



## Guide to the Willis B. Smith Collection on Western Airlines

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This finding aid was created by UNLV Special Collections and Archives staff. This copy was published on March 28, 2022. Please contact [special.collections@unlv.edu](mailto:special.collections@unlv.edu) for questions regarding this collection.

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**University of Nevada, Las Vegas. University Libraries. Special  
Collections and Archives.**

Box 457010

4505 S. Maryland Parkway

Las Vegas, Nevada 89154-7010

[special.collections@unlv.edu](mailto:special.collections@unlv.edu)

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## Summary Information

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<b>Repository:</b>	University of Nevada, Las Vegas. University Libraries. Special Collections and Archives.
<b>Creator:</b>	Smith, Willis B.
<b>Title:</b>	Willis B. Smith Collection on Western Airlines
<b>ID:</b>	MS-00123
<b>Date [inclusive]:</b>	1958, undated
<b>Physical Description:</b>	0.2 Cubic Feet (2 folders (shared box), 1 flat file)
<b>Physical Description:</b>	0.2 Linear Feet
<b>Language of the Material:</b>	English
<b>Abstract:</b>	The Willis B. Smith Collection (1958) on Western Airlines consists of two news releases from Western Airlines about the company's history and two letters to Willis B. Smith. The collection describes the founding of Western Airlines and its early flights from Salt Lake City, Utah to Los Angeles, California. It also contains a color photograph of a Western Air DC-10 airliner in flight.

### Preferred Citation

Willis B. Smith Collection on Western Airlines, 1958. MS-00123. Special Collections and Archives, University Libraries, University of Nevada, Las Vegas. Las Vegas, Nevada.

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## Historical Note

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Western Airlines operated between 1926 and 1987 when it merged with Delta Airlines. They began operation as Western Air Express on April 17, 1926, flying between Salt Lake City, Utah and Los Angeles, California via Las Vegas, Nevada as the first commercial air flight to carry United States mail. On May 23, 1926, Western Air Express started carrying passengers. In 1941, they changed their name to Western Airlines. Western Airlines and Delta Airlines merged on April 1, 1987.

Source: Delta Flight Museum, Western Airlines History. <https://www.deltamuseum.org/exhibits/delta-history/family-tree/western-airlines>. Last accessed 08 July 2015.

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## Scope and Contents Note

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The Willis B. Smith Collection (1958) on Western Airlines consists of two news releases from Western Airlines about the company's history and two letters to Willis B. Smith. The collection describes the founding of Western Airlines and its early flights from Salt Lake City, Utah to Los Angeles, California. It also contains a color photograph of a Western Air DC-10 airliner in flight.

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## Arrangement

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Materials are arranged chronologically.

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## Administrative Information

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### Access Note

Collection is open for research.

### Publication Rights

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### Acquisition Note

Materials were donated in 1975 by Willis B. Smith; accession number 75-89-1.

### Processing Note

Materials were processed by Special Collections staff. In 2015, as part of a legacy finding aid conversion project, Angela Moor revised and enhanced the collection description to bring it into compliance with current professional standards. In 2018, Angela Moor described additional material in the collection.

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## Names and Subjects

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- Airlines -- United States
- photographs
- Western Airlines

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## Collection Inventory

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Title/Description	Containers	
Letter to Willis B. Smith from Salt Lake Tribune regarding mail flown on first Western Airlines flight, 1958 April 25	box SH-009	folder 01
Western Airlines news release about the history of the airline, 6 pages, undated	box SH-009	folder 02
Letter to Willis B. Smith from Western Airlines about company history and first flight, 1958 May 08	box SH-009	folder 02
Western Airlines news release about the history of the airline and its aircraft, undated	box SH-009	folder 02
Photograph of Western Airlines DC-10 jetliner, undated	flat file 01	