THUNDERBLADE

User Guide

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INTRODUCTION

1.1 Minimum System Requirements

- **Operating System**:
  - macOS 10.13 or later
  - Windows 10 or later

- **Hardware:**
  - Mac or Windows PC with Thunderbolt 3 port

1.2 Package Contents

- OWC ThunderBlade
- 0.5 m Thunderbolt 3 cable
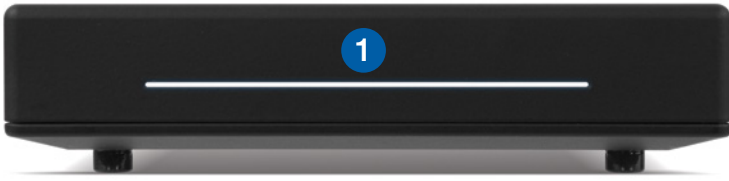- Power supply and cable

1.3 Getting Started

- To use the ThunderBlade, connect it to your computer via attached Thunderbolt 3 cable (macOS 10.13 or later, or Windows 10 or later required). Device drivers are not required, however use of SoftRAID XT (macOS only at the time of this writing) requires the SoftRAID driver and application.. See Section 2.1 for more information.

- The LED indicator on the front of the device (see Section 1.5) glows blue when the device is receiving power and is connected to an active host. The LED glows white when the device is connected to a host that is in Sleep or hibernation mode, or when it has power but is not connected to a host. This LED is also connected to a light sensor on the back of the device which enables automatic brightness adjustments based on ambient light levels.

- The LED has four segments, one for each installed M.2 SSD. When one or more of the SSDs are accessed, the corresponding segments will blink blue.

- While it is possible to connect a DisplayPort 1.2 display to the spare Thunderbolt 3 port on the device by using the appropriate cable or adapter, HDMI and other types of displays require an *active display adapter* with a USB-C host connection.

- **Software RAID volumes cannot be used as boot drives in macOS 10.13 and later.** In order to boot to this device, do the folllowing: break the RAID, format one of the drives as an independent volume, then install macOS on that drive. The remaining drives can be reconfigured as a RAID 0 volume if necessary. For more details, please see: **www.owcdigital.com/thunderblade-boot**

1.4 About This Manual

The images and descriptions may vary slightly between this manual and the unit shipped. Functions and features may change depending on the firmware version. Screenshot images may vary slightly from the applications you seen on-screen. The latest product details and warranty information can be found on the product web page. OWC's Limited Warranty is not transferable and subject to limitations.

1.5 Front View

1. LED array (power and disk activity)

1.6 Rear View

2. Dual Thunderbolt 3 ports
3. Power input
4. Ambient light sensor (do not cover)
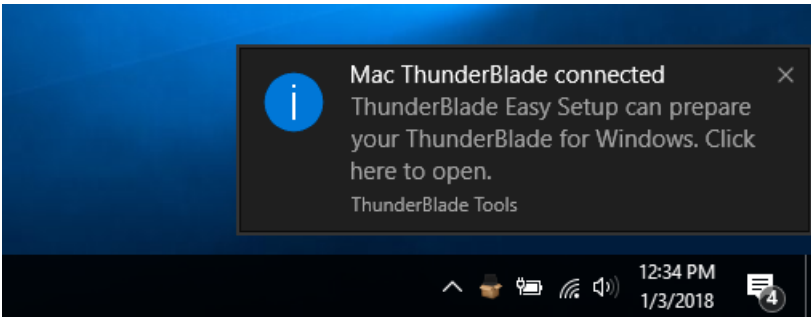
MAC & PC SETUP

2.1 Mac Formatting & SoftRAID

The pre-installed SSDs have been formatted as a Journaled HFS+ volume for Mac, and configured as a RAID 0 using the SoftRAID application. We recommend you download the application at **go.owcdigital.com/softraid** and install the latest version to get the best performance. **Note:** the SoftRAID serial number is on the bottom of the device, and the companion driver will be installed with the application.
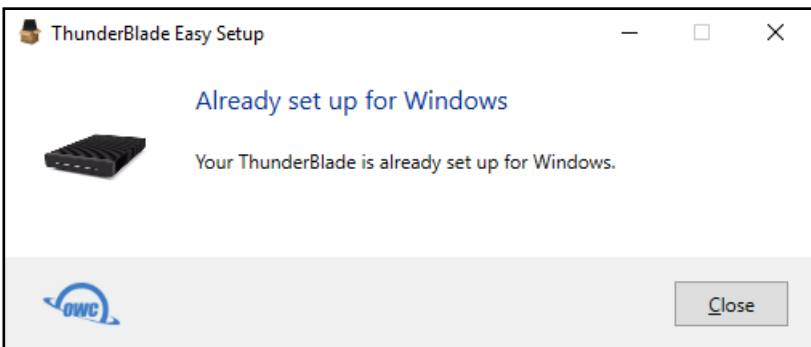
2.2 Windows Formatting Process

Note: all data on the OWC ThunderBlade will be lost when following the steps below. Back up all important data before proceeding.
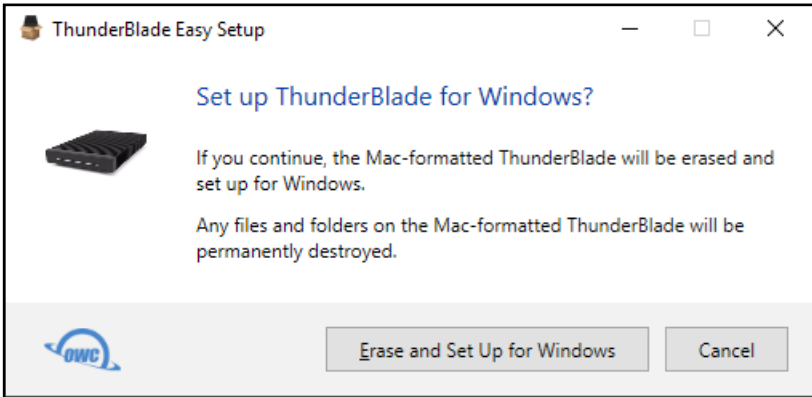
1. Download the **ThunderBlade Tools application**. Once you have the file, run the installer and follow the prompts.

2. Connect your ThunderBlade SSD. This will launch the newly installed application and display a dialog like the one shown below.
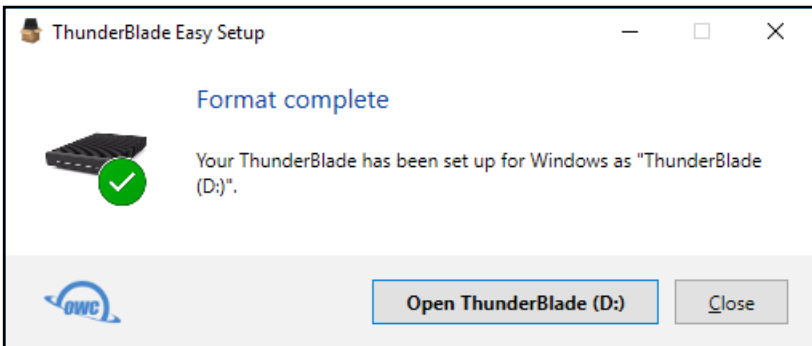

If instead you see a dialog that states your ThunderBlade has already been set up for Windows (below), you can close the application window and skip the remaining steps. Your ThunderBlade is ready for use!

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3. Next you will be asked if it is OK to erase the existing volume on the OWC ThunderBlade, in order to set up your new SSD for use with a Windows PC. When you are ready and sure that any relevant data has been backed up, click Erase and Set Up for Windows.

4. After a moment, the ThunderBlade should be formatted for PC and a dialog will confirm that it is ready to be opened and used. You can either click the 'Open ThunderBlade...' button or click Close and then navigate to the ThunderBlade in your Windows Explorer. Note: the dialog below shows the drive with a letter designation of 'D,' however this can vary from system to system, depending on available drive letters.

3.1 Troubleshooting

If you have more than one ThunderBlade, do not stack them. This can cause performance issues related to thermal dissipation.

If your computer does not recognize the drive when it is connected, make sure the cable is attached securely. You can also try plugging the cable into a different Thunderbolt 3 port on your computer and/or trying a different Thunderbolt 3 cable.

PC users: if you have opened Disk Management but do not see the ThunderBlade SSDs listed, make sure you follow the steps in Section 2.2 of the online User Guide. Multiple permission steps are required for a PC to communicate properly with this device; skipping one or more of those steps may result in the disks not being visible in Disk Management.

3.2 About Data Backup

To ensure your files are protected and to prevent data loss, we strongly suggest that you keep two copies of your data: one copy on your OWC ThunderBlade and a second copy on either your internal drive or another storage medium, such as an optical backup, or on another external storage unit. Any data loss or corruption while using the ThunderBlade (including with SoftRAID) is the sole responsibility of the user, and under no circumstances may OWC, its parent, partners, affiliates, officers, employees, or agents be held liable for loss of the use of data including compensation of any kind or recovery of the data.

3.3 Contacting Technical Support

Phone: M–F, 8am–5pm Central Time
(866) 692-7100 (N. America) | +1 (815) 338-4751 (Int'l)

Chat: M–F, 8am–8pm Central Time
www.owcdigital.com/support

Email: Answered within 48 hours
www.owcdigital.com/support

Changes:
The material in this document is for information purposes only and subject to change without notice. While reasonable efforts have been made in the preparation of this document to assure its accuracy, OWC, its parent, partners, affiliates, officers, employees, and agents assume no liability resulting from errors or omissions in this document, or from the use of the information contained herein. OWC reserves the right to make changes or revisions in the product design or the product manual without reservation and without obligation to notify any person of such revisions and changes.

FCC Statement:
Warning! Modifications not authorized by the manufacturer may void the user's authority to operate this device.

NOTE: This equipment has been tested and found to comply with the limits for a Class B digital device, pursuant to Part 15 of the FCC Rules. These limits are designed to provide reasonable protection against harmful interference in a residential installation. This equipment generates, uses and can radiate radio frequency energy and, if not installed and used in accordance with the instructions, may cause harmful interference to radio communications. However, there is no guarantee that interference will not occur in a particular installation.

If this equipment does cause harmful interference with radio or television reception, which can be determined by turning the equipment off and on, the user is encouraged to try to correct the interference by one or more of the following measures:
- Reorient or relocate the receiving antenna.
- Increase the separation between the equipment and receiver.
- Connect the equipment to an outlet on a circuit different from that to which the receiver is connected.

Health And Safety Precautions:
- Read this user guide carefully and follow the correct procedures when setting up the device.
- Do not attempt to disassemble or modify the device. To avoid any risk of electrical shock, fire, short-circuiting or dangerous emissions, never insert any metallic object into the device. If it appears to be malfunctioning, contact OWC technical support.
- Never expose your device to rain, or use it near water or in damp or wet conditions.
- Never place objects containing liquids on the drive, as they may spill into its openings. Doing so increases the risk of electrical shock, short-circuiting, fire or personal injury.

General Use Precautions:
- Do not place objects on top of the device.
- To avoid damage, do not expose the device to temperatures outside the range of 5° C to 40° C (41° F to 104° F).
- Always unplug the device from the electrical outlet if there is a risk of lightning or if it will be unused for an extended period of time. Otherwise, there is an increased risk of electrical shock, short-circuiting or fire.
- Do not use the device near other electrical appliances such as televisions, radios or speakers. Doing so may cause interference which will adversely affect the operation of the other products.

For up-to-date product and warranty information, please visit the product web page.