

THE FOUNDATION OF THE AMERICAN INSTITUTE FOR CONSERVATION OF HISTORIC AND ARTISTIC WORKS

Top Ten Conservation Websites

The web is full of advice on almost anything. Just as medical advice found on the web can range in quality, so can advice on caring for your treasures. The following is our "Top Ten List" of sites for non-technical, concise, and reliable information on care of collections. However, be aware that self-diagnosis, in medicine or in conservation, can be tricky. Glass and Plexiglas may look alike, for example, but can be damaged by using the wrong cleaning methods. What might work for an oil painting could be disastrous if used on watercolors. When in doubt, contact a professional! (See AIC's directory of conservators at www.conservation-us.org/findaconservator)

The American Institute for Conservation of Historic and Artistic Works (AIC)

www.conservation-us.org

We'd be nuts if we didn't start with our own website, wouldn't we? Seriously, you can find information on a variety of topics in our Resource Center, including a series of flyers on how to care for your treasures, advice on dealing with wet materials, and more. Back issues of the *Journal of the AIC* can be searched for specific topics. AIC Specialty Group web pages provide detailed information and publications. And, of course, check out our interactive guide to finding a conservator (www.conservation-us.org/findaconservator).

AIC is the national association of conservation professionals. AIC and its foundation, FAIC, provide publications, education, and other resources in support of conservation of our shared heritage.

Conservation OnLine (CoOL)

www.cool.conservation-us.org

CoOL contains thousands of pages of information on conservation topics. It is intended for conservation professionals world-wide, but many of its resources are useful for anyone caring for collections. You can find conservation professionals world-wide through the ConsDir directory; learn about 19th century photography in the "Albumen" subsite; or even get a list of films and television shows featuring conservators to build your own film festival.

CoOL was operated for over 20 years by Stanford University. FAIC assumed responsibility for the site in the summer of 2009.

Foundation for the American Institute for Conservation of Historic and Artistic Works (FAIC)

<http://www.conservation-us.org/foundation/initiatives>

The Foundation of the American Institute for Conservation has information about several of the FAIC initiatives, including CoOL, AIC-CERT, Alliance for Response, State heritage Emergency Partnership, MayDay, Connecting to Collections Care, STASH, and others.

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Library of Congress (LC)

<http://www.loc.gov/preserv/>

Of special interest are the "Caring for Your Collections" and "Preparing, Protecting, and Preserving Family Treasures." Books, papers, photographs, electronic media, and even leather items are covered.

Minnesota Historical Society (MNHS)

<http://www.mnhs.org/preserve/conservation/>

Lots of information on caring for collections, including one of the best series of short documents on salvaging various wet materials, from archaeological objects to wooden artifacts.

National Archives and Records Administration (NARA)

<http://www.archives.gov/preservation/formats/>

The National Archives provides information on how to store and care for books, papers, photographs, and multimedia materials.

National Center for Preservation Technology and Training (NCPTT)

<http://www.ncptt.nps.gov/>

This Center within the U.S. National Park Service provides a wealth of information and resources on preservation. Check out the short instructional videos under the "Videos" tab. You'll find demonstrations on various aspects of cemetery care, laying drystone walls, and even replacing trees in historic landscapes.

National Park Service (NPS)

http://www.nps.gov/museum/publications/conservation/cons_toc.html

The National Park Service publishes "Conserve O Grams," short PDF documents on specific topics intended for individuals caring for museum collections. Many of the publications focus on storage, from constructing cabinets to rolling flags.

Northeast Document Conservation Center (NEDCC)

<http://www.nedcc.org>

Under "Resources," check out the NEDCC Preservation Leaflets. These are designed for collecting institutions, but can certainly be applied to home collections as well. The focus is on books, papers, and photographs.

Saving Your Treasures

<http://www.netnebraska.org/extras/treasures/index.htm>

Based on an NET Television program featuring professionals from the Nebraska State Historical Society's Gerald R. Ford Conservation Center and the State Library Commission, this site provides video clips that demonstrate practical and effective methods to help ensure that artifacts, photographs, and documents will survive into the future.

That's ten sites, as promised, but there are so many more! Here is a "bonus" site on historic preservation, and four excellent sites from outside the United States:

National Trust for Historic Preservation (NTHP)

<http://www.preservationnation.org/>

If you find yourself living in (or caring for) "This Old House," you may appreciate the guidance offered here on going green, weatherproofing, and complete rehabilitation of older homes.

Australian Institute for Conservation of Cultural Material (AICCM)

<http://aiccm.org.au/>

In addition to links to information on collections care and salvaging keepsakes after a disaster, the photo gallery of "Remedies Gone Wrong" (<http://aiccm.org.au/conservation/remedies-gone-wrong>) is a graphic reminder that too little knowledge can be a dangerous thing.

Canadian Conservation Institute (CCI)

<http://www.cci-icc.gc.ca/>

In English and French. CCI is one of the world's leaders in conservation research. The main CCI website home page includes links to resource for Conservation Professionals, Museums and Archives, Aboriginal Cultural Centres, Conservation Students and the General Public. You have access to the extensive documentation of the research and outreach compiled by the CCI since it's founding in 1972. Their CCI Notes <https://www.cci-icc.gc.ca/resources-ressources/ccinotesicc/index-eng.aspx> are now available online in English, French, and Spanish. This valuable resource includes guidelines for the care of almost every type of cultural object.

Institute for Conservation (ICON)

<http://icon.org.uk/>

Click on the "How to Care For..." series (<http://icon.org.uk/what-is-conservation/caring-your-collection>), which provides useful information on everything from archaeological materials to stained glass. Their website also contains a directory to conservators in the U.K.

National Archives of Australia

<http://www.naa.gov.au/collection/family-history/family-archive/index.aspx>

Clear, concise guides to storing and caring for family papers, photographs, and scrapbooks.

And, after you've done all that serious research, check out the videos on art conservation from major museums at <http://www.artbabble.org/topic/museum-practice/conservation>, or the conservation videos at <http://www.conservationreel.org/>.

These recommendations are intended as guidance only. FAIC does not assume responsibility or liability from their use. Selections of websites were based on perceived usefulness for the general public. There are many other websites with valuable conservation content designed for professional use that were omitted from this list.

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ABOUT AIC

The American Institute for Conservation of Historic and Artistic Works (AIC) is the only national membership organization supporting the professionals who preserve our cultural heritage. AIC plays a crucial role in establishing and upholding professional standards, promoting research and publications, providing educational opportunities, and fostering the exchange of knowledge among conservators, allied professionals, and the public. Learn more about AIC at www.conservation-us.org.



ABOUT FAIC

FAIC, the Foundation of the American Institute for Conservation of Historic & Artistic Works, supports conservation education, research, and outreach activities that increase understanding of our global cultural heritage. Learn more about FAIC at www.conservation-us.org/foundation.



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