



Conserve O Gram

September 2001

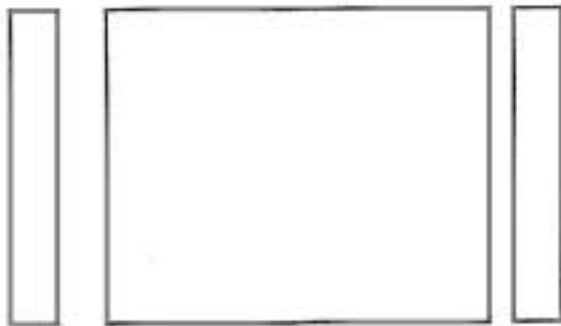
Number 16/3

A Simple Storage Mat For Textile Fragments

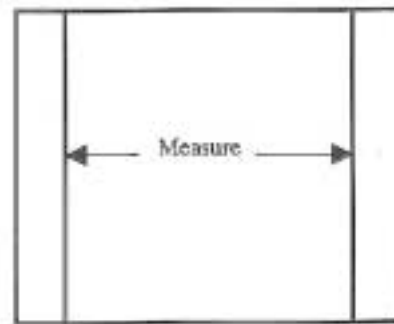
Objects require appropriate support when they are handled for research, moved to a new location, placed on exhibit, or stored. Textiles are, by their nature, very flexible materials that require an auxiliary support. Textiles can be handled on a simple support board made of a piece of sturdy archival corrugated cardboard covered with washed cotton fabric. However, if small textiles in your collection are handled frequently, construction of a more permanent storage container may be useful. A modified mat (similar to the type used for prints and drawings) is easy and economical to construct. The mat provides both a storage container and a way to move and transport the textile without needing to handle the object directly.

Instructions for Making a Storage Mat

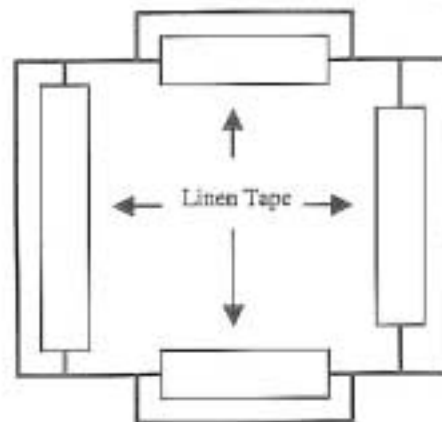
1. Measure the textile at the longest and widest points.
2. Cut a piece of 4-ply archival mat board 6 inches longer and wider than the textile for the backing board. Cut two strips of 4-ply archival mat board 2 inches wide and the length of the backing board.



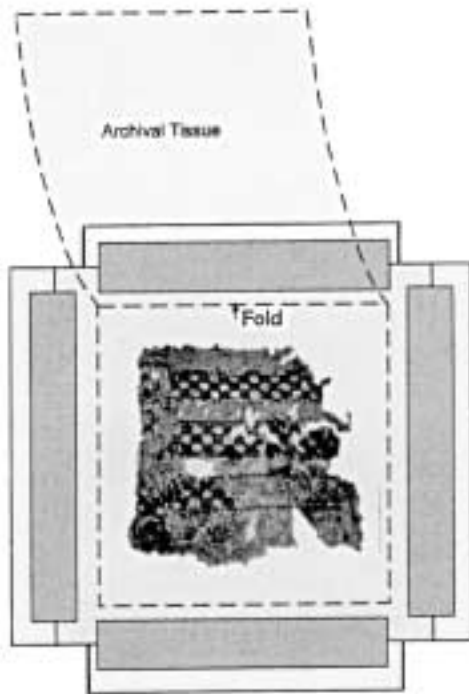
3. Lay the strips at the left and right vertical edges of the backing board and measure the space between the strips. Cut two strips of 4-ply archival mat board 2 inches wide and the length of the measurement just taken **minus** 1/8th inch.



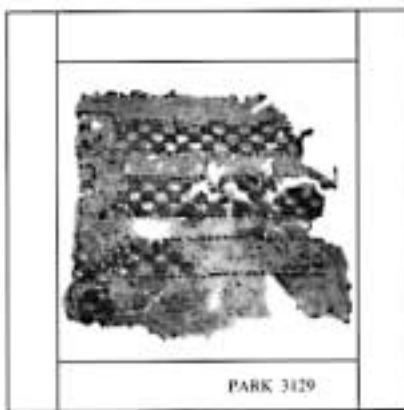
4. The four strips of mat board will form the window around the textile. Lay out the strips so that they will not overlap when they are hinged to the backboard. Attach the strips to the backing board with gummed archival linen tape.



- Fold a piece of unbuffered archival tissue in half. The tissue should be slightly smaller than the backing board when it is folded. Unfold the tissue and lay it on the backboard. Center the textile fragment on the tissue.



- Fold the tissue over the face of the textile. Fold in the strips over the tissue. The strips should hold the tissue in place without overlapping the textile.

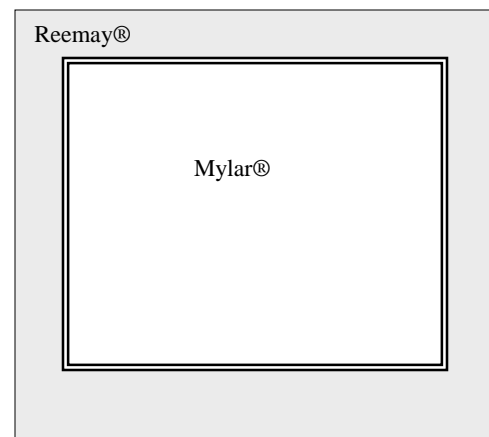


- Write catalog and other important numbers on the lower right corner of the mat in pencil.

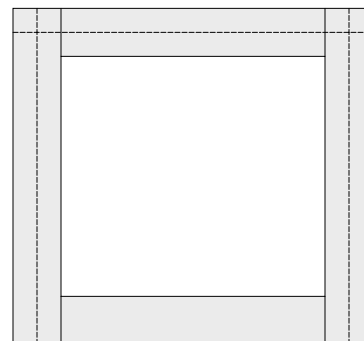
Instructions for Making a Storage Envelope

Matted fragments can be stored in flat-file drawers or archival boxes. However, if they are used frequently, a storage envelope can provide additional protection from handling and dust.

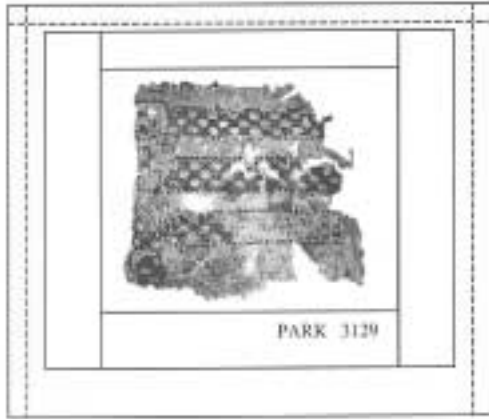
- Cut a Mylar® sheet 2 inches wider and longer than the mat.
- Cut a piece of Reemay® spunbond polyester fabric 1 inch wider and 1½ inches longer than the Mylar®. Lay the Mylar® on the Reemay® as shown, so that there is a ½ inch border of Reemay® on the top and two sides.



- Fold the top and sides of the Reemay® over the Mylar® and machine sew in place.



4. Slide the matted textile into the envelope and store in a flat-file drawer or archival storage box.



Note: To view the back of the textile, open the four flaps of the mat and lay a piece of matboard on top of the tissue covering the textile. Place one hand on top of the matboard and one under the textile mat, spreading your fingers to maintain good contact between the textile and the boards as you turn the mat upside down. Lift the textile mat and open the tissue to view the back of the textile. Reverse this process using the textile mat on top to return the textile to the mat for storage.

Also see *Museum Handbook*, Part I: Appendix I, Curatorial Care of Archeological Objects, Figure I.8, Construction of a Portfolio Mount for Archeological Textile Fragments.

Materials and Supplies:

Archival mat board, gummed linen tape, Mylar®, and unbuffered archival tissue are available from several suppliers including:

University Products
517 Main Street, PO Box 101
Holyoke, MA 01041-0101
(800) 628-1912
<<http://www.universityproducts.com>>

Light Impressions
PO Box 2278
Rochester, NY 14692-2708
(800) 828-6216
<<http://www.lightimpressionsdirect.com>>

See also: *Tools of the Trade*, National Park Service

Reemay® spunbond polyester (medium weight) available from:

Snow Filtration Company
6386 Gano Road
West Chester, PA 45069
(800) 543-4935

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