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Storage of your doll collection is inevitable to occur at some stage. This may be a result of moving home or purely because your doll collection has grown beyond the point where you have sufficient suitable available space to display your entire doll collection. Irreparable damage that could significantly devalue your doll collection can result from incorrect storage methods. The following are basic guidelines to assist you when storing collectible dolls.

- Storage Area

The most popular storage areas for storage of goods, being basements and attics, are in most cases not ideally suited for storage areas for your doll collection. These areas are more likely to be prone to extreme temperatures which are a definite risk to most types of collectible dolls and could cause irreversible damage to your collection. As these areas are traditionally less frequented sections of your home they are more likely to get infested by rats and moths which needless to say could damage your collection. If at all possible the ideal storage area in your home would preferably be in a temperature-controlled room in a closet, in a trunk or in a chest-of-drawers. There are temperature-controlled storage options available that would be suitable for your doll collection, but these may prove to be are costly should you require prolonged periods of storage for your doll collections.

- Type of container

Plastic bags and plastic containers should never be used to store dolls and doll accessories. These containers have a tendency to trap moisture that could cause mold growth which is very difficult and in some cases impossible to remove. Vinyl or plastic dolls have the additional risk of damage resulting from gases that some plastic containers have been known to emit. Storing dolls in their original cardboard boxes is another common error made by many doll collectors. The acid present in cardboard could cause damage to your dolls if stored without the necessary protection in these boxes. Wrap your dolls in acid-free tissue paper or unbleached and undyed cotton or muslin cloths if you opt for storing your dolls in cardboard boxes

- Metal Accessories

Jewelry, metal doll stands, metal headbands or any other metal objects must be removed from dolls prior to storage as these are known to discolor plastic and vinyl dolls. If you have true NRFB (never remove from box) collectible dolls then you may have to leave box and doll together, and any jewelry still on the doll, risking eventual damage to the doll.

- Packing materials

Ideally all dolls and doll clothing should be wrapped in acid-free tissue paper prior to storage. To prevent the doll and doll clothing from touching one another and maybe causing permanent discoloration it is advisable to place a layer of acid-free tissue paper between the doll and the doll's clothing. If the dolls are to be stored in a wooden trunk or drawer remember to place a protective barrier between the wood and the dolls as the acids present in wood can be damaging to your dolls. Muslin cloth or acid-free tissue paper is ideal for this purpose. Newspaper should never be used to wrap dolls or doll clothing as this too contains damaging acids and besides which it most probably will leave newsprint marks. Wooden dolls that are more prone to insect infestation should be stored with moth crystals but care must be taken to ensure that the crystals do not touch the body of the doll by wrapping the crystals in a muslin cloth. Moth crystals must never be used with plastic or vinyl dolls as irreversible damage can be caused by chemical reactions between the crystals and the plastic or vinyl. Dolls with inset eyes must always be stored with their faces down to prevent damage to their eyes.

- Storage of doll clothing

To minimize the crushing of doll clothes during prolonged storage periods it is advisable to place a ball of acid-free tissue paper inside the sleeves and bodice of doll clothing. To minimize creasing all clothing should be laid down flat.

Regular checks to perform on stored dolls

Remember to check your stored dolls at least once a year for any discoloration or vermin or

insect infestations. Pay careful attention to clothing and sawdust for any signs of insects. Wooden dolls are a high risk for insect infestation and if undetected can spread from one doll to the next placing your entire collection at risk. If any of your dolls are found to be infested isolate the dolls until they have been chemically treated and you are satisfied that the dolls are insect-free.

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