



PAPER-BASED COLLECTIONS HANDLING ESSENTIALS

Handling essentials include the following:

- Hands and work surfaces must be kept clean.
- Always have a planned landing area before removing an item from storage.
- A book should be grasped by the boards (the shoulders), not at the end cap, when being retrieved or reshelved.
- Flat paper should be handled at the edges and be supported so that it is not creased.
- A bulky book or fragile material may require a book cradle or book snake to allow it to be opened without damaging the spine or spine lining and to support it fully.
- Large flat paper, such as oversized prints, drawings, maps, and architectural drawings, should always be supported on a piece of mat board larger than the item and should be turned over in a package of two pieces of mat board held tightly together. Two staff members may be required. Only trained staff should turn large items.
- Fragile folded papers should not be given to users and should be opened only by a conservator.
- Photographic materials should be handled with non-latex disposable gloves. Other materials should be handled with freshly washed, dry hands.
- Whenever possible, papers should be photocopied individually. Fragile or irreplaceable papers should never be fed into a photocopier. Bound material should never be forced flat to be photocopied.