

WHAT IS PRESERVATION?

Preservation is preventative care taken to make sure that items in a collection, whether in a library, a museum, or a home, stay in the best possible condition for future use.

How does this matter for me?

Most people have something that can't easily be replaced if lost. Family photos, old letters, and collections of any kind all need preservation to last through the years. If you have thought about making sure these things are safe, you've already done preservation!

Is it difficult? Is it expensive?

No and no! The basics of home preservation can be done by anyone. And, while professional archives spend lots of money making sure their collections stay safe, basic home preservation can cost very little, or no money at all.


Read ahead, or contact the library to learn more! See back page.


DIGITAL PRESERVATION

Even well-preserved photos, books, tapes, and documents fade and deteriorate. These items are especially suitable for digitization, but preservation doesn't stop there.

Digital items need preservation too. Here are some general tips for keeping digital memories safe:

- Have backup copies on one or more drives in different locations, in case one is lost or damaged.
- Every five years, make sure your files are compatible with modern computers.
- Consider sharing your items with digital archives to make them accessible to more people.

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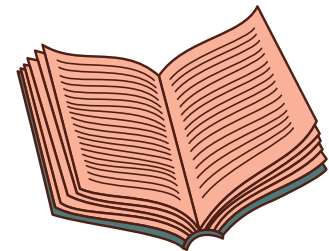
 www.rockislandlibrary.org



Save Your Memories

HOME PRESERVATION
GUIDE

*MAKE YOUR FAMILY
HISTORY LAST*



*Rock Island Public Library, with help from
Augustana Library's Special Collections*



WHAT CAN I SAVE?

Paper and Books

- Birth, marriage, and death certificates
- Photographs
- Journals and diaries
- Scrapbooks
- Letters and cards

Textiles

- Flags
- Uniforms
- Quilts and blankets
- Dolls and stuffed animals
- Sports memorabilia
- Clothing

Metal

- Service medals
- Jewelry
- Silverware
- Antiques
- Coins

Film, AV, and Media

- Reels of film
- VHS and Cassette Tapes
- Vinyl Records
- DVDs and CDs
- Computer Files

...and whatever else you have!

SIX ENEMIES OF LONG-TERM STORAGE

Many things can threaten your items. Here are just six:

Water



Water can soak pages, corrode metal, warp wood, run ink, and generally ruin your items. Keep your things off the ground and in water-tight containers in case of flooding or leaks.



Light

Direct light of any kind, but especially sunlight, can slowly destroy ink and fade colors. Keep your items in a dark place or opaque container. If you want to display items, keep them out of direct sunlight.

Climate



Rapid changes to temperature and humidity can cause serious damage. Make sure your storage location is well-insulated and dry, like under a bed or in a closet - not in a garage or attic.

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Pests

Mice, moths, molds, and many other critters find your memories to make good homes or good food. Keep the area around your items clean and dry, and ensure they're secured against pests.



Disasters

Sometimes, the worse happens. In the event of a catastrophic fire, flood, or tornado, even the best-kept collections can be ruined. When possible, make digital copies and store them in another location or online. In addition, consider insuring your items.



People

Well-meaning people can be the biggest danger to your items. Ensure everything is clearly labelled so that nothing is thrown out by mistake. You might also keep important or valuable items behind a locked door or in a safe.