

## Timely Tips: Types of Storage Materials

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The objects in museum collections help us to tell the stories of our communities and the events that impact those communities. The objects come in all types, shapes, sizes, and are made up of all kinds of materials. To preserve them, we have to provide the best storage we can. The storage options available are as varied as our objects and knowing what kinds of storage to use can be quite a conundrum.



[\*Timely Tips: Types of Storage Materials\*](#) (Indiana Historical Society)

To determine your storage needs it's important to know what types of objects and how many of each type you have in your collections. There are several things you can do to figure out your storage needs. You can perform a visual scan of your collections, generate reports from your collections management database, or look through your collections records. Using any or all of these methods will give you an idea of what supplies you should have in order to store your collections.

Remember that archival storage is not one size fits all. It's important to think through how you will create the safest and best environment for the objects in your collections. Objects are happiest when they are stored in the way the best fits their needs. Think of the containers as the primary envelopes and the first line of defense for your objects. Is the best container for the object a flip-top box? Is it an archival folder? A polyester sleeve? Let the needs of the object itself guide your decisions.

Once you've determined what type of container you are going to use, be sure to think about how you are going to pad out the container. It's important for objects to be held securely, but not so tightly that they are compressed or packed together so that they are in constant contact with each other. To prevent damage from objects shifting around the container or knocking or rubbing together in the box, you can use archivally stable, unbuffered tissue paper and Ethafoam to create cushions between objects and to fill up empty spaces at the edges of the container.

Understanding your collections objects' needs and considering this information will help you make good decisions to protect and preserve your objects so that you can tell the stories of the history they represent.

## Further Resources

- [Collections Advisors](#) (Indiana Historical Society)
- [Conserv O Grams](#) (National Park Service)
- [Timely Tips](#) (Indiana Historical Society)

## Collection Trainings

### [Archives Are Not Neutral](#)

**November 29** (Conservation Center for Art and Historic Artifacts)

### [Metadata for Digital Preservation](#)

**November 30** (Northeast Document Conservation Center)

### [Decolonizing in Collections Care](#)

**November 16** (Connecting to Collections Care)

### [Webinars](#)

**Recorded** – (Indiana Historical Society)

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