

# How to Save Flood or Water Damaged Photos

By Mark Madere

More information: [www.SpectraLight.com/PhotoRestoration](http://www.SpectraLight.com/PhotoRestoration)



When floods and fires occur, most people don't grieve losing a stove or couch. It's the loss of valued family photos, scrapbooks and memorabilia that makes them cry. When facing piles of soggy, mud-spattered photos and other valuables - saving them may be possible by using some of the tips that follow.

## Saving Water-Damaged Photos

Watch this video for a demonstration of saving water-damaged: [www.SpectraLight.com/FloodPhotos](http://www.SpectraLight.com/FloodPhotos)

Most photos, negatives and color slides can be cleaned and air-dried using the following steps:

1. Carefully extract photos from muddy water. Remove photos from soaked albums and separate any that are stuck together. Be careful not to rub or touch the wet surface on the image side of the photos.
2. Gently rinse both sides of the photo in a sink filled with clear, cold water. Again, don't wipe the image side of the photos. Be sure to change the water often.
3. If you have time and space, immediately lay each washed photo - picture side up - on clean blotting paper like paper towels. Don't use newspapers or printed paper towels because the ink from those materials may transfer to your wet photos. Change the blotting paper every hour or two until the photos are dry. It is best to dry the photos indoors if possible because wind and sun will cause photos to curl more severely.
4. If you can't dry your photos immediately, just rinse them to remove any mud and debris. Carefully stack the wet photos between sheets of wax paper and seal them in a resealable plastic bag. If possible, freeze the photos to restrain damage. Then later, photos can be thawed, separated and air-dried when you have the time to do it correctly.

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## Additional Tips

1. Try to save flood-damaged photos within two days or they will begin to get moldy or permanently stick together - making saving them much less likely.
2. Begin with photos for which there are no digital files or negatives or the negatives are also water damaged.
3. Photos in picture frames are best saved while they are still wet. Otherwise, the photo will stick to the glass as it dries. Then, you may not be able to separate them from the glass without damaging the photo. To remove a wet photo from a picture frame, keep the glass and photo together. Rinse both under clear, flowing water using the water stream to gently separate the photo from the glass. Watch this video for a demonstration of removing a photo stuck to glass: [www.SpectraLight.com/PhotoStuckToGlass](http://www.SpectraLight.com/PhotoStuckToGlass).
4. It is important to note that some historical photographs are very sensitive to water damage and may not be recoverable. Older photographs should not be frozen without first consulting a professional conservator. You may also want to send any damaged heirloom photos to a professional photo restorer after drying.

See a video of before-and after photos that were restored by SpectraLight Photography at:  
[www.SpectraLight.com/RestoreSampleVideo](http://www.SpectraLight.com/RestoreSampleVideo)



If your photos are water damaged - there is hope! SpectraLight Photography & Design has a long history of success copying and digitally restoring faded, water-stained and damaged photos.

See samples at: [www.SpectraLight.com/PhotoRestoration](http://www.SpectraLight.com/PhotoRestoration)

Please contact us for a no-cost, no-obligation appointment to examine your photographs and receive a free quote... *before* it's too late: [www.SpectraLight.com/Contact](http://www.SpectraLight.com/Contact)  
Or call 440-748-6300. (**NOTE:** This is a landline so text messages won't come through.)

## Additional Resources

Here's a link to some bonus resources so be sure to check them out! [www.SpectraLight.com/Resources-101](http://www.SpectraLight.com/Resources-101)

- Save money with a company that facilitates backing up your digital files to their secure web servers.
- See an affordable photo restoration software that will help you retouch your photos on your computer.
- Order archival storage products for your photos so they don't deteriorate prematurely.
- More photography related resources to be added as I discover them.