

Many families have sketches, watercolours or even paintings that were produced during wartime. These items have different preservation needs depending on their material types.

## Paintings

Paintings are quite durable and can last several hundred years without any attention if kept in a good environment. If in good condition, with no flaking paint or tears, the painting surface can be gently cleaned with a soft brush. The back of the painting can also be carefully brush-vacuumed to remove dust build-up. Please see our fact sheet on 'Brush Vacuuming Techniques' for further details.

Prior to picking up a framed artwork, check that the frame is stable with no loose frame elements. Handle large framed works underneath and at the sides. Use two people to handle large works and carry the work upright. When moving items make sure your pathway is clear. Place the work on a padded table (bubble wrap or smooth blanket) to examine.

## Watercolours, Drawings & Sketches

Artworks without colour are generally quite durable. However, some inks such as felt-tip pens and coloured ballpoint pens can be very sensitive to light and can fade within weeks of display. Tinted papers can also fade in light, especially those produced during the late 19th and early 20th century. Ultraviolet radiation can discolour poor quality paper so again, display away from direct sunlight.

Watercolour images can be affected by water and light and are prone to fading. If displayed keep away from direct sunlight and consider keeping artworks on temporary display and resting in the dark for the majority of the year.

- Display periods should be limited and consultation should be sought regarding the appropriate length of display for your artworks.
- A high-quality copy can be made for display rather than risking damage to the original

## More information

For more information on the care of artworks, please see the following resources:

CCI Notes: <http://canada.pch.gc.ca/eng/1439925167385>

reCollections: <https://aicm.org.au/conservation/collection-care>

through exposure to light. Please see our fact sheet on 'Creating Copies' for further information.

- Refer to our fact sheet on 'Papers and Documents' for advice on the storage of artworks on paper.

## Pastels, Charcoal & Chalk

- Pastels, charcoal or chalk art can be difficult to care for due to their soft surface that is susceptible to smudging.
- Avoid 'fixing' these artworks with hair spray or art fixatives, as these can alter their appearance.
- Best stored in their frames to prevent any contact to the surface.
- These items should be framed with glass rather than Perspex glazing, as Perspex can have static build up that attracts loose media particles.

## Unframed Artworks

- If possible, store artworks flat in archival boxes, interleaved with archival paper.
- They can be stored in smooth archival paper folders, or in mounts made from 100% rag board. Refer to the 'Benefits of Mounting and Framing Artworks' fact sheet for further information.
- Rolling and unrolling will damage brittle papers, unstretched canvases and delicate images. Rolled up paintings should be rolled with painted image outwards and placed in an archival tube to prevent impact damage. Don't attempt to unroll a work that is "set" in shape, this requires expert assistance.

## Other Considerations

- If you have artworks in your personal collection, you should regularly check them to see if there are signs of deterioration.
- If a painting is dirty, stained or has tears, large dents or flaking paint, contact a conservator to assist with these problems.