

Digital Film, Camera Flash Card Care

When you buy a digital camera, you will discover sooner or later that the amount of memory available on the card that came with the camera is not enough.

Taking pictures at highest quality will fill up your memory card much too quickly.

All though downloading photos can be quick, it's not really as simple as changing a role of film, particularly if you're not close to your computer.

So let us look at some solutions for selecting and caring for memory cards?

Large Capacity Memory Cards

Size Isn't always the remedy but, a big improvement:

Keep in mind that you will most definitely take 2 to 3 times more images using digital cameras than you would with film. And why not, you have eliminated all the inconvenience of driving down to the photo store to drop off the film for processing and the time it takes to drive down and pick it up and review and edit these images.

Think about your picture taking habits and consider multiple cards you can change frequently and label like a rolls of film. (512 MB or 1GB)

Big capacity memory cards in the range of 1 GB (1000MB) and up will certainly help you shoot longer without having to download your pictures to a computer frequently.

Here is the problem. Sometimes but rarely memory cards do fail and if this should happen to you, think about all the images you will have lost . Not a pleasant experience.

With my Nikon D100 (set up for shooting in Raw format NEFs uncompressed) a 512mb card will provide 50 images and the 1Gigabyte card 103 images before I need to change cards

I carry four (4) compact flash cards for maximum image security and peace of mind. This way I change out cards and label them before downloading just

like rolls of film.

What about Editing and Deleting images from the card within the camera when I'm in the field free up some space on my card??

It's often difficult to tell what the true quality of an image is by simply reviewing it on your camera's tiny LCD screen. So deleting images from the card in the field to make room may not be the best solution unless it is an esthetic reason.

Jer's Tips for protecting your flash cards from damage.
Pay attention here!!

Format Your Card in Camera!

Deleting all the images on your flash card from your computer after downloading is not the same thing as reformatting the card in your camera. A contributing factor to card failure can be the existence of previously deleted photos. The best thing is to always format the card in your camera after you have finished downloading.

Always reformat the card in your camera each time after downloading and saving the pictures on your computer.

Always create a backup by saving your files from the memory card to your computer.

Tethering your digital camera to a computer to transfer pictures from a memory card involves using a USB cable. This method can be slow, cumbersome, and a drain on your camera's precious batteries.

A better way is to use a small peripheral device called a card reader.

NEVER REMOVE A MEMORY CARD FROM YOUR CAMERA during the image transfer process.

Always power down your camera before card removal.

Always charge your camera batteries.

Battery failure while shooting will result in corruption of data on the card and can even lead to a damaged card.

Do not remove the card from the camera or card reader too quickly as this can result in the corruption of data on the card and lead to damaged memory areas.

Wait for just a few moments to ensure that all the data has been written to the card before you shut off the camera.

Avoid large static charges, and be extra careful when handling cards in dry, low humidity areas like New Mexico

Keep cards away from strong magnetic sources, and extreme heat and cold.

If using Windows 2000 or XP always flush the cache before removing your card from the reader, this can be done by right clicking on the green arrow in the system tray and ejecting your drive letter.

When editing pictures in your graphics application always ensure you have moved the picture from the card to your computer first, you will dramatically increase the life of your card by doing this.

If a memory card problem occurs, stop using the card immediately, do not reformat the card or delete pictures and use an Image recovery program. (ImageRecall and **Image Rescue to name a few**)

Be careful with the "delete all" and "Format" functions on cameras using Smartmedia or XD cards. These are irreversible formats that cannot be recovered by anybody.

Understanding the cause of memory card failure will help to eliminate future frustration and ensure continued enjoyment from your digital camera.