

**International Association of Sound
and Audiovisual Archives**

**Internationale Vereinigung der
Schall- und audiovisuellen Archive**

**Association Internationale d'Archives
Sonores et Audiovisuelles**

**Asociación Internacional de Archivos
Sonoros y Audiovisuales**



Handling and storage of audio and video carriers

Handling and Storage of Audio and Video Carriers

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Handling and Storage of Audio and
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Physical audiovisual media

Analogue or digital

- Tapes
- Discs (LPs, Gramophone records etc.)
- Video cassettes (of every format)
- Betacam
- DAT (Digital Audio Tape)
- CDs / DVDs, especially CD-R and DVD-R
- Digibeta
- ...

Mechanical carriers constitute the oldest, commonly used type of carrier used for recording and reproducing audio and later video.



Physical audiovisual media

Original analogue or digital carriers

**Originals are not thrown away or destroyed,
even if a digital copy has been made of them.**

Archiving of physical media



Poor storage



Causes of deterioration

1. Environmental conditions:

- Heat
- Light
- Water
- Oxygen
- Atmospheric contaminants
- Static electricity

2. Mycosis, formation of mould

3. Incorrect handling

Results of poor storage

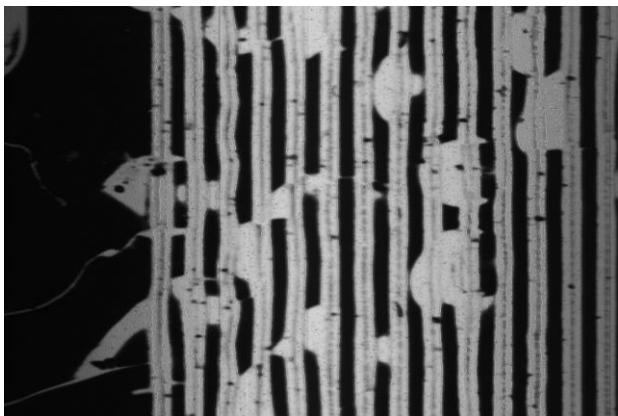
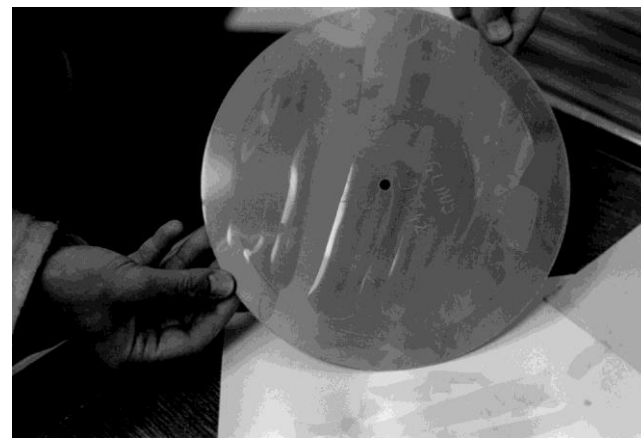
Distortion



Fissuring



Results of poor storage



Archiving of physical media



1. Archiving conditions

- Furniture
- Packaging material
- Use of space
- Magnetic fields
- Cleanness

2. Safety and security

- Safety installation (alarm)
 - Intrusion
 - Fire (intervention concept)
 - Water (intervention concept)

3. Climate

- Temperature
- Humidity
- Air filter

Recommendations

- The temperature, in the room where the sound and video carriers are stored, should never exceed 25°C. The relative humidity should never exceed 55%. The optimal values are 19°C and 40% RH.
- Do not stack the sound or video carriers horizontally or in contact with materials that have an irregular surface. Physical deformations can be limited by placing the disks vertically and slightly compressed between each other.
- Do not touch the grooves of the disks, the recorded surface of tapes, and the reflecting surface of optical disks. After using, always put the carriers back into their protective covers. Avoid dropping them.

Recommendations

- Avoid exposure of the sound and video carriers to direct sunlight, to other UV rays and to magnetic fields, such as: household appliances, electrical motors, loudspeakers, etc.
- Store all the tapes (including cassettes) wound to the end. In this way:
1) to reproduce a tape you are forced to rewind it completely, thus partly attenuating the copying effect; 2) a tape wound to the beginning tends to produce a pre-echo that, at times, can be annoying (for analog recordings). If the tape is wound to the end, this pre-echo will become instead a post-echo, with a much more acceptable result.

Wind and rewind the tapes (and cassettes) at least once a year to eliminate the forces created during archiving and to maintain the copying effect within acceptable levels.

**Do you also have the right and professional play-back device
for all documents in your archive?**



Test your collection needs:

- Is your collection insured against theft, damage or disaster?
- Is the climate of your archives under control?
- Do you know where your documents are located?
- Are your objects stored correctly?
- Do you have adequate packaging material?
- Do you know the value of your collection?
- Do you have consistent guidelines regarding the management?
- Do you have a preservation policy?
- Do you have an accessioning plan for your collection?
- Do you know the history and provenance of the objects in your collection?
- Do you have a catalogue or an inventory of your collection?
- Do you spend too much time “administering” your collection?
- Do you have in house expertise?
- Have you outsourced some activities? Are these under control?
- ???

Don not Tinker with your AV materials !

In case of doubt or for any additional information, or for simple curiosity, please do not hesitate to contact a competence centre (Audiovisual archives / Responsibles of sound and/or video collections ...) or IASA.

Magnetic Tape Alert Project

An initiative of the IFAP Working Group on Information Preservation, UNESCO

<http://www.mtap.iasa-web.org/>

IASA Website:

<https://www.iasa-web.org/>

Publication of TC 05

<https://www.iasa-web.org/handling-storage-tc05>

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