

## WELCOME

This leaflet explains how to care for your precious and important volumes at home. It highlights best practice for storing your books to prevent further deterioration, environments that are damaging and how to handle your books to avoid further damage.



## FIND OUT MORE

### The full series

- #1 Caring for loose documents at home
- #2 Caring for books at home
- #3 Displaying prints and drawings at home
- #4 Caring for photographs at home
- #5 Caring for LPs and CDs at home
- #6 Caring for newspapers and offcuts at home
- #7 Pest monitoring at home

### Visit LMA online

[www.cityoflondon.gov.uk/things-to-do/history-and-heritage/london-metropolitan-archives](http://www.cityoflondon.gov.uk/things-to-do/history-and-heritage/london-metropolitan-archives)

### Suggested reading and websites

#### Institute of Conservation

[www.icon.org.uk](http://www.icon.org.uk)

Carter, John (1994)

#### ABC For Book Collectors

Oak Knoll, 2008

#### The National Trust Manual of Housekeeping

Viking, 1984

#### Looking for archival packaging?

[www.cityoflondon.gov.uk/things-to-do/history-and-heritage/london-metropolitan-archives/about-lma/archive-box-making](http://www.cityoflondon.gov.uk/things-to-do/history-and-heritage/london-metropolitan-archives/about-lma/archive-box-making)

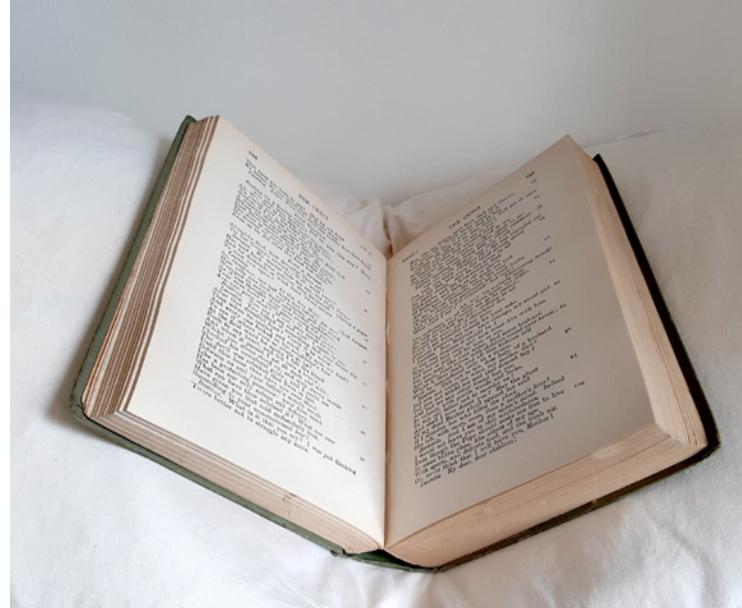
CARING FOR YOUR  
COLLECTION AT HOME

**BOOKS**

2/7

## Storage

- Store precious books in acid free boxes.
- Instead of wrapping books in newspaper, which is acidic, wrap them in acid free tissue.
- It is always best to leave a gap between the back of a bookshelf and wall for good ventilation which discourages mould growth.
- Try not to let dust gather on the top of your books. With a brush, gently dust away into a vacuum cleaner.
- Avoid storing books in bathrooms and kitchens where steam and frying can cause damage.
- Don't store books in damp basements or garages where mould can grow.
- Do store books in bedrooms and living rooms, where temperatures are warmer and drier.
- Don't store books in lofts and attics which have extremes of hot and cold temperatures.
- If your book is broken, you can store it horizontally to avoid further damage and loss of fragments (below).



## Handling

- Never pull a book off a shelf by the top of the spine. This is a vulnerable area that can be easily damaged.
- Never open a book forcefully, beyond its natural opening. This causes wear and tear on the spine and often results in the spine failing, causing breaks in the textblock.
- You can prop a book open at a convenient angle with a pillow if a book is heavy or fragile (above).
- Always handle pages with care as deteriorated papers are more susceptible to tears.

## Keep precious books away from:

- Damp corners, humid kitchens and areas prone to water leaks.
- Heat sources, such as radiators, fires, boilers, microwaves, ovens.
- Plants that require watering.
- Bright light that can damage books. Try to keep your books away from windows and halogen lamps that are also hot.
- Pets that like to shred paper.
- Liquids.

## Damaged books



### Seek a Conservator's opinion if your valuable books are damaged

- Never try to mend tears or book covers with plastic sticky tape – this can cause more damage as the adhesive on the tape degrades and is very difficult to remove in future.
- To find a conservator check the link on the back of the page.