

Ensuring long-term preservation and usability of digital information

The National Diet Library (NDL) is concerned with ensuring the long-term preservation and usability of digital information.



The NDL is the only national depository library in Japan, and as such is responsible for developing and preserving a comprehensive collection of books and other library materials as valuable cultural heritage for future generations.

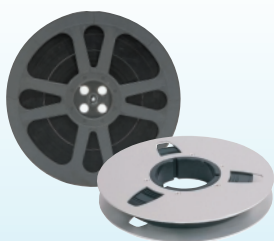
Nowadays the materials that a library should collect and preserve are not only items published in the traditional paper form but also packaged digital publications such as CDs, DVDs, and software, as well as Internet resources.

Digital information is easy to copy, so it is also **easy to preserve?**

No, there are various problems with ensuring the long-term preservation.

- Very short lifespan of digital media compared with printed materials
- Internet resources very often tend to vanish
- Difficulty in securing playback environment, caused by rapidly changing media standards
- Ease of falsification
- Difficulty of ensuring true and correct copy

Analog media such as records and videotapes face the same difficulties as digital media in securing playback environment. In addition, their contact playback system causes them to deteriorate rapidly through wear and breakage. We have to digitize them and preserve them as digital information before it is too late.



Therefore the NDL conducts the following studies to solve these problems:

- **Studies relating to preservation media and playback environments**
- **Studies relating to systems for the long-term preservation**
- **Studies relating to access methods for obsolete file formats**



Digital Library Division, Kansai-kan of the National Diet Library

The National Diet Library Home Page <http://www.ndl.go.jp/en/>