

**Backing Up your entire Digital Kit Collection, Personal Photos, Digital Layouts**  
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1. Always maintain at least two independent copies of your images. Here are some options:

- A) Hard Drive and CD or DVD
- B) Hard Drive & External Hard Drive (EHD)
- C) EHD & second EHD
- D) 2 copies of CD or DVD
- E) Hard Drive and Online Storage

2. Suggestion: As a protection against unfortunate incidents such as fire, tornadoes, floods, etc., store one of your backups in a different location.

NOTE: **Putting it on CD/DVD and deleting it off your hard drive is not a backup.** A backup is if the first media fails, you will have a second copy. So if you are doing this, make 2 CD's or DVD's.

**Issues or Facts about Each Type of Storage:**

- CD/DVD backup specifics:
  - Need access to a CD/DVD burner.
  - All CDs and DVDs will decay over time. This depends on how they are stored, how well you take care of them, and how often they are read.
  - A small scratch can make the disc useless
  - Once a CD or DVD is damaged or corrupted, it is very unlikely that you will be able to recover anything.
  - Price per CD/DVD. Buy as you need. (They are getting cheaper all the time)
- Issues with Hard Drives and EHDs
  - Large initial setup cost than CD/DVD's
  - What size to buy? If a large one crashes – you lose MORE. A suggested mid-range size is 250 – 300 gig.
  - Disk crashes – due to mechanical failure
  - Susceptible to shock or power surges
  - EHD disk crashes – mishandling (dropping them)
  - If a hard drive crashes, recovery is possible but time consuming and expensive.
  - Susceptible to virus attacks

- Issues with Online Storage:
  - Cost
  - Need good internet connection. With DSL or Cable internet connection, this means you can back up to 2 – 3 Gig a day.
  - Servers crash, and companies go out of business, both without warning.
  - Security of your data

### **Analyzing the Pros & Cons of Each Combination of Backups:**

#### A) Hard Drive and CD or DVD

1. This protects from hard disk failure by any reason.
2. Making CD/DVD's is time consuming.
3. CD/DVD's can be taken offsite to protect against unfortunate incidents (fire, flood, etc)

#### B) Hard Drive & EHD

1. This is easy and takes very little time.
2. Protects against mechanical failure but doesn't not protect against power surges unless you:
  1. buy power surge protection
  2. only have the backup EHD connected and plugged into AC when being used.
3. Doesn't protect from unfortunate incidents (fire, flood, etc) unless you bring the EHD to another place. i.e. Bring it to work, family members house, etc. and bring it back to periodically to make your backup.

#### C) EHD & second EHD

1. Same as B)

#### D) 2 copies of CD or DVD

1. Very time consuming making CDs/DVDs.
2. Very easy to bring one copy to another location for protection against unfortunate incidents (fire, flood, etc.)

#### E) Hard Drive and Online Storage

1. Requires good internet connection
2. Maybe unrealistic for backing up all your entire digital kit collection which means many Gigs.
3. Automatically protects from unfortunate incidents (fire, flood, etc.)

## What method is best for me?

Well it depends on a lot of things: time, money, computer skills, etc. If you are thinking of backing up and do any of the above approaches it is **better than nothing**.

## How often should I back up?

It depends on how much you are willing to lose? It also depends on how much are you willing to spend? By providing double the space for your digital kits and photos is also expensive. Here are some questions you need to ask yourself:

- How much am I willing to lose if something were to happen?
- How much am I willing to spend to avoid losing data?
  
- **For pictures:**
  - Is losing one month's pictures acceptable? Then back up once a month. If it is not acceptable, then backup more frequently.
  - Most people are willing to spend money to protect their pictures.
  - If you are printing via an online printing service, maybe the company stores your pictures indefinitely. This would protect you against an unfortunate incident automatically. Look into if this company lets you download your images again. If they do, this would be a great online backup you get for free by printing with an online service. Remember only what you upload there is only what would be protected. NOTE: I would think uploading your pictures to an online printing service, not printing them, and only using them as a backup service would not be ethical.
  
- **For Digital Kits:**
  - How often do you buy kits? The more often you do, then you probably should back up more often to protect your investment.
  - Are most of your kits free? Backup probably isn't as important since you are really losing free kits.
  - Think about if you lost your digital kit collection? Would you be sad and disappointed? Then backup more frequently. Would you see this an opportunity to go find better, newer kits? Then backup less frequently.
  
- **For Digital Layouts:**
  - If you are printing them in some method, then backing them up is less important. Well, maybe not, because what if there was one of those unfortunate incidents (fire, flood, etc.). Then your paper version may be destroyed along with your electronic version.
  - If you are printing via an online service, maybe the company stores your layouts indefinitely. This would protect you against an unfortunate incident automatically. Look into if this company lets you download your images again. If they do, this would be a great online backup you get for free by printing with an online service. Remember only what you upload there is only what would be protected. NOTE: I would think uploading your layouts to an online printing service, not printing them, and only using them as a backup would not be ethical.

**Need some concrete examples?**

The above should give you plenty of information to get started but I will provide a concrete example and tips:

- Personal Photos: I think my personal photos are the most important.
  - I would definitely keep these on a hard drive and on at least 2 CD/DVDs. I send one of the copies of the CD/DVD offsite to be stored to protect against unfortunate incidents.
  - Tools such as ACDSee Photo Manager allows CD/DVD's to be easily created. To see a tutorial on how to do this go to: [Creating Photo CDs/DVDs](#)
  
- My Digital Layouts:
  - I print them via an online printing service. The company offers unlimited storage that won't be removed although continue to watch the company policies on this. The company also provides a CD archive product that I can get my images back although it isn't cheap. This protects me from unfortunate incidents that may damage my printed albums.
  - I also backup current layouts that I have not printed on a backup EHD.
  - Another option is make CD/DVD and bring them offsite to protect against unfortunate incidents.
  - Tools such as ACDSee Photo Manager allows CD/DVD's to be easily created. To see a tutorial on how to do this go to: [Creating Photos CDs/DVDs](#)
  
- My Digital Kits:
  - I have taken the stance, that I willing to lose data if there was an unfortunate incident and am not going to take my digital kits offsite.
  - With digital kit collections being so large, I think the easiest way is to use an EHD for backup.
  - And if I see bad weather is coming, my backup EHD will be turned off and unplugged from the electrical outlet.
  - Tools such as ACDSee Photo Manager allows a user to easily synchronize your hard drive with an EHD or an EHD with another EHD. Think of synchronization as a mirror of your primary hard drive. What is on your first drive is on your second drive. The tool provides a scheduling servicing and is done automatically according to how often you want it to. To see a tutorial on how to synchronize your data, go to: [Synch'ing with ACDSee Photo Manager](#)

Other comments or tips:

- If you are making CD/DVDs of your backups: Keep a log or file of what you have backed up and when. This serves as a reminder and makes it easier to keep track of. Less time is wasted in duplicating your backups.
  
- If you use a calendar service or pda, enter in a reminder to backup however often you think you should.
  
- As technology changes, you need to migrate your data. Today is DVD's, tomorrow is ????. How many new computers can read a floppy disk still? Remember those 5 ½ inch floppies - who can read those? This will be the same for Cds/DVDs in the future.
  
- **Remember, if its important to you, keep 2 copies or more of it.**