

Video Tape Storage and Handling

This is a brief list of do's and don'ts from tape manufacturers, with a few additions from our staff:

Do not bring in a tape quickly from hot or cold outdoors and put immediately in a VCR. The tape needs to be room temperature or damage can result. Condensation (moisture) can adhere to tape surfaces and stick to VCR parts.

Do not turn the spools at the bottom of the cassette by hand.

After use, put the cassette in the box and store vertically.

Avoid storage near equipment that give off electromagnetic fields (top of stereo speakers, TV sets, monitors, etc) which can reduce the quality of recorded video or erase it.

3/4" videotapes have a removable red button on the bottom; remove the button to prevent editing over it/accidental erasure. 1/2" (VHS) have a breakable tab at the front; remove to prevent erasing, stick some tape over it to record again. DVCPPro also have a red tab in front, with marking for SAVE or REC.

Do not leave the tape in the VCR overnight.

You get what you pay for; better tapes (i.e. not the 10 tapes for \$9 off-brand Wal-Mart specials) have higher Coercivity (degree to which a tape can be magnetized) for improved detail, Retentivity (ability to retain a magnetic charge) for tape longevity, are thicker (to resist stretching and breaking) and better reproduction.

For long term storage, "pack" the tape by fast forwarding to the end then rewinding. Before watching a tape from storage, pack it as well. Note: Do not do this to Betacam tape.