

## The Do's of Being A Researcher

- ✓ Do your background research before you go to visit other collections. When looking at baskets it important to know the terminology, what different types of baskets you're studying, and what materials they're made of.
- ✓ Do ask lots of questions. Often you only have a day to complete a research visit in collections, so make the most of it and speak up with your questions!
- ✓ Do give yourself and the other institution's collections staff lots of time. Time in the scheduling stages, time to pull objects, and time to visit with the objects is all crucial to a successful research visit.
- ✓ Do have a backup plan. The institution you're set on visiting may not have time, or the objects you're hoping to see may be out on loan. Have a plan for how you will deal with these unpredictable circumstances.

## The Don'ts of Being A Researcher

- ✓ Don't bring anything harmful to the collections with you on your research visit. This includes liquids, food, pens, or any harmful chemicals.
- ✓ Don't rush yourself. Prepare for several hours to visit with the collections. A good estimate is 3-5 objects per hour if you're looking closely at each object individually.
- ✓ Don't expect the other institution to be able to provide supplies for you. Some may have extra gloves or supplies on hand, but it is always a safer bet to bring your own.
- ✓ Don't handle the objects without permission or help.



Basket hats at the Oakland Museum of California.

CAS 0473-0023: Hat (unfinished) made by Vivien Hailstone (Hupa/Yurok/Karuk) c. 1977. In the collections of the California Academy of Sciences.



## Guide to Researching Basketry in Collections

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## BEFORE Doing Research Visits in Collections

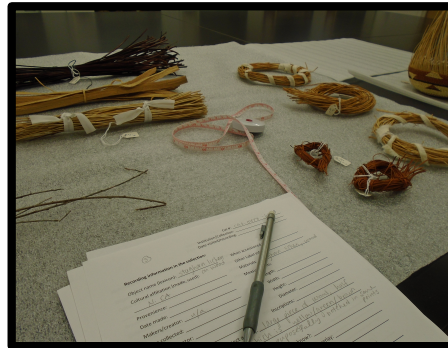


A Researcher's Toolkit.

- ✓ Decide which collections it is most important for you to visit
- ✓ Exhaust your online resources in order to determine which objects you should visit with (search databases, websites, collections summaries)
- ✓ Contact the institution well in advance (a month is good)
- ✓ Fill out any necessary forms to request access to collections and permission for photography
- ✓ Decide how you'll be collecting data and what data you need
- ✓ Prepare a "research kit" of necessary supplies

## DURING Your Research Visits in Collections

- ✓ Document your data collection in multiple ways based on what the institution allows (computer, paper, photography)
- ✓ Decide on how best to approach the objects in a systematic way (especially if you are working in a small space or with many objects)



Researching basketry materials at the California Academy of Sciences in San Francisco, CA.

- ✓ Ask questions of the staff, this is your only real chance to get clarifications on numbering systems, collection history, etc.
- ✓ Capture all your visuals while you can. Take photographs and make sketches (sketching helps you see objects in a new way)

## AFTER You've Completed Your Research Visits

- ✓ It's time to analyze your data, type up your notes, scan your data collection sheets and develop a system for processing your information
- ✓ Have a system for storing your data and backing it up
- ✓ If you are interested in sharing your work, decide how you will disseminate your information (conferences, lectures, etc.)
- ✓ Send a thank you to the staff you worked with (email is nice, a handwritten thank you is better)
- ✓ Follow up with the institution about your completed research. It is good to send a completed copy for their records.



The Clarke Historical Museum in Eureka, CA.