GENERAL

how to update gopro hero 3

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Whether you're a seasoned adventurer or a casual vlogger, keeping your GoPro Hero 3's firmware up to date is essential for unlocking new features, improving performance, and ensuring compatibility with the latest accessories. This guide walks you through every step of updating your GoPro Hero 3—whether you prefer a quick app-based method, a direct USB connection, or a more hands on SD card approach. By the end, you'll have a fully refreshed camera ready to capture your next epic moment.

Why Updating Your GoPro Hero 3 Matters

Firmware updates bring more than just a polished user interface. They can:

- Fix bugs that affect video quality or battery life.
- Introduce new shooting modes or image processing algorithms.
- Improve compatibility with newer GoPro accessories, such as the Hero 3+.
- Enhance overall stability and reduce the risk of crashes.

Ignoring updates can leave you stuck with outdated features and potential security vulnerabilities. If you've ever experienced lagging playback or unexpected shutdowns, a firmware update is often the first line of defense.

Before You Begin: Things You'll Need

1. GoPro Hero 3 camera (any model: 3, 3+, or 3+ Silver).
2. A fully charged battery or a reliable power source.
3. An SD card (preferably Class 10, 16 /GB or larger).
4. A computer with a USB port and an SD card reader.
5. Internet access for downloading firmware.
6. Optional: GoPro App (iOS or Android) for quick updates.

Make sure you back up any important footage before proceeding. While firmware updates are generally safe, having a copy of your best clips is always wise.

Method 1: Updating via the GoPro App (iOS & Android)

The GoPro App offers the most straightforward way to update your Hero 3, especially if you're on the go. Follow these steps:

1. Download the App: Install the GoPro App from the App Store or Google Play.
2. Connect Your Camera: Turn on your Hero 3 and enable Wi Fi. Open the app, tap "Add New Device," and follow the on screen prompts to connect.
3. Check for Firmware Updates: Once connected, tap the "Settings" icon and then "Firmware." If a newer version is available, you'll see an "Update" button.
4. Start the Update: Tap "Update." The app will download the firmware file and automatically transfer it to your camera.
5. Wait for Completion: The camera will reboot once the update is finished. Do not remove the battery or disconnect the Wi Fi during this process.
6. Verify the Update: Open the camera's menu, go to "Settings" !' "About," and confirm that the firmware version

matches the latest release.

Tip: If the app shows “No new firmware,” your camera is already up to date. However, double check the version number to be sure.

Pros of App Based Updates

- Convenient: No cables or SD cards needed.
- Automatic: The app handles the download and transfer.
- Real time: You can update while traveling.

Cons of App Based Updates

- Requires a stable Wi Fi connection.
- Limited to newer app versions that support the Hero 3.
- Can be slower on older smartphones.

Method 2: Updating via GoPro’s Official Website

For those who prefer a manual approach, downloading the firmware from GoPro’s website and transferring it to your camera via USB or SD card is reliable. Follow these steps:

1. Visit the GoPro Support Page: Go to GoPro Support and search for “Hero 3 firmware update.”
2. Download the Firmware File: Look for the latest firmware version (e.g., “Hero 3 Firmware v1.3.2”). Download the ZIP archive.
3. Extract the File: Use your computer’s file manager to unzip the archive. Inside, you’ll find a file named firmware.bin or similar.
4. Transfer to SD Card (Optional): If you choose the SD card method (see below), copy firmware.bin to the root directory of your SD card.
5. Insert SD Card into Camera: Power off your Hero 3, insert the SD card, and power on.
6. Initiate the Update: Navigate to Settings !’ Firmware on your camera. It should detect the new firmware file and prompt you to update.
7. Complete the Process: Follow on screen instructions. The camera will reboot automatically after the update.

Why Use the Official Website?

- Ensures you’re getting the most recent firmware directly from GoPro.
- Provides a fallback if the app fails or your device doesn’t support the GoPro App.
- Allows for offline updates if you’re in a remote area.

Method 3: Updating via USB Cable

Updating via USB is useful if you want a direct connection without relying on Wi Fi or an SD card. Here’s how to do it:

1. Connect the Camera to Your Computer: Use the USB cable that came with your GoPro. Plug one end into the camera’s USB port, and the other into your computer.
2. Put the Camera in USB Mode: Turn on the camera and press the “Mode” button until the screen displays “USB.” This signals that the camera is ready for file transfer.
3. Transfer the Firmware File: Open the camera’s storage on your computer (it appears as a removable drive). Drag the downloaded firmware.bin file into the root folder.
4. Disconnect and Reboot: Eject the camera from your computer, then power it off and back on. The camera should detect the new firmware and prompt you to update.
5. Follow On Screen Prompts: Confirm the update and let the camera finish the process. Do not interrupt it.

When to Use USB Updates

- When you're in a location without Wi Fi.
- When you want a faster transfer speed than SD card.
- When you're troubleshooting connectivity issues with the app.

Method 4: Updating via SD Card (Manual)

For many GoPro users, the SD card method remains the most reliable, especially when dealing with older devices. This method involves placing the firmware file on the SD card and letting the camera handle the update automatically.

1. Prepare the SD Card: Format your SD card to FAT32 (if it isn't already). Make sure it's at least 16 /GB.
2. Download the Firmware: As described in Method 2, get the latest firmware.bin file.
3. Copy to SD Card: Insert the SD card into your computer, open it, and copy the firmware file to the root directory (not inside any folder).
4. Insert into Camera: Power off your Hero 3, insert the SD card, and power on.
5. Access Firmware Menu: Go to Settings !' Firmware. The camera should recognize the file and present an update prompt.
6. Update: Follow the prompts. The camera will reboot automatically once the update is complete.
7. Remove SD Card: After the reboot, remove the SD card. Your camera is now updated.

Advantages of SD Card Updates

- No need for a computer or internet connection.
- Works even if your GoPro's Wi Fi is disabled.
- Useful for bulk updates across multiple cameras.

Common Issues & Troubleshooting Tips

Even with careful preparation, you might run into hiccups. Below are the most frequent problems and how to resolve them.

1. Firmware Update Fails to Start

- Make sure the camera's battery is fully charged or connected to a power source.
- Verify that the firmware file is in the root directory of the SD card.
- Check that you're using the correct firmware version for your specific Hero 3 model.
- Try a different USB cable or port if you're using the USB method.

2. Camera Freezes During Update

- Do not turn off the camera or remove the battery during the process.
- Wait patiently; the update can take several minutes.
- After a freeze, power off and power on the camera again. It should resume or restart the update.

3. Firmware File Not Detected

- Confirm the file name is exactly firmware.bin (case sensitive).
- Make sure the SD card is formatted to FAT32; exFAT can cause detection issues.
- Re insert the SD card after copying the file.

4. Outdated Firmware Version Still Shows Up

- Double check that you downloaded the latest firmware from GoPro's official site.
- Some older GoPro App versions might not support newer firmware; update the app first.

- Restart the camera after the update to ensure the new firmware loads.

After the Update: What to Expect

Once the firmware update is complete, you'll notice several improvements:

- Enhanced video stabilization and image quality.
- New shooting modes (e.g., high speed video, improved night vision).
- Better battery efficiency and longer runtime.
- Improved compatibility with newer GoPro accessories.

It's a good idea to test the camera's performance by shooting a short video clip in various lighting conditions. If you notice any anomalies, consider resetting the camera to factory settings (found in Settings !' Reset).

When to Consider a Full Reset

If you encounter persistent problems after updating, a factory reset can help. Keep in mind that this will erase all settings and stored data on the camera's internal memory, but not the SD card. To reset:

1. Navigate to Settings !' Reset.
2. Choose Factory Reset and confirm.
3. Re configure your camera settings as desired.

Frequently Asked Questions

Is it safe to update my GoPro Hero 3 more than once?

Yes, firmware updates are designed to be incremental. Each new version builds upon the previous one, so you can safely update multiple times.

Will the firmware update delete my footage?

No. The update only modifies the camera's internal software. Your recorded videos remain intact

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