



Does the film have "Nitrate" or "Safety" imprinted somewhere along the outer edge?

Yes, it has "Nitrate" printed along the edge.
It is **cellulose nitrate film**

Yes, it has "Safety" printed along the edge.
It is **cellulose acetate film**

No

Is the film either 16 mm or 8 mm (amateur home movie film)?

Yes
It is **cellulose acetate film**

No

Can you date the year of manufacture?
Refer to manufacturer's websites (Kodak etc.) for more information or research film stock dates and codes online.

Yes, it is before 1910.
It is **cellulose nitrate film**

Yes, it is between 1910 and 1951

No

Yes, it is between 1952 and 1990.
It is most likely **cellulose acetate film***

Yes, it is between 1990 and present day

Look for signs of deterioration

the film is turning an amber color, is tacky or powdering/crumbling.
Assume it is **cellulose nitrate**

The film is "channeled" and/or the film smells like vinegar.
It is **cellulose acetate**

The film is in good condition or has no other deterioration signs.
Assume it is **cellulose nitrate**

Perform the Polarization Test

See no colors or it is dark.
It is **cellulose acetate film**

See rainbow colors.
It is **polyester film**

*Although Kodak ceased manufacturing cellulose nitrate motion picture film in 1951, the stock material may have been available and used into the mid-1950s. Also, other manufacturers may have produced cellulose nitrate film well into the 1950s.