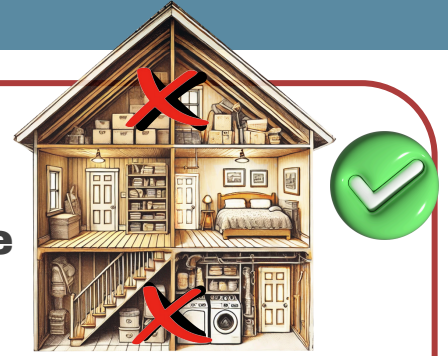


Caring for Photographs



Consider storage climate



Attics are seasonally very hot and high temperatures accelerate chemical processes. Photographs, which are created with chemicals, are especially at risk and high temperatures cause discoloration. Dry environments may cause cracking or curling. High humidity in basements will also speed decay.

Dim the lights



Light will damage images over time and the damage cannot be reversed. Consider making copies for display and keeping the originals in an acid-free box, a box lined with fabric or printer paper, or in an album.

Avoid touching



Oils from hands can damage the emulsion or image. Museum and archives staff wear gloves when handling photographs. Lift them carefully at the edges or by sliding a paper underneath.

Be careful with adhesive



Attach photographs to a scrapbook or a frame back with photo corners, rather than glue or tape. Albums labeled "magnetic" often include harmful adhesives.

Document the subjects

Future generations may want to know the names of people, places, and things captured in the photo. Avoid writing on the back of photographs. A copy of the photo with notes can be stored with the original. Printer paper, which is usually acid-free, and cotton bond paper are safe for placing between photographs. If necessary to mark the back of the photo, write lightly in pencil and as close to the border as possible.

