

Digital Data Preservation Program

CD and DVD Archiving

Quick Reference Guide for Care and Handling

Do:

1. Handle discs by the outer edge or the center hole.
2. Use a non solvent-based felt-tip permanent marker to mark the label side of the disc.
3. Keep dirt or other foreign matter from the disc.
4. Store discs upright (book style) in plastic cases specified for CDs and DVDs.
5. Return discs to storage cases immediately after use.
6. Leave discs in their packaging (or cases) to minimize the effects of environmental changes.
7. Open a recordable disc package only when you are ready to record data on that disc.
8. Store in a cool, dry, dark environment in which the air is clean.
9. Remove dirt, foreign material, fingerprints, smudges, and liquids by wiping with a clean cotton fabric in a straight line from the center of the disc toward the outer edge.
10. Use CD/DVD cleaning detergent, isopropyl alcohol or methanol to remove stubborn dirt or material.
11. Check the disc surface before recording.

Do not:

1. Touch the surface of the disc.
2. Bend the disc
3. Use adhesive labels.
4. Store discs horizontally for a long time (years).
5. Open a recordable optical disc package if you are not ready to record.
6. Expose discs to extreme heat or high humidity.
7. Expose discs to extreme rapid temperature or humidity changes.
8. Expose recordable discs to prolonged sunlight or other sources of UV light.
9. Write or mark in the data area of the disc (area where the laser "reads").
10. Clean in a circular direction around the disc.

For CDs especially do not:

1. Scratch the label side of a CD.
2. Use a pen, pencil, or fine tip marker to write on the disc.
3. Write on the disc with markers that contain solvents.
4. Try to peel off or re-position a label.

General recommendation for long-term storage conditions

For archiving recordable (R) discs, it is recommended to use discs that have a gold metal reflective layer.

Media	Archival Storage Facility - Recommendation for storing CDs and DVDs together	Relative Humidity (RH)
CD, DVD	Temperature Less than 20°C (68°F) Greater than 4°C (39°F)	20% to 50% RH

A temperature of 18°C and 40% RH would be considered suitable for long-term storage.
 A lower temperature and RH is recommended for extended-term storage.

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