



Terms and conditions for filming at The National Archives

This information is important.

Please read it thoroughly before you contact us to arrange filming.

The National Archives welcomes the opportunity to display records on film and television. As a working archive our service in delivering documents to the public and responsibility to the care and conservation of our unique and irreplaceable documents must take priority. This means we are not always able to meet all of the many requests we receive for filming.

In most cases we will grant permission to film records we hold provided the film company/producer will agree to:

- Credit The National Archives as the source of the records on screen and in the script (not just in the closing credits) during the film/programme itself
- Respect and adhere to the National Archives conservation and care requirements for document handling

The National Archives reserves the right to refuse permission. We strongly advise you secure permission before confirming talent, travel or accommodation arrangements.

Making a request to film

Requests for filming must be in **writing, with a completed application form** available from our website (link) as far in advance as possible, **giving at least ten working days' notice**. Please either email press@nationalarchives.gsi.gov.uk or fax on 020 8487 1987.

Identifying the records you wish to film

You are responsible for identifying document you wish to film. The National Archives cannot undertake detailed research on your behalf.

All document **file references must be submitted to the Press Office** (by email or fax), **at least FIVE working days in advance** of filming to ensure they are ready for your arrival. **No additional documents can be ordered on the day of filming.**

How to search our records

You can search our online Catalogue at nationalarchives.gov.uk/catalogue or for general advice on finding documents in the Catalogue telephone the Contact Centre on 020 8392 5200. Advice and detailed finding aids are [available online](#) and in our reading rooms. On site reader advisers can advise you about the different types of records and the sources relevant to particular subjects.

Before ordering any document you need a Reader's Ticket for The National Archives.

Opening hours are available to view at nationalarchives.gov.uk/visit/times.htm

Should you need further support check out our independent researchers who do research at The National Archives listed at nationalarchives.gov.uk/irlist

The practicalities

Making a preliminary visit

We strongly advise that you make a preliminary visit (recce) to look at where filming can take place, to ascertain timing, lighting etc. There is no charge for this.

Locations

Filming in public areas is restricted and will only be permitted under exceptional circumstances We provide access to the **repository** (document storage) area and selected **reading room** environments. Filming outside in the grounds of The National Archives is allowed provided the public are not inconvenienced – there is no charge for this unless our expert is involved.

Filming locations **must be agreed at least 48hrs before filming** in order for appropriate arrangements to be made.

While we will make every effort to accommodate your filming needs, please be aware that these are working areas, and in some instances filming/recording may be interrupted intermittently.

For radio recordings, we have a small sound-proof studio Equipped with ISDN line

Timings

Filming should take place in The National Archives premises between 9:00 and 17:00, Monday to Friday. **The crew must be off site by 17:00.**

Filming out-of-hours can sometimes be arranged but would have to be negotiated well in advance.

Who can film

You must let us know in advance the names of the people in the crew who will visit The National Archives, including any presenters, interviewees and researchers. There is limited parking space and we cannot guarantee to reserve spaces.

How you can film

We do not allow documents to be removed from The National Archives for filming.

All filming on the premises must be supervised by staff. The National Archives reserves the right to terminate filming at any time if the officer in charge is concerned that the terms and conditions are not being met or that the filming is deviating from the agreed schedule or context.

The crew should stay with a staff member and wear their visitor passes at all times. **Smoking is not permitted anywhere inside The National Archives' buildings.**

No drinks or food of any kind, including chewing gum or sweets, are allowed near the documents. When filming a shot in which someone appears to be studying a document then the rules of the Reading Room (use of supports, pencils only etc) must be observed.

Protective gloves (which we supply) must be worn when filming with original documents. If you would like document handling training before agreeing to film at The National Archives, please let us know as we would be happy to arrange a session for you.

Filming and the care of documents

Documents are easily damaged and so they must be handled as little as possible. Excessive exposure to light is also dangerous, and the lighting levels and periods of exposure must be kept to minimum. Every effort must be made to ensure that documents are not exposed to strong lighting for extended periods of time while filming. Please remember to switch off additional lighting when the camera is not rolling/between takes. You must not make a mark of any kind on any documents, or attach any adhesive, such as Post-it notes. Pages may not be removed from documents.

We will supply book-rests, backboards and other materials necessary for the display of documents. Our documents are valuable and irreplaceable so we have to impose restrictions on how they are handled. The National Archives Collection Care department can be on hand to arrange documents onto handling/library aids and give guidance on how to handle the documents. We can also send you information leaflets and arrange training on document handling in advance of your visit if you would prefer.

Equipment used by film crews in The National Archives

The National Archives reserves the right to determine the suitability of all equipment used in filming, including its electrical safety. No equipment without a current valid safety certificate or which does not conform to the Safety Regulations of the Electrical Institute of Great Britain and suitable British Standards may be used on the premises. No lights or equipment may be clamped to any fixed furnishings.

The capacity of the electrical circuits which concerns film crews is that of any one 13 amp safety socket, ie just over 2 kilowatts. In terms of arc or spotlighting this would be up to 1 x 2000 watt lamp or 2 x 1000 watt lamps (on a linked plug) on one 13 amp outlet. Multi outlet adaptors are forbidden even where the total wattage rating is within the 2 kilowatt guideline. Not more than 2 x 2000 kilowatt pieces of equipment should be put onto one ringmain as the overall fusing will be insufficient.

Insurance

All film crews must provide evidence that they are adequately insured. Any damage arising out of filming of National Archives material either of persons or objects will be the responsibility of the client. We shall ask for a copy of your insurance schedule when you request permission to film.

Copyright

Filming and photography

Access for filming of public records is given with the authority of the Keeper of Public Records, under s.49 of the Copyright, Designs and Patents Act 1988. In many cases, the material copied is still subject to copyright. Access is given on the understanding that it is the responsibility of those making the film or photographic copies to ensure that subsequent use of the copies does not infringe copyright. For further guidance on copyright please contact our Copyright Officer on 020 8392 5381 or copyright@nationalarchives.gsi.gov.uk

Copyright of non-public records held in The National Archives is subject to greater restrictions. We may have to refuse access for filming or photography of such material unless permission has been obtained from the holder of the copyright.

Use of material

Crown copyright material among the public records may be broadcast freely although an acknowledgement of the source of the material must be made.

The National Archives cannot give permission for the use of material that is not Crown copyright, or advise on the current ownership of any copyright which may still subsist in it.

No copyright application is required for general views of records in which detail of the contents does not appear on the screen.

Transmission

The National Archives must be credited on screen, and in the script, during the broadcast programme as the source of the records.

Please inform The National Archives of the date and time of the proposed broadcast and forward to us a VHS videotape or DVD of the programme.

For further information please contact us on + 44 (020) 8392 5277 or email us at press@nationalarchives.gsi.gov.uk