

Sensor Dust Removal Procedure

Nikon Example

By Jim Lamb

1. You come back from a shoot with hundreds of photos. You crank-up your photo editor and transfer the bunch. You notice sensor dust spots on all of them in low detail areas.
2. You could try Lightroom Classic's *Spot Removal* tool (*Q* as in *Q-Tips*) with the aid of the *Visualize Spots* slider down on the *Tool Bar* (*T*). Then *Sync* the edits with all the rest and see what you get. But, there is another way!
3. The free Nikon Capture NX-D software has the ability to batch fix the spots. (You do have *Setup Menu > Clean Image Sensor* set for *Automatic Cleaning > Clean at Shutdown*, don't you?)
4. Before you touch those damaged photos (you did save *Second Copies* of your new imports and have them still on the card?), grab a white or light gray card that has no texture/marks on it. Put it under some bright lights (or use a white page on your monitor)
5. Place the camera (with maybe another memory card) and lens square on about 4 inches/10 cm from the card/paper/screen. Focus to infinity at a narrow aperture.
6. Go to the next *Setup Menu* item, *Image Dust Off Ref Photo > Start > OK* (don't use *Clean Sensor and Then Start*).
7. Observe "*rEF*" on the monitor, bottom right.
8. After the shutter fires (unless there is a warning requesting more light/exposure) hit *Playback* for an *NDF* file (not a visible image file).
9. Using your *Finder/File Explorer*, copy the *.NDF* file from your memory card to the folder where all those damaged files are.
10. Open (Download and install at <https://downloadcenter.nikonimglib.com/en/download/sw/166.html>) *Nikon Capture NX-D* software (Windows/Mac).
11. Browse from the left side to your awaiting folder with the images and *.NDF* file.
12. On the right side, select *Edit > Camera and Lens Corrections* icon.
13. Select a bad/low detail image in that folder while in a large loupe view. Wait. A *Change* button appears.
14. Click on *Change* and a query appears: *Do you want to use a Dust off ref photo that is the same folder as the active image? Yes*. After some time, all images will receive spot corrections.
15. There is no *Done*, just the hour glass goes away when complete.
16. Oh, yeah, don't forget to clean, or have a pro clean, your sensor. Try the *Clean Image Sensor* menu item first. See my *Sensor Cleaning* doc on that: <https://www.capcitycameraclub.com/Resources/ViewFiles.php> .

Remember, there is no mirror guarding the sensor in a mirrorless camera. Keep the opening down and quickly change lenses (just don't in dirty air).

Your future images will be spotless.