



## Handling Guidelines

Please observe these guidelines, which are based on professional conservation practice in the library, archive, and museum communities, while using the Trust's collections. They apply to all items, including books, manuscripts, shoes and other objects, which are unique and irreplaceable items with historical and commercial value.

Some of the guidelines may appear to impose restrictions on your use of the items. This is not their purpose. The aim is to minimise the risk of damage to items in our care. The same guidelines apply to all users, including members of staff. The aim is to prolong the lives of the items, and to continue to make them available for use by all into the future.

If you have any concerns, questions or suggestions regarding the safe handling or the condition of any items, please seek advice from staff.

- Always use a pencil in the reading room. Accidents with ink can cause permanent damage. Pencils may be borrowed from Trust staff.
- Ensure that hands are clean and dry before handling any items. It may be necessary to wear gloves when handling some items. This will be explained whenever necessary by staff. Various size gloves are available in the reading room. Assume that all items are fragile, and take this into consideration before you pick any item up.
- Keep looking and thinking as you handle the items. Lapses in concentration and in attention to detail are the most likely causes of accidental damage.
- Refrain from writing, leaning or resting on top of books, catalogues or manuscripts. Avoid touching the text or image on the page. Acid free paper slips can be supplied for readers who need to follow the text. Please turn the pages carefully and one at a time.
- When consulting loose documents, ensure that they remain in the order as issued to you.
- Book supports (to support bindings) and weights (for keeping volumes open) are available and Trust staff may insist that they are used. Books should not be pressed flat onto a surface, and their spines should not be bent back.
- Never place museum objects in direct sunlight or proximity to other sources of heat.
- Do not stack shoes, volumes or documents on top of each other.
- Avoid placing items on the floor.
- Ask for assistance in moving oversize items.
- Staff will be able to assist you in photocopying or photographing items if required: please ask permission first.

If you accidentally damage an item, or discover signs of previous damage, you must report this to the person supervising immediately. We will not necessarily penalise you for genuine accidental damage, but we do need to know about it in order to repair the item.