

# Elements of a Good Historical Records Preservation Strategy

- Use file names, folders, and metadata that will help you identify and locate inventory, and regularly delete unwanted files.
- Minimize handling, and handle only with clean, dry hands.
- Avoid touching image/print areas.
- Do not use paper clips, staples, rubber bands, adhesives, or self-stick tape.
- Remember paper printed with toner will not last long.
- Use only archival quality digital copies to avoid degeneration.
- Keep ambient temperatures below 70 degrees F.
- Keep relative humidity between 30 to 50%.
- Store in a clean, climate-controlled area free of pests and pollution.
- Make high-quality images in high definition formats.
- Consider needed storage—digital images can consume huge amounts of storage space.
- Check your images at least once a year for fading.
- Use storage devices often to ensure they are still working properly.
- Back up files onto at least two different storage media.
- Store backups in multiple physical places with good storage conditions to avoid loss.
- Migrate files to the latest technology every 3–5 years before the current reading software or hardware becomes obsolete.
- Digitally preserved information can be more accessible to a much larger customer base and protects the original records.
- Increased online use not only benefits the local archive but also the local community through increased access, awareness, and even heritage business.

Source—Library of Congress Preservation

