



Keeping Personal Digital Photographs

Perhaps more than any other kind of personal digital information, photos have rich personal meaning. And photos are unique: if they are lost, the information they provide can never be replaced.

You will want to keep at least some of your digital photos for a long time. Focus attention on organizing your important photos by placing them into related groups.

Archiving Tips

Identify where you have digital photos

- Identify all your digital photos on cameras, computers and removable media such as memory cards.
- Include your photos on the Web.

Decide which photos are most important

- Pick the images you feel are especially important.
- You can pick a few photos or many.
- If there are multiple versions of an important photo, save the one with highest quality.

Organize the selected photos

- Give individual photos descriptive file names.
- Tag photos with names of people and descriptive subjects .
- Create a directory/folder structure on your computer to put the images you picked.
- Write a brief description of the directory structure and the photos.

Make copies and store them in different places

- Make at least two copies of your selected photos—more copies are better.
- One copy can stay on your computer or laptop; put other copies on separate media such as DVDs, CDs, portable hard drives, thumb drives or Internet storage.
- Store copies in different locations that are as physically far apart as practical. If disaster strikes one location, your photographs in the other place should be safe.
- Put a copy of the photo inventory with your important papers in a secure location.
- Check your photos at least once a year to make sure you can read them.
- Create new media copies every five years or when necessary to avoid data loss.