

SPECIMEN HANDLING CHECKLIST

- Only trained and authorized personnel should handle collection items.
- Consider each object as unique, irreplaceable and of equal value.
- Handle objects only when necessary and as little as possible.
- Remove any watches or jewelry on hands, arms or neck that may scratch the artifacts.
- Use only pencils for note taking around objects. Keep pens, ink or other materials that could stain away from artifacts. Do not use sharp objects, post-its, sticky labels or tape on or near specimens.
- Always wash and dry hands before handling specimens. *Know* what types of gloves to wear with certain objects. Wear your correct glove size - do not wear gloves that are too large because slippage can occur. Clean or discard gloves frequently to remove oils and dirt. Remember that gloves also protect the handler from hazardous chemicals or residues.
- Examine specimens for signs of weakness or old repairs, moveable or detachable parts that will affect how it should be handled. Anticipate problems or unstable areas of structure or surface that are not readily observable.
- If present, move the specimen's pallet or tray when examining or moving items rather than touching the specimen. Only handle or remove the specimen from its support if absolutely necessary.
- A plan of action is required when moving collections. Decide where you are going, ensure that there is a clear path to get there, and know what you are going to do once you arrive. If necessary prepare the final destination with adequate padding. Do not attempt to open or maneuver doors while holding a specimen.
- When collections must be moved use a padded secondary support, such as a cart or tray. Padding should be placed in between specimens or between moveable/detachable parts to prevent them from bumping into each other. Avoid putting weight on object appendages. Do not stack collections for moving or overload cart.
- Always carry specimens from underneath supporting their full weight. Never pick up or carry objects by their projections or appendages. Anticipate weakened structure of a specimen. Don't assume to know the weight of a specimen based on its size.
- Carry only one tray or object at a time, no matter how small it is. Always use both hands when moving collections. Heavy, large or awkward items should never be moved by one person alone – ask for help.
- If damage occurs collect all broken fragments and contact a Collections Manager and/or Conservator.