



SAVING YOUR Treasures

A Website about what you can do to protect and preserve the things of importance in your life



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CONSERVATION ROLLING OF TEXTILES FOR STORAGE

1. Textiles should not be stored if they are soiled. New items such as wedding dresses and new christening clothing should be dry cleaned or laundered before being put away. Older items and antique textiles should be examined by textile conservator before long-term storage.
2. Before storage each item should be thoroughly photographed for record keeping and insurance purposes. A written description of the piece including the reason why it is important and any details about its history and importance are essential. One of the images of the object should be attached to the outside of the rolled storage package. This will prevent the frequent need to unroll the object to see what is inside or to locate a specific object.
3. Before beginning a space should be prepared for rolling the object. It should be large enough to lay the item out completely. A large dining table can be used or, if necessary, a large clean floor area can also be used. The surface should be covered with a large, clean, white cotton sheet prior to retrieving the object.
4. In preparation for rolling, remove all jewelry, watches, belt buckles, and abrasive items. Clean, dry hands are essential for safe handling of textiles. If your hands are prone to sweating or are very rough, use clean white cotton gloves for this procedure.
5. A large diameter acid-free, lignin-free textile rolling tube and several white 100% cotton sheets are needed. The tube and the sheets should be long enough that they extend an extra seven inches past the object at each long end. The larger the diameter of the tube the better. If the object is large, a minimum of two people will be required for the rolling procedure. If an acid-free lignin-free tube is not available, an acid tube, such as the tubes used to roll carpeting, can be used if the tube is covered with a continuous layer of aluminum foil prior to use. Tuck the ends of the foil into the ends of the tube.

6. Start by laying out a sheet large enough to completely cover the width of the object. Lay the tube on one end of the sheet and roll the tube with several layers of the sheet. Lay the object on the portion of the sheet that remains flat on the surface and cover it with a second sheet. Begin to carefully roll the object around the sheet-covered tube. (If the object has a pile, as in the case of velvet or a carpet, roll the object pile side out and in the direction of the pile. The direction of the pile can be determined by feeling for the pile bristles as you move your hand across the object.)
7. Continue to roll the object making sure that there are as few wrinkles in the object as possible. As the inner or outer sheet comes to an end add a new one with an overlap of at least seven or eight inches. A tail that will cover the tube several times should be left at the end of the rolling process. This excess sheet should be wound around the outside of the rolled object and the ends tucked into the open ends of the tube. The rolled bundle can be secured with acid-free cotton twill tape ties with or cotton string.
8. A final layer of polyethylene sheeting should be wrapped around the outside of the roll and tied or tucked into the end. The image of the object and any additional information about the object can be tied with twill tape or cotton string to the outside of the package.
9. The roll can be stored by suspending it from a rod inserted in to the tube or by holders at each end. If absolutely necessary, it can be laid on a shelf. If this is done, the object should be periodically rolled so that a different portion of the object is resting against the shelf as time passes. The roll can be propped in a corner, if absolutely necessary. Propping the object upright can be problematic because the object will slide down the tube and become wrinkled at the bottom over time.

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