

Caring for Your Family Collections:

Documents, Scrapbooks, and Books

Hidden Collections Initiative for Pennsylvania Small Archival Repositories
Historical Society of Pennsylvania

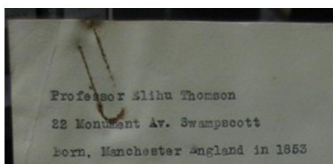
<http://hsp.org/hcipsar>

Documents

Includes, but not limited to:

- Correspondence: letters, postcards
- Official documents: birth, marriage, and death certificates
- Financial records
- Legal documents: deeds, wills, estates
- Original Artwork
- Newspaper

Documents



- Remove harmful fasteners:
 - Metal fasteners
 - Paperclips
 - Pins
 - Staples
 - Brads
 - Binder clips
 - Rubber bands
 - Strings, ribbon



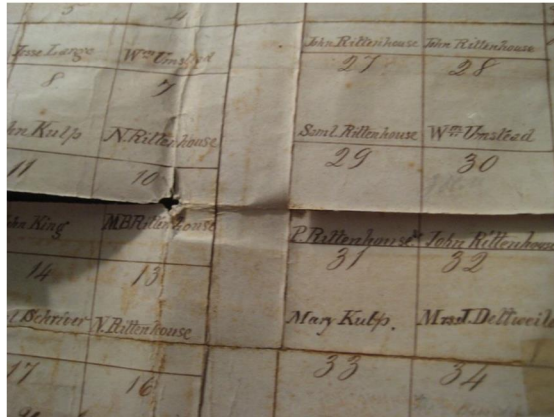
Metal fasteners can rust and damage paper, as illustrated by the rust marks on the photo in the upper left-hand corner. Similarly, staples, pins, and brads can cause similar issues over time. If you need to use staples and/or paper clips, consider using stainless steel versions.

Rubber bands can become soft and tacky, adhering to the paper it is holding together and surrounding papers.

String and ribbon, like other fasteners, can cut into the edges of materials, causing tears and/or breaks in the paper. In some cases, dyes from ribbon can transfer to paper materials.

Documents

- Flatten, if possible
 - Repeated folding can cause breaks in the paper along fold lines
 - If possible, folded items should be flattened



If possible, folded materials should be flattened. Continual folding and unfolding can weaken paper and cause damage such as rips and tears.

Oversized Documents

- Avoid folding and rolling, if possible
- If you do need store rolled, the materials should be rolled around tube, rather than inside.



Images from The National Archives (UK), "Preparation of records: Maps and plans,"
<http://www.nationalarchives.gov.uk/documents/maps-and-plans.pdf>

Oversized materials are slightly more difficult to store. Although flat files are ideal, not everyone has that option for their family papers.

You should avoid folding materials, especially if they are photographs, artwork, or heavy-weight paper that is more likely to break when folded. Consider rolling materials around acid free tubes. Stored rolled materials within the tube can cause damage when retrieving the item. Information can be found online on how to best roll oversized materials for storage.

Newspaper

- Newspaper can be highly acidic and should be separated from other items.
- Brittle or damaged newspapers and clippings can be photocopied onto good quality, acid-free paper.
- Copies should be stored separately from originals.



Newspaper is acidic and acid migration is possible between newspaper and surrounding materials, so it is ideal that they are stored separately

Photocopying newspapers and newspaper clippings is a good option to preserve the information. Photocopies should be made on good quality, acid free paper, available at office supply stores and photocopying businesses.

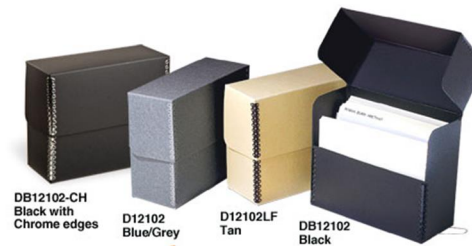
Make sure you store the original and the photocopy separate to avoid acid migration. If you prefer to keep them together in the same folder, make sure there is a piece of paper interleaving between the two.

Storing Your Documents



Archival (acid-free) folders

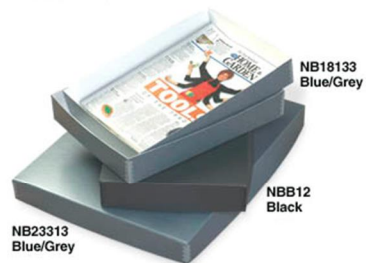
Document Boxes



Ideally, you would store items in acid-free folders within acid-free boxes. However, this isn't always feasible when it comes to your personal collections.

Be sure to use folders and avoid using envelopes – removing items from envelopes can cause damage

Storing Your Documents



Flat Boxes for oversized materials

Record Carton (Paige Box)



Displaying Your Documents

Avoid:

- Tape
- Acidic mats
- Direct sunlight



Ideal:

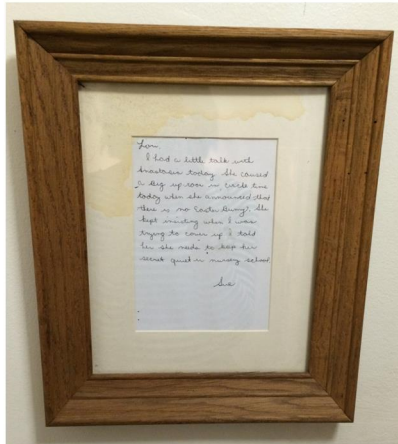
- Mounting Corners
- Acid-free mats
- UV Filtering glass



Archival Quality framing is available at art supply stores such as Blick Art Supply, located at Broad and Chestnut Streets in Philadelphia.

Displaying Your Documents

Or make a copy!



Scrapbooks

Scrapbooks

- Scrapbooks tend to consist of a variety of materials, including newspaper clippings, photographs, printed matter, ephemera
- These elements can easily shift, resulting in their loss or damage



Scrapbooks consist of a variety of materials, such as newspaper clippings, photographs, printed matter, ephemera – things like hair, textiles, buttons.

Adhesives can break down, and these numerous elements can shift as the scrapbook is handled. Items can fall out and be lost, or become bent and damaged. Loose items could also cause harm to other materials.

Storing Your Scrapbooks

- When possible, scrapbooks should be stored flat on shelves or within appropriately sized boxes.



When possible scrapbooks should be stored flat on a shelf. Storing them upright on the shelf could result in the shifting of the contents, causing damage and possibly loss.

For more fragile scrapbooks, consider storing them in an acid-free box. This will ensure that anything that falls out of the book or breaks off will be contained. In addition, it provides a extra layer of protection against light, dust.

Storing Your Scrapbooks

- Consider dismantling scrapbooks
 - Allows for separate storage for incompatible items (newspaper, photographs, etc.)
 - Consider taking photographs or creating photocopies of the pages prior to dismantling to preserve the original order
 - Identify materials removed using pencil
 - Store pages in folders and boxes



Clockwise from upper right: <https://www.flickr.com/photos/rich701/8487456856/>; <https://www.flickr.com/photos/kellywatson/5950471419/in/album-72157629361471099/>; <http://www.gaylord.com/c/Document>; <https://www.flickr.com/photos/wallyg/733686577/>

Taking scrapbooks apart, removing them from their binding, does have benefits. Allows for separate storage if items are incompatible. Because you shouldn't interleave paper in bound books, this is ideal if you want to create an extra layer of protection between pages

In addition, if you are a current scrapbooker, consider your materials now rather than later down the line.

Avoid using tape, rubber cement, white glue, metal fasteners, and so on.

Try using wheat-starch paste or photo corners

Don't use "magnetic" albums

Archival suppliers offer scrapbook kits with "archival-quality" accessories

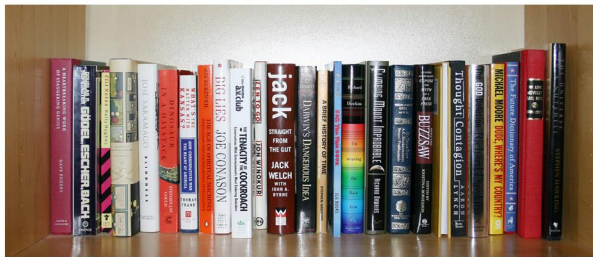
Books

Includes, but not limited to:

- Family Bibles
- Cookbooks
- Published books
- Diaries

Storing Your Books

- Should be stored upright
- Avoid storing on fore edge of the book
- Oversized books should be stored flat
- Should be properly supported by shelves
- Loose boards can be secured with cotton tying tape



<http://www.flickr.com/photos/dimond/1468712130/in/photostream-4642148P2q/347Y1a2Zwq/172aac4b47244dQ8P4PwQw+8R3U5Y5d8aF5w3Lk+4C7T14u2+4d0B3h3aY+cdm/1537573+G238L63414wQm3B3y+e230+ew12148+de+PQ2C-d8a7Y+ab3aY+4AaY/9a1Q2448R1p344a4w381a+V14p32q3a38paw+Q/P8B-3olaLc344R-9a3Y+9a3Q8-3P1a43aaw373p+P3d4e-7LCC4H-dEX3H-3446L4FCV1L3a27Y+344a4d>



<http://www.hollingsheadedge.com/modules/stores/index.html?depg=29&cat=193&searchname=book%20apad&search=8&searchtype=&Char=14433036766314>

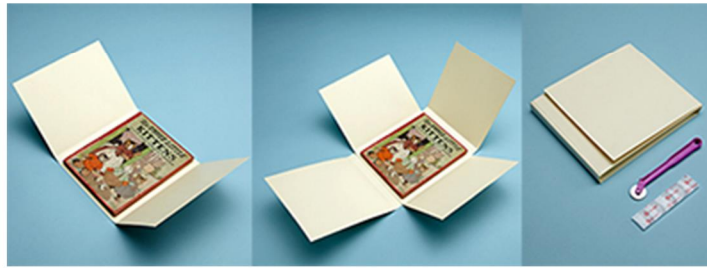
Store upright if possible. Do not store on fore edge, as it can cause damage to the spine and potentially detaching the text block, leaving you with a book in multiple pieces.

If storing in boxes, consider orienting with spine facing down to avoid pressure.

If a book has loose boards, can also use book tape (cotton string) to secure the boards to prevent further damage.

Storing Your Books

- If a book is particularly fragile, consider housing in acid-free boxes or basic book enclosures made of acid-free materials.



<http://www.hollingerstudios.com/modules/stores/index.html?dgt=1&cat=191&care=14430166766314>

Adjustable book storage boxes are available from archival suppliers, such as these from Hollinger- can make exact size boxes to store books. The materials come pre-scored and do require a level of craftiness.

Also, you can purchase pre-made clamshell boxes and phase boxes for books from suppliers.