

Home Movie Legacy

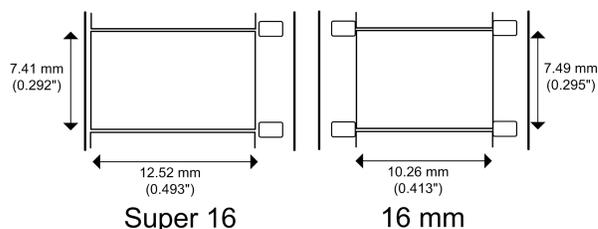


An Extremely Condensed History of Home Movie Film

There are many formats that people have used for amateur filmmaking and home movies. If you are a cinema or history buff, you can read all about these on Wikipedia. Below are the most common ones that you will find in an average home movie archive.

9.5 mm (Introduced in 1922) is an amateur film format introduced by Pathé Frères as part of the *Pathé Baby* amateur film system. It was used to provide inexpensive copies of commercially made films to home users. Popular in Europe.

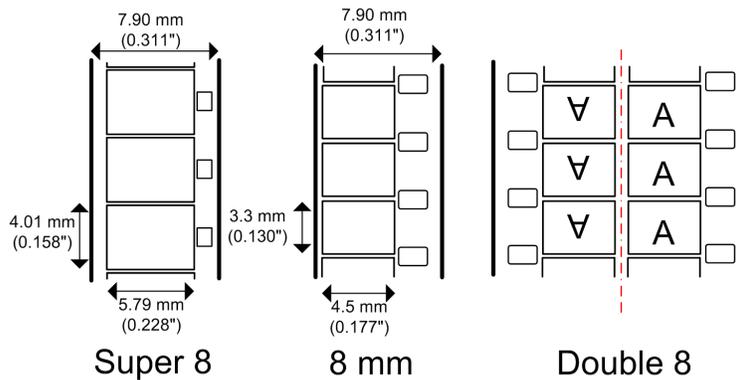
16mm film (Introduced in 1923) During the 1920s the format was often referred to as sub-standard film by the professional industry. Initially it was directed toward the amateur market. During World War II, it was used extensively for education, and for TV production in countries where 35mm is too expensive.



Regular 8 (Introduced in 1932) Also known as standard 8 or normal 8. Kodak introduced this format during the depression as a home movie format that was less expensive than 16mm. The film spools contain 16mm film with twice as many perforations along each edge.

Super 8 (Introduced in 1965) by Eastman Kodak and was a great improvement over regular 8. It featured a better quality image, and was easier to use mainly due to a cartridge loading. It remains a popular film format today for some production work, weddings and

other milestone events.



And just so you know...Tapes and Discs

VHS – Introduced by JVC in 1971

Beta Max -- Introduced by Sony in 1977

8mm Video – 1980's

Hi 8 – 1980's

Mini DV -- 1995

DVD Sony and Phillips -- 1995

Blu-ray Disc -- 2006

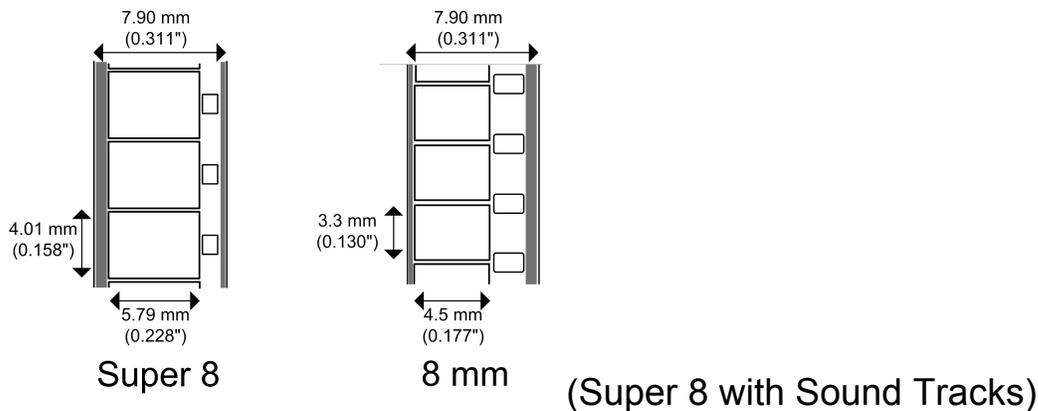
TIP: LOOK FOR YOUR AUDIO TRACK

Look for your audio track! A majority of places that transfer film on a film chain projector won't tell you if you have one because they can't transfer it!

Throughout the history of filmmaking, sound in many forms has been used in conjunction with 8mm and 16mm film. Sound has been recorded on film using either magnetic or optical systems. Sound has had many challenges, from fidelity issues to holding sync with picture.

Part of my company, Pro8mm's, legacy is that we invented sound for super 8 film in 1972. At the time, the company was called Super8Sound ©. The system we invented used a special tape recorder (called a full-coat recorder). The audiotape had sprockets that matched the sprockets on the film. The camera and tape recorder ran in sync. This idea of double system filmmaking for super 8 mirrored the way it was done in 35mm professional filmmaking.

Later, Kodak introduced home movie film, which had an audio stripe right on it. This is a little piece of magnetic audiotape right on the film. Sound cameras were introduced so you could film and record your movies all on one film cartridge loaded in your camera. Projectors evolved that had audio systems to play the sound track.



Super 8 and 8 mm film formats side by side. Magnetic sound stripes are indicated in gray; the wide stripe is the actual sound track, the narrow stripe is a "balance" stripe, enabling smooth movement and rolling-up of the film. (created by Max Smith for Wikipedia, Public Domain)

The capability for a company to handle audio, especially for regular 8 films, is a specialty that is both unique and rare. Millions of feet of audio stripe are lost from archives and private home movie collections because most facilities do not have the capacity to transfer it. In many cases, neither you as the consumer, or the relatively unskilled transfer technician can recognize that the sound stripe on the film exists.

A professional company will have a system that can handle all types of sound tracks used in small format film, creating a new digital master with your sound and picture in sync. This can include Super 8 main magnetic track, Super 8 stereo main and balance track, Regular 8 main track, and 16mm with magnetic and optical audio.

(Diagrams in the public domain from Wikipedia)

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