

FACT SHEET 4 Packing and labelling records for transfer



Records transferred to our custody must be packed and labelled appropriately.

This fact sheet outlines our requirements for packing and labelling physical records.

Packing

Items must be packed into containers that are appropriate for the size and format of the record. A container protects records but also, when packed correctly, provides on-going structure and support. An item packed into an over-sized container will slump, while an item packed into a small container will crumple and tear.

Containers must not be too heavy – 7 kg is considered the safe lifting limit. If you have containers that will exceed this weight please contact us.



Figure 1: Type 1 boxes are suitable for A4 files or small volumes

Figure 2: Over-sized boxes are not suitable for A4 files or small volumes

Paper files

- A4 files or small volumes must be packed in Type 1 boxes (L:400mm x W:170mm x D: 245mm).
- A box is packed correctly if you can easily slide your flat hand down the inside of the container without resistance and your fingers can touch the bottom.
- Bundles of papers without file covers should not be tied with cotton tape, as it can cut into the papers and result in loss of information. If bundles cannot be housed in file covers, they should be wrapped in a wrap that has passed the [Photographic Activity Test](#) or insulated between two pieces of board that are larger than the papers, then bound with tape.



Figure 3: Well packed box

Figure 4: Poorly packed box

Volumes

- Large volumes can be packed in temporary transport boxes for delivery, and then unpacked and placed on open shelving when they arrive at NSW State Archives and Records.
- Do not over pack transport boxes as this may inhibit easy moving of the boxes – 7 kg is considered the safe lifting limit.
- Make sure that the volumes will not slide around in the boxes during transport. If there are gaps in the boxes that would allow internal movement during transport, fill the gaps with some packing material (non-archival material is suitable as it will be removed when the volumes arrive at NSW State Archives and Records).
- If the volumes fit comfortably into Type 1 boxes (L:400mm x W:170mm x D:245mm) you can pack them spine down, leaving enough space so that you can fit your hand down the side of the box.
- Volumes that have become unbound need to be wrapped in a wrap that has passed the [Photographic Activity Test](#) and bound with approved cotton tape. If the original cover boards are still present and in good condition they can be used to provide support for the volume, alternatively an approved board insert may also be used to provide support for the wrapped volume. Please contact us for further advice on packing unbound volumes.



Figure 5: Volumes packed in a Type 1 box

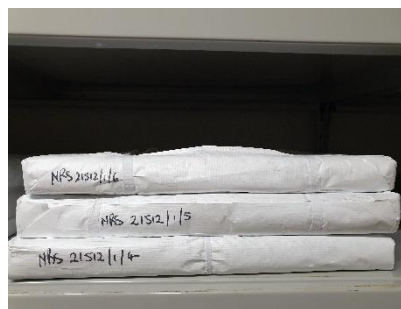


Figure 6: Wrapped volumes

Maps and plans

- Maps and plans may be transferred flat for storage in map cabinet drawers.
- Maps and plans may be transferred in containers if they are grouped appropriately – please contact us to discuss whether the container dimensions are suitable for our shelving and are appropriate for the records.
- Maps and plans should be grouped by format type and size, where possible, e.g. acetate plans, blue prints.

Over-sized items

- Non-standard containers for over-sized items can be purchased from external providers. Before ordering any non-standard containers, please contact us to discuss whether the container dimensions are suitable for our shelving and are appropriate for the records.
- If unsure of what container to use, please contact us for advice.

Labelling

Containers

All containers must be labelled with the series, consignment and container numbers following the consignment list as shown in Figure 6, e.g. *NRS 12345/6/7*.



Figure 7: Box labels

After we have reviewed the consignment list we will send you barcodes to be placed on the front of each container. These should be placed underneath the hole.

Volumes

- If the volumes will be stored in a Type 1 box, place a barcode on each box. Volumes that will be stored permanently in boxes do not need their own barcode.
- If the volumes will be packed temporarily into boxes for transport, then stored loose, place a barcode on each volume. There is no need to place a barcode on temporary transport boxes.
- Barcodes should be placed on the spine of a volume.
- Some bindings, such as leather, will not allow a barcode to “stick” – in these cases, we will affix the barcode when the volumes arrive at NSW State Archives and Records.
- Whether the volumes are boxed or loose they require internal labelling in case their labels or spines fall off. The series, consignment and container numbers (if applicable – see Fact sheet 3: Creating a consignment list) must be written in pencil in the upper right-hand corner of the last blank left-hand page of the volume.

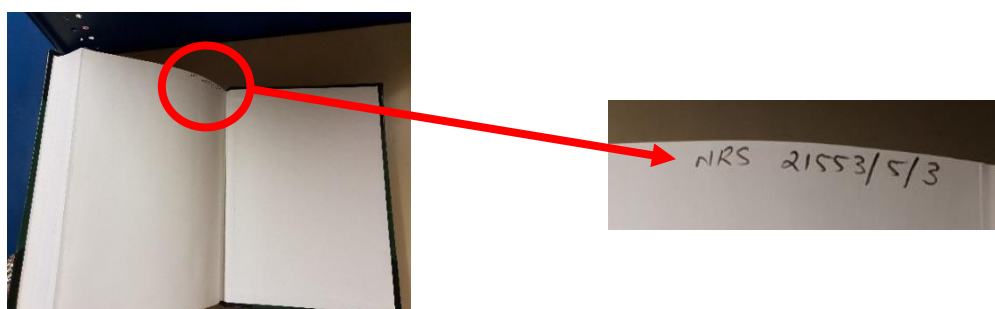


Figure 8: Internal label in a volume

FAQs

- Q. Can I transfer records in ring binders?
- A. No. Binders do not provide long-term protection to the papers. Remove the records from the binders and place them into office folders or document wallets, or wrap them with archival quality wrapper board, tied with cotton tape. Reproduce all file control references on the new covers.

- Q. Can I transfer records in standard file plastic sleeves?
- A. Papers can remain in plastic sleeves if they are made from polypropylene. Typically such material is stamped with “copysafe” on the edge. All other plastic sleeves are not acceptable as they contribute to the deterioration of the enclosed record and should be disposed of. If you are unsure, remove the files from the sleeves and replace with archival folders.
- Q. Can I transfer standard files containing Plasti-klips and Tube clips?
- A. Yes.
- Q. Can I transfer records with staples and paperclips?
- A. Staples can remain on records if there is no evidence of rust. All paperclips, bull-dog clips and other metal fasteners should be removed from records prior to transfer, particularly if there is evidence of rust. Replace metal fasteners with plastic fasteners such as Plastiklips or re-package loose records into folders.