



## What to Pack: In-Field Backup Kit for Photographers

Headed out on a photography workshop or road trip? Whether you're chasing wild horses in the desert or composing intimate landscapes in the mist, your backup gear matters just as much as your lenses. Here's a no-nonsense checklist to help you protect your work in the field.



### Memory + Storage

- **Two spare memory cards per camera body**
  - Use high-quality, name-brand cards from a trusted source
  - Label each card clearly ("1", "2", etc.)
  - If a card starts acting up, red-tape it immediately and stop using it
- **Proper card storage**
  - Use a dedicated card wallet or rugged case (not tossed into a camera bag side pocket)
  - Keep this separate from your backup drive pouch to minimize single-point failure
- **Two rugged external SSDs**
  - e.g., Samsung T7 Shield, OWC Envoy Pro, LaCie Rugged SSD
  - Label clearly with unique names (e.g., ENVOY1\_NM2025)
- **Fast, reliable card reader**
  - Make sure it's compatible with your camera's card format (SD, CFexpress, etc.)
  - If you can't read images directly off your camera as an option to a broken card reader, bring a spare if you're going remote — this is a single point of failure



### Laptop + Software

- **Laptop with enough internal storage for at least one copy of each day's shoot**
  - If you're going on a workshop that includes editing sessions, *you'll need this*
  - Keep the operating system updated for security, *but* do not install updates less than 48 hours before travel. Give yourself time to test
- **Up-to-date editing software**
  - Lightroom, Capture One, Photo Mechanic — whatever you use, update it before your trip
  - Again, don't update it or switch to a completely new version right before you leave. Allow 48 hours and one edit session post-update
- **Folder structure prepped in advance**
  - E.g., 20250812\_WhiteSands\_Sunset/Camera1/Card1

## ✓ Cables + Power

- **At least two tested USB-C (or A) cables that work with your drives and reader**
  - Important: *not* all USB cables are created equal
  - Test spares *before* you pack them to make sure they work reliably
  - Label them if needed
- **Compact power bank**
  - Enough to keep your phone or laptop topped up during a long day
  - Helpful if you're off-grid, even for a short while

## ✓ Organization + Protection

- **Soft case or pouch for backup gear**
  - Something to store SSDs, card reader, cables, and power bank together
  - *ThinkTank* makes great modular pouches that are tough and well organized
- **Notebook or index cards**
  - Use this to track card usage, backups, or quick notes on shoot days
- **Red + green tape**
  - Green = ready to use
  - Red = faulty, error-prone, or due for review
- **Reward label or contact info**
  - Optional, but smart. Put your contact details on all critical gear