

## PLASTICS IDENTIFICATION

Certain types of plastics are considered archivally safe for storing important keepsakes and papers. When looking for plastic boxes for storage, just look for the recycling number. It will tell you which type of plastic was used to make the box. Following is a list of the recycling numbers and the corresponding plastics which are safe for archival storage:

- 1 - PETE - Polyester**
- 2 - HDPE - High Density Polyethylene**
- 4 - LDPE - Low Density Polyethylene**
- 5 - PP - Polypropylene**
- 6 - PS - Polystyrene (Don't use pink!)**

The very best of these plastics to use for archival purposes is HDPE, or High Density Polyethylene. Many commercially available storage boxes are made of this plastic. Look for the number '2'. When storing anything in plastic, remember to periodically let your items breathe. Open the cover and let some fresh air into the box. Make sure that the items you are storing are not damp, as the liquid that gets trapped in the box may ruin what you are trying to preserve.

The following two types of plastic (with their recycling numbers) should never be used for archival storage:

- 3 - V - Vinyl or Polyvinyl Chloride (a.k.a. PVC)**
- 7 - Other**

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