

# Preserving Video Recordings as Digital Evidence

Compiled by Tech Safety BC



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Video recordings can show harassment, threats, intimidation, or other abusive behaviour. They may also capture patterns of monitoring or control.

Videos can come from:

- Recordings you took yourself.
- Videos your current/former partner sent to you.
- Videos posted online or on social media.

This infosheet explains how to safely preserve video evidence and what to consider if you want to use it in court.

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If something in this guide is no longer up to date, or you have any questions, please reach out to [techsafe@bcsth.ca](mailto:techsafe@bcsth.ca) with your concerns.

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## Why Video Evidence Can Help

Video recordings can:

- Provide a clear record of what happened.
- Capture details that [screenshots](#) or text cannot.
- Show patterns of behaviour over time.
- Help support criminal or civil legal actions.
- Preserve content that may be deleted.

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## Safety Check

Before recording or saving videos, think about your safety.

Your current/former may see what you are doing if:

- They share or have physical access to your device.
- They know your passwords.
- They have access to your cloud accounts (iCloud, Google Drive, Dropbox).
- Spyware/stalkerware is installed on your device.

Recording or saving videos could alert them. If you suspect monitoring, make a plan to avoid detection and consider reaching out to an [anti-violence worker](#) for support.

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## Videos You Recorded Yourself

### Preserving the Original File

- The recording will save automatically to your Photos app (iPhone), Gallery (Android), or your computer files.
- Do not edit the video. Courts prefer unedited, complete recordings.

- Keep the original file to preserve metadata (date, time, device).
- Be prepared to explain:
  - When it was recorded.
  - Who recorded it.
  - What device was used.

## Backing Up Safely

- If your cloud account is not safe, back up the video to a USB or USB-C drive or another secure location.
- If a harassing or threatening video is sent to you, save it to your Photos or Gallery if safe to do so.

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## Videos Posted Online

### Recording Online Videos

- Use your phone's screen-recording feature to capture online videos quickly.
- On Android, turn audio ON before recording.

### If You Cannot Screen-Record

- If screen recording is not possible, use another device to film your screen.
- Third-party websites or apps can download online videos, but:
  - Some may not be legal for certain content.
  - Some raise data privacy concerns.
- Use them only if screen recording or filming your screen is not an option.

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## Transcripts

A transcript can support the video in court. It may help if:

- The audio is unclear.
- There is background noise.
- The court cannot play the video.

Always review it carefully to ensure accuracy.

Also, document:

- The date and time of the recording.
- Who can be heard or seen in the video.

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## Presenting Video Evidence in Court

Before your hearing:

- Contact the Court Registry to confirm what video formats they accept.
- Ask whether the court can provide equipment or whether you can bring your own laptop.
- Phones are often not allowed for playing evidence unless approved.
- You may need to transfer videos to a USB, DVD, or another format the court prefers.

### About Secret Recordings

Courts, especially family courts, may not accept secretly recorded videos.

Secret recordings can:

- Harm how the judge views your credibility.
- Increase conflict.

- Be emotionally harmful to children if they are involved.

If you choose to record, avoid leading questions or trying to provoke the other person, as this can affect how the evidence is viewed.

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## Authentication

To help prove the video is real:

- Transfer the file as few times as possible.
- Keep the original version.
- Be ready to explain how and when it was recorded.

If the other person denies they are in the video, you may need to identify them by:

- Their voice.
- Their appearance.
- Personal details they mention.

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## Safeguarding Your Videos

- Store video files in a safe, private location.
- Keep a backup copy on a second device or secure drive.
- Use the TFGBV Evidence Log to track when and how recordings were saved.

*If you are experiencing tech abuse, you are not alone. Find support in your community by connecting with a [BC Society of Transition Houses Member Program](#) or check out our other safety resources at [techsafebc.bcsth.ca](https://techsafebc.bcsth.ca).*