

## Module 4: Care of Collections

<b>Conservation</b>	The maintenance and protection of collections. It is a process that includes documentation, restoration, preventative conservation and storage.
<b>Conservator</b>	A specialist hired by a museum or gallery to restore an artefact or artwork as closely as possible to its original condition and protect it from future damage.
<b>Preventative Conservation</b>	A form of conservation that works by eliminating environmental concerns that can cause objects to deteriorate. This is completed by the Hunt Museum Collections staff. No chemicals are used.

There are many ways in which collections can become damaged. Conservators sometimes use a framework called the '[Agents of Deterioration.](#)'

1. Physical forces	Sudden shocks (such as being dropped) or long term pressure (such as incorrect storage). Everyone who handles objects is trained.
2. People	This includes vandals and thieves. Therefore, cases are locked and alarmed.
3. Fire	There are fire alarms, fire exits and plans in place in case of an emergency.
4. Water	The Hunt Museum is beside the river so we always keep an eye on potential flooding risks.
5. Pollutants	Includes dust and grease. As part of preventative conservation 'housekeeping' is carried out regularly to clean objects.
6. Light	Windows have special UV filters and there are monitors in rooms and cases to measure the intensity of visible light
7. Incorrect temperature	These two often go hand-in-hand. Humidity is the moisture in the air. For example, too much moisture can cause some materials to rot and others to rust, while too high temperatures can cause paint to crack. There are checked with special monitors inside cases and rooms.
8. Incorrect relative humidity	
9. Pests	Bugs or pests such as clothes moths can cause serious damage. Organic materials like wood and paper are especially vulnerable. There are traps set around the museum that allow staff to monitor pest levels.
10. Dissociation	Dissociation occurs when not enough care is taken to record and preserve the objects and their information. Put simply: it's when we don't know what's going on with the objects anymore and can no longer connect them or tell their stories.