

PACKING AND MOVING BOOKS

University at Albany, University Libraries

Good ways to arrange books in mail bins:

- 📖 Place volumes into their container carefully. Do NOT toss, throw or drop books into the mail bins.
- 📖 Place the books upright on the bottom of the mail bin, as if they are standing on a shelf. Keep them straight and don't let them sag because this will cause them to become misshapen. Use wads of clean paper or padding material to fill empty spaces.
- 📖 Lay the books flat, one on top of the other, starting with the biggest books on the bottom. Don't let large books cantilever out over small ones.
- 📖 Put the books into mail bins *spine side down*. This way the text block is supported by the book cover. If the spine faces up the book will sag over a period of time and the pages may start to fall out of the covers.
- 📖 Sometimes a combination of these methods within a box works best, e.g., put a couple of large, thin books at the bottom of the mail bin and then some books upright or resting on their spines. Or you can have two piles of books that are lying flat. The idea is to make sure that the books are supported and do not have room to shift around.
- 📖 Don't fill empty spaces with books at strange angles.
- 📖 Seal the hinged lid shut using the proper color of cable tie (Green – Dewey; Orange – Science; Purple – Tech Services; Natural – University Library).
- 📖 Even closed, please not leave bins of books on the floor to avoid problems with moisture from leaks or condensation.
- 📖 Protect collection materials during inclement weather if they are moved outdoors, i.e., if they are transported to another library. They should never be left on an open loading dock.

Good ways to move books on book trucks:

- 🚚 The same principles apply to placing books on book trucks. The books should be flat, or they can stand on the shelves, or they can be on their spines.
- 🚚 Don't overload the trucks. Don't stack books horizontally on top of other books.
- 🚚 Book trucks should be packed evenly so they are most stable, i.e., don't just pack all on one side, or load up the top shelf only.
- 🚚 Use a truck with sloped shelves for smaller books. Use a truck with large, flat shelves for oversize materials.
- 🚚 Use bookends to keep materials secure and upright.
- 🚚 If you use one of the older, wooden book trucks push from the side with the rotating wheels. If you push from the side with the stationary wheels it's difficult to steer.
- 🚚 Don't put junk, like pens, soda cans, and other debris, on your book truck.

Good ideas for packing valued books for shipping:

- 📦 Each volume should be wrapped individually with sturdy paper, such as brown Kraft paper. Special collections materials should also be wrapped in padding material, or placed into a padded envelope.
- 📦 If the volume is bound in a paper wrapper or a limp binding, paper boards should be cut to the size of the volume and placed on the outside of the front and back covers before the volume is wrapped.
- 📦 Line the box with padding such as bubble wrap, air pillows, or Styrofoam peanuts. Fill the corners with crushed paper. The contents should not shift. Top the box off with more padding and overfill it slightly.