Loading the Raspbian Operating system onto an SD Card

This tutorial will help you move your downloaded copy of the Raspbian operating system's raw image from your windows computer to an SD card.

Windows: Loading Raspbian onto an SD Card

If you downloaded Raspbian to a Windows machine, follow these steps to load Raspbian onto an SD card:

1. If you do not already have one, download and install a disk image writer utility onto your Windows machine. The Win32DiskImager utility from https://launchpad.net/win32-image-writer is recommended.

2. Load your SD card into your SD card reader. Take note of the drive letter that Windows assigns to it (for example, F:).

3. If you are using a brand-new, never-been-used SD card, you can skip this step. If you are not using a brand-new SD card (or if this is your second attempt at moving the operating system to the SD card), you need to format it. Format the SD card to FAT32 with one partition. Check the below figure.

Format SD Card to Fat32
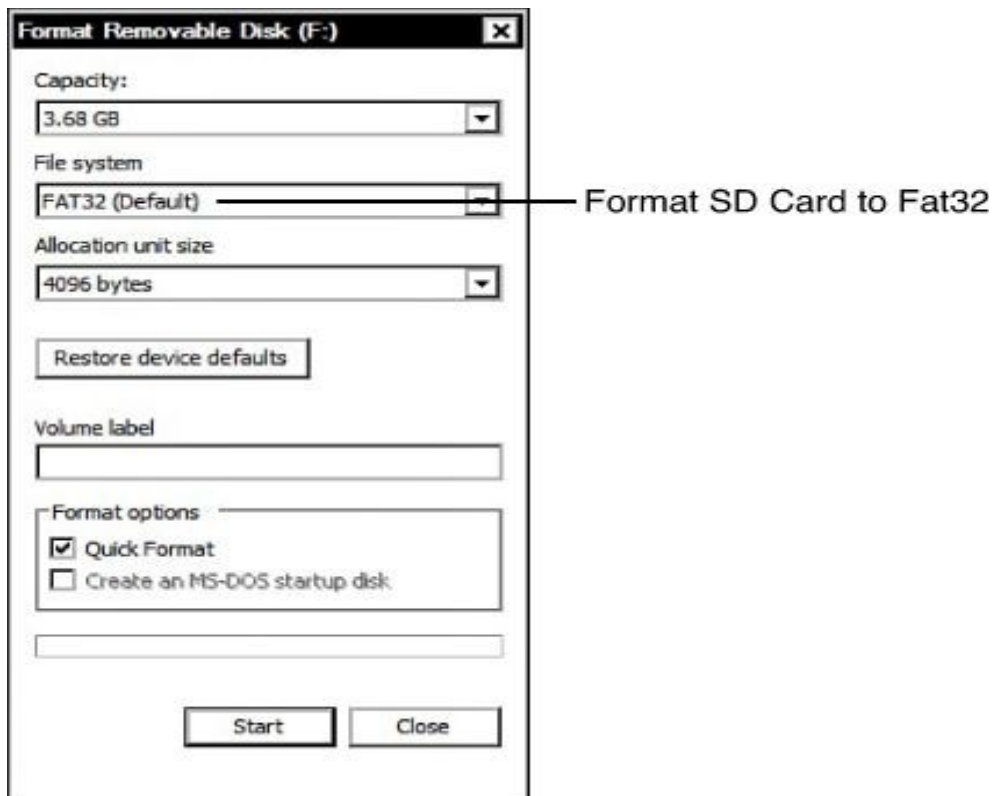
4. Assuming that you have downloaded the Raspbian operating system zip file already, extract the operating system image from t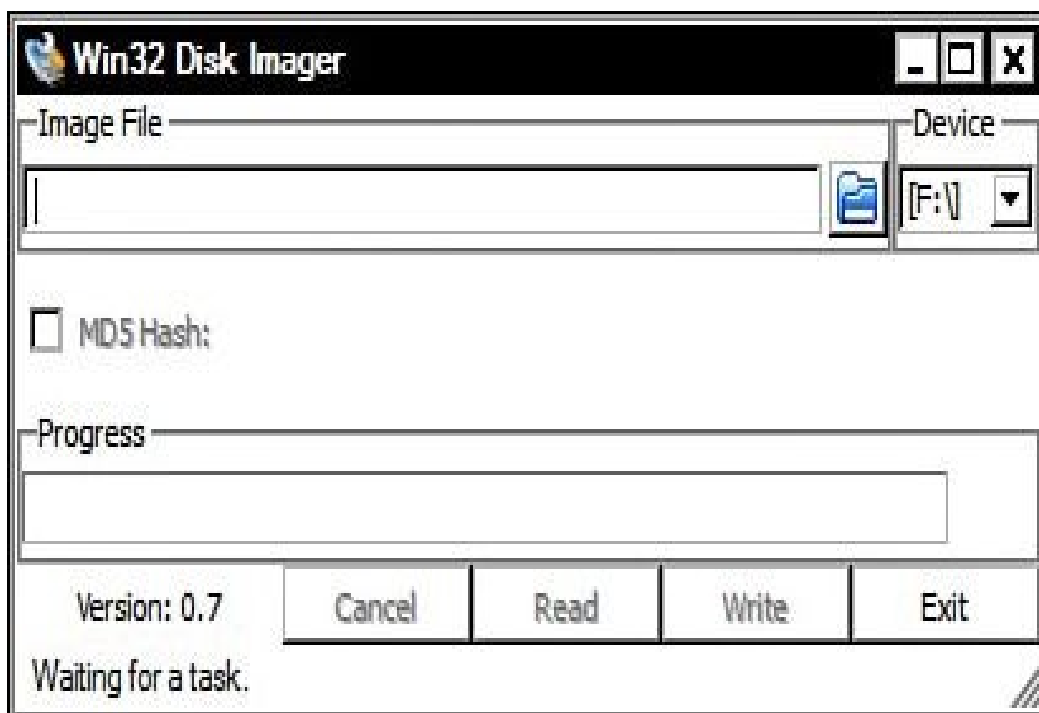he zip file. Note where the image file is currently located on the Windows system. For example, it may be in your `Downloads` directory.

5. Run the Win32DiskImager program. A window similar to the one below appears on your screen.

In the Device section of the Win32DiskImager window on the right side of the window, click the down arrow. Select the drive letter of your SD card that you noted in step 2.

Watch Out!: Wiping the Wrong Disk

If you select the wrong letter in Win32DiskImager window's Device section, you might wipe out the wrong disk, such as your computer's primary hard drive. That would be bad.

In the Image File section of the window, click the file folder icon. Navigate to the location of your Raspbian image file. Click the file name to select it . See the below figure.

Now click the Write button in the Win32DiskImager window to write the image file to your SD card. This may take a little while, so be patient.
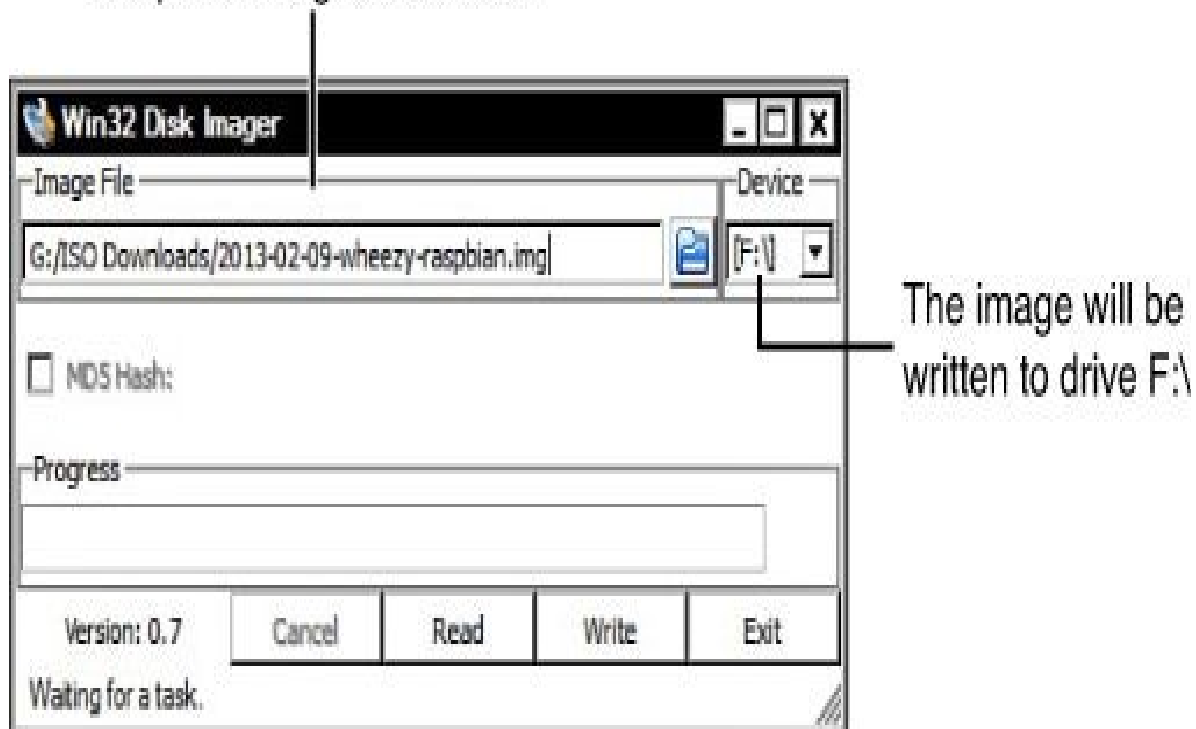
When Win32DiskImager is done writing the image, click the Exit button to close the program. Now you can eject the SD card from your SD card reader. The Raspbian operating system is now loaded on your SD card.