

How to protect your treasured textiles

Over time, all fabrics change or deteriorate. How you care for them can mean the difference between preserving them for many years or for only a short time. Following the basic guidelines in this pamphlet will help protect your textiles from stains, discoloration, and deterioration.

Linens, cottons, silks, and wool are all organic materials that are susceptible to environmental damage. The major environmental factors that effect the long-term preservation of organic materials are light, temperature, humidity, insects, dust, dirt, and improper storage.

Light

Exposure to light is the greatest threat to textiles. Ultraviolet radiation from natural daylight and fluorescent light will cause them to become brittle and fade. Textiles stored in darkness will last far longer than those which are subject to light.

Temperature & Humidity

A stable and moderate climate with proper air circulation, as found inside most homes, is the best environment for storing textiles.

- High temperatures accelerate the deterioration of fine textiles.

Additionally, high humidity combined with high temperatures encourages the growth of mold and mildew and provides a desirable climate for insect activity.

If you live in an area in which the item is exposed to these extreme conditions, we advise placing a desiccant where you are storing the item.

- Low humidity is just as harmful because it may cause the item to become dry and brittle.

A steady temperature range of 68-72°F and relative humidity of 45-55% is ideal.

Air Pollution

Protect the item from dust and airborne dirt with LE BLANC® Storetex® LINEN PRESERVE™ acid-free, unbuffered tissue paper.

How to store your textiles using LE BLANC® LINEN PRESERVE®-unbuffered acid-free tissue paper

Item to be stored must be clean, dry, and unstarched.

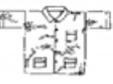
1. With clean hands, carefully fold item and buffer folds with tissue paper to minimize permanent creasing and splitting of fibers. If item has a sleeve, stuff it with tissue

paper. Using several more sheets, completely cover the item.

2. Whenever possible, store wrapped items flat in a cool dry room.
 - a. If storing in a closet, make sure there is plenty of air circulation.
 - b. To avoid moisture or the transfer of acid, we recommend lining the drawer with the tissue paper to create a barrier between the wood and the wrapped textile.

For optimal protection, place item in our Storetex® Keep-Safe boxes.

- Do not place item in an airtight plastic bag.
 - Do not store item in the attic or basement.
 - For the best protection against atmospheric conditions, tissue paper should be replaced twice a year for open shelf storage such as a drawer or shelf. At that time, textile should be removed and inspected for insect infestation.
- Care should be taken to refold the item, changing the position of the folds to minimize permanent creasing and splitting.

The Pest and Its Life Cycle	The Damage Stage	Detection	Control	Prevention
<p>Clothes Moth and Larvae The Clothes moth spins webbing and lays eggs which hatch into larvae (small worms). The larvae spin a cocoon in which it transforms into an adult moth. Moth infestation can multiply rapidly and cause severe damage. Approximate size: Adult 9mm. larva 9mm.</p> 	<p>The larvae does damage by feeding on the protein of wool, fur, and silk. The cocoon, under which the larva feeds, includes bits of fiber from the object so that it is often effectively camouflaged.</p>	<p>A silky webbing is always associated with a moth infestation. It is important to inspect a textile on all sides when looking for infestation. Moth larvae leave holes or thin areas in a textile. If infestation is advanced, granular excrement can also be found on or around the textile. Moths prefer darkness and will shun light.</p>	<p>If infestation is localized it is possible to carefully vacuum the object, providing it is strong enough to withstand the suction. Vacuuming should be thorough on both sides of the object with special attention to seams and creases. Dry cleaning is advisable for contemporary garments as it will kill all stages of infestation. This treatment however is not always safe for historic textiles or luxury linens.</p>	<p>It can not be stressed enough that good housekeeping is essential in preventing an infestation. Examine garments and textiles very carefully before storing. Periodic inspection of collections is necessary for pest control.</p>
<p>Carpet Beetle and Larvae The hard shelled carpet beetle, black or mottled black and white, lays eggs which hatch into larvae. The larva is yellow to brown in color, and is very fast moving. A carpet beetle larva will molt several times during its life leaving a skin casting.</p> 	<p>The larvae of the carpet beetle can do extensive damage as it feeds without preference on wool, fur, and silk. The larvae also feed on dead insects.</p>	<p>If you have an infestation of carpet beetles you will be able to find bodies of adult beetles and larval skin castings in light fixtures, on window sills and in the cracks of floor boards. Carpet beetle larvae leave clean neat holes in textiles with a fine powder of the same color as the object left behind. By placing white paper in the bottom of boxes or on shelves, the powder left underneath the infested object will be clearly visible.</p>	<p>Carpet beetles, unlike moths, are attracted to light. Insect sticky traps set on window sills are effective in trapping carpet beetles. Carpet beetle eggs are very fragile and are easily destroyed when brushed off. An infested textile can be carefully vacuumed and/or dry-cleaned if appropriate.</p>	<p>Good housekeeping is very important. Dust, dirt, dead insects and human hair all act as food in sustaining a carpet beetle infestation. Light fixtures should be emptied of dead insects and storage areas containing textiles should be kept clean. Windows and vents should be properly sealed. Periodic inspection of textiles is essential. Carpet beetles can enter your home on flowers or plants.</p>
<p>Silverfish are small, wingless insects that do not have larvae in their life cycle. They lay eggs that hatch into nymphs and resemble miniature adult silverfish. Nymphs molt several times before they mature into adults. Approximate size: 12.5 mm.</p> 	<p>Both adult and nymph silverfish cause damage. They hide in cool, dark places and feed on sizing that consist of starch, sugar and/or protein. Silverfish have rasping mouth parts and cannot successfully chew textile fibers but can cause damage to fine fabrics such as silk, cotton, linen, and rayon.</p>	<p>Silverfish can leave irregular holes by eating the surface material of objects. Rarely do they cause a hole in the textile but rather a shaving off of the surface fibers.</p>	<p>The presence of silverfish indicates a moisture problem. Infested areas should be aired out and dried. A professional exterminator can successfully eliminate a silverfish problem.</p>	<p>Proper storage is important in the prevention of infestation. Nylon netting wrapped around storage boxes is an effective method in preventing the entry of pests. Storage areas should be kept dry.</p>
<p>Mold and Mildew are microorganisms that are ever present in the air and soil. Under certain conditions such as high humidity a fungal growth develops from spores. This can damage textiles. If fabrics are the least bit moist when stored, a mold and mildew problem may occur.</p> 	<p>Mold and mildew are spore growths and for nutrition they break down the cellulose found in cotton, linen, and rayon. They cause a stain which cannot be easily removed.</p>	<p>Mold and mildew appear as irregular shapes of gray, black, or green spots on fabrics. Mold and mildew will discolor fabrics and emit a musty odor.</p>	<p>Textiles that have evidence of mold and mildew should be aired out and then carefully vacuumed. It may be advisable to have the textile cleaned.</p>	<p>If proper air circulation is maintained and relative humidity of a storage area is kept at 45-55% with a temperature of 68-72 F, mold and mildew should not occur.</p>