



Maryland Department of Planning
Maryland Historical Trust

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The Secretary of the Interior's
Standards for Rehabilitation
36 CFR 67

**Use these guidelines
if your project
involves:**

- **State or Federal Rehabilitation Tax Credits**
- **MHT Capital Grants**
- **MHT Capital Loans**

**Standard
1**

A property shall be used for its historic purpose or be placed in a new use that requires minimal change to the defining characteristics of the building and its site and environment.

Choosing an acceptable use for a historic building is the first important step toward its preservation. Of course, continuing to use a building for its historic purpose tends to minimize the need for change, so is preferred. But many times that is not possible, so Standard 1 allows for a change of use, such as using a historic residential building for a commercial purpose. It is important to keep in mind, however, that a new use that requires extensive changes to historic materials, features, finishes, and spaces will likely violate Standard 1.

**Standard
2**

The historic character of a property shall be retained and preserved. The removal of historic materials or alteration of features and spaces that characterize a property shall be avoided.

Each historic building and its site has special visual qualities that should be preserved. Removing, altering, or covering over distinctive materials, features, and spaces is inappropriate. Some specific actions to avoid include making major changes to the front of a building or other significant elevations; altering a distinctive interior plan; removing historic plaster to expose a brick wall; installing a new ceiling that destroys a historic plaster cornice; or destroying historic landscape features, such as a cast iron fence or major plantings. On the other hand, making changes to a non-significant rear elevation may be acceptable if the alterations are in keeping with the overall appearance of the building. Similarly, secondary interior spaces may often be altered successfully in rehabilitation – as may non-significant landscape features – and a project can meet Standard 2.

**Standard
3**

Each property shall be recognized as a physical record of its time, place, and use. Changes that create a false sense of historical development, such as adding conjectural features or architectural elements from other buildings, shall not be undertaken.

A historic building is an important record of its past, reflecting its original construction as well as its various uses and changes over time. To make a building appear as if it were older than it actually is, for example, by applying an earlier architectural style or decorative details, will falsify its history and, as a result, not meet Standard 3.

For use with Federal and State Rehabilitation Tax Credits, MHT Capital Grants and Loans

Standard 4 Most properties change over time; those changes that have acquired historic significance in their own right shall be retained and preserved.

Buildings evolve over time as the people who live and work in them decide to make changes. This may include alterations and additions (such as new storefronts, porches, windows, rooms, and even entire floors). Sometimes these changes have acquired significance in their own right because they provide evidence of the historical evolution of the building or are important examples of an architectural style, material, or method of construction. To meet Standard 4, significant later changes need to be retained during rehabilitation; on the other hand, non-significant later changes may be removed.

Standard 5 Distinctive features, finishes, and construction techniques or examples of craftsmanship that characterize a property shall be preserved.

Architectural and landscape features play a major role in defining the unique historic appearance of a building and its site. Removing or drastically altering distinctive features, such as a porch, bay, chimney, decorative detailing, walkways, or trees can result in the loss of that special character and violate Standard 5. Other visual changes, such as painting historically unpainted brick or stone walls, are also inappropriate.

Standard 6 Deteriorated historic features shall be repaired rather than replaced. Where the severity of deterioration requires replacement of a distinctive feature, the new feature shall match the old in design, color, texture, and other visual qualities and, where possible, materials. Replacement of missing features shall be substantiated by documentary, physical, or pictorial evidence.

Since a building's historic character is really the sum of its parts, it is always best to retain and repair distinctive historic features. But when a feature is too deteriorated to repair, then it has to be replaced. The replacement feature should match the historic one, based on physical, pictorial, or documentary evidence – never on conjecture! It is always preferable to use the same material too; for example, replacing a badly deteriorated wood bracket with a new wood bracket will meet Standard 6.

Standard 7 Chemical or physical treatments, such as sandblasting, that cause damage to historic materials shall not be used. The surface cleaning of structures, if appropriate, shall be undertaken using the gentlest means possible.

Buildings are often cleaned to remove harmful pollutants or chemicals from surfaces. Sometimes buildings are cleaned to make them more attractive. Whatever the reason, it is important that destructive methods be avoided and gentle methods used. Sandblasting, for example, will destroy the surface of brick and stone, pit most metals, and raise the grain on wood. Using chemicals incorrectly will also damage historic materials. Similarly, the incorrect use of water or steam to clean a building may damage historic materials and not meet Standard 7.

Standard 8 Significant archeological resources affected by a project shall be protected and preserved. If such resources must be disturbed, mitigation measures shall be undertaken.

When an archeological discovery is made during rehabilitation (for instance, when excavating for a foundation or an addition or grading for a new parking lot), a trained archeologist should be called in to evaluate the findings. Significant archeological resources should be protected and preserved in place. If this is not possible, the archeological material should be documented and recovered according to accepted practices. If human remains are uncovered, stop work immediately and consult with appropriate state and local officials – it's law in every state.

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Standard 9 New additions, exterior alterations, or related new construction shall not destroy historic materials that characterize the property. The new work shall be differentiated from the old and shall be compatible with the massing, size, scale, and architectural features to protect the historic integrity of the property and its environment.

When extra space is needed for a new use, historic building owners may consider construction an addition. A new addition needs to be designed with sensitivity to protect distinctive historic materials and features from damage or destruction. The new work also needs to be compatible with the historic building's character. Compatibility between old and new is achieved through the thoughtful application of basic architectural principles (massing, size, scale, setback, rhythm, and proportion), as well as the selection of appropriate materials and color. A compatible new addition will meet Standard 9. However, creating a new addition that so closely resembles the historic building that the old and new are indistinguishable will fail to meet Standard 9.

Standard 10 New additions and adjacent or related new construction shall be undertaken in such a manner that if removed in the future, the essential form and integrity of historic property and its environment would be unimpaired.

A new addition should be constructed in a manner that – if removed at a later date – the historic building's distinctive form and materials would be kept intact to the greatest extent possible. Standard 10 is often called the "principle of reversibility." Generally, placing an addition on a nonsignificant side or rear elevation can help achieve this goal, as well as being mindful of the addition's size and scale.