

Preservation of Historical Records Workbook

**New York State
Archives**

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Agenda

Difference between preservation and conservation

Causes of deterioration in records

Assessing preservation needs

Preservation strategies

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The New York State Archives is part of the Office of Cultural Education within the New York State Education Department.

Preservation of Historical Records

New York State Archives
<http://www.archives.nysed.gov>

Workshop Topics

- Causes of deterioration in records
- Preservation strategies
- Assessing preservation needs
- Difference between preservation and conservation
- Where to find help

Preservation Goals

- Ensure availability of information
- Provide benefit for all your records
- Preserve using most cost-effective means
- Generally adopt non-intrusive strategies

Preservation

- Prevents deterioration
- Halts deterioration where it already exists
- Focuses on information in records

Conservation

- Addresses existing damage
- Usually involves hands-on intervention
- Focuses on maintaining the original record

Preservation Factors

- Physical qualities of records
- Storage environment
- Handling and use

Physical Qualities of Records

- Records consist of
 - Physical form
 - Base medium
 - Recording material
- Variety of each may exist within a single document or series
- Vary in their internal stability
- Solutions vary for stabilizing each

Causes of Deterioration

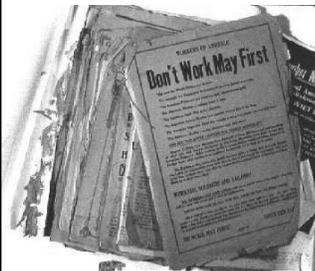
- Temperature and humidity
- Light
- Basic cleanliness
- Container storage
- Handling and Use

Temperature and Humidity

- Non-fluctuating cool and dry conditions are the best for records storage
- Records react adversely to
 - Hot and dry
 - Hot and humid
 - Fluctuations
 - Water

Hot and Dry

Brittle paper

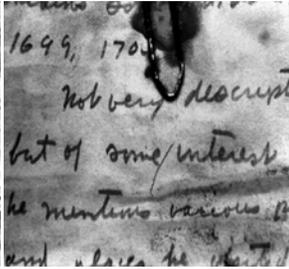


Stiffened leather

Hot and Humid

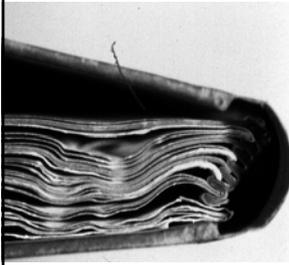


Mold



Rust

Fluctuations

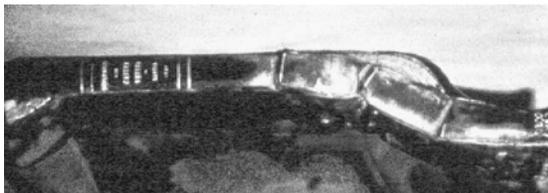


Buckling



Flaking emulsion

Water



Warped books

Ultraviolet Light

- Daylight and fluorescent light
- Weakens paper fibers
- Damage is cumulative



Cleanliness

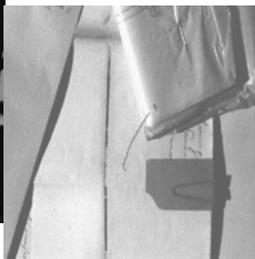
- Air pollution
 - Produces acids
 - Initiates oxidation
 - Contains particulate matter
- Vermin
 - Harm records
 - Toxic to humans



Container Storage



Crowded storage



Rubber bands

Unprotected storage



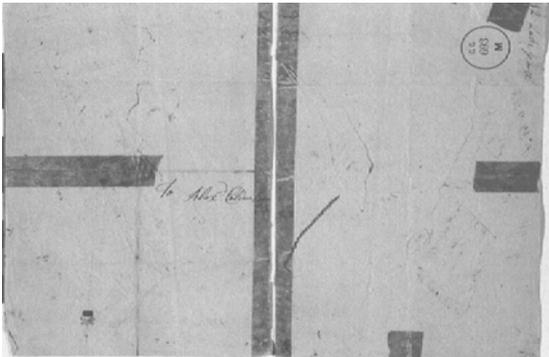
Inadequate support

Handling and Use Issues

- Humans endanger records most through
 - Careless Handling
 - Abusing Records
 - Misguided Repairs
 - Poor Exhibition Practices



Misguided Repairs



Poor Exhibition Practices

- Attaching labels directly to records
- Staples and tacks through documents
- Unsupported records
- Overexposure (more than three months)
- Poorly designed exhibit cases
- No security

Assessing Preservation Needs

- Assess current conditions and practices
- Identify problems
- Identify appropriate preservation measures
- Establish priorities and goals

Assess Current Conditions

- Records inventory
- Series or collection level survey
- General preservation survey

General Preservation Survey

- Provides overview of
 - how historical records are stored and used
 - condition of historical records as a whole
- Focuses on overall holdings rather than individual items
- Focuses on activities with broad positive impact

Exercise 1

- Refer to General Preservation Survey form for information
- Which areas need addressing?
- Which have greater priority?

Preventive Measures

- Prolong record life
 - Limiting physical damage
 - Slowing rate of deterioration
- How?
 - Environmental control
 - Procedures for handling and use
 - Holdings maintenance
 - Reformatting

General Preservation Survey

Do one form for each location in which you have historical/archival records

1. Location _____ off-site on-site

If multi-storied building, include which floor: _____

Nature of storage: basement; attic closet at home warehouse
 garage vault safe fireproof file cabinet other (specify)

2. Environmental controls

Is the HVAC system for the storage area part of the system for the entire building?
 Yes No (if yes, go to A below; if no, go to B below)

For storage in a building with central HVAC, complete below:

Is the HVAC system shut down during evenings, weekends, etc?
 Yes No

Are there separate temperature zones within the centralized system for the storage area?
Yes No

If yes, can the temperature be adjusted by individual users?
 Yes No

Are there separate humidity zones within the centralized system for the storage area?
Yes No

If yes, can the humidity be adjusted by individual users?
 Yes No

Do you use supplemental environmental control equipment in areas covered by the system?
Yes No

If yes, what do you use (check all that apply):
 fan heater portable humidifier portable dehumidifier
 window air conditioner other: _____

Do you open doors and/or windows to control temperature and provide ventilation?
Yes No

For storage in a building without central HVAC, complete below:

Are any of the following centralized: Heat - Yes No Cooling - Yes No

Do you use local climate control equipment?: Yes No

If yes, please check all you use:
 fan window air conditioner portable heater
 portable humidifier portable dehumidifier

Do you open doors and/or windows to control temperature and provide ventilation?
 Yes No

General Preservation Survey (cont'd)

What is the average temperature?

Spring/Fall Hot Cold Comfortable Temperature: _____°
Summer Hot Cold Comfortable Temperature: _____°
Winter Hot Cold Comfortable Temperature: _____°

Does it fluctuate? Daily Weekly Monthly Seasonally

What is the average humidity?

Spring/Fall Damp/Humid Dry Comfortable Level: _____%
Summer Damp/Humid Dry Comfortable Level: _____%
Winter Damp/Humid Dry Comfortable Level: _____%

Does it fluctuate? Daily Weekly Monthly Seasonally

Light exposure

Are there windows? Yes No
If yes, are they Covered Uncovered
Artificial Light: Fluorescent Incandescent

3. Security/disaster protection

Does your storage area have

Smoke/heat alarms? Yes No

If yes, are they connected to local fire department/dispatch? Yes No

Intrusion alarms? Yes No

If yes, are they connected to local police/sheriff? Yes No

Water alarms? Yes No

If yes, are they connected to local police/sheriff? Yes No

Fire suppression system? Yes No

If yes, are they water based or gas based

Do you have fire extinguishers in the area? Yes No

Do you have a disaster plan for your records? Yes No

Are doors locked? Yes No

Are windows locked? Yes No

Who has access/keys to the area? (list below)

General Preservation Survey (cont'd)

4. General conditions of storage area

Is your storage area

Overcrowded? Yes No

Cluttered? Yes No

Dusty? Yes No

Is there evidence of mold/rodent/insect damage? Yes No

Is other material stored in the same room as your archival records? Yes No

If yes, what is the other material?

Paper supplies Packing supplies Holiday decorations
 Cleaning supplies Security/Backup copies Trophies, banners, objects
Other _____

5. General conditions of the records

Do the records suffer from any of the following?

Faded Mold damage Surface dirt Insect/vermin damage

Folded Stains Water damage Enclosures/attachments

Brittle Loose bindings Use of mending tape

Fasteners/rubberbands

How are the records stored?

Storage units used (mark all that apply):

Steel Shelving Wooden Shelving Wooden Cabinets Metal filing cabinets
Metal flat files Metal Storage Cabinets Other (please list) No storage units
(Piled on the floor or stacked on pallets)

If you have shelving, is it wobbly rusty bent

Are your basic paper records stored in (mark all that apply):

Records center cartons Cardboard boxes Alkaline boxes
Hanging Folders Original folders Alkaline folders

Are your oversized materials (maps and plans):

Flat Suspended Rolled

How are your bound volumes stored?

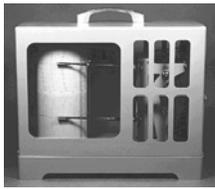
Upright Leaning Flat On Spine Covered

Environmental Control

- Temperature
 - 65 ° - 72° F
 - +/-2° F
- Humidity
 - 35% - 45% RH
 - +/-5% RH
- Maintain stable environmental conditions
- Maintain adequate air exchange

Environmental Monitoring

- Hygrothermograph
- Data loggers



Reduce Particulate Pollutants

- Use HVAC filters (and change regularly) to eliminate
 - Gases
 - Dirt
 - Other solid particles
- Minimize use of off-gassing materials
 - Wood
 - Chlorine and ammonia compounds
 - Polyurethane and oil-based paints
 - PVC and other vinyls

Housekeeping Activities

- Keep storage areas and environs clean
- Damp-mop or vacuum floors
- Dust shelves, storage boxes, and bound books
- Don't use abrasive cleaning products
- Isolate deteriorating records that could damage others

Light Protection

- Store records covered
- Don't store records in area with windows
- Use UV Sleeves or low UV output tubes
- Turn off the lights



Handling and Use

- Basic procedures
 - No eating, drinking, smoking
 - Wear gloves for handling photographs
 - Use pencils only
- Provide access copies of heavily used records
- When transporting records
 - Use rigid support
 - Carry with both hands
 - Use two people for heavy, oversized materials

Exhibiting Historical Records

- Don't mark the original
- Exhibit duplicates when possible
- If using originals
 - Exhibit for only short periods
 - Provide light protection
 - Provide good security

Preventing Theft and Vandalism

- Keep storage areas closed to public
- Install locks on doors and windows
- Install intrusion alarms
- Allow use only under supervision
- Limit number of files per user
- Store patrons' belongings in separate area
- Develop security procedures for staff

Holdings Maintenance

- Purchase and use appropriate storage supplies and equipment
- Prepare records for storage by applying preservation measures
- Protect records while facilitating retrieval

Purchasing Supplies and Equipment

- Assess Records
 - Size, format, condition
- Evaluate Resources
 - Money, space, time, skills
- Investigate vendors
 - Products, price, suitability
 - Customer base

Storage Equipment



Use steel, not wood

Shelving



- Adequate support
- Appropriate dimensions
- Ample clearance

Oversize Storage

- Keeps items flat
- Internal dust covers
- Use with large folders
- Expensive
- Uses floor space



Map Towers

- Standard records shelving with extra shelves
- Greater storage density
- Stores maps flat or rolled



Archival Supplies

- Paper
 - pH between 8.4 and 10
 - Alkaline reserve between 2 to 3%
- Stable plastic
 - Mylar®, polyethylene, polypropylene
 - Do not use acetate, vinyl, or PVC products



Alkaline versus Acid Free

- Alkaline is the preferred quality
- Acid-free items are not always archival
 - Can be created as acid free but later become acidic
- Get specifications from vendor for any products

PAT = Photographic Activity Test

- Indicates whether paper enclosures will damage
 - Photographs
 - Slides
 - Film
- Applicable to paper enclosures, not plastic
- Look for "Passes PAT" in catalogs

Levels of Protection



1) Boxes



2) Folders



3) Enclosures

Map Tube Storage

- Don't store maps inside tubes
 - Maps unfurl within the tube
 - Exception: "square" tubes
- Store outside tubes
 - Wrap around tubes
 - Wrap w/paper or Mylar
 - Tie with cotton ties

Preparing Records for Storage

- Remove fasteners
- Unfold and flatten
- Enclose damaged or vulnerable records
- Remove unstable materials
- Separate records with different storage needs
- Label folders and create container list



Musty Records

- Dry damp material to eliminate mold
- Deodorize the collection
 - Using odor absorbing material
- Return collections to cooler, drier environment



Filing

- Records in folders
 - Fully enclosed by folders, not extending beyond edges
 - Align so evenly supported
 - Fit squarely in folders
 - Don't overfill
- Folders in boxes
 - Provide support to prevent slumping
 - Should be slightly smaller than boxes
 - Don't overstuff

Reformatting

- Types of reformatting
 - Photocopying
 - Microfilming
 - Imaging
- Why reformat archival records?
 - Retire originals from active use
 - Publish and distribute
 - Address multiple access needs

Photocopying

- | | |
|---|-------------------------|
| •Techniques | •Advantages |
| –Make a master photocopy of popular items | –In-house |
| –Use alkaline paper | –On as-needed basis |
| –Don't use color copies | •Disadvantages |
| –Don't force books open | –Can hurt materials |
| | –Labor intensive |
| | –No reduction in volume |

Microfilming

- Techniques

- Prepare records for filming
- Process film to archival standards or engage vendor
- Inspect film
- See State Archives publications and workshop

- Advantages

- Stable, eye-readable medium
- Easily stored
- Cost-effective over time
- Saves space

- Disadvantages

- Hard to do well
- Can distort image
- Can be expensive

Imaging

- Advantages

- Easier to distribute and duplicate
- Improves accessibility
- Can place images on the web

- Disadvantages

- Not generally considered an archival medium
- Some items can be difficult to scan
- May be difficult to maintain images over time

Conservation

- Requires a trained conservator
- Techniques to repair, strengthen, or stabilize original records
 - Return items to stable and usable condition
 - Allow for safe duplication
- Is not restoration

**INTENDED FOR MATERIALS THAT HAVE
INTRINSIC VALUE**

Conservation Treatments

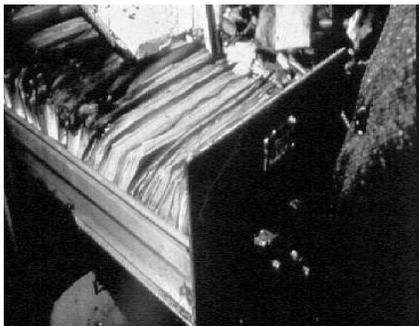
- Cleaning
- Mending or reinforcing
- Deacidifying
- Encapsulating
- Treatments are
 - Labor intensive
 - Time consuming
 - Expensive



Exercise 2

Use the Conservation Evaluation Form to evaluate the conservation needs of common archival records

Disasters



Background:

You have decided to implement an "adopt a record" program to raise funds for conservation work. Before you can approach local civic organizations you need to determine which records you want conserved. You have narrowed down the selection to the following series.

Using the Conservation Evaluation Form determine the need for conservation of the following record series; descriptions follow.

Once you have evaluated these records and know their priority level consider the options that are available to you:

- 1) Only undertake preventive activities that will slow down or halt deterioration.
- 2) Microfilm or reformat the original and retire it from use.
- 3) Conserve some but not all of the records. Indicate which would be conserved and why.

Minute Books

Your government's minute books range from 1905 to 1995. The two earliest volumes are handwritten and bound. The remaining 5 volumes are typed and have a post binding. Over half the volumes contain attachments and enclosures. Many of these have been taped or fastened to the pages. The tape is yellowing and some of the paperclips are rusty. Pages from the early volumes are worn on the edges. The binding on the early volumes is still strong but clearly straining from the additional attachments. The volumes vary in size from 8.5" x 11" x .5 " to 8.5" x 14" x 2". The minutes are stored in the vault which is adjacent to the clerk's office which has a central HVAC system. The door of the vault is left open during the day. All of the minutes have been microfilmed.

Birth Records

Of all the vital records you are responsible for, the birth records are in the worst shape. Ranging in date from 1905 to the present the two volumes have tattered pages, loose or missing covers, and repairs made to the covers with cloth tape. A number of pages in each volume contain sealed records. These entries have been sealed with Scotch tape. The tape is yellowing and peeling. All the vital records are stored in the clerk's vault, none have been microfilmed.

Blueprints

The Department of Public Works recently transferred over 100 blueprints and maps to you. Some were rolled up and stuck haphazardly in large cardboard boxes. Other blueprints were folded to fit into file folders or envelopes. All of the records exhibit extensive wear and tear both from use and storage. Edges are folded and torn. Many have tears which have been mended with tape. Some have coffee, food, and dirt stains. About once every two months the Department asks you to locate a map or print for them. The records are currently stored in the basement in your inactive storage area. Retrieval is very difficult since there are no labels on the exterior or the documents. You find yourself frequently tearing more edges as you pull records out from the overstuffed boxes. Folded maps are starting to crack when you try to flatten them.

Disaster Plans Include

- Steps to minimize risks
- Plans for reacting to specific types of disasters
- Emergency telephone numbers
- Resource lists
- Salvage priorities list

In conclusion

- Many preservation activities are very basic
- Best strategies benefit most or all records
- Goal is usually to preserve information rather than physical form

Questions?

Thank you!!

Causes of Deterioration in Records

1) Chemical and Physical Make-up – Characteristics of Media

Paper

Most common archival medium

- Consists of vegetable fibers reduced to pulp, suspended in water, and then matted in sheets. Sizing is added to paper to prevent the absorption of ink into the paper.
- Additional additives may be added to harden the sizing, prevent mold growth, or bleach or color the paper (alum, rosin, chlorine). Additives and lignin can interact with their environment or naturally break down and form acid compounds.
- Life expectancy of paper can range from fifty years for paper made from wood pulp to indefinite for paper made from rag (examples of records on rag paper are still with us from over 300 years ago).
- Acidity is a primary cause of paper deterioration. This causes paper to lose strength, become brittle, and discolor. Sources of acid include alum rosin as sizing agent, lignin in groundwood, residual bleaching chemicals (chlorine), inks (iron gall), pollutants (sulphur dioxide), and migration of acid from acidic media to other media.

Photographs

- Consist of a support or base material upon which an emulsion or image-bearing layer is applied.
- Variety of materials have been used for each of the layers. Base materials include metal, glass, paper, plastic film, leather and fabric. Image is usually created by finely divided metal, often silver, suspended in gelatin.
- Adhesives, coatings, and applied color may also comprise the structure of the photograph.

Microfilm

- Consists of a polyester or acetate film base upon which an emulsion is applied.

Magnetic media (floppy disk, hard disk, magnetic tape)

- Consists of a stable nonmagnetic materials, such as Mylar, coated with emulsion of magnetic oxide particles. The oxide particles are electronically/magnetically arranged to represent the data.
- Other chemicals may be added to give the media good operational characteristics (flexibility, conductivity, softness).

Optical disks

- Consist of two layers of glass or polycarbonate plastic with a metal alloy layer in between. A laser beam "writes" data on the disk using a variety of processes.

2) Physical Environment

Hot and Dry – Low Humidity

- Paper becomes brittle, fractures, or crumbles during use and handling. Parchment and vellum become inflexible, ripple, and shrink. Books have structural warping and buckle.

Hot and Moist – High Humidity

- Mold and mildew can form. Moisture sensitive inks can blur or transfer to adjacent paper. Photo emulsions become tacky. Coated paper sticks together. Metals corrode or rust. Residual processing chemicals can break down. Magnetic media binder materials deteriorate.

Fluctuating Temperature and/or Humidity

- Cracking, peeling, and buckling of media.
- Flaking emulsion layers caused by separation of emulsion and base layers (photos & microfilm) or of binder materials and media substrates (magnetic media)

Water

- Many media absorb water. This moisture can affect dimension and flexibility.

Light – Daylight and Fluorescent

- Bleaches or lightens media and ink. Paper with high percentage of lignin can discolor and darken.
- Sensitive media such as color photos, blueprints, and watercolors can have a color loss, diminished contrast, and loss of information

Air Pollution

- Causes staining and degrading of base materials, and accelerates fading or loss of the image.
- Particulate matter such as dirt, dust, oily soot, and ash can scratch surfaces (photos, magnetic media) and obscure information

Vermin – Insects and Rodents

- Permanently stain, disfigure, and weaken paper.
- Insects and rodents are attracted to cellulose, paste, glue, gelatin sizing, emulsions and adhesives. They use records for nesting material and leave corrosive and toxic droppings

3) Handling and Use

Careless Handling

- Dropping records during retrieval, breaking spine by flattening volume for photocopying, tearing a document by turning page or unfolding, making permanent notations or marks with pens, or spilling beverages, food, or ashes.

Improper Storage

- Containers that are too small for the documents, causing torn and cracked edges, bending, or breaking; containers that are too big, allowing for movement within container, causing crumpled edges.
- Stuffing maps into tubes
- Unsupported records, including volumes leaning on shelves, which can cause broken spines and end boards, or too few records in box, which can bend and curl the records.

Misguided Repairs

- Pressure sensitive tapes can cause tacky residue, yellowing, staining, cracking, and chipping
- "Lamination," which is not a reversible process.

Poor Exhibition Practices

- Attaching labels directly to materials, mounting materials by putting staples or tacks through documents.
- Records left on display too long, which can lead to damage from light and other environmental factors.
- Poorly designed exhibit cases, having wooden or recently painted interiors that off-gas acidic vapor or harmful chemicals
- Inadequate or no security, so that people are able to touch, damage, and steal documents

Purchasing Storage Equipment

Shelving

- Use heavy gauge steel (at least 18 gauge)
- Truly archival-grade shelves are covered with baked enamel properly cured (should not smell like organic solvent) and powder coated
- Do not use wood (especially oak) or wood composition products (such as plywood or particle board). These contain pitch, resins, and other acidic products.
- If you must use (or already have) wood, seal with latex paint, air-drying enamels, or moisture-cured urethane or line with polyester film. Replace wooden shelving with steel as soon as possible.
- Shelving should have adequate support, which means that it must be grounded to the floor, bolted to adjacent units and the floor, and have back and side braces.

Shelves should be installed twelve inches from outside walls, with the bottom shelf four to six inches from the floor and the top shelf clearing the ceiling or pipes by eighteen inches.

Oversize storage

- Can include map cabinets with drawers no more than two inches deep and A flexible dust cover (cloth better than vinyl) in each drawer.
- Provide a landing space (large clear surface) to place materials following removal from and return to storage.
- Roll any maps or blueprints that exceed 36 x 48 inches.

Open Roller Shelves

- These shelves are not recommended for archival records because they do not provide overall support for volumes and their mechanical mechanisms can damage the volumes.

Purchasing Archival Supplies

Acid Free vs. Alkaline

- “Acid-free” items not always archival. Items can be made acid free but later become acidic. Ask for specifications from vendors for any products, and look for the term “alkaline.”

Photographic Activity Test (PAT)

- Applicable to paper enclosures (not plastic) for photographs, slides, and film. Look in catalogs to see whether the enclosures pass PAT.

Boxes

- Constructed from various paperboards, most with a thickness of 60 pts.
- Blue/gray barrier board is buffered with small amounts of lignin, whereas tan lignin-free board has trace amounts of lignin.
- Metal edges should be non-corrosive and painted.
- Bottom drop-front provides good structural support but can be difficult to open. Hinged top (come in 6" and 2.5" boxes) are more useful friendly. Record cartons are convenient for large record series but can be heavy and awkward to handle. Phased boxes and custom-made boxes are for very valuable volumes and items.

Folders and enclosures

- Provides primary support to a group of documents or single document
Select from paper or plastic; letter size, legal size, or oversize; and front, side, or multi-side closures.
- Sleeves and envelopes provide additional support for damaged or vulnerable items.

Map tube storage

- Don't store inside tubes, because maps will unfurl in the tube and get damaged when you try to extract them. Also, circular tubes are difficult to store. Instead, buy “square tubes” that open along the side. These can be stacked if necessary and sit firmly on a shelf.
- If you decide to use map tubes, store the maps around the outside, a common solution in archives. Wrap the maps **around** alkaline or buffered tubes. Some people wrap a layer of alkaline paper or Mylar first, then the map, and then another layer of paper or Mylar to protect the map from dust, scraping, other damage. Tie this whole assemblage with cotton ties, which are non-acidic and will hold the tube together. Of course, this is only usable for little-used archival records, because it takes time to unwrap and rewrap the maps each time

Preparing Records for Storage

Remove fasteners and replace when needed with paper barrier or plastic clips.

Remove loose surface soil with soft brush.

Unfold and flatten documents if this will not damage the paper.

Remove and copy unstable materials (newspaper clippings, faxes).

Separate material with different storage needs. Provide damaged or vulnerable items (torn, tiny, or brittle documents) with an additional level of support (such as sleeve or envelope). Separate materials which don't fit the same size storage containers or have different storage needs using a separation sheet.

Label folders with enough information to identify the contents.

Improve access and retrieval to relevant records by creating a **container list** (listing of folders by box) thereby reducing the handling of each folder.

Within folders

Documents should be fully enclosed by the folders (not extending beyond edges) and fit squarely in folders (not creeping up on the sides).

Align documents so they are evenly supported

Don't overfill folders. Maximum thickness should be .5 to .75 of an inch. Adjust crease at bottom of folder to accommodate quantity

Within boxes

Provide support to prevent slumping of folders; use spacer boards or roll extra folders.

Folders should be slightly smaller than the boxes, about .5-.75 of an inch narrower and .25 of an inch shorter.

Don't overstuff boxes. It should be easy to retrieve and file folders. Allow .75 to 1 inch of room.

Don't make boxes too heavy to transport or retrieve from

Qualities and Characteristics of Records With Intrinsic Value

1. Physical form that may be the subject for study. For example, glass-plate negatives or wax-cylinder sound recordings.
2. Aesthetic or artistic quality: May include photographs; pencil, ink, or watercolor sketches; maps; architectural drawings; and engraved and/or printed forms, such as bounty-land warrants.
3. Unique or curious physical features: Including quality and texture of paper, color, wax seals, imprints and watermarks, inks, and unusual bindings.
4. Age that provides a quality of uniqueness: Generally, older rather than more recent records, although the earliest records concerning, for example, the development of the radio industry or of nuclear power could have intrinsic value because of age.
5. Value for use in exhibits: Records that illustrate the immediacy of an event, depict a significant issue, or impart a sense of the person who is the subject or originator of the record.
6. Questionable authenticity, date, author, or other characteristic that is significant and ascertainable only by physical examination of the originals.
7. General and substantial public interest because of direct association with famous or historically significant people, places, things, issues, or events.
8. Significance as documentation of the establishment or continuing legal basis of an agency or institution: Agencies or institutions acquire or lose functions and responsibilities through the actions of the executive, legislative, and judicial branches of the Government. Records documenting these actions may be found concentrated in series or scattered in various series.
9. Significance as documentation of the formulation of policy at the highest executive levels when the policy has significance and broad effect throughout or beyond the agency or institution

[The above is an abbreviated version of an article published by the National Archives.]

CONSERVATION EVALUATION FORM

SERIES NAME:		
QUANTITY OF RECORDS: <i>(Note portion of total if not whole series, e.g., 1 vol. of 20, 5 items of 20 c. ft.)</i>		
VULNERABILITY & EXISTING CONDITION		
a.	Are the records used often? <i>Assign a value 0-5. 5 = heavy use (once/week), 3 = some of the material is used frequently, 0 = little use (once/year).</i>	
b.	Are the records fragile or unstable? (such as color photographs, thermofax, film or magnetic tape, ground wood paper). <i>Assign value: 0-5. 5 = most (<2/3) of the series is unstable, 0 = (>1/3) most of the series is stable.</i>	
c.	Are they in a fragile format (such as oversized materials, glass plate negatives, inflexible, folded or rolled documents, scrapbooks). <i>Assign a value of 0-5. 5 = most of the series is in a fragile format, 0 = most of the series is not in a fragile format</i>	
d.	Is there existing damage/deterioration. <i>Assign a value or 0-5. 5 = a majority of the series has structural damage and cannot be safely handled in current condition, 3 = The majority of the materials have structural damage but they can be safely handled, 0 = the majority of materials are structurally sound and can be safely handled.</i>	
e.	Are they poorly housed (acidic enclosures, overcrowded or unsupported folders, damaging attachments). <i>Assign a value of 0-5. 5 = most of the items are poorly housed, 3 = some of the materials are poorly housed, 0 = all of the series is housed in acid-free protective enclosures and supported properly.</i>	
f.	Will improved environment and housing stabilize the records and halt or slow further deterioration? <i>Assign a value of 0-5. 5 = material will continue to deteriorate, 0 = improvements will halt all further deterioration.</i>	
g.	Is treatment necessary before copying can be performed safely? <i>Assign a value of 0-5. 5 = extensive repairs are needed on most of the records before copying, 3 = modest number of repairs will be needed, 0 = very few documents will need treatment.</i>	

ACCESS		
a.	Are the records confidential or restricted in any way? Assign a value of 0-5. 0 = the records are permanently restricted, 1 = restricted 50-75 yrs, 2 = 25-50 yrs, 3 = 10-25 yrs, 5 = records open to the public	
b.	Have the records been microfilmed or otherwise duplicated? Assign a value of 0-5. 0 = duplicated, 5 = not duplicated	
c.	Will the records be housed in a stable environment and secure storage area after conservation treatment? Assign a value of 0-5. 5 = temp between 60-70°, RH 40-45%, good air circulation; 0 = widely fluctuating temperatures, little air circulation	
d.	Are records described to improve access? Assign a value of 0-5. 5 = no inventory description exists and there is heavy reliance on staff and user browsing, 3 = an brief but informative inventory worksheet description exists, 0 = an archival series description exists.	
e.	Are records physically accessible? Assign values 0-5. 0 = extensive physical access has been provided for the series (volumes, boxes and folders are clearly labeled, records easy to retrieve), 3 = boxes are labeled but access to folders is difficult, 5 = access is extremely difficult (boxes are not labeled or in order on shelves, no listing of contents is available).	
APPRAISAL SYNOPSIS		
a.	Do the records have research value? Locally? Regionally? Statewide? Nationally? Assign a value of 0-10. 10 = very valuable, 0 = low value	
b.	Do they have intrinsic value (must be retained in original form) or can it be replaced by a duplicate? Assign a value of 0-5. 5 = all of the material must be retained, 3 = some of the material must be retained in its original form, 0 = information in other form acceptable	
c.	Do the records have exhibit or educational potential? Assign a value of 0-5. 5 = all of the material has very high potential, 3 = some of the material has potential, 2 = a few of the items may have potential, 0 = rarely would the material be used	
VALUE TOTALS		
	Add all the values	
PRIORITY LEVEL		
<i>1st (top) Priority = 70-54 pts.; 2nd Priority = 53-36 pts.; 3rd Priority = 35 - 18 pts.; 4th (lowest) Priority = 17-0 pts.</i>		