



EXHIBITS 101

The Basics of How to Curate & Install an Exhibit in the Library
January 22, 2016

Library Exhibitions Committee

The Library Exhibitions Committee supports exhibits that highlight the University Library's rich and vast collections, and especially encourages exhibits that look beyond the walls of the Library and attempt to incorporate nationally or locally recognized themes and events, campus programs, or emerging research. The Committee maintains a wide variety of preservation-friendly supplies and offers modest funding assistance to exhibitors throughout the University Library system. The committee also manages exhibitions held in the designated Main Library display cases.

Members:

Miriam Centeno, Chair

Cara Bertram

Anna Chen

Kasie Janssen

Pat Miller

Cher Schneider

Exhibits 101

This workshop is intended to provide basic instruction in designing and installing a successful library exhibit. Thoughtful design ensures that an exhibit can be understood and enjoyed by a diverse audience, including people with disabilities. Careful selection of exhibit materials and proper use of supports helps protect library materials during exhibit. Topics discussed in this workshop will include:

- Selection of Materials for Exhibit
- Preservation Considerations for Exhibit Spaces
- Designing an Exhibit
- Supply and Funding Support for Exhibitors
- Exhibit Installation: Materials and Procedures

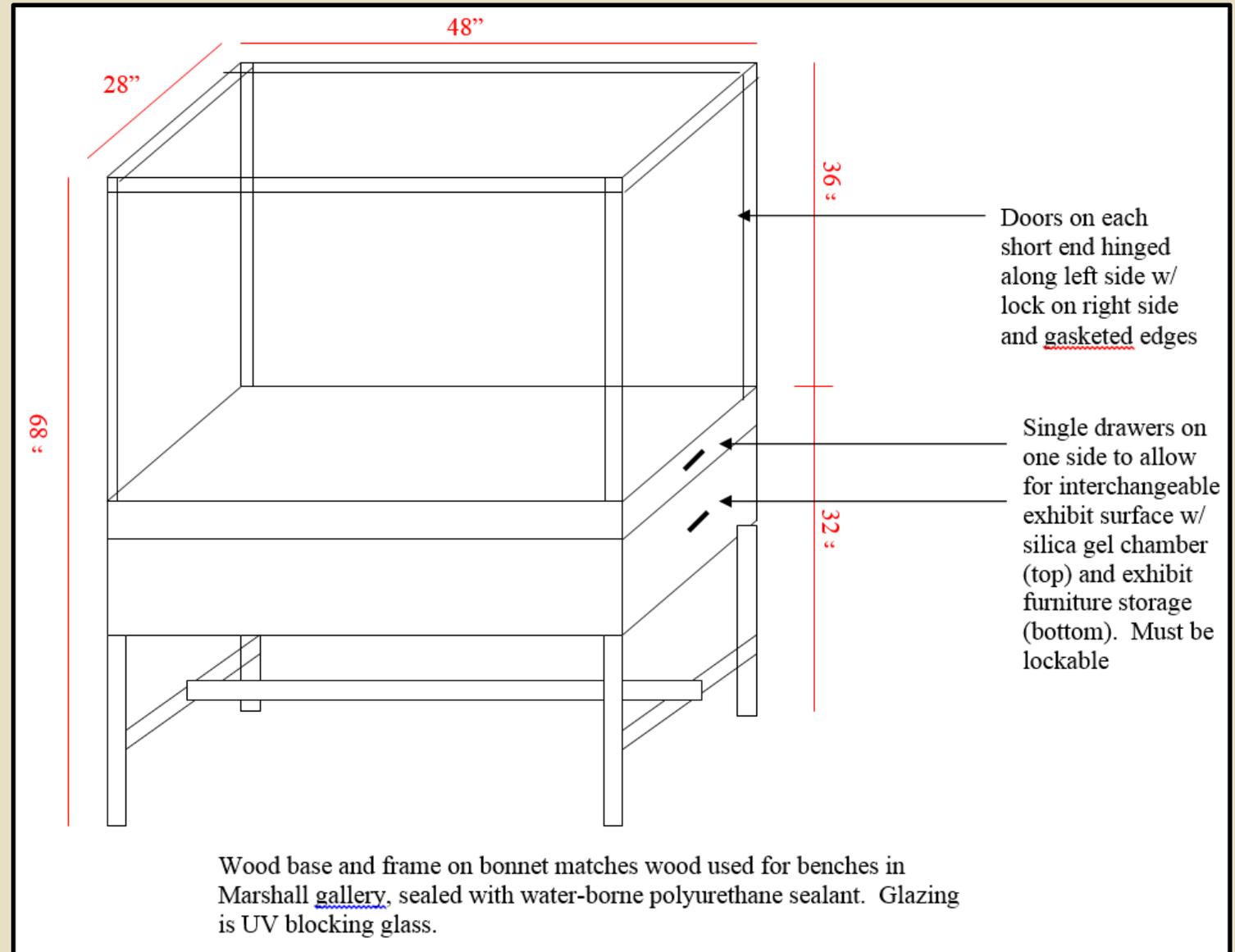


Selection of Materials for Exhibit

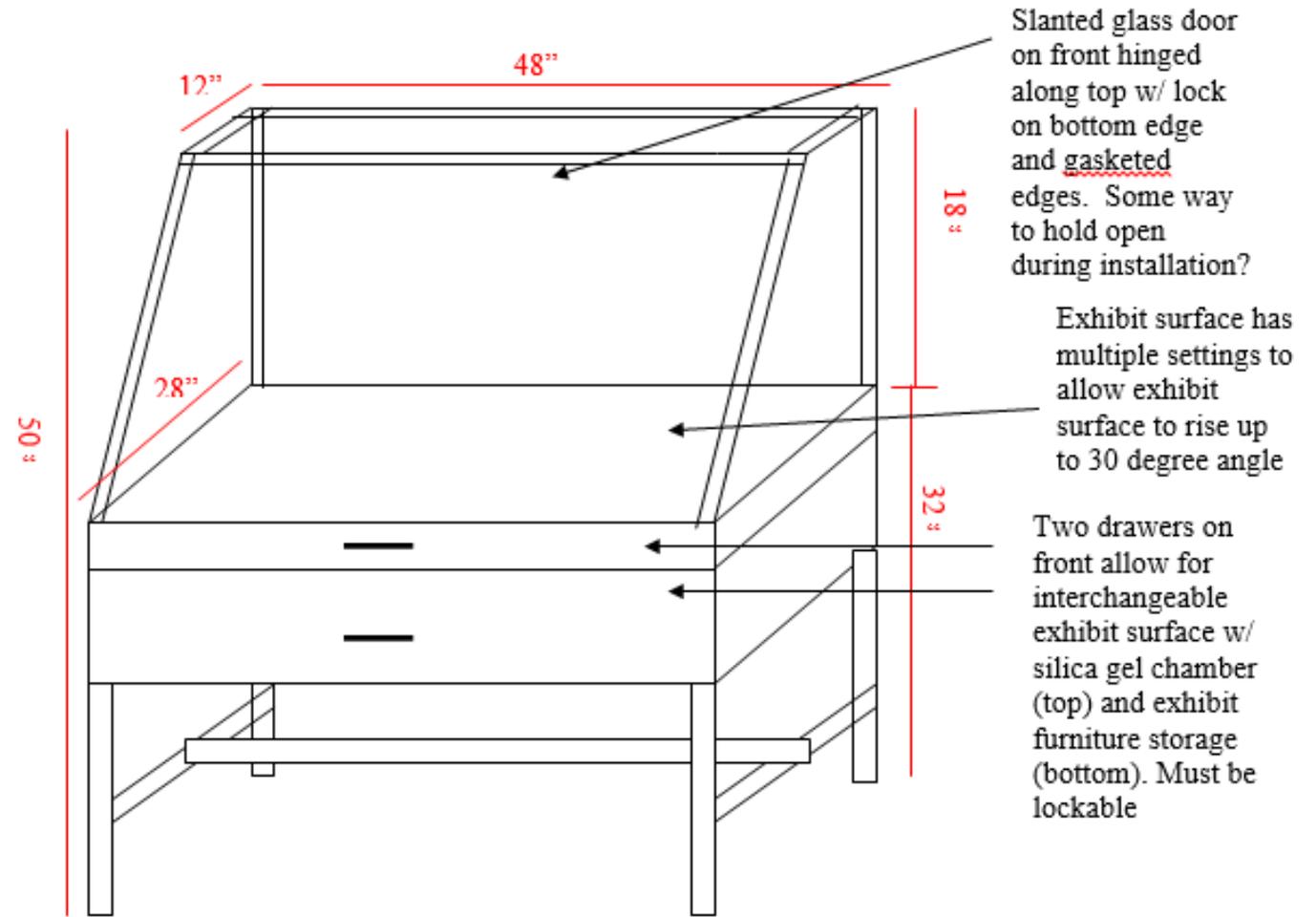
Selection of Materials

- What idea are you trying to communicate? Choose items to support this idea.
- How many items will be displayed?
- If they won't fill the space, add more items.
- If they are too large or numerous, edit or consider other formats (facsimiles of covers only, etc).
- How will these items be displayed? Think three-dimensionally!
- Will they fit in the case? **Check the case dimensions!**

Marshall Gallery



North South Gallery



Wood base and frame on bonnet matches wood used for benches in Marshall gallery. sealed with water-borne polyurethane sealant. Glazing is UV blocking glass.

Selection of Materials

- Are the items damaged or fragile?
- How Rare or Valuable is the item?
- Consider using another object or a facsimile
- Theft, vandalism, environmental damage, inherent vices, insects



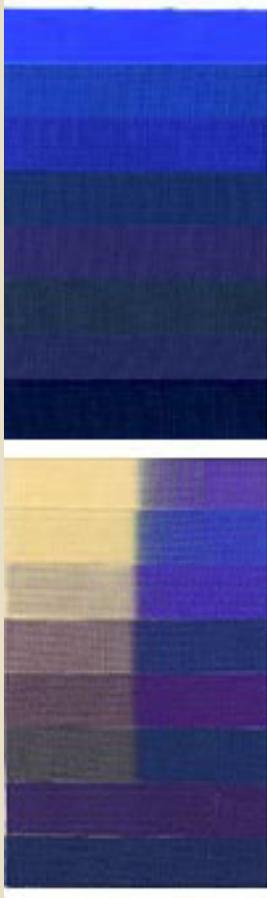
Preservation Consideration for Exhibit Spaces

Basic Preservation Concerns

- Environment: light, temperature and relative humidity levels, bugs and pests
- Physical support: book cradles, board supports, window mats, encapsulation
- Security: theft, vandalism, fire risk

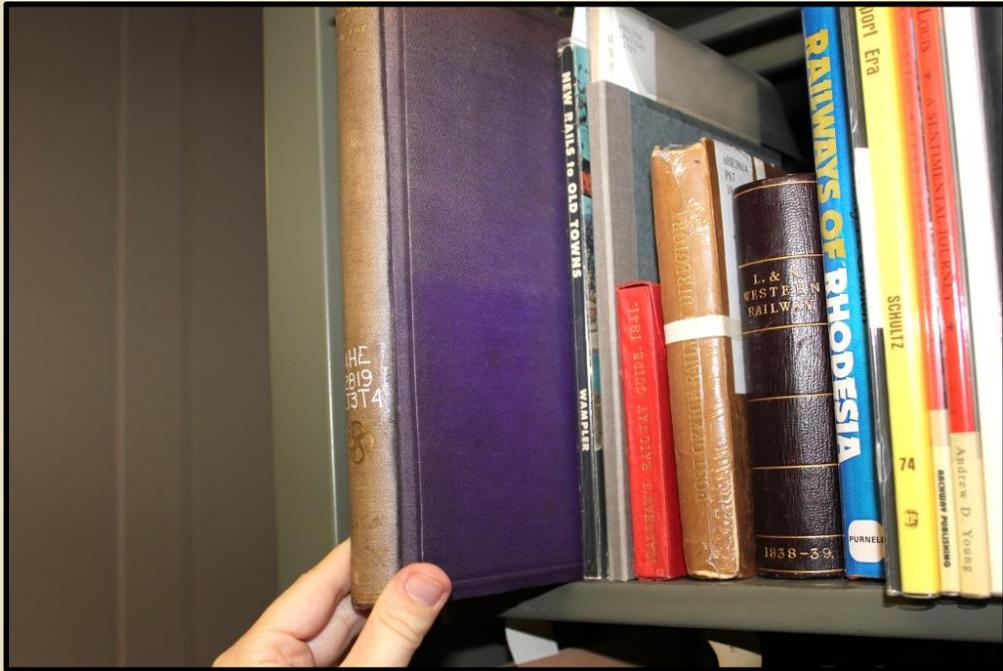


Light Damage



- We are using blue wool scales in the N-S corridor to determine how much fading can occur in a defined period of time in that area. No window coverings and minimal UV protection suggest that fading will be extreme to items displayed on the bulletin boards.
- Light Sensitive Materials:
 - Photographs
 - Documents using colorants – watercolors, ink jet prints, blueprints, paste papers, pen and marker
 - Textiles

Light Damage



Visible light damage to the books spine and front cover.
<http://blog.lib.uiowa.edu/speccoll/files/2013/07/purple.jpg>



Light that materials are exposed to in the North South Gallery.

Temperature and Relative Humidity

- Gallery areas have no environmental controls and both areas are adjacent to exterior doors
- Materials which are particularly sensitive to fluctuating humidity or temperature
 - Vellum and Parchment
 - Photographs



Vellum bindings distorted by humidity.



Conservation Recommendations

Do's

- Take into account possibility of theft or damage
- Use a facsimile whenever possible
- Change the opening of a book to prevent excessive light damage to one page
- Support each item using proper cradles, strapping, board, easels, and risers
- Select items early enough to ensure time for proper presentation – conservation is available with enough time
- Contact the Exhibitions Committee with any conservation related questions

Don'ts

- Display books with vellum or parchment bindings
- Display original photographs or other light sensitive items
- Hang original items on display boards
- Apply adhesive directly to an item to offer support
- Use items without the permission of the owning library



Designing an Exhibit

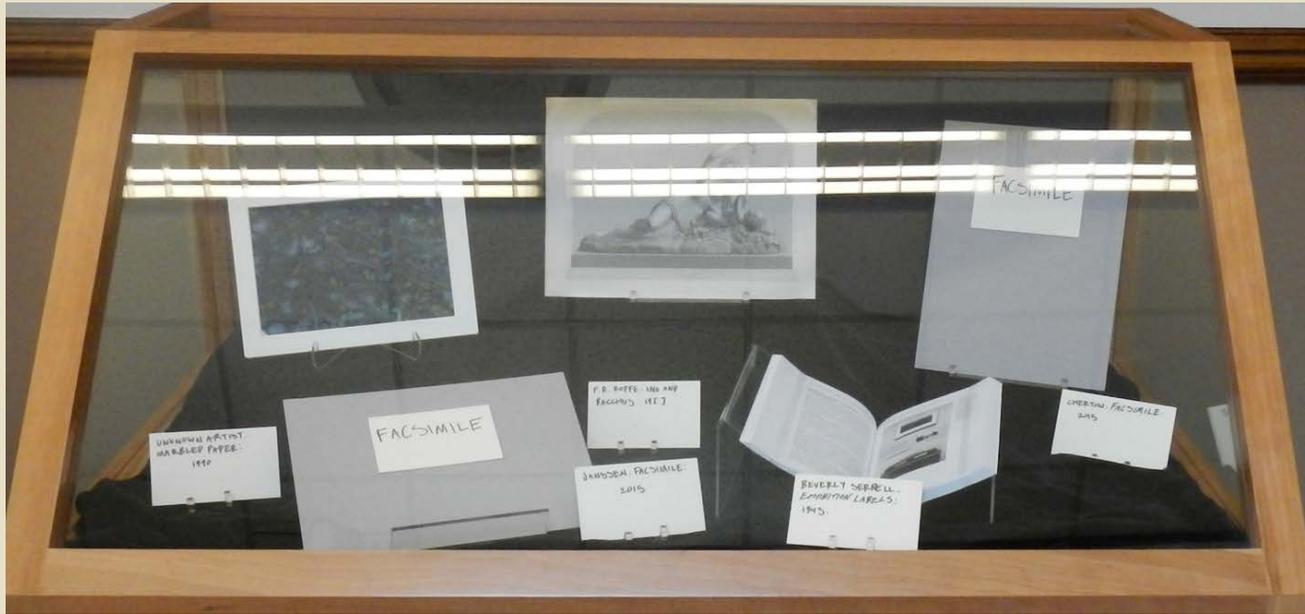
Designing an Exhibit

Aesthetics, clarity, and accessibility are all important components of exhibit design. Thoughtful design ensures that your exhibit can be understood and enjoyed by a diverse audience.

Exhibit Layout

- Avoid clutter. Limit the number of items and display accessories.
- Use simple, preferably solid color backdrops for items. This improves visibility, especially for those with vision deficits.
- Use risers to take advantage of vertical space.
- Whenever possible, prop up exhibit materials at an angle to improve visibility for people in wheelchairs.

Good Display Case Example



- Flat paper items are supported with mat board, photo corners and easels.
- Polyethylene strapping gently secures the book's pages without distracting from information.
- Descriptive labels are mounted on board and displayed using easels.
- A neutral black cloth is used as a background. This improves visibility, especially for viewers with vision deficits.
- Risers and easels are used to fill vertical space and improve visibility for viewers in wheelchairs.

Bad Display Case Example



- Original color documents are displayed in a bright hallway.
- Flat paper items are sagging and unsupported.
- The glass weight is holding the desired page open, but it distracts from the information and puts uneven weight on the book. Polyethylene strapping should be used to keep a book open to the correct page.
- The descriptive labels are propped against the objects on display.
- The background fabric is a colorful print. This is distracting and may make the display inaccessible to a viewer with vision deficits.
- Items are displayed flat. This lacks visual appeal and may make them inaccessible to viewers.

Signs and Labels



New Views:
*Recent Work from the
Midwest Chapter
of the Guild of Book Workers*



The Guild of Book Workers was founded in 1906 "... to establish and maintain a feeling of kinship and mutual interest among workers in the several hand book crafts." The Guild believes there is a responsibility among civilized people to sustain the art and craft involved with the production of fine books. Guild members work to broaden public awareness of the hand book arts, to stimulate commissions of fine bindings, and to stress the need for sound book conservation and restoration.



This exhibition highlights the work of the the Guild's Midwest chapter. Most of the works here are from the Midwest, but some have come as far as California, Massachusetts, and the Czech Republic.

The Guild's major focus has always been on bookbinding. Excellent examples of design binding appear in this exhibition. But the Guild appreciates & promotes all of the related book arts: hand papermaking & decorating, printing, calligraphy & illumination, & the conservation, preservation, & restoration of older book materials. More recently a stronger interest has developed in "artist's books". This broader interpretation & definition of the book has attracted a new group of devotees to the Guild. Welcome back to the "New View."



Label Content

- Who is the audience? What do you want them to know?
- Identify the object in the label
- Avoid colloquialisms, technical language or acronyms.
- Keep sentences short, ideally 15-25 words.
- Use the active voice.
- Keep the whole label short.

Label Design

- Ideal font size depends on distance between the reader and the label
 - Under 3 feet: minimum 20pt
 - 3-6 feet: 48pt or larger
- Suggested fonts:
 - Times Roman or New Century Schoolbook (serif)
 - Helvetica, Univers or Futura (sans serif)
- Do NOT use:
 - Condensed, extended, or very thin type
 - Script fonts or italics
 - All caps

Label Design

- Label background should be solid and provide high contrast with the text
- Limit each line of text to 55 characters long
- Justify left margin and keep a ragged right margin
- Spacing between lines should be at least 20 percent greater than the font size used (example: 20pt font, 24pt spacing). **To adjust spacing in Microsoft Word:**
 1. Select the paragraphs for which you want to change the line spacing.
 2. On the Home tab, in the Paragraph group, click Line Spacing.
 3. Adjust the line spacing to at least 20 percent greater than the font size.



Supply and Funding Support for Exhibitors

Exhibit Supplies and Funding

The Library Exhibitions Committee stocks an assortment of exhibit supplies for use in the Marshall Gallery and North-South Corridor. The committee also offers up to \$200 per exhibit for additional supplies and printing.

Libraries may also request funding for supplies and printing costs associated with exhibits in their spaces.

To find out more about funding for exhibitions, please contact the Library Exhibitions Committee.

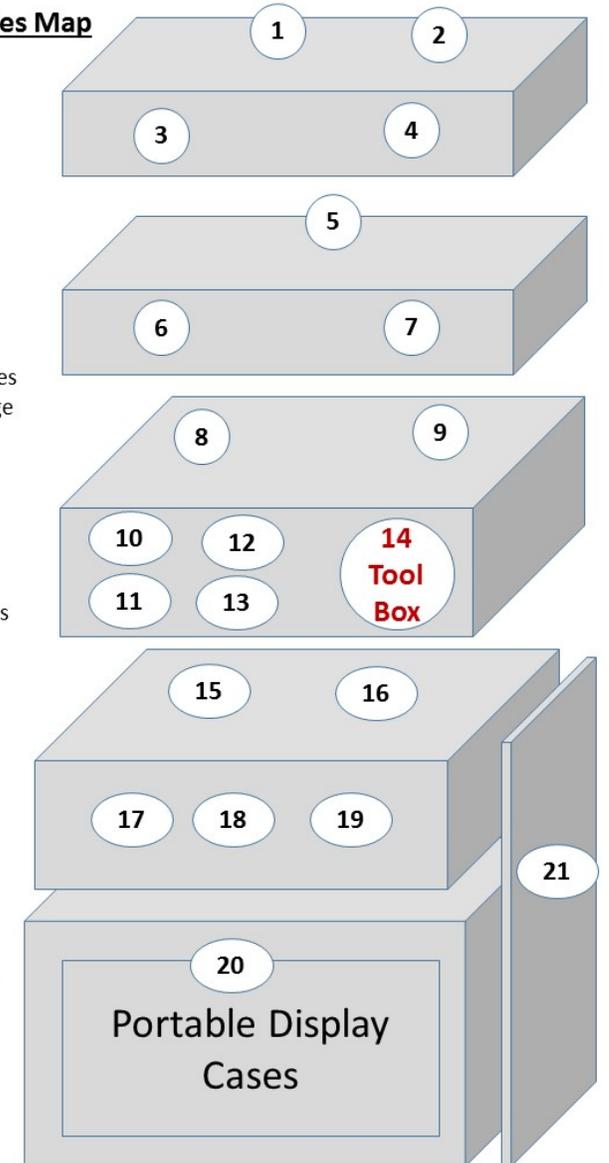
Borrowing Supplies

To view or borrow exhibit supplies, check out keys for the exhibit supply cabinet in Preservation, 425 Library. The supply cabinet is located in 421A. Please return all keys promptly once you have finished.

Please refer to the inventory list & the cabinet map to find what you need.

Exhibit Cabinet Supplies Map

1. Fabric Natural Linen Props & Risers
2. Fabric- Natural Linen & Black
3. Acrylic menus
4. Cleaning Supplies
5. Acrylic Book Cradles – Large
6. Acrylic Book Cradles – Wedges
7. Acrylic Flat Display Cradles
8. Black Fabric Risers – Large & Small & Poster Board Mightee Mounts
9. Acrylic Risers – Large & Small
10. Small Boards Pieces for Labels
11. Pins, tacks & suction cups
12. Acrylic Mini Label Easels
13. Acrylic Mini Easels
- 14. Tool Box**
15. Acrylic Book Cradles – Medium
16. Glass Weights
17. Acrylic Book Cradles – Small & Medium
18. Upright Easels & Plate Easels
19. Exhibit Reference Books & Labels Stickers
20. Portable Display Cases
21. Oversize Board



Purchasing Supplies

If you require supplies or props not available in the supply cabinet, contact the Exhibitions Committee to discuss purchasing or fabricating the necessary props.



Printing

Color and large-scale printing may be done through UIUC Document Services.

1. 7 day advance order is needed
2. File Preparation tips
<http://union.illinois.edu/shop/document-services/preparation-tips>.
3. Upload formatted documents to Box (<https://box.illinois.edu/>) and share link excom@library.illinois.edu.
4. The Exhibitions Committee will work with Document Services to get the order placed and paid for.
5. If the cost of the printing job will exceed the \$200 allotment, the committee may request that the exhibitors change the print size or quantity to lower the cost.

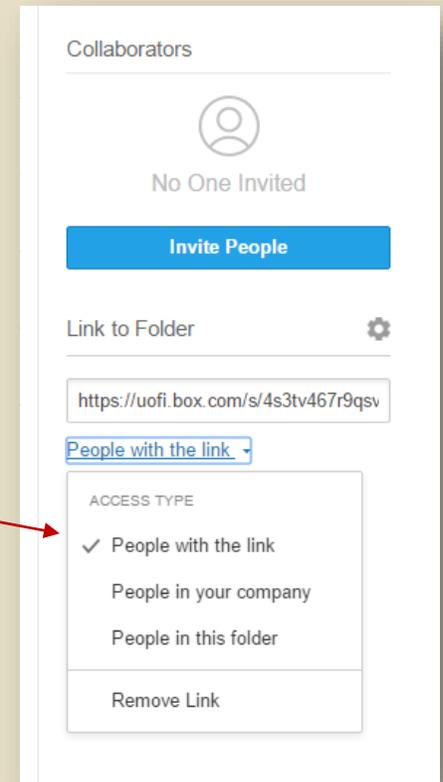




Exhibit Installation: Materials and Procedures

General Care and Handling

- Wash and dry hands before handling library and archival materials.
- Exhibit cases should be lined with acid-free materials, such as cotton, linen, polyester, or acid-free card stock when installing archival or sensitive materials.
- Do not lay exhibit materials on the floor.
- Avoid piling Library materials on top of one another, especially if adhesive may be present on the back of another item.
- Do not allow adhesives or fasteners to come into direct contact with original materials.
- Ensure that materials are properly supported. Items toppling over can cause irreparable damage.

Books and Other Bound Materials

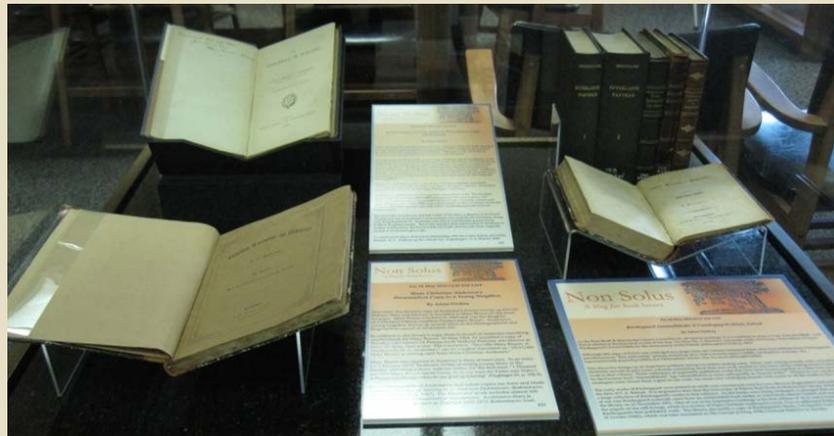


Books and Other Bound Materials

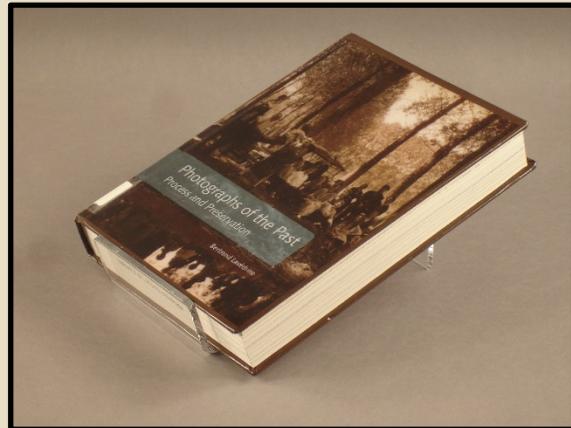
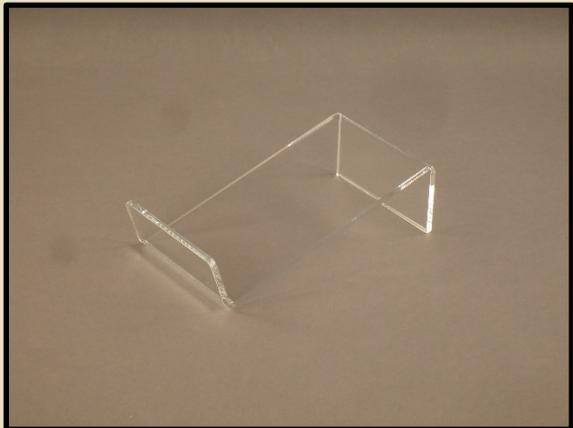
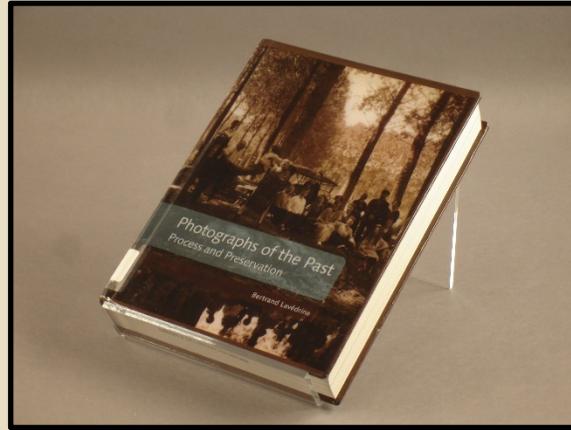
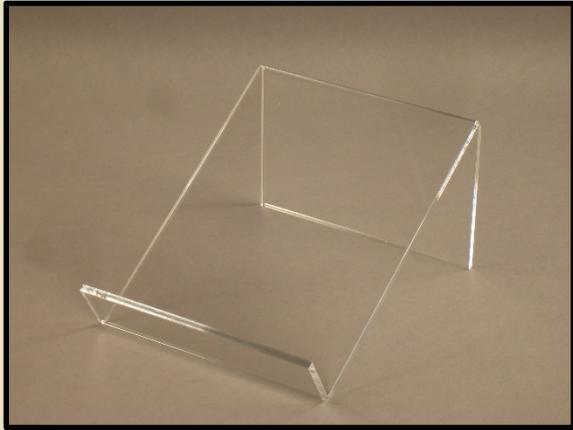
- Do not force books to open flat. Regardless of condition, a book should never be opened beyond 130 degrees.
- Use a book cradle to properly support bound materials. Cradles should be large enough to support the entire book. If the book is being displayed open, the cradle should support the covers at an appropriate angle – never force a book to open flat.
- If the pages won't remain open naturally, wrap a strip of polyethylene strapping around each side of the open book and secure it with double-sided tape. Do not allow the tape to come in contact with the volume.

Plexiglas Book Cradles

- Custom, fabricated in Conservation
- The opening should not be strained
- Support the spine and text block of a book
- Monitor exposure times
- Consider changing the display pages or use digital surrogates

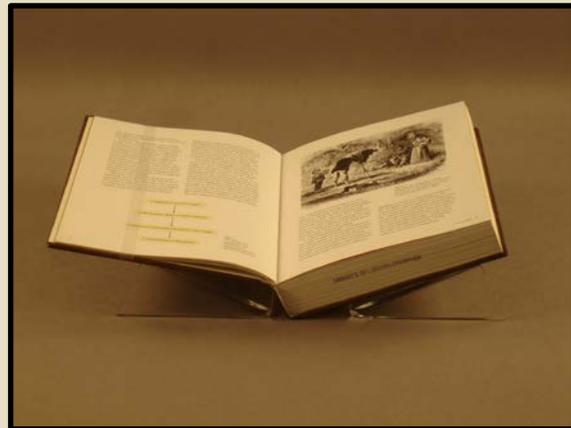
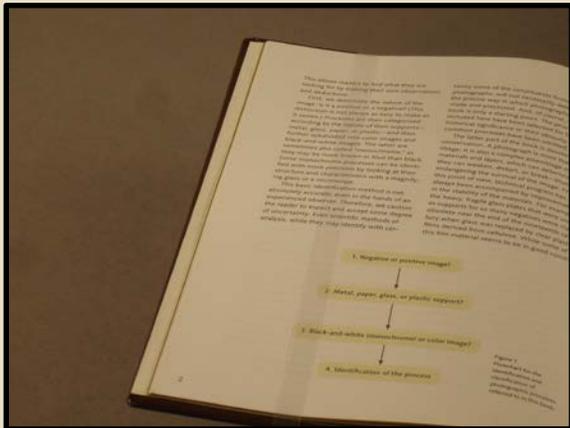
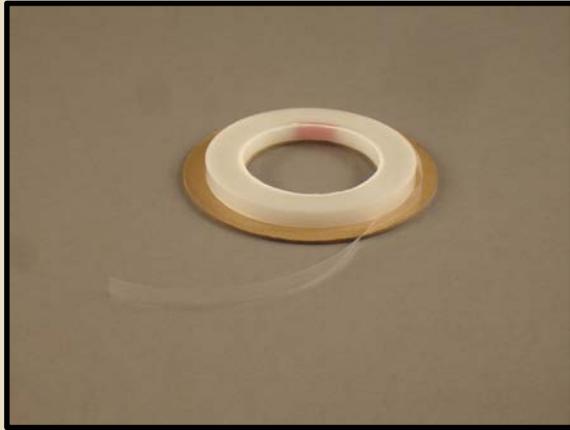


Plexiglas Upright Cradles



Use upright cradles to display closed books. Cradles of varied sizes and angles provide visual variety.

Polyethylene Strapping



Polyethylene strapping can be used to keep a book open to the desired page. Use double-sided tape to adhere the strapping to itself (not to the book!) from the back.

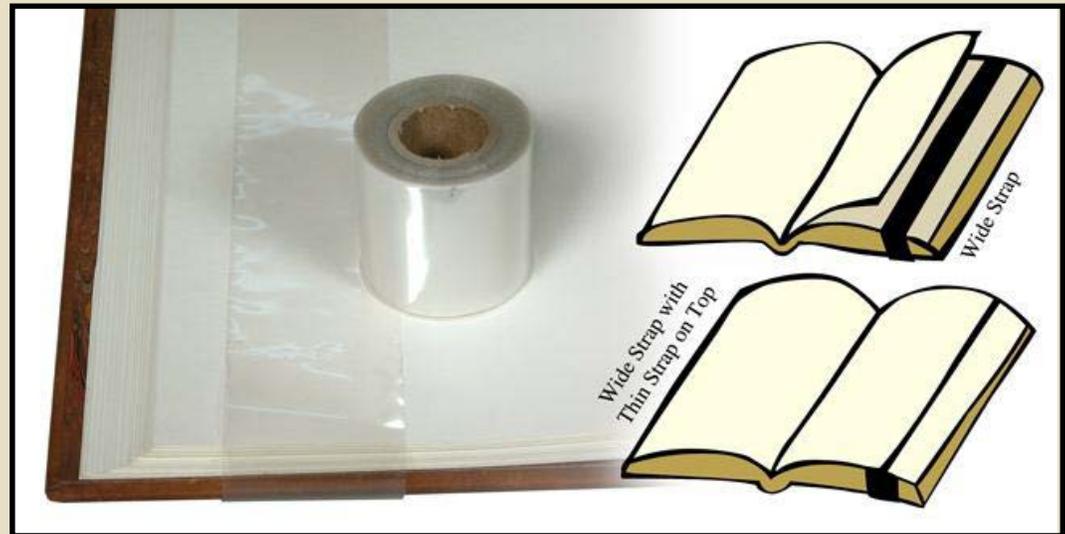
Polyethylene Strapping

Good for

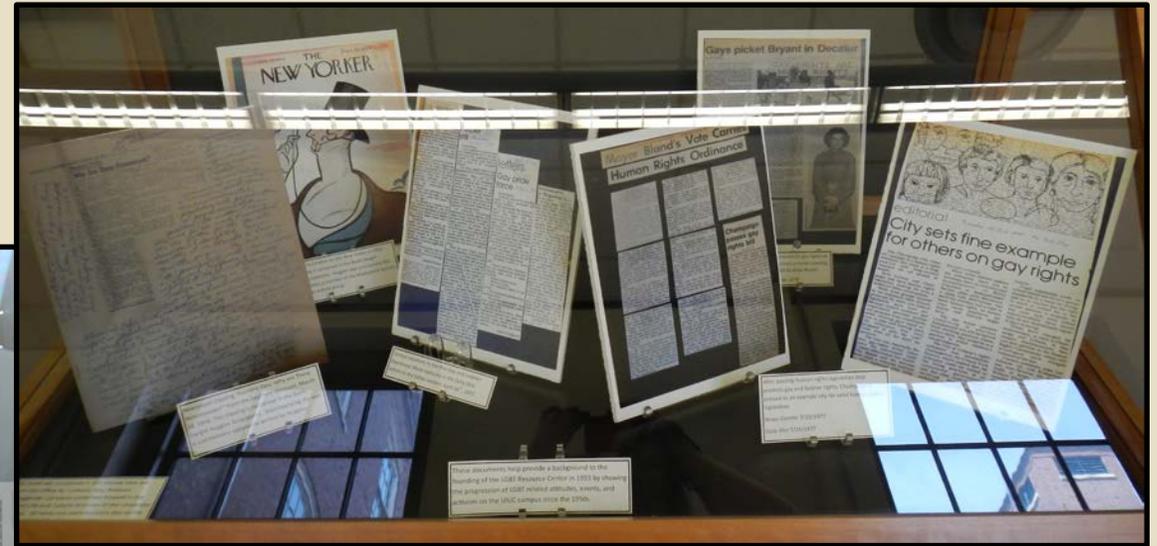
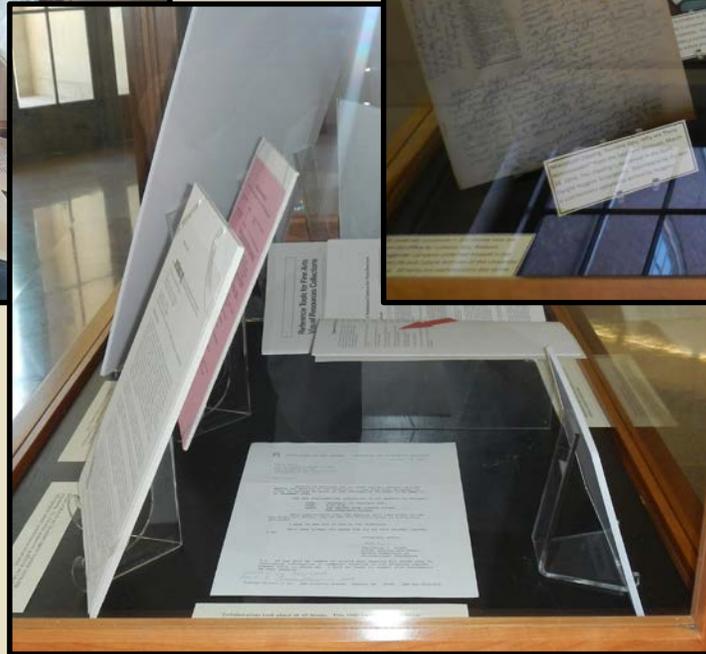
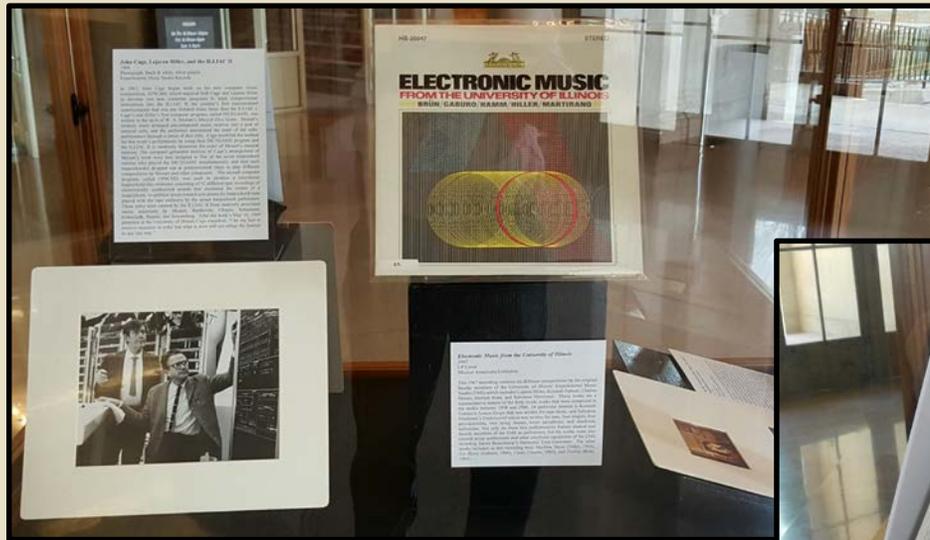
- Restraining pages
- Supporting textblocks
- Temporarily fixing books to their cradles

Pros

- Inert Material
- Softer than Mylar, better for brittle paper
- Comes in varying widths
 - 3/16", 3/8", 1", 2" 2 1/2"



Photographs, Flat Paper, Unbound Materials



Photographs, Flat Paper, and Other Unbound Materials

- If possible, use a good quality color copy in place of original materials.
- Unbound paper objects should be temporarily backed with acid-free card stock or mat board. Trim the card stock or mat board to be slightly larger than the object. Use photo corners to mount the object.
- Wear clean cotton gloves at all times when handling photographic materials.
- Do not allow materials to sag or slip out of place due to inadequate support.

Museum (Mat) Board

Pros

- Acid free
- Many colors available
- Cheap
- Easiest to customize

Cons

- Least sturdy
- Need weights
- Can abrade
- Disposable

Mats can be custom made for items on exhibit.

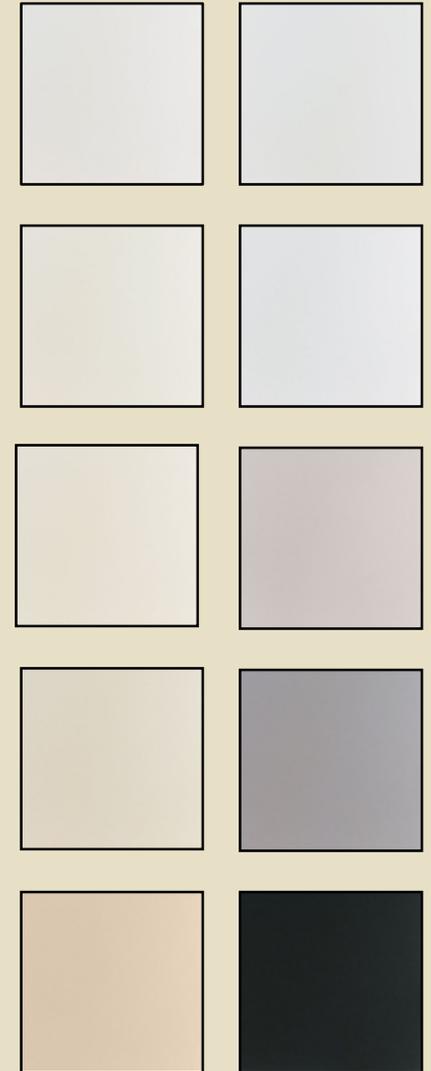
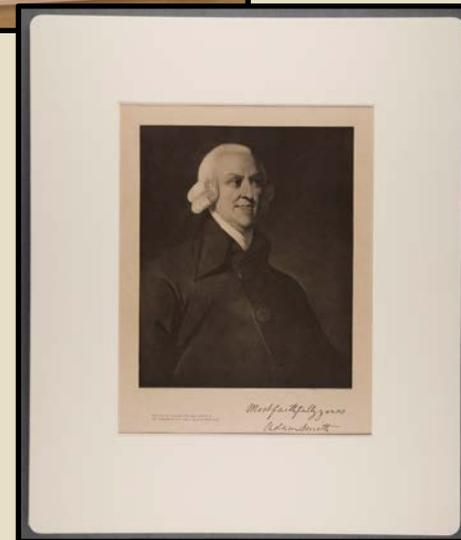
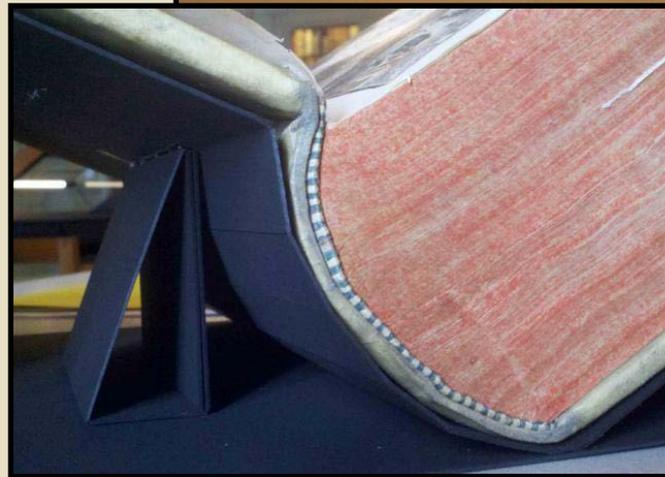
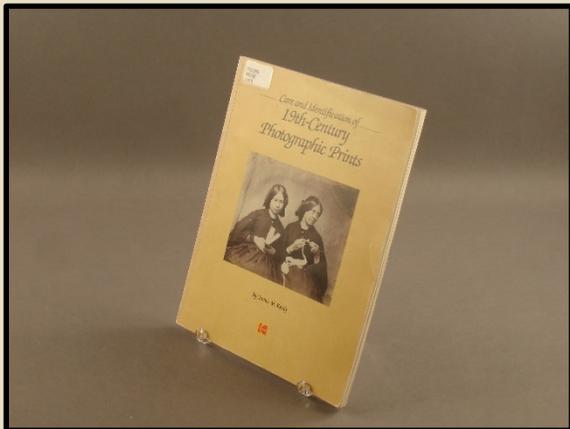
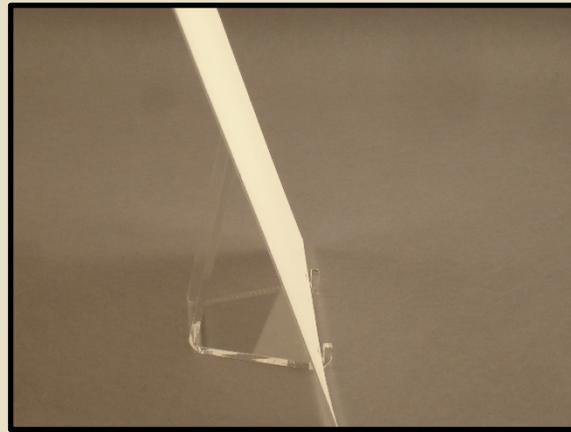
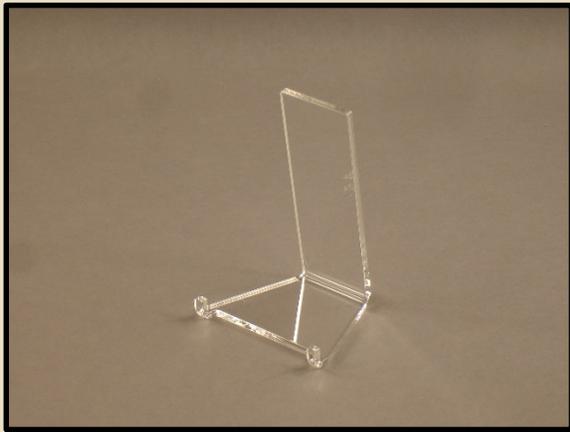


Photo Corners



- Adhere photo corners to mat board to keep flat paper materials in place.
- Position the item on the mat board, carefully mark where the corner of the items sits on the mat board, and adhere the photo corners to the mat board accordingly.
- Carefully slide the corners of the paper object into the photo corners.

Upright Easels



Use low profile easels to display thin books, pamphlets, or flat objects at a semi-upright angle. Place a sheet of acid-free board behind the item. Very thin items can be temporarily attached to this support board using polyethylene strapping or photo corners.

Mylar

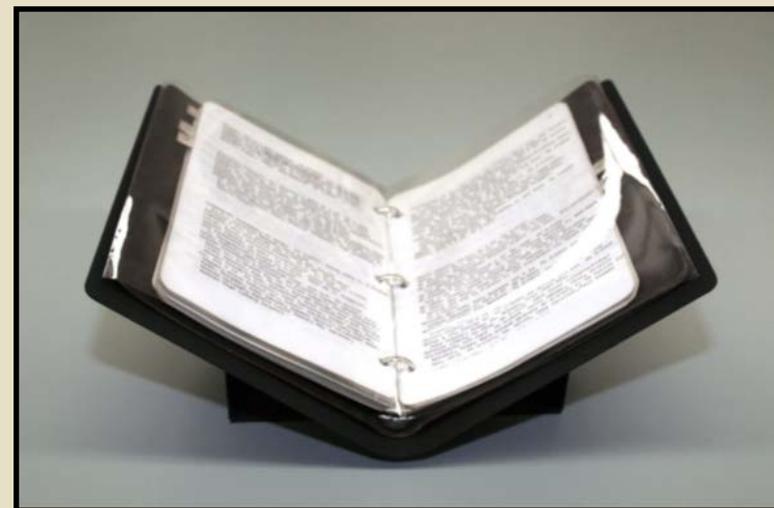
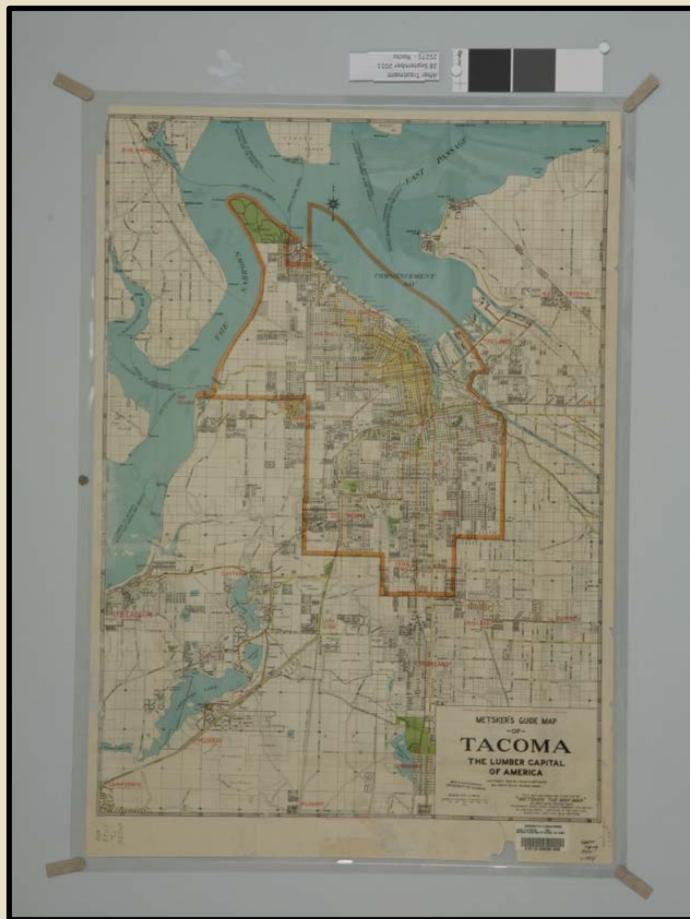


Plate Easels & Mini Display Easels

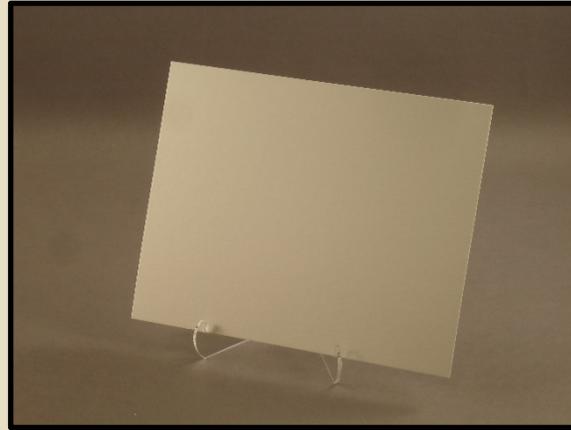
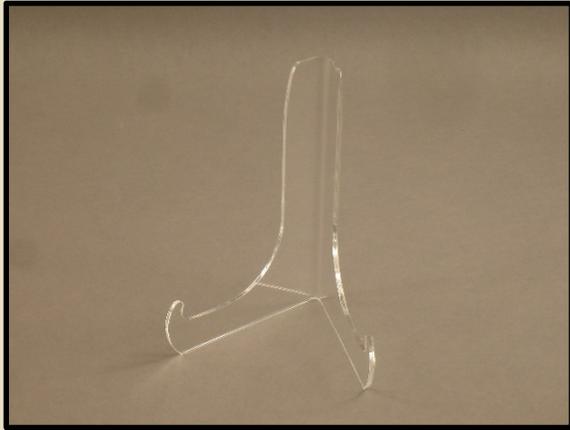
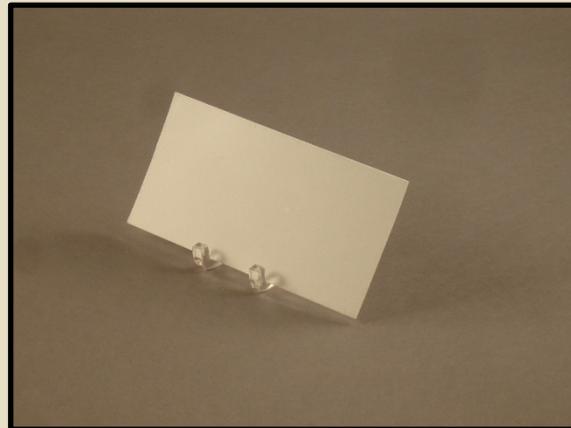
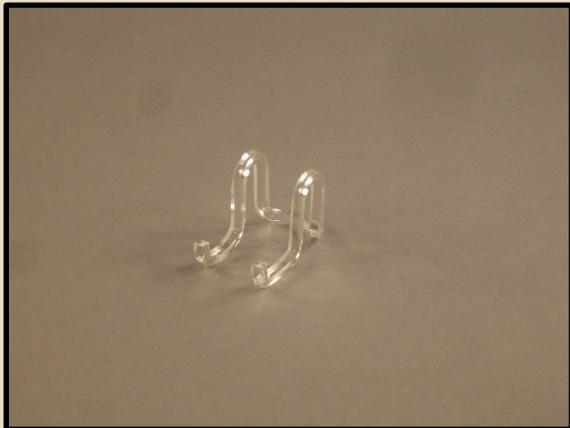
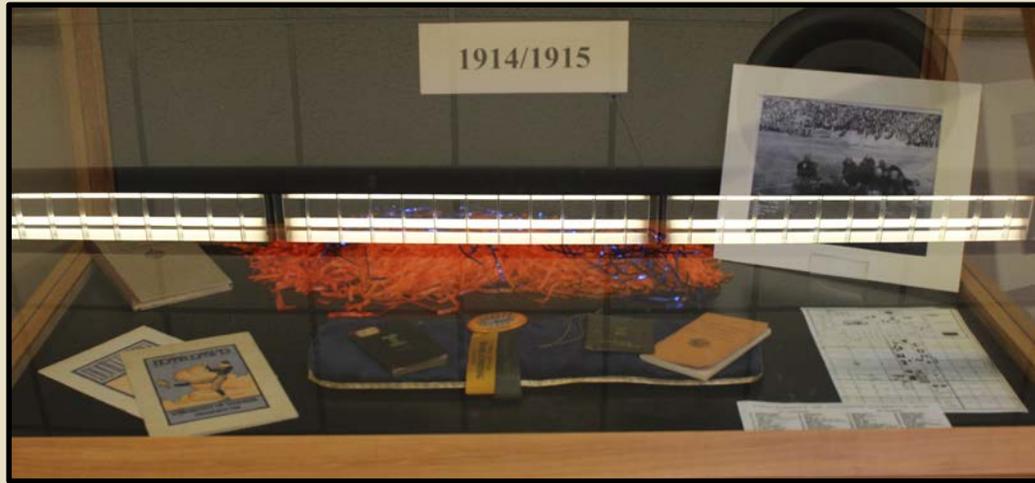


Plate easels are also good for supporting flat objects, especially those that are wider than they are tall. Again, use a sheet of acid-free board behind the item as a support.



Use mini display easels for labels.

Other Types of Materials



Other Types of Materials

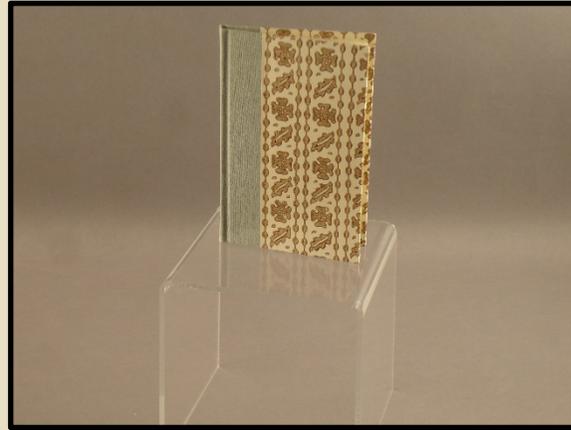
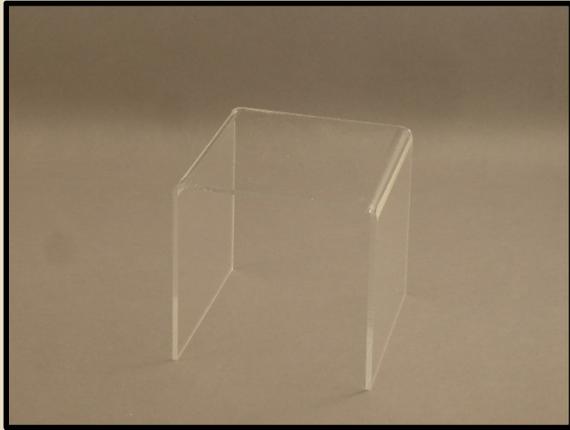
- If possible, textiles should be exhibited in a flat position rather than folded to prevent creasing, tearing of fibers, and uneven fading. If folding cannot be avoided, pad the folds with materials such as washed cotton or muslin sheeting, or acid-free papers.
- Wear clean cotton gloves at all times when handling metal, ivory, or bone artifacts to avoid damage that can be caused by oil from skin.
- Avoid displaying particularly light-sensitive materials like color photographs, watercolors, colored writing inks, and silk.
- Avoid displaying vellum and parchment, which are very sensitive to shifts in relative humidity.

Hanging Objects

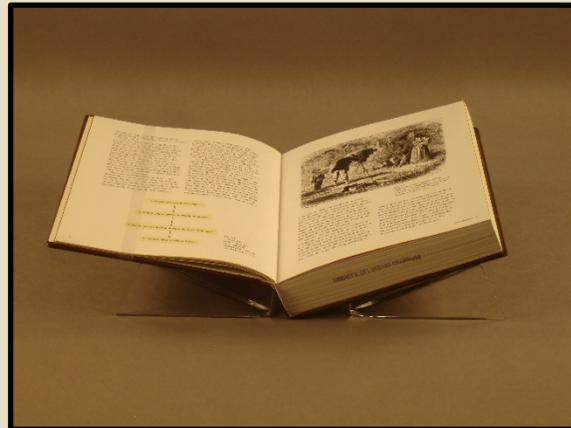
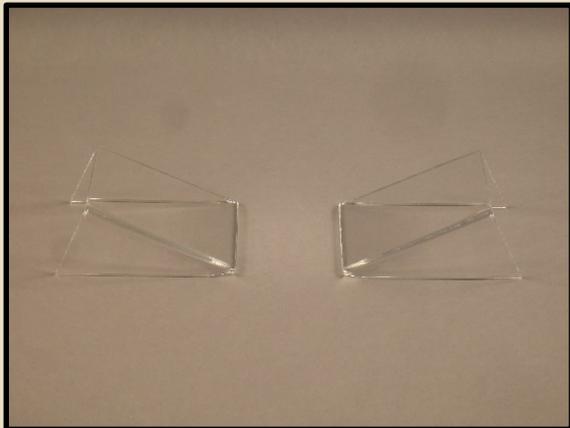
- Secure
- Reversible
- No damage to item
- No damage to case
- Inside of cases or on bulletin board (NS Corridor)



Risers & Support Wedges



Risers lift objects into the vertical space of the cabinet, and can also be stacked to create a staircase effect. Drape black or neutral fabric over the risers to create a cohesive surface.



Wedges support an open book at a safe angle.

For more information...

Resources

- Exhibit Reference Books
- Exhibitions Committee Workshop email
excom@library.illinois.edu
- Exhibitions Committee website:
<http://www.library.illinois.edu/committee/exhibit/charge.html>

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Library » Committees » Exhibitions Committee » Charge and Membership

Library Committee Handbook

University Library Exhibitions Committee

Charge

The Library Exhibitions Committee supports exhibits that highlight the University Library's rich and vast collections, and especially encourages exhibits that look beyond the walls of the Library and attempt to incorporate nationally or locally recognized themes and events, campus programs, or emerging research. The Committee maintains a wide variety of preservation-friendly supplies and offers modest funding assistance to exhibitors throughout the University Library system. The committee also manages exhibitions held in the designated Main Library display cases. At the start of each academic year, the committee solicits exhibitions for these display areas from the Library and campus community and maintains a schedule of these exhibitions, including the titles, dates of displays, and names of exhibitors, which are publicized through the Office of Library Advancement.

Members

*Miriam Centeno, chair (08/15/17)
Cara Bertram (08/15/17)
Anna Chen (08/15/16)
Pat Miller (08/15/16)
Cher Schneider (08/15/16)
Kasie Janssen, graduate student volunteer

Call for Exhibits

Have a great idea for a Library exhibit? Now's the time to showcase it!
The Library Exhibits Committee is seeking exhibits for the Main North-South Corridor and Marshall Gallery. To submit an exhibit request form (and for more information on the exhibit spaces and available supplies), visit <http://www.library.illinois.edu/committee/exhibit/charge.html>.

All topics for Library exhibits are welcome. Preferable are those that either highlight the University Library's rich and vast collections or that look beyond the walls of the Library and attempt to incorporate nationally or locally recognized themes and events, campus programs, or emerging research. All exhibit topics should be presented in a thoughtful and inclusive way. Questions? Contact the Library Exhibits Committee at excom@library.illinois.edu.

Funding for Exhibitions

Funding in support of library exhibits is available through the Dr. C. Barber Mueller Display Case Fund. Color and large-scale printing, display equipment, and exhibition supplies may be purchased by the Exhibitions Committee on behalf of exhibit curators. To find out more about funding for exhibitions, or to inquire about a reimbursement, please contact the Exhibitions Committee.

Read this *Friendscript* article about Dr. C. Barber Mueller's generous donation and his desire to honor the five University of Illinois zoology and chemistry professors who had a profound influence on his career during his undergraduate studies on our campus.

CHARGE & MEMBERS
Call for Exhibits
Funding

CURRENT EXHIBIT & NEWS

PLAN AN EXHIBIT
Exhibit Locations & Access
Exhibit Calendar
Schedule an Exhibit
Exhibition Topics

INFORMATION FOR EXHIBITORS
Designing an Exhibit
Installation Procedures
Care and Handling
Supplies & Printing

GRADUATE STUDENT EXHIBIT CONTEST

PREVIOUS EXHIBITS

MEETING MINUTES



Thank you!

For more information visit

<http://www.library.illinois.edu/committee/exhibit/charge.html>

Don't hesitate to contact us – excom@library.illinois.edu