

Quick Guide to Common Types of Photographs and Images

Types	Dates	Features
daguerreotype	1839 to 1857	mirrorlike, must angle to view image, encased, often hand-tinted
ambrotype	1854 to 1870s	underexposed glass negative on black backing, encased, often hand tinted
tintype	1856 to 1938, esp. to 1890s	metal, can be cased or encased, image often scratched or peeling
<i>cartes de visite</i>	1859 to 1914, esp. 1850s-1870s	2-1/4" X 4-1/4"; revenue stamps required from 9/1/1864 to 8/1/1866
cabinet card (general)	1866 to 1914, esp. to 1890s	4-1/4" X 6-1/2" image glued to cardstock
Victoria cabinet card	1870 to 1890	3-1/4" X 5"
promenade cabinet card	1875 to late 1890s	4" X 7"
boudoir cabinet card	late 1870s to 1900	5" X 8-1/2"
imperial cabinet card	late 1870s to 1900	7-7/8" X 9-7/8"
panel cabinet card	no specific dates	8-1/4" X 4"
glass-plate negative	1878 to 1940s, esp. 1880s to 1910s	negative film over glass; often peeling at edges
cyanotype	1842 to 1910s, esp. 1880s to 1910s	blue coloration
charcoal portrait or overpainting	1850s to 1910s, esp. 1880s to 1890s	typically 16" X 20" drawn or overpainted, framed
stereo views	1850s to 1910s	double images on 3" X 7" cards viewed in a scope to make them 3D
flat and thin stereo views	1851 to 1867	
rounded corner stereo views	1868	
heavier stereo views	1879	curved, 4" X 7"
photographic postcards	1900 to 1920s	black-and-white standard-size postcards printed for addressing on back
black-and-white portraits	1920s to 1950s	created in studios, often in gray cardstock folders
black-and-white snapshots	1930s to 1950s	dates in the margins; may be printed in booklet; straight or pinked edges
color snapshots	1942 to present	commonly 3-1/2" X 3-1/2", date in margin, will fade
black and white Polaroid prints	1947 to 1963	instantly printed photographs
color Polaroid prints	1963 to present	instantly printed photographs; will fade

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