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Subject: Curious about Cds and DVDs - What part can you touch?

Posted by [bengee](#) on Sun, 20 Feb 2011 14:52:20 GMT

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When cds first starting coming out, I was always nervous about holding them, because I knew that if you scratched it in the wrong place, it might not work right again.

I'm not so clear though on whether it matters how you hold it. For the longest time, I thought that the inner circle held all the information, so I'd never hold it that way. Other people have told me that cds are very resilient and that I shouldn't worry about how I hold it.

What is correct?

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Subject: Re: Curious about Cds and DVDs - What part can you touch?

Posted by [Wayne Parham](#) on Sun, 20 Feb 2011 16:16:15 GMT

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I think some common sense is in order here. CDs and DVDs are pretty durable, and not as affected by scratches as vinyl records are. But that doesn't mean they're immune. If the surface is sufficiently scratched or contaminated, it will adversely affect laser pickup. We've all suffered through a CD that skips because somebody scratched it bad enough to damage it.

My suggestion would be to gently handle your CDs and to keep them clean and free of smudges. Treat them like you would a photographic negative. Handle it by the edges, or by putting your finger through the center. Don't touch the surface of either side if possible. The bottom surface is more important to keep clean, because that's the side that is read. But the top is actually more fragile, since it contains a (required) reflective layer that is only about 7 microns thick.

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Subject: Re: Curious about Cds and DVDs - What part can you touch?

Posted by [Adveser](#) on Sun, 20 Feb 2011 19:28:24 GMT

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Wayne hit is right on the head. If you scratch the label side and it hits any of the reflective layer I will guarantee you it will not play on that region ever again. You might have a chance if the scratch is on the data side.

That said, be very careful. A lot of people have been under the impression that you can scratch the label side and it will be okay.

CDr's actually have the reflective surface just below the label itself and it is not embedded in the disc at all. That said. I like to pretend that is the case on every disc because you can't be too careful.

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Subject: Re: Curious about Cds and DVDs - What part can you touch?

Posted by [JakeQ](#) on Mon, 07 Mar 2011 23:25:14 GMT

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My rule of thumb was always, don't touch the shiny parts! I didn't realize that they were so delicate that you couldn't get a scratch on the label.

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