

PRESERVE YOUR WORKS OF ART



The best preservation measure for art is **good storage (cool, low to moderate relative humidity, dark, clean, secure, minimal exposure to pollutants and to vibration, appropriately crated/boxed/physically protected)**; avoid storage in attics, basements, garages) or **controlled display**.

Appraise and insure all objects of significant monetary value, whether on display or in storage.

Controlled Display includes:

- Temperature: Keep ambient temperatures stable and as cool as comfortable
- Relative Humidity: Keep RH between 30-50%
- Location: Keep art off the floor, out of high traffic or leak-prone areas, away from heaters, vents, direct light; Avoid hanging art on poorly-insulated external walls or use minimum 3/4" bumpers to keep the frame from touching the wall

PRESERVE YOUR FAMILY HEIRLOOMS



The best preservation measures for family heirlooms are **good environment, good storage, and careful handling**. Appraise and insure all objects of significant monetary value.

Good Environment

- Temperature: Keep ambient temperatures stable and as cool as comfortable
- Relative Humidity: Keep RH between 30-50%
- Light: Keep lighting indirect, low in intensity, UV filtered out; Block light exposure of light-sensitive objects; Keep shades/curtains down when you're not home
- Location: Keep objects off the floor if possible, away from leak-prone areas, heaters, vents, direct light
- Air Quality: Minimize exposure to dust, smoke, air pollution, fumes
- Pest-Free: Good housekeeping goes a long way

PRESERVE YOUR STUFF AFTER WATER DAMAGE



The best preservation measure for water-damaged objects is **preparation**. This will enable you to proceed **calmly, carefully, and quickly to retrieve wet objects** and to decide whether to **immediately dry or freeze them**.

Prepare and Educate Yourself Before Damage Occurs

- Familiarize yourself with general disaster preparedness information (Internet search: "disaster emergency planning")
- Always put human safety first
- Appraise and insure all objects of significant monetary value
- Have flood insurance coverage
- Save the contact info for local disaster service providers (Internet search: "salvage company business freeze wet books")

PRESERVE YOUR A/V RECORDINGS



The best preservation measures for audio-visual materials are **good storage and storage environment, careful handling, and digital conversion/transfer**.

Good Storage Environment

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

Good Storage

- Find preservation suppliers with Internet search: "preservation products suppliers"

Good Storage continued:

- Discs: Use high density polyethylene sleeves (fit inside original sleeve or store original sleeve next to the poly-sleeved disc); Store discs upright, on edge
- Cylinders: Store on end in preservation quality cylinder boxes
- Magnetic tape: Store away from sources of magnetic fields (e.g., loudspeakers, electric motors)
- Films: Store in polypropylene, polyethylene, or cardstock containers that pass the Photographic Activity Test [ISO 18916]; Use vented containers if film is not in cold storage
- Do not store related acidic papers in the enclosure with AV material

Careful Handling

- Handle with clean, dry hands
- Handle the reel, cartridge, or edge; Avoid touching the playing surface
- Avoid playback of analog media that cannot be replaced; Instead, create the best possible digital transfer and use the digital copy
- If media is playable, regularly assess for physical damage and maintain playback equipment
- Allow items to adjust to/from cold storage for 24 hours before using

Digital Conversion/Transfer

- Use a conversion/transfer services provider located in the U.S. (Internet search: "[media type] conversion transfer archival preservation")
- Choose providers with respected institutional clients
- Require the provider to return the originals; Never allow the provider to retain or destroy the originals

For more information, see

www.loc.gov/preservation/care
and
www.loc.gov/avconservation/



Photo: Photograph of the painting "Dog looking at and listening to a phonograph," by Francis Beraud in 1898, [between 1930-1959]. Library of Congress, Prints & Photographs Division, LC-USZ62-117301.

Calm, Careful, Quick Retrieval

- The objective of a quick response (ideally within 24 hours of exposure to water) is to minimize the risk of mold growth
- If many objects are affected, first focus on removing standing water and reducing humidity
- Many materials are weaker when wet, so handle minimally and carefully

Dry or Freeze?

- If the number of affected objects is manageable and you have the space, set out objects on a clean surface to air dry; Note that air dried objects often come out significantly distorted, even if safely restrained during drying (this can be treated at a later time)
- If there are too many objects to air dry, prioritize for freezing: Saturated books and papers; coated or glossy papers; photographs; textiles
- Less/not suitable for freezing (prioritize for air drying): Furniture; A/V materials; paintings; plastics; ivory; bone; wood; musical instruments; other composite objects

For more information, see
www.loc.gov/preservation/emergprep



Photo: "Flood-war damage," [approximately 1924-1946]. Library of Congress, Prints & Photographs Division, LC-M33- 80578-x

Good Storage

- Store objects in preservation-quality packing and boxes located in a good environment; Avoid attics, basements, garages
- Find preservation suppliers with Internet search: "preservation products suppliers"
- Use neutral-pH (not buffered) preservation packing for silk and wool textiles and blueprints
- Store textiles (e.g., wedding dresses) flat in boxes when possible

Careful Handling

- Handle objects infrequently
- Handle objects with clean hands
- Keep objects on display clean by dusting with a clean, soft bristled, flat artist's brush about 1-1.5" wide; Do not clean with water, solvents, or other cleaning agents

Tips for Framing/Displaying

- Use matting materials that pass the Photographic Activity Test [ISO 18916]
- Frame with UV-filtering acrylic sheet
- Avoid permanent display of light-sensitive objects or display copies

Light-Sensitive Objects

- Light damage is cumulative, irreversible, and can drastically change an object's appearance
- Most light sensitive: Paper, photographs, textiles, dye-based colors/inks, leather, wood

For more information, see
www.loc.gov/preservation/care



Photo: "Congestion of colonists' luggage," Los Angeles, ca. 1910." Library of Congress, Prints & Photographs Division, LC-USZ62-15536.

Controlled Display continued:

- Air Quality: Minimize exposure to dust, smoke, air pollution, fumes
- Light: Keep lighting indirect, low in intensity, UV filtered out; Block light exposure (e.g., dark curtain over a frame) of light-sensitive objects when not being viewed; Keep shades/curtains down when you're not home

Light-Sensitive Art

- Light damage is cumulative, irreversible, and can drastically change an object's appearance
- Most light sensitive: Paper, photographs, textiles, dye-based colors/inks, leather, wood

Tips for Framing

- Avoid permanent display of light-sensitive art or display copies
- Use only matting materials that pass the Photographic Activity Test [ISO 18916]
- Frame with UV-filtering acrylic sheet

Careful Handling

- Handle or move objects as infrequently as possible
- Keep art clean by dusting with a clean, soft bristled, flat artist's brush about 1-1.5" wide; Do not clean with water, solvents, or other cleaning agents

For more information, see
www.loc.gov/preservation/care



Watercolor painting: "Look pleasant, please," by Charles Dana Gibson, [1922]. Library of Congress, Prints & Photographs Division, LC-USZ62-99831.