



Preservation Tips

Removing Fasteners From Documents

Fasteners such as staples, paper clips, brads and straight pins frequently damage documents. Physical damage from fasteners includes distortion, punctures and tears while chemical damage from corrosion may cause staining.

Benefits of removing fasteners:

- Removes potentially damaging material from collections
- Increases ease of use for researchers

Tools needed:

- Microspatula
- Mylar/Melinex
- Acid Free paper marked as interleaving

Removing staples:

1. Place the document on a flat surface with the prongs of the staple facing up.

2. Gently insert the microspatula between the paper and one of the staple prongs.



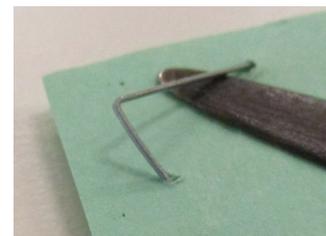
Hint: Place a small square of mylar between the paper and the staple at each step, then slide the microspatula between the mylar and the staple.

3. Pry the prong into a straight position, repeat with the second prong.



For documents with heavy duty staples, after straightening the prongs, gently lift the back pages off the staple prongs, utilizing the existing puncture holes. Once the stack of papers has been reduced, turn the document over and remove the staple as per step 4.

4. Turn the paper over, insert the microspatula between the paper and the staple and pull the staple off through the existing puncture holes.

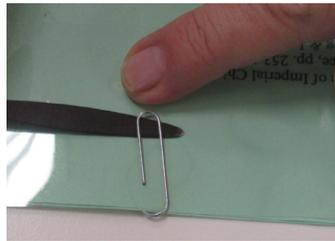


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Removing paper clips:

1. Place the document on a flat surface with the short side of the clip facing up.
2. Put gentle pressure on the long side of the clip.
3. Insert the microspatula between the paper clip and the document.
4. Gently pry up the short side with a microspatula.



5. Turn document over and lift the clip off.

Hint: For tight or rusty paperclips, place a small square of mylar between the paper and the clip.

Removing straight pins:

Pins that have not rusted can be removed by gently pulling through the existing puncture holes. When pins are rusty place mylar between pin and paper at top, middle and bottom of pin prior to pulling through.



Removing brads:

Place paper on flat surface with the prongs of the brad facing up. Using a microspatula, lift the prongs of the brad and press together. Turn the paper over, grasp the brad head and pull to remove through existing puncture holes. If the brad is rusty place mylar between the prongs of the brad prior to lifting.

After fasteners are removed documents can be kept together by inserting a sheet of acid free interleaving paper at the beginning and end of the document.