

# Five Tips For The Proper Care & Feeding Of Memory Cards For Photographers



Whatever memory card you use, there are some best practices that you might want to consider to keep your memory cards safe, and operational. Here are some suggestions. (Remember these are BEST PRACTICES. This doesn't mean that you may not be able to get away with any or all of these things, it's just that you'll run a greater risk of problems if you ignore this advice.)

- 1) Always **FORMAT** your card after you have downloaded the images from it rather than erasing the images one-by-one or taking them en' masse to the trash. This cleans up the file system and greatly reduces your chance of a crash.
- 2) Don't share cards with friends, or put them into other people's cameras or computers. This can cause a crash since the other camera or computer may attempt to write a system, desktop or file of unknown format to the card.
- 3) Stay away from the super-duper, neat **ULTRA** fast and large cards until they have been on the market for six months to a year. 90% of the problems come from these cards. They use gimmicks or acceleration routines that may or may not work in your camera, but that can cause instability. They are also really expensive so that's plenty of reason to avoid them anyway.
- 4) The very large (and expensive) cards, are prone to far more File Allocation Table (FAT)-like errors. For ultimate safety, stick with cards that are at least one size smaller than the largest available until later, when they will be down in price and up in reliability.
- 5) Do not remove your card, or power down your camera while the card is writing. This can cause critical data loss. In fact, always turn your camera off before inserting or removing a memory card, just to be safe.

I've been very lucky. I've had an almost perfect track record with camera memory cards by following these guidelines. Hopefully they will help protect you too