



Overview

Although popular home videotapes provide an inexpensive medium for capturing family videos, they unfortunately do not provide a durable or reliable one.

Videotapes, due to their makeup, are susceptible to three dangers, time, usage, and environment. Unless these videotapes are transferred to digital format, their video and audio will fade and eventually be irretrievable.

The very first sign of degradation that home videotapes experience begins with the audio. The sound quality starts to become poor, and may cut in and out. This is soon followed with loss of video quality; the video may become wavy, have lines, or become pixelated. As these tapes are sitting in basements and garages the quality continues to diminish. Many find when they actually play these tapes again, the audio and video that a few years earlier was clear, is now a faded or diminished version of the original. Occasionally people will have their videotapes transferred to digital without viewing them first. Therefore, they are unaware of how much degradation has already occurred. Converting your tapes to digital will preserve your video as it is at that point.

Time Goes On

The very first danger to your home videotapes is the passing of time. The elements in the tapes begin to break down, the magnetism in the tape is lost and the tape loses its lubricants necessary for viewing. This danger is unfortunately unavoidable and the main cause of loss.

Use & Re-Use

The next unfortunate enemy is use. Every time a tape is played the equipment comes in contact with the tape wearing the tape down. (This differs from DVD's as the laser never actually comes in contact with the disc.) The tape can also stretch in the beginning and the end as the tape is rewound or fast forward. Many times footage in the middle of the tape may appear in better condition than footage near the end or beginning.

Environment Is Key

Most people's old home movies lie buried in the attic or in the garage. The elements such as heat, moisture and mildew damage the tape. Tapes can become brittle or warped and eventually unable to be played by any player.

The Solution

There is hope for those old videotapes, a way to dust them off and give them new life. Simply transfer them to contemporary, crystal clear, digital formats such as DVD's. These new formats will allow for simple viewing, sharing, and copying and will not degrade like tape does. Best of all they are an affordable and easy solution and will protect your memories for generations to come.