



**National foreword**

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A list of organizations represented on this committee can be obtained on request to its secretary.

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English Version

**Conservation of cultural heritage - Guidelines for management  
of environmental conditions - Open storage facilities: definitions  
and characteristics of collection centres dedicated to the  
preservation and management of cultural heritage**

Conservation des biens culturels - Recommandations pour  
la gestion des conditions d'environnement des biens  
culturels - Pôle de conservation: définitions et  
caractéristiques des espaces permettant la conservation et  
l'exploitation des biens culturels

Erhaltung des kulturellen Erbes - Richtlinien für den  
Umgang mit Umwelt- und Umgebungsbedingungen -  
Schaudepots: Definitionen und Merkmale von  
Sammlungszentren bestimmt für die Bewahrung und Pflege  
des kulturellen Erbes

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EUROPEAN COMMITTEE FOR STANDARDIZATION  
COMITÉ EUROPÉEN DE NORMALISATION  
EUROPÄISCHES KOMITEE FÜR NORMUNG

**Management Centre: Avenue Marnix 17, B-1000 Brussels**



## Foreword

This document (EN 16141:2012) has been prepared by Technical Committee CEN/TC 346 "Conservation of cultural heritage", the secretariat of which is held by UNI.

This European Standard shall be given the status of a national standard, either by publication of an identical text or by endorsement, at the latest by May 2013, and conflicting national standards shall be withdrawn at the latest by May 2013.

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## Introduction

The importance of preserving and transmitting cultural heritage under the best conditions is imperative for all, but is of utmost importance for cultural heritage institutions. They have the responsibility of preserving, presenting and developing spaces dedicated to the public or reserved for collections. Stored collections have often remained inaccessible to the public but increasingly there is an expectation that collections should be accessible even when not on display, either for the general viewing public or for controlled research and collection management activities. To meet this demand, dedicated facilities are being developed to allow access and research. These "Open Storage Facilities" or "Collection Centres" place new demands on cultural heritage institutions and this guidance document is intended to assist institutions by describing common best practice in the design and function of such facilities.

Open Storage Facilities have four main purposes:

- to fulfil the requirements of conservation;
- to facilitate access to the collections;
- to allow for the management of collections;
- to provide a secure place for the safekeeping of collections.

This standard may be used for designing new open storage facilities or for the improvement of existing storage facilities.

The concept of open storage facilities is general. It relates to places gathering the functions defined in this standard belonging to any type of institutions (archives, libraries, archaeological deposits, museums,...) dedicated to the safekeeping of any type of collection (archives, books, archaeological items, etc...)

## 1 Scope

This European Standard defines the characteristics of specific areas dedicated to the preservation, storage, management of, and access to collections. It lists the considerations that should be taken into account to achieve optimum storage and accessibility.

## 2 Normative references

The following documents, in whole or in part, are normatively referenced in this document and are indispensable for its application. For dated references, only the edition cited applies. For undated references, the latest edition of the referenced document (including any amendments) applies.

EN 15898:2011, *Conservation of cultural property - Main general terms and definitions*

## 3 Terms and definitions

For the purposes of this document, the terms and definitions given in EN 15898:2011 and the following apply.

### 3.1

#### **handling**

method of holding and moving an object according to established procedures in order to limit the risks of damage and deterioration

### 3.2

#### **integrated pest management**

##### **IPM**

established procedure for controlling pests such as insects, rodents

### 3.3

#### **packing**

measures and actions to safeguard objects during movement, transport and for storage

### 3.4

#### **protocol**

agreed procedures defining the progress of an operation

### 3.5

#### **quarantine**

isolation and observation of an object which may present a danger of biological contamination

### 3.6

#### **safety**

pertaining to human health

### 3.7

#### **security**

protection against theft and physical damage

### 3.8

#### **storage**

designated area where objects are housed providing the necessary conditions required for preservation, safety and security while not on display

Note 1 to entry: The term “repository” is used in archives and libraries.

**3.9 open storage facilities**  
places dedicated to housing collections, and to activities relating to their management providing the necessary conditions required for preservation, safety and security and public access

## 4 Open storage facilities

### 4.1 General organisation

Open storage facilities are part of the general organisation of a cultural heritage institution. Such premises constitute a set of areas isolated from each other but interdependent and organised according to use.

Open storage facilities have four principal functions:

- a) permanent and temporary storage of objects;
- b) collection management: study of the collections, display, consultation, and scientific examination; some of these functions require areas dedicated to public access;
- c) collection services: movement, packing/unpacking, workshops, and sometimes treatment of the collection;
- d) facilities management (e.g. security system, alarm control unit, and plant room).

The purpose is to offer the best conditions of collections conservation and management. However, all functions of an open storage facility do not necessarily require their own specific area.

### 4.2 Storage

A clear and rational organisation of the collections is important as well as policies and procedures for managing operations. A balance should be maintained between security of collections and access.

Collections are arranged in spaces which are exclusively devoted to them. These areas constitute the central and vital core of the open storage facilities. Safety and security, climate control, fire prevention and other preventive measures require attention. Storage areas should be protected from risks of natural disasters. They should be kept dark, except when lighting is required for access. They should be equipped with fire detectors, sensors reacting to dampness and pest monitors.

The distribution of the collections in storage areas should follow these principles:

- stable environmental conditions adapted to the requirements of the various collections;
- the placement of storage units such as shelves, cabinets, etc., should be appropriate to the collections, ensuring easy and effective access to objects and secure handling of artefacts.

Storage furniture should be designed according to the characteristics and conservation requirements of the collections and the activities of the institution. It should be designed to allow easy maintenance of the area and facilitate the movement of people and collections without risk. The furniture arrangement should facilitate cleaning of the floor.

Storage areas and furniture should be able to adapt to the growth of the collections without risks to safety and security.











The type, nature and quantity of the collections shall be thoroughly documented in order to determine the conditions required for long-term preservation.

It is advisable to consult an expert for fire protection or burglar alarm (e.g. police, insurance).

Areas and equipment for work within the storage areas are made with materials compatible with conditions for preservation (avoiding dust, off-gassing, volatile organic compounds, etc.). These materials should contribute to preserving a stable climate.

For each aspect of design of the facility and activities carried out inside, preservation of collections should be taken into account.

## 9 Sustainability

Sustainability shall be taken into account, both in the construction and use of the facility.

The materials and cost of building are a factor, as well as how well the building is constructed or adapted to operate with minimal calls on energy.

New construction and adaptation should take account of the latest practice and research in the design of cultural property facilities.

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