

# Mini-Me



Consider this a public service announcement. I recently had two different clients come in on two different days with the same request and the same problem.

They had mini-dvds – miniature discs that fit into certain camcorders. Both clients wanted to have the video footage from the discs transferred to computer files that they could play on their computers.

They came in because they found they could no longer watch the mini-DVDs. The reason? The cameras that recorded them were no longer working. And when they tried to play the mini-dvds on another player... they didn't work.

Here's how I explained it to them. Each mini-dvd camera had the ability to write directly to the disk and play those disks back. However, each camera is different in where they store the digital data on the disk. To make the disk universally accessible to all DVD players, they needed to "finalize" the disk. This process puts metadata on the disk that will tell all other players where the files are stored. If that finalization process isn't done, the only player that would know where the files are is the equipment that recorded it. And no other player would be able to play it.

There is a way to recover files if the original camera is no longer available but it takes some doing. One of my clients

still had the camera. The other one didn't. Thanks to our ability, both will be getting their memories restored to them but it will be at a vastly different price point.

If you have worked with mini-dvds in the past, double check to make sure the disks have been finalized. You'll save yourself a few dollars.

*Michael Ondrasik and Home Video Studio of Mount Dora specialize in the preservation of family memories. For more information, call 352-735-8550 or visit [www.homevideostudio.com/mtd](http://www.homevideostudio.com/mtd).*