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Proper storage of your vinyl records will prove to be a valuable investment of your time. When planning for proper storage you should 1) prepare an inventory, 2) organize the vinyl records, 3) clean the vinyl, 4) preserve your records by making sure there are good sleeves for each one, and protection for the outer jackets or covers, 5) take care to place them in a climate controlled, dry location.

INVENTORY: Invest time in organizing your records. Organizing should begin with some form of inventory so you know exactly what you have. In the process of making an inventory you are also preparing a document for insurance purposes, should you ever need it. Your inventory should include the title of each record, Artist(s) name, date released or bought if you know it, and any other information that you think is helpful. You might even leave a place on the form for the value of the record if you should have that information. If the inventory is set up in the order that you store your records, it will serve as a great tool for locating them when needed.

ORGANIZING: After this inventory is completed consider ways to organize your records. You need to choose the one way that best fits your needs. They can be placed in order of artist, or title, or you might even be more specific and have them in categories of music styles or recording companies. This way you can locate a particular record more easily when you need to retrieve it. This will help keep you from having to handle other records and possibly damaging them.

CLEANING: Now that you know what records you have, and where they are all located, it is very important to make sure they are clean. Dust and body oils can lead to damage to the record, cause low quality sounds and static sounds. These can also damage to the needles you play the records with. There are brushes and cloths made specifically for cleaning vinyl records. You can also purchase cleaning chemicals made for vinyl records. It is recommended not to use soap and water. There is less of a chance of damaging the record if you can clean it as it turns on the turntable. You won't be touching them and depositing body oils on them, and there is less of a chance of dropping them.

PRESERVING YOUR VINYL RECORDS, SLEEVES AND OUTER JACKETS: While you are cleaning your records, it is a good idea to place them into a new sleeve. This will assure that no

lingering dust is between the sleeve and record. Keep the original sleeve in the cover also, as collectors like to have the complete original set all together. You can buy special sleeves for best results. There are plastic sleeves, and you can also get one that is called "rice paper". To protect the original cover or jacket, you can purchase plastic covers for them as well. This is an extra step to keeping dust out of the records.

With the plastic covers you have the added possibility of placing labels on the outside with identifying information on them. These labels can be placed on them in such a way as to be visible without having to move the records or pull it from the shelf.

STORAGE LOCATION: It is recommended that you have a climate controlled, cool and dry location to store your vinyl records. This can be in your home, or in a special vault or storage unit. Having temperature control is a must. Extreme temperatures can be damaging to your records. Heat will warp them, and maybe even make them brittle. Moisture can cause mold and damage the jackets and sleeves, and can harm the record. Wherever you store them, never place them next to an outside wall. This is the very place where the moisture, mold, and temperatures are most likely to be to effect your records.

Whether in boxes or on shelves, the records need to be placed upright at a 90 degree angle. Leaning them can cause them to be warped. Also make sure that they are on the shelf so that the record itself is actually resting on the outer cover. If the opening of the outer cover is down, the record may be touching the shelf, and could be damaged.

Remember, your records can increase in value. They will always hold memories for you. Your collection holds clues to cultural, national and even world history. Preserve these memories for the generations to come.

Source: <http://www.helium.com/items/1130532-how-to-store-your-vinyl-record-collection>