

# Bagging & Boarding Silver Age Comics

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**General:** First off, remember there is more than one way to do things the right way. This is the way I do it based on research and practice. The key is to do your research. I do a lot of it. Preservation is always a top priority for my collection. Be careful what you read on the internet. Yes, I know, this article is on the internet. Check your sources. When in doubt, consult resources provided by the US National Archives and the Library of Congress. If it's good enough to preserve the most important documents of our country it's good enough for our comics.

**Considerations:** Your bags and boards can damage your comics if you make the wrong decisions. Bags protect your comics and can provide some rigidity. Boards provide rigidity to help keep your comics from bending along the long axis and breaking/creasing the spine. So the logical decision is to pick the thickest bags and thickest boards right? Not necessarily. This may cause undue pressure on the spine of the comic causing damage to old and brittle comics and it is much easier to damage comics when you try and squeeze them into tight bags.

**Products:** I have used many different products over the years to protect my comic books. When it comes to old silver age comics, I resort to more expensive products. Poly bags may be sufficient for modern less expensive books, but they have to be replaced every few years because they yellow and break down.

I currently use E. Gerber Silver & Golden Age size Mylites2 bags for my silver age comics. They are Mylar bags that are pretty thick, won't break down like poly bags and protect against acid mitigation among other things. They are 7 3/4" x 10 1/2" with a 1 1/2" flap and are 2 mils thick.

When you center the comic in the bag, it is big enough to allow a space between the comic and the edges of the bag. More pressure is put on the spine of the comic when you get it close the side/seam of the bag. It also allows you to open the bag easier to slide the comic in and out without damaging it. I use E. Gerber Full-Back backing boards (or two Half-Backs). These are thicker boards that provide good rigidity to help keep the spine from bending when handling and during storage. They are 7 1/2" x 10 1/2" in size and 42 mils thick. The entire board is acid free and alkaline buffered with a ph of 8.0 so you can use either side of the board facing the comic.



**Procedure:** Place a Full-Back (or two Half-Back) board into the the Mylites2 bag. Fold the flap over and use a bone folder or similar tool (your fingernail) to crease the flap. When you let go of the flap, it should stay folded about 90 degrees because of the crease. Now take a pair of scissors and cut the flap on both sides to taper the flap. This will make it much easier to fold the flap into the bag after you put the comic in. Never use tape.



No matter how careful you are, there can always be accidents. Avoid the accident by avoiding the situation all together. If you are taking a comic out of a bag that has tape, remove the tape completely from the bag before removing the comic and don't place the comic on the table on top of the piece of tape. Oops. Next, pull the board about a third to one half of the way out of the bag, lift up the flap, and place the comic onto the board into the bag. Slide the comic in by pushing on the backing board not the comic. If you push the comic into the bag by using the edge of the comic you can damage it. Especially if its an older brittle comic. Now, fold the flap into the bag behind the backing board and gently push the air out of the bag by pressing it carefully on the tabletop. Do not press on the spine!

**Cost:** E. Berber products are more expensive than basic poly bags and generic backing boards, but it's worth it for the older comics. You can buy them at [www.eGerber.com](http://www.eGerber.com), but only in bulk. You can buy in smaller quantities on eBay and Amazon or through other third parties. On Amazon they cost around \$0.70 per comic when you buy 50 bags and 50 boards with free shipping.