

## PRESERVE YOUR PHOTOGRAPHS



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

### GOOD STORAGE

- Use storage materials (paper or plastic sleeves and folders, albums, boxes, etc.) – from preservation suppliers (Internet search: "preservation products suppliers") that pass the Photographic Activity Test (PAT) [ISO 18916]
- Store each print or negative in its own sleeve if possible
- Store sleeves in buffered cardstock boxes; Ensure vertically-stored sleeves do not slump, but remain upright and planar

## PRESERVE YOUR DIGITAL FILES



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

### GOOD ORGANIZATION

- Give meaningful names to files you want to keep; Regularly 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 leak-prone areas, heaters, vents

## PRESERVE YOUR PAPERS

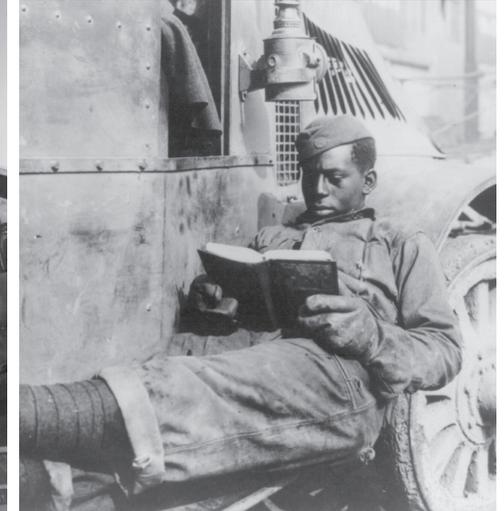


The best preservation measures for paper (prints, drawings, letters, maps, posters, newspapers, etc.) are **good storage, good storage environment, and careful handling.**

### GOOD STORAGE

- Use storage materials (folders, sleeves, albums, boxes, etc.) from preservation suppliers (Internet search: "preservation products suppliers") that meet preservation specifications (see Supply Specifications at [www.loc.gov/preservation](http://www.loc.gov/preservation))
- Except for blueprints, use buffered paper storage materials
- Put torn or brittle items in its own folder/sleeve
- Store folders in buffered cardstock boxes sized to fit the folders
- Make copies (e.g., photocopy, scan, photograph) of brittle or otherwise short-lived items (e.g., with faded or easily faded marks)

## PRESERVE YOUR BOOKS



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

### GOOD STORAGE

- Ensure books stand upright (and are not leaning) on the shelf
- Shelf oversized books flat
- Shelf books of similar size next to each other
- Use book-sized bookends or put a hard-cover book next to the bookend
- Use storage materials (jackets, boxes) from preservation suppliers (Internet search: "preservation products suppliers") that meet preservation specifications (see Supply Specifications at [www.loc.gov/preservation](http://www.loc.gov/preservation))
- For how to pack books into moving boxes, see the Preservation FAQ (Books) at [www.loc.gov/preservation](http://www.loc.gov/preservation)
- Protect each rare book in its own custom-fitted buffered cardstock box

### GOOD STORAGE ENVIRONMENT

- Temperature: Keep ambient 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, away from heaters, vents, direct light, sources of water
- 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
- Do not force a book to lie open flat or break the spine
- Do not lick your fingers to turn pages
- Do not use oils, waxes, or "dressings" on leather bindings
- Do not use adhesives or self-stick tape of any kind

### SPECIAL TIPS FOR SCRAPBOOKS

- Store flat in an appropriately-sized buffered cardstock 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: "Reading a...book...on the salvage truck of the A[rmy] T[ransport] S[ervice]..." by American Library Association, c. 1919. Library of Congress, Prints & Photographs Division, LC-USZ62-26640.

### GOOD STORAGE ENVIRONMENT

- Temperature: Keep ambient 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, away from heaters, vents, direct light, sources of water
- 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 image/print areas
- Do not use paper clips, staples, rubber bands, etc.
- Do not use adhesives or self-stick tape of any kind

### TIPS FOR FRAMING/DISPLAYING

- Avoid permanent display or display a copy
- Limit light exposure; Light damage is cumulative and irreversible
- Use only 100% rag matboard
- Use non-adhesive hinges or hinges secured with purified starch paste
- Frame behind UV-filtering acrylic sheet

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



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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.

### REGULAR MIGRATION

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

### ADDITIONAL TIPS FOR DIGITAL PICTURES

- Do not rely on sharing, cloud, 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>  
and  
<http://www.digitalpreservation.gov/personalarchiving/>



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

### GOOD STORAGE ENVIRONMENT

- Temperature: Keep ambient temperatures below 70 degrees F
- Relative Humidity: Between 30-50%
- 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
- Free of pests: Keep storage areas clean and check regularly for pests

### CAREFUL HANDLING

- Handle photographs with clean, dry hands or wear gloves
- Avoid touching the emulsion side
- Beware of creating dents/creases when handling
- Label the sleeve instead of the photograph
- Do not use adhesives or self-stick tape of any kind
- Do not use paper clips, staples, rubber bands, etc.

### TIPS FOR FRAMING/DISPLAYING

- Avoid permanent display or display a copy
- Limit light exposure; Light damage is cumulative and irreversible
- Use matting materials that pass the PAT [ISO 18916]
- Frame behind UV-filtering acrylic sheet

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



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Photo: "Oliver Coleman...with his...son, looking at... photographs of bands with which he has played," by Jack Delano, April 1942. Library of Congress, Prints & Photographs Division, LC-USW3-001500-D.