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## Managing Memories

By Jennifer Humes, Clutter Queen®

Do you have photos stored in boxes buried at the back of closets? If you are storing photos in an area that is not temperature controlled, chances are you could open them now or years later and they might be ruined. If photos represent memories then preserve those memories that will last a lifetime.

### Where to start?

You don't need a special moment to get your photos in order. Get your photos in order now. Preserve memories from the holidays. Grab some file folders and label with the years. Grab a stack of photos and start sorting by date.

### What to consider

When deciding whether to keep a photo, consider the following:

- Discard bad photos that are blurry, incomplete, or have cut-off body parts.
- Discard duplicates. Keep one or two good shots that capture the moment.
- Don't feel obligated to keep photos of others. Just because someone sent you cousin Will's baby photo doesn't mean you have to hold on to it forever.
- Is it a good or bad memory? All photos should not be treated equally. If it reminds you of a bad memory it might be best to part with it.

## Sorting

- Sort by date - first by year, then by month.
- Take out duplicates.
- Label files in date order.
- Label the backs of photos with the date and names of people in the photo.

## Storage

Storage should be convenient and easily accessible. Create a library of photos with photo albums that tell it all. Look for acid-free and archival quality. Storage boxes come in an array of shapes, sizes and colors making photo storage more stylish than ever. Label the backs of photos, fill out an index card with the date and pop them in. Or try one of these photo pods that help you separate the dates and keep them in order. Just pull out the photos you want to look at. It's that easy.

Photopods are an easy-to-use organizing system which protects your precious photographs. Photopods are made of a durable transparent plastic which filters out over 90% of harmful UV light to help prevent fading of your photographs. They are great for storing photographs and include the Media Card™ for labeling, negative or backup disk storage, and an index print.

## Digital Storage

You can take your negatives to a professional photo lab and have them scanned to a CD-ROM or DVD. The cost may be a little more but the negatives are hand fed, color corrected, scanned and then printed.

"Don't go throwing away your negatives just yet," says John Gentsch, owner of Flash-Back. "Digital cameras record the information but there is no guarantee that the medium will last forever. You can make it easier to view by scanning pictures to a DVD and being able to play it on your TV." It's easier and more cost-effective to scan from a negative than a print.

## Label

Date the backs of photos with an acid-free pen, pencil or marker. It's best to label photos once you get them back from the photo lab with the date on the back. Label storage boxes or photo albums with decorative nameplates or get creative and make your own.

## Get Creative

If you want to add creativity to your photos, try some of the many popular scrapbook supplies. Decorate the corner edges with punched designs and trim your photos to the perfect size with a paper trimmer or decorative scissors. Fiskars® offers a wide variety of decorative hand punches, corner punches, scissors and trimmers.

With a little time and effort you and your loved ones will be able to enjoy the memories rather than sift through chaotic piles of pictures. **HI-D**

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