

Caring for Your Antiques



Five Simple Tips to Preserve Your Treasures:

1. Keep items out of bright or direct light.
2. Store them at a stable, consistent temperature.
3. Handle objects rarely, gently, and keep them clean.
4. Protect against insects and other pests.
5. Prevent exposure to excess moisture or humidity.

Silver

Keep your silver in good shape by preventing it from tarnishing and polishing only when necessary. Every time silver is polished or treated with a chemical tarnish remover, a small amount of the underlying silver is lost along with the tarnish layer.

To prevent tarnishing, store your pieces in an airtight container where possible, and place an anti-tarnishing strip, like the 3-M anti-tarnish strips, with your silver pieces. Polishing your silver can be done with a cloth and a polishing powder, or you can make your own by mixing a small amount of precipitated calcium carbonate (precipitated chalk) with water to form a thick paste. We also recommend Duraglit wadding polish for silver.



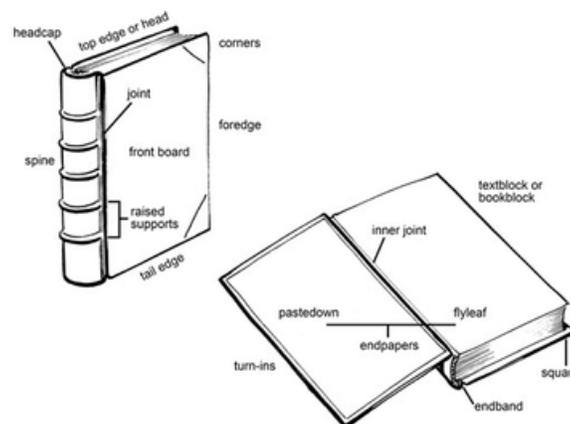
Photographs & Documents

Paper documents and photographs are most easily damaged by rips and water. When handling paper, use clean, dry hands and be careful with any jewelry or watches. Keep all paper objects stored away from light to prevent fading. Do not fold or roll any important documents.--store them flat in boxes, folders, or drawers. Do not use staples, paperclips, tape, or glue. If you can, make a copy to use for research or display, and keep the original in storage. On the copy, using a pencil, identify any people, places, or details you know for the people who will be looking at them in the future.

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Books

Old books face many of the same issues as paper. They also face the risk of damage to the binding that holds the paper within the book together. Handle the spine of the book with care, not opening it too widely or too quickly. Avoid storing books with anything bulky in between the pages. When flipping pages, always do so slowly and from the center of the page to avoid ripping. Try to dust books once a year, and deal with any mold or pest problems you discover.



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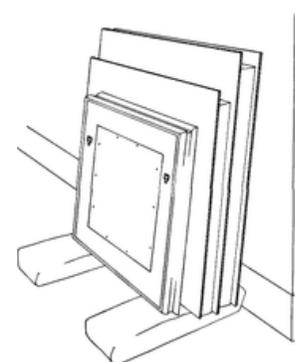
Figure 1. A diagram showing the parts of a book.

Clothing

Textiles are among the most sensitive objects you may save due to their organic nature. No matter what fabric your old clothing is made from, storing textiles flat is ideal because it distributes support evenly, reducing strain on the fibers. If enclosed, this method also offers protection from water, dust, and light. If that is not an option, your next best bet is on a padded hanger in a dark closet. Textiles should be clean when stored. As long as textiles are not in a very delicate condition, they can be surface-cleaned by lightly brushing or vacuuming through a screen. When appropriate, stable white cotton or linen textiles may also be washed.

Paintings

All types of paintings are sensitive to light and moisture. When hanging, do your best to limit its exposure to bright, direct light, and avoid areas near open windows, fireplaces, or an area where you occasionally use a humidifier or dehumidifier. Any changes, especially sudden changes, to an environment's humidity may cause damage to a painting's surface. Paintings and frames are best stored in such a way as to protect them from damage caused by physical force, dust, dirt and water. Paintings or frames of similar size can be stacked together, ideally with cardboard, or other rigid board material, placed, as separators, between each artwork



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Figure 1. Temporary storage against a wall.