

Mastering the Preservation of Art: Checklist

Environmental Conditions

To prevent climate damage to artworks, maintain stable temperature and humidity levels. Aim to keep relative humidity (RH) predominantly between 45-55% and temperatures between 15-23°C for 95% of the time for mixed collections, with absolute limits of 40-60% RH and 15-26°C throughout the year to prevent mold growth and material damage.

Avoid direct sunlight and limit exposure to natural and artificial light as much as possible. Maximum light intensities (measured in lux) depend on the materials of the artworks. For example, light intensities of 250-300 lux are acceptable for paintings, while light-sensitive paper or textile objects should only be exposed to 30-50 lux. Use UV filters on windows and UV-free, dimmable lights to prevent fading of pigments and yellowing of supports.

Handling and Storage

Always wear nitrile gloves and avoid direct contact with the surface of artworks.

Store artworks in a secure, climate-controlled environment. Use only archival, acid-free materials for packing and padding.

Ensure proper packaging and appropriate transportation. Use custom-made climate-controlled crates, including insulated ones if necessary. Climate and vibration-sensitive artworks should be transported in climate-controlled trucks with air suspension by qualified personnel.

Enclosure, Mounting and Framing

Use only archival, acid-free materials for mounting and framing.

Determine in advance which packing, and enclosure materials can be used to avoid contact damage or marks, such as dimples, on the artwork's surface.

Pest Management (Integrated Pest Management)

Conduct regular inspections to detect increased pest activity early on or hire a professional for this purpose.

Engage only professional conservators-restorers for implementing any treatment measures on artworks.

Documentation

Request detailed condition reports for each artwork, documenting its state of preservation with textual descriptions, damage mapping, and photographic documentation (purchase, loan).