

Care for Comic Books

Comic books have many preservation needs in common with books and photos, but were traditionally printed on low-grade newsprint pulp paper and can quickly become acidic and brittle.

Find a Stable Storage Space

Store comic books in a clean storage area where temperature and relative humidity (RH) are moderate and stable: 68°F or less, and between 30 and 40% RH. Moisture and temperature speed decay. Low humidity can crack, peel, or curl pages. Avoid attics and basements and provide good air circulation. An air-conditioned room or closet is best.

Protect from Light

All light, especially the ultraviolet (UV) part of the spectrum, causes fading and other damage. Store and display items away from natural and artificial light. Comics and newsprint are particularly vulnerable.

Use Preservation Storage Enclosures

See-through preservation enclosures help minimize handling and prevent edge damage, creases, and tears. If you use plastic enclosures, use uncoated polyester, cellulose triacetate, polyethylene, or polypropylene never PVC. If you can't keep RH below 80%, don't use plastic enclosures.

Store comic books vertically with like sizes and types together, with good support, preferably preservation-quality backing boards.

Store comic books in preservation storage boxes that are right size for issues. Do not over fill the boxes.

Handle with Care

Don't use paper clips, rubber bands, staples, marking pens, or highlighters all can stick, stain, deform, or otherwise damage comic book issues.

Handle gently. Wash and dry hands often, and use two hands or a support to prevent bending.

Repairing Damaged or Worn Issues

Consider carefully before repairing damaged or worn issues yourself, as this may lower value. Send issue to specialists for flattening or dry-cleaning to avoid damage and decreased value. Special issues can be submitted to a commercial expert for grading and special encapsulation in hard-shell preservation quality holders.

**For more tips please visit
www.ala.org/preservationweek**

Best-selling author, television host, and library advocate Brad Meltzer will serve as 2016 Honorary Chair of Preservation Week®, April 24–30, 2016, a time when libraries throughout the country will provide information and expertise on how to archive and preserve individual and institutional treasures.

Preservation Week® is supported by the Association for Library Collections and Technical Services, a division of the American Library Association.



Brad Meltzer

Preservation Week Honorary Chair, 2016

Preservation

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Association for Library Collections & Technical Services

ALA American Library Association