

**Proper care and  
maintenance of  
metal objects**



# Metal objects

- **Proper care and maintenance of your family heirlooms and works of art will ensure that they are available for future generations to enjoy**



# Metal objects

- Almost every metal material you will encounter will be an alloy, not a pure metal



# Metal objects

- **The primary means by which metal deteriorates is through corrosion, which can occur on contact with water, acids, bases, salts, oils, aggressive metal polishes and other chemicals**



# Metal objects

- **Metal objects should always be handled with clean, white cotton gloves, or vinyl gloves with a pair of cotton gloves over them, to prevent damage from the oils in your hands**



# Metal objects

- **Don't overestimate the strength and resilience of metal pieces; they are often weaker than you might think**



# Metal objects

- In general, it is not a good idea to routinely polish or aggressively clean metal pieces
- It is best to use the most mild and nonabrasive methods; don't use wire brushes to clean away rust



# Metal objects

- **Store in clean, dry areas**
- **Avoid damp basements; relative humidity should be kept below 55 percent**





# Metal objects

- **Metals should be stored with inert storage materials: wood and wood products can emit acids and other gases that cause metals to corrode**
- **Use acid-free, lignin-free wrapping paper; a clean, soft cotton cloth can also be used**



# Metal objects


- Silver can be stored in "silver cloth" available in jewelry and some fabric stores
- However, it should be changed every few years to remain effective



# Metal objects

- **Metal objects, even large ones like farm implements or automobiles, should always be covered to protect from dust build-up**
- **Clean cotton sheeting can be used to make removable dust covers**





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