

CCC Hints and Tips

Back up devices

Q - Has any member has any experience of “Infiniti Cloud” or “The Photostick” or any other recommended back-up storage. Both look similar but Infiniti Cloud is rated higher on a couple of comparison sites although I’m not convinced that some of these sites are impartial.

<https://consumerreviewer.org/best-photo-backup-devices/?msclkid=d97839e9260d1a49771c674165fd6b8c>

All my photos are backed up on One Drive but it would be good to have some physical back up a bit closer to hand.

“As you say, an important subject which I take seriously as you can see below. So the answer is, yes, you definitely need to back up your precious photos given how much you have slaved over taking and processing them. I do have a lot of back up and my advice is, you can never have too much storage space!

Cloud storage is a lot cheaper than it used to be at around £4 per month for unlimited storage although Amazon do a Photo only unlimited package for about £10 per year. However this does come with some problems primarily download and worst still upload speeds! These are ideally suited to phone images etc. Where the file size is compressed and pretty small! Try uploading several hundred images from your holiday and see how long it takes.....Hours!

Also, once you have committed to one cloud service you have to stay with them even if the price increases as trying to transfer data from one account to another would take an eternity! Plus what happens if that company you are with goes bust? You would have no way of accessing all your valuable information and data!

I do have a One Drive account which I use to transfer files between one PC and another, however as I don’t do this much so the included 5 GB of “Free” storage is enough! For this reason I use external Storage for all my data backup!

I back up across multiple drives, either two or three separate hard drives depending on the age of the photos. The types of External / Internal Hard Drives you can get varies across three different types,

1. Cheapest but Slowest - External hard drive space is cheap. A 4 TB HDD (Terra Byte (4000 Giga Bytes) Hard Drive) costs around £80. If you have a USB 3.0 enabled PC / Mac get one to suit this format as the data access speeds will be much quicker at around 70 Megabytes per second transfer speed rate although they are all backwards compatible with older connections such as USB 2.0 but at slower transfer speeds around 5 MBS! – A 4 TB Hard Drive will hold approx. 400,000 x 10 Mega Byte JPEG Photos or around 100,000 – 40 MB Raw Images – Usually plenty! I would Buy 2 x 2 TB (£50 each) or 2 x 4 TB Hard Drives (£80 Each) and back the same images onto both. That way if one hard drive fails at some point you will always have a copy on another spare Hard Drive!

2. If you have a Desktop PC, you could install an internal Hard Drive and connect it via a SATA port connection which is much faster than USB at around 150 MBS, or if funds are less limiting then look at a SSD (Solid State Drive) which can transfer speeds at around 300 MBS although at around twice the price of a Internal 3.5 Inch Hard Drive!

3. I have a PCI-E 4.0 - 1 TB M.2 NVME drive which I use to store Photoshop and Video Editing material as this works around 5000 MBS – Much faster but around 8 x the cost of Standard Hard Drives. These are ideal for quick access but a very expensive option for mass storage and only suitable for more modern computers that have the correct connectors on them!

Given the above, there are a few things to note:

1. Internal Hard Drives are a better option than an External Drive as they use the faster SATA connector for data transfer. They do not require an external power supply and keep your desk cleaner and tidier. However you need to be confident accessing the insides of your PC / Mac to install them and ensure that you have the available connectors (see You Tube for how to install an internal Hard Drive).
2. All 3.5 Inch External Hard Drives need an external power source (3 pin plug) to power them. They also boot at start up so will slow your PC / Mac down when booting (allow an addition 10 Seconds Boot time for each Hard drive added). They don't usually have an on or off switch so will run all the time that the PC / Mac is switched on! To get around this, I use an external USB 3.0 Switchable hub so I can turn the Hard Drives on or off independent of the PC to ensure that it is only on when I want it to be, not all the time (much better than turning a plug on or off all the time as this could "blow" your Hard Drive with a lot of use).
3. 2.5 Inch external drives usually work off the USB supplied power and don't need an external power supply. However they are slower because of this unless you get the latest Gen USB 3.2 Hard Drives which run much faster and will match the speed of a (powered) 3.5 Inch external drive! Note: You need a Gen USB 3.2 enabled PC / Mac to get the most from these faster Hard Drives – Otherwise stick to a standard USB 3.0 Hard drive and save some money! These Hard Drives are ideal for Laptops as they are small and portable!
4. Macs and newer Windows PC's have something called USB C and Thunderbolt connectors which have much higher data transfer rates than USB, however these come at a premium price, usually double that of a standard Hard Drive! If you can afford one, get one of these above all the other external drives but you will spend a lot more!

For me I have the following hard drive kit:

1 x 1 TB M.2 NVME Hard Drive – Stores Windows, Photoshop and DaVinci Resolve – For the fastest access

1 x 500 GB SSD – Internal - Used to store most accessed files that I am working on

1 x 500 GB HDD – Internal – Used primarily as a Photoshop Scratch disk for temporary Photoshop Storage

2 x 2000 GB HDD - Internal – Used for Photo and Video Storage – Standard HDD but quicker access than External HDD's (Same info. On both – Set up as RAID Drives)

2 x 4000 GB HDD – External USB 3.0 – For older Photo / Video archived Storage – Require external Power source (Same info. On both – Set up as RAID Drives)

1 x 6000 GB HDD – External USB 3.0 – Complete Archive backup of my most treasured Photos and Videos from the 2 x 4000 GB HDD's above (Manually transferred) – Requires external Power

2 x 2000 GB HDD – External (Portable) USB 3.2 (smaller 2.5 inch Hard Drives) - For transferring Photos / Video files between my PC and Laptop – Run off of USB Power – (Ideal back up for Laptops)

1 x 1500 GB HDD – External USB 2.0 – Older drive used to store standard archived data not accessed very often

I am sure others would say that Cloud services are good, which they are for "non Photographers", but trying to upload "gigabytes" worth of data is a painful process unless you have a Gigabyte line which I am sure most of us don't have!

I have a high speed internet line which gives me around 18 mbs upload speed, so to upload say a 32 GB cards worth of Photos (which I would easily take on holiday) would take around 8.23 Hours by my calculations! Um...Maybe not!

As I said, you can never have too much storage! I hope that helps.

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