

PRESERVATION WEEK @ Dowdell Library

**Every family has a treasure trove of cherished mementos...
Whether they are pictures, photographs, slides, letters, documents,
or forgotten memorabilia, sifting through years of accumulated "stuff"
might be daunting, so you might ask: How can I preserve my
family treasures? Where should I start?**

When planning a preservation project ...

First and foremost, make sure your hands are clean and dry.

Use materials that are permanent and durable. When using paper products such as scrapbook materials, cardstock, or storage boxes, make sure they are acid free. Glue or glue sticks should also be acid free. Avery Permanent Glue Stic Acid-free and Photo Safe is a good product.

Archival supplies can be found at Hollinger Metal Edge, University Products, Light Impressions, Talas, B&H Photo, Staples, Office Depot, or Walmart.

Store your items in an area with low heat (stable temperatures from 68-72 degrees F), low humidity (optimum is between 30-40%; no higher than 55% because mold can set in), low light, and in a safe location. Regular air circulation keeps dust, dirt, and mold spores from settling.

Do not store art near windows, doors, vents, or ceiling fans. Protect them by storing them above floor level and totally covered with heavy plastic. If framed works are stacked, place corrugated cardboard between each layer and stack them front-to-front and back-to-back.

DOCUMENTS AND PAPERS

1. Store papers in an environment that is comfortable for you. Basements may be damp and cultivate mold.
2. Sort paper into acid-free folders and boxes to protect from light and damage.
3. When displaying artwork or documents, protect them from direct sunlight.

PHOTOS

1. Handle photographs at the edges.
2. Store in albums with acid-free pages or polyester sleeves.
3. Mount photographs with photo corners, not glue or tape.
4. Store in an environment that's comfortable for you. Damp basement locations can lead to mold. Excessive fluctuations in temperatures and humidity are also damaging.

SCRAPBOOKS

1. New scrapbooks and other paper products should be acid-free.
2. Use photo mounts to mount items in a scrapbook, not tape or rubber cement. Use acid-free glue. Acid-free glue sticks make the job easier.

3. Handle the pages of older scrapbooks with clean, dry hands and turn pages with one hand underneath.
4. Again, store scrapbooks in an environment that is comfortable for you and away from direct sunlight. Older scrapbooks should be stored flat, not upright, in protective boxes.

BOOKS

1. Store books in an environment away from direct sunlight and kept at a comfortable temperature.
2. Dust the tops of the books regularly with a microfiber cloth to discourage pests and mold.
3. Cover with polyester covers when possible.
4. Fragile, damaged books should be stored in acid-free boxes.
5. Use acid-free tape to repair pages.

SLIDES

1. Store slides in a cool dry place. Keep them in their carousels or boxes.
2. Label the containers.
3. Use polyester, polyethylene, or polypropylene sleeves to store loose slides, not PVC.
4. Clean the film side with a cotton swab dipped in a water/ethanol mixture if they are dirty. Clean the emulsion side with a gentle puff of air or lightly dust with a very soft brush.

FILMS AND HOME MOVIES

1. Keep films in their canisters or boxes to keep out dust and light.
2. Label boxes and films.
3. Store home movies in a cool dry place with sound tails out (wound backwards on the reel) to minimize the effect of sound bleed-through.

AUDIO

1. Store cassettes, reel-to-reel tapes, CD's or LP's vertically in a cool dry place.
2. Each LP should be encased in a high density polyethylene (HDPE) sleeve.
3. Reel-to-reel tapes should be stored tails out (wound backwards on the reel) to minimize sound bleed-through.
4. If there are copy protection tabs, remove them to avoid accidentally overwriting.

TEXTILES

1. Box or roll textiles, then cover them to prevent damage from dust and light; inspect frequently for insects.
2. Try not to fold textiles. If you do, pad the folds with acid-free tissue.
3. Store textiles in an environment that isn't damp.
4. Hang historic clothing on well-padded hangers and cover with plain cotton.

DATA

1. Back up *multiple* copies of your data on *multiple* types of media and store in *multiple* locations.
2. Save files in stable, non-propriety formats such as .pdf - .jpg - .tiff.

Save your family treasures for future generations!

