

Unit 5

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Micro Filming:

Preservation of a document often involves copying or reformatting of information from one form to another in order to preserve it. This is also known as preservation reformatting. Microfilming is an example of reformatting technique. Other techniques are photocopying and digitisation.

In microfilming images are reduced to such a small size that they cannot be read without optical assistance. This photographic compression leads to saving of space and is of enduring value. Microfilm has an estimated lifespan of 500+ years when stored in proper condition. Moreover, a roll of 35mm microfilm can hold about 900 pages and a roll of 16mm about 3000 pages.

Rare valuable archival documents deteriorate with time. This could be because the paper they are recorded on is of poor quality, the conditions of storage are adverse or because of frequent use. By microfilming the information recorded in these documents can be preserved and retrieved/used as and when required. This saves the original document from further damage even after the original has deteriorated and become unusable. The original documents or records could be in the form of brittle and decaying books, newspapers, maps, plans, and archival documents such as diaries and manuscripts. These rare and valuable records can be microfilmed to preserve them from loss and destruction over time. In the case of valuable documents, which might become damaged by constant use, a microfilm copy of it may be made and stored separately. The film used is safety film and if properly processed it will last longer than the originals. If possible, the microfilm copy may be given to the reader for reference purposes which will not only prevent the original from damage by constant use but will also protect it from danger, such as fire, natural disaster, etc.