

Preserving PAPER



Because documents record our history

Find a stable storage space.

Store paper items like letters, prints, drawings, newspapers, maps and posters in a clean storage area where you can keep temperature moderate (72°F or less) and relative humidity stable (50% or less). High temps and humidity (or rapid changes in either) speed decay. Provide good air circulation. Don't expose paper to chemical fumes, cleaning supplies, kitchen exhaust, plywood or cardboard. Check regularly for signs of pests. Avoid attics and basements lacking climate control; an air-conditioned room or closet is best.

Protect from light.

Light, especially the UV part of the spectrum, causes fading and other damage. Display framed items on interior walls away from sunlight, and store other items away from natural and artificial light. Inks, watercolors and newsprint are particularly vulnerable to light damage. UV-filtered glazing on frames, windows or light fixtures may slow, but not prevent, fading and other damage.

Use preservation storage enclosures.

Enclosures prevent edge damage, creases and tears.

Use boxes, folders, envelopes, sleeves, backings and mats free of sulfur, acids and peroxides. Don't use buffered storage materials for blueprints—blue pigments in watercolors may also react.

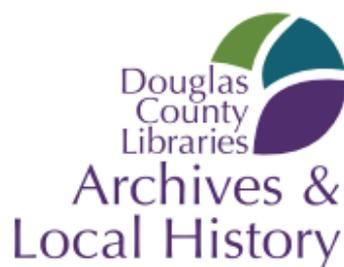
If you use plastic, it must be uncoated polyester, cellulose triacetate, polyethylene or polypropylene—never PVC. Don't use polyester to store items with unfixed pastels, charcoal, soft pencil, other loosely attached media or loose pieces. Look for storage materials marked "PAT" (passed a photographic activity test).

Handle with care.

Wash and dry hands before touching any material, and use two hands or other support under large or flimsy items to prevent bending. Store paper items by size, flat in boxes (largest on bottom to smallest on top) or standing in folders. For added protection, insert sheets of neutral tissue between items. Never use rubber bands, paper clips, glues or adhesives (e.g., pressure-sensitive tape or rubber cement) on valued items.

Donate

Remember, you can always donate your materials to Archives & Local History! For more information, speak with an archivist.



303-688-7730

DCL.org/history

Monday-Friday, 9am-5pm
or by appointment

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