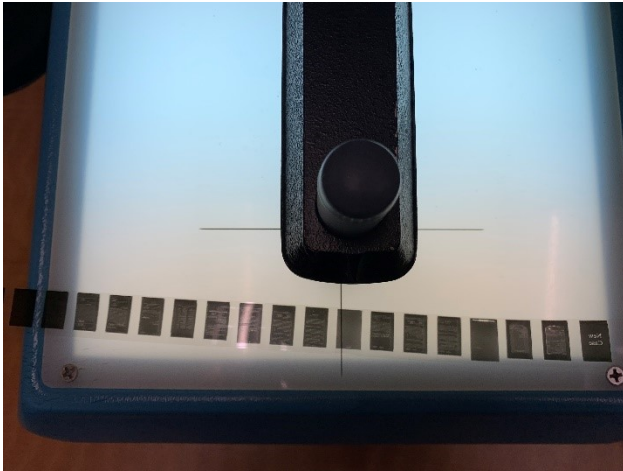




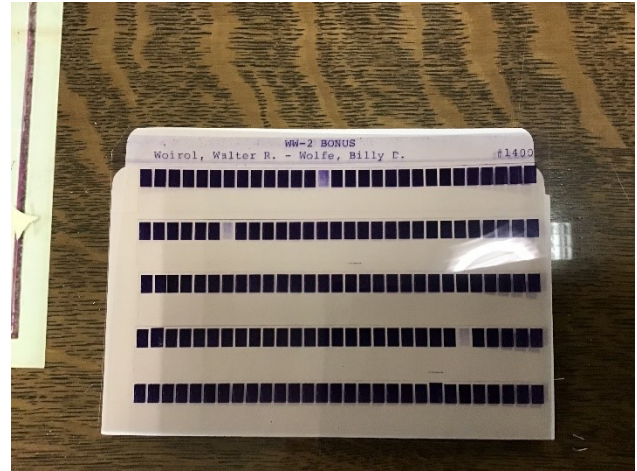
Microfilming Records: What's the Difference Between Microfilm and Microfiche?

Purpose: Provide guidance to state and local government agencies on the difference between microfilm and microfiche.



What is microfilm?

Microfilm is a very long strip of photographic film with small photographs of records arranged in a single stream of images.



What is microfiche?

Microfiche is a small, flat piece of transparent photographic film with small photographs of records arranged in a grid.

How are they similar?

- Both can preserve access to rare, fragile, or damaged materials.
- Both take up less space than traditional paper formats such as documents, newspapers, and ledgers.
- Both can last up to 500 years if created, handled, and stored properly.
- Both can be copied from a master negative.
- Both can be digitized.

How are they different?

- Microfiche is organized by card or sheet, while microfilm is organized by reel or cartridge.
- A sheet of microfiche can hold dozens or hundreds of images, while a reel of microfilm can hold thousands of images.

**Additional advice regarding the management of public records is available from
Washington State Archives:**

**www.sos.wa.gov/archives
recordsmanagement@sos.wa.gov**