

Caring for collections Workbook



in partnership with

Caring for Collections

The online 'Caring for Collections' resource is aimed at library staff who handle books and documents. It provides an overview of how to care for the books and documents in library collections and why this is important. The resource has been developed as part of a joint preservation learning programme by RLUK and the British Library Preservation Advisory Centre. The resource can be accessed here: www.bl.uk/blpac/induction.html

The resource has eleven sections:

- The importance of caring for collections
- Deterioration and damage
- Handling books
- Transporting books
- Copying books
- Storing books
- Environmental conditions
- Mould
- Pests
- Security
- Disasters and salvage

Each section includes information and photographs to guide you as well as quizzes and tasks. A set of key points and links to additional information is also included. The resource does not have to be completed in one session, it is possible to leave the resource at any point and return to it later.

This workbook is designed to be used alongside the resource. The workbook contains a summary of the tasks, key points and links to additional information from each section along with space for you to make your own notes.

The British Library Preservation Advisory Centre and Research Libraries UK would like to thank all those who have helped in the development of this resource.

Deterioration and damage

The key points to remember from this section are:

- All books and documents deteriorate, but the rate of deterioration can be slowed down if they are stored in appropriate environmental conditions and are handled properly.
- Although collections are always at risk from wear and tear, it is important that collections are made available for people to use.
- Everyone working in and using your library is responsible for caring for the collection.

Additional information

Basic preservation (booklet) – www.bl.uk/blpac/pdf/basic.pdf

Damaged books (booklet) – www.bl.uk/blpac/pdf/damaged.pdf

Notes

Handling books

Task

Get a copy of any information on handling books or rules of use that is given to users of the library where you work. Keep these with your workbook.

The key points to remember from this section are:

- Remember to wash your hands before using books.
- Take the books off the shelves carefully.
- Some books need extra support while they are being used.
- Pens and sticky notes must not be used around books.
- Familiarise yourself with your library's handling procedures.
- You should know what to do if you find a book that has been mutilated.

Additional information

Using the collections (videos) – www.bl.uk/aboutus/stratpolprog/ccare/collectioncarevideos/index.html

Using collections (booklet) – www.bl.uk/blpac/pdf/handling.pdf

Notes

Transporting books

Task

Get a copy of any safety guidance on transporting books in the library where you work. Keep this with your workbook.

Do you have any other equipment in your library for moving books? If so, ask your manager to find someone to show you how to use it correctly.

The key points to remember from this section are:

- Make sure that you have enough time to move the books; it is easier to take care when you are not rushed.
- Never carry more than you are able to safely.
- Make sure you load trolleys and crates correctly and don't overfill them.
- Look after your back, get manual handling training if you can.

Additional information

Packing and moving library and archive collections (booklet) – www.bl.uk/blpac/pdf/moving.pdf

Notes

Copying books

Tasks

Find out what photocopying is available in the library where you work. Get a copy of any guidance provided to readers and keep this with your workbook.

Find out who is responsible for copying in the library where you work and what you should do if a reader asks you to copy a book which is not suitable for photocopying.

Find out what guidance there is about digitisation in the library where you work. Make a note of this in your workbook.

The key points to remember from this section are:

- Not all books and documents are suitable for all types of copying.
- Some libraries allow self copying and will provide guidance for users.
- Specialised copying should be carried out by trained staff.

Additional information

Photocopying of library and archive materials (booklet) – www.bl.uk/blpac/pdf/photocopy.pdf

Managing the digitisation of library and archive materials (booklet) – www.bl.uk/blpac/pdf/digitisation.pdf

Notes

Storing books

Tasks

If the library where you work has mobile shelving, get a copy of any health and safety guidelines and procedures you should follow when using it. Keep these with your workbook.

Does your library have other formats? If so, find out how to store these and make a note in your workbook.

The key points to remember from this section are:

- It is important to use the right size shelves to support books and to make sure that the shelves are not too full or too empty.
- Make sure you know how to use mobile shelving correctly.
- Some formats of books and documents need special storage to prevent damage.

Additional information

Specifying library and archive storage (booklet) – www.bl.uk/blpac/pdf/storage.pdf

Cleaning books and documents (booklet) – www.bl.uk/blpac/pdf/clean.pdf

Notes

Environmental conditions

The key points to remember from this section are:

- Unsuitable environments are more responsible for damage to collections than any other factor.
- Not all collection types are suited to the same environment.
- Monitoring the environment is essential for identifying problem areas and items at risk.
- A small action can make a big difference.

Additional information

Environment (booklet) – www.bl.uk/blpac/pdf/environment.pdf

Notes

Mould

Tasks

Find out who you should contact and what you should do if you find mould in the library where you work. Make a note of this in your workbook.

Find out who you should contact if you find a leak, a blocked drain or if there is a lot of condensation. Make a note of this in your workbook.

The key points to remember from this section are:

- Damp and humid conditions can encourage mould growth.
- Mould will start to grow quickly if items or areas become wet and are not dried out.
- All mould whether active, dormant or dead can be harmful to people so seek expert advice if you find mould.
- Protect yourself with appropriate clothing and equipment if you have to handle mouldy books.
- If you find mould, you should report it so it can be dealt with promptly.

Additional information

Mould (booklet) – www.bl.uk/blpac/pdf/mould.pdf

Notes

Pests

Task

Find out who you should contact if you find insects or other pests in the library where you work. Make a note of this in your workbook.

The key points to remember from this section are:

- Some insects will eat books and documents and damage them.
- Insects need a ready food source and moisture to thrive.
- Increased temperatures may encourage insect activity.
- Work and storage areas should be kept clean, dry and well maintained to discourage pests.
- Rodents and pigeons can cause great damage and must be blocked from buildings.

Notes

Security

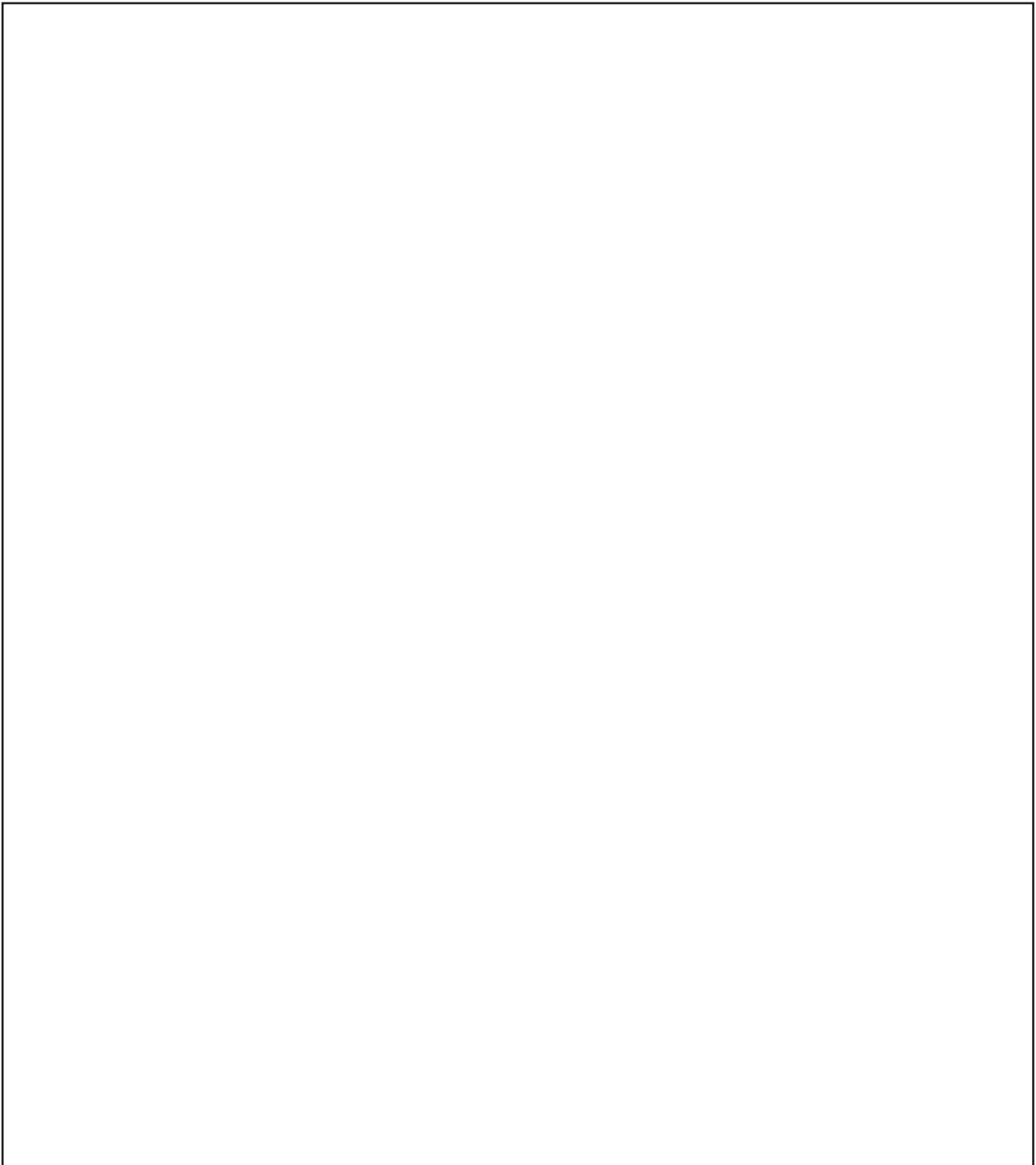
Task

Find out what you should do if you discover a book is missing. Make a note of this in your workbook.

The key points to remember from this section are:

- It is important for you to know what you should do if you find out that a book is missing.

Notes



Disasters and salvage

Task

Find out what you should do if you discover an unexpected incident, make a note of this in your workbook.

Does the library that you work for have more than one site? If so, find out what you should do if you discover an incident at another site. Make a note of this in your workbook.

The key points to remember from this section are:

- Small unreported incidents can grow into major emergencies – if you see something that concerns you, report it.
- Make sure you know what to do if you discover an incident.
- Never put yourself or others at risk.

Additional information

Disaster/emergency planning – www.bl.uk/blpac/disaster.html

Notes