



The National Museum of American History aspires to provide optimal protection and preservation for its collections while ensuring appropriate access and use. This is especially important as we lend collections to partner institutions throughout the country and world. While each object and each exhibition is different and will be evaluated on individual merit and liabilities, the following are broad requirements for museums wishing to borrow collections from the NMAH. While these guidelines drive the evaluation of all loans, users should regard Facilities and Security and Access guidelines as requirements for loans. The information listed below about environmental conditions should be regarded as minimum acceptable conditions with many objects requiring even tighter restrictions based on the specifics of material type and other vulnerabilities. Additional requirements to ensure the preservation of NMAH collections will be provided as Special Exhibition Requirements within the Loan Agreement following the completion of a preservation survey by NMAH Conservators.

Facilities

- Objects must be displayed in limited access exhibit galleries dedicated solely to museum or gallery exhibition. Objects may not be displayed in lobbies, hallways, commercial spaces, or multiple use spaces.
- Exhibit cases must be constructed with NMAH-approved materials, a schedule of which must accompany the loan application.
- Objects (including costumes) must be displayed inside exhibit cases that lock or are secured with security hardware. Some objects require alarmed exhibit cases.
- Objects that are too large to be displayed inside exhibit cases must be displayed in such a way that visitors cannot reach or touch them and within an environment that does not cause undue degradation.
- Food and/or drink are not allowed in exhibition galleries where NMAH objects are on display or in areas where NMAH objects are staged, processed, packed, unpacked or stored.
- Objects may be unpacked, handled, installed, and deinstalled only by experienced professional museum object handlers. Trained and vetted conservators may be required for the handling of some collections as a condition of the Loan Agreement.
- Objects requested for display in new exhibition spaces will not be shipped until the following requirements are met:
 - Construction has been completed and the borrower has taken possession of the space.
 - Permit of occupancy has been issued.
 - Newly constructed exhibit cases, newly painted case or gallery wall surfaces, carpets, and other exhibition materials have off-gassed for at least 28 days prior to installation of NMAH objects.
 - The borrower can demonstrate stable, object-appropriate environmental conditions over a specified period of time.

Security and Access

- The Borrowing museum must provide 24/7 physical and/or electronic security.
- The Borrowing museum must be covered 24/7 monitored fire protection.
- Objects (including costumes) must be displayed inside exhibit cases that lock or are secured with security hardware. Depending on value and other considerations, some objects require alarmed exhibit cases.
- Objects on exhibit must be monitored daily by museum staff experienced in the care of museum collections.

Environment

- The borrower must maintain a facility with stable environmental conditions (temperature and relative humidity) within acceptable ranges and these conditions must be monitored on a regular basis. NMAH objects are generally acclimated to these environmental conditions:
 - Temperature: $70^{\circ}\text{ F} \pm 4^{\circ}\text{ F}$
 - Relative humidity: $45\% \pm 8\%$.
- Light levels must be measured and controlled. No natural light can be allowed in the exhibition space. Light levels can be no higher than 20 footcandles. Some objects require light levels as low as 3 footcandles.
- Per the advice of NMAH conservation staff, some collections may require more specific and tightly controlled environmental conditions; others may be stable within broader parameters.
 - Paper and printed materials frequently require 3-5 footcandles
 - Historic textiles frequently require fewer than 3 footcandles
 - Objects with polymer materials frequently require fewer than 5 footcandles
- The NMAH frequently requires conservation and cleaning for its collections to ensure stability in potentially fluctuating environments.
- Borrowers may be required to submit periodic reports on exhibition environmental conditions.