

Frequently Asked Questions

Who do I contact?

There are separate offices dealing with commercial and non-commercial services. Please contact the relevant section direct with all requests. If you are unsure which section to contact, please deal with the Commercial section initially.

Commercial: Tel + 44 (0) 20 7416 5291/2

Email: filmcommercial@iwm.org.uk

Non-commercial: Tel + 44 (0) 20 7416 5293/4

Email: film@iwm.org.uk

Fax no. +44 (0) 20 7416 5299

What does the Archive hold?

Broadly, we cover all aspects of conflicts – social and political, as well as military – in which British and/or Commonwealth forces have been involved since the beginning of the 20th century until almost the present day. The archive comprises a large variety of material, ranging from official documentaries and unedited actuality news coverage to amateur film, which records from a personal perspective the impact of war. The archive is constantly growing, as we continue to acquire film and videos from service media units and private individuals alike.

How is it held?

Much of our material, particularly covering the two World Wars, is on 35mm film, although some more regularly requested subjects are available on videotape. There are some items on other film formats, and our more recent material is on videotape (PAL standard).

What can the Archive transfer to?

Any format any standard. All material to be transferred to a broadcast standard tape is sent out to a commercial facility house. You pay the company direct for this service. The Museum can transfer to VHS and DVD in-house, but only to PAL television standard. This service is available for a fee to both commercial and non-commercial customers.

How do I get access?

Use the online catalogue and then contact the relevant section direct (see above). If you do not find what you are looking for online please ask, as there is still a significant amount of material not yet on the online catalogue. You can either come to the Museum and view the selected items or ask for a VHS or DVD. A fee will be involved, but this varies on who you are and what you are doing.

How quickly can I get a copy?

This depends on how much and what format you require. In-house, we hope to supply our commercial customers within 7 working days, although this may vary at busy times. A broadcast copy can be supplied usually more quickly. For non-commercial customers it might take between 2-4 weeks for a DVD or VHS, owing to the heavy demand for this service.

Can I view/download films online?

A selection of films from the Archive is available to view and download from our [Film and Video Sales website](#)

I have found some old film – what should I do with it?

If you think it might be of interest to the Museum, please contact our Acquisitions Officer, Mr Kay Gladstone on:

Tel 020 7416 5289 email: kgladstone@iwm.org.uk

If he is not available, then please contact one of the numbers given above under 'contacts'.

If the film is 35mm (approx.1.5” wide) then it might be on the old (pre-1951) cellulose nitrate film stock, which is highly inflammable. As this film is dangerous, it is better to err on the side of safety and store it in a closed can, preferably in an outbuilding away from heat of any kind, flame or ignition and isolated from other combustible materials. 16mm or smaller gauge film is safe, as is videotape. The Film and Video Archive will give you advice on what to do and assuming it is of relevance to us, we will arrange for its collection. Otherwise, you should contact your local environmental health department, who will advise on safe disposal.

We are happy to advise on the relevance of any film or videotape you may have and so please speak to us before you consider disposing of such items. If you also hold any film-related memorabilia and items such as cameras, books and posters that might be of interest to the Museum, please mention these when making contact.