Taking Inventory

The first step in any personal digital preservation project is to make a list. What digital content do you have? Where is it stored or located? It can be a little overwhelming to think about all of the digital "stuff" that accumulates over the years! Making a list helps you sort through what you have so that you can then take appropriate actions to preserve your content for the future.

Keep in mind that you do not necessarily need to preserve everything. After making a comprehensive list, go back through and decide what you want to save. Consider: is this really important to me? Do I want or need to be able to look at this again in the future? Would I like future generations of my family (and/or the public) to be able to see this?

Use the following checklist and chart as a tool to organize your thoughts.

BRAINSTORM: Do I have digital content saved on (a/an)…?

☐ Digital camera
☐ Computer
☐ Memory card
☐ DVDs
☐ CDs
☐ Hard drive
☐ USB
☐ Audio player
☐ Mobile phone
☐ E-mail account
☐ Tablet
☐ Social media or content sharing/storing site like Facebook, Twitter, Instagram, etc.
☐ Internet storage (cloud storage)
☐ Floppy disk
☐ VHS or VHS-C
☐ Audio cassette
☐ DV tape
☐ Other: _____

BRAINSTORM: Do I have…?

☐ Digital photos
☐ Audio
☐ Videos
☐ E-mail
☐ Electronic personal documents such as forms, school assignments, etc.
☐ Blog
☐ Other: _____

Location (e.g. camera, computer, USB, phone, tablet, etc.)	File Path or Web Address (if applicable)	Username/ Login Info (if applicable)	Type of Content (e.g. photo, audio, video, e-mail, document, blog, etc.)	Format (e.g. jpg, doc, pdf, etc.)	Screenshot or Picture	Rights Statement* (e.g. public domain, attribution, etc.)	Decision time: Do you want to preserve this?
ex. computer	ex. Libraries > Pictures > Spring2016 > CherryBlossoms _03262016_01	ex. N/A	ex. digital photo	ex. jpg		ex. attribution/non-commercial	ex. yes

KEY:

☐ Recommended

☐ Optional

☐ To be filled out upon completion

TIP: Your inventory can be as general or detailed as you choose – use the **KEY** as a guide and feel free to add or delete columns as you see fit.

TIP: Revisit your inventory list and access your content at least once a year in order to keep everything up-to-date. Make new copies and/or transfer formats, as needed.

TIP: If you need more space for additional columns and/or rows, use this chart as an example and create your own in a spreadsheet.

Date last reviewed: Click here to enter a date.

For more, check out: **Personal Archiving: Preserving Your Digital Memories**, a resource from the Library of Congress.

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