

PROCESSING TEXTUAL RECORDS

- Remove metal paper clips and staples. They often rust and cause deterioration of the paper. Newer staples and paper clips are coated and will not rust. You may leave these intact if the papers are in danger of separating. Watch to make sure they are not causing damage. If possible use a plastic clip. Place a folded paper under the clip to prevent indentations that tend to break down the paper over time.
- Remove rubber bands as they become sticky and permanently attached to the paper.
- Where a newspaper clipping is essential for future preservation, it is advisable to have it photocopied on acid free paper and preserve the copy rather than the original. When saving newspaper clippings, be sure to date the clipping and identify the paper from which it is taken. If you wish to keep the clipping, place in a Mylar enclosure.
- Materials should be flattened as far as this is possible. Always unfold materials for permanent filing and storage. Paper with a fold will ultimately become perforated and tears at the seam. If the unfolded item is too large to place in the file folder or box, remove from the material and place a note saying what was removed and where to locate it. Place these oversized items flat on a surface that will support the whole document. If items are tightly rolled, contact your District Archivist for methods of flattening. Do not unroll, especially photographs, as the document may tear or the photograph may crack.
- Scrapbooks purchased in retail stores for photographs and documents are not recommended because the paper is not acid free. If you can, construct your own scrapbook using acid free paper and detachable mounts for documents and photographs. Do not use glue, scotch tape or any type of permanent substance to attach items. These will, over time, damage the material you wish to save. If you receive a scrapbook already assembled and have decided the contents are in danger, you can photograph the pages and then disassemble them. Proceed to store the items in proper archival fashion. If that is not possible, place acid free tissue paper between the pages to at least prevent the deterioration of items on opposite pages affecting each other.
- Photo albums should be acid free, Lignum, and PVC free. Do not buy ones that just say archival.
- Security copies, especially for irreplaceable and invaluable documents, should always be made.
- Do not attempt to mend, restore or otherwise “treat” valuable items. Check with the District Archivist when in doubt and before attempting any repairs.