT)
- PAT storage materials are available from preservation suppliers (Internet search: “library preservation suppliers”)
- Store each photograph or negative in its own sleeve or pocket
- Sleeves should be larger than the photograph or negative
- Store the sleeved items neatly in opaque boxes sized to fit the sleeves
- Avoid using adhesives or self-stick tape of any kind on photographs, negatives, and the storage materials in direct contact with them

PRESERVE YOUR DIGITAL FILES



BECAUSE TECHNOLOGY IS CONSTANTLY CHANGING

The best preservation measures for digital files of all kinds (image, audio, video, data) are **good organization, redundancy (backups), and regular migration.**

GOOD ORGANIZATION

- Name files you want to keep and delete unwanted files
- Organize files into a simple folder structure that makes sense to you
- Add basic metadata to enhance your ability to search for wanted files later

REDUNDANCY (MAKE BACKUPS)

- Back up files onto two different storage media (e.g., external hard drive and USB stick)
- Store the backups in two different physical places with good storage conditions...
- ...A clean, cool, climate-controlled area (avoid attics, basements, garages), off the floor and away from heaters, vents, and sources of water and intense, direct light

PRESERVE YOUR PAPERS



BECAUSE THEY CARRY OUR INTERESTS AND DREAMS

The best preservation measures for all paper items (prints, drawings, letters, maps, posters, newspapers, etc.) are **good storage, good storage environment, and careful handling.**

GOOD STORAGE

- Use storage materials (folders, sleeves, albums/leaves, boxes, etc.) that meet preservation specifications (see Supply Specifications at www.loc.gov/preservation)
- Appropriate storage materials are available from preservation suppliers (Internet search: “library preservation suppliers”)
- Except for blueprints, use buffered paper storage materials
- Store poor quality or poor condition paper items in its own folder/sleeve
- Store the foldered items neatly in opaque boxes sized to fit the folders
- Do not use adhesives or self-stick tape of any kind on paper items and the storage materials in direct contact with them

PRESERVE YOUR BOOKS



BECAUSE BOOKS ARE MORE THAN A GREAT STORY

The best preservation measures for books are **good storage, good storage environment, and careful handling.**

GOOD STORAGE

- Use protective materials (jackets, boxes, etc.) that meet preservation specifications (see Supply Specifications at www.loc.gov/preservation)
- Appropriate protective materials are available from preservation suppliers (Internet search: “library preservation suppliers”)
- Shelf books of similar size next to each other
- Ensure books stand upright on the shelf and oversized books lie flat
- Avoid using adhesives or self-stick tape of any kind on books and book jackets and boxes
- For how to pack books into moving boxes, see the Preservation FAQ (Books) at www.loc.gov/preservation
- Protect each rare book and any parchment book in its own custom-fitted box

GOOD STORAGE ENVIRONMENT

- Temperature: Keep temperatures below 70 degrees F
- Relative Humidity: Keep RH between 30-50%
- Location: Store in a clean, climate-controlled area (avoid attics, basements, garages), off the floor and away from heaters, vents, and sources of water and intense, direct light
- Air Quality: Minimize exposure to dust, smoke, air pollution, fumes
- Free of pests: Keep storage areas clean and check regularly for pests

CAREFUL HANDLING

- Handle books with clean, dry hands
- Pull the middle of the book spine – not the top of the spine – to remove a book from the shelf
- Don't force a book to lie open flat or break the spine
- Don't lick your fingers to turn the page
- Do not dog-ear, mark pages, use self-stick notes, etc.
- Do not use oils, waxes, etc. on leather bindings

SPECIAL TIPS FOR SCRAPBOOKS

- Store flat in an appropriately-sized box

For more information, see
<http://www.loc.gov/preservation/care>



The original version of this bookmark was made possible in part by funding from the Institute of Museum and Library Services

Photo: "Pilot from the 332nd Fighter Group signing Form One Book" by Toni Frissell, March 1945. Library of Congress, Prints & Photographs Division, LC-DIG-ppmsca-13247.

GOOD STORAGE ENVIRONMENT

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- Relative Humidity: Keep RH between 30-50%
- Location: Store in a clean, climate-controlled area (avoid attics, basements, garages), off the floor and away from heaters, vents, and sources of water and intense, direct light
- Air Quality: Minimize exposure to dust, smoke, air pollution, fumes
- Free of pests: Keep storage areas clean and check regularly for pests

CAREFUL HANDLING

- Handle paper with clean, dry hands
- Avoid touching the image/print area
- Do not use paper clips, staples, rubber bands, other fasteners, self-stick notes, etc.

TIPS FOR FRAMING/DISPLAYING

- Avoid permanent display or display a reproduction
- Avoid exposure to direct light and bright ambient light
- Use only 100% rag matboard
- Ask the framer to use non-adhesive hinges or Japanese tissue hinges secured with purified wheat starch paste
- Frame behind UV-filtering acrylic

For more information, see
<http://www.loc.gov/preservation/care>



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Photo: "Dressmaking class, Manzanar Relocation Center, California, 1943." Library of Congress, Prints & Photographs Division, Ansel Adams, photographer, LC-DIG-ppprs-00126.

REGULAR MIGRATION

- Migrate files onto new and current storage media every 3-5 years
- Convert old file formats to new, current file formats before they or the reading software or hardware becomes obsolete
- How to convert old formats? See the Preservation FAQ (Reformatting) at www.loc.gov/preservation

ADDITIONAL TIPS FOR DIGITAL PICTURES

- Don't rely on sharing or printing websites for storage
- To make a long-lasting print, use pigment-based ink on paper optimized for the ink and for the printer

For more information, see
<http://www.loc.gov/preservation>



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Photo: "Bonus Bureau, Computing Division, Nov. 1924." National Photo Company Collection. Library of Congress, Prints & Photographs Division, LC-DIG-npcw-12637.

GOOD STORAGE ENVIRONMENT

- Temperature: Keep temperatures below 70 degrees F
- Relative Humidity: Keep RH between 30-50%
- Location: Store in a clean, climate-controlled area (avoid attics, basements, garages), off the floor and away from heaters, vents, and sources of water and intense, direct light
- Air Quality: Minimize exposure to dust, smoke, air pollution, fumes
- Free of pests: Keep storage areas clean and check regularly for pests

CAREFUL HANDLING

- Have clean hands or wear gloves
- Avoid touching the emulsion side
- Label the sleeve instead of the photograph

TIPS FOR FRAMING/DISPLAYING

- Avoid permanent display or display a copy
- Avoid exposure to direct light and bright ambient light
- Use only matting materials that pass the PAT
- Frame behind UV-filtering acrylic

For more information, see
<http://www.loc.gov/preservation/care>



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Photo: "Spanish-American boy with lamb, Amalia, New Mexico" by Russell Lee, July 1940. Library of Congress, Prints & Photographs Division, FSA/OWI Collection, LC-USZ62-126048.