

KODAK RELIABLE IMAGE TIP # 10

Can archived microfilm be cleaned or re-washed?

Yes, microfilm can be cleaned and re-washed if your film is in good physical condition. There are many rolls of dirty microfilm in vaults all over the world. These rolls have become dirty over the years for many reasons such as:

- Improper washing during processing**
- Poor/improper storage**
- Poor/improper storage environment**
- Improper film handling techniques**
- Dirty thread paths in film readers**

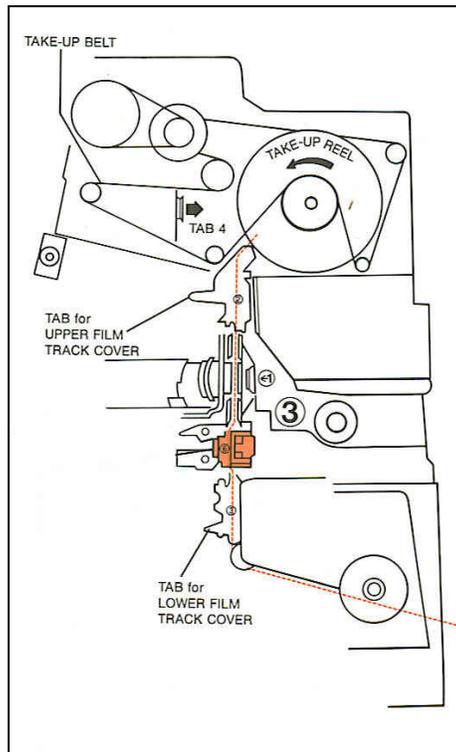
Microfilm can be re-washed to remove surface dirt. Care must be taken to inspect the film prior to washing. Splices, tears, rips and curling can cause jams in the processor and lead to film damage and image loss. Re-washing may heal minor emulsion scratches in the gelatin layer. However, most scratches or abrasions on the emulsion will remain.

If you use your film for retrieval purposes in a reader printer, you should incorporate a daily cleaning procedure (refer to your operator's manual.) Below is a diagram of the film thread path of a Kodak Photo Retrieval machine. This portion of the machine is the hardest to clean and most times is the dirtiest. The other picture is that of a roll of cleared out (D-Min) processed microfilm ("the cleaning roll"). Clear film has a higher propensity for static build-up and will attract dirt and dust particulate easily. Load the cleaning roll into the thread path as usual and advance it for 10 seconds, rewind and unload the roll. You will see the dirt that has accumulated on the clear film surface. As this film becomes dirty, just cut off the dirty length and continue to use the roll until it is all gone. Contact your processing lab for a replacement "cleaning roll".

Cleaning Roll



Thread Path



Another way to clean your film is with “Film Particle Cleaning Rollers” (see picture below). They are tacky rollers designed specifically to clean film and not harm the film surface or images. These assemblies and rollers are available from FPC, a Kodak company, which can be contacted at www.fpcfilm.com.



