



Quick Checklist for Filmmakers: Preservation & Restoration

This checklist provides a rough step-by-step guide for anyone beginning the process of locating, organizing, and safeguarding your audiovisual materials. It is designed as a practical reference that can be used alongside the more detailed Preservation & Restoration Resources document or in consultation with an archivist or preservationist.

1. Locate Your Film Elements

- ☐ Contact your original distributor or sales agent for storage leads.
- ☐ Check with archives (Academy Film Archive, Library of Congress, UCLA, MoMA, Anthology Film Archives, Internet Archive, regional archives).
- ☐ Inquire with film schools (NYU, Columbia, USC, UCLA, UW-Madison) that may hold teaching copies, and your alma mater.
- ☐ Research where your lab's collections may have gone (DuArt, Technicolor, Deluxe, etc.).
- ☐ Ask PBS or regional broadcasters if they retained prints or masters.
- ☐ Reach out to collectives and distributors (e.g., Women Make Movies, Canyon Cinema, Film-Makers' Cooperative, New Day Films).
- ☐ Search ArchiveGrid or WorldCat, and post inquiries on AMIA listserv.

2. Assess & Organize Materials

- ☐ Create a simple inventory: title, format, year, condition, location.
- ☐ Label all film, tape, and digital media clearly with acid-free labels.
- ☐ Separate deteriorating items (e.g., film that smells of vinegar, sticky videotape) from stable ones.
- ☐ Use archival-quality boxes, cans, or sleeves for safe storage.
- ☐ Avoid basements/attics; keep media in a cool, dry, stable space.

3. Safeguard Digital Media

- ☐ Keep at least two backups in different locations, ideally different geological regions.



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- ☐ Migrate files from obsolete formats regularly.
- ☐ Transcode files from older codecs to contemporary before older codecs expire.
- ☐ Use fixity tools (like AVPreserve Fixity) to check file integrity.

4. Explore Preservation Partners & Funding

- ☐ Consult IndieCollect and other nonprofits for assistance and referrals.
- ☐ Apply for grants: Al Larvick Fund, WFPF, Film Foundation, NFPF, CLIR.
- ☐ Contact labs and other vendors that digitize, store, and restore media.