

## Archives 101

Archival collections are those that contain valuable documents, manuscripts, reports, photographs, and other records created by people, governments, and businesses in the past. These collections offer a wealth of primary sources that historians and others can use to research past events. The word “archives” has three different meanings that are all related. An “Archives” can be the organization that houses valuable, permanent collections of records, which are also themselves referred to as “archives.” “Archives” can also refer to the space within a museum, historical society, library, or other organization where these collections are actually stored. Several tips on managing archives, caring for your archival collection, and copyright issues appear below. See also the toolkit [“Paper”](#) for additional preservation resources for paper-based collections.

### General Archives Management and Collection Care

- Archives Association of British Columbia: [“A Manual for Small Archives”](#)
- Association for Library Collections & Technical Services: [Preservation – The Big Picture Webinar Series](#) (Various videos on the care of library and archives materials.)
- Connecting to Collections Care
  - [“Caring for Archives: Fundamentals for Everyone” Webinar](#) (Presenter: Fletcher Durant, University of Florida)
  - [“Caring for Artifacts Found in Archives Collections” Webinar](#) (Presenter: Rebecca Elder)
  - [“Care of Paper, Photographs, and Audiovisual Collections” Webinar](#) (Presenter: Kristen Laise, formerly of Heritage Preservation)
  - [“Imaging in Context: Introduction to Still Image Digitization for Smaller Institutions” Webinar](#) (Presenters: Brittany Stratton, Wendy Martin, and Anna Lamphear, University of Texas)
  - [“Oversize, Overwhelmed? Caring for Maps and Architectural Drawings in Your Collection” Webinar](#) (Presenter: Robin Carlson, David Erickson, and Katie Mullen of the Wisconsin Historical Society)
- Harvard University Archives: [“Care and Handling of Archival and Special Collections Materials”](#)
- National Archives: [“How to Preserve Family Papers and Photographs”](#)
- Northern Michigan University: [“Archives 101” – An Introduction for Users](#)
  - Note: This source consists of various introductory articles geared toward users of archives, but includes basic information on archives processing, preservation, describing collections, terminology, effective research, common usage and handling guidelines, and other topics that may be of interest to those who are new to archival work.
- United Kingdom National Preservation Office: [Guidance for Exhibiting Archive and Library Materials](#)
- Northeast Document Conservation Center:
  - [“Caring for Private and Family Collections”](#)
  - [“Collections Security: Planning and Prevention for Libraries and Archives”](#)
  - [NEDCC Preservation Leaflets](#) (Various articles focused on the preservation of documents, books, and photographs.)
- Society of American Archivists: [Standards Portal](#) (Various articles on best practices for archives)
- Smithsonian Institute of America Archives: [Preservation](#) (Various articles on preservation, storage, handling, and emergency preparedness)

## Copyright

- Peter B. Hirtle, et. al: [Copyright and Cultural Institutions: Guidelines for Digitization for U.S. Libraries, Archives, and Museums](#)
- Library of Congress: ["Section 108 of the US Copyright Code – Reproductions by Libraries or Archives for their User, for Replacement, or for Preservation"](#)
- Society of American Archivists: ["Copyright and Unpublished Material"](#)
- U.S. Copyright Office: ["Frequently Asked Questions about Copyright"](#)