



## Researchers A-C-T on DNA Storage

Using a technique with multiple accuracy checks, researchers have stored large amounts of digital information on tiny volumes of synthetic DNA. Sophie Bushwick reports

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Scientists have used synthetic DNA to store digital files—including a photo, Shakespeare's sonnets and an [audio recording of Martin Luther King](#). The work is published in the journal *Nature*. [Nick Goldman et al, [Towards practical, high-capacity, low-maintenance information storage in synthesized DNA](#)]

Unlike many forms of information storage, DNA is extremely long-lasting and does not require constant electrical power. Plus, it's tiny—a small cup of DNA can store one hundred million hours of high-quality video.

But until now, this storage method has faced too many obstacles: DNA synthesis is expensive and only works for short strings, and the decoding process creates lots of errors.

To avoid these problems, British researchers broke a long string of information into many overlapping short sequences, each tagged with its position in the overall sequence. American collaborators then synthesized short pieces of DNA to match the strings, and shipped the material overseas. Finally, researchers reconstructed the digital files with complete accuracy.

DNA storage is still very expensive. But the scientists predict advancing technology will lower prices and make their method cost-effective within a decade.

—Sophie Bushwick

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Cool, so when we create artificial life when can include make, model and serial number, as well as the users manual.

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