



Preserving Physical Archive Media

Summary

The Basics

Storage environment		
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • As cool as possible (according to budget for air conditioning). See specific recommendations for types of media. • As low a relative humidity as possible (around 30% - 50% humidity) • As consistent temperatures as possible; run air conditioners constantly. • As dust and pest free as possible. 		
Video cassette/cartridge media	Photographic media	Audio cassette/cartridge media
Storage practices (analog preservation masters)		
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Handle as little as possible – not for loan or regular viewing. • Store VHS tapes within archival boxes in a protective inert plastic VHS case, in an upright position and not on the VHS edge or side. • Cases should have lugs to secure the tape hubs to the case. • Spool slowly to the start or the end of the tape before storage. Do not store half wound. • Break the record tab off the cassettes. • Use professional archive boxes with lids. For example a 400mmWx305mmLx260mmD box will hold 26 tapes stored upright. • Avoid bumping or dropping. • Label the tapes with MASTER; place label on visible part of the VHS case and on the VHS shell (not on the flip up cover). Do not use lead pencil to write on the label; use a biro or preprinted label. 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Handle as little as possible – not for loan or regular viewing. • Store photographic materials in PAT (Photographic Activity Test) filing systems (binders, albums, boxes). • Store in dark and enclosed storage reduce light, pest and dust exposure. • Label the binders/boxes/album covers with MASTER. • Do not use anything other than a soft 2B lead pencil to notate an appropriate place on the photographic storage enclosures. 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Handle as little as possible – not for loan or regular viewing. • Store tapes within archival boxes in a protective inert plastic case, in an upright position and not on the edge or side. • Cases should have lugs to secure the tape hubs to the case. • Spool slowly to the start of the tape before storage. Do not store half wound. • Break the record tab off the cassettes. • Use professional archive boxes with lids. • Avoid bumping or dropping. • Label the tapes with MASTER; place label on visible part of the case and on the cassette shell. Do not use lead pencil to write on the label; use a biro or preprinted label.