

## Collections Care

### Wooden Objects and Furniture

The sturdy yet shapeable nature of wood has historically made it a prime candidate for crafting everything from houses and furniture to food vessels and art. Though initially strong, decades of use and exposure to deterioration mechanisms, such as pests, moisture, and light take a toll on wooden artifacts. As with any museum or personal collection, appropriate handling techniques and storage are the first line of defense in their preservation. General tips include limiting movement to only when necessary; grasping at the most sturdy areas when needing to move a piece; using at least two people to move anything heavier or more bulky than a typical dining room chair; using sheets of mylar under items placed on top of historic furniture; monitoring for temperature, humidity levels, and pest activity; keeping light levels low in exhibition and storage areas; avoiding direct sunlight; using proper dusting techniques and avoiding furniture polish; and general good housekeeping in storage and exhibition areas. Further tips on caring for wooden objects and furniture, can be found below.

### General Information and Care

- Canadian Conservation Institute: [“Basic Care: Furniture and Objects Made of Wood”](#)
- [Henry Ford Museum: “Furniture & Wooden Objects”](#) (Clara Deck, Senior Conservator)
- National Park Service:
  - [“Dusting Wood Objects”](#) (Conserve O Gram Series, September 2002, Number 7/5)
  - [“Emergency Treatment for Water-Soaked Furniture and Wooden Objects”](#) (Conserve O Gram Series, July 1993, Number 7/7)
  - [Museum Handbook: Appendix N, “Curatorial Care of Wooden Objects”](#)
- Smithsonian Museum Conservation Institute:
  - [“Biological Deterioration and Damage to Furniture and Wooden Objects”](#)
  - [“Fundamental Construction Techniques for Furniture and Wooden Objects”](#)

### Furniture: Wooden and Upholstered

- American Institute for Conservation of Historic & Artistic Works (AIC): [“Caring for Your Treasures – Furniture”](#)
- Connecting to Collections Care: [“A Conservation Primer: Caring for Historic Furniture” Webinar](#) (Presenter: Tad Fallon)
- National Park Service: [“Upholstered Furniture: Agents of Deterioration”](#) (Conserve O Gram Series, July 1993, Number 7/4)
- Smithsonian Museum Conservation Institute:
  - [“Furniture Care and Handling”](#)
  - [“Moving, Packing, and Shipping Furniture”](#)
- Winterthur Museum:

- [“Care in Handling, Chapter 6, Furniture and Wooden Objects” Video](#)
- [The Winterthur Guide to Caring for Your Collection \(book\), Chapter 11: “Furniture” \(written by Michael S. Podmaniczky, Winterthur Museum, 2017\)](#)
- Victoria and Albert Museum (London, UK): [“Caring for Your Upholstery”](#)