

# **Proper Handling of Memory Cards for the Digital Photographer**

## **Tip No.1.**

Download, email, post-process and/or print your images promptly. If you wait weeks or months, the colours could fade, saturation could suffer and colour balance could shift. Or worse, image files could become corrupt or you could misplace your card.

## **Tip No.2.**

When you're not going to use a memory card for a long time, it's a good idea to securely wrap it (make sure it's airtight) and store it in the freezer. Doing this helps preserve the card's ability to retain data so that your images remain crisp and sharp. To thaw the card, take it out of the freezer and place in the refrigerator for 24 hours. Then take it out of the fridge and place it away from direct heat and sunlight, until it reaches room temperature. Do not unwrap until it is fully thawed. That bit of moisture could affect the card's ability to hold the images. Do not microwave.

## **Tip No.3.**

Try not to swap memory cards in direct sunlight. But if you must, at least shade it with your body. Never, ever swap cards in direct sunlight. It could melt some of those metal contacts. Store the filled-up card properly, and make sure the memory card compartment on your camera is shut tight after replacing the card. We don't want any stray light ruining our images now, do we? And what to do with the filled-up memory cards? Why, see Tip #1 above, of course.

## **Tip No.4.**

Handle memory cards only by the edges. Avoid getting fingerprints on your card—they will show up in your images, leading to countless hours of Photoshopping. (Well, the upside is, at least you'll become a master of Photoshop.)

## **Tip No.5.**

When traveling through airports, carry the cards with you. Don't pack them in checked luggage, where they could be subjected to strong X-rays, not to mention pilferage. Strong X-rays could fog not only images already on the card, but also those still to be taken. Fogging can be particularly severe if you shoot at high ISOs.

Follow these tips, and you'll be on your way to enjoying problem-free photography, at least where memory cards are concerned.

Happy shooting

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