

## Home Movie Day Supplies/Equipment Checklist



Here's a list of things to have on hand for your Home Movie Day event. Some of them are optional, nice to have around just in case. Some of them we consider to be essential, based on local hosts' experiences and our own standards of preservation and careful film handling. You may or may not choose to project all film or video formats, or you may want to add more less-typical ones.

If you're missing anything essential, and absolutely can't beg, borrow, or steal it from someone you know, send an email to the Home Movie Day list—we're all there to help each other out!

### Film Inspection and Prep

- Cotton gloves
- Webril wipes or lint-free cloths
- Film cleaner
- Loupe or magnifying glass
- Scissors/snips and razor blades
- Regular 8, Super 8, and 16mm splicers and splicing tape/cement
- Regular 8, Super 8, and 16mm leader
- Shrinkage gauge (or 10 frames of leader taped to a board)
- Portable rewinds
- Empty Regular 8, Super 8, and 16mm reels
- 16mm split reels and cores
- Paper tape
- Desk lamps for projection table
- Freezer bags to store film
- Experienced person(s) to inspect and repair film!

### Film Projection and Display

- Regular 8, Super 8, and 16mm projectors and viewers, clean and in good working order
- Spare bulbs and fuses for all projectors being used (optional, but very helpful)
- Supply of Q-tips, rubbing alcohol, and canned air for in-between cleanings
- Portable screen(s), if venue doesn't have built-in
- Test reel in each format you'll be projecting (or a pre-cut piece of leader that you can run through projectors to make sure they're set up and running OK)
- Experienced person(s) to operate projectors!
- Power strips and extension cords

## Video Projection Gear & Supplies

- ❑ Projector - with RCA & S-Video inputs
- ❑ CRT Monitors
- ❑ Cables (BNC, RCA, S-video)
- ❑ Switcher/Mixer

## Video Decks

- ❑ DVD player
- ❑ VHS deck
- ❑ Betamax deck
- ❑ Hi-8/Video 8
- ❑ Mini-DV
  - Second decks or additional rewinders are recommended for efficiency

## Video Supplies

- ❑ Power strips
- ❑ Head cleaning supplies (q-tips, isopropyl)
- ❑ Reuseable VHS tape housings
- ❑ VHS-C adapter
- ❑ Betamax rewriter

## Room set-up

- ❑ Several clean tables or countertops: one for sign-in and organizing reels of film to be shown, one for film inspection and prep, one for handouts and show-and-tell materials, one for snacks and beverages, one for projectors
- ❑ Chairs for people to sit on, if venue doesn't have built-in
- ❑ Informational materials on: film preservation, local and national labs that do small-gauge film preservation and transfer work, local sponsors, books/magazines on amateur film and home movies
- ❑ Volunteers to sign people in, answer questions, and help out
- ❑ Snacks and beverages, if you can get them!

## Notes on what you'll need:

- Pretty much all of the inspection and prep equipment is mandatory. Home Movie Day is about preserving film in optimal condition, and presenting it as it was meant to be seen. Be sure to inspect, repair and clean everything you plan to put on a projector.
- You can make your own rough film shrinkage gauge out of short lengths of new leader in each format. If the sprocket holes on the film to be projected don't line up with the leader's holes, it's shrunken. If it's too shrunken to fit properly in a splicer (sprocket holes completely off within a 10-frame interval or less), or seems otherwise unstable, DON'T project it! Screening dirty film with bad splices and breaks is bad for your equipment, it's bad for the film itself, AND it perpetuates the image of film as a "nostalgia" medium that always looks cruddier than video and digital media. In actual fact, some of the people who came to

Home Movie Day reported that their home movie originals looked much better than the video transfers they'd already made. Let's try to keep all HMD films looking their best and minimize the potential for damage!

- On the subject of projectors: you can handle projector set-ups in any number of ways. The ideal might be to have one each dedicated to regular 8, Super 8, and 16mm, set up and running at the beginning of the day, with at least two projectionists, and back-ups and spare parts for all three projectors. That way, you can always have one projectionist threading up film while the other runs a reel, and keep screening continuously. Failing that, it's probably better to have an extra working projector on hand than extra parts, so you can just swap them if the projector you start with gets "tired" after hours of screening.
- For 8mm film, HMD hosts should be aware that there are good and bad points to using dual-8 projectors. Good: if you have two dual-8 projectors, you can set one up for straight 8 and one for Super 8, and keep them dedicated unless one or the other breaks down, in which case you can still run both formats. Also, if space is an issue, then you can do double duty with a single projector. Bad: Dual-8 projectors are often less reliable, especially under heavy use. You can also damage film if you're switching back and forth between 8mm formats and forget to change your projector settings appropriately. Last but not least, if you're relying on a dual-8 machine for all your 8mm projection needs, and it goes on the fritz, you're done with 8 for the day (or at least until you can fix it and check with your test reel)!
- Local hosts have reported that people showed up with everything from 8mm film that was still in the cartridge—exposed but not developed—to 9.5mm to 16mm anamorphic widescreen to VHS and DVD transfers of home movies. Be prepared for anything, and try to use the weird stuff as a way to demonstrate the great range and history of home movies. You can always draw the parallel between all these different home movie formats and their technical differences and all the digital and analog video formats and THEIR technical differences—make the point that we can at least identify film by looking at it, but video and digital storage media and their contents are going to be harder for us to identify in the future. So people should preserve their films! If someone shows up with something you can't play, try to make sure you tell them whom to talk to about getting a look at their family memories sometime soon.
- Re: volunteers, it's better to have too many people on hand to help out than too few. For a big urban venue, you might end up needing a dozen people or more to keep track of what film goes on next, who it belongs to, and who's coming and going, not to mention spelling tired projectionists and film inspectors and local hosts. Getting people who are keen on home movies to come spend part of their day doing this shouldn't be too hard, and you'll be glad to have the help. If there's a lab near you, ask them to send a volunteer with inspection and repair equipment to be your prep person, in exchange for the opportunity to get the word out to their target audience about their transfer services!
- Re: snacks and beverages, as well as other optional supplies, don't hesitate to ask someone to donate these. Having local support helps. Many chain grocery stores, coffee shops, and restaurants have community relations programs that

allow them to donate products or services to non-profit community activities and fundraising events. Ask store managers if they can contribute to your HMD event several weeks in advance if they require an official written request.