

Frequently Asked Questions

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What is the Digital Film Archive? ([Return to the top](#))

Essentially the Digital Film Archive is a viewable, searchable database of movies, photographs, and supplementary information. It currently has more than 80 hours of film footage and contains 664 items in total

Who is Northern Ireland Screen? ([Return to the top](#))

Northern Ireland Screen is the government-backed lead agency in Northern Ireland for the film, television, and digital content industry, driving global growth through boosting our economy, celebrating our culture, and enhancing our children's education. For more information for who we are and what we do please visit: www.northernirelandscreen.co.uk

How do I use this website? ([Return to the top](#))

This website can be used to access and view the majority of the footage available on the Digital Film Archive. Use the tabs along the top of the home page to Browse the archive by categories, dates, or locations; or use the Collections section to select films on a specific subject or by a certain filmmaker. You can also use the Search and Advanced Search facilities to look for material.

What else does the new website offer? ([Return to the top](#))

Using the new website's Playlist feature, you can create and save a playlist of your favourite archive films. This list will only be temporarily saved to the computer that was used to access the website, unless you become a member, in which case the list will be saved in your account and can be accessed from any computer once you have signed in. Please note this is not the same as downloading a piece of film, as the film itself will not be saved onto your computer.

Why can I not download film from the website? ([Return to the top](#))

Downloading, capturing, or otherwise recording film footage from the Digital Film Archive website is a breach of copyright and not permitted.



Why can I only access some of the Digital Film Archive content online? ([Return to the top](#))

Digital Film Archive Northern Ireland Screen does not own the copyright to any footage in the Digital Film Archive. This has meant we have had to approach copyright holders to request permission to put their footage online. For a variety of reasons, some copyright holders have declined this request.

How can I access the entire archive? ([Return to the top](#))

The entire archive can be viewed at any of our 23 Digital Film Archive Locations across Northern Ireland. As Northern Ireland Screen does not have copyright permission to stream all footage on the Digital Film Archive over the internet, each location has been furnished with a standalone Digital Film Archive Kiosk. These Digital Film Archive Kiosks permits users to access the entire collection. All USB port and DVD drives on these computer kiosks have been disabled as has access to the internet. This is to ensure that archive material cannot be copied or downloaded

What is a Digital Film Archive Kiosk? ([Return to the top](#))

Each location has a copy of the Digital Film Archive on a PC Computer or Kiosk. Each Kiosk is dedicated to the Digital Film Archive only and cannot be used as a computer for normal use.

Can I use the Digital Film Archive computer for other uses such as internet access? ([Return to the top](#))

No. The Digital Film Archive Kiosk has been set up in such a way that only permits viewing access to the Digital Film Archive. This allows Northern Ireland Screen to secure the archive material and prevent it from being copied or duplicated.

What is Copyright? ([Return to the top](#))

Copyright is, "the exclusive and assignable legal right, given to the originator for a fixed number of years, to print, publish, perform, film, or record literary, artistic, or musical material" (*Oxford English Dictionary*). For more information on copyright, what it is and how long it lasts for, visit

<https://www.gov.uk/intellectual-property/copyright>

Can I purchase a copy of the Digital Film Archive on DVD? ([Return to the top](#))

No. Copyright restrictions inhibit us from copying or distributing the Digital Film Archive. Attempting to copy the material from the Digital Film Archive, without written permission from the relevant copyright holder, will jeopardize the entire project.

It also simply would not be practical. The Digital Film Archive is just too big. Comparing memory capacity, a DVD holds about 4.7GB of memory; the Digital Film Archive takes up nearly 80GB presently and that will increase as new content is added to the Digital Film Archive.

If I own a film/footage, do I own the copyright? ([Return to the top](#))

Unless you made the film, or you have been assigned or bought the rights from the original creator or owner of the film, then no, you do not own the copyright. Purchasing a film (DVD, tape, reel etc) does not make you the copyright owner. If you were employed and created a piece of film as part of your work, you do not own the copyright. The rights remain with your employer.

How can I get a copy of a film on the Digital Film Archive? ([Return to the top](#))

If you wish to obtain a copy of film from the archive, you will first need to obtain written permission from the relevant copyright holder(s). The names of the copyright holders are provided with each film. Contact details for many of the institutions and production companies that have provided footage for the Digital Film Archive can be found online. Please note that Northern Ireland Screen is not permitted to release the contact details for any copyright holder who is a member of the public.

For further queries regarding copyright, please contact Francis@northernirelandscreen.co.uk or telephone 028 9023 2444.



Is the Digital Film Archive free to use? ([Return to the top](#))

The Digital Film Archive is free to access at each of the Digital Film Archive locations (see **Locations** page), as is the Digital Film Archive Outreach Programme (see below). Workshops, screenings, or any activities involving the Digital Film Archive are also free of charge.

How do I book a Digital Film Archive outreach presentation? ([Return to the top](#))

Northern Ireland Screen delivers themed presentations based on the content of the Digital Film Archive, to a variety of audiences including community and reminiscence groups, historical societies and schools. All presentations are free of charge and are given on a range of subjects, including:

- The History of the Newsreel
- From Home Rule Crisis to Partition
- A Century of Moving Images
- Themed reminiscence workshops

If you are interested in arranging a presentation please email

Francis@northernirelandscreen.co.uk or telephone 028 90 232 444 to discuss your requirements.

How to Deposit Film with the Digital Film Archive ([Return to the top](#))

Northern Ireland Screen is continuously looking for new and exciting film footage from Northern Ireland to add to the Digital Film Archive. Whether you are an amateur or professional filmmaker, and have made films in or about Northern Ireland that you think would be of interest to us, please email Francis@northernirelandscreen.co.uk and we will arrange to view your film

Unfortunately, as Northern Ireland Screen does not maintain a physical archive, we are unable to store reels of film. Should a donor wish to have their film stored permanently in archive conditions, Northern Ireland Screen will advise them of the options available.

What does Northern Ireland Screen look for in a film for the Digital Film Archive? ([Return to the top](#))

To be included in the Digital Film Archive, your film must meet certain criteria:

- It must be of intrinsic educational value
- The footage must be about, made in or by someone from Northern Ireland
- It must not require any restoration work
- It must not be on 35mm silver nitrate. (Please note this format is rare, but it does crop up. Silver Nitrate film is extremely flammable and is therefore a hazardous material. Northern Ireland Screen **does not** have the capacity to handle this type of film. If you suspect that your film might be Silver Nitrate, please contact us and we will direct you to the appropriate authorities.)
- It must be **your film**, i.e. you must own the copyright to the footage.

If we feel that it is suitable to be included in the Digital Film Archive, we will arrange to digitise your footage and return the original copy to you. If you wish to have your film permanently housed in suitable archival conditions, we will help you make the appropriate arrangements.