

How to Properly Package Maps and Books

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Old World Auctions

At Old World Auctions (OWA), we ship thousands of antique maps and books every year. All of our packaging and shipping is done in-house, and we have become experts in safely transporting maps and books to our customers. We also receive hundreds of packages every year from our consignors, and unfortunately some of them arrive with damaged contents due to inadequate packaging. Our customers often ask us how to pack items in order to send them to us on consignment, to a conservator for repair, or to a loved one as a gift. As a result, OWA would like to share our best practices in how to package maps and books. Please click on the links below for a PDF with full instructions on how to package maps or books, complete with photos to guide you through the process.

While books are always shipped in boxes, maps can be shipped either flat or in a tube. It is always safest to ship a folding map (those with more than a centerfold, particularly those with intersecting folds) flat as long as the map still has clear fold lines. However, if repair work has been done along the folds or the map has been pressed flat, a folding map may need to be shipped rolled in a tube. This can be done safely as long as the paper is sturdy and not brittle. Maps that only have a centerfold or no folds at all are usually shipped in a tube. The key exceptions are for maps that have original color that has oxidized significantly, or those that have brittle paper, as rolling these maps may cause cracks to form. Here are a few additional tips and tricks:

1. Avoid office tape or masking tape - neither of these tapes adhere well to cardboard, and they will often come loose during transit.
2. Never use newspaper or other printed paper as packaging material, as the ink can rub off onto the contents of the package. Crumpled paper will also compress more during transit, offering little protection for the contents.
3. Place a piece of clear packing tape over the shipping address on the packaging label to prevent it from being damaged or smeared during transit.
4. Include a copy of the shipping address or return shipping information inside the package, or write the shipping information in a secondary location on the outside of the package. If the shipping label becomes damaged or lost during transit, the carrier will still be able to determine ownership of the package.

Links to printable PDF files:

Instructions for Packaging Books:

http://www.oldworldauctions.com/newsletter_archive/book_packaging_instructions.pdf?utm_source=All+Customers&utm_campaign=3f234ddc7d-Newsletter_April_2015&utm_medium=email&utm_term=0_57570955bc-3f234ddc7d-39564485

Instructions for Packaging Maps Flat:

http://www.oldworldauctions.com/newsletter_archive/flat_packaging_instructions.pdf?utm_source=All+Customers&utm_campaign=3f234ddc7d-Newsletter_April_2015&utm_medium=email&utm_term=0_57570955bc-3f234ddc7d-39564485

Instructions for Packaging Maps in a Tube:

http://www.oldworldauctions.com/newsletter_archive/tube_packaging_instructions.pdf?utm_source=All+Customers&utm_campaign=3f234ddc7d-Newsletter_April_2015&utm_medium=email&utm_term=0_57570955bc-3f234ddc7d-39564485